



Zoning & Planning and Public Facilities Committee

Joint Meeting Report

City of Newton

In City Council

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Present Zoning & Planning Committee Members: Councilors Albright (Chair), Danberg, Leary, Krintzman, Brousal-Glaser, Baker, Downs and Kalis

Present Public Facilities Committee Members: Councilors Crossley (Chair), Leary, Norton, Kelley, Laredo, Lappin, Danberg. Absent: Councilor Gentile

Also Present: Councilors Greenberg and Markiewicz

City Staff Present: Jonathan Yeo (COO), Barney Health (Director of Planning & Development), James Freas (Deputy Director of Planning), Jennifer Steel (Planner for Planning & Development), Attorney Andrew Lee, and Ann Berwick (Director of Sustainability)

Guests: Beverly Craig (Newton Citizens Commission on Energy), Halina Brown (Chair-Newton Citizens Commission on Energy), Jonathan Kantor (Newton Citizens Commission on Energy) and, Members of the Community Preservation Committee

#302-19 Appointment of Paul Dudek to Auburndale Historic District Commission

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing PAUL DUDEK, 30 Williston Road, Auburndale, as a member of the AUBURNDALE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION for a term to expire September 30, 2022 (60 days: 11/02/19)

Action: **Zoning and Planning Approved 6-0 (Councilor Krintzman and Downs not voting)**

Note: Paul Dudek was present to explain why he would like to be a part of the Auburndale Historic District Commission. Mr. Dudek explained that he is a retired Architect, has lived in Auburndale since 1974 and his children went to Newton Public Schools. Additionally, he explained he was a supporter of the creation of the Auburndale Historic District Commission and has also been before the Commission for construction on his own property. He understands the importance of preserving the historic fabric of Newton. Mr. Dudek explained he would be honored to serve on this Commission. Committee members thanked the Mr. Dudek for his willingness to serve. Councilor Danberg motioned to approve which passed 6-0 with Councilor Krintzman and Downs not voting.

#303-19 Appointment of Richard Alfred to Auburndale Historic District Commission

HER HONOR THE MAYOR reappointing RICHARD ALFRED, 73 Grove Street, Auburndale, as an alternate member of the AUBURNDALE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION for a term to expire October 1, 2022 (60 days: 11/02/19)

Action: **Zoning and Planning Approved 7-0 (Councilor Krintzman not voting)**

Note: This item was approved without discussion. Councilor Leary motioned to approve which passed 7-0 with Councilor Krintzman not voting.

#304-19 **Appointment of Kathryn Kubie to the Newton Historical Commission**
HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing KATHRYN KUBIE, 48 Holman Road, Auburndale, as a member of the NEWTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION for a term to expire August 1, 2022. (60 days: 11/02/19).

Action: **Zoning and Planning Approved 6-0 (Councilor Krintzman and Downs not voting)**

Note: Kathryn Kubie was present to explain why she would like to be a member of the Newton Historical Commission. Ms. Kubie explained she has lived in Newton for almost 30 years and has been a teacher in the Newton Public Schools. Prior to her education career, Ms. Kubie was active in historical preservation at the state level. She explained she worked at the Mass Historical Commission in the 1980s, where she looked at the impact of any development projects that took federal funding to understand possible impact on the historic fabric. Additionally, Ms. Kubie works for the Historical Association on Nantucket and a member of the Nantucket Preservation Trust. Ms. Kubie explained that her interests and background make her want to be a part of the Auburndale District Historical Commission. Committee Members thanked Ms. Kubie for her willingness to serve. A committee member commented on the City's the fact there has not been an effort to systematically landmark appropriate homes in need of preservation and asked Ms. Kubie if she had any comments on that issue. Ms. Kubie explained the importance of being proactive with this issue and that the exterior and interior parts of a building are important when landmarking. Ms. Kubie agreed with the importance of landmark status. Councilor Brousal-Glaser motioned to approved with a vote of 6-0 with Councilor Krintzman and Downs not voting.

#140-19(3) **Zoning amendments for Riverside project**
RIVERSIDE STATION/355 GROVE STREET AND 399 GROVE STREET requesting amendments to Chapter 30, Newton Zoning Ordinance, in Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 relative to the Mixed Use 3 District.

