



Programs & Services Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Present: Councilors Krintzman (Chair), Noel, Albright, Ryan, Wright, and Humphrey

Absent: Councilors Baker and Greenberg

Also Present: Councilors Leary, Norton, Crossley, Gentile, Kelley, Kalis, Laredo, Malakie, and Markiewicz

City Staff: Nicole Banks, Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Culture; Marc Welch, Deputy Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Culture and Superintendent of Urban Forestry; Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer; Nathan Giacalone, Committee Clerk

#352-20 Appointment of Laura Shaw to the Council on Aging

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing LAURA SHAW, 116 Church Street, Newton, as a member of the COUNCIL ON AGING for a term to expire on October 15, 2023. (60 Days: 11/07/2020)

Action: Programs and Services Approved 6-0

Notes: The Chair welcomed Ms. Shaw, asking her to introduce herself and describe her interest to serve on the Council on Aging. Ms. Shaw said that she has already been participating with the Council on Aging for three years and is excited to join as a full member. She said that as a senior citizen herself, she has a passion to help other older adults and assist them to get the services they need. Ms. Shaw described her extensive experience with social work—beginning as a teacher and eventually joining the PTA at Underwood School. This teaching experience also included teaching emotionally troubled youth. These experiences motivated Ms. Shaw to become a social worker and earn her master's degrees in social work and special education. Now retired, Ms. Shaw currently serves on the board of directors for Springwell, an organization that provides services to elderly and disabled residents in eight metro-Boston communities. She currently volunteers with the Council on Aging to record their minutes.

The Committee thanked Ms. Shaw for her willingness to serve and said it was impressed by her extensive social work experience. They said the Council on Aging is lucky to have her volunteering with it.

The Committee also complimented her on the positive reputation of Springwell in the community.

Councilor Albright moved approval which carried 6-0.

#386-20 Request to move the Ward 3 Precinct 1 polling location

CITY CLERK requesting that the polling location for Ward 3, Precinct 1, which is currently located at the Newton Community Service Center on 492 Waltham Street be relocated to a new location.

Action: Programs and Services Held 6-0

Notes: The Chair introduced the item and said that the City Clerk had contacted him earlier requesting that the Committee hold the item. He said that the item's purpose is to move the polling locations out of the Family Access Center. The Clerk still needs to find alternative locations for the polling locations. It was clarified that this move is temporary due to the COVID pandemic and that the Committee will convene in a special meeting to vote on this item before the October 5 Council meeting.

Councilor Humphrey moved Hold which carried 6-0.

#126-20 Request for tree planting update

THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE requesting an update from the Administration on tree planting efforts.

Action: Programs and Services No Action Necessary 6-0

Notes: The Committee was joined by Nicole Banks, Marc Welch, and Jonathan Yeo for discussion on this item. Mr. Welch gave a presentation (attached) which summarized the history and current projections of Newton's tree planting efforts.

Mr. Welch said that many street trees were planted in the 1960s and 1970s and that today they are starting to die off, resulting in a net tree population decline. The 1960s and 1970s, Mr. Welch said, capped off a period of high numbers of tree plantings as about 10,000 trees were planted each decade. This trend reversed in the 1980s and tree loss outpaced plantings into the 2010s. Mr. Welch said that part of the reason for this was the elimination of Newton's in-house tree crew due to budget cuts. However, beginning in the 2010s, Newton was able to reform the City tree crew and begin to reverse this decline. During this time, the net tree amount in Newton rose and beginning in FY2019, tree planting once again outpaced loss. The goal is to continue to build upon this success.

Mr. Welch explained that the tree planting plan is guided by the analysis of current tree canopy compared to hot spots/heat islands. Many of these heat islands are parking lots, leaving little room for planting. But for the rest of the hot spots, these are used to guide tree planting efforts. Prior to the return of the in-house crew, tree planting was done using Tree Conservancy funds. Planting in this time was based on a visual count of vacant spots. Mr. Welch said that tree planting plans will continue to adapt as tree loss is constantly reevaluated. These plans also adjust to the needs and requests from the Tree Conservancy. They are also broad enough to accommodate residents who do not want a tree planted in front of their house because there are plenty of vacant sites. Currently, the City has projected where it is going to concentrate tree planting efforts through the current fiscal year into FY2026.

All trees are watered once a week April through Columbus Day or Halloween depending on water needs, usually for the first one or two years of the tree's life. Additionally, newly planted trees are also weeded and receive mulch on a regular basis for about two to three years. Mr. Welch said that reviving the in-house crew has been worth the cost as it yields far better results for tree plantings than contractors have.

Mr. Welch said that due to COVID budget cuts, tree planting numbers will be closer to 400 or 500 including Tree Conservancy plantings rather than the initial goal of 900 for this year. However, Mr. Welch said that this will allow the City to focus on maintenance and upkeep for its existing street trees.

Committee Discussion:

Q: When are trees planted during large building projects?

A: On private projects such as Riverside, tree planting is usually addressed through the special permit and the developer must do the planting. When it is a City project in question, there is more control over the process and when tree planting occurs. Private projects must maintain their own trees but receive guidance from the City. Once trees are on city property, they usually become property of the city.

Q: During budget season, there was shown to be a large infusion of money into the tree fund, what is the story behind this?

A: This is a payment that came from the Church of Latter-Day Saints to the tree fund for their development in Oak Hill which cut down many trees. The tree fund supplements the entire tree operation, not only planting. The planning for tree planting using this money is ongoing. Since planting a tree can take up to a year of planning, the effects of this payment will not be immediately visible.

Q: If Urban Forestry is planting about 600 trees and the Tree Conservancy is planting about 200. If you said that 400 trees would be the limit, how are 600 trees handled?

A: In order to plant a tree, overtime funds are used for watering. Overtime was one of the areas reduced due to COVID. The large payment was received around the time that the pre-COVID budget was finalized and there was not enough time to factor it into the revised budget. Any projected pitfalls in tree planting in the foreseeable future are due to COVID cuts.

Q: When is the best time to plant a new tree?

A: Late October and November is the best time to plant as the trees are dormant. This must be before the ground freezes.

Q: Can a tree be revived if it has suffered due to lack of water?

A: It depends on the tree and how well it was planted initially.

Q: Based on the planting plans, does it show that there will not be any plantings again in Upper Falls after the Northland project?

A: These plans are not related to the Northland project but rather the priorities identified through the canopy and heat island studies.

Q: What are the payments to the tree fund in exchange for?

A: This is a payment in lieu of tree planting. The tree ordinance states that builders and developers must replace what they have cut down. If trees cannot be replanted, then a fee must be paid to the city. Builders and developers usually replant instead of paying the fee. This ordinance has helped reform the city tree crew which has saved money from contractual costs.

Q: Why does the tree fund show up separate from the main budget?

A: The City Ordinances put it into a separate revolving fund account. This is not the operational budget and rolls over from one year to the next.

Q: Is the amount of tree loss you described in Newton typical for other communities?

A: No, Newton's tree loss exceeds that of other communities. This is because Newton is a large city with a larger number of street trees to begin with due to a history of robust tree planting. The reason for the high losses is because many of the same kind of trees were planted at the same time which then suffered neglect as the tree crew was cut. Reforming the City tree crew has driven the positive change in the tree program.

Q: What is the formula for the tree reimbursement?

A: It is an inch-per-inch charge of \$180 per every inch cut down. Whatever is not replaced is multiplied by 180 to determine the amount of the fee. If a builder attempts to plant a small size that will not survive, then the City will push for the tree fee instead.

Q: Where do you decide where the plantings go?

A: The plans shown only cover city funded plantings and do not account for Tree Conservancy activities or where tree ordinance payments have been used to replace trees. Oak Hill Park, for example, is not shown high on the city funded needs because there has already been a large amount of planting done there recently. Since a large amount of funds have been obtained through a project in Oak Hill Park, this funding will be used in Oak Hill Park.

Councilor Noel moved No Action Necessary which carried 6-0.

Chair's Note: *The Committee met jointly with the Public Facilities Committee and received an update from the Commissioner of Public Buildings on the NewCAL project.*

Note: Please refer to the 09/23/2020 Public Facilities Committee Report at the following link: <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/106649/09-23-20%20Public%20Facilities%20Report.pdf>.

Chair's Note: *The Chair announced that the Committee will also be meeting again on Thursday, October 8 to hold a public hearing on renaming Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day as has already been advertised.*

