Newton Zoning Redesign

A Parking Lot for Goldilocks: Zoning for Just the Right Size

01.18.18
Welcome!

6:35  Zoning 101

6:45  A Parking Lot for Goldilocks

7:20  Q&A

7:30  Table-top Sessions
Zoning Is...

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
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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.
Central Elements of Zoning

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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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A – min. lot area
B – lot coverage
C – frontage
D – open space
E – front setback
F – side setback
G – rear setback
H – height
Central Elements of Zoning

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- Dimensional Requirements
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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

- The Zoning Map
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- Dimensional Requirements
- 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.
30-Second History of Zoning in Newton

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!

Current efforts
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.

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
A Parking Lot for Goldilocks: Zoning for Just the Right Size
Zoning & Transportation – Two Intersections

• Development review
  – Transportation studies
    • When? How? About what?

• Parking
  – Minimum number of spaces
    • 1 space per 3 restaurant seats
    • 2 per residential unit

  On these particular ones we’re among the highest in the region

  – Design Requirements for parking lots
The Problem

Cycle of building for the “worst case” scenario

Plan for more cars

Parking minimums + Traffic Analysis

Unfriendly walking conditions

“not enough parking” + “too much traffic”
You get what you zone for...

Current zoning asks for...
- Worst-case traffic projections
- High minimum parking

We get...
- More traffic
- Large empty parking lots
Zoning can...

...help achieve Newton’s goals for a Safe, Smart, Accessible, Livable, and Sustainable transportation system.

...help ensure convenient and available parking for those who need it.
Zoning Tools for Transportation

Transportation Demand Management

Right Size Parking Requirements

Optimize Parking Resources

Site Design
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Giving People Options
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Instead of driving in rush hour
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

- Leave late/go in early
- Telecommute
- Carpool
- Rideshare (Uber/Lyft)
- Walk
- Bus
- Green Line
- Commuter Rail
- Bike
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locate housing near transit and jobs</th>
<th>Invest in walking, biking, and transit infrastructure</th>
<th>Distribute information about transportation options</th>
<th>Transit Passes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separate housing and residential parking costs</td>
<td>Bike parking &amp; locker rooms</td>
<td>Emergency ride home programs</td>
<td>On Site Carshare (e.g. zipcar)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Proposed Approach:
Set mode-split goal & implement TDM to reach goal

Novartis Necco Building
Cambridge, MA
Opening Goal: 44% Drive
Year 7 Reporting: 33% Drive

Mix of limited parking, ongoing incentives for transit, walking, biking
Proposed Transportation Demand Management Policy

Goal: Require new developments to reduce drive alone trips at peak times.

1. Set a mode-split goal

2. Require developments to implement T.D.M. until they reach their mode-split goal
Zoning Tools for Transportation

- Transportation Demand Management
- Right Size Parking Requirements
- Optimize Parking Resources
- Site Design
Too big? Too small? Just the right size?
Right Sized Parking Requirements

Abundant Free Parking → Driving
Right Sized Parking Requirements

Abundant Free Parking → Driving
**Right Sized Parking Requirements**

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**Current Approach**
Assumes every use is an island:
- Driving is the only way a visitor arrives. Must drive between destinations.

Parking requirement is based on highest use day.

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**Goldilocks Approach**
Review context:
- Mix of uses
- Current/projected mode-split
- Shareable resources
Right Sized Parking Requirements

**Current Approach**
Assumes every use is an island:
- Driving is the only way a visitor arrives. Must drive between destinations.
- Parking requirement is based on highest use day.

Newton’s Zoning Ordinance assumes all commercial areas – malls & village centers alike – Start with the single use approach.
Land uses in “park once” areas like village centers are required to get special permits waivers to operate in existing spaces because they cannot meet conventional parking requirements.
Shops at Chestnut Hill

• Received at waiver because they did not have enough parking to meet the zoning requirements

• 2017 Black Friday found 30% of the parking was still empty at busiest time, on busiest day of the year

Black Friday (November 24, 2017) Parking Occupancy

Right Sized Parking Requirements
Right Sized Parking Requirements

Now: minimum parking requirement
Based on estimated maximum need
Results in large lots, inefficient 364 days of the year

Proposed: goldilocks parking with a maximum
Based in transportation goals, design goals, modern market needs
We’re not worried about minimum parking – market still wants parking, developers are going to provide it
Zoning Tools for Transportation

- Transportation Demand Management
- Right Size Parking Requirements
- Optimize Parking Resources
- Site Design
Optimizing Parking Resources

Shared Parking

Currently:
• Shared parking occurs informally throughout the city

Proposed:
• Encourage sharing of parking at off-peak times
• Allow lot owners flexibility to offer parking to the public
• New app-based tools to make this easy for lot owners and parkers

43% of all (public and private) parking spots in Newton Centre are empty at peak times

26% of parking is unused overnight at multifamily residential buildings in a Boston Metro area 2017 MAPC study
Optimize Parking Resources

Free Parking is not free

• Opportunity costs
• Construction & maintenance costs

Residential
• Decouple housing and parking costs

Employee Parking
• Charge for parking
• Subsidize Transit
Proposed Parking Policy

Goal is to ensure convenient parking without excessive parking

1. Set parking maximums
2. Recalculate/remove parking minimums
3. Allow shared parking
4. Encourage parking to reflect true costs
Zoning Tools for Transportation

- Transportation Demand Management
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Site Design

Clear entrances & routes for walking and biking

Walking up equally easy as driving up
Visible bike parking for visitors
Site Design

Create safe & pleasant parking lots

Once a driver parks, they become a pedestrian
Environmentally friendly parking lots

Parking lots are an opportunity to progress sustainability goals
Site Design

Prepare for future technology
Prepare for future technology

- Electric vehicle charging at all new buildings
  - All parking ready to accept charging station tech
- Designated pick-up/drop-off areas
- Convertible parking garages
Site Design Policy

Goal: Site design policies reinforce transportation options and sustainable design.

1. Include sidewalk & bike access in site design criteria

2. Enhance safety & sustainability in parking design standards

3. Direct developments to prepare for emerging technologies
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, March 15th
Building Shape, Size, and Form in Neighborhoods and Village Centers

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

Thursday, May 10th
A New Zoning Map for Newton

*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, Jini 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.
Thank You!
What do you think?
<table>
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What did you like?
What did you not like?
What did we miss?
How should we refine these proposals?