



Warrant Article #42  
Dimensional Regulations  
Floor Area Ratio  
Zoning Bylaw Amendment

Mr. Johnson moves:

that the Town take affirmative action on Article #42 as printed in the Warrant.

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What is “Mansionization”?



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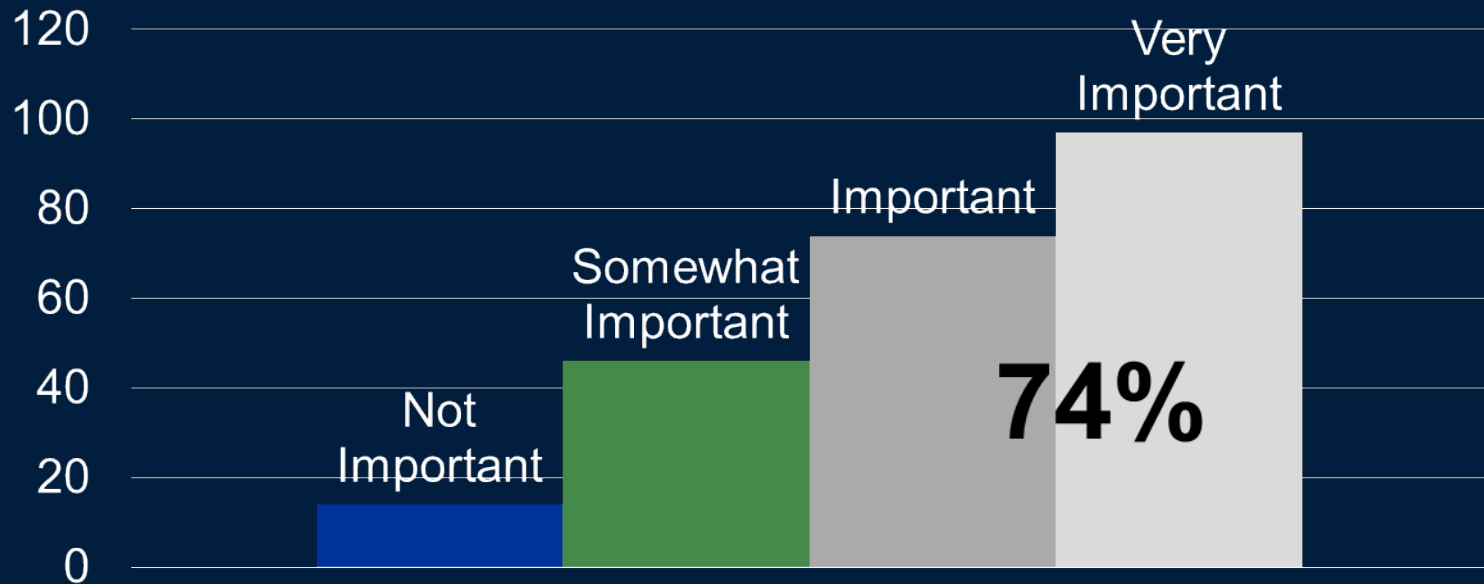
*Comprehensive Long Range Plan (2005)*

**Action CH-4.2.1:** “Create zoning bylaws to limit mansionization, using mechanisms outlined in Taintor report, ‘Zoning Bylaw Review – Mansionization,’ Aug. 29, 2003

(Supported by the 2009 Mansionization Report)

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# Importance of *Low Density of Buildings* to the Neighborhood

