

City of Newton
Zoning & Planning Committee



Village Center Rezoning Phase 3: Draft Zoning

November 28, 2022

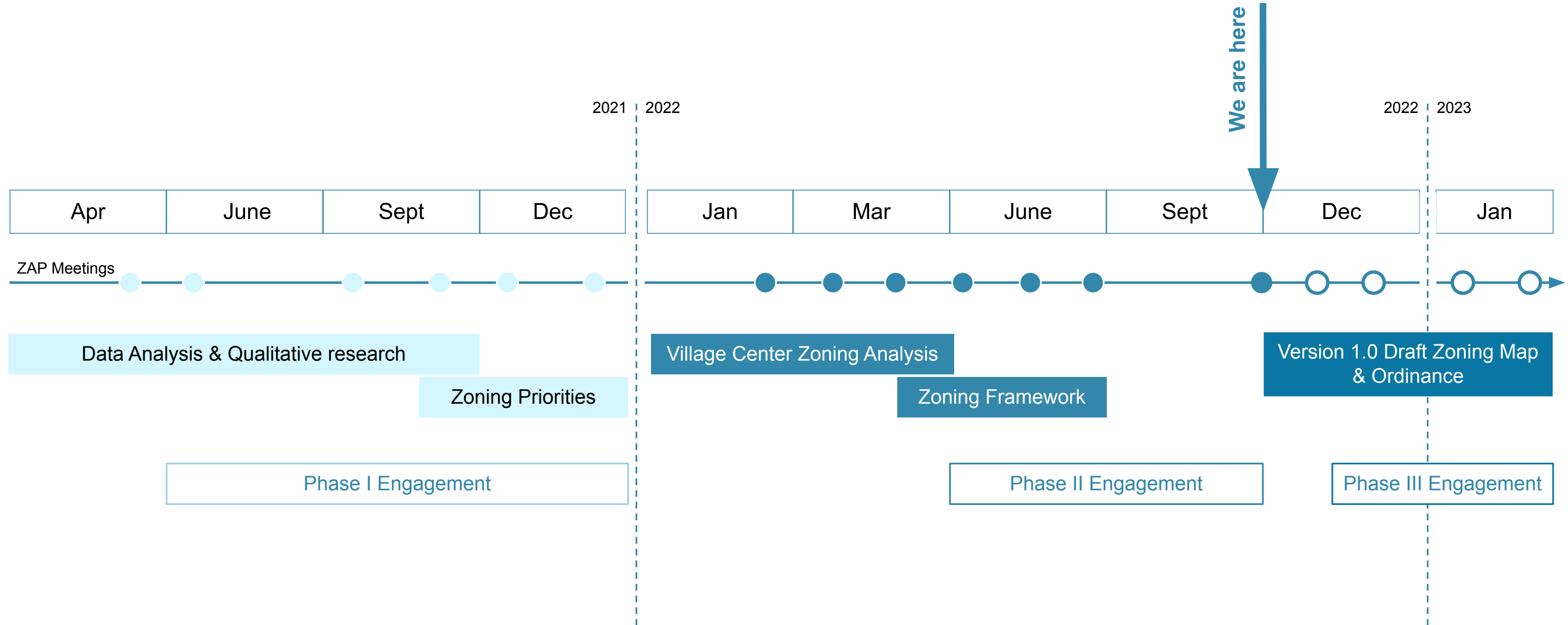
Docket #

Agenda

1. Where we are
2. Recap of Zoning Approach
3. Draft Village Center Zoning Ordinance
4. Next Steps
 - a. Workshop ordinance and maps
 - b. Calendar

Timeline: Where we are

Building Upon A Multi-Year Effort



Intended Outcomes

- Diverse housing options
- New local businesses
- Active gathering spaces
- Safe sidewalks / streets
- Sustainable / accessible buildings



This code regulates urban form through the following principal mechanisms:

1 Building Footprint
Sets the maximum area per story

2 Building Height
Sets the maximum height in stories/feet

3 Roof Form
Provides options for a flat or pitched roof half-story

Zoning Approach

**The figures below represent proposed by-right zoning allowances*

Village Center 1 (VC1)

2.5 Stories

48 Feet tall, max.

4,000 SF, max. footprint

Residential development allowed

Village Center 2 (VC2)

3.5 Stories

62 Feet tall, max.

10,000 SF, max. footprint

Mixed Use/Commercial, & Residential development allowed

Village Center 3 (VC3)

4.5 Stories

75 Feet tall, max.

15,000 SF, max. footprint

Mixed Use/Commercial, & Residential development allowed

Proposed Development



Existing Development



Draft Village Center Zoning Ordinance

1. Timeline: where we are
2. Recap of Zoning Approach
- 3. Draft Village Center Zoning**
4. Next Steps

The following pages present updates to the draft zoning for the Village Center Overlay Districts.

Dimensional Standards included are:

- Building Massing: Lot Size and Site Plan Review
- Building Setbacks
- Building Separation for Multiple Buildings on a Lot
- Facade Build-Out Ratio
- Building Footprint
- Building Height: in stories and feet
- Facade Articulation

Lot Size

	VC1	VC2	VC3
Lot Size (By-Right / Special Permit)			
-	Less than 30,000 sf / Greater than or equal to 30,000 sf		
Site Plan Review (By-Right / Special Permit)			
Lot Size	Greater than or equal to 20,000 sf but less than 30,000 sf		

Notes:

- Previously proposed that lots were By-Right if they were less than ¾ acre, and lots greater than ¾ acre would need a Special Permit.
- To be consistent with the units in the rest of the zoning ordinance, proposed By-Right and Special Permit lot size thresholds have been adjusted to be in feet.
- The Planning Board will conduct Site Plan Review at the proposed threshold. The Site Plan Review process will review conditions related to site layout, pedestrian safety, internal circulation, and other public safety considerations.

Building Setbacks

	VC1	VC2	VC3
Front (min. / max.)			
–	10' / 20' or Average	0' / 15' or Average	0' / 10'
Side (min.)			
Abutting a Party Wall in non-R District		0'	
Abutting a building without a Party Wall in non-R District	10'	5'	5'
Abutting an R District		15'	
Rear (min.)			
Abutting a non-R District	10'	5'	5'
Abutting an R District		15'	



28 Austin Street would require a Special Permit, but its setbacks match those desired in the proposed VC districts.

Notes:

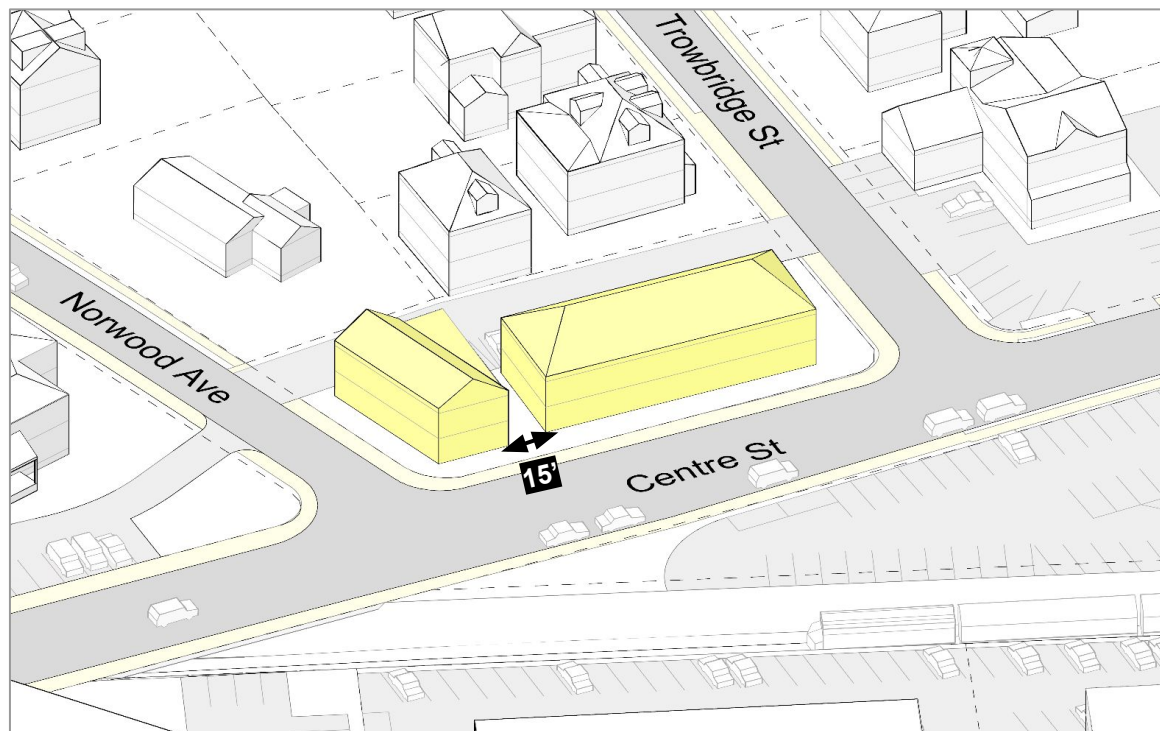
- The front setbacks in the VC2 and VC3 districts encourage a more continuous street wall.
- VC1 districts have greater setback distances relative to the VC2 and VC3 districts in order to better match the reduced scale of their surrounding context.

Building Separation

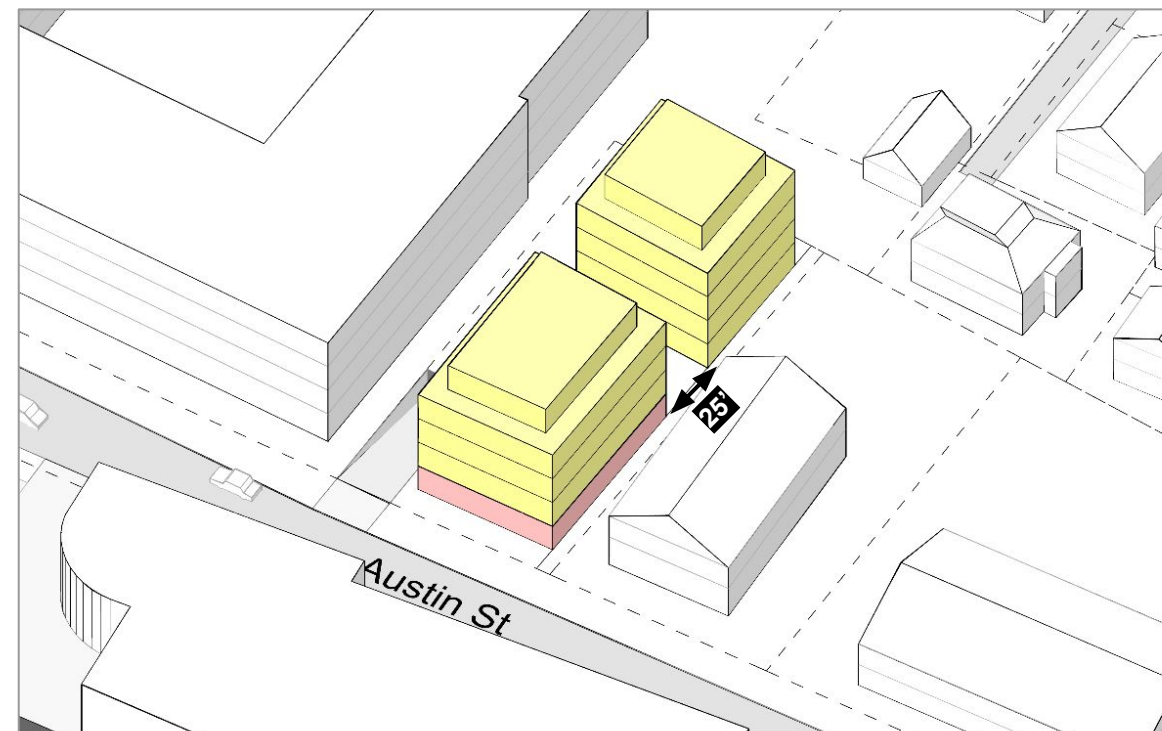
	VC1	VC2	VC3
Building Separation for Multiple Buildings on a Lot (min.)			
-	15'	25'	25'

Notes:

- A minimum building separation distance of 15' allows for 25% fenestration of the facade, which is good practice for Passive House standards.
- A minimum building separation distance of 25' allows for 70% fenestration of the facade.
- Above a building separation distance of 30', facade openings are unlimited.