Action: **Zoning and Planning Held 7-0 (Councilor Krintzman not voting)**

Note: See note for item 187-19

#187-19 **Zoning amendment from Newton LFIA for Riverside Station**
LOWER FALLS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION RIVERSIDE COMMITTEE & THE WARD 4 COUNCILORS requesting to amend Chapter 30, City of Newton Zoning Ordinance, Sections 4.2 and 7.3.5 pertaining to the Mixed Use3/Transit-Oriented zoning district.

Action: **Zoning and Planning Held 7-0 (Councilor Krintzman not voting)**

Note: The Chair explained that the petitioners would like to hold items 140-19(3) and 187-19 and discuss it at the October 28th Zoning and Planning meeting. Councilor Danberg moved to hold which passed 7-0 with Councilor Krintzman not voting.

Referred to Public Facilities and Zoning & Planning Committees

#143-19 **Discussion/Adoption of Climate Action Plan/Citizens Climate Action Plan**
COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT AND CROSSLEY on behalf of the Zoning & Planning and Public Facilities committees, requesting discussion and adoption of items within the Climate Action Plan and the Citizen's Climate Action Plan with the Sustainability Directors, Climate Action Planning team led by Jennifer Steel (Planning Department staff, MAPC and volunteers) and the Citizens' Commission on Energy. The focus will be to understand the synergies between the two complimentary plans and how items within the plans can be integrated to achieve the significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions called for in recent national and international reports.

Action: **Zoning and Planning Held 8-0**
Public Facilities Held 7-0

Note: See note for #13-19

#13-19 **Adoption of the Climate Action Plan**
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING requesting discussion and adoption of the Climate Action Plan as an amendment to the 2007 Comprehensive Plan.

Action: **Zoning and Planning Held 8-0**

Note: Senior Planner Jennifer Steel, Director of Planning and Development Barney Heath and Deputy Director of Planning James Freas presented their changes to the Climate Action Plan (CAP) resulting from the comments at the last discussion. Beverly Craig, a member of the Newton Citizens Commission on Energy (NCCE), presented information about how Home Energy Rating Systems (HERS) work and how such information may be used to incentivize energy efficiencies retrofits at point of sale. Ms. Craig's presentation is attached. Ms. Craig explained that the CAP talks about an energy consumption disclosure at the time of sale for homes. The NCCE was asked to find out what the options are for that. There are two accepted standardized methods for the energy assessment of a building. Both the HERS Index and the Energy Scorecard are explained in the presentation, as well as the importance of sharing such consumer information with home buyers.

A committee member asked if the Citizens Commission on Energy is now asking for the Energy Scorecard to be a part of the CAP versus Utility Bills. Ms. Craig explained that both the NCCE and Green Newton believe that Energy Scorecards are preferable to just bills. Additionally, the Scorecards are free, so this can be a reasonable request. HERS ratings would be better/more accurate, but there is a cost associated. Ms. Craig added that the Commission believes that the best time to require this is at the time of listing. HERS ratings are available for new construction and Ms. Craig suggested that HERS should be added to Assessors file so that the homeowner has access to that. A committee member asked if requiring at the time of listing is legal? City Attorney Andrew Lee expressed concern on whether the City can require the Scorecard to be produced at the time of listing. Ms. Craig explained that they will look at other communities that have done this and do more research on the matter.

A committee member asked when this will be done, who would bear the cost and what prevents someone from asking for an energy assessment as part of the home inspection process right now? Additionally, the committee member asked whether getting an energy Scorecard on a property be a recommendation instead of a legal requirement. Ms. Craig explained that the energy assessment could be added to a home inspection for \$50 but there are other ways the seller can get a scorecard, for example going through a private company. The committee asked if this will be paid for by the seller. The Chair explained that this will depend on what the Council wants to do with it. For example, Title V requires an inspection to be the seller's responsibility. At one time the HERS was proposed to be included in the Green Communities Act; it was thought of it as a consumer protection device. Ms. Craig explained that the NCCE are here to present what options are out there for energy assessment and how it could be used. The Chair recognized the need for more information on the legality of requiring this at the time of listing.

Using an outline provided to the committee (attached), Ms. Steel explained the changes that have been incorporated into the 10-15-19 Draft Climate Action Plan, those that were not, and why. This draft of the Climate Action Plan is available on the Zoning and Planning Committee Page as part of this report.

