

Zoning Redesign Pattern Book Comments

The public was invited to comment on a draft of the Pattern Book in the autumn of 2017. The planning team, including staff of the City of Newton, have thoroughly read and discussed all of the comments, and their responses are documented below. Comments have been addressed in order to improve the accuracy and utility of the Pattern Book. The Pattern Book is a tool in drafting a new zoning ordinance for Newton, and as such City staff referred to these comments as part of the drafting process for the Zoning Redesign initiative as one of many pieces of input. Please note that the page numbers included in the public comments may have changed in the final version of the Pattern Book.

Date	Comments received from members of the public	Action/response from the planning team
9/8/17	<p>I have been browsing the pattern book that is available online.</p> <p>On page 42, isochrones is defined: "isochrones (iso meaning distance, and chrone meaning time)." I am not a Greek scholar, but in my experience "iso" typically means equal as in isosceles triangles, isotopes, isobars...</p> <p>One of my main takeaways is that 87% of the properties are nonconforming. I do not understand why so many properties do not conform to current zoning regulations. Is it that the regulations have changed since the properties were developed? Is it that properties were developed in violation of the current regulations? Is it that the current regulations do not permit accepted activities or practices? I think more elaboration on this issue would help make a compelling case for rezoning.</p>	<p>Definition of isochrone was edited to reflect the use of the prefix "iso-" meaning "equal."</p> <p>Most non-conforming properties exist because they were developed before Newton had certain zoning restrictions. The original Zoning Ordinance was in 1922, but nonconformity increased with the 1941 and 1953 ordinances, which zoned for the patterns of development and buildings that were already built at that time.</p>
11/29/17	<p>Following are comments on the draft version of the Pattern Book for Newton, MA.</p> <p>1. Typos and errors</p> <p>Page 180: Waban, not "Newton" in the first paragraph.</p> <p>Page 183: Aerial photograph is of Newton Highlands, not "Newton Centre".</p>	<p>Edited as suggested.</p> <p>Edited as suggested.</p>

	<p>Page 184: The narrative describes some residential/office use above some retail business. The data table incorrectly shows zero square feet of mixed use. The accurate number of sq. ft. should be calculated.</p> <p>Page 189: Cold Spring Park is not all natural landscape. It contains extensive development for recreational use including parking areas, tennis courts, baseball fields, basketball courts, and fields for soccer and other sports. This classification error appears on other maps as well.</p> <p>Pages 54 and 55: The narrative for Open Space categories does not match the legend categories of the map. For example, the narrative places school yards, golf courses, and cemeteries in the same category.</p> <p>Pages 78 and 79: The legend system displayed on page 78 is very difficult to read when printed on the map. The zoom feature was not able to bring up clear lettering. Perhaps this can be computer corrected, or the information divided into several maps.</p> <p>Pages 111 and 113: These maps of the broad categories of recreation/public use and natural landscape would benefit by the addition of the legend initials from page 78.</p> <p>2. Classification and Terminology</p> <p>“Convenience Center”</p> <p>This classification relies too heavily on sq. ft. of commercial use without including the public, non-profit, and private cultural uses which contribute to the sense of place as a neighborhood. Nor does the CC category account for commercial activity that draws customers from outside of the immediate area.</p> <p>Waban can be used as an example. The village center includes a library, two churches, post office, MBTA Green Line stop, school, and social club that</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The tables reflect datasets in the City’s Assessors records at the time of production. Proposed Zoning Ordinance drafts are based on multiple data sets and evaluative information.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. After review, it was determined that “natural/landscape” is the most appropriate label for the character of the property as a whole.</p> <p>The legend and description were edited to align with the visual provided.</p> <p>Edited as suggested.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Please refer to the zoomed-in maps in the character patterns and pattern subsets page of each CBA to view the titles on page 78. A note specifying that the pattern subset legend and a more detailed map is located on page 79 has been added to each of these pages.</p> <p>These classifications are meant to establish the scale of development/buildings within a given commercial area – we recognize that some stores in these areas may serve a broader client base and that there are a range of uses that contribute to that place.</p>
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	<p>make this a neighborhood center. Some businesses draw customers who are not from the immediate area. Waban Hardware Store draws customers from this side of Newton much in the way Schwartz Hardware Store does on the other side of the city. Waban Market carries specialty items from Eastern Europe in addition to offering a full service grocery store. Russian is often spoken here. Both of these are destination businesses for many of their customers who do not live in Waban.</p> <p>“Workers’ housing in village centers” Many of the buildings tucked into the hills of Newton Upper Falls were built as housing for mill workers. This was worker housing in an era when transportation options were limited and a daily commute unrealistic. Currently, “The City strongly believes in regional approaches to economic development activity.” (Page 29) Residents work in jobs that are local, regional, national, and international. I think more appropriate wording could be found to convey the ideal of housing options for workers of all salary levels from high to low. Such housing need not be tied to a village center. Lower wage earners many not prefer living in an urbanized area any more than higher wage earners. Choice should be available.</p> <p>“Open Space” I finally went to the current Zoning Code to see the description of open space. The Pattern Book groups and regroups these uses in different ways which can cause confusion. Because 62% of current land area is permeable, it is important that we can easily see where permeable land is located and who controls it. Perhaps the consultants can come up with a remedy for the way open space is patterned.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Open space is defined differently in the Zoning Ordinance than in the Pattern Book. There is now a definition of open space in the glossary on page 289.</p>
12/7/17	<p>As a resident of Newton, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to submit comments about planning for Newton's future. I believe that if Newton's government is going to promote greater housing densities and population growth, then it should present a balanced view of the consequences of that growth.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

