



Programs & Services Committee Agenda

City of Newton In City Council

Thursday June 8, 2023

7:00 PM

The Programs & Services Committee will hold this meeting as a virtual meeting on Thursday, June 8, 2023 at 7:00 pm. To view this meeting using Zoom use this link: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/86441340715> or call 1-646-558-8656 and use the Meeting ID: 864 4134 0715.

Items Scheduled for Discussion:

Public Hearing

#144-23

Citizens Group Petition to place a nonbinding advisory question on the ballot PETER HARRINGTON ET AL., petitioning pursuant to Article 10, Sec. 10-2 of the City of Newton Charter, for the City Council to cause the following non-binding question to be placed on the November 7, 2023 municipal ballot: “Shall the City of Newton adopt new zoning laws to: 1. Allow new buildings of three and one-half and four and one-half stories in our village center business districts; 2. Allow the expansion of the lot size on which new developments can be built, without obtaining a special permit, from the current 10,000 square foot threshold to 30,000 sq ft; 3. Allow the reduction or elimination of parking space requirements in Village Centers; 4. Change Newton Ordinances to allow developers to build fewer affordable housing units and allow the affordable units to be occupied by tenants with more income than provided by Newton’s Ordinances, unless Newton shows its requirements are economically feasible.”

Respectfully Submitted,

Josh Krintzman, Chair

The location of this meeting is 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 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.

Petition to the Newton City Council:

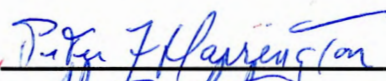

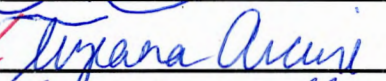
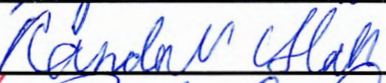
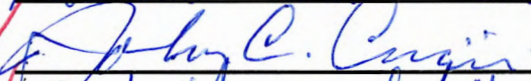
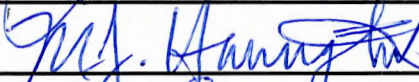
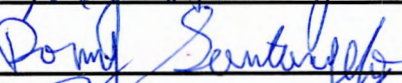
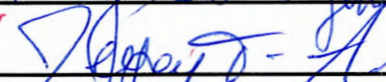
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- 3. Allow the reduction or elimination of parking space requirements in Village Centers;**
- 4. Change Newton Ordinances to allow developers to build fewer affordable housing units and allow the affordable units to be occupied by tenants with more income than provided by Newton’s Ordinances, unless Newton shows its requirements are economically feasible.**

Signature	Print Name	Street Address	Ward/Precinct
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✓ 	Peter F Harrington	57 Lowell Ave	2/1
✓ 	Thomas R Tucker	157 Lowell Ave	2/1
✓ 	Tenana Arari	294 Webster St	4/1
✓ 	Randall B Dick	45 Lafayette Rd	4-2
✓ 	Ruby C. Curran	7 Wildwood Ave	3-1
✓ 	Maria Harrington	157 Lowell Ave	2-1
✓ 	Donny Santangelo	3 Milton Ave.	4/4
✓ 	Jeffrey T Arari	294 Webster St	4/1

(8) eight

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✓ Susan Reisler	Susan Reisler	11 Claflin Place	2/3
✓ Peter Bruce	Peter Bruce	11 Claflin Place	2/3
✓ Jeffrey Key	Jeffrey Key	5957 Wash St Unit 5	2/1
✓ Margaret L Ward	Margaret L. Ward	957 Washington St Unit 4	2/1
✓ Laura Deveau	Laura Deveau	12 Proctor	2/1
✓ Robert Kavanagh	Robert Kavanagh	69 Court St	2/1
✓ Carole Kavanagh	Carole Kavanagh	69 Court St	2/1
✓ Linda M Work	Linda M. Work	345 Newtonville Ave	2/2
✓ Heather Faulk	Heather Faulk	49 Washington Pl	
✓ Jacqueline Cate	Jacqueline Cate	102 Washington Park	2/3

Return to Peter F. Harrington, 157 Lowell Avenue, Newtonville

(10) Ten

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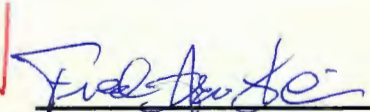

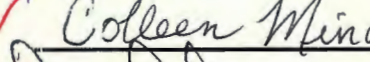
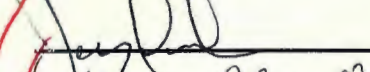
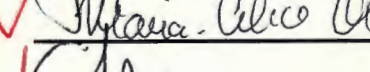
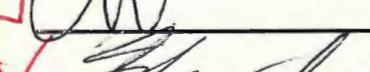
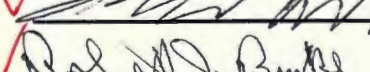
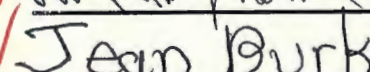
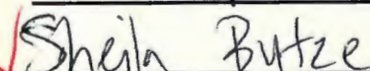
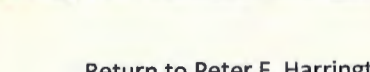
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✓ 	FRED ARNSTEIN	7 Briar Lane	W 2/3
✓ 	Pamela Geib	7 Briar Lane	W 2/3
✓ 	Colleen Minaker	32 Bemis St.	2/1
✓ 	Jeremy Ledman	38 Bemis St.	2/1
✓ 	MARIA-ALICE ORTEGA	31 Bemis St.	
✓ 	Cynthia Kane	23 Bemis St	2/1
✓ 	Tasha Sullivan	54 Wyoming Rd.	2/1
✓ 	Robert J. Burke	81 Wyoming Rd	2/1
✓ 	Jean Burke	81 Wyoming Rd.	2/1
✓ 	Sheila M. Butze	575 California St.	2/1

