



# WMAN Zoning Remapping Task Force

June 1, 2026

Chloe Mohr, AICP



# Agenda

- What is Zoning?
- Neighbor input
  - general
  - geographically specific
- What did this task force do?
- Proposals: Review and Discuss



Zoning started in early 1900's at a time when American cities were growing rapidly as a result of industrial manufacturing.

Zoning was upheld by US Supreme court in 1926 and the court has never heard a case to overturn that decision.



# Purposes of Zoning

- Promote Protect, and Facilitate “Public Health, Safety, Morals & the General Welfare”
- Implement the Comprehensive Plan
- Regulate how land can be used
- Regulate the density and intensity of development
- Protect environmentally sensitive features

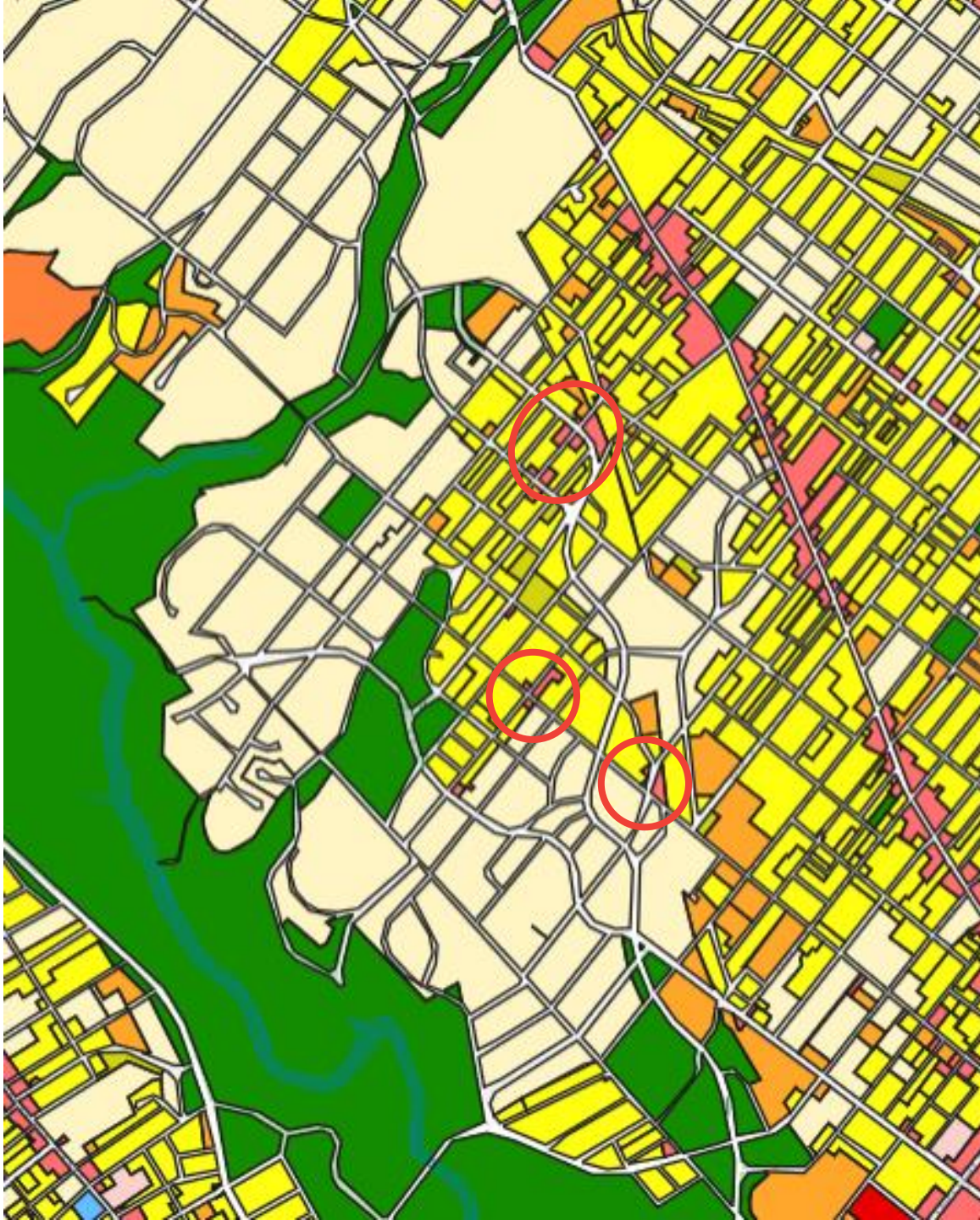
## What zoning is not:

- A tool to prevent development or eliminate certain uses from the city
- A tool to regulate the interior of buildings

# Zoning in Pennsylvania

- Zoning powers granted to municipalities by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Two parts: text and map
- Zoning changes do not impact anything already proposed, even if it hasn't been built.
- “Variances” from Zoning Code may only be granted by the Zoning Hearing Board.
- All reasonable uses must be accommodated somewhere.

# Existing Zoning

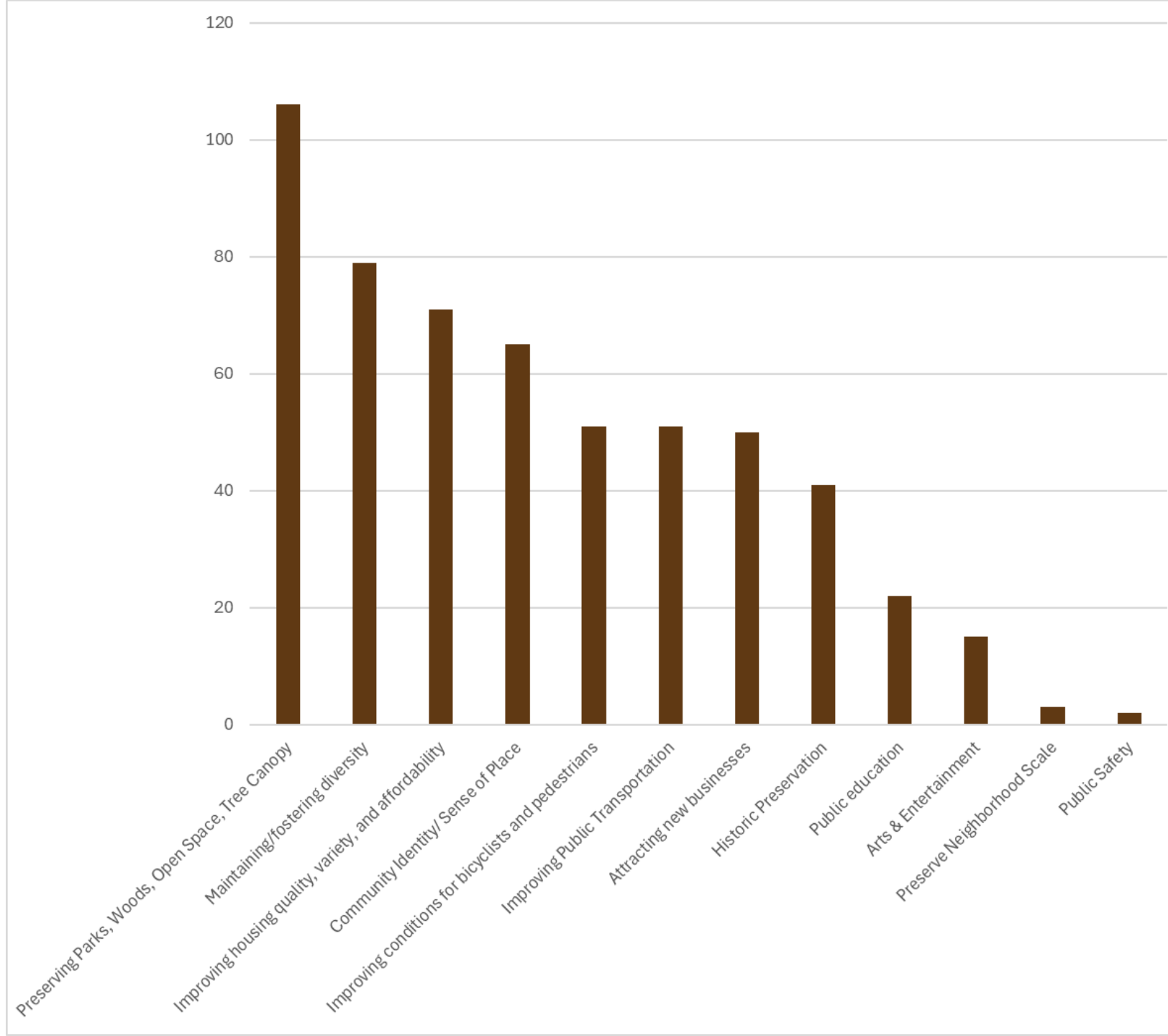


CA1	RM1	SPAIR
CA2	RM2	SPENT
CMX1	RM3	SPINS
CMX2	RM4	SPPOA
CMX2.5	RMX1	SPPOP
CMX3	RMX2	SPCIV
CMX4	RMX3	RTA2
CMX5	RSA1	RSA6
I1	RSA2	SPSTA
I2	RSA3	Other
I3	RSA4	
ICMX	RSA5	
IP	RSD1	
IRMX	RSD2	
	RSD3	
	RTA1	