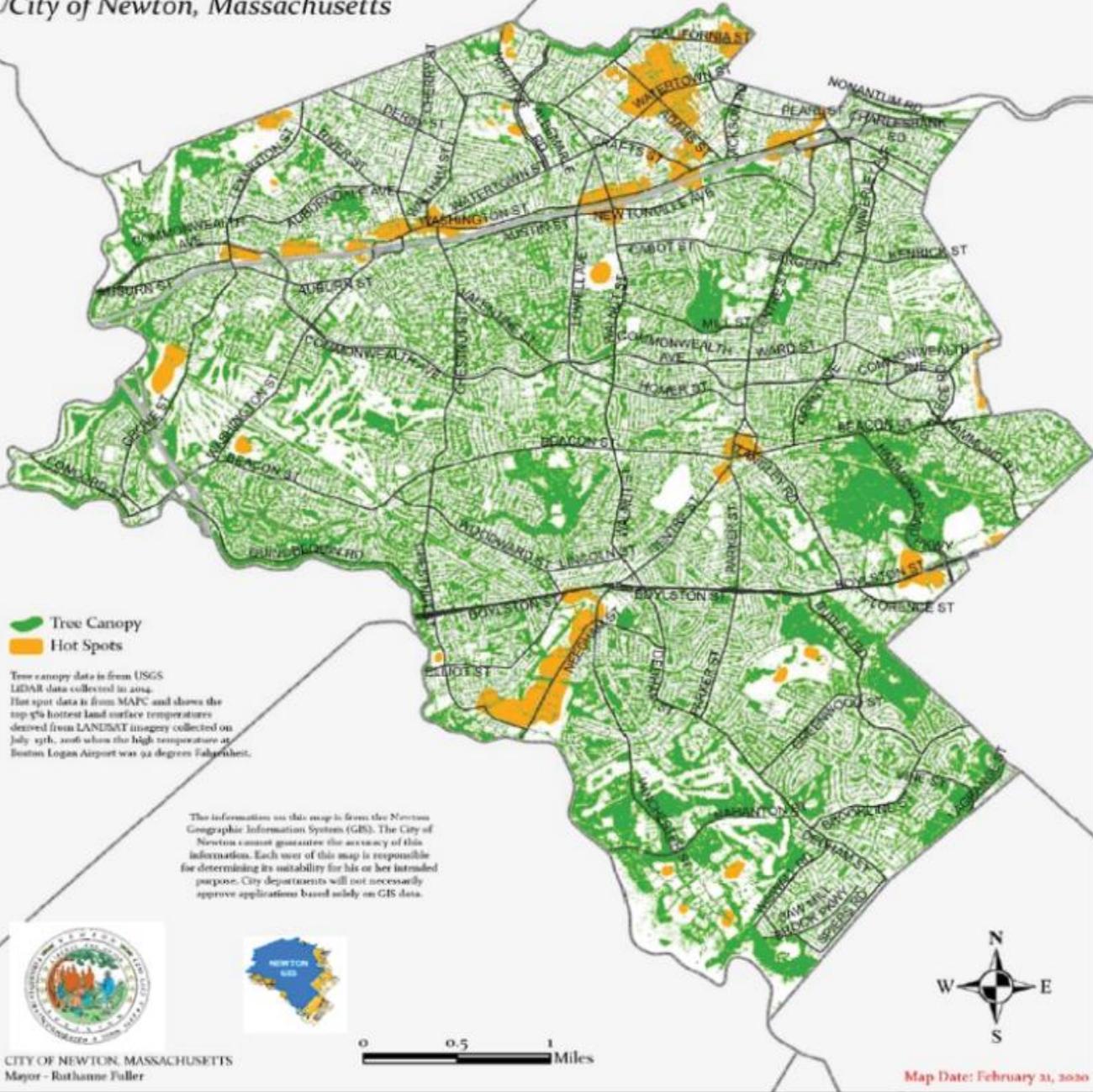
The meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Josh Krintzman, Chair