	<p>Any plan for growth should cite the measures of quality-of-life and prosperity besides those that are monetary-based – traffic congestion/time in traffic, per capita open space, ambient noise, crime, neighborhood character, and peace-of-mind. Before facilitating growth, the City of Newton also needs to describe the sacrifices that existing residents will need to make to accommodate a plan for “perpetual growth.”</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments as part of developing Newton's "Pattern Book." Please let me know if you have any questions.</p>	
12/8/17	<p>(1). The Pattern Book is a very good first step but changes to the approval process and the final outcome of the make-up of Newton’s City Council will determine the final impact of the zoning changes.</p> <p>(2). The meetings at Newton Free Library are useful to encourage citizen participation and expand the knowledge base for residents.</p> <p>(3). Recommend inclusion of information from the Smart Growth Alliance and Great-Neighborhoods.org. Andre Leroux should be asked to make several public presentations to Newton residents.</p> <p>(4). Recommend use of definitions and language consistent with proposed HB2420 and SB81 which are supported by Smart Growth Alliance and the MA AIA. Attached are both bills and a comparison.</p> <p>(5). Recommend better MBTA train service along MainLine @ MA Turnpike with more trains and new stations including reconnection of train service from Riverside MBTA to South Station.</p> <p>(6). Recommend extension of MBTA train service from Needham to Newton Upper Falls with more trains and new stations.</p> <p>(7). MAPC may be able to assist with (5) and (6) above or provide other alternatives to improve mass transit service in Newton. TOD will only succeed with improved MBTA mass transit service.</p> <p>(8). Do not allow construction on small existing lots under 7,000 SF without Design Review an/or Special Permit. Several building permits were issued for 5,000 SF lots which resulted in law suits from abutters.</p> <p>(9). Create a Design Review Process for all new construction which is similar to design review legislation for Historic District Commissions.</p>	Thank you for your comments.