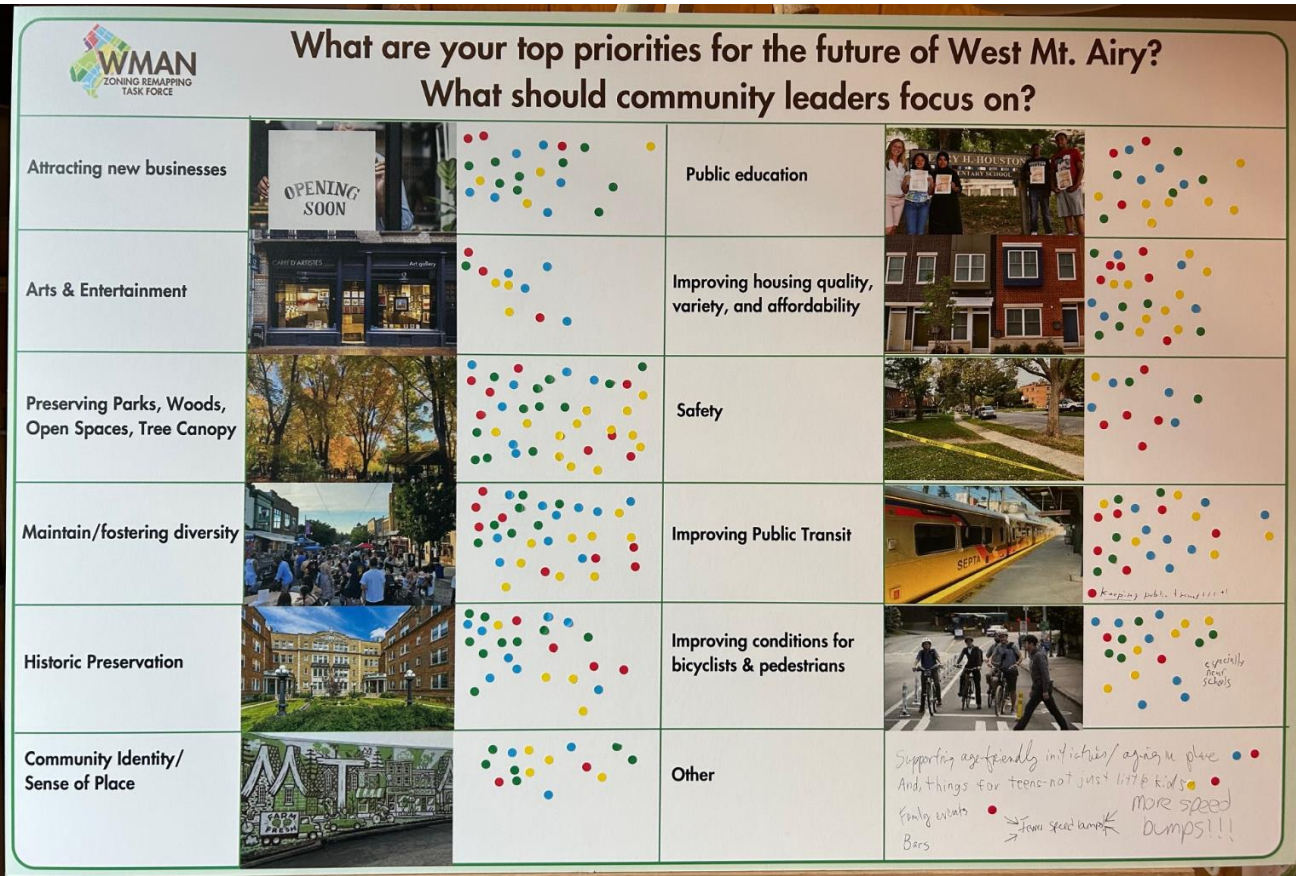


- 1) Parks, woods, trees 106
- 2) Diversity 79
- 3) Housing quality, variety, affordability 71
- 4) Community 65
- 5) bike/pedestrian 51
- 6) Transit 51
- 7) New businesses 50
- 8) Historic preservation 41
- 9) Public education 22
- 10) Arts & entertainment 15
- 11) Preserve neighborhood scale (write in)

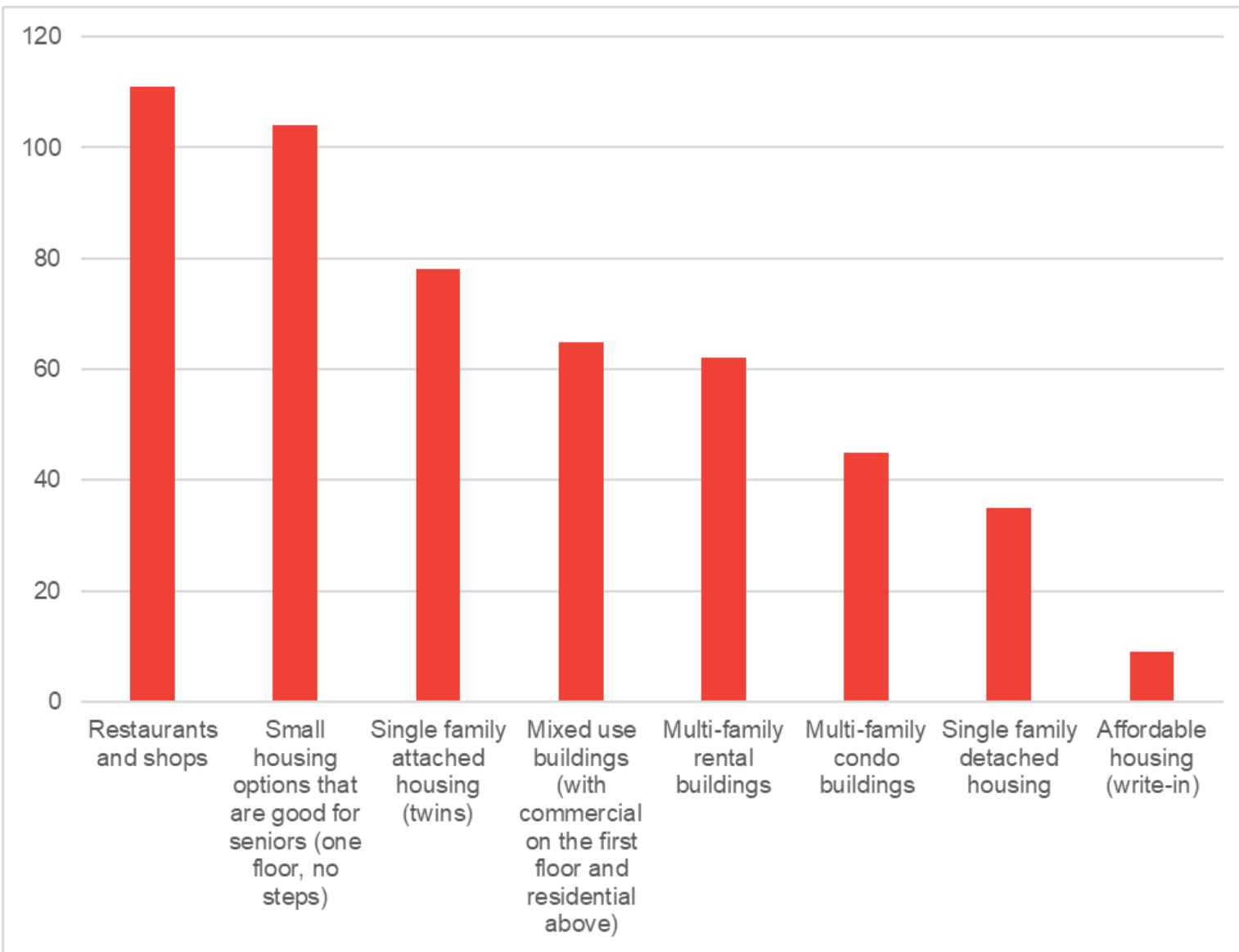
What are the top three priorities you would like to see WMAN focus on in terms of the future of the community? (n=178)



# What are your top priorities for the future of West Mt. Airy? What should community leaders focus on?



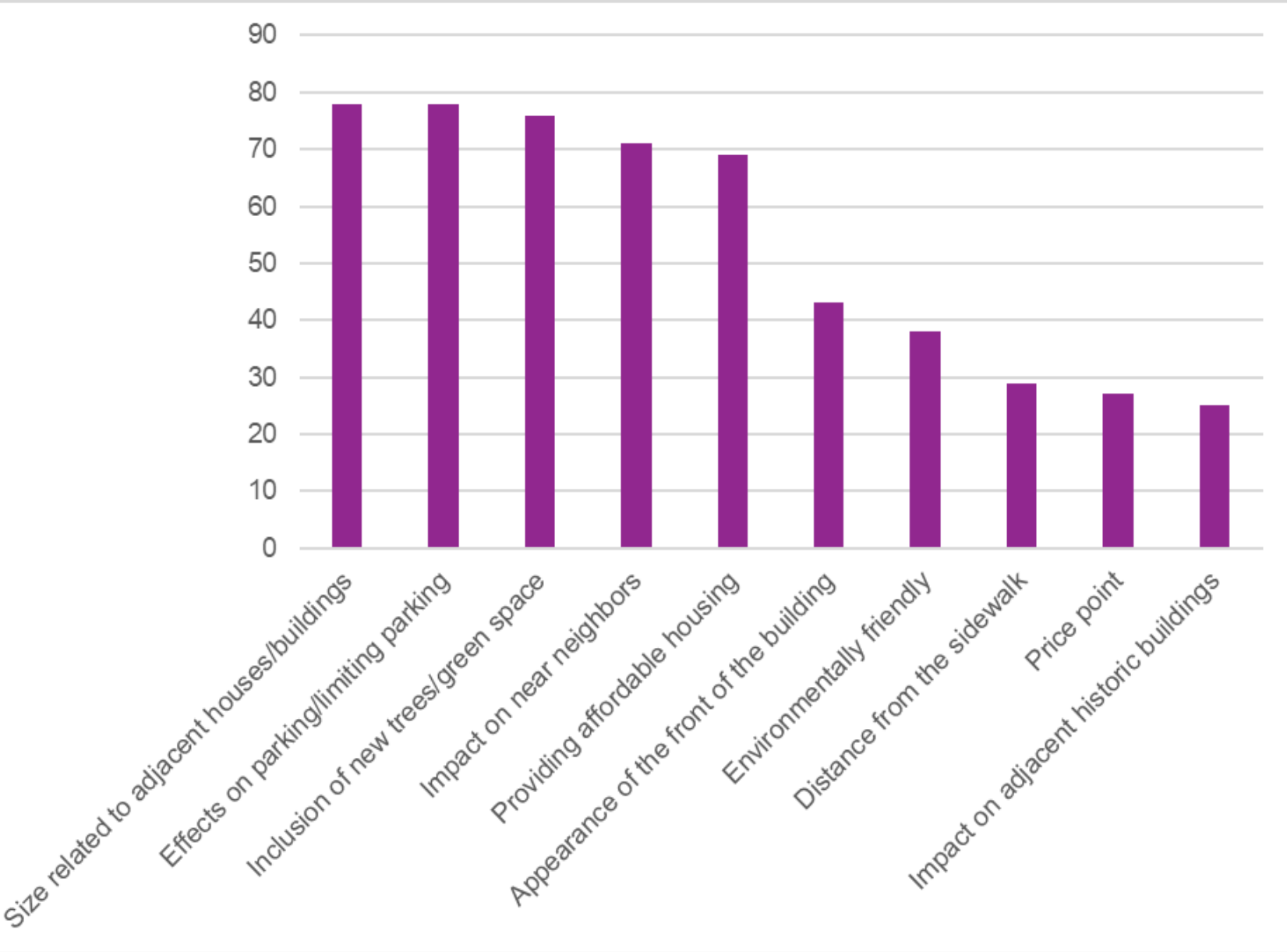
- Preserving Parks, woods, open spaces and tree canopy 41
- Maintain/fostering diversity 33
- Improving housing quality, variety, affordability 26
- Improving public transit 26
- Historic preservation 25
- Attracting New Businesses 22
- Improving conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians 21
- Public education 19
- Community identity/sense of place 15
- Safety 12
- Arts and Entertainment 11
- Other:
  - Supporting age-friendly initiatives/aging-in-place



