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Mayor

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Anthony Ciccariello,  
Commissioner of  
Inspectional Services

Barney S. Heath,  
Director

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**M E M O R A N D U M**

**DATE:** September 22, 2023

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Anthony Ciccariello, Commissioner of Inspectional Services  
Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development  
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director of Planning and Development  
Deb Finamore, Executive Administrator  
Katie Whewell, Chief Planner for Current Planning  
Alyssa Sandoval, Deputy Chief Planner for Current Planning

**CC:** Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer  
Maureen Lemeiux, Chief Financial Officer  
Joseph Mulvey, Chief Information Officer

**Re:** NewGov Status Report

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The Departments of Inspectional Services (ISD) and Planning and Development are pleased to report that the new permitting system "NewGov" is working quite well since its launch in May 2022. The system has dramatically increased the efficiency and user experience of city staff seeing everything in one place instead of making calls and e-mails to city staff within other departments to track down where an application is within its respective process. City staff can see extensive information and history of a property by simply searching the address and going to a property's "landing page" (Attachment A). This memo will primarily focus on the staff experience of utilizing the software, but staff have received positive feedback from the public, as well as minor requests from frequent external users (such as permitting attorneys) to enhance their experience with the permitting system.

Planning

The Planning Department has found NewGov extremely useful in managing the special permit process and the follow up after a special permit is approved (building permit and certificate of occupancy). There are several steps built in (Attachment B) which trigger various workflows with corresponding steps dependent on the type of application and in certain circumstances, and the type of zoning relief sought. For example, projects with seven or more units are automatically prompted to upload an Inclusionary Housing Plan, since that is the documentation which corresponds with their project. Another example is when reviewing a special permit application for completeness, staff can click a box that will then loop in the Engineering Division to review in accordance with the Stormwater and/or I&I Ordinances.

Properties with a special permit also receive a “flag” that is additional notification to other city departments whose work involves that property to alert them there are additional layers of review associated with the application.

Efforts thus far have gone into the special permit and building permit processes (the front-end processes). While the system works well, staff are still discovering areas where minor tweaks need to be made. These tweaks and hurdles are primarily around applications that were imported into NewGov from the former system, Community Plus, which is not entirely unexpected that there are some issues to work through when data is imported to a new system. Work is ongoing to establish and improve a process for capturing ongoing conditions relating to special permits. A new record type has been created for this and the Deputy Chief Planner is currently testing and ensuring the new record type will work as planned.

### Inspectional Services

One aspect of NewGov that has been particularly helpful in terms of efficiency to the Inspectional Services team is regarding properties with a special permit, staff are now able to see the recorded special permit, as well as the approved plans that were submitted with the special permit application. Inspectional Services staff can also view applications/permits for external departments such as Historical, Historic Districts, Engineering, Health Department and building, plumbing, gas and electrical permits. This is helpful as Inspectional Services staff are the ones who the public first meet at the customer facing counter. ISD staff can quickly see the appropriate department they may need to loop in to answer more specific questions on a property and whether the site is subject to certain jurisdictions, such as Conservation or Historic.

When working with the system, staff can also communicate with the applicant and other city staff on an application/record. This is extremely important when an inspector is out of the office. In this scenario, another inspector can quickly see what is happening with the application and can move the project forward or provide a quick response on any next steps. ISD as well as the applicants can enter inspection requests and payments in the system. Workflow steps in the applications allow other departments to give approval and ask questions before permits are issued.

ISD is also utilizing the new software for Zoning Enforcement complaints and all information regarding leaf blowers. Residents can submit complaints, which is routed to an inspector. All inspectors have iPads to use in the field and are able to upload pictures to the records instantly which frees up their time to work on other matters, such as reviewing new projects.

1114 BEACON ST NEWTON HIGHLANDS, MA 02461

Feedback



Display on Map Edit

Details

Zoning	Building Type	Occupancy
BU2	APARTMENT (9-99 UNITS)	112
MBL	Year Built	Book Page
54022 0004	2023	81658/117
Lot Area	Water	Sewage
52486	--	--
Subdivision		
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Name  
Name this location...

Property Owner

Name BEACON 1114 LLC

Phone

Email

Address 109 HIGHLAND ST 203  
NEEDHAM, MA 02494

Notes

Add a note...

