Welcome!

6:15  Welcome & Background
6:30  Introduction to Zoning Redesign
6:50  Stations Exploration
7:20  Next Steps
What is zoning?

Zoning is a tool used by local governments to regulate what kinds of development can happen in which places. Zoning was first introduced in the United States in the early 20th century as a way to separate incompatible uses within a city (e.g. heavy industrial and residential uses). A zoning code regulates appropriate uses for discrete zoning districts throughout a city.

Newton’s first zoning code was introduced in 1922. Since then, the code has grown from an original 16-page document to over 125 pages.
Newton’s zoning ordinance is difficult to understand and administer and sometimes does not result in the best outcomes for the community.

- Zoning Reform Group, 2011 Final Report
Zoning reform is of critical importance to the future of Newton. The Zoning Ordinance guides new construction, redevelopment, and land use patterns by creating regulations, standards, and review processes that shape the City over the long-term. The last comprehensive review and revision of Newton’s Zoning Ordinance took place in 1987. Much has changed in Newton and the Greater Boston metropolitan area since then. An updated ordinance could help the City better respond to changing market pressures, guide new development, renew Newton’s village centers, and protect the City’s unique residential neighborhoods.

Newton Zoning Reform Group
December 30, 2011 Final Report
Newton Zoning Reform

Reform Process Phases

**PHASE 1**

Zoning Reform Group

- Zoning code analysis & reorganization

**PHASE 2**

Zoning Redesign

- Pattern book & comprehensive zoning code rewrite/redesign

**PHASE 3**

One-Year Review

- Analyze data and experience with new zoning ordinance
Newton Zoning Reform

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Newton Zoning Reform

Zoning Redesign: Anticipated Project Timeline

- Goal Setting & Community Analysis
  - Zoning Redesign Kick-Off Event & Courbanize Site Launch

- Pattern Book
  - Pattern Book Open House
  - Public Presentation

- Zoning Ordinance Development
  - Public Presentation

- Timeline:
  - Fall '16
  - Winter '16/17
  - Spring '17
  - Summer '17
  - Fall '17
The Zoning Redesign initiative aims to create a zoning code that is more flexible, predictable, and context-based in order to encourage development/redevelopment within Newton that is in keeping with the city’s celebrated character while directing growth and economic development to the most appropriate areas.
Traditional Zoning

Traditional or “Euclidian” zoning is designed around the principle of separation of land uses and guidelines designed to facilitate the approval process for proposed developments that conform to the code.

Context-based Zoning

Context-based zoning is an evolution in thinking when it comes to zoning policy. In place of an ordinance that attempts to regulate simply by land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, etc.), context-based zoning aims to understand, respect, and build off of the design and character of existing neighborhoods to help steer new development/redevelopment efforts.
Newton Zoning Reform
Principles for a New Ordinance

• Be easy to use, administer, & enforce
• Be well-organized, indexed, and cross-referenced
• Use clear, precise, & contemporary language
• Be internally consistent
• Produce predictable, desired results
• Balance flexibility & predictability
• Support the vision expressed in the Comprehensive Plan
Newton Zoning Reform
Themes for a New Ordinance

1. Better organize the ordinance for ease of use
2. Simplify & streamline the permitting & review process
3. Recognize that each village center & commercial corridor is unique
4. Encourage mixed-use residential redevelopment in village centers
5. Create “soft transitions” between village centers & residential neighborhoods
6. Allow moderate, flexible growth on commercial corridors
7. Rationalize & streamline parking regulations
8. Protect neighborhood character & scale
9. Create more diverse housing opportunities
10. Institute a better process for managing change of religious & educational institutions
11. Improve natural resource conservation & sustainability
Zoning 101
coUrbanize & Engagement Opportunities
Ask us your questions!
Next Steps