Restaurants and shops	111
Small housing options that are good for seniors (one floor, no steps)	104
Single family attached housing (twins)	78
Mixed use buildings (with commercial on the first floor and residential above)	65
Multi-family rental buildings	62
Multi-family condo buildings	45
Single family detached housing	35
Affordable housing (write-in)	9

What would you like to see more of in Mt. Airy? (n=178)





Size related to adjacent houses/buildings	78
Effects on parking/ limiting parking	78
Inclusion of new trees/ green space	76
Impact on near neighbors	71
Providing affordable housing	69
Appearance of the front of the building	43
Environmentally friendly	38
Distance from the sidewalk	29
Price point	27
Impact on adjacent historic buildings	25

**What matters most to you as it relates to new buildings being built across West Mt Airy?  
(choose up to 3, n=182)**

# Thinking specifically about new development in West Mt. Airy, what would you most like to see?

**WMAN**  
ZONING REMAPPING  
TASK FORCE

Thinking specifically about new development in West Mt. Airy, what would you most like to see? (choose up to 3)

Appearance of the front of the building is similar to surrounding buildings			Building is set back from neighboring buildings		
Height is similar to surrounding buildings			Height is taller than surrounding buildings		
New vehicle parking			New bicycle parking		
Inclusion of new trees/green space			Building includes new retail or restaurant space		
Inclusion of public plazas			Pedestrian-friendly features like wide sidewalks and fewer driveways		
Building is close to the sidewalk			Building is not close to the sidewalk		
Building is energy efficient and/or has renewable energy (like solar panels)			Building includes affordable housing		
Preservation and reuse of existing buildings			Other: <i>Restrictions on Fencing re Forest - heights/opacity/signatures at intersections</i>		

Inclusion of new trees/green space

35

Preservation and reuse of existing buildings

33

Buildings include affordable housing

20

Pedestrian-friendly features like wide sidewalks and fewer driveways

19

Inclusion of public plazas

15

Building includes new retail or restaurant space

13

Appearance of the front of the building is similar to surrounding buildings

13

Building is energy efficient and/or has renewable energy

10

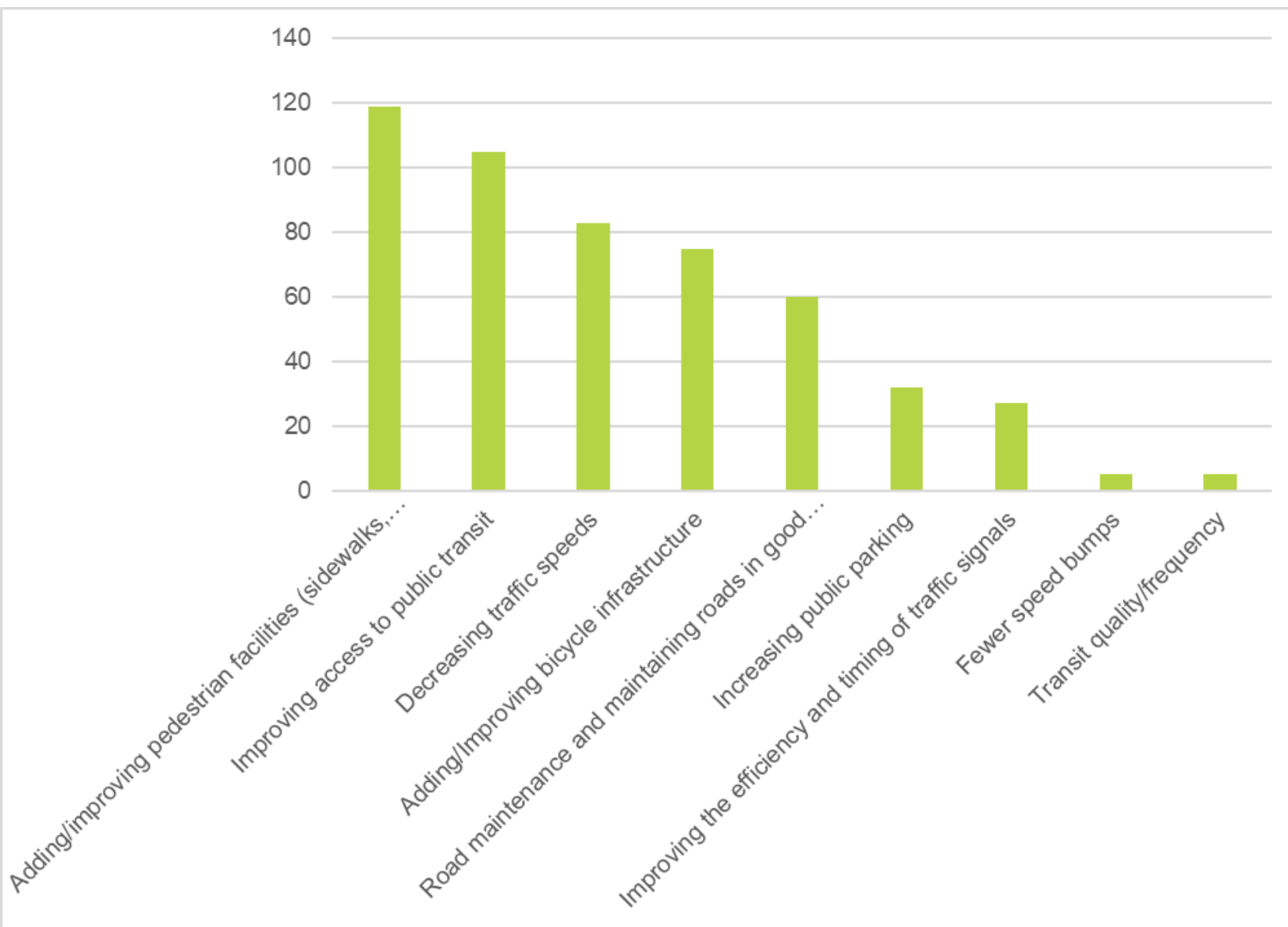
Height is similar to surrounding buildings

14

Height is taller than surrounding buildings

3

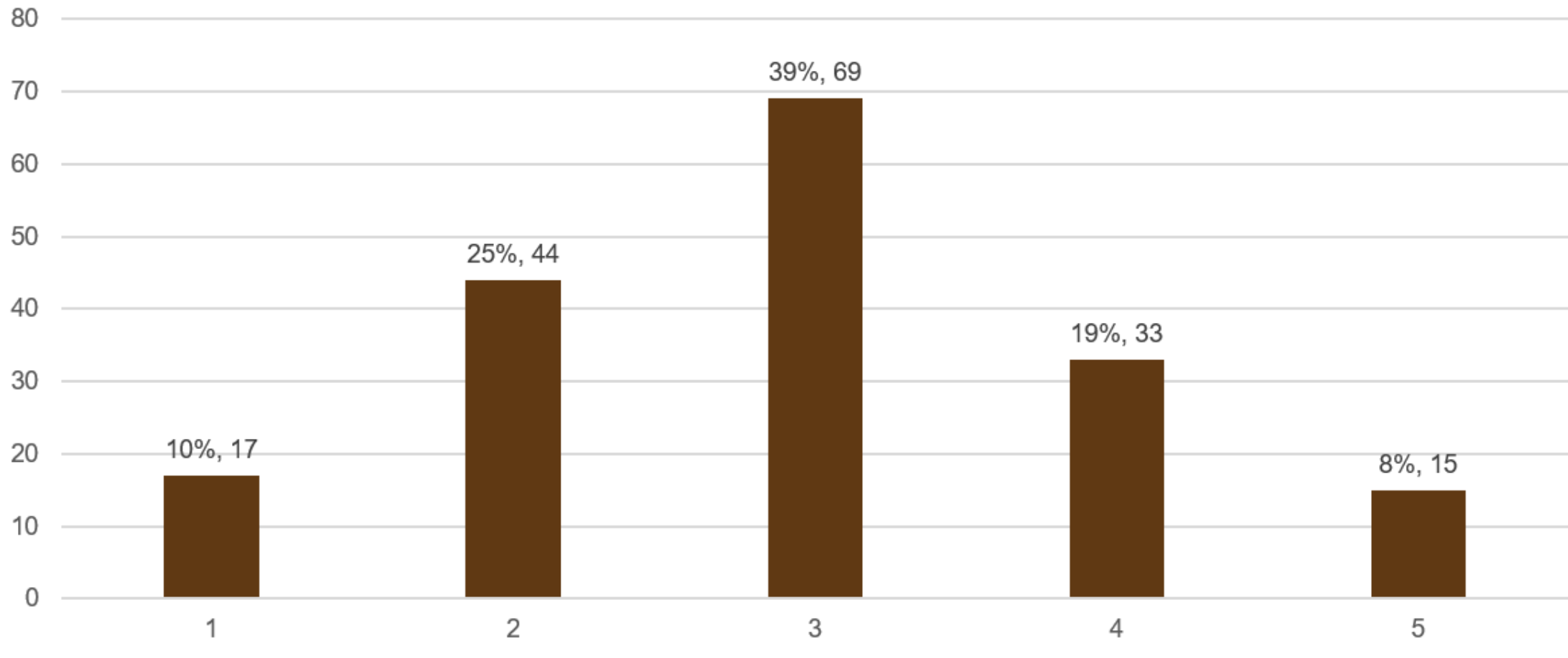
- mixed-height buildings are environmentally sustainable
- historical precedent already exists: examples exist in our neighborhood
- Greater population density will serve diverse social needs (library, Post Office, retail, etc.)
- will drive up demand for public transportation, retail services