12/8/17	<p>I live in West Newton. This analysis fails to account for Albemarle, a key resource for the citizens in W Newton.</p> <p>Why wasn't this book broadly advertised? I just now found it and feel you disrespect the citizens for all Newton by keeping this effort a secret!</p>	Thank you for your comments.
12/9/17	<p>I'd like to add the following suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create land trusts where affordable entry level homes can be made available to first time or downsizing buyers. Example: The Current price for an Oak Hill Park single family one level residence is 700K for the land. Could the city raise funds for the land trust by additional taxes, demolition fees and contributions by developers on their profits so a buyer could pay \$400K and the seller could be compensated for the additional 300K to account for market value? Then the 'subsidized properties' would go into a trust for future buyers. Development of these properties would be limited to the new zoning regulations. 2. In Oak Hill Park, an initiative like the aforementioned could be put in place for returning or retired veterans to create affordable , accessible homes, thereby repatriating the Park and continuing the historical legacy of its' inception. 3. New Oak Hill Park homes must be reduced in size and remain at the original grade of the original basic home. No knee walls and mounding up of land to accommodate basements. This has increasingly changed the topography and character of the neighborhood. 4. Privacy and sunlight of abutting homeowners need to be taken into account when houses are designed and constructed. Reducing this erodes quality of life and open space. 5. Affordability cannot be limited to multifamily shoebox units like condos and apartments. This creates economic, social and other discrimination. 	Thank you for your comments.

<p>12/28/17</p>	<p>I have taken a look at the Pattern Book and my responses are below:</p> <p>1. Page 29 quote from 1921: “The aim of zoning is not to hinder the development of a community, but to encourage the right kind of buildings in the right place.” Response: My neighborhood is filled with smaller and small-medium sized (traditional small) single family homes that are capes, colonials and ranch houses. The tear downs of these modest homes being replaced by oversized, wasteful, mansions have created a lack of a cohesive neighborhood as well as a lack of affordable single family homes for young families, families of modest means and older folks who want to downsize. Not to mention the extreme environmental waste of trashing an existing home, disposing of it and then using new materials to rebuild as well as cutting down most, if not all trees on the property. This is the most un-environmental process that could exist which is very sad considering we call ourselves the Garden City and our worlds natural resources have been depleted almost to the point of no return.</p> <p>2. Page 30: Newton’s Comprehensive Plan: Response: Interesting that this plan from 2007 mentions increasing traffic congestion as in issue to be resolved. As I live in close proximity to Needham Street, there seems to me ever increasing interest in adding more and more stores and potential housing that cannot do anything but dramatically increase traffic congestion. The new Nexus development has caused even more long backups on Needham St. often extending back to Walnut St. and beyond. The Northland proposal for 900+ units of housing and retail on the Marshall’s site is even more absurd. Do people really think that won’t create complete gridlock? This does not sound like comprehensive or any sort of planning to me. It’s obvious that this is all about money - plain and simple, with no regard to surrounding neighbors, neighborhoods and schools.</p> <p>3. Page 228: Context -Based Areas Needham Street: Response: My neighborhood in two different categories - Newton Highlands and Needham St. In the neighborhood section of 14. Needham St., it states that these residential properties are transitioning from small/medium homes to larger homes. This is what I refer to under Number 1 above. This type of transformation</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
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	<p>should not be allowed as it extremely wasteful. Most families do not need these size homes. We need to be aware of what creates a healthy environment. We need more trees which improve air quality and smaller, traditional-sized housing. I cannot reiterate enough the negative impact this unnecessary type of development is causing. And yet, even though small in number, there are actually some excellent redevelopment examples in my area of existing housing that was enlarged by adding a story, reused or enhanced without such the wasteful approach of tear downs and tree clearing while maintaining the existing dwelling footprint. These examples should be a model for future housing redevelopment.</p> <p>4. Page 268: CoUrbanize Online Engagement Platform: Response: I object to the name “CoUrbanize”. This implies an urban environment which is the exact opposite of why I moved to Newton. My husband and I moved here to have a small, affordable house to raise a family in where we could have a yard and walk to places. We did not move here to have our neighborhood and street become a traffic thoroughfare for nearby office parks, traffic from the new exit off 128, traffic trying to avoid Needham St. and large trucks that disobey the truck ban we implemented.</p>	
12/29/17	<p>I have not chimed in on the Pattern Book, but inspired by the deadline I have read it.</p> <p>Generally it is an excellent piece of work and will prove very useful going forward. It is a snapshot at a point in time, but it is thorough and understandable.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I note the salute to the Comprehensive Plan which contains language about controlling the process to allow for predictability. Some day the Council will need to grapple with prerogatives. 2. page 12 - I note the concept of positive encouragements rather than re-active responses. Some of that comes from the choices in 1988 to widen the available special permits so everything is negotiable. 	<p>Thank you for your comments. The coloring, walk zones, picture locations, and references were reviewed as noted below.</p>