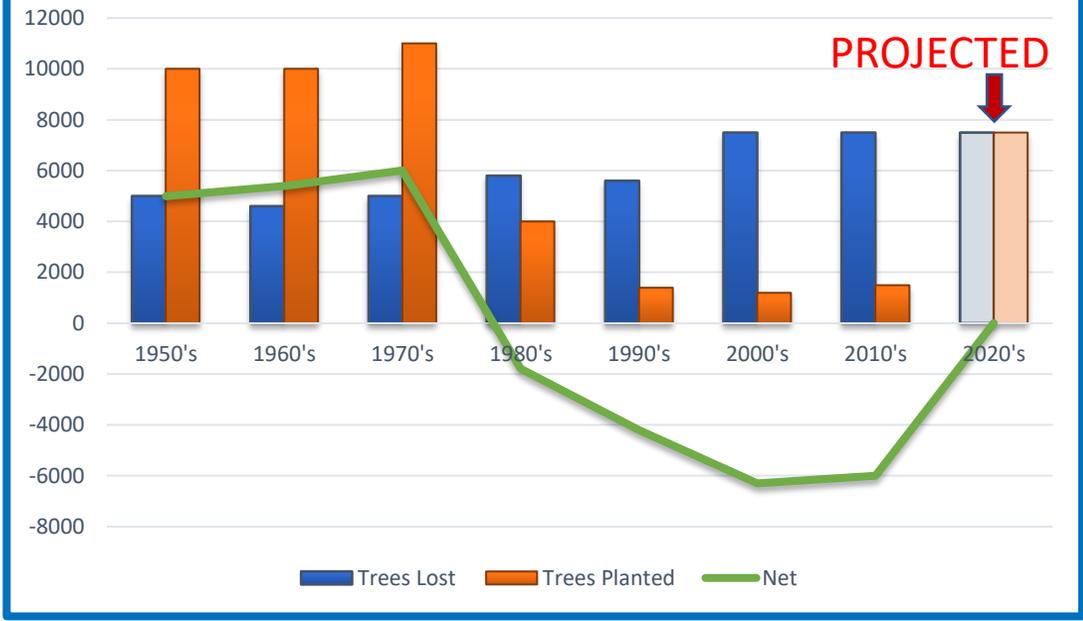
Tree Canopy Coverage

City of Newton, Massachusetts

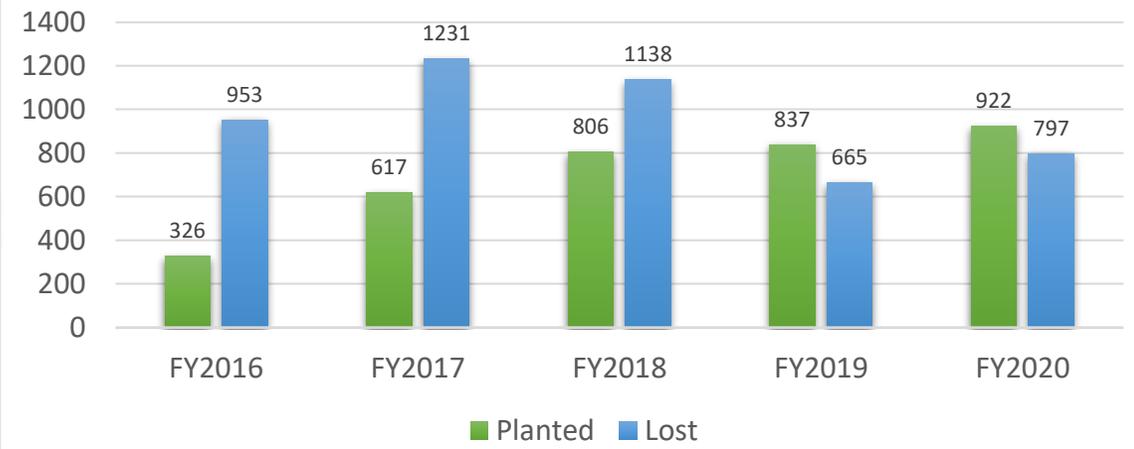


By Decade Trees Planted, Removed, and Net Gain

#126-20



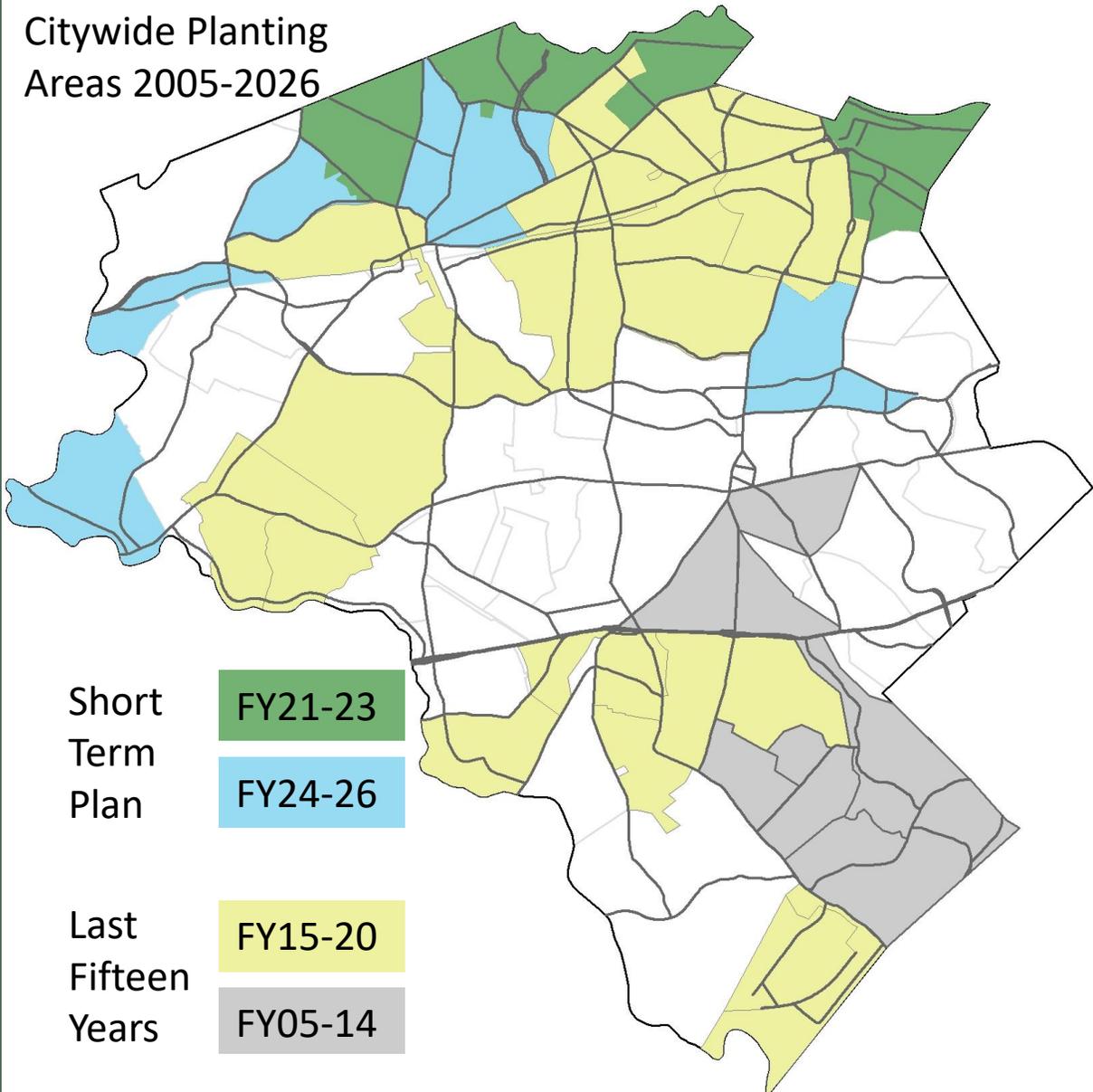
Street Tree Planting & Loss



Citywide Planting Plans

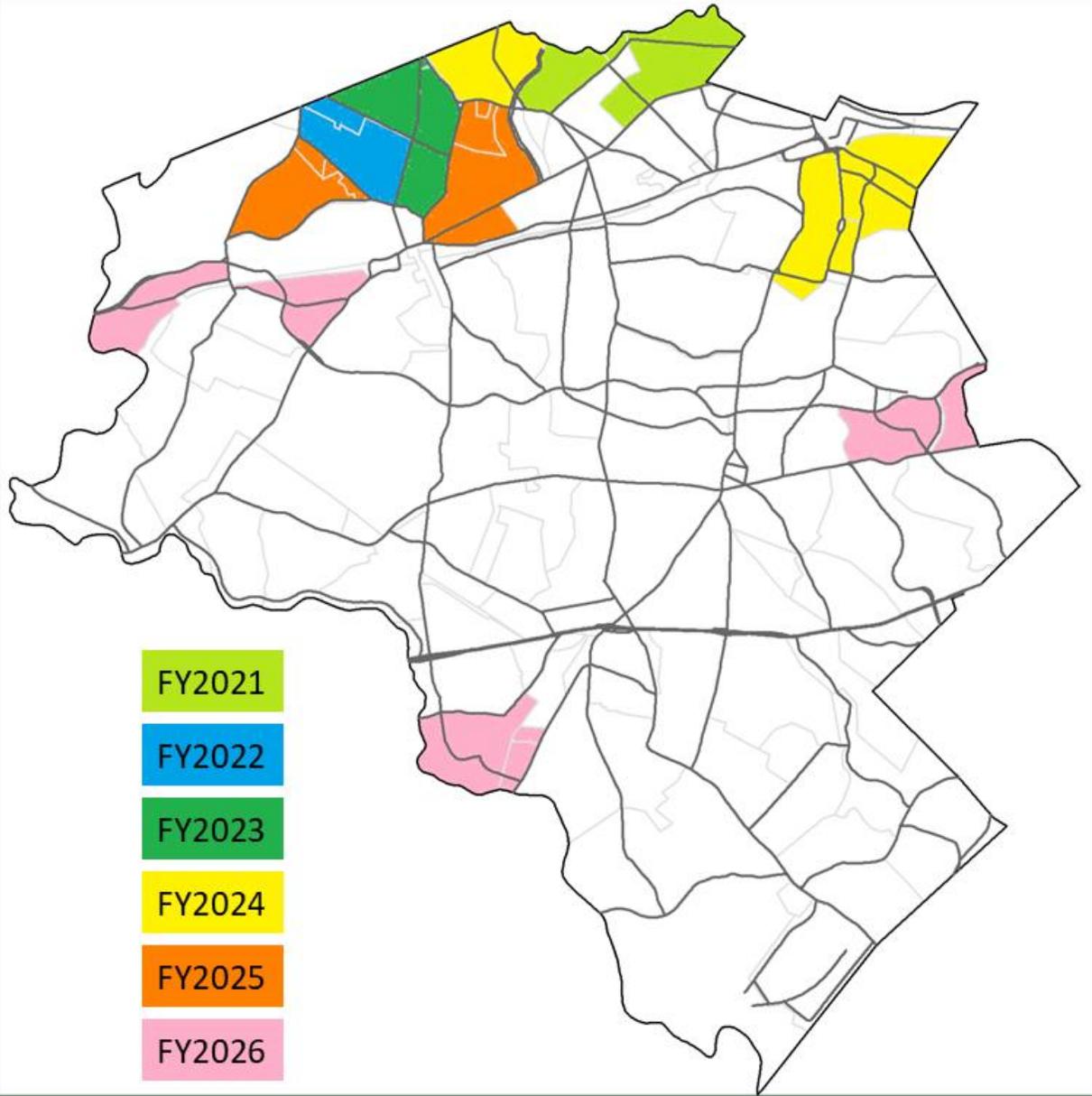
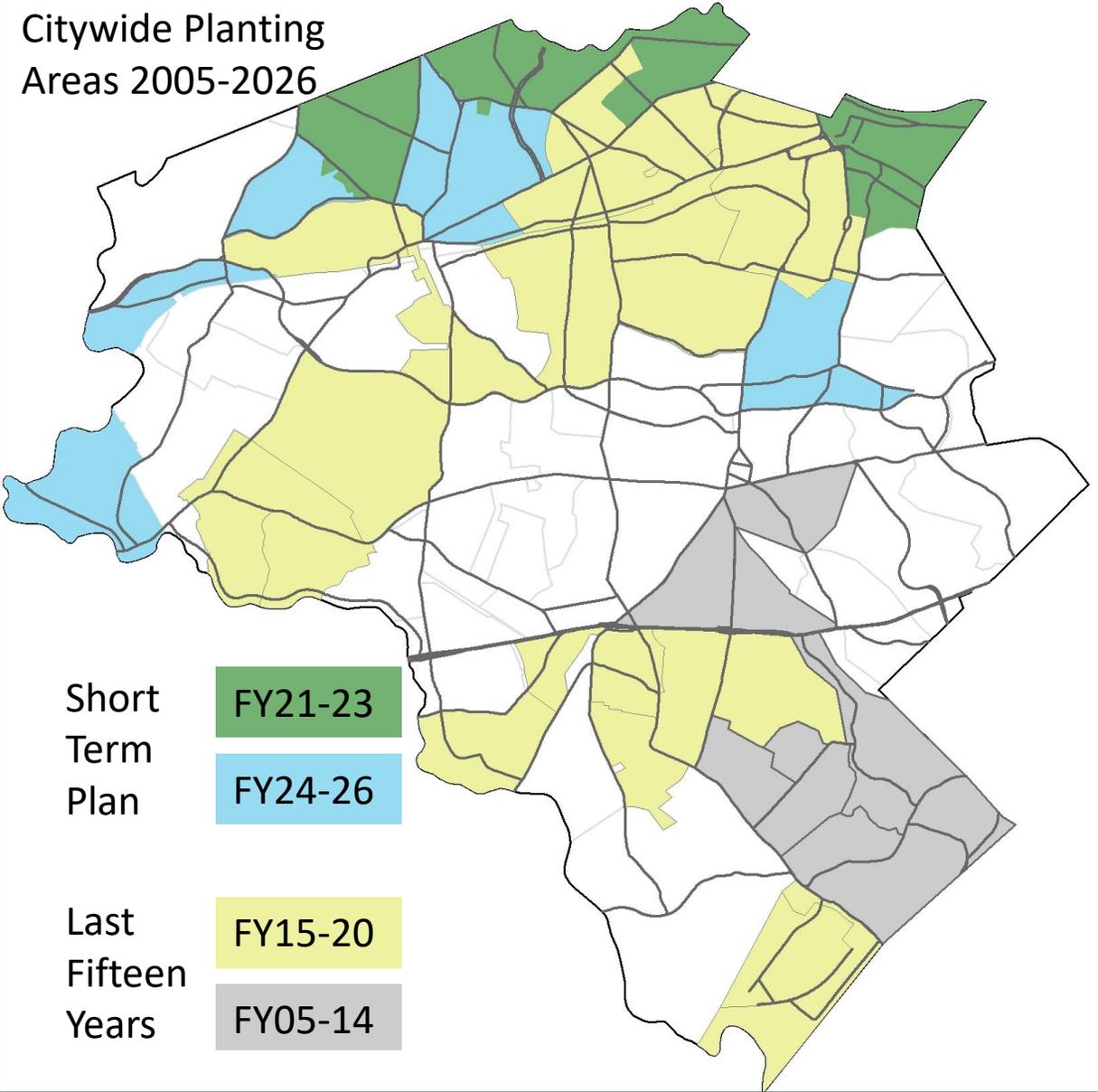
#126-20

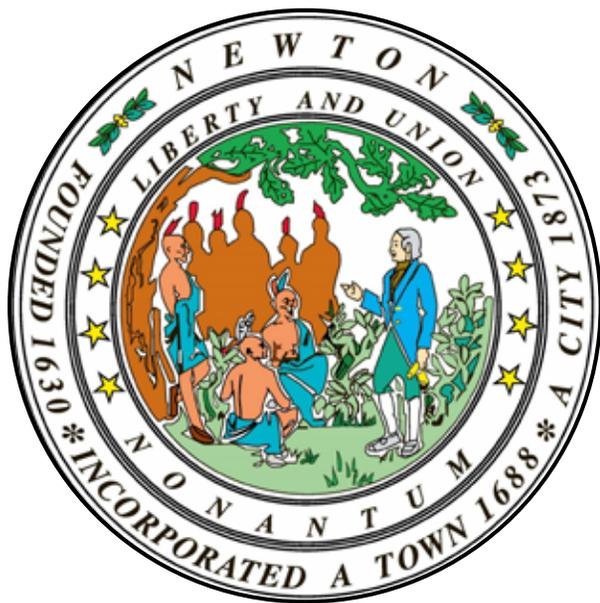
Citywide Planting
Areas 2005-2026



Citywide Planting Plans

Citywide Planting
Areas 2005-2026





NewCAL Project Update

Public Facilities and Programs & Services Committees

September 23, 2020



Owner's Project Manager



Bargmann Hendrie+ Archetype, Inc.

Architect



Following the Newton Council on Aging vote, the Working Group recommended the proposed NewCAL facility be located at the existing Senior Center at 345 Walnut Street in Newtonville. Newton residents were notified on August 12, 2020 that the Mayor agreed with the recommendation.

