Newton Zoning Redesign

Newton’s Advantage: Zoning and Economic Development

10.19.17
Welcome!

6:35  Zoning 101

6:45  Newton’s Advantage: Zoning & Economic Development

7:10  Q&A

7:15  Table-top Sessions

7:50  Report Outs
Zoning 101
Zoning shapes our city. It ensures that buildings and uses of land promote positive outcomes for the community and are consistent with the neighborhood context.

Zoning is the regulation of our built environment: types of buildings, their locations, and their uses.
Central Elements of Zoning

- The Zoning Map
- The Zoning Ordinance
- Dimensional Requirements
- Development and Use Standards
- Decision Making Processes

The Zoning Map divides the city into districts, each of which represents a different set of land uses and scales of building types.
Central Elements of Zoning

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- The Zoning Ordinance
- Dimensional Requirements
- Development and Use Standards
- Decision Making Processes

The Zoning Ordinance is the book of rules and regulations for how private property lots are divided, how buildings are constructed on those lots, and how those buildings are used.
Dimensional Requirements control the dimensions of private property lots and the buildings constructed on them, including: width and depth of properties, height and overall scale or mass of buildings, as well as how far buildings are from the street and from neighboring property lines.
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For each use
- Define it. State Intent.
- Set standards - Specific application materials, specific site layout standards, specific operations standards
Central Elements of Zoning

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- Development and Use Standards
- Decision Making Processes

Who approves? What standards for approval are applied?

City Council
  e.g. Special Permit
  Zoning Amendments

Zoning Board of Appeals
  e.g. Variance

Inspectional Services Department
  e.g. Building Permit

Decision Making Processes for applying the zoning rules are outlined in the ordinance as well.
1922 – First zoning code in Newton
1941 – Add residential zones
1953 – Introduce lot sizes & setbacks
1987 – Major reorganization, and update to commercial zones
2011 – Zoning Reform Group
2015 – Phase One completed
2017 – Phase Two – TODAY!
What is Zoning Redesign?

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.
The Pattern Book

The Pattern Book represents several months of effort collecting first-hand data and analysis. We will be collecting comments on this document through November 29.

Complete draft online at:
www.courbanize.com/newtonzoning
Zoning is our opportunity to shape the future of Newton
Newton’s Advantage: Zoning and Economic Development
Newton’s Business Community

10,000+ businesses
Pattern Book: Newton’s Business Centers

Proximity is measured using 1/4-mile, and 1/2-mile radii as break points (roughly equivalent to 5- and 10-minute walks). The polygons that bound each business center ensure that buildings are not double counted when 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile radii unites intersect.
Residential Tax vs. Commercial Tax

Share of total

- **Residential Share**
- **Commercial & Industrial Share**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Residential Share</th>
<th>Commercial &amp; Industrial Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Zoning can...

...help businesses find opportunities to locate and expand in Newton.

...make it easier to operate a business in Newton and contribute to vibrant commercial areas.
Newton's innovation economy
Economic Development is linked to:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Business competition

Make it Newton
Newton’s village centers
Zoning & Economic Development

Commercial Uses
Business types allowed and the rules that apply to them

Manufacturing District
Industrial lands

Home Businesses
Work from home!

Signs
The design of signs
Zoning & Economic Development

**Commercial Uses:**
Business types allowed and the rules that apply to them

- 68 uses currently
- Difficult to interpret and enforce
- New “innovation economy” uses not defined
- Extraneous rules
Goal: Support businesses to locate and thrive in Newton’s commercial areas.

1. Combine & categorize uses to ease understanding & enforcement.
2. Introduce new uses like co-working space.
3. Remove or modify specific rules applying to some uses.
4. Reduce parking requirements.
Zoning & Economic Development

Manufacturing District:

- Current zoning reflects old-school heavy industry
- Evolved to offices, light industry, storage, automotive
- Encourage commercial like Wells Ave., N2, Charles River
Thinking Differently about “Manufacturing District”

Manufacturing District:
- Opportunity for innovation district (maker spaces, fabrication, innovation economy)
- Protect manufacturing from housing development pressure
Proposed Manufacturing Districts Policy

Goal: Support economic development and a growing innovation economy in Newton.

2. Transition some to other types of districts.
3. Identify some for redevelopment and growth.
4. Identify others for retention as lower-cost business start-up and fabrication space.
Home Businesses
Zoning & Economic Development

Home Businesses:
- Online based businesses
- Virtual transactions, customer interaction
- Service economy, consulting, etc.
- Cuts congestion, increases entrepreneurship
Goal: Support residents with a flexible home business policy to encourage economic development.

1. Allow more than one per dwelling unit.
2. Recognize the difference between businesses with onsite customers and not.
3. Relax regulations around type and number of employees, location and square footage of business.
4. Remove parking requirement.
Signs

- Newton-Wellesley Hospital
  - West Entrance
  - Cancer Center
    - Patient
    - Drop-off/Pick-up
  - Receiving
  - Emergency
    - Patient & Visitor
    - Parking Garage
  - 2014 Washington Street

- Bill's Pizzeria
  - Est. 1975

- Lumière
Goal: Make sign ordinance more business-friendly, easier to enforce, and encourage good design.

1. Clarify and illustrate sign rules. Create a sign design guide.

2. Expand Urban Design Commission to decide minor adjustments to sign rules.

3. Encourage comprehensive sign packages for multiple storefronts in the same building.

4. Create new rules for temporary signs and sandwich boards.
Stay involved

We’ve only scratched the surface today.
Participate in future events and online at:

www.courbanize.com/newtonzoning
City of Newton Zoning Redesign
Event Series: September 2017 - May 2018

Location: Newton Free Library, 330 Homer Street, Druker Auditorium*
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
RSVP online at www.courbanize.com/newtonzoning

Wednesday, September 27th
Think Globally, Act Locally: Zoning for a Sustainable Newton

Thursday, October 19th
Newton’s Advantage: Zoning and Economic Development

Thursday, December 14th
Housing for Whom? Zoning, Affordability, and Fair Housing

Thursday, February 15th
Tapping the Creative Economy: Zoning, Arts, and Artisans

Thursday, April 12th
What’s the Process? How Stuff Gets Built in Newton

Thursday, May 10th
A New Zoning Map for Newton

Thursday, January 18th
A parking Lot for Goldilocks: Zoning for Just the Right Size

Building Shape, Size, and Form in Neighborhoods and Village Centers

*All the events will be held at this location and time.
The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance.
If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the City of Newton’s ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator, Jil Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or 617-796-1253.
The city’s TTY/TDD direct line is 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.
What do you think?
What do you think?

**Commercial Uses**
Business types allowed and the rules that apply to them

**Manufacturing District**
Industrial lands

**Home Businesses**
Work from home!

**Signs**
The design of signs

What did you like?
What did you not like?
What did we miss?
How should we refine these proposals?