	<p>3. page 14 - this section raises the issue of the effect of the market - do we try to go with it or fight it. Example - people want big houses and don't care about yards. How do we respond to that?</p> <p>4. page 26 - the \$1M median home price is shocking. I don't think anyone has a "right" to live in Newton, but the stratification is real. I have one son who is an MBA type who bought here but the other son earns a good living and couldn't begin to. Our daughter is a teacher and couldn't think about it.</p> <p>5. Page 27 - Northland is thinking about how do we view transportation demand in 2030. Linear projection is easy, applying some factor to it could be wrong, and as Yogi said "predictions are difficult especially about the future".</p> <p>6. Page 30 - the decrease in family household size is staggering, and the age shift is huge. It is all so inconsistent with the "monster house" movement - bigger houses for fewer people. Some of that may reflect government policy of keeping energy costs low, which may be a mistake.</p> <p>7. Page 44 - we don't know whether walkability will decrease traffic, slow the increase or leave it as is with additional walking. It is hard to get a control group experiment.</p> <p>8. Page 44 - I think the 10 minute walk isochrome from Eliot Street to Northland may be too conservative. The walk from Newton Highlands T stop to National Lumber should be 10 minutes - 2238 feet - the map shows coming short of that. i.e. that map is too conservative. I didn't review all of them.</p> <p>9 Page 48 says "darker shades of green" - they show red on my screen. Generally in these charts the different shades don't show sufficiently distinctly.</p> <p>10. Page 55 - open space map. To me this points out the critical importance of the golf courses as green space. Every few years we think about how to preserve them, but we haven't done much, and we have great dependence on rich old</p>	<p>Edited to reflect more scientifically accurate language regarding the effect of walkability on traffic.</p> <p>The isochrones were computerized based on the assumption that a 10-minute walk covers a half of a mile along the walking path. However, different individuals will have widely different walking speeds.</p> <p>Edited to eliminate the color discrepancy between the description and the map.</p>
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<p>people playing golf at a time when the sport is declining. The economics of golf clubs varies widely - we have Newton Commonwealth because that club went under in 1979. In the 1980's Woodland was in play for development because of the 128 access, but it was rescued by an economic boom. Brae Burn and Charles River are at the top of the food chain, but Woodland is the smallest at +/- 130 acres, and they could be tempted to sell x acres if times get tough. Preserving that open space in private hands should be a priority.</p> <p>11. Pages in the 80's - maybe some identification of where the pictures are.</p> <p>12 Page 99 - there is reference here to evolution. The Pattern Book is essentially static, but mention can be made of evolution with a backwards look and also looking forward - with some specificity.</p> <p>13. Page 122 - reference to Washington Street is incorrect. Either Commonwealth Ave or Lexington Street</p> <p>14. Page 124 - I'm not sure there is "chain dining" in Auburndale.</p> <p>I didn't compare the village descriptions but I can see what you have noted as the possibility of people being unhappy either because they are in some area or they are not in some area. Good luck with people who want to be in Waban but aren't!</p> <p>Another example is the area off Cabot St between Cabot, Centre and Mill Streets - Edmands Park and the campuses. I think that's pretty clearly Newtonville (my house), but it probably doesn't matter in the grand scheme.</p> <p>The report is very good. Congratulations. We'll see what happens next.</p>	<p>Photos were taken as part of sample tours of the community by Sasaki Associates. Specific addresses are unknown in many cases, and if known are not recorded here for consistency and respect for the privacy of the residents.</p> <p>The City has corrected this error based on information obtained from Historic Newton. Thank you.</p> <p>The City considers Dunkin' Donuts, Bruegger's Bagels, and others to be chain dining establishments.</p>
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12/30/17	<p>I live in Newtonville north of Watertown St. Your pattern book eliminates my neighborhood from the newly created north boundary line. For what purpose was this imaginary line drawn? It makes no sense. What is the motivation behind this unnecessary boundary change? There is a significant historical group of fine homes which do belong in the Newtonville village. I find this revised boundary an insult.</p>	<p>Sorry that you feel this way – the analysis zones do not represent any official representation of neighborhoods; they are simply areas for analysis that attempted to identify natural breaks in the development patterns.</p>
12/30/17	<p>I first heard of the “Pattern Book” when I went to the zoning meeting a couple of weeks ago at the Newton Library.</p> <p>Based on my experience below I think that Pattern Book should be thoroughly reviewed, especially since it is intended as a template for growth long into the City’s future.</p> <p>I think that it is good that you are attempting to get the public involved in reviewing this work. But this is a difficult task.</p> <p>The Pattern Book is quite lengthy and I think that it is hard to get the public interested in dealing with something of this nature and as complicated.</p> <p>Therefore, more publicity about the Pattern Book and more time to review it may get more people involved in the review and benefit the citizens of Newton.</p> <p>I looked at my geographic area, and found it listed as “Traditional Small/Medium.</p> <p>Initially this seemed to be a reasonable characterization, some small lots, some larger lots, some small houses, some larger houses.</p> <p>However, further investigation casts some doubt on how this classification was accomplished.</p> <p>Using the Old Version of the Assessor’s Database I looked at the statistics for the properties in the section of Adams Avenue from Cherry Street to Sheridan Street</p>	<p>The patterns subsets in the Pattern Book are an initial categorization of land uses and scale of development. This is just one of many inputs that will be used in the drafting of the Zoning Ordinance.</p>