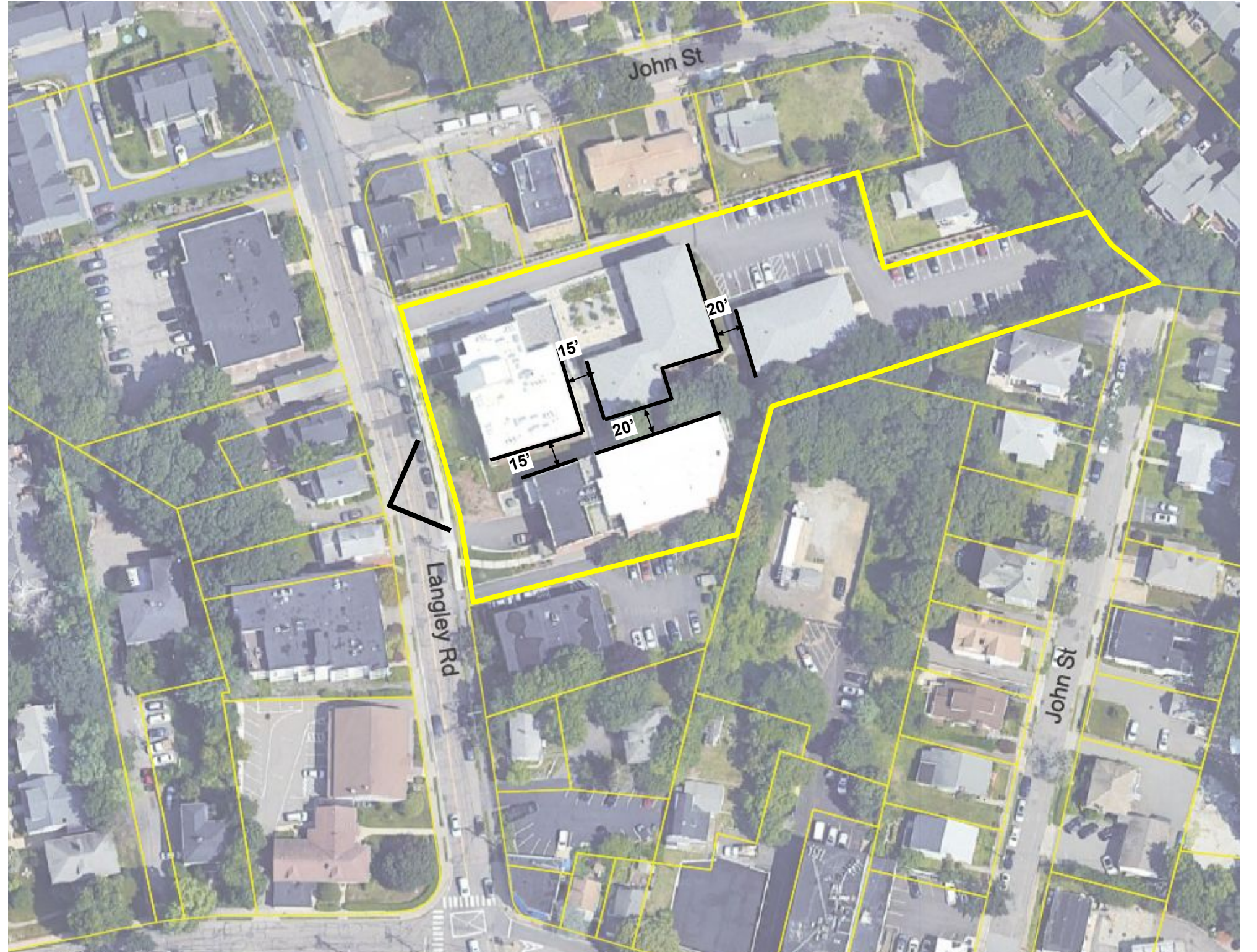


VC1 Example, Newton Centre
Building Separation Distance: 15'



VC3 Example, Newtonville
Building Separation Distance: 25'

Building Separation Example



Langley Terrace Apartments, Thompsonville

Facade Build-Out

VC1

VC2

VC3

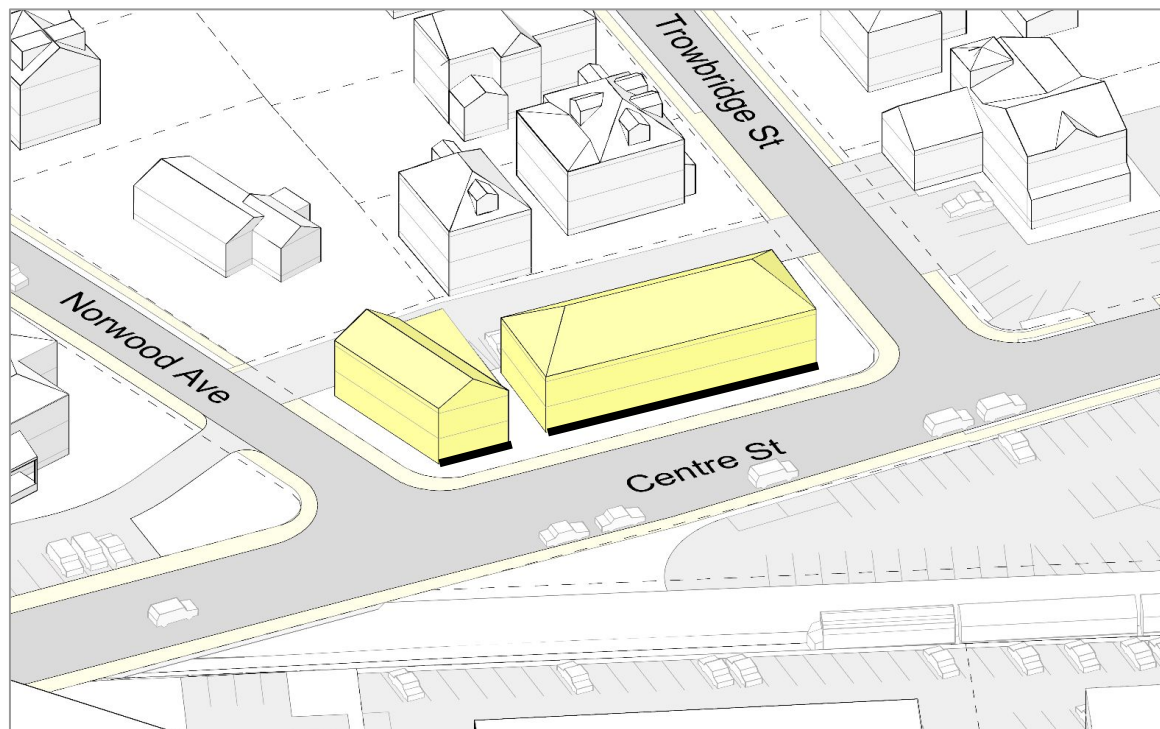
Facade Build-Out Ratio (min.)

Facing a public right-of-way

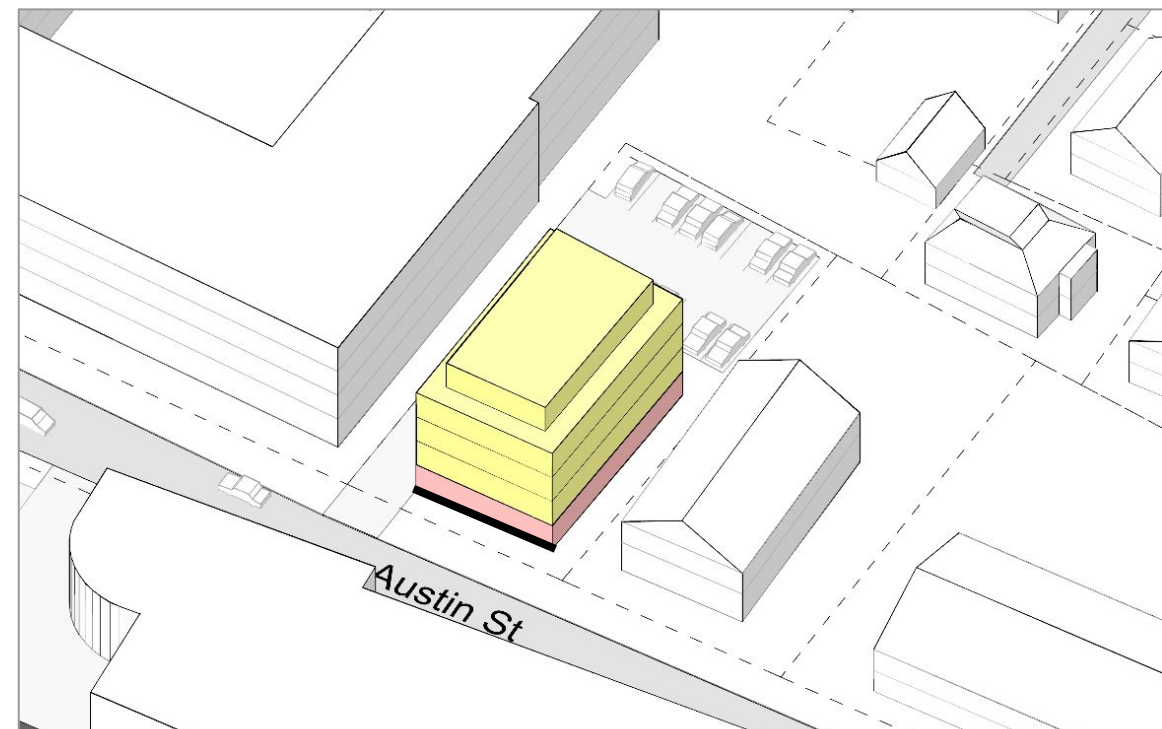
75%, or Lot Width within side setbacks minus 15', whichever is less