A committee member asked if the special permit recommendation means that the Council is recommending that the Zoning now add that a property be electrified as a condition of a special permit. The committee member believed that the language added TO D.3.1 ("use electricity for heating and cooling") is too broad.

A committee member asked for A.1.3 (adding of a dashboard) and what will have to be done to make this possible. The committee member commented that updating should be done on a monthly basis to understand when things are working versus not working. He added that he would like to work with the Planning Department to see what can be tracked monthly and what can't.

Ms. Steel listed and described requested changes not added to the 10-15-19 Draft Climate Action Plan. A summary of this is attached.

A committee member commented that the heading of C.4.2 does not match the text. The text states that reducing the parking minimum will be explored but the header states that they will work with the City Council to reduce or eliminate the minimum parking requirement, Additionally the committee stated the text should read that parking caps "can" limit expanses of asphalt and not "will".

In response to a councilors question, regarding near-interim milestones, Ms. Steel stated that no near-term milestones to mark progress have been incorporated into the plan. Interim milestones will be developed as this plan is implemented. This was to address the question of adding specific milestones between now and 2025 and 2025 to 2050. There are three specific metrics outlined in the CAP that are annual goals. The footnote gives the numerical targets. Ms. Steel explained that they can't state specific objectives between 2025 and 2050 because that is beyond the 5-year plan. A committee member is also concerned that if no one is thinking about the long term and if there

are foundational elements that have to be set that aren't (yet understood) that it could hold the plan back. The committee member wants there to be a group that is planning and setting the foundational elements so that the long term goals can be met. Ms. Steel explained that the volunteers from the NCCE have worked to make sure that this plan is setting the framework to lead Newton toward carbon neutrality by 2050. Additionally, Ms. Steel explained that the goal is to have the plan passed as soon as possible so that the "cluster" /task force can be established and get to work.

A committee member asked about whether the CAP draft in its entirety should be made a part of the Comprehensive Plan. The CAP is a document that will need to be updated periodically as the various programs and the technologies evolve. The committee member asked if a broader expression of the CAP might be added to the Comprehensive Plan because most the Comprehensive Plan expresses a broader vision. It will be difficult to update an element of the Comprehensive Plan as frequently as the Climate Action Plan may need to change. Mr. Freas explained that they do not plan to amend the CAP document until 5 years is up. As technology evolves, they will change course as needed. A committee member stated that the public and the Council needs to be kept updated on the progress of the plan if the Climate Action Plan itself will not be a living document. A committee member suggested that the Climate Action Plan could be separate and then add a broader statement to the Comprehensive Plan. A committee member asked Mr. Heath if their plan was for the CAP to be a part of the Comprehensive plan. Mr. Heath explained that this is their usual practice because the Comprehensive plan is what is looked to for guidance on policy.

When asked about EV charging stations, Ms. Steel explained that goals for Electric Vehicle chargers in municipal and school lots is addressed in the transportation chapter of the plan. Mr. Yeo explained that there will be information on EV chargers as well in the next Capital Improvement Plan to be presented at full council next week.

A committee member stated that the metrics are important because otherwise it is not clear how the City will measure success against stated goals. Long term goals include having all cars and homes powered by electricity by 2050. Electrification is necessary to using clean energy sources; the only way to achieve carbon neutrality. But he asked, how can this be implemented? Owners of older houses in Newton may not want to go through with everything being proposed. The committee member questioned what happens to those residents who may stay with gas? And will the gas companies be able to service them? Public Buildings and vehicles should also be electric by 2050, if this is what the Council is asking of the private sector.

A committee stated the importance of the Energy Coach in educating the public and is disappointed that the administration has not made a strong commitment to fund this position. Other items before the City have commitments without yet identifying a funding source such as Webster Woods. If this position is not funded then the information will not get to our residents, businesses and then the city will not reach these goals.

Halina Brown, Chair of the Citizens of the Energy Commission, stated that the City adding the metrics and footprints to this plan was important, and that the NCCE is overall very pleased with this iteration of the CAP. Ms. Brown also explained that the questions regarding disclosure of the energy

assessment will take a bit more research and they will investigate that quickly – in time for the next meeting. Ms. Brown did not believe that the Climate Action Plan should suggest only a conversation about disclosure but to adopt energy disclosure as part of the CAP pending the outcome of the research. A committee member agreed that this process can be figured out and it does not have to wait 5 years to be implemented.