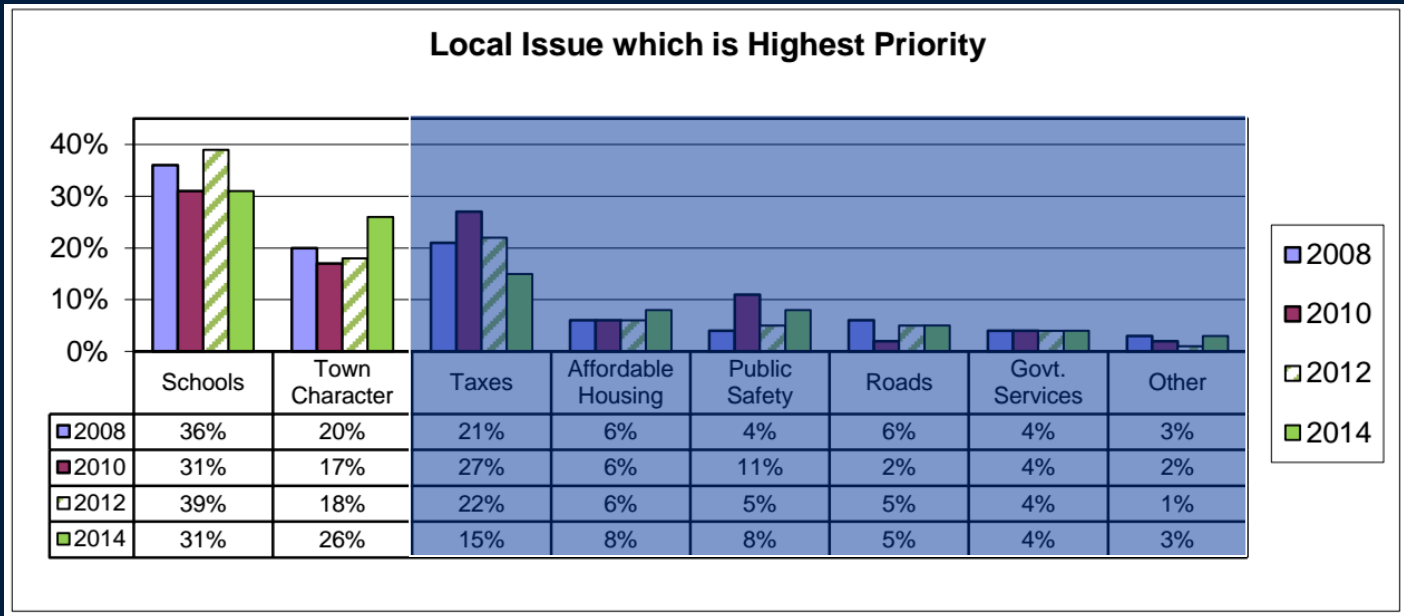


Concord Housing Foundation Residence B Survey, 2011

# Warrant Article #42 Dimensional Regulations – Floor Area Ratio Zoning Bylaw Amendment

## Objective: Preserve Town Character

2014 biannual Town survey identified the preservation of the Town's character as the #2 priority (and growing)



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How can the Town regulate mansionization?

The Planning Department hired a summer intern to study “what works.” Most successful initiatives were:

- **Simple:** common terms, easy measurements
- **Relative:** differing limits by neighborhood lot size
- **Clear:** hard and fast rules, with minimal exceptions

The FAR bylaw reflects these objectives.

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This amendment seeks to:

- Establish a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for all residential zoning districts in Concord.
- Allows the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant a special permit to exceed the maximum FAR under certain conditions.

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What is a Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?

The bylaw defines FAR for residential zones as

**Gross floor area of all buildings / actual lot area**

*Example:* 3,600 sq ft house / 10,000 sq ft lot =  
**0.36 FAR**

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## Gross Floor Area

Horizontal area of the floors of a building  
 with ceiling height > 6' 8", excluding:

- Open/screened porches, stoops or decks
- Basements (finished or unfinished)
- Accessory structures <100 sq ft, or with no permanent foundation

Code	Description	Living Area	Gross Area	Eff. Area	Unit Cost	Undeprec. Value
BAS	First Floor	2,210	2,210	2,210	219.51	485,117
DCK	Deck		465	41	22.22	9,000
FGR	Garage		801	320	87.69	70,243
FOP	Porch, Open		115	23	43.90	5,049
FQS	Fin 3/4 story	461	615	461	164.54	101,194
FUS	Upper Story, Finished	2,229	2,229	2,229	219.51	489,288
STP	Stoop		15	1	14.63	220
UBM	Basement, Unfinished		2,043	409	43.94	89,780
UHS	Half Story, Unfinished		1,428	428	65.79	93,950
URB	Basement, Unfinished, Raised		140	42	65.85	9,219
<i>Ttl. Gross Liv/Use Area:</i>		4,900	10,001	6,164		1,394,460
			7,283			