- 1) Pedestrian Facilities  
119
- 2) Public Transit  
105
- 3) Traffic speeds  
83
- 4) Bicycle infrastructure  
75
- 5) Road maintenance  
60
- 6) More parking  
32
- 7) Traffic signals  
27
- 8) Fewer speed bumps (write in) 5

What do you see as priorities for transportation in West Mt Airy? (Choose up to 3.) (n=182)

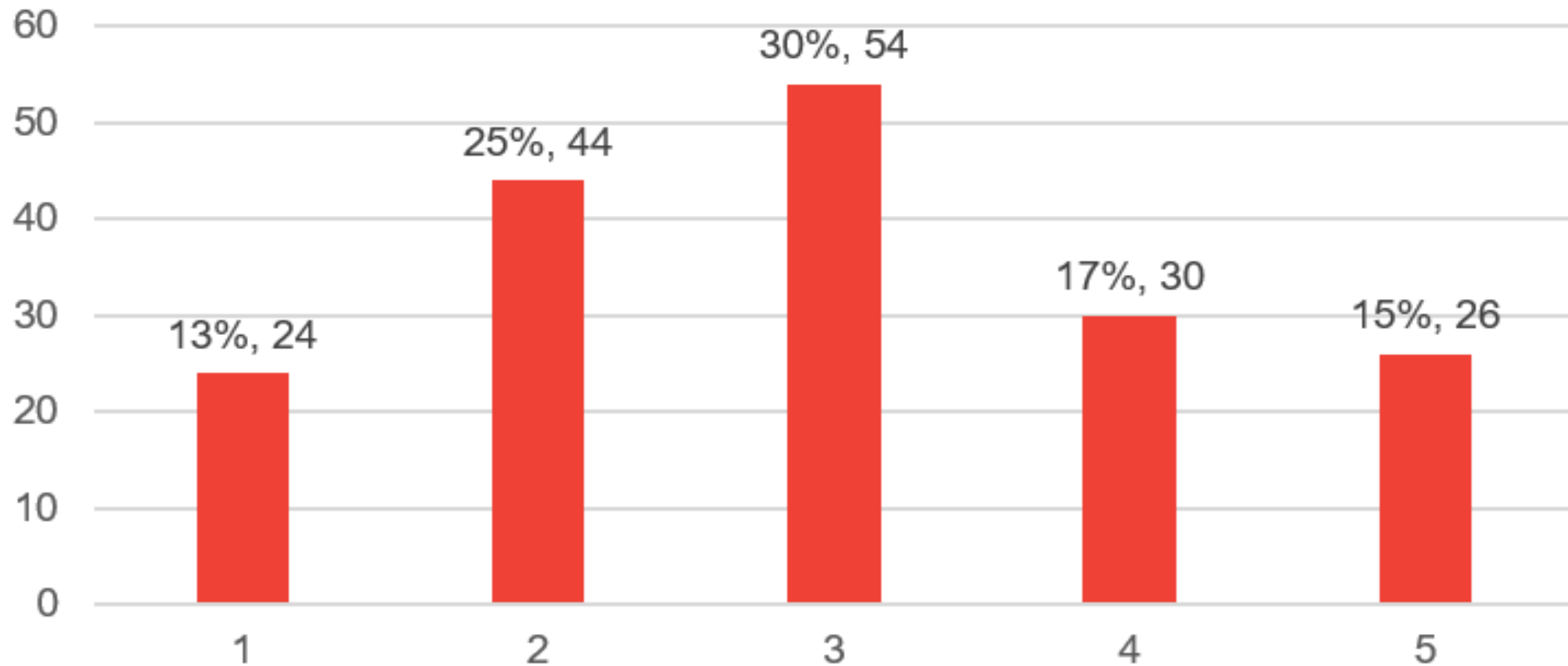
Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the statement: **There are a good variety of housing options offered for sale/lease in West Mt Airy.** (n=178)



1=strongly disagree

5=strongly agree

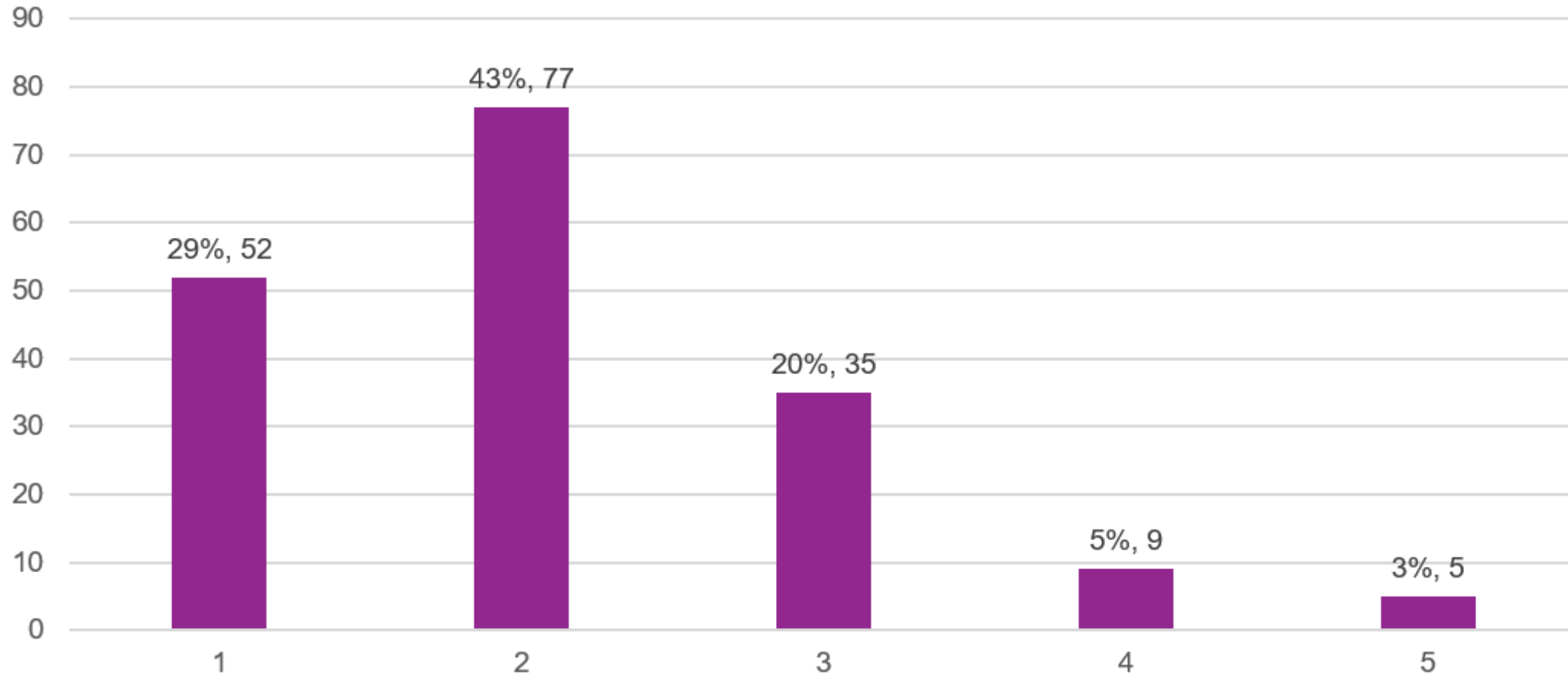
Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the statement: **There are enough apartments in West Mt Airy.** (n=178)



1=strongly disagree

5=strongly agree

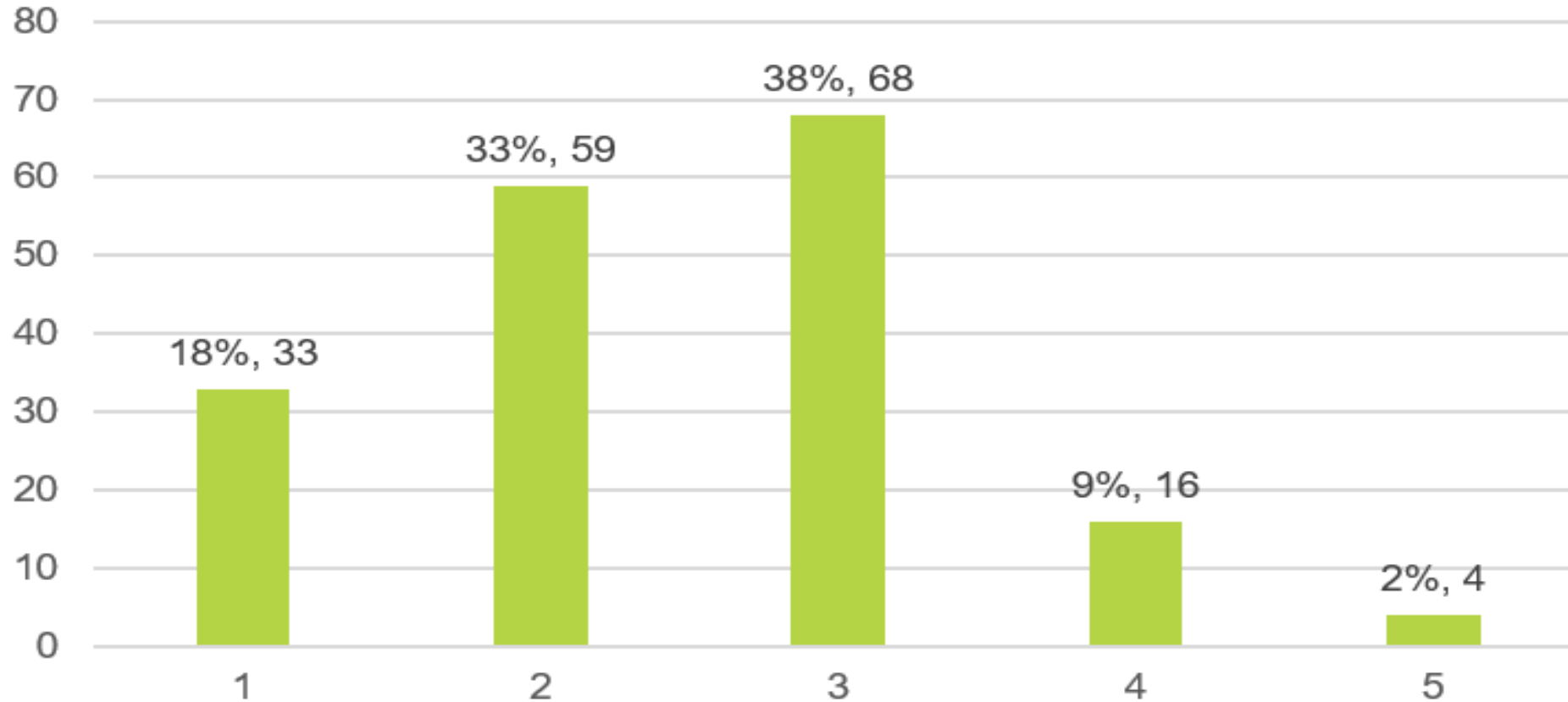
Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the statement: **There are enough low/moderate income housing options in West Mt Airy.** (n=178)