Notes:

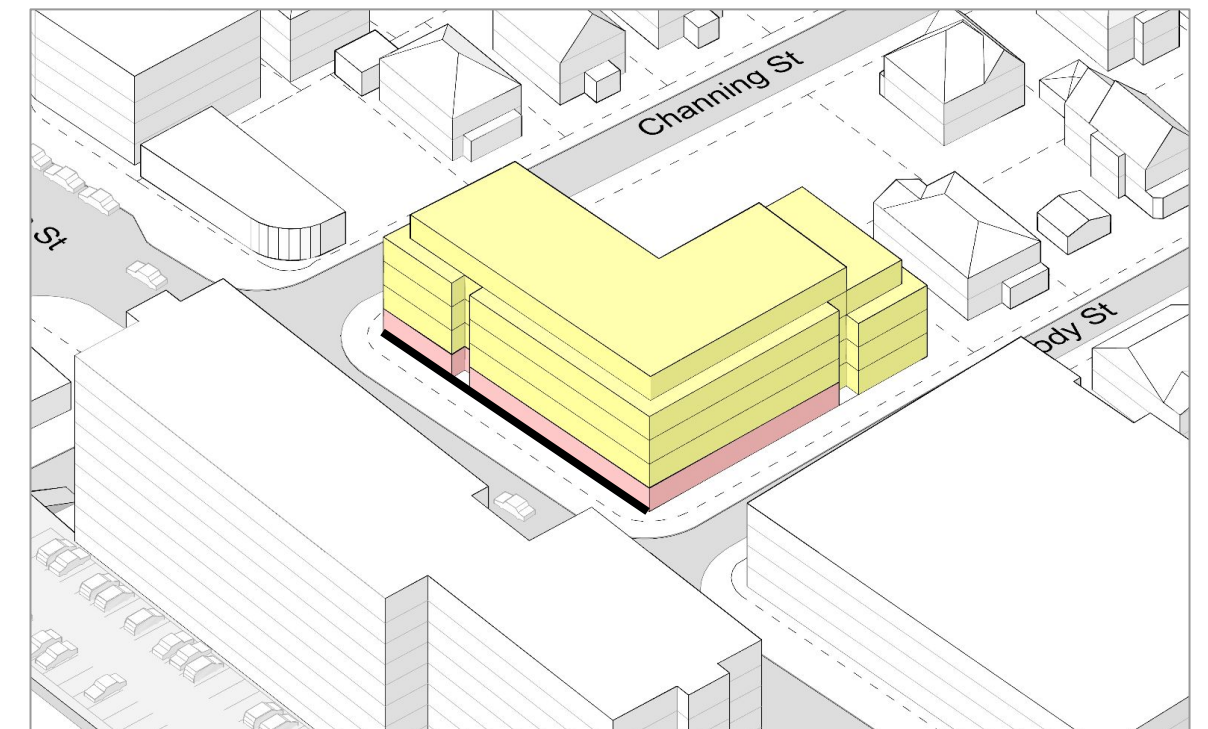
- A minimum facade build-out of 75% encourages positive urban design and an activated streetfront.
- Narrow lots that cannot meet the 75% build-out can instead build to the side setbacks minus 15', which allows for a driveway if no secondary lot access is possible.



VC1 Example, Newton Centre
Facade Build-Out: 72%



VC3 Example, Newtonville
Facade Build-Out: 63%



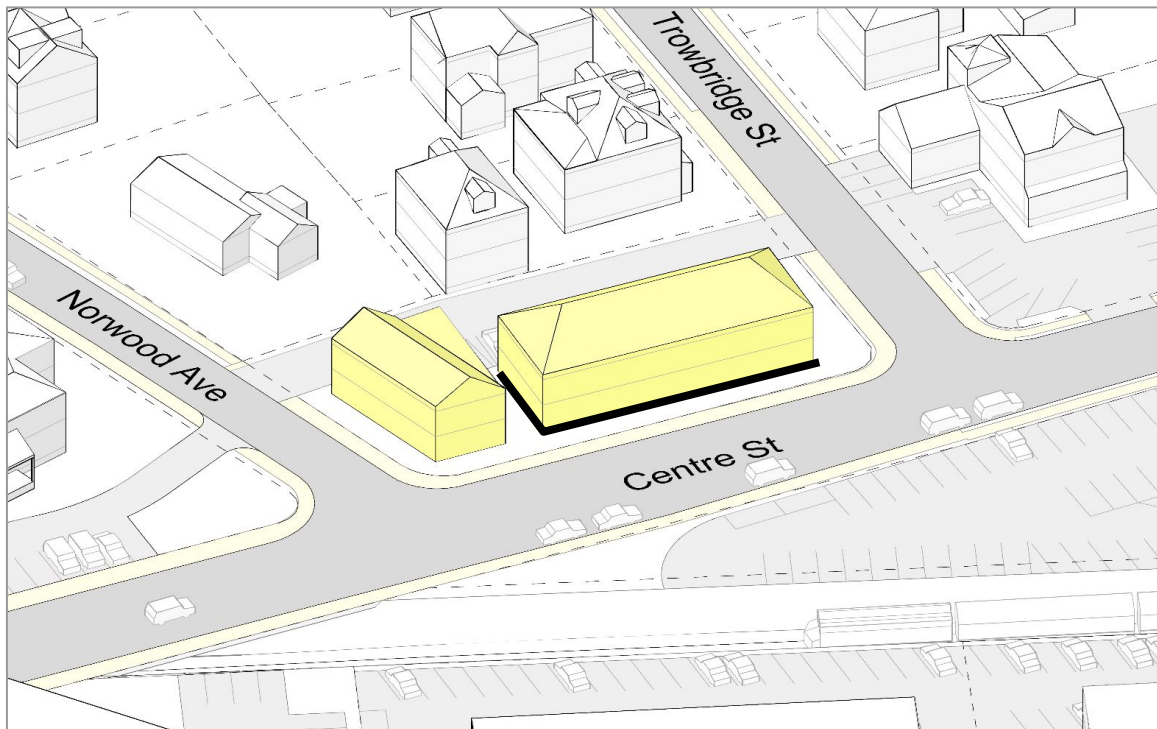
VC3 Example, Newton Corner
Facade Build-Out: 85%