	<p>and compared them to the criteria set up in the Pattern Book to define Traditional Small and Traditional Medium.</p> <p>What I found was that the lot sizes of these properties fit with in the definition for Traditional Small or Traditional Medium respectively.</p> <p>However, when looking at Development (House) Size all fit into the definition of Traditional Small only.</p> <p>This begs the question of how was the characterization of this area as Traditional Small/Medium arrived at?</p> <p>Was characterization based on lot size only?</p> <p>If there is a particular formula used to characterize areas this should be explained and demonstrated in the Pattern Book.</p> <p>If this was done on this section of Adams Avenue in error where else does this error occur?</p>	
12/31/17	<p>Thank you for the publication of the Pattern Book (“the Book”) and the opportunity to comment. This document is a first step in the effort to define neighborhoods and residential building types, in preparation for a revised context-based Zoning Ordinance. We recognize that this document is for purposes of analysis and a working tool in relation to the proposal of an updated zoning ordinance. We understand that the “Book” is not a final product. We, also, realize that the City is aware of the following items, but, make these comments, as a helpful correction: In relation to our section of Grant Avenue, the Pattern Book drew the boundary between the neighborhoods of Newton Center and Chestnut Hill through Grant Avenue; because, as we understand, it was a more feasible approach than drawing the line through the backyards of houses. However, we respectfully disagree with the placement of our house as well as others on Grant Avenue, in the Neighborhood of Chestnut Hill; and, the categorization of the “residential building type,” in terms of the Book,</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. The context-based areas do not constitute an attempt to undermine or change any sense of identity or neighborhood that already exists. They are categories that help in the analysis of the city’s development patterns. The distinction between the CBAs is only one of many inputs that will be used in the drafting of the Zoning Ordinance. Thank you for understanding.</p>