The Chair stated that if the committees are ready then this will be taken to public hearing on November 13th and could potentially be voted at that meeting. There was a sense of the meeting to go ahead with that date, but members want to see a redline draft in advance.

A committee member discussed the disclosure item and stated that this could be a part of the Assessors database which could encourage people to get the Scorecard or the HERS rating on their property. There is concern that the plan should commit to address how to help residents who may need financial help investigating in electric heating or even just getting the Scorecard.

Ms. Steel will prepare a redline document so that the Councilors can comment on the changes since the September 23rd draft that have and will be made.

In Zoning and Planning Councilor Danberg motioned to hold which passed unanimously. In Public Facilities Councilor Kelley moved to hold which passed unanimously.

#518-18 Discussion and review relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING requesting review, discussion, and direction relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance.

Action: Zoning and Planning Held 8-0

Note: James Freas, Deputy Director of Planning, and Barney Heath, Director of Planning presented the request to review the draft Zoning Ordinance. The Chair noted that the committee will be looking only at the environmental standards in this draft Zoning Ordinance. The proposed draft environmental ordinances deal with 3 areas; reducing barriers to environmental improvements, sustainable building/ site design requirements and EV charging station requirements.

Mr. Freas provided a description of each of the three areas. Proposed amendments to reducing barriers to environmental improvement include allowing things in the setback such as heat pumps, exterior insulation, doorway vestibules, window shades and overhangs; allowances for solar panels that would effect height requirements; and elements that effect floor area ratio (FAR) such as doorway vestibules and exterior insulation. Mr. Freas stated that the building standards section was modeled after a similar 2010 Cambridge ordinance. Proposed changes to sustainable building and site design include applying new standards to proposed special permits of 20,000 or larger, applying the standards of three green building programs (such as LEED or Passive House), EV charging stations and other smaller requirements. In addition, special permits would require design review and program development by a green building program professional. Finally, to ensure compliance there would have to be assurance from a green building professional that the program meets standard at the time of submission for a building permit as well as participation from a green commissioning agent. The final proposed area of change would require that 10% of proposed project parking spaces

have access to EV chargers and that an additional 10% of the spaces would be EV charging read. At the completion of each section of the presentation the floor was opened to questions and comments.

A councilor commented regarding encroaching into the setback and suggested that there should also be a different number for new construction vs renovation. The councilor added that we should find an incentive for developers to do more than what is required by code for continuous insulation and for continuous insulation to be offered for existing and new construction. Additionally, the councilor commented that the standard should be different for encroachment into the front setback for a vestibule than for one in the side setback. For the equipment the councilor agreed it should be on the side or rear not the front of the property. It was opined that the noise ordinance should not be a problem with that equipment.

A councilor expressed a concern that setbacks and height limits are designed to take care problems and wants to be sure they aren't compromised unfairly. For example, if an air conditioner cannot be in the rear yard setback, then perhaps a heat pump should also not be allowed. Additionally, the councilor commented that there should be a noise and visual screening for the heat pumps if they are in the setback. The councilor also commented on the window shades and how the shades will look visually. The wrap around insulation should be better defined on how the insulation will work with older homes and if it will affect the historic appearance of the home.

A councilor commented on the solar panel being allowed to be 4 ft off the roof line and that on a slate roof the solar panels generally the panels are attached to the roof itself but on a flat roof then they are angled up. The councilor was under the impression that the City was trying to discourage flat roofs for residential properties and questioned why the City would be encouraged a 4ft extension above the roof line. For the sundown shades the councilor questioned if there should be a design review on that aspect of the project. Additionally, the councilor asked if on the 8 inch encroachment allowance for the exterior wrap on insulation and if the normal insulation is 3 inches then what would need to be 8 inches wide. Mr. Freas explained that there are several products that come in various widths that are attached the siding and the exterior. Jonathan Kantor, a member of the Energy Commission, explained that there a couple of conditions that need to be accounted for when adding insulation to the exterior. In a renovation, 4 inches of rigid insulation could be added plus another inch of an air gap, adding the siding makes 8 inches is a good number to have as a maximum. If this is new construction or a major gut renovation, then there could be a wall that is 12 inches thick with an interior and exterior stud partition wall which will be filled with insulation. The 8 inch definition is a good number and if the 4 inch stud wall is included then that would be 12 inches.