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Betsy Hewitt	Betsy Hewitt	1 Winter St. ⁰²⁴⁶⁴	5/1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gail Harris	GAIL HARRIS	10 E. Blvd. Rd.	7/2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carolyn A. Lattin	Carolyn A. Lattin	277 Park St ⁰²⁴⁵⁸	7/2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Toole	Chris Toole	114 Cabot St ⁰²⁴⁵⁸	2/2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judith Horgan	JUDITH HORGAN	25 BRIDGES AVE	2/2

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✓	<i>William E. Roegner</i>	WILLIAM E. ROESNER 1058 WALNUT ST. NEWTON HIGHLANDS, MA 02461	6/3
✓	<i>Carol Clark</i>	Carol Clark 1058 Walnut St. Newton MA 02461	6-3

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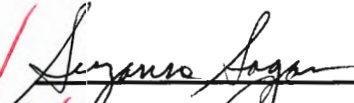
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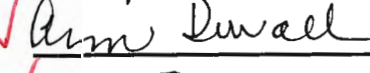
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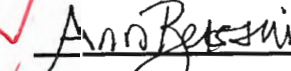
✓ 	Suzanne Sagan	3 CLAFFIN PL	2/3
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✓ 	Susan Verrill	538 WALCOTT ST	2/3
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✓ 	Pingliang	17 CLAFFIN PL.	2/3
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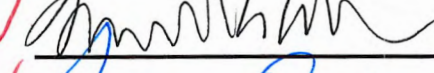
✓ 	JILL GEIGER	72 MADISON AVE	2/2
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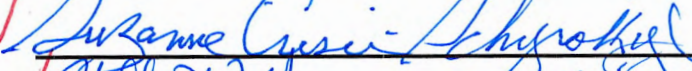
✓ 	Ann Duvall	33 Maglison Ave.	2/2
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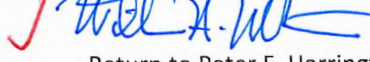
✓ 	Ann Berszai	94 Harvard St	2/2
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✓ 	SAGUN KE	27 Loudholm Rd.	2/2
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MICHAEL DURKIN			
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✓ 	MICHAEL DURKIN	94 HARVARD	2/2
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✓ 	Suzanne Casci-Scheyroky	149 Cabot St	
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✓ 	William Martin	151 Cabot Street	2/1
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Return to Peter F. Harrington, 157 Lowell Avenue, Newtonville

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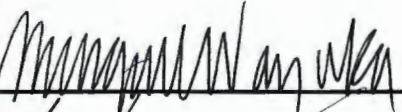
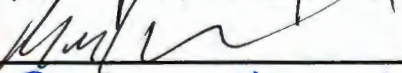

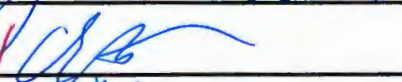
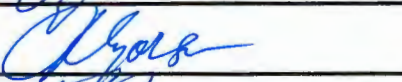
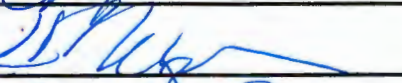
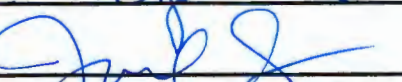
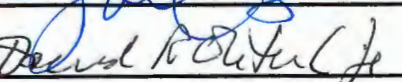

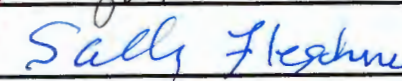
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✓ 	margaret Wazuka	6 Briar Lane	2/3
✓ 	Mark Lyon	8 Bristol	2/3
✓ 	Joan Talbot	106 Washington Park	2/3
✓ 	Chris Brown	22 Gay St.	2/3
✓ 	Anna Morgan	22 Gay St	2/3
✓ 	Susan Megerson	#Townhouse	2/3
✓ 	Jennifer Sun	48 Washington Park	2/2
✓ 	DAVID OUTERBRIDGE	24 MADISON	2/3
✓ 	Margaret Howard	24 Madison Ave	2/3
✓ 	Sally Flechner	76 Madison Ave, Newton	2/3

