



February 24, 2022

BY EMAIL TO:

Deborah Crossley, Chair, Zoning and Planning Committee  
Members of the Zoning and Planning Committee  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Members of the Zoning and Planning Committee:

At Peter Harrington's request, I will be making a brief presentation to your committee on Monday, Feb. 28, 2022 in support of docketed item #42-22, the "Citizens petition to amend the village center district."

My remarks will focus on the necessity of village centers having open green space that will act as a social gathering space thereby enhancing the vibrancy of the village center. I will propose that village centers that lack a social gathering space are more correctly called "commercial districts".

Utile Design's analysis of village centers presented on 9-13-2021 included a Venn Diagram that illustrates which "Metrics of Success" 11 of Newton's village centers have achieved (see attached slide). Given that the definition of "village center" includes having a social gathering space, I propose that the presence of reasonably large green open space be added as a fourth metric of success. The attached slide expands Utile's analysis and illustrates which of the four metrics of success are achieved by 11 of Newton's village centers.

I look forward to our discussion next Monday.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randall Block". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Randall Block, President  
RightSize Newton

Cc: Members of the City Council

Barney Heath, Director, Planning and Development Department  
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director, Planning and Development Department  
Zachery LeMel, Planning and Development Department  
Nevena Pilipovic-Wengler, Planning and Development Department