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Proposed Maximum Residential FAR  
(Table III – Dimensional Regulations)

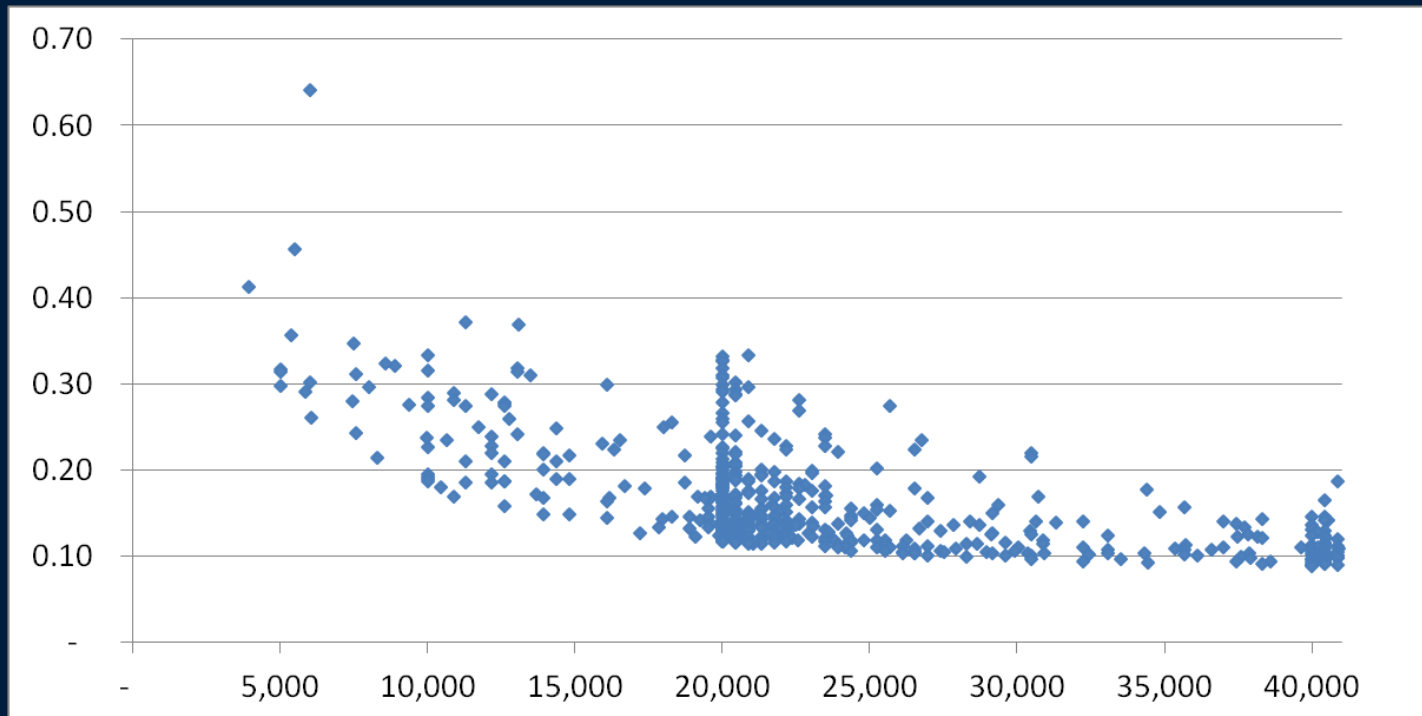
**Max FAR = .24 + (1,200 / actual lot area)**

10,000 sq ft lot x .36 Max FAR	=	3,600 sq ft
20,000 sq ft lot x .30 Max FAR	=	6,000 sq ft
40,000 sq ft lot x .27 Max FAR	=	10,800 sq ft
5,000 sq ft lot* x .48 Max FAR	=	2,400 sq ft