1=strongly disagree

5=strongly agree

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the statement: **Housing in West Mt Airy is generally affordable for the average person/family.** (n=180)



1=strongly disagree

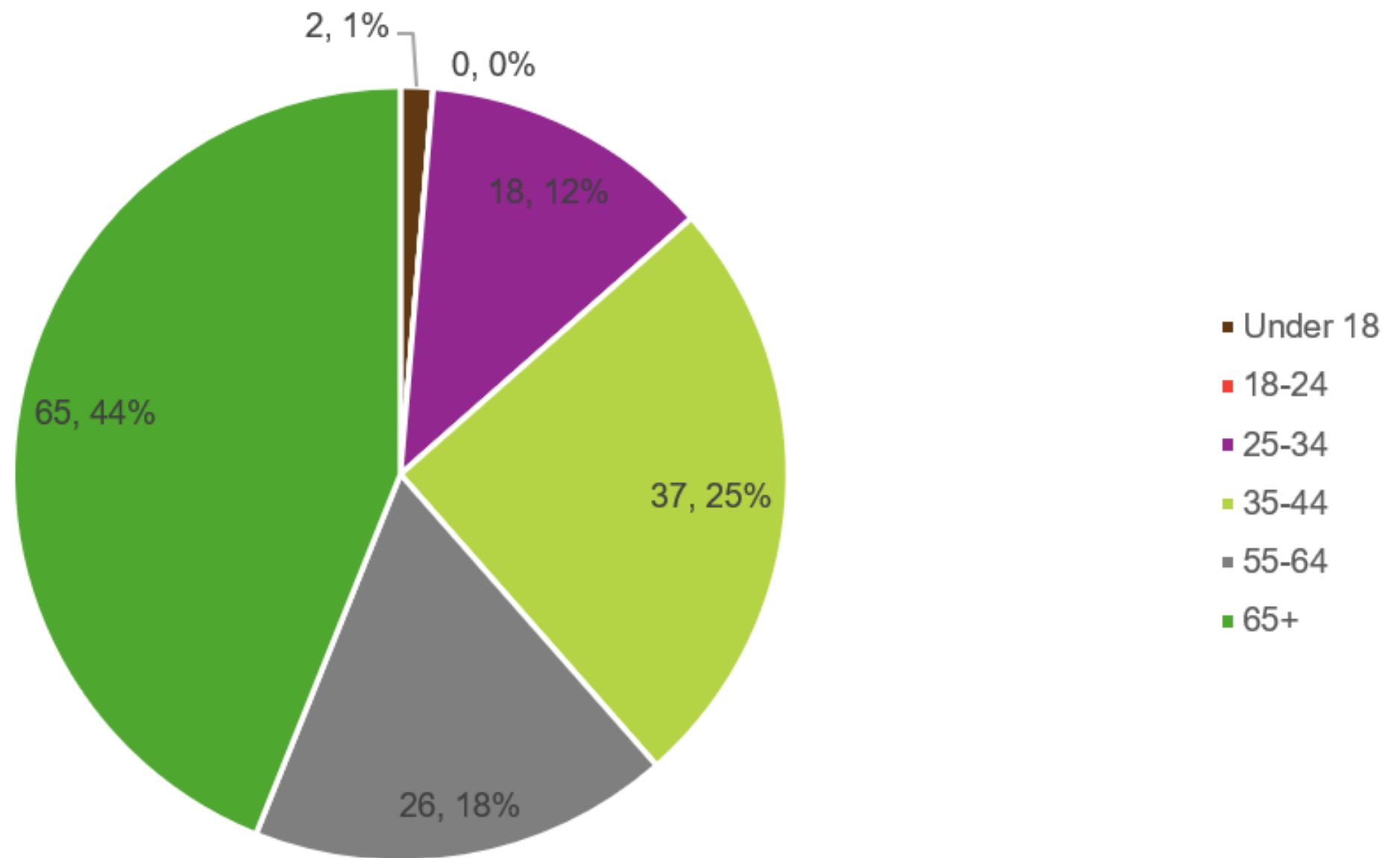
5=strongly agree

# Who took the survey?

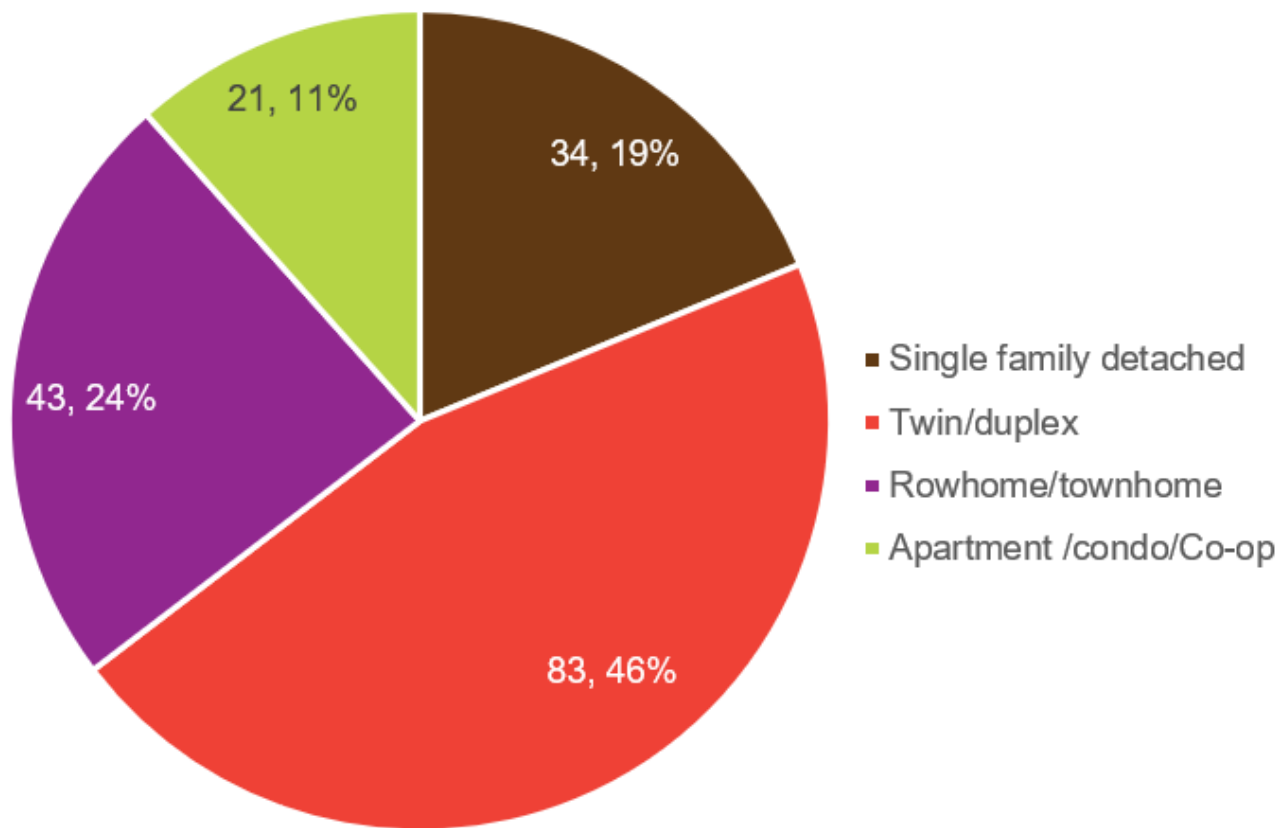
**(We don't have demographic information on the people who came to the open house.)**

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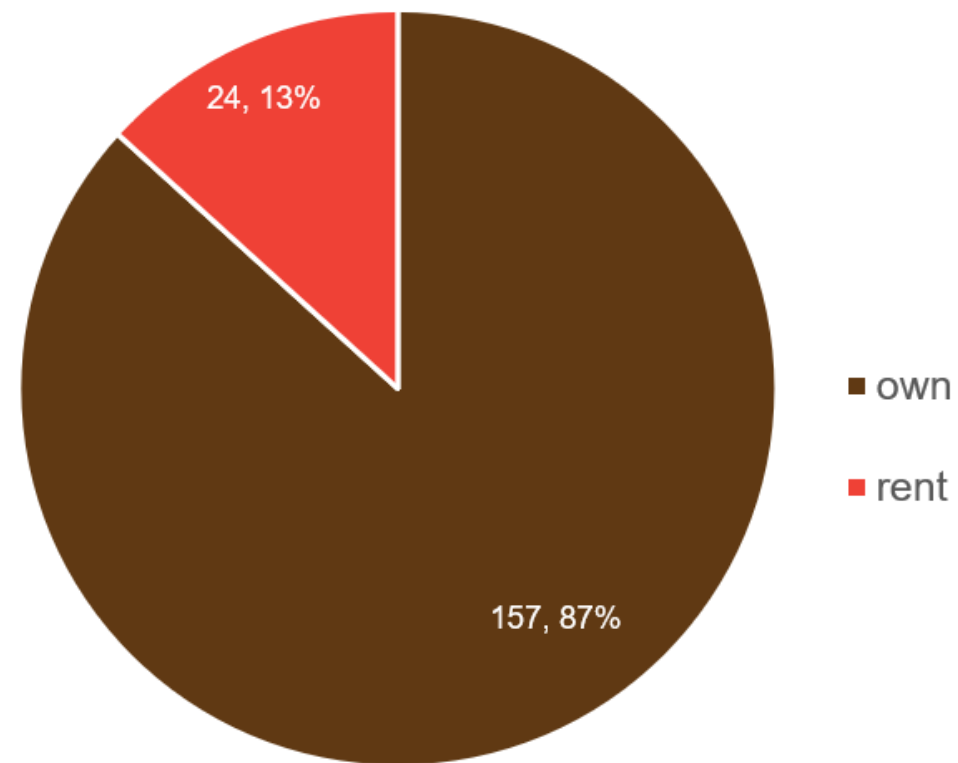
# Please select your age range (n=148)