Building Footprint

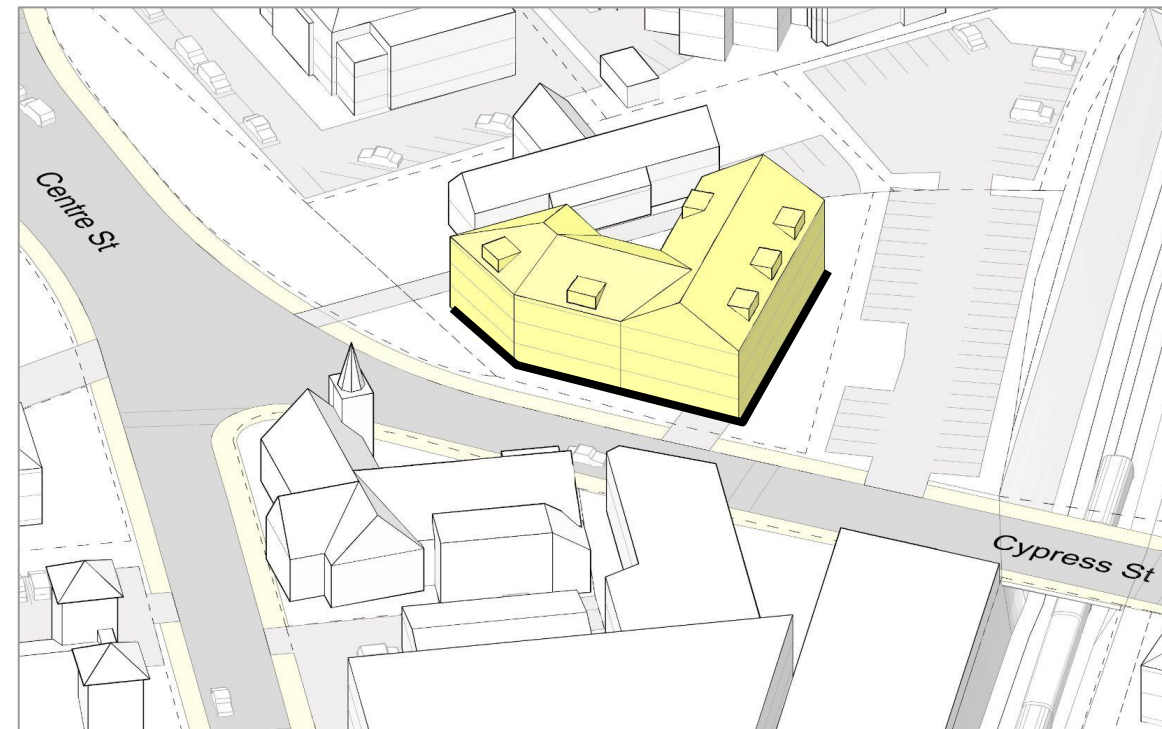
	VC1	VC2	VC3
Building Footprint, max. (By-Right / Special Permit)			
-	4,000 sf / 6,000 sf	10,000 sf / 12,500 sf	15,000 sf / 17,500 sf

Notes:

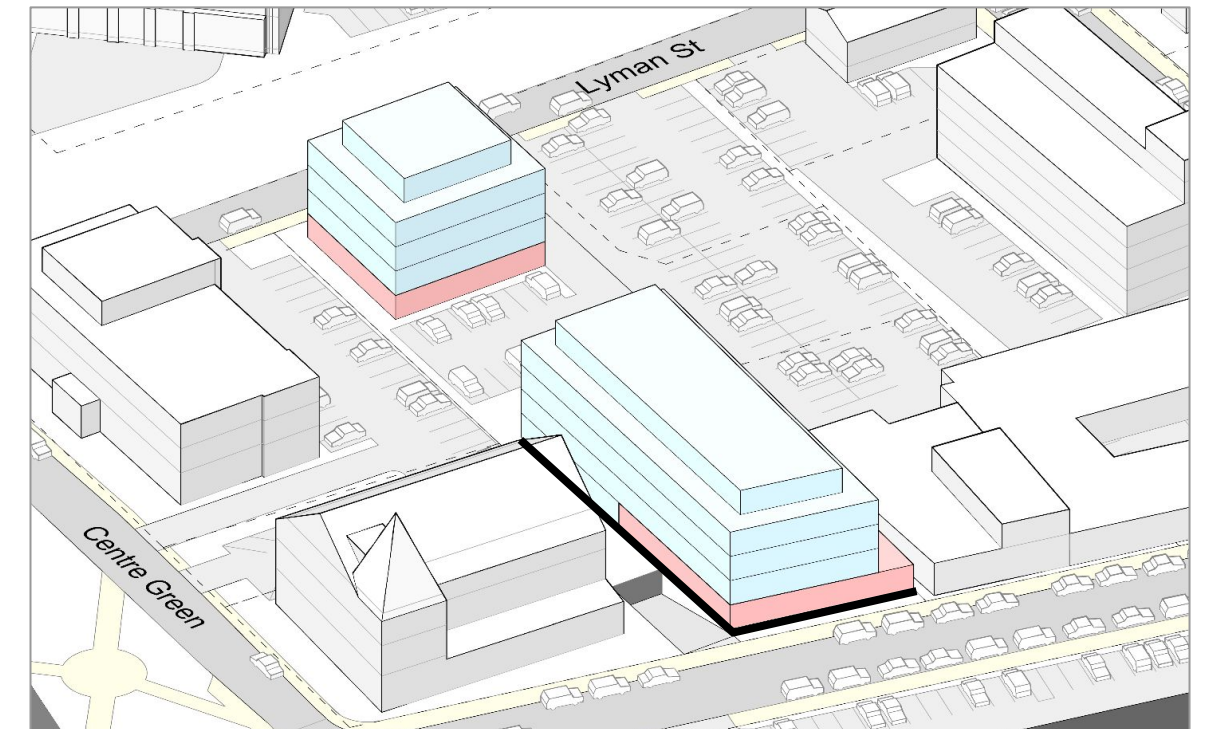
- The proposed maximum footprint for VC1 has been reduced to 4,000 sf (previously 5,000 sf).
- It is possible to increase the maximum building footprint according to the Special Permit thresholds proposed.



VC1 Example, Newton Centre
Footprint: 3,800 sf



VC2 Example, Newton Centre
Footprint: 8,800 sf



VC3 Example, Newton Centre
Footprint: 14,970 sf

Residential Building Comparison for VC1



Multi-Family Residential:
Townhouse (with duplex)
674-680 Boylston St (Route 9)
Footprint: 4,400 sf



Multi-Family Residential:
6-unit converted Victorian
11 Washington St, Newton Corner
Footprint: 3,831 sf