\*nonconforming

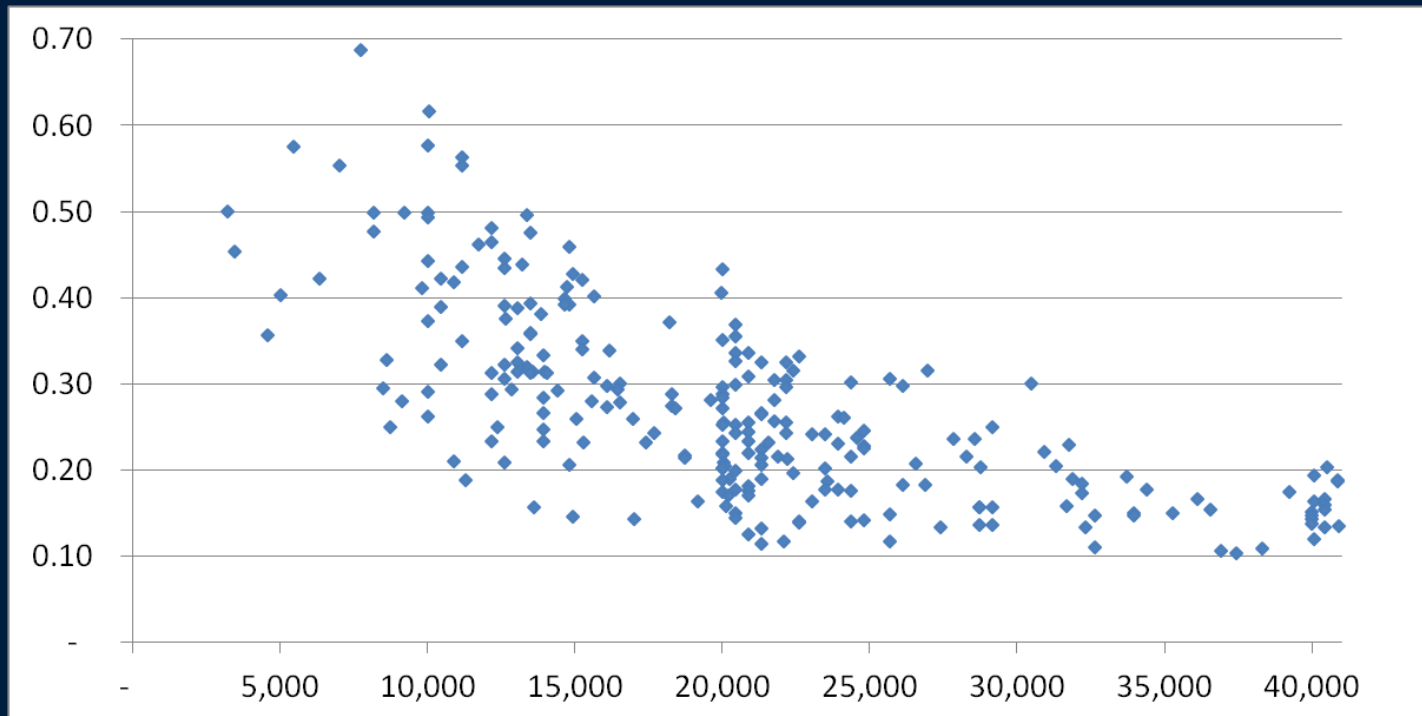
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# FAR of New Construction (1961-2000)