A councilor questioned if using a specific technology in the standard, a heat pump compressor, is too specific recognizing that there might be yet unknown technological advances designed to improve the efficiencies in the future. The councilor agreed there should be a standard in the ordinance to make sure this would not disruptive to the surrounding properties.

A councilor commented that the Council needs to understand the noise impact of the equipment. There are portions of the City where the houses are close together and if neighboring homes are brick, they may be especially impacted by sound reverberating between the brick.

A councilor commented that a 3 by 4 foot vestibule is small and perhaps the Council should allow for a larger vestibule in the setback. There was concern that limiting the size would not give homeowners the incentive to build a vestibule. The councilor wondered if the new high efficiency equipment is quieter and that perhaps we could rely on the existing noise ordinance. A councilor was concerned that the noise ordinance may not account for a situation where noise is being generated in homes in very close proximity. Also, the councilor noted that the Council should understand that the construction might also generate noise. A councilor stated that their other equipment that can encroach into the setback. A condenser that is wall mounted or a temporary AC unit onto to the house could hang over the setback and noted that it could be better to get the equipment out of sight and not have to hang it on the building. A councilor asked if there could be a screening requirement for the equipment.

The next part of the discussion dealt with the Development Standards. This would require sustainable building and site design requirements.

A councilor asked what the department has learned from Cambridge and asked if they had discussed the 20,000 to 25,000 sq. ft. range. Mr. Freas explained that he had mostly talked to Cambridge about how Cambridge administers the ordinance. Cambridge has a staff member whose primary role is to review the Green or Sustainable Building submissions. Mr. Freas explained that the development community and Cambridge has not had any issues with that ordinance. Cambridge's program requires LEED Silver for anything over 25,000 sq. ft. and they have had positive results. Mr. Freas explained that the Newton's requirement of 20,000 sq. ft. which also triggers a special permit. A councilor questioned if besides the three choices for Green Building Programs, LED, Passive House and Enterprise Green Communities, that there should be another point that will provide opportunity for any new technology that may be developed. Mr. Freas did not have an issue with including that and explained that each of the Green Building Programs is an established program with a certification program attached to it. Any other program would have to be a certifiable equivalent.

A councilor questioned if there was an existing structure at 20,000 sq. ft. would it have to follow this ordinance. Mr. Freas explained that it would not. The councilor also asked about possible exceptions and if it was identical to the parking exceptions. The councilor would not want people to be able to be exempt for just any reason. Mr. Freas explained that it is not identical to the parking exemption and that he has tried to build in language to prevent people from exempting for anything except a valid public purpose. The councilor asked if they could ask how other cities implemented these exemptions.

A councilor commented that through the docket item that Councilor Crossley and Albright docketed was to see if the City could broaden the scope of special permit criteria number 5. This ordinance would replace criteria number 5 and the Council should discuss whether the criteria is met. The councilor also commented that perhaps 10,000 sq. ft. could be selected with a different set of requirements. Mr. Freas explained that the department is not closed to the idea of 10,000 sq. ft. The councilor asked if there could be a think tank with excerpts in the community and the City's Sustainability team on the issue of 10,000 sq. ft. or 20,000 sq. ft. A councilor questioned how many projects, in the last 2 years, would that reduction in size would have affected and what would be the increase in cost for the developers to meet the City's standards. Mr. Freas explained that even if they

moved the requirement to 10,000 sq. ft. the project would still need a special permit; theoretically there would 10,000 sq. ft. buildings that would not have to meet the requirements because they do not need a special permit.

The Chair noted that there would need to be a conversation on if this ordinance replaces criterion number 5. Additionally, there needs to be a conversation on the Solar Panels that is not incorporated into this ordinance which were not included in the draft ordinance.

Councilor Krintzman motioned to hold which passed unanimously.

#165-19 Adoption of Washington Street Vision Plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING requesting approval and adoption of the Washington Street Vision Plan as an amendment to the 2007 Newton Comprehensive Plan.

Action: **Zoning and Planning Held 8-0**

Note: James Freas, Deputy Director of Planning, explained that the 10-11-19 Planning memo covers the issue of height on the Washington St Corridor. He reiterated zoning will have requirements related to varying building heights, heights, stepping down to adjacent neighborhoods, heights stepping back along the street above 3 or 4 stories. He stated that 6-story buildings should be used sparingly, to mark significant locations and to help achieve City policy objectives for land use and design. Criteria will give the right to the City Council to deny a project that has multiple 6-story buildings. Each project will be reviewed individually. Mr. Freas explained that zoning could require that any building over 3 stories along the Washington Street Corridor would require a special permit.