	<p>“Contemporary Manor Houses.” Ours are ranch houses. These houses do not have the prestige or the value of those “Contemporary Manor Houses” or “Historic Manor Houses,” located in Chestnut Hill. The Assessing Department recognizes that this style of house (i.e., ranch) has a lower value, and sells for less than, in its terminology, other architectural styles, (e.g., colonial style houses or Tudors), by adjusting the assessing formula used to generate the value of ranch houses for the purpose of taxation, downward. These houses are, in the parlance of the Book, “Large Traditional Houses.” Furthermore, they face a busy street and are close to an urban village center: The context has more in common, in terms of density and proximity to the sidewalk, with many houses on the other side of this part of Grant Avenue than the “Manor” houses, some more secluded than others, on the quiet streets of Chestnut Hill. In terms of “local wisdom,” the feel is similar on both sides of the street in this section of Grant Avenue. Thus, we think that for the sake of accuracy, the next step in this analysis preparatory to drafting the new zoning ordinance should be to place these ranch houses in the Neighborhood of Newton Center. Finally, the structures fall more naturally into the same “residential building type,” classified as “Large Traditional,” consistent with a number of the houses on the other side of the street, in this section of Grant Avenue, as opposed to the “Manor” houses of Chestnut Hill. In practical terms, the houses across the street and up and down the adjoining blocks; and, on the streets, in back of Grant Avenue, are an eclectic mix of residential types from “Small Traditional” to “Medium” to “Large.”</p> <p>In summary, the facts do not support the assumptions, stated in the Pattern Book, concerning the neighborhood location of the ranch houses, identified above, or the categorization of the residential building type for these houses. Those classifications are inappropriate. We believe that correcting these misclassifications would have far reaching implications for future development in this area of the City, under the revised context-based Zoning Ordinance.</p>	
12/31/17	<p>Dear Mr. Heath and Planning Department Staff,</p> <p>I am very disappointed that you have wasted taxpayer dollars -- that might have been spent usefully on Newton's most at-risk residents, pressing infrastructure</p>	Thank you for your comments.

needs, or to pay down our municipal debt - instead on an over-priced consultant report that is based on disputable assumptions and riddled with errors. As a taxpayer, I want our money back.

This pattern book is at its core completely unreliable because it is not an accurate reflection of Newton's built environment. There was no attempt to follow the traditional understanding of where Newton's 13 villages begin and end, and no formal way for the residents and business owners in each village to define their village and their aspirations for it. The villages, the 13 parts of Newton with which residents in each most identify, seem to disappear in this document. Was that your instruction to Sasaki, or did the Sasaki staff decide Newton's villages didn't matter? This document presents a Newton made up of neighborhood patterns and village centers, but not villages. How does one have a village center without a village surrounding it?

The insensitively-named "Co-Urbanize" website was an entertaining diversion - a step up from post-its and stickers - but hardly a rigorous way to collect data about the understandings and preferences of Newton residents. The same goes for the "questions board" post-its at the kick-off, and the chalk drawing "data collection" at Newtonville Village Day. I asked a Planning Department staffer that day if she seriously expected taxpayers to get down on their hands and knees on the street and draw pictures in chalk to record our village's built environment and also how she was recording the chalk drawing data since I didn't see anyone photographing any drawings. She handed me a piece of white paper and told me I could draw a picture on that. That this Planning Department continues to treat residents like children and with contempt with these childish "engagement" games is a wasteful problem that I hope our new mayor will put an end to once and for all.

I attended almost all of the types of engagement activities for this pattern book process. In every case, the "data" collected would be scattershot, random, and subject to manipulation by a determined person or group with a specific agenda. I laughed when I saw the tremendous number of gold stars for "preservation" plastered on top of Newton Centre after the Historic Newton data collection event. I can guess exactly which two residents are responsible for all

those stars. The same kind of manipulation was done by the pro-high-density-developers at other events and on the "Co-Urbanize" site. Developers had their proxies providing "data" supporting development at locations they wish to develop.