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✓ Bette A. White	BETTE WHITE	14 FOSTER ST	2/1
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✓ Joanne C. White	JOANNE C. WHITE	14 FOSTER ST.	2/1
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	HELIO ORTEGA	31 DEMISS NEWTON MA	2/1
	Ellen Fitzpatrick	20 Foster St. Newtonville	2/1
	ADEL FOZ	16 PAGE RD	2/1
	Blanche M. Foz	16 Page Rd	2/1
	M. Cecily Summers	171A Lowell Ave	
	Harry Senders	607 Watertown St.	2-1
	Mary Castro Summers	171A Lowell Ave	2/1
	ROBERT H. SMITH	40 FOSTER ST. NEWTONVILLE	2/1
	Maura Harrington	157 Lowell Ave., Newtonville	2/1

Duplicate

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Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 31, 2023

TO: Councilor Joshua Krintzman, Chair, Programs and Services
Members of the Programs and Services Committee

FROM: Barney Heath, Director, Department of Planning and Development
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director Department of Planning and Development
Zachery LeMel, Chief of Long Range Planning
Joe Iadonisi, Planning Associate

SUBJECT: **#144-23 Citizens Group Petition to place a nonbinding advisory question on the ballot**
PETER HARRINGTON ET AL. petitioning pursuant to Article 10, Sec. 10-2 of the City of Newton Charter, for the City Council to cause the following non-binding question to be placed on the November 7, 2023 municipal ballot: "Shall the City of Newton adopt new zoning laws to: 1. Allow new buildings of three and one-half and four and one-half stories in our village center business districts; 2. Allow the expansion of the lot size on which new developments can be built, without obtaining a special permit, from the current 10,000 square foot threshold to 30,000 sq ft; 3. Allow the reduction or elimination of parking space requirements in Village Centers; 4. Change Newton Ordinances to allow developers to build fewer affordable housing units and allow the affordable units to be occupied by tenants with more income than provided by Newton's Ordinances, unless Newton shows its requirements are economically feasible."

Meeting: June 8, 2023

CC: City Council

Introduction

The Planning Department has reviewed docket item #144-23 and wishes to provide the City Council with the following brief analysis in advance of the scheduled public hearing on June 8, 2023.

Proposed Ballot Question Responses

1. "Allow new buildings of three and one-half and four and one-half stories in our village center

business districts;”

As presently proposed the Village Center Overlay District (VCOD) has four sub-districts: Village Center 3 (VC3), Village Center 2 (VC2), Village Center 1 (VC1), and Multi-Residence Transit (MRT). Each sub-district has its own set of dimensional standards that are not uniformly applicable across Newton’s village centers. The question fails to inform the voter of the height maximums by stories as proposed: VC3 is permitted 4.5 stories, VC2 is permitted 3.5 stories, and VC1 and MRT are permitted 2.5 stories. No additional stories are allowed by special permit. VC3 requires a stepdown to 3.5 stories where development is within 50’ of a lot line abutting a Residential District, which includes MRT.

2. “Allow the expansion of the lot size on which new developments can be built, without obtaining a special permit, from the current 10,000 square foot threshold to 30,000 sq ft;”

This question conflates two different regulations within the Zoning Ordinance, Special Permit threshold and minimum lot size. As presently proposed, lots under 20,000 sq. ft. will not require any additional development review. Lots from 20,000 sq.ft. to 30,000 sq. ft. will require Site Plan Review from the Newton Planning Board and lots over 30,000 will require a Special Permit. Under current zoning, 10,000 square feet is the minimum lot size for by-right development in Multi-Residence 1-4 for Single-Family and Two-Family detached, Mixed Use 1 and 2, Business Use 1-5, Manufacturing, Limited Manufacturing, Single Residence 2 (before Dec. 1953), and Single Residence 3 (on/after Dec. 1953) zoning districts. Additionally, many lots in Newton’s village centers predate this zoning requirement and are smaller than 10,000 sf. Therefore, these lots are considered legally non-conforming. This designation offers such lots protections, including a by-right pathway to development.

3. “Allow the reduction or elimination of parking space requirements in Village Centers;”

As presently proposed, on-site parking will not be required within the VCOD. However, parking is not only allowed, but also expected for new developments. This proposal is supported by a recent study by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (link: [Final Perfect Fit Report.pdf \(mapc.org\)](#)) that found half of the parking in Newton’s multifamily buildings goes unused and recommended local governments reduce or not require parking minimums and instead allow market demand to dictate the number of spots.

4. “Change Newton Ordinances to allow developers to build fewer affordable housing units and allow the affordable units to be occupied by tenants with more income than provided by Newton’s Ordinances, unless Newton shows its requirements are economically feasible.”

As proposed, the VCOD zoning will have the same affordable housing requirements as required of any other project in the City. To comply with the MBTA Communities Law, the City will provide an economic feasibility study. The Planning Department is confident that we can prove that our affordability requirements will not deter construction of housing units and are already preparing such an analysis to be

submitted with our MBTA Communities compliant submission.

Planning Department Recommendation

The Planning Department recommends that the Programs and Services Committee vote no action necessary (NAN) at the upcoming public hearing. This proposed ballot question misrepresents the current VCOD proposal and conflates several distinct issues into one question. As a result, the proposed question may increase confusion regarding the VCOD.