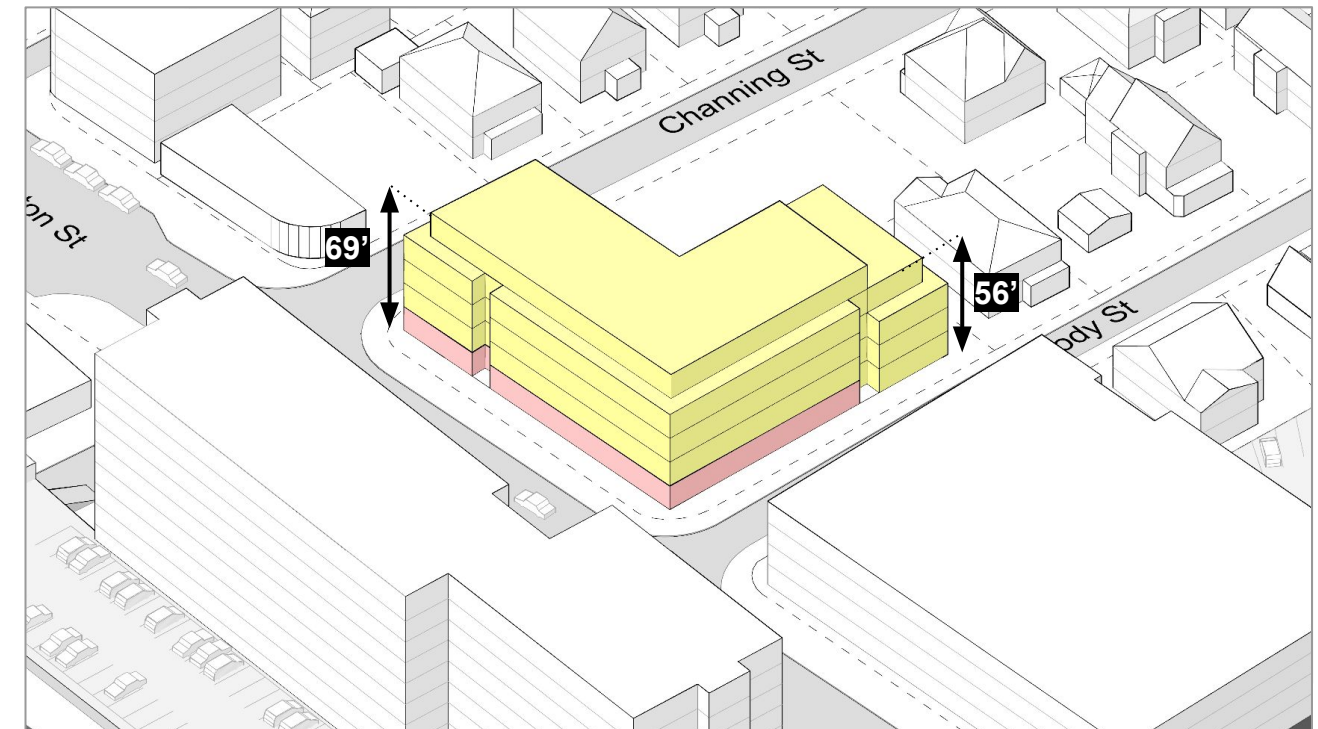
Multi-Family Residential:
Garden Apartments
55-75 Wyman St, Waban
Footprint: 2,200 sf

Building Height

	VC1	VC2	VC3
Building Height in Stories, max. (By-Right / Special Permit)			
Commercial / Mixed Use	- / 2.5	3.5 / -*	4.5 / -*
Residential	2.5 / -*	3.5 / -*	2.5 / -*
Development within 50' of lot line abutting R District	No Change	No Change	Same as VC2
Pitched Roof, Building Height in Feet (By-Right / Special Permit)			
Commercial / Mixed Use ⁵	- / 48'	62' / -*	75' / -*
Residential	45' / -	60' / -*	48' / -*
Development within 50' of lot line abutting R District	No Change	No Change	Same as VC2
Flat Roof, Building Height in Feet (By-Right / Special Permit)			
Commercial / Mixed Use	- / 42'	56' / -*	69' / -*
Residential	39' / -	54' / -*	42' / -*
Development within 50' of lot line abutting R District	No Change	No Change	Same as VC2

*Staff is exploring a Special Permit allowance of an additional one-story with specific criteria tied to an increase in affordable housing

⁵ Additional analysis needed if limited commercial ground floor uses may be allowed by Special Permit in the VC1 or if it should only allow multi-family residential



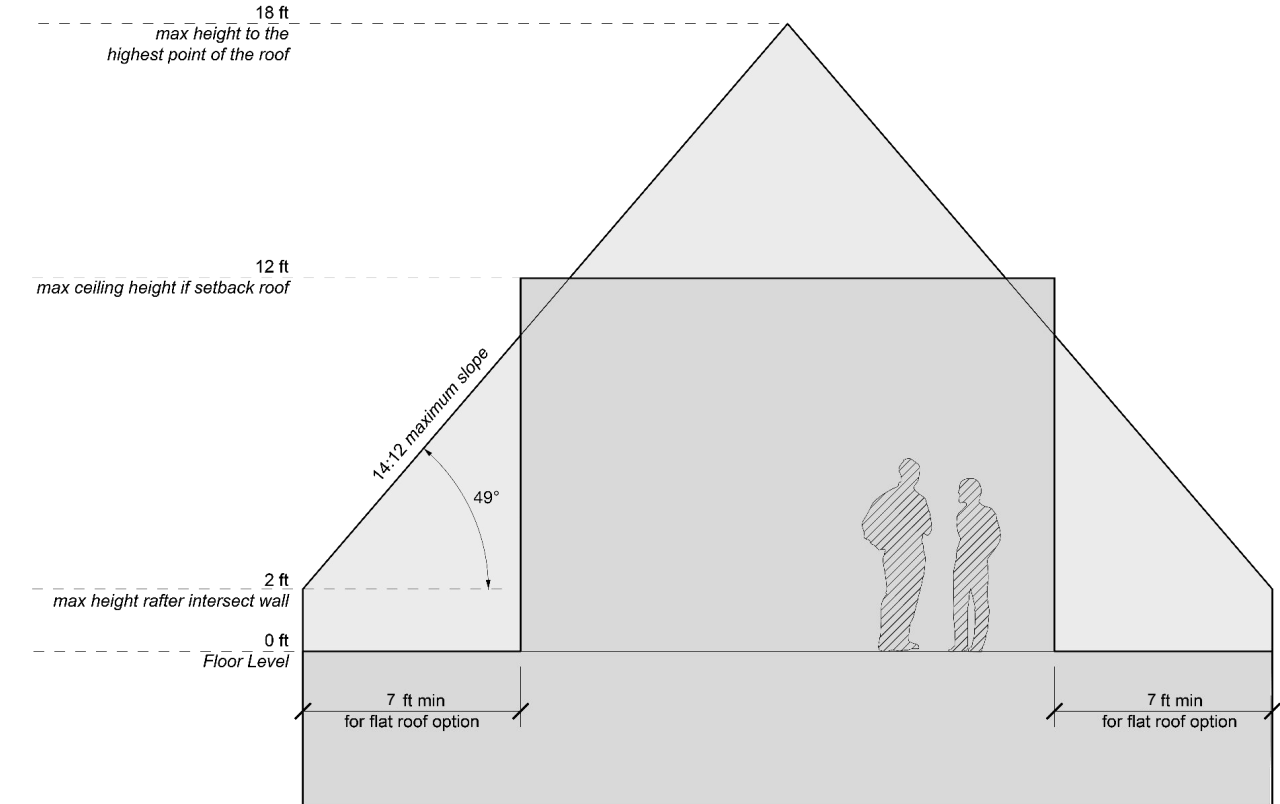
VC3 Adjacent to R-District Example, Newton Corner

Notes:

- VC3 maximum building heights step down by one (1) story within 50' of a lot line abutting a Residential District to transition to the residential context.