A committee member explained that the height issue is a concern for residents and stated that some residents want a low-scale appearance to Newton and do not want to see higher structures as part of the village center. The committee member understands that the City needs to provide an incentive for re-development and that could mean more height, but this can be difficult when some citizens feel that 3 to 4 stories should be the maximum height. The member is concerned that a special permit is rarely turned down. Mr. Freas explained that the plan states the median height category and that allowed heights are lower in the village centers to preserve historic character. Additionally, Mr. Freas explained that the zoning would require significant height variation. In addition, underground parking would be required because there was a consensus that buildings wrapped around above ground parking garage are not desirable for Newton.

A committee member asked if it is a first come first serve scenario on building heights. Mr. Freas explained that as the Zoning is set up right now that if the developer will have more than one building in the development that height variation is specified. This does become an issue when there are different properties with ownership, but criteria could be written to allow the Council to turn down proximate 6 story buildings.

A committee member asked how to assure mixed heights in the Zoning. Mr. Freas explained if there are multiple buildings on one property then the draft zoning ordinance has standards that will require a variation of height. The committee member asked if any wording could be added about contiguous

properties. Mr. Freas explained that this could be done through special permit criteria that could give the Council the right to deny, for example, a five story building next to another five story building.

The Chair explained the obligations the Council will require including underground parking, sustainable building standards, and inclusionary zoning requirements for affordable housing all of which effect the financial feasibility of a project. In a multiple building site, the Council will require some 3 story buildings, and varied heights of other buildings. A six-story building would be limited. A Committee member stated, overall this needs to relate to what is in the best interest of the City as a whole, comparing height and the benefits we want from that. Mr. Heath explained that they are trying to leave some flexibility for some of the public benefits. A committee member asked about the ratio of the height of the building to the street. The street width to height ratio is an item that that helped the Planning Department set heights that are being proposed.

The Chair raised the issue of Washington Street as a boulevard which is one option described in the plan. A study will be conducted to propose the best configuration for Washington Street. Mr. Freas added that the number one priority on the street would be safety for all users and then general improvements to a range of other issues. A boulevard is a great way of dealing with these issues, but it is not the only alternative that will be studied. The Chair noted that the issues with pick-up and drop offs would be answered through a study of the road. A committee member committed that boulevard is used in a leading sentence of the plan and that it could just read "Reconfigure Washington St for safety for all users".

A committee member stated that there will be analysis on how affective having discounted MBTA passes available on Washington Street will be. This data should be available soon.

A committee member commented that the height of the building should be no more than 4 stories. Additionally, the committee member is concerned that this will also bring more cars to the area. When asked if the city planned to find land to help create affordable housing. Mr. Heath explained that the plan does discuss leveraging city land for affordable housing. The committee member is concerned with this incentive. Mr. Heath explained there are not many incentives that can be offered for affordable housing and that is one of the most effective ones. The committee member asked if they have met with affordable housing groups about what they would need to bring more housing to newton. Mr. Heath explained they are in constant communication with these groups and are happy to discuss with them if they have a proposal for an incentive. The Chair commented that she and other councilors met with a nonprofit housing developer who said that the major issues in Newton regarding affordable housing development are the high price of land and the lengthy approval process. These are issues that need to be looked at.

A committee member stated that the maps, especially the height, trouble him. A committee member stated that housing residents in close proximity to transportation and amenities will mean less driving to destinations. The committee member commented that more height would mean more people in walking distance to amenities. If the Council limits the height to 3 stories, then there will not be much variation on the street. A Committee member suggested a straw vote on this matter.

A committee member commented that there is congestion, heat islands and tree-less areas on Washington St and this plan needs to move forward so that these issues can be addressed. Variation in height would be beneficial for the city. The sustainability improvements are critical for the goals in the Climate Action Plan. Implementation would be mostly 2,3 or 4 story buildings near village centers and 6 story buildings in limited areas. The overall design of this street will enhance Washington Street and the height should not hold up the plan.