I take issue with the statement on page 15, claiming that "the team also completed several custom analyses to to review the most recent data available with a variety of approaches" and that "in chapter 4 of this document, the processes and specific methodologies employed in these analyses are described for reference". The "custom analyses" are nowhere to be found and chapter 4 is just a scrapbook of some of the engagement events at which questionable "data" was collected. The consultants claim that "this strategy provides both confidence in and objectivity to the results presented in this document as well as different ways of understanding the data at different scales to serve the needs of many different constituencies". Asserting doesn't make it so. If this were a graduate school paper it would barely get a passing grade.

If I had the time, I could dissect this document paragraph by paragraph and find flaws in most, but because time is short, I will just provide a brief sample of the many things wrong with this pattern book, specifically - flawed assumptions, sloppy fact-reporting, and inaccuracies.

Flawed Assumptions:

1. "The city must encourage growth and development to maintain equality of access". Where is the proof underlying this critical assumption? (p.9)
2. There is "a growing consensus on what needs to change". Where is the proof that there is "consensus" among Newton residents/taxpayers about what needs to change? (p. 12)
3. An audit of Newton's zoning ordinance is meant to identify areas that "are inconsistent with the community's goals". When did we as a community decide on our goals for our zoning ordinance? When did we the residents say that we

	<p>have defined and agreed upon goals that require an audit of or changes to our zoning? (p. 12)</p> <p>4. The authors' state that their "intention is to guide change so that it reinforces what we have building on our assets". Change does not equal growth. Change can represent enhanced diversity, fiscal health, improved quality of life, and greener outcomes without growth in population or residential density. (p.12)</p> <p>5. The authors state that "this pattern book is intended to be used as a resource for decision-makers, property owners, developers and designers working outside the formal zoning approvals process who aim to make informed choices on the design, siting, and uses of <i>new development</i> with respect to its compatibility with existing contexts." So residents and business owners who want to live and do business in a stable community are out of luck? We taxpayers get to pay for a document that's designed to help those who want to do new development, even if we don't necessarily welcome that new development? (p.13)</p> <p>6. The authors recommend that the "data and determinations found in this pattern book be updated as regularly as needed to accurately reflect the built condition of Newton and maximize the value of this document in ensuring context-based development/re-development". So in other words, context is 'all relative'. This pattern book won't protect the existing patterns, because it's aimed at helping developers of new development. That new development will change the context and the patterns (more density, no doubt), and that will necessitate hiring (these same?) consultants to re-assess the new, denser patterns in preparation for the next iteration of altering patterns for more density. Where is the proof that residents want this approach or this densification? There is none underlying this assumption, nor most of the others in this document. (p. 13)</p> <p>Sloppy Fact- Reporting: 1. "Transit, biking, and walking make up ##% of commuter trips by residents." How much did we pay for this report? (p. 27)</p>	<p>These placeholder symbols were replaced with figures obtained for the final version of the Pattern Book.</p>
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2. "Car ownership rates are more reflective of the City's walkability and strong transit options with an average of # cars per household and a few sections of the City where households have 1 to 1.5 cars on average." (p. 27) How many cars?

3. "It is well known that much of Newton's existing development is 'non-conforming' with respect to the existing zoning ordinance... Given the complexity of the existing zoning ordinance and the distinction in rules depending on the age of a parcel, the City of Newton has not embarked upon a comprehensive inventory of conforming and non-conforming parcels. In order to capture a close approximation of the number of parcels classified as either conforming or non-conforming, a detailed evaluation of the city's many neighborhoods and properties would have to be undertaken." (p. 278). So, the planner experts and consultants *don't actually know how many properties are non-conforming*, if it's a significant problem, if it's a problem that could be addressed in a way that doesn't involve paying consultants to create a pattern book, or if the pattern book will be in any way useful for resolving the problem, if it is, in fact, a serious problem.

Inaccuracies:

1. It's curious and inaccurate that West Newton Hill has been separated by the planners and consultants from the less-wealthy and therefore more-likely-to-be-further-densified West Newton. The same goes for Chestnut Hill being removed from Route 9 East. Why are only these very wealthy enclaves to be protected from further densification and "co-urbanization"?