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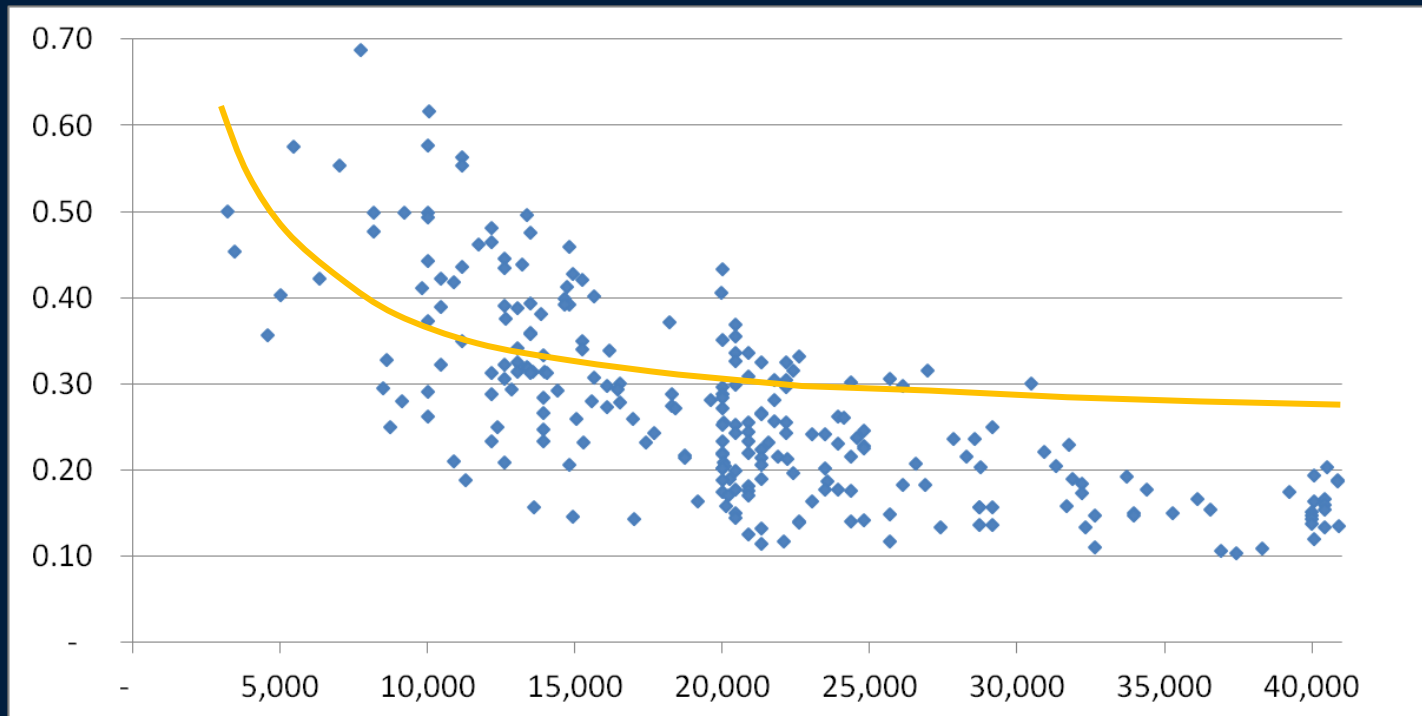
# FAR of New Construction (Post-2000)



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## Proposed FAR Limit

(83% of new houses built since 2000 would comply)



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When can a Home Exceed the Limit?

The ZBA can grant a special permit if:

1. There are no reasonable alternatives
2. There is no substantial detriment to the neighborhood, **and**
3. The relief doesn't compromise the intent and purpose of the bylaw