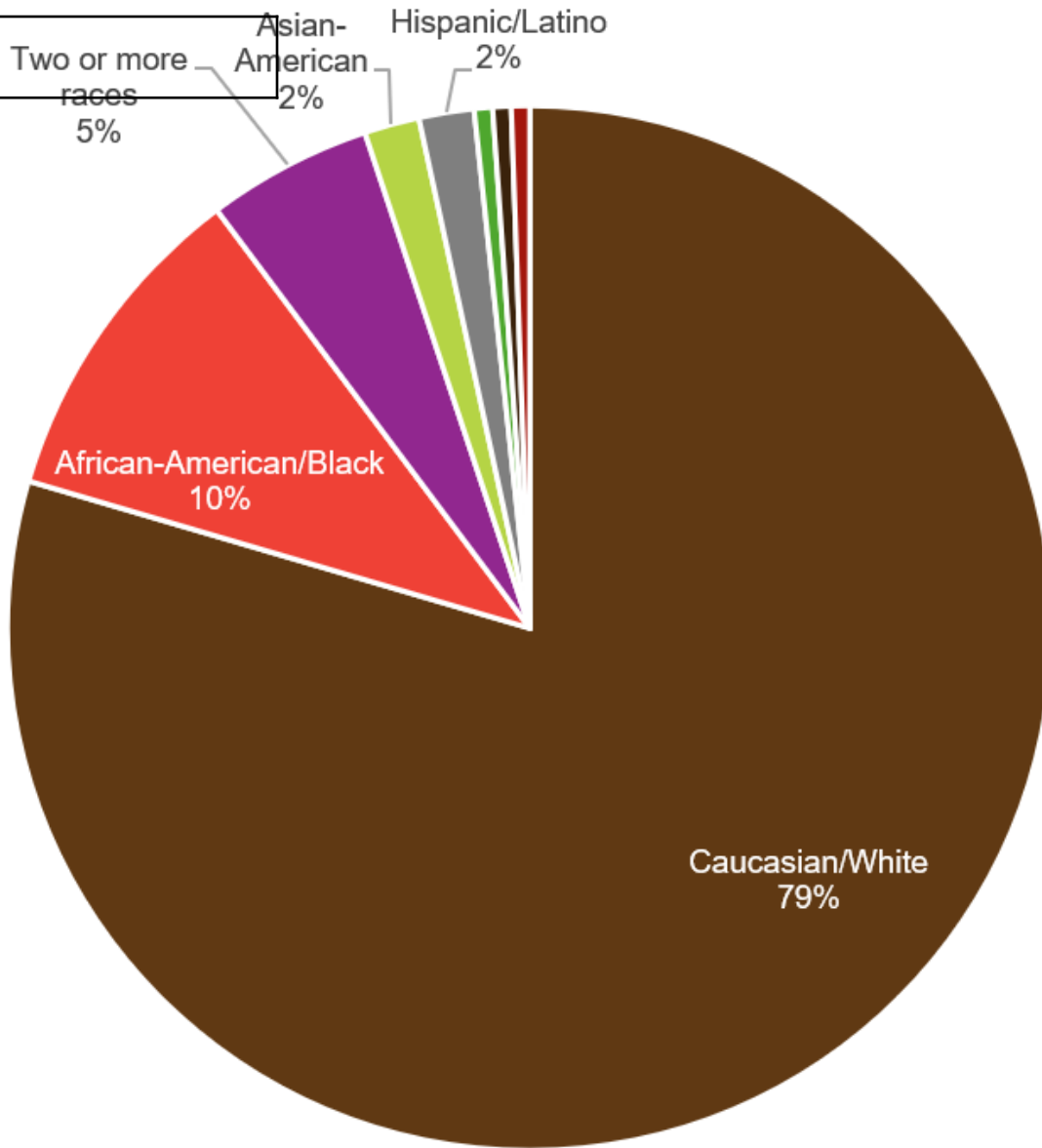


What type of housing do you live in? (n=181)



Do you rent or own your residence? (n=181)

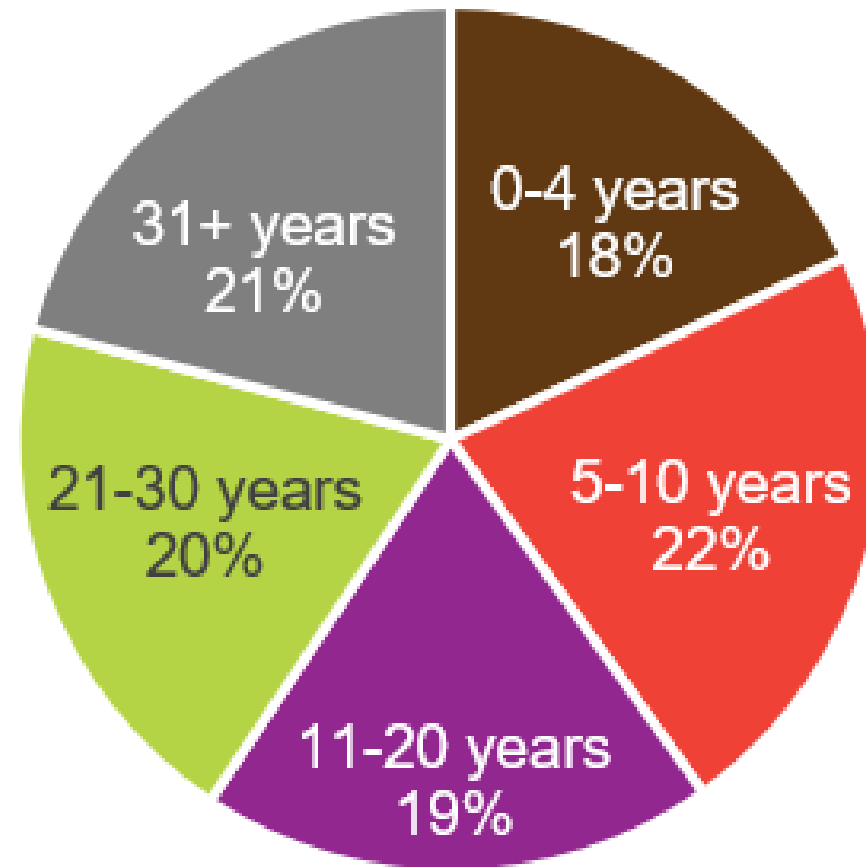




Caucasian/White	140
African-American/Black	18
Two or more races	9
Asian-American	3
Hispanic/Latino	3
Semitic	1
Middle Eastern	1
Arab	1

**What is your race and/or ethnicity? Check all that apply. (n=173)**

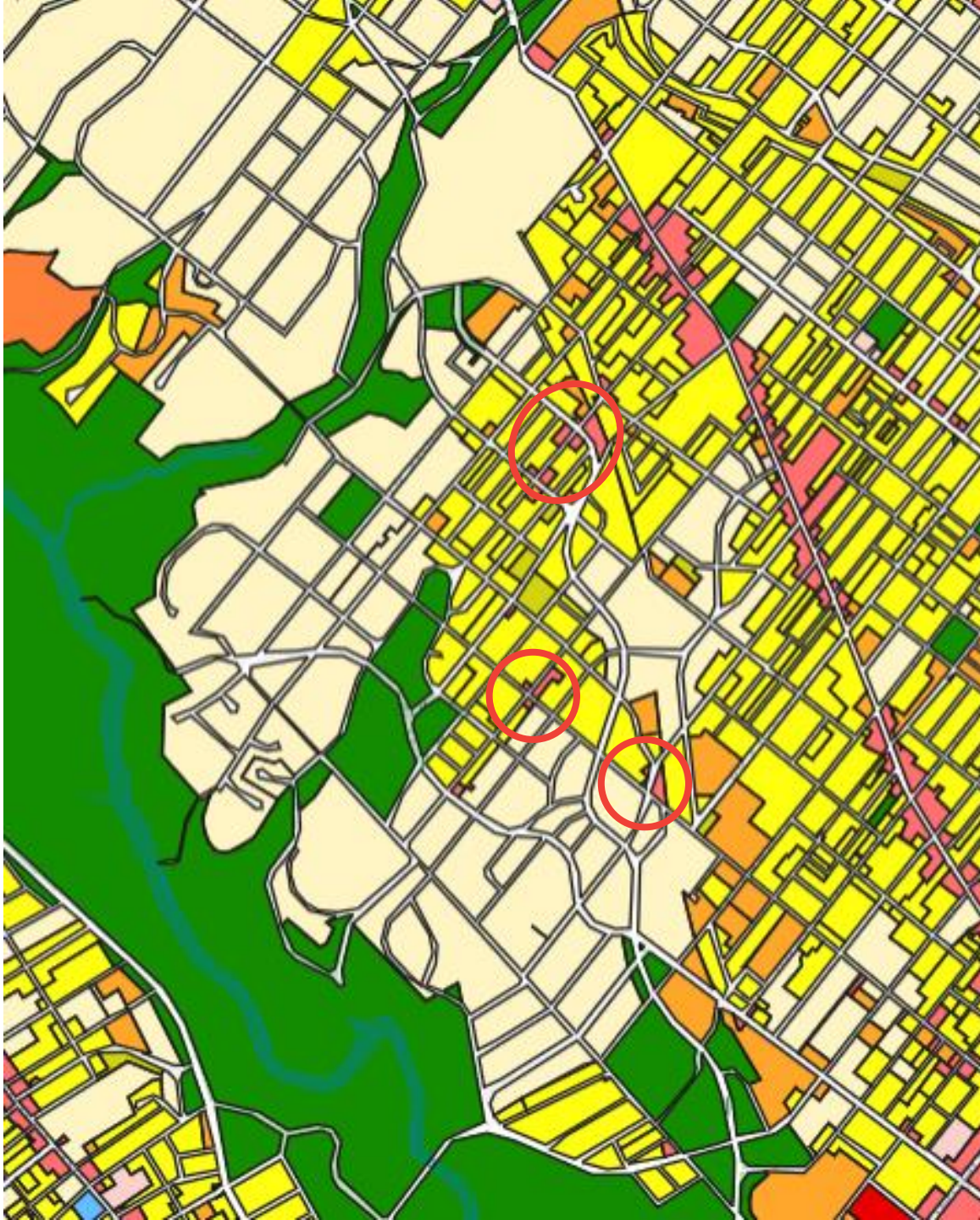
# How long have you been a community member in Mt. Airy? n=182