2. The boundaries of Newtonville in "Context-Based Area #6" are inaccurate. According the maps in the pattern book on pages 161, 163 and 165, Newtonville does not include the houses across the street from my home in Newtonville, nor those on the streets just to the east. This is my neighborhood and we know ourselves to live in the village of Newtonville. We have an active neighborhood association, we take a deep interest in what's happening to our village center, we vote in Ward 2 (mostly Newtonville), our children are zoned for Cabot School, and on the City's own Residential Services App, it says we live in Newtonville. I am attaching a screenshot of the Residential Services App page that shows my neighbor's house directly across the street. He knows he lives in

	<p>Newtonville. The City knows he lives in Newtonville, but the planning experts and consultants have drawn maps indicating that he (and a lot more of my neighbors) don't live in Newtonville. This is inaccurate and unacceptable.</p> <p>3. According to the pattern book maps on pages 161, 163 and 165, Newton City Hall is now in Newtonville. According to the City's own app and Google Maps, City Hall is located in Newton Centre with a 02459 zip code. Newtonville's zip code is 02460. Newton City Hall has never been in Newtonville and I doubt Newton residents want it to move to Newtonville now, no matter what the planning experts and consultants think.</p> <p>Finally, I could cite many more errors of fact, sloppy reporting and unsubstantiated assumptions. This pattern book isn't worth the \$25 I paid for my copy (which was missing the appendices, by the way), and certainly not worth the cost to Newton taxpayers in consultant or staff time. I do not see how this document is of any use in informing possible changes to our zoning ordinance.</p> <p>Instead, I believe we need to restart the zoning review process with an authentic resident-led planning process. We have a new administration. It's time for a new approach - one that is based on residents' preferences, not those of profit-seeking developers who would urbanize our beautiful community and impose their unsustainable, externalized costs onto our indebted municipality.</p>	
12/31/17	<p>Dec. 31, 2017</p> <p>A few last minute comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map on Page 189 shows three CPS (Bowen, Zervas, and Countryside), but the narrative states one school is in the Newton Highlands area as outlined in the Pattern Book. 2. A business zoned parcel at the corner of Walnut Street and Lake Ave. is not included in the zone outline on Page 189. Offices are in the building facing Walnut Street. Current use of the section facing Lake Ave. is apartments. 	<p>Thank you for all your comments.</p> <p>The description has been edited to conform to the map.</p> <p>The map has been edited to include the parcel in question as a business-zoned property.</p>

	<p>3. Community Centers are not a map category on Page 111, but are included in the narrative on page 110.</p> <p>4. The green shading legend for the Open Space map does not match the narrative.</p> <p>I am especially concerned about the multiple times the mapped information in the Pattern Book does not show the same information as described in the paragraphs of prose. Some people read only prose or only maps. We can't have informed decision making with inconsistent information. I hope this has been remedied.</p>	<p>It's possible that community centers were largely excluded in the map because their buildings also include other uses. The assessors' database has been categorized in a way that makes it hard to identify individual community centers. We have removed mentions of community centers from the text.</p> <p>Edited as suggested.</p> <p>The City has found multiple instances of these discrepancies and corrected them.</p>
12/31/17	<p>21 page pdf</p> <p>171231Citizen Comments - Draft Pattern Book.pdf</p>	Thank you for your comments.
12/31/17	<p>8 page pdf</p> <p>JM Pattern Book comments_123117.pdf</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Fall 2017	Changes CBA boundaries affecting CBA 8, 13, 14	"Revisions to CBAs" were incorporated.
Fall 2017	Questions about inconsistencies of "mixed use" in Waban CBA 8. Parcels colored in map as "mixed use" may be in error? What mu parcels are these?	Thank you for pointing this out. There is a discrepancy between the map, which uses the City's Assessor's database, and the table, which reflects the categorization used by the City's consultants. The parcels indicated as mixed-use on the map are home businesses, which are regarded as primarily residential for the purposes of the table.