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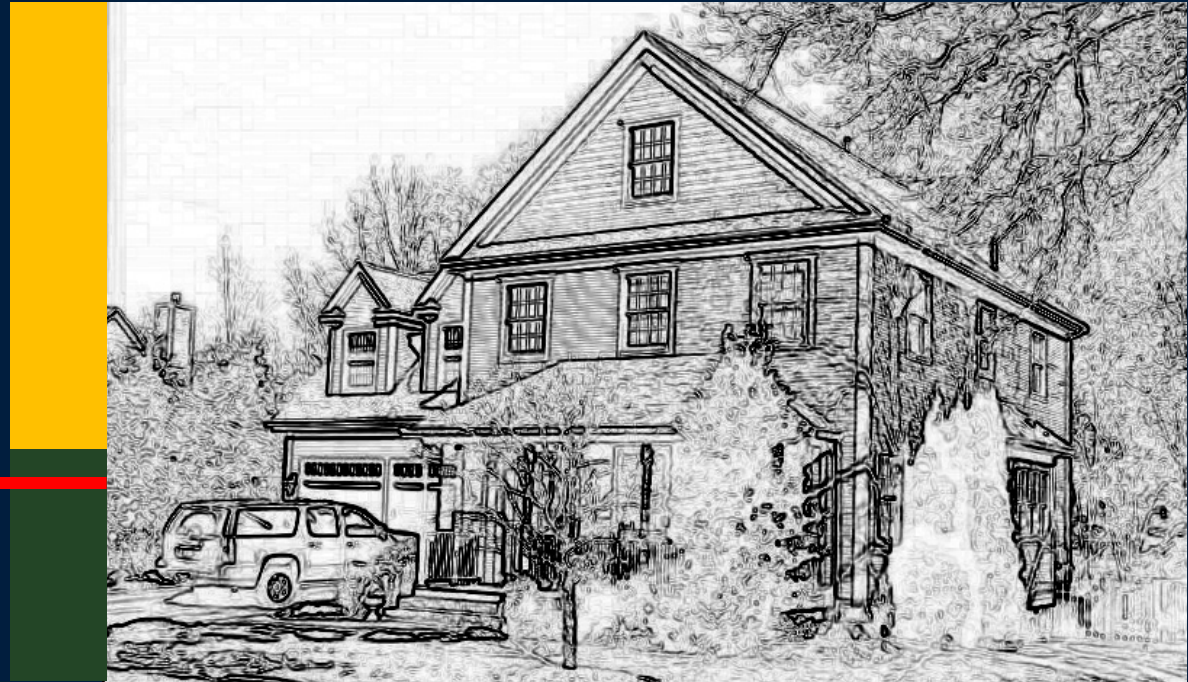
3,100 sq ft home / 12,200 sq ft lot [.34 Max FAR]



.25 FAR

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3,500 sq ft home / 12,200 sq ft lot [.34 Max FAR]



.29 FAR

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4,900 sq ft home / 11,300 sq ft lot [.35 Max FAR]