# Geographic Focus Areas

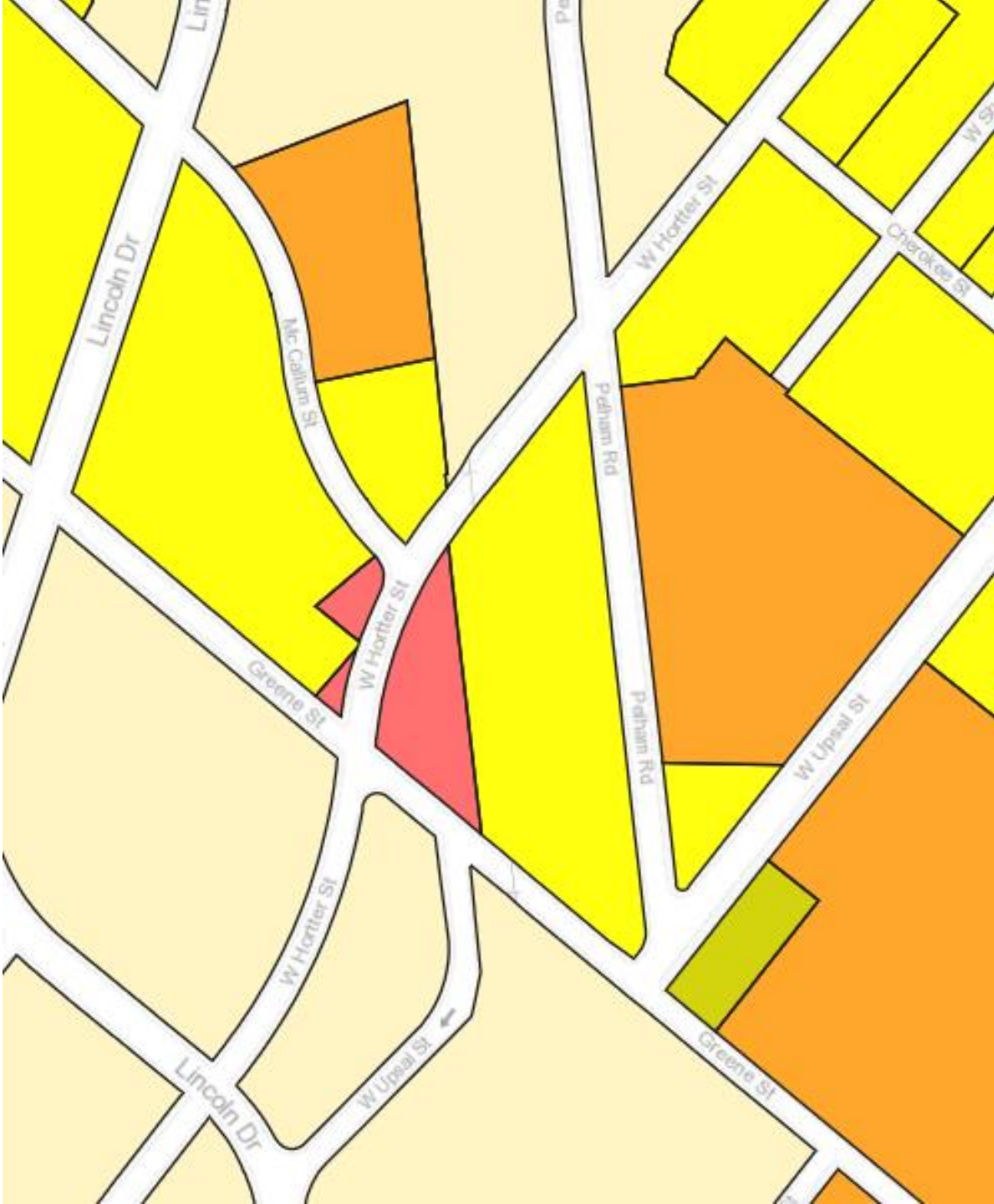
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IRMX	RSD2	
	RSD3	
	RTA1	

# Greene & Hortter



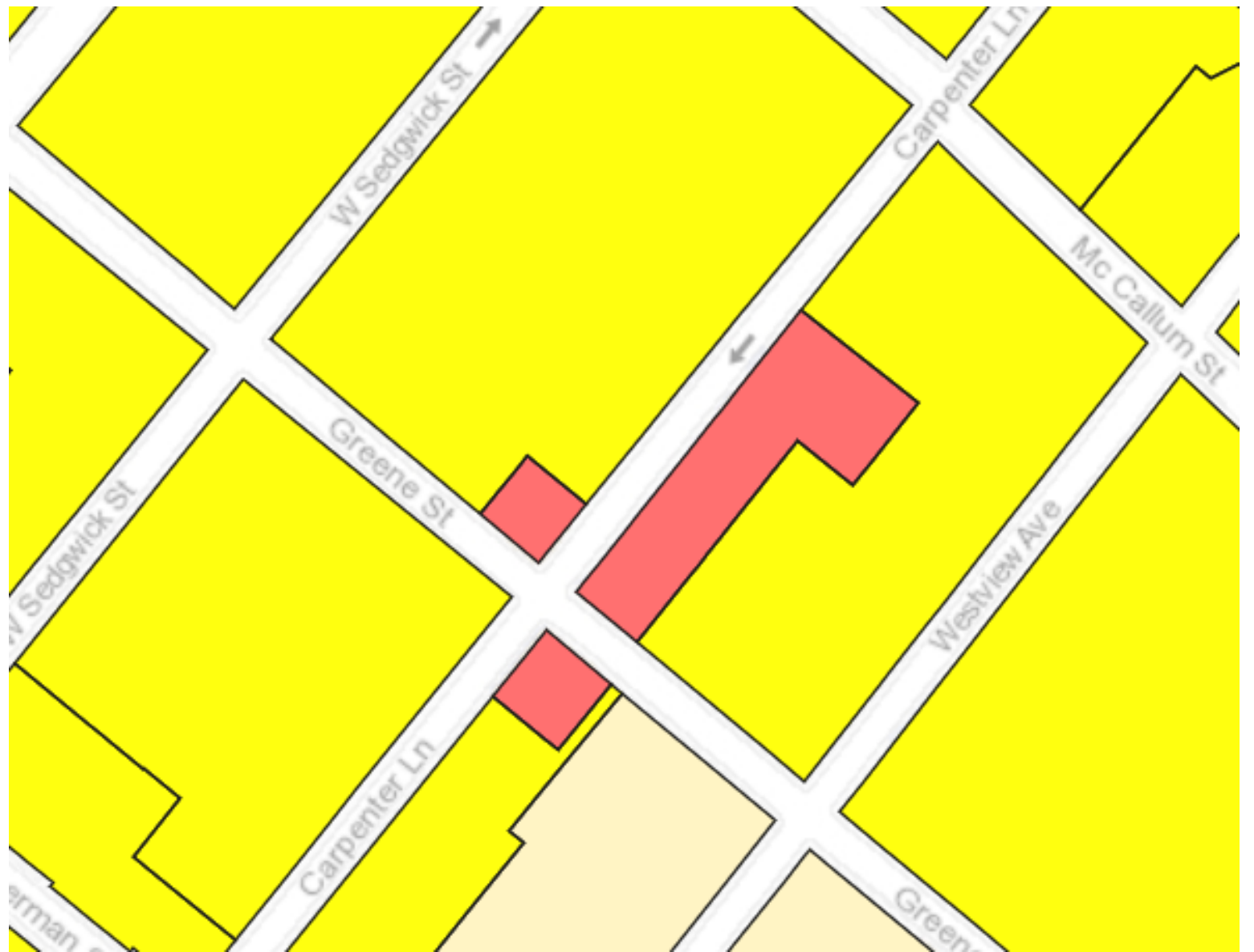












## **Greene & Carpenter (Mt. Airy Village)**







**What do you  
want to stay the  
same?**







# Mt. Pleasant















# Task Force

# Our Zoning Dreams



- Bicycling
  - Encouraging bicycling
  - Bicycling safety
- Walking
  - Encouraging pedestrian activity
  - Pedestrian safety
- Private car usage
  - Encourage car usage - parking
  - Safety
- Transit
  - transit oriented development
  - Encouraging transit use
- Historic Preservation
  - Rehab properties
- Promote economic and racial diversity, welcoming people of different identities
- Promote commerce
  - small businesses
  - restaurants
- Support institutions
  - Schools
  - Places of worship
- Activate the street
  - people walking

# Our Zoning Dreams



- Environmental sustainability
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
  - Reduce pollution
  - Reduce the use of resources
- Use compatibility
  - environmental safety
  - Cohesive places
  - Pockets of uses
- Flexibility/adaptation
- Occupied spaces
  - Activates vacant properties
  - eliminate blight
- Housing
  - more affordable housing,
  - more access to housing for diverse populations,
  - more variety
- Sympathetic building form
- Beautiful public spaces
- Green space
  - Protect existing
  - Create more/new
- Looks to the future
- Long range master planning



# Geographic Focus Areas

## 1) Understand

What makes this place great/special?

What should stay the same?

What should change?