Building Height

	VC1	VC2	VC3
Ground Story Height in Feet (min. / max.)			
Commercial / Mixed Use		15' / 18'	
Residential	12' / 15'	12' / 18'	12' / 18'
Half-Story Height in Feet (max.)			
Flat Roof	12'	12'	12'
Pitched Roof	18'	18'	18'
Half-Story Step-Back in Feet (min.)			
Flat Roof	7' along all Lot Lines, see Sec. 2.6.B.4.		
Pitched Roof	N/A, see fig. #		



Roof Half-Story Diagram

From Section 2.6.B.4.:

Half-Story Step-Back

- a. A required distance that certain upper stories of a building must be recessed from the plane of the facade of the stories below.
 - i. Required Step-Backs must be provided for all stories as specified for each VCOD tier.
 - ii. Buildings on any lot with a Lot Width of Less than seventy (70) feet are exempt for the upper story Step-Back requirement along the Side Lot Line.
 - iii. Buildings on any lot with an average lot depth less than seventy (70) feet are exempt from the upper story Step-Back requirement along the Rear Lot Line.

Notes:

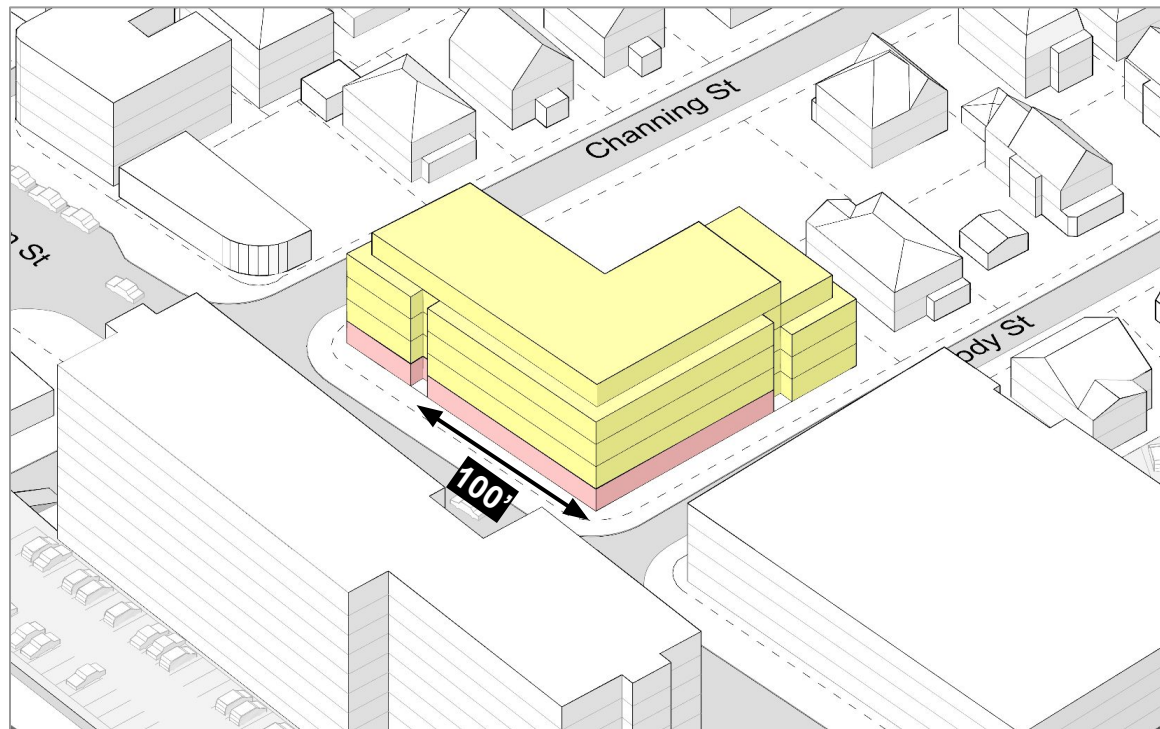
- Max. ground floor heights of 18' allow for diverse market-viable uses in commercial and mixed use buildings. In residential buildings, it provides flexibility to adapt to future mixed uses.
- VC1 has a reduced resi. max. ground floor height of 15' to better match its residential context.

Facade Length

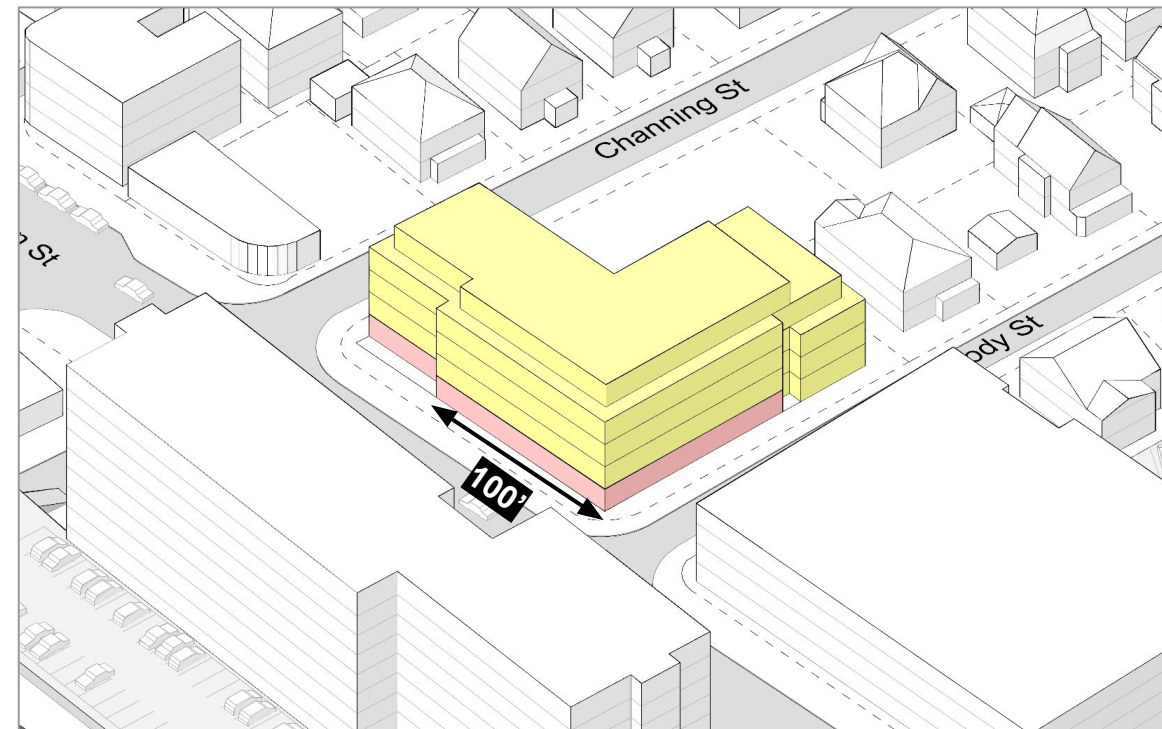
	VC1	VC2	VC3
Articulation			
Length of continuous facade (max.)		100'	

Notes:

- The facade of any building greater than 100 feet in width must be divided vertically by a recess or an offset at least seven (7) feet deep and ten (10) feet wide and designed as two (2) or more distinct facades of differing architectural treatment so that the building appears to be multiple buildings.



VC3 Example, Newton Corner
Facade Articulation: Recess



VC3 Example, Newton Corner
Facade Articulation: Offset

Facade Length Building Examples



Trio, Newtonville



28 Austin St, Newtonville

Design Standards Examples

- **Ground Story Active Uses:**

- Retail
- Restaurant / bar / specialty food service
- Brewery / distillery / winery with an accessory retail component
- Place of amusement
- Personal service
- Day care center
- Public art / gallery / arts studio
- Live/work space
- Community use space
- Semi-active accessory uses, such as lobbies and common areas associated with office, hotel, or residential uses

- **Minimum Sidewalk Width:**

- When development occurs on any lot abutting a sidewalk that is less than twelve (12) feet in total width, inclusive of the Furnishing Zone, buildings must be set back an additional distance such that a paved area meeting City sidewalk standards of at least twelve (12) feet in width is provided, inclusive of the Furnishing Zone. The minimum and maximum front setbacks are increased accordingly.

- **Open Space and Public Realm:**

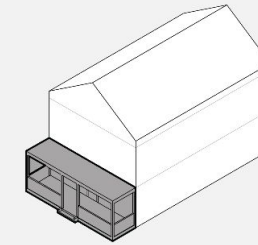
- Lots greater than 30,000 sf within the VC1 and VC2 districts must provide Usable Open Space accessible to the public totaling no less than five (5) percent of the total lot area.
- Buildings may provide shared Usable Open Space as exterior spaces (patio, roof deck, roof terrace, yard, Forecourt, plaza).

- **Parking Setbacks**

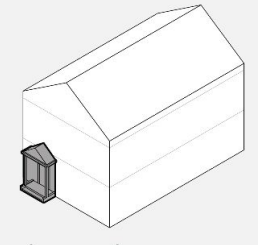
- All parking spaces and structures must be located at or behind any required parking setback as specified for each VCOD tier.
- Parking lots must be separated from the public right of way by a building or landscaped strip with a depth equal to the parking setback as specified in the Lot Standards for each VCOD Tier.

- **Architectural Features:**

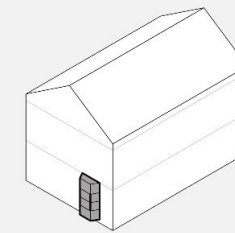
- **Bay.** A Bay is a window assembly extending from the main body of a building to permit increased light, provide multi-direction views, and articulate a building wall. Two Bays can connect around corners to create distinctive living space or terminate in an important axis.
- **Balcony.** An unenclosed platform with a railing that provides outdoor amenity space on upper stories.
- **Awning.** A roof-like covering of canvas or other material attached to a metal or other frame and supported entirely from a building or other structure.
- **Canopy.** A wall-mounted structure that provides shade and weather protection over a storefront or building entrance.



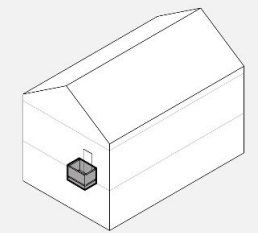
Porch



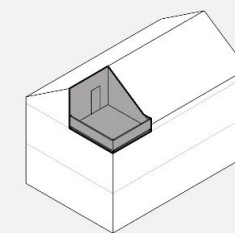
Projecting Entry



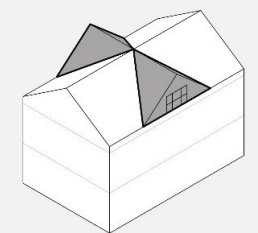
Bay



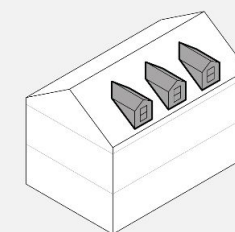
Balcony



Roof Deck



Cross Gable



Dormer

Design Guidelines Examples

- **Frontage Types:**

- Frontage types provide access to principal entrances and serve as the interface and transition between the private realm (building interiors) and the public realm (sidewalks and public spaces) and are defined by a combination of site features and façade characteristics.

- **Facade Articulation:**

- The type and color of materials should be kept to a minimum, preferably three (3) or fewer.

- **Building Entrances:**

- Monotonous and repetitive storefront or lobby systems, awnings, canopies, sign types, colors, or designs should be avoided.

- **Landscape and Stormwater Management:**

- Low-Impact-Development practices consistent with state law, such as Rain Gardens and bioswales, should be installed to treat and infiltrate runoff from parking lots, thoroughfares, entry plazas, dining patios, and other impervious surfaces.

- **Mechanical Equipment:**

- Vents, exhausts, and other utility features on building facades should be architecturally integrated into the design of the building and should be located to minimize adverse effects on pedestrian comfort along sidewalks and within open spaces.

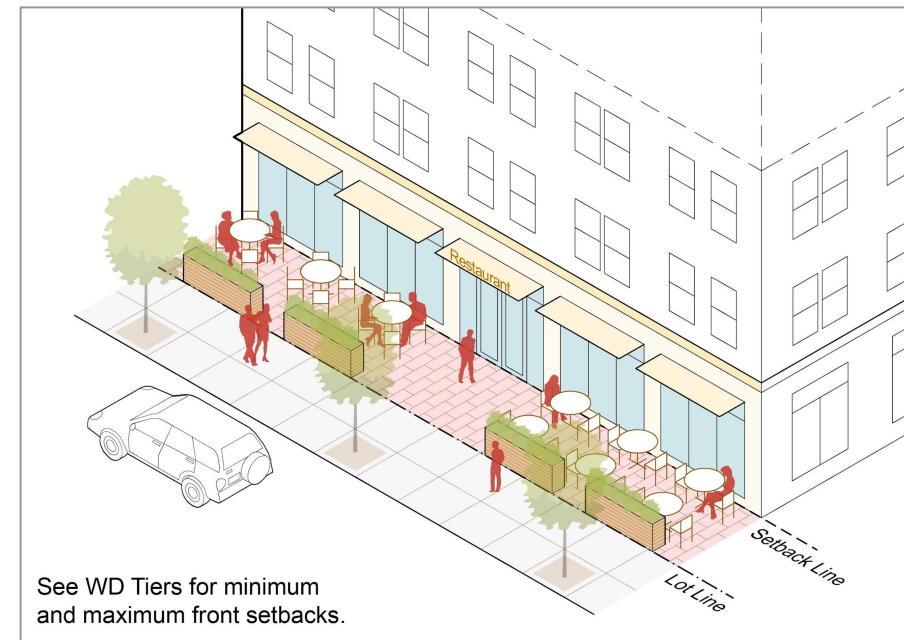
Frontage Type: Front Garden



Sustainable Design



Frontage Type: Dining Patio



Facade Treatment



Source: Beverly Design Standards
Utile, 2022

Source: Watertown Design Guidelines
Gamble Associates, 2015

Calendar Towards Potential Adoption

1. Where we are
2. Recap of Zoning Approach
3. Draft Village Center Zoning Ordinance
4. **Next Steps**

This first draft of the Village Center Zoning Ordinance is meant to be reviewed and updated. Moving forward, the team will work with the City Council and the broader community to refine the zoning text.

Calendar