A committee member asked if we could include special permit criteria or some other way to limit 6 story buildings. Mr. Freas explained that the draft zoning ordinance states that a lot with multiple buildings require varying the heights and stepping down in residential areas. If step down cannot be achieved, then then project cannot use the maximize height. Mr. Freas reiterated that including 6 stories in the plan is nonbinding for zoning efforts.

A committee member commented that they are in favor of bringing the MBTA lot down to six stories as part of this plan. Also, if the range is 3 to 5 stories then they have the option of 4 stories and the City will be able to vary the heights. The Chair commented that as of now Washington St is zoned for 3 stories, MU 4 zone allowed for up to 5 stories. The flexibility is important part of this project.

A committee member stated that they would like to see sidewalks wider to help with encouraging people to walk and added amenities need to be a part of discussion when discussing height. The reason there are ground level parking lots is because many of the buildings in commercial areas are only 1 story. Additionally, the committee member commented that there must be a number of stories on a building that will make it worth it for a developer to add underground parking. There could be fewer amenities available if the developers are limited on the height of the building.

A committee member commented that in the special permit criteria there should be good cause to go up higher or have no impact on the adjacent properties. Washington St is abutted by residential properties. Zoning criteria would need to be added to protect residential areas. The setbacks need to be considered in the Zoning.

Straw Votes

Councilor Kalis made a motion to remove the 10 story option in West Newton and set a maximum of 6 stories.

This vote was 6 in favor and 2 abstentions.

Councilor Leary moved to include the flexibility to have buildings up to 6 stories in the Vision Plan.


This vote was 5 in favor 2 against and 1 abstention.

The Chair stated that there should be a new draft by the October 28th meeting.

Councilor Krintzman moved to hold which passed unanimously.


Respectfully Submitted,

Susan S. Albright, Chair




Energy Scorecard

- Compares your home to average existing home in Massachusetts
- Shows energy and \$\$ savings of energy upgrades
- Based on computer modeling only
 - Requires 25-30 data inputs
- Less precise than HERS
- Most appropriate for existing homes
- Cost
 - Free with Mass Save Energy Audit, starting in spring 2020
 - \$50 extra when combined with regular home inspection
 - \$150-200 market price



5



Your Massachusetts Home Scorecard

This scorecard compares home energy use and carbon footprint to an average home in MA, and shows improvements based on recommendations.

ABOUT

Address
123 Main St., Watuly, MA, 01903

Year Built: 1850 Sq. Footage: 2735

of Bedrooms: 3 Primary Heating Fuel: Fuel Oil

Assessment Date: N/A Energy Specialist: Dave Saxe

YEARLY ENERGY USE

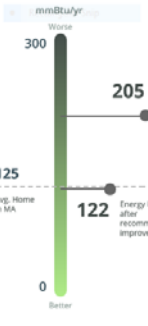
Electricity: 3,613 kWh Fuel Oil: 1,324 gallons

YEARLY COSTS & SAVINGS*


\$ 4,343 Pre-upgrade Energy Cost per yr	\$ 2,798 Post-upgrade Energy Cost per yr	\$ 1,545 SAVE Estimated Energy Savings per yr
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HOME ENERGY USE


This shows the estimated total energy use (electricity and heating fuel) of your home for one year. The lower the energy use, the better!



Estimated percentage of energy use by fuel type:



6




Scorecard pilot: 2012-2014

- 8 Towns in Western MA, 3866 Energy Audits
- Small extra \$\$ incentives for insulation work

RESULTS

- 44% followed audit with insulation (compare to Newton 19%)
- 100% found Scorecard easy to understand
- 99% found it useful in decisions to make efficiency improvements
- 74% said scorecards very useful in home-buying



7

Energy Scorecard is coming!

- Spring 2020: Utilities required to provide Energy Scorecards **FREE** with home energy assessment
- Energy Scorecards are currently required at home sales in
 - Oregon
 - Connecticut
 - Montpelier, VT



8

Why Not Utility Bills?