## 2) Propose

What are the most important “zoning dreams” (goals that we might realize, at least partially, through zoning) for this area?



# Proposals



# Sets of Proposals

## Site and City Related

1. Landscaping and street trees
2. Public spaces
3. Sidewalk widths

## Building Related

4. Building height
5. Upper story setbacks
6. Facade articulation
7. Side and rear setbacks
8. First floor commercial height

## Modify Existing Zoning

9. CVS/goodwill upzoning
10. Greene/Horter upzoning
11. Mt. Airy Village downzoning

Site and city related

# 1. Landscaping and Street Trees



Street Trees

Protect Heritage Trees

Yard Trees - increase to  
1 tree every 500 SF

No exceptions for  
smaller lots

Landscape buffers  
between uses

## 2. Public Spaces

Require public plazas with new developments on large lots

Include seating, landscaping and lighting

Plaza should remain open and not be used for parking or loading.



Site and city related



### 3. Sidewalk Widths

Provide sidewalks at least 8 feet wide.

Increase building setbacks to improve pedestrian comfort.

Encourage 12-foot sidewalks to accommodate seating, café use, displays, and public gathering spaces.

#### Sidewalk Zones

Sidewalks are not a singular space, but are comprised of distinct usage zones. Sidewalks typically are located in the right-of-way that extends from the curbline to the property line behind it. They can be broken up into three primary zones performing

unique functions in the overall operation of the street, and interface with adjacent private property uses. Although boundaries between zones may blur and blend, the overall function of each zone generally remains consistent.

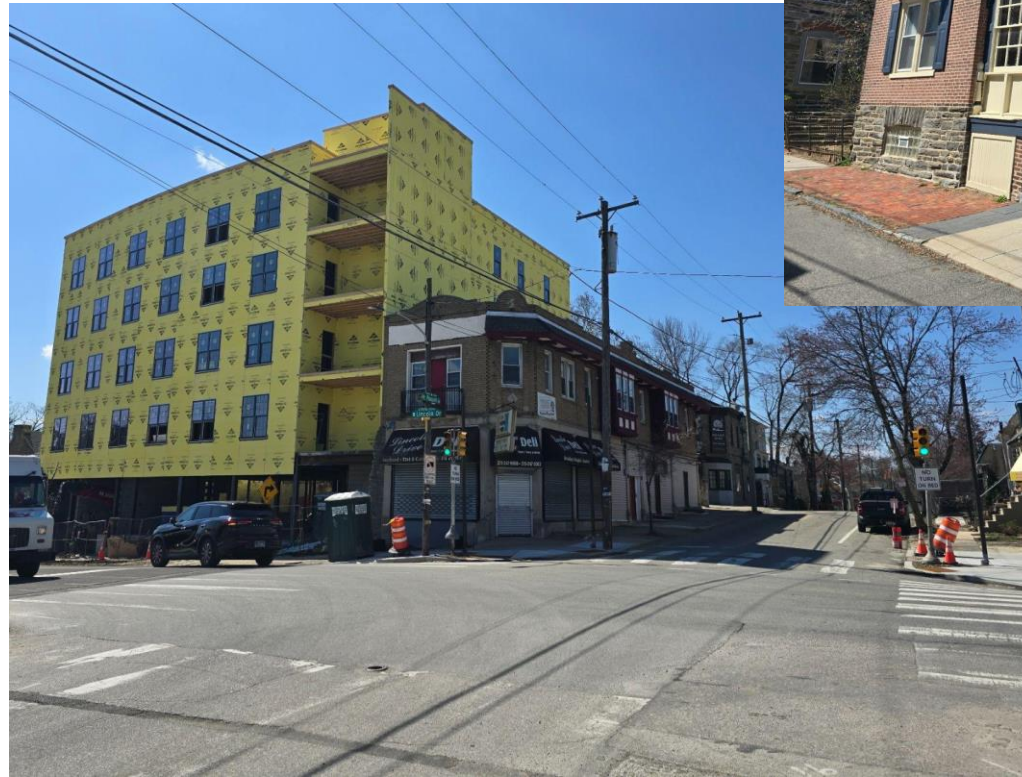


## 4. Building Height

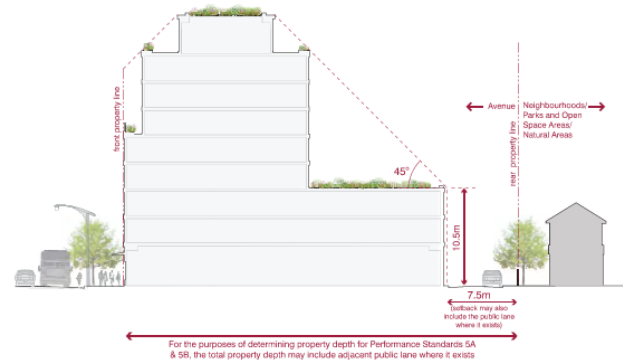
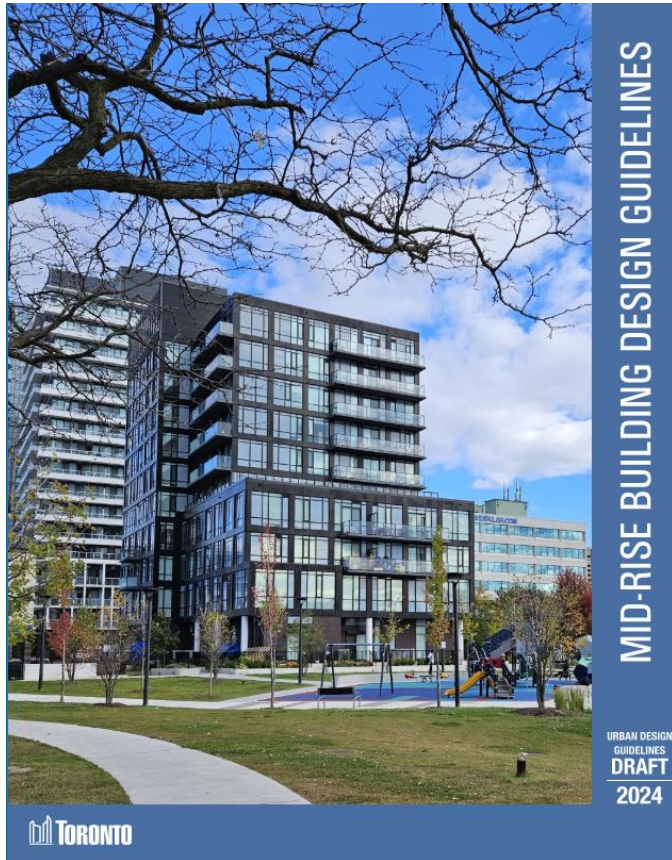
CMX-2 allows 38 feet, or 45 feet with bonuses

The intention was 3 floors, or 4 with bonuses

Developers try to build 4 or 5 stories instead



## 5. Upper Story Stepbacks



Illustrating the alternative transition for shallow properties abutting Neighbourhoods, Parks and Open Space Areas, and Natural Areas (30 metre R.O.W.).



Stepbacks on upper floors allow taller buildings to better fit into their surroundings.

Require front facade stepbacks above the third story.

Consider side stepbacks above the third story if close to other buildings

## 6. Facade Articulation

Large buildings should have breaks to make them interesting.

Vertical and horizontal articulation required on all sides visible from streets



Building-related



Building-related

## 7. Side and Rear Setbacks



Side setbacks allow landscaping, light, air, and windows while reducing impacts on neighboring properties.

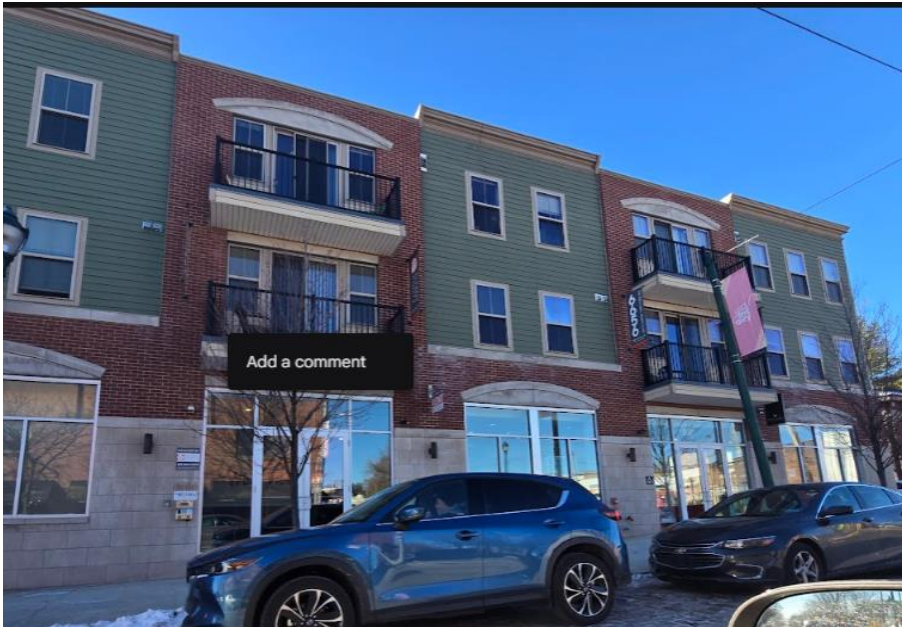
Require greater setbacks for taller buildings.

Require greater setbacks from historic buildings

## 8. Ground Floor Commercial Ceiling Height

Commercial uses need higher ceilings

Developers have an incentive to build smaller floors to fit more in the height permitted



Modify existing zoning

## 9. CVS & Goodwill at Lincoln Drive & Mt. Pleasant

Up



bounded by train tracks and  
busy roads

opportunity for more  
housing and commercial

upzone?

No development is actually  
proposed for this site!  
Rendering for illustrative  
purposes only.

Modify existing zoning

## 10. Shopping Center at Greene & Hortter



bounded by train tracks and roads  
across the street from a 9 story building  
opportunity for more housing and commercial  
upzone?

Modify existing zoning

## 11. Mt. Airy Village Downzoning



existing two-story buildings

mixed use is appropriate

height in CMX-2 might be too tall with bonuses

downzone?



# Discussion of Proposals

(next steps)