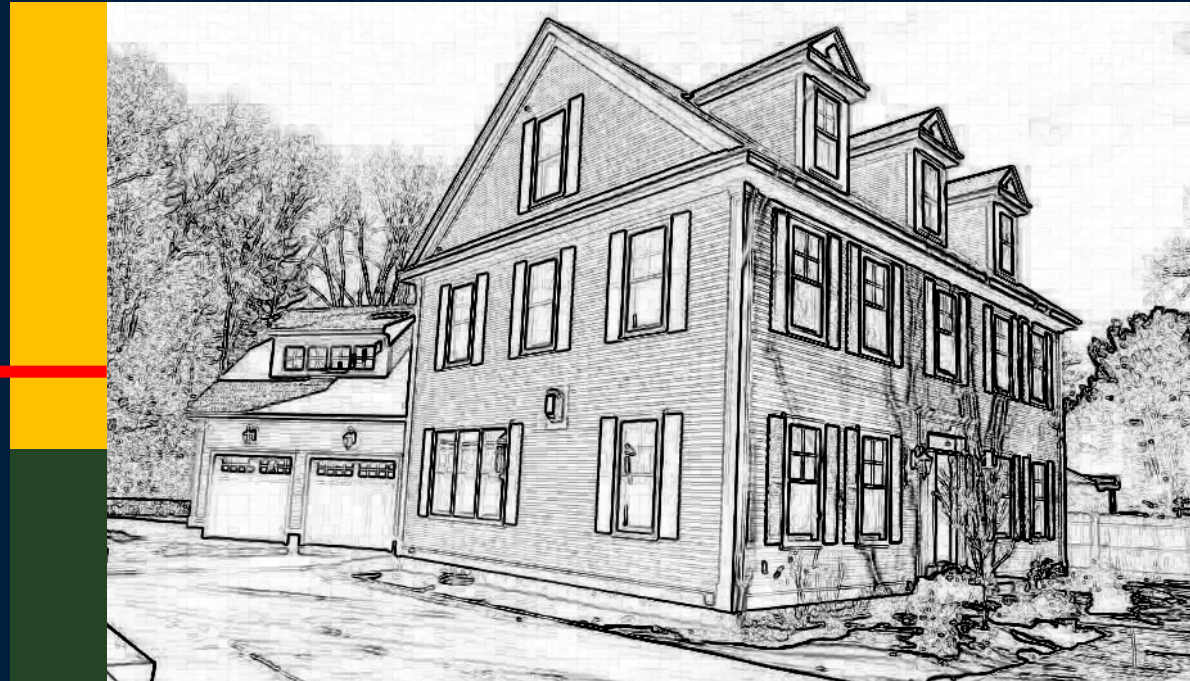
.43 FAR



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5,400 sq ft home / 11,800 sq ft lot [.34 Max FAR]

.46 FAR



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6,200 sq ft home / 11,300 sq ft lot [.35 Max FAR]

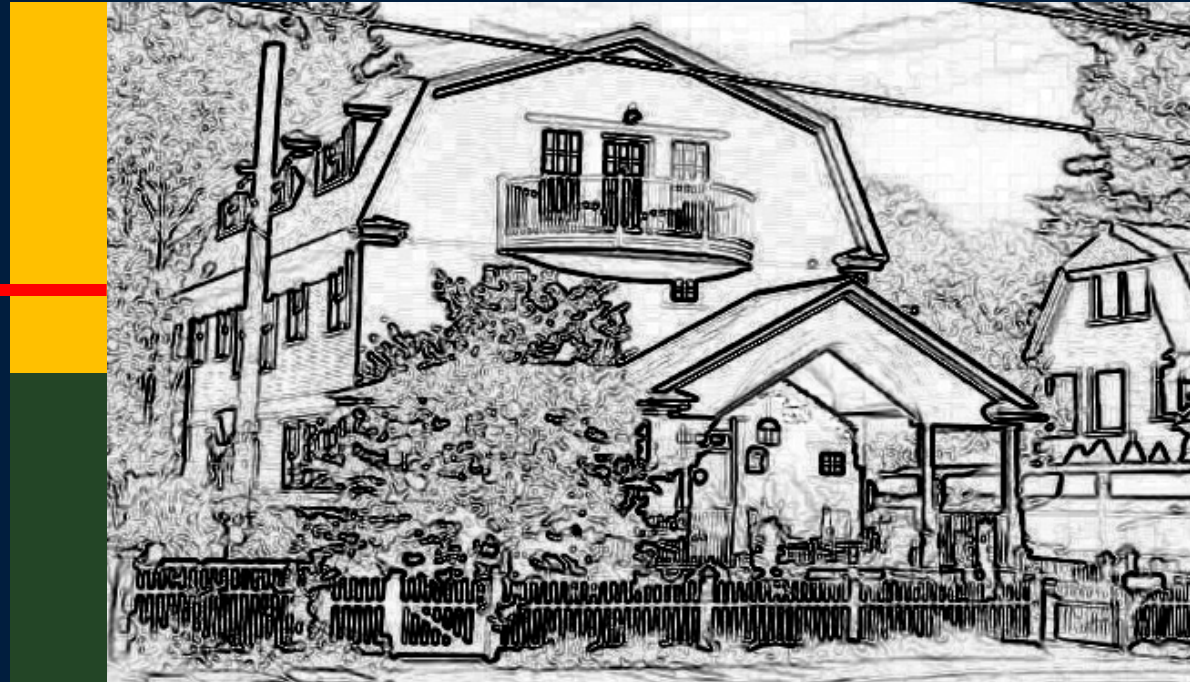
.55 FAR



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3,100 sq ft home / 5,400 sq ft lot [.46 Max FAR]

.57 FAR



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What About Additions?

**93%** of homes  
on conforming  
lots could grow  
at least  
**1000 sq ft**  
without hitting  
the limit



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Will FAR regulations impact property values?

South Meadow Neighborhood  
Property Sales Study (2004-2010)

On average, for sales of equivalent small homes:

- Builders paid **12%** above assessed value
- Individual buyers paid **16%** above assessed value



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