- Privacy issues such as low income
- Depend on homeowner's habits
- Depend on weather
- Depend on # of home occupants
- Depend on house size
- Depend on EV charging
- Don't assess "physical building"
- No benchmark to compare with



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DOER Energy Scorecard Disclosure

- Currently no requirement for public disclosure at point of sale
- Two years ago defeated at state legislature, BUT...
- In 2018 Governor Baker filed legislation to...require after January 1, 2021, that home energy ratings be made available to potential homebuyers at the time of listing
- MLS increasingly includes energy features of homes for sale



10

Aligning With Other Programs/Ratings



- DOER Home Energy Score and HERS rating now qualify for mortgage enhancements from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
- Potentially financial advantages to homebuyers and realtors
- All new construction requires HERS rating

11

Recommendations for Newton

- Require Scorecard at the point of listing

OR

- Require Home Energy Assessment before listing. It will come with a free Scorecard. Require disclosure of Scorecard for MLS and homebuyer

AND

- Evaluate the legality of requiring that Scorecard and HERS score are listed in Assessor's Database.

12

Requested Changes that Were Not Incorporated into the 10-15-19 Draft Climate Action Plan (*and Why*)

Throughout

- ---- Incorporate stronger language indicating that the City “will” do x, y, and z
 - *Each action item in this plan is a recommendation. Each recommended action will require a body (e.g., the Mayor, the Cluster, or City Council) to “adopt” the recommendation, dedicate funding, (re)allocate staff time, or approve a new ordinance. It will be up to those bodies to determine the most efficient and financially feasible paths forward.*

Executive Summary and Introduction

- ---- Include additional near-term interim goals and long-term interim goals
 - *Any new near-term goals will be determined by the implementers and the Cluster.*
 - *Long-term interim goals are not a priority for a 5-year plan.*

A. Implementation Leadership

- A.2.2. Include a firm commitment to funding an Energy Coach
 - *Any new position will need to be evaluated as part of the FY21 budget.*

B. Greening Newton’s Transportation and Streetscapes

- C.4.2. Remove parking minimums
 - *The existing language of C.4.2 allows for “elimination” of parking minimums, but does not require it.*

C. New Construction and Major Renovations

- ---- Avoid making specific zoning recommendations
 - *Zoning is one of the few regulatory tools available to the City and one of the more effective means of addressing GHG emissions. All proposed zoning changes will be discussed and debated by the City Council.*
- D.3.1. Require Passive House standard for all new construction
 - *The details of the zoning ordinance must be debated, but the broad goal of “maximizing energy efficiency” will allow for Passive House or other appropriate standard.*
- D.3.3. Require EV chargers to be installed on all existing parking lots
 - *Zoning regulations provide influence over new construction. There is no regulatory mechanism for requiring construction/installation on existing private parcels.*

F. Reducing GHG Emissions Associated with Consumption and Disposal

- ---- Add a fee for bulky waste items
 - *This suggestion has merit but was not identified as a priority for reducing GHG emissions.*
- F.2.1. Require all businesses to recycle
 - *This will get consideration under F.2.1 “Consider citywide mandatory commercial recycling.”*

Requested Changes that Were Incorporated into the 10-15-19 Draft Climate Action Plan

Throughout

- ---- Noted that TAG is an advisory committee

Executive Summary

- ---- Added the table of metrics/goals and notes about building up to the 2025 goals
- ---- Formatted the other tables in the Executive Summary for consistency

Introduction

- ---- Added the table of metrics/goals
- ---- Added text box noting that reference to current best practices is not intended to limit exploration or implementation of other technologies.

A. Implementation Leadership

- A.1.2. Clarified that cost-benefit analyses will be of municipal projects
- A.1.3. Added consideration of a dashboard
- A.1.7. Added an annual public update and noted interest in adding a dashboard to the website
- A.2.2. Noted the necessity of the Energy Coach

B. Clean and Renewable Energy

- ~B.3.1. Added a text box about gas leaks

C. Greening Newton's Transportation and Streetscapes

- C.1.4. Added note that streets are the most extensive City infrastructure and an area where the City can influence GHG emissions
- C.4.3. Noted the need to incorporate bike/ped improvements in all street projects
- C.4.3. Added network of calm streets as a goal
- C.4.4. (and referenced in C.1.5) Noted the need for TDM for schools and City buildings
- C.4.7. Noted the need to explore all possible funding sources for transportation improvement projects
- Accomplishment Box. Clarified that street trees are not green infrastructure

D. New Construction and Major Renovations

- D.3. Added the concept of Passive House to the high-efficiency zoning ordinance recommendation
- D.3.1. Added "and use electricity for heating and cooling" to the special permit zoning ordinance recommendation
- ~D.3.1. Added a text box summarizing Passive House standards

E. Existing Buildings

- E.3.2. Added future consideration of a HERS standard and disclosure