Attachments

Upload Files

- Certificates of Inspection.pdf May 4, 2022 at 12:09pm
- mechanical permits.pdf May 4, 2022 at 12:09pm
- Simons 1114 Beacon St Recorded Council Order 12.8.21.pdf Feb 27, 2023 at 3:14pm

Flags

+ Add Flag

- SPECIAL PERMIT
- ZONING: BU2
- WETLAND FILING
- BUILDING DISTRICT: 4
- YEAR BUILT: 1940
- LAND USE: 325
- MECHANICAL DISTRICT: 3
- FOOD INSPECTION ZONE: 3
- FIRE DISTRICT: 3
- ENGINEERING DISTRICT: SOUTH
- WARD/PRECINCT: 6-3
- FRONTAGE: 158 FT.
- LOT SIZE: 52486 SF.

Records

#	Type	Date Submitted	Status
PL-23-842	Plumbing Permit Application	Jun. 16, 2023	ACTIVE
BP-23-1132 172 - BCC-23-50	Building Permit - Application	Apr. 26, 2023	ACTIVE
ENG-22-442	Engineering Construction Per...	Jun. 29, 2022	ACTIVE
EL-22-934	Electrical Permit Application	Apr. 25, 2022	ACTIVE
EL-19-1506	Electrical Permit Application	Jun. 30, 2019	ACTIVE
BP-13-99	Building Permit - Application	Jan. 16, 2013	ACTIVE
BP-06-2011	Building Permit - Application	Oct. 31, 2006	ACTIVE
BCC-23-50 172 - BCC-23-50	Building Permit - Change of C...	Aug. 28, 2023	COMPLETE
FHOT-23-81	Fire Hot Work (Welding, Cuttin...	Aug. 9, 2023	COMPLETE
FPU-23-73	Universal Fire Permit - NFD Int...	Jan. 19, 2023	COMPLETE
FPU-22-518	Universal Fire Permit - NFD Int...	Aug. 31, 2022	COMPLETE
CR-22-11	Consistency Ruling Request	Jul. 29, 2022	COMPLETE
FPU-22-356	Universal Fire Permit - NFD Int...	Jul. 25, 2022	COMPLETE
BP-22-4268	Building Permit - Application	May 12, 2022	COMPLETE
BP-22-3977	Building Permit - Application	Apr. 19, 2022	COMPLETE
ENG-22-45	Engineering Construction Per...	Feb. 2, 2022	COMPLETE

# SP-22-143



### Location

1 JACKSON ST, NEWTON CENTRE, MA 02459

### Timeline

Add New ▾

- ✓ **Completeness Review**  
Completed Aug 18, 2022 at 9:42 am KW
- ✓ **Clerk Intake Review**  
Completed Aug 18, 2022 at 12:16 pm DW
- ✓ **Special Permit Fee Submission**  
Completed Sep 22, 2022 at 11:25 am DW
- ✓ **Planner Assigned**  
Completed Oct 4, 2022 at 3:36 pm CK
- ✓ **Public Hearing Sign**  
Completed Oct 4, 2022 at 4:28 pm CK
- ✓ **Public Hearing Date Assigned**  
Completed Oct 7, 2022 at 10:40 am Nov 26 DW
- ✓ **Public Hearing Notice**  
Completed Oct 7, 2022 at 10:40 am DW
- ✓ **Public Hearing and Memo Attachment**  
Completed Oct 14, 2022 at 12:54 pm CK
- ✓ **Land Use Committee Vote**  
Completed Jan 19, 2023 at 11:20 am DW
- ✓ **City Council Vote**  
Completed Jan 19, 2023 at 11:20 am DW
- ✓ **Appeal Period**  
Completed Feb 10, 2023 at 6:04 pm Feb 10 DW
- ✓ **Decision Details**  
Completed Feb 27, 2023 at 9:34 am CK
- ✓ **Signed Council Order**  
Completed Feb 27, 2023 at 10:11 am DW
- ✓ **Recorded Special Permit**  
Completed Feb 27, 2023 at 10:11 am DW

### Details

#### Internal Information Edit

- Docket Number**  
448-22 **Planner Assigned**  
Cat Kemmett
- Engineering Review Needed**  
 **Tree Warden Review**
- Additional Land Use Meetings Needed**  
 **Hearing Date**  
10/18/2022
- Number of Land Use Meetings**  
2
- Notes: (ex. additional hearing dates)**  
1/10/2023

#### Decision Details Edit

- Land Use Committee Recommendation (Clerk)**  
Approved
- Land Use Committee Vote (Clerk)**