NewCAL Vision Statement

The City of Newton's goal, as an age friendly community, is to build a large, well equipped, comfortable Center to meet the unique interests and needs of older adults, both those currently using the Senior Center and many others who are not. The Center will foster a special sense of community and belonging for this growing group. This facility will be designed to optimize the quality of life for Newton's older adults and those who support them, through welcoming, respectful and meaningful opportunities that engage, value, and empower older adults to remain independent and important assets in our community.

When spaces within this facility are not programmed for older adults, the goal is to offer well managed, quality and enriching community and multigenerational experiences for all residents of Newton.

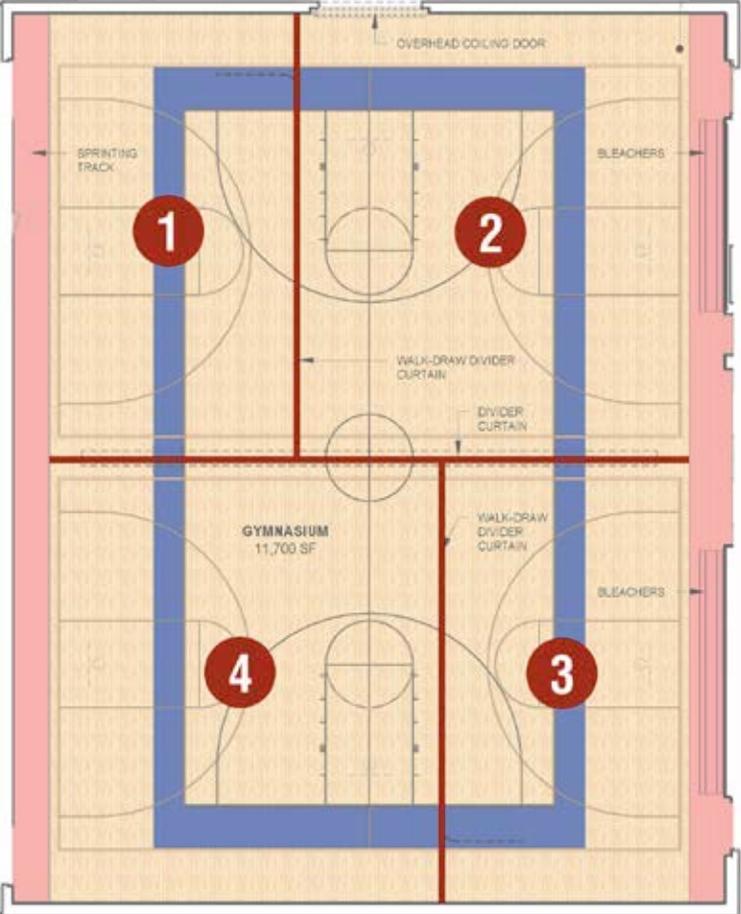
NewCAL Guiding Principles

1. The Center will be designed to promote and support the Mission Statements of the Senior Services and Parks and Recreation Departments.
2. Spaces within this facility will be clustered and programmed to preserve the wonderful sense of community that exists in the current Senior Center.
3. The Center will be age friendly, welcoming to everyone, and will be designed and programmed to meet the unique needs of seniors as well as the broader community.
4. The Center will ensure safety and accessibility both inside and outside the facility through thoughtful design and operation.
5. The Center will promote social equality and maximize access to programs and services to those who are unserved or underserved.
6. The facility will be environmentally conscious, strive to be carbon neutral, and will leave a legacy of responsible design and operation.

Diversity of 31,500sf of Space in NewCAL

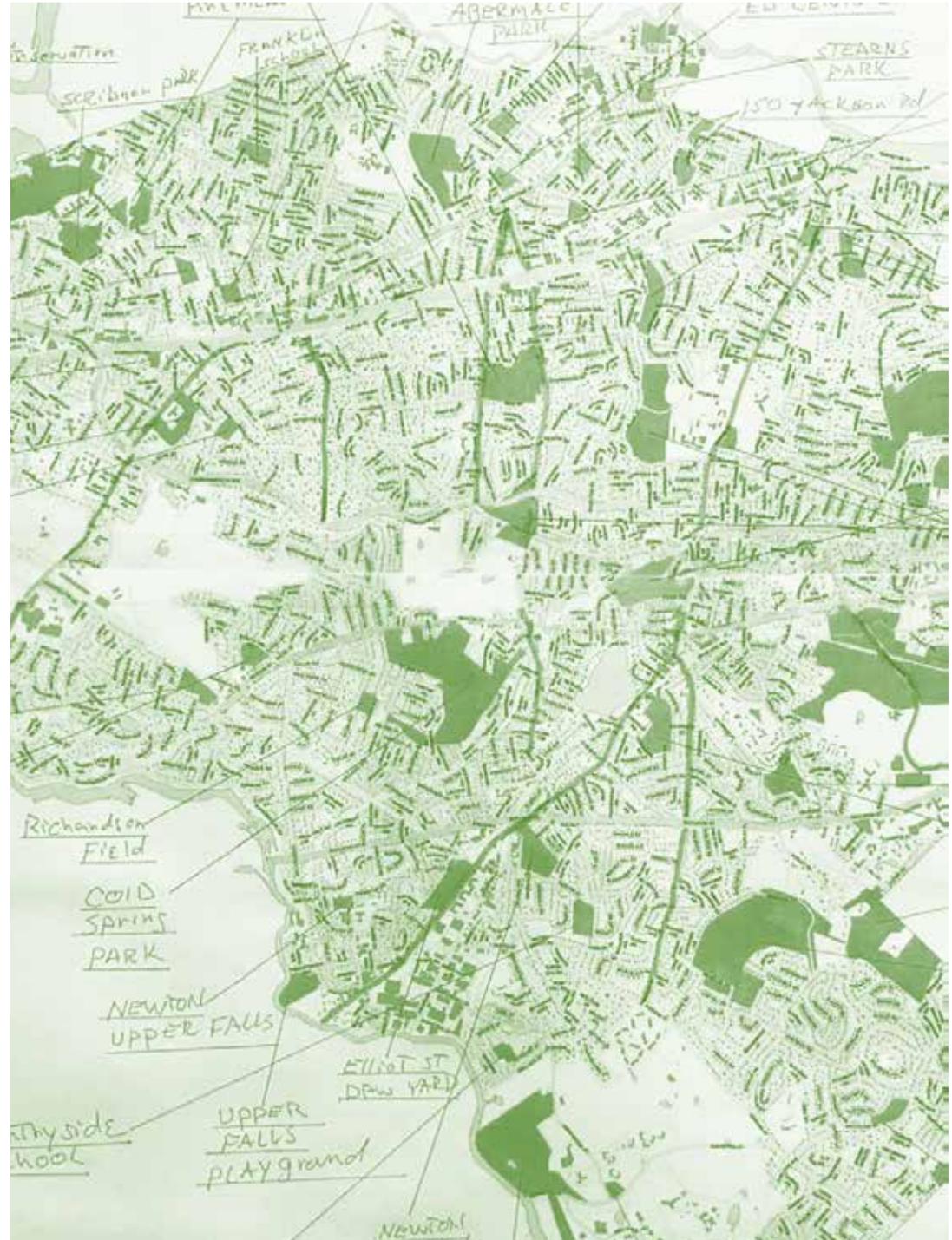


Multi-functional Gym and Track



**PHASE ONE: REVIEW OF ALL CITY OWNED
PROPERTIES AND 6 FINALISTS**

Over 150 Private & Public Sites were reviewed by the City to find a potential new home for NewCAL



6 “Finalist Sites” were rejected by the citizens, who were adamantly opposed to reducing open space in parks, due to a new building.



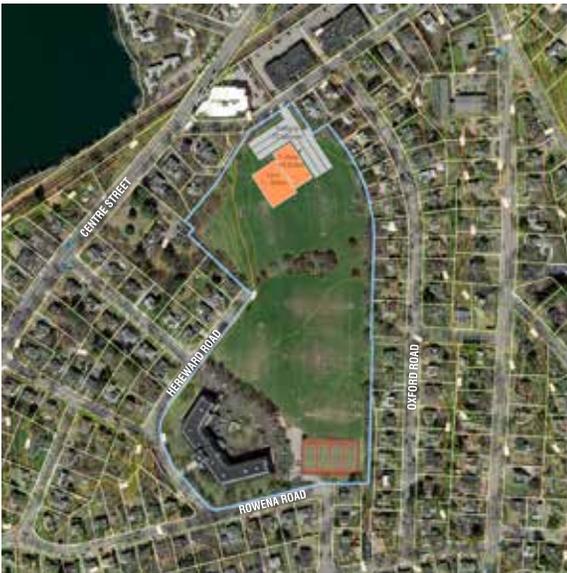
Cabot Park



McGrath Park



Pellegrini Playground



Weeks Park



Tyler Terrace



Albemarle Field

NEWTON CENTRE & NEWTONVILLE FINAL TEST FITS

After regrouping from the “finalist sites”, the ultimate decision came down between two locations, the Walnut Street Senior Center site or the Newton Centre Parking Lot.

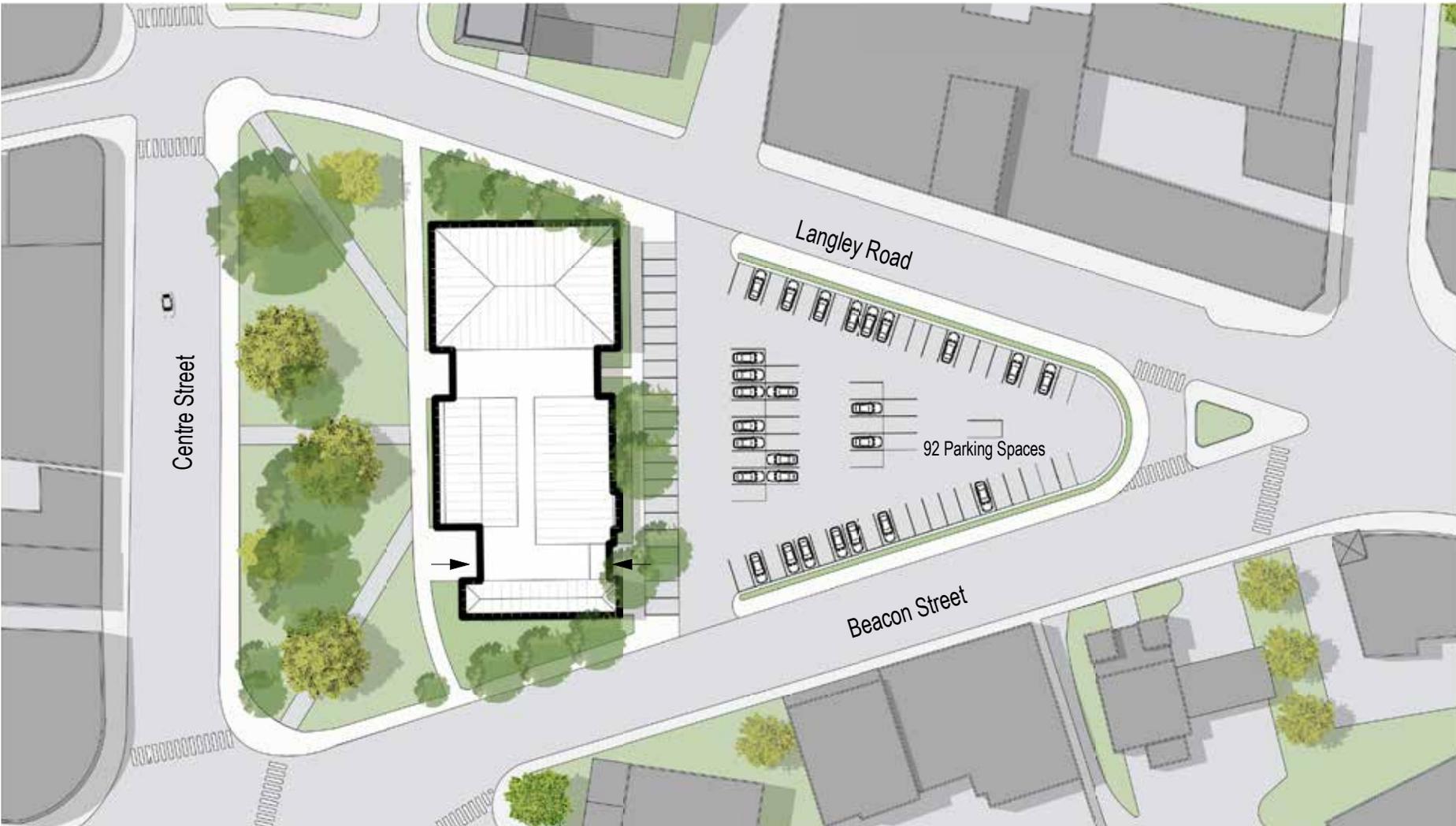


SITE: Newton Centre
Triangle Parking Lot
(152 Spaces)

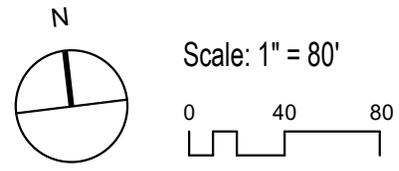
Newton Centre Triangle



Newton Centre Triangle 2 Story Building



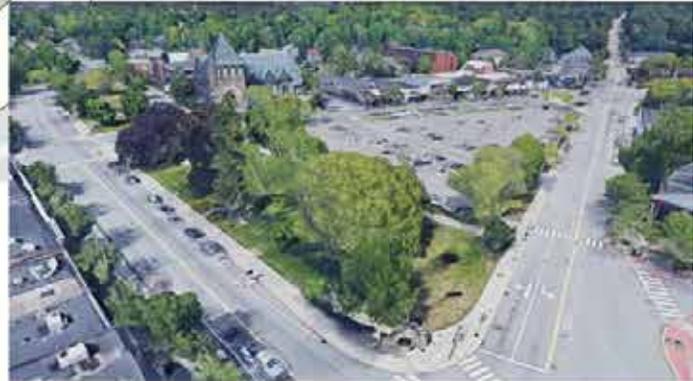
Site Plan: 33,000 sf



Newton Centre Triangle 2 Story Building



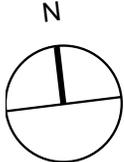
Aerial View from Southwest



Newton Centre Triangle 3 Story Building with Parking Below



Site Plan: 33,000 sf



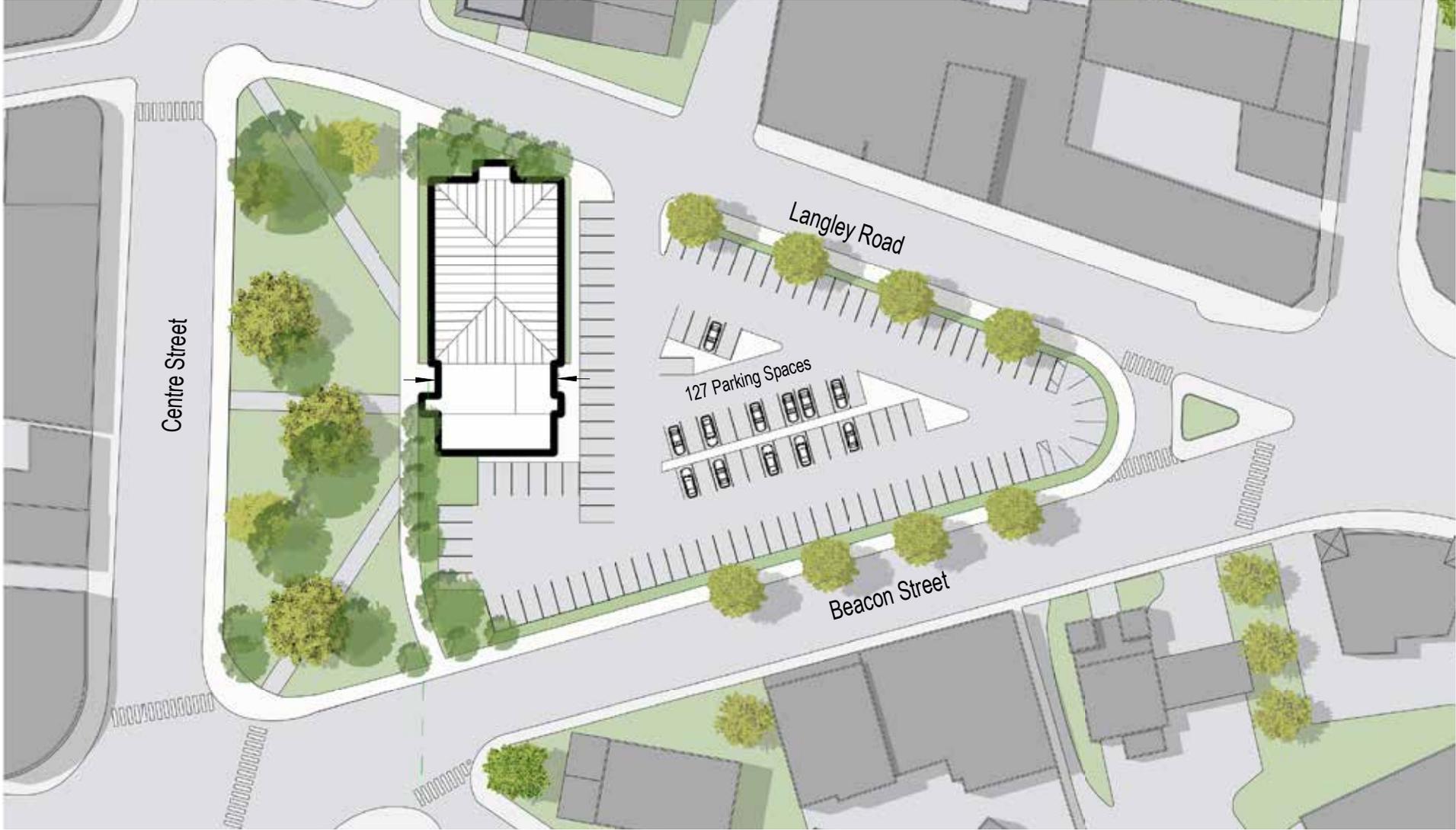
Scale: 1" = 80'
0 40 80

Newton Centre Triangle 3 Story Building with Parking Below

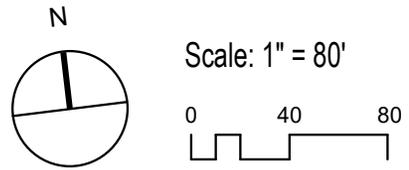


Aerial View from Southwest

Newton Centre Triangle 4 Story Building with Smaller Footprint



Site Plan



Newton Centre Triangle 4 Story Building with Smaller Footprint



Aerial View from Southwest





SITE
345 Walnut St.

These are three very early program and massing studies. They are not designs. There will be many more studies on how to renovate and add on to the existing building or build a new facility.

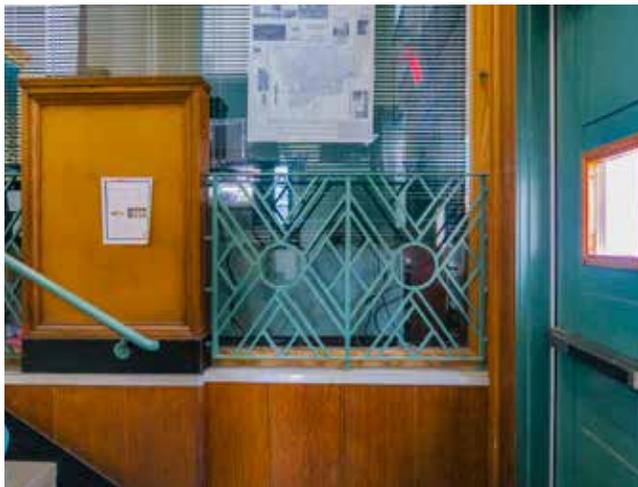
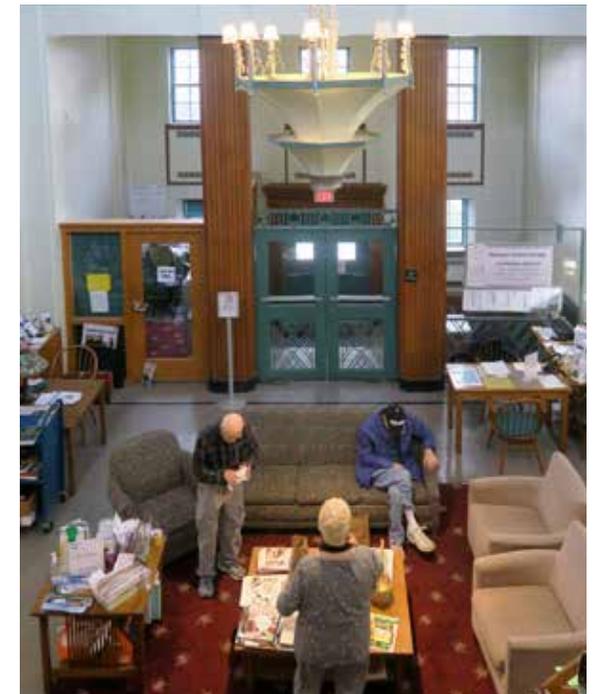




The original cross section drawing of the Library showing the raised main floor level 5 feet above outside grade



The outside stairs take you up three feet to a landing

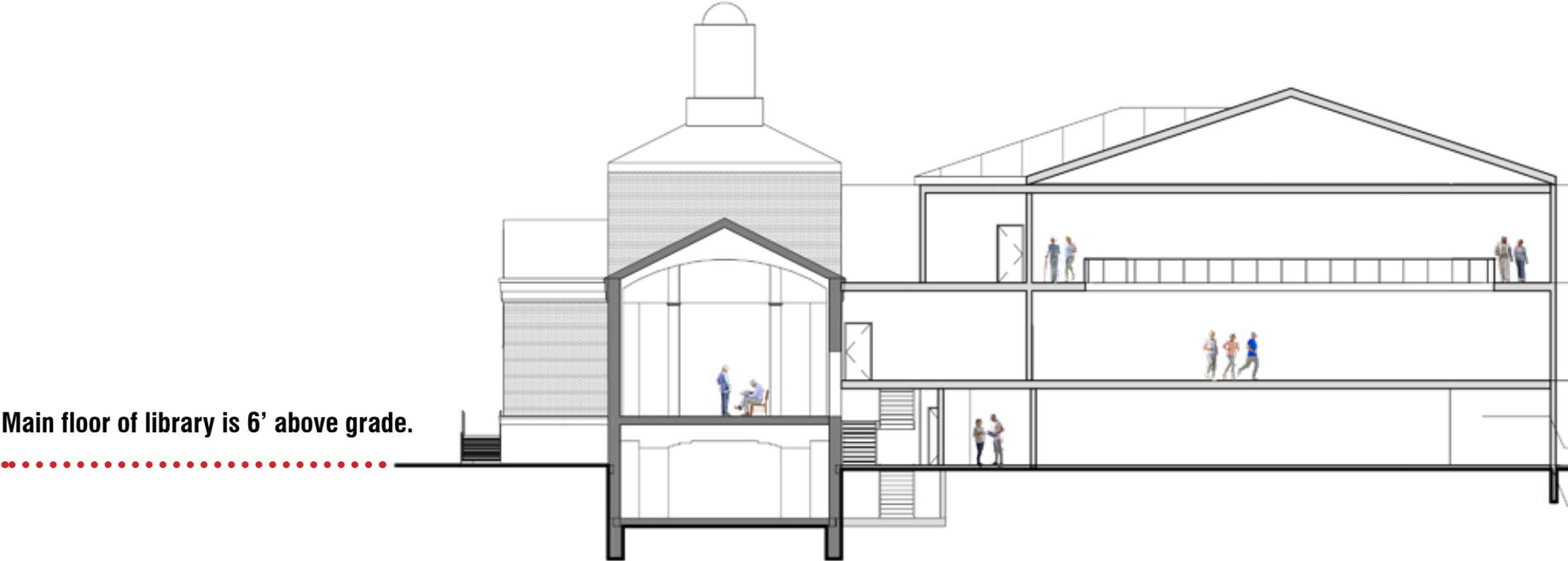


Then, inside stairs take you up the final two feet to the main floor level.



One or both of the basement level wings would retain their windows in the proposed concepts that do not cover the front façade of the existing building. This could be secondary use space assuming that the elevator is brought to this level.

Newtonville Retain Existing Building



Main floor of library is 6' above grade.

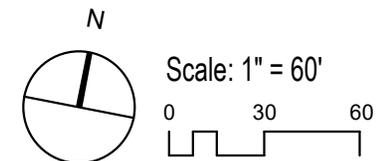
Building Section

Scale: 1" = 20'-0"

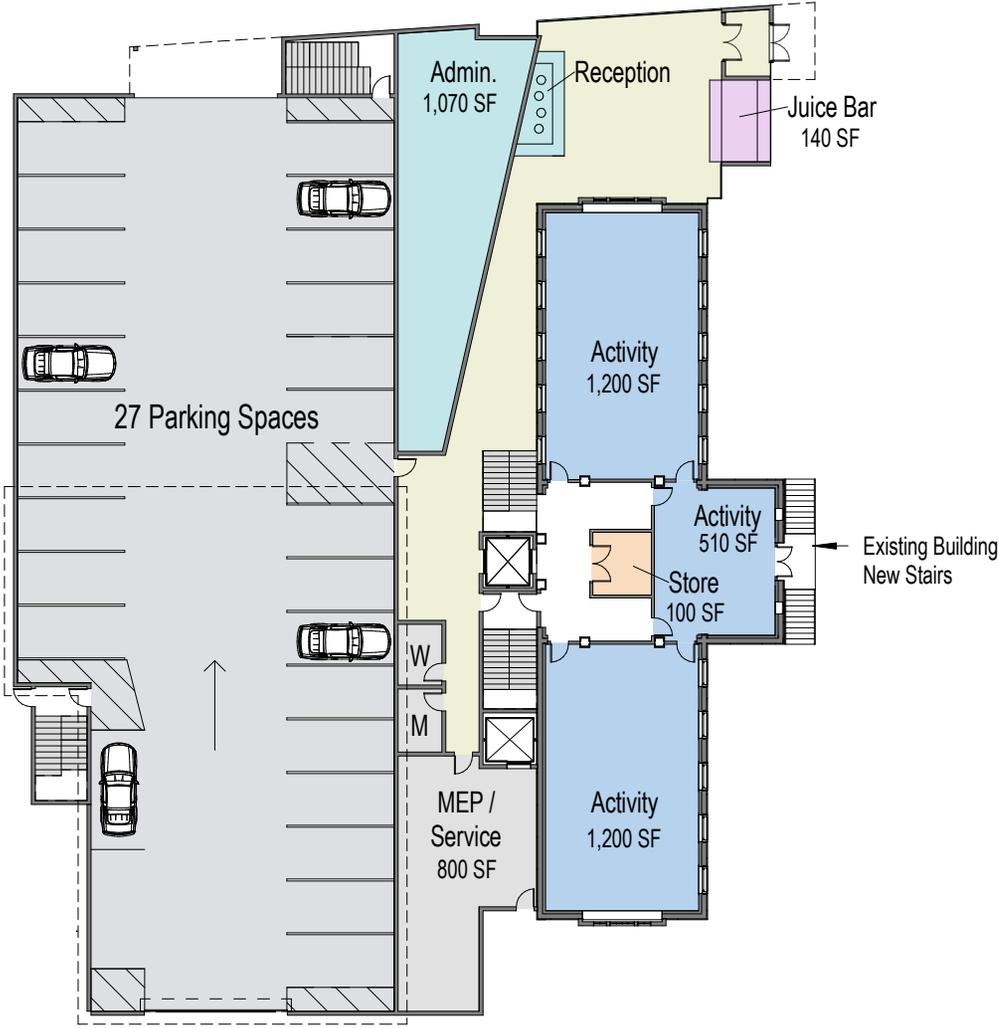
Newtonville Retain Existing Building



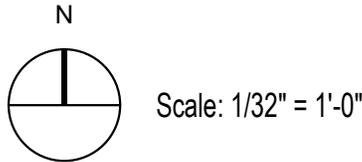
Site Plan: 33,000 sf building



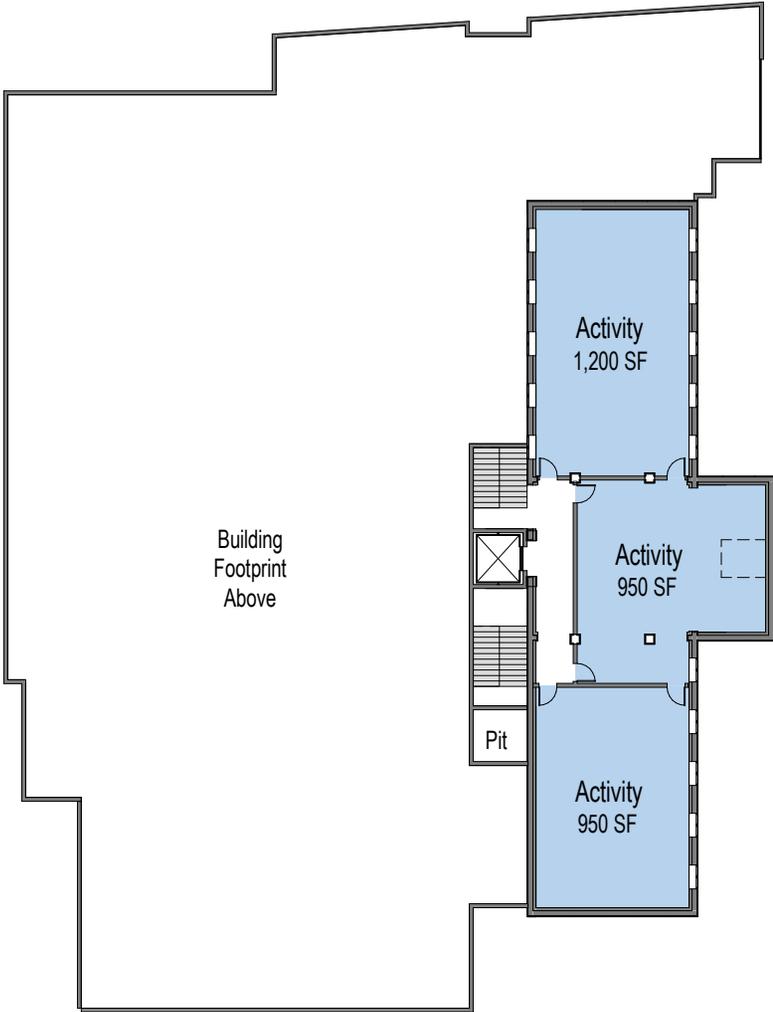
Newtonville Retain Existing Building



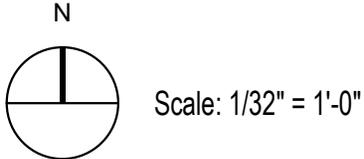
First Floor Plan: 8,000 sf
Garage Area: 9,000 sf



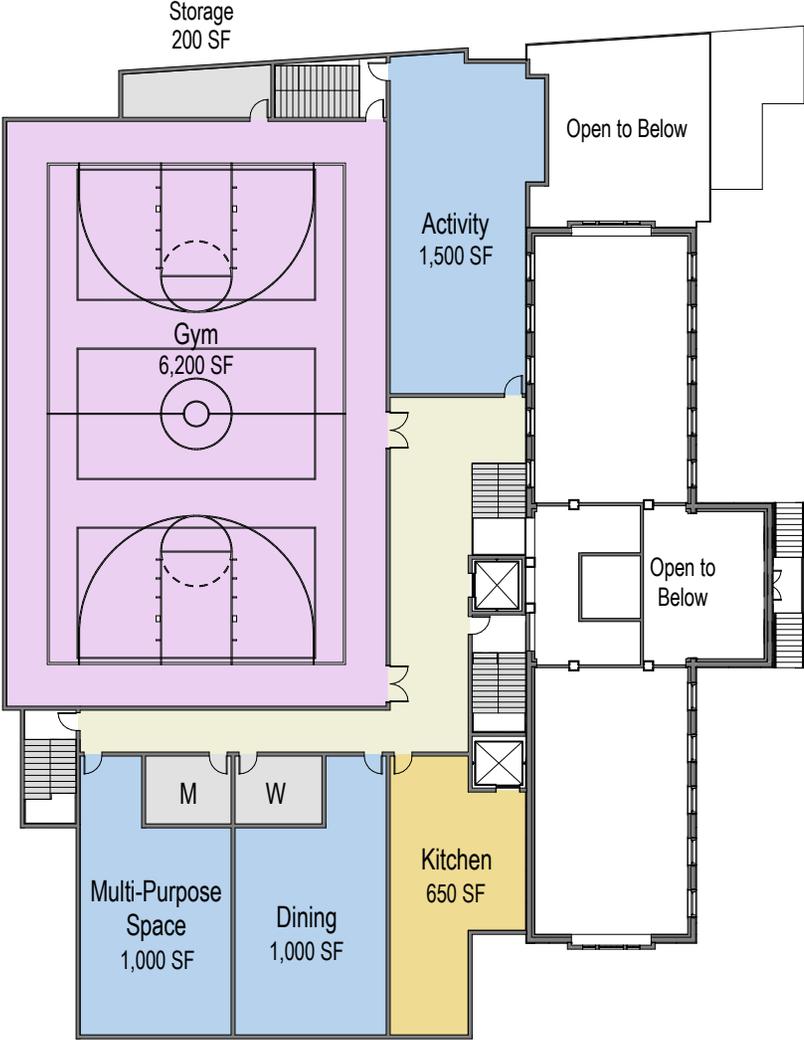
Newtonville Retain Existing Building



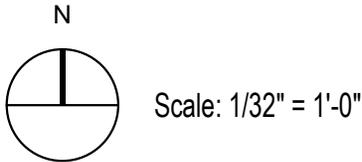
Basement Plan: 4,000 sf



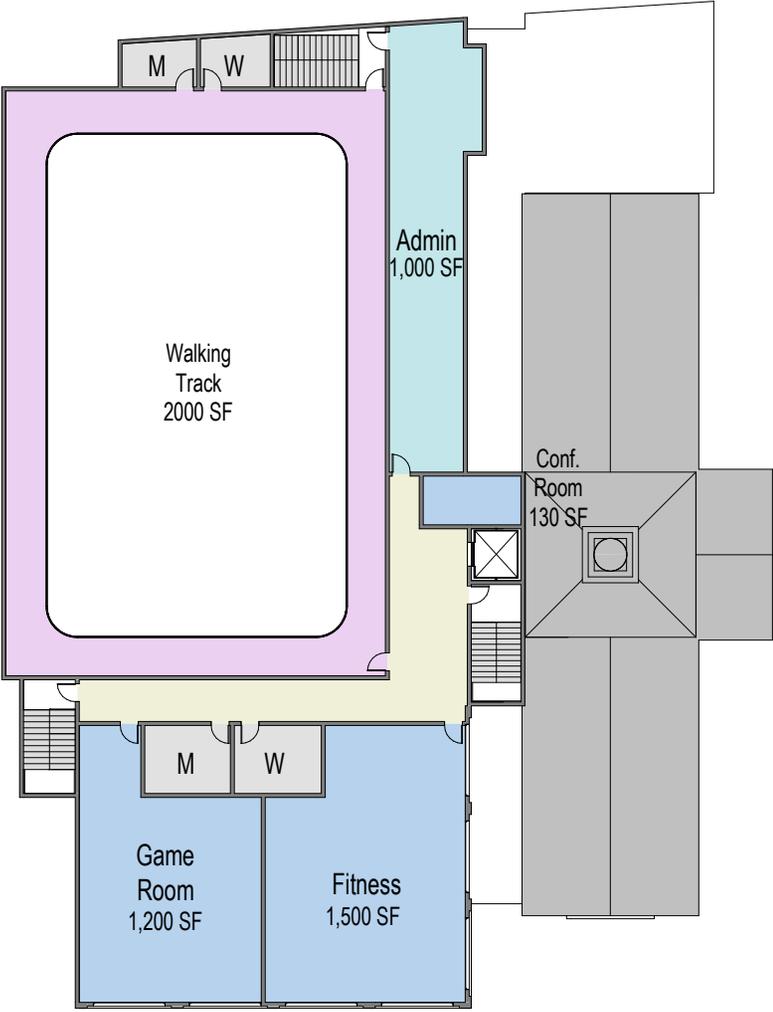
Newtonville Retain Existing Building



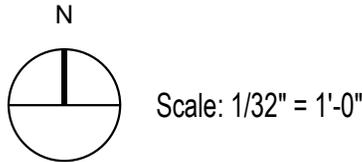
Second Floor Plan: 13,000 sf



Newtonville Retain Existing Building



Third Floor Plan: 8,000 sf



Newtonville Retain Existing Building



Aerial View from Northeast



Newtonville Retain Existing Building



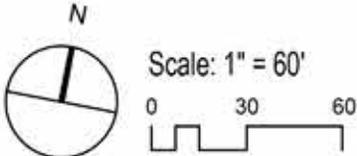
Street View from Southeast



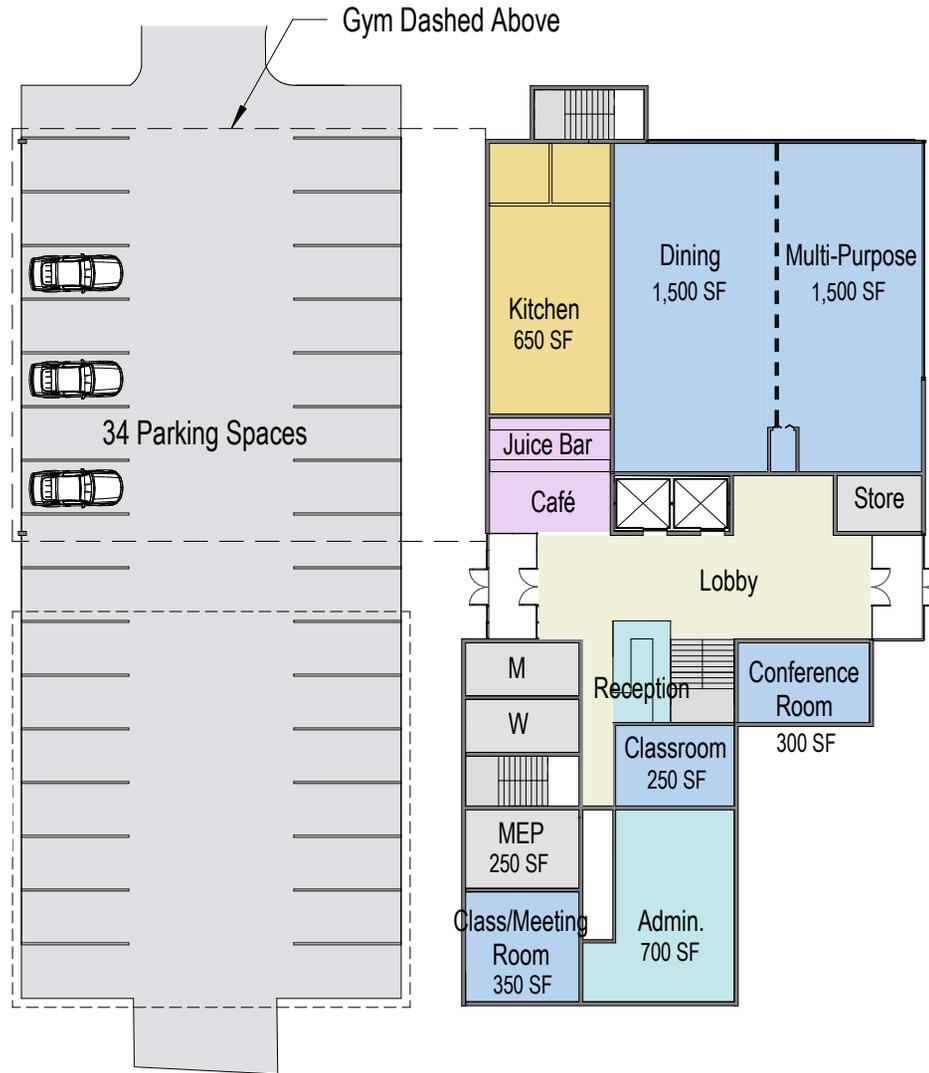
Newtonville New Construction: 3 Stories



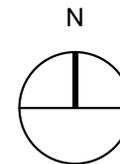
Site Plan: 33,000 sf



Newtonville New Construction: 3 Stories

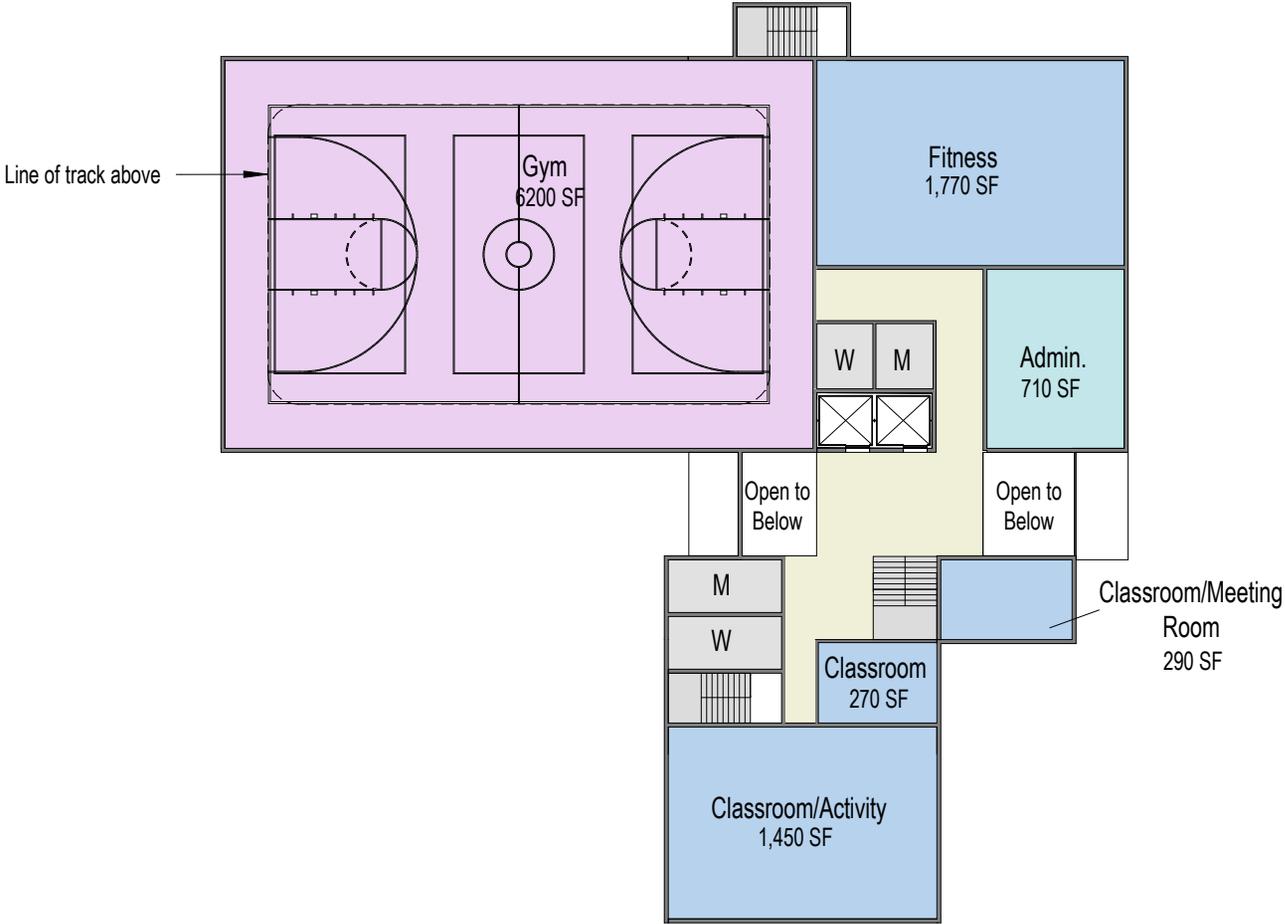


First Floor Plan: 9,000 sf

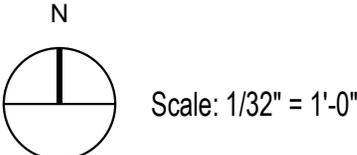


Scale: 1/32" = 1'-0"

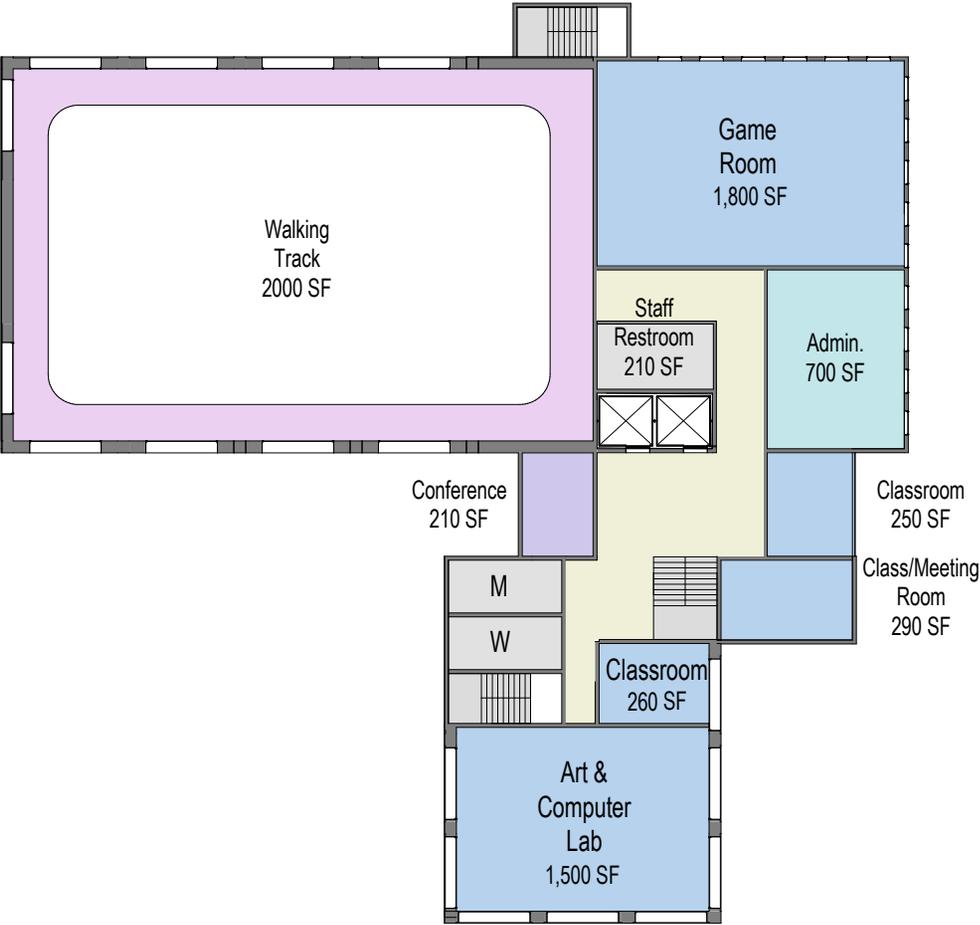
Newtonville New Construction: 3 Stories



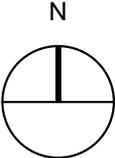
Second Floor Plan: 14,000 sf



Newtonville New Construction: 3 Stories



Third Floor Plan: 10,000 sf

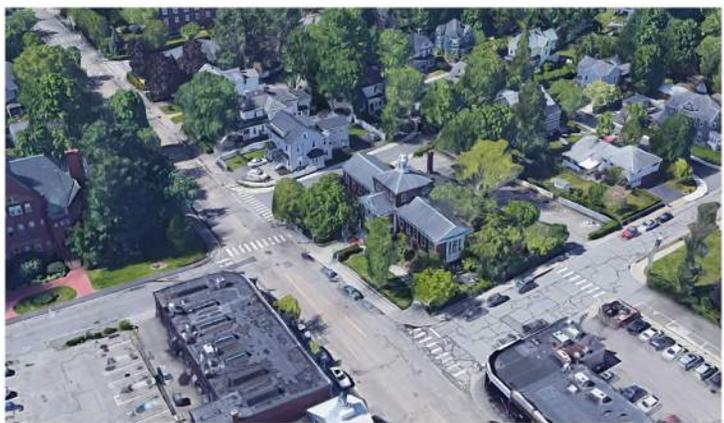


Scale: 1/32" = 1'-0"

Newtonville New Construction: 3 Stories



Aerial View from Northeast



Newtonville New Construction: 3 Stories



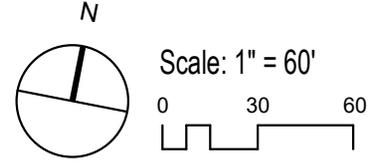
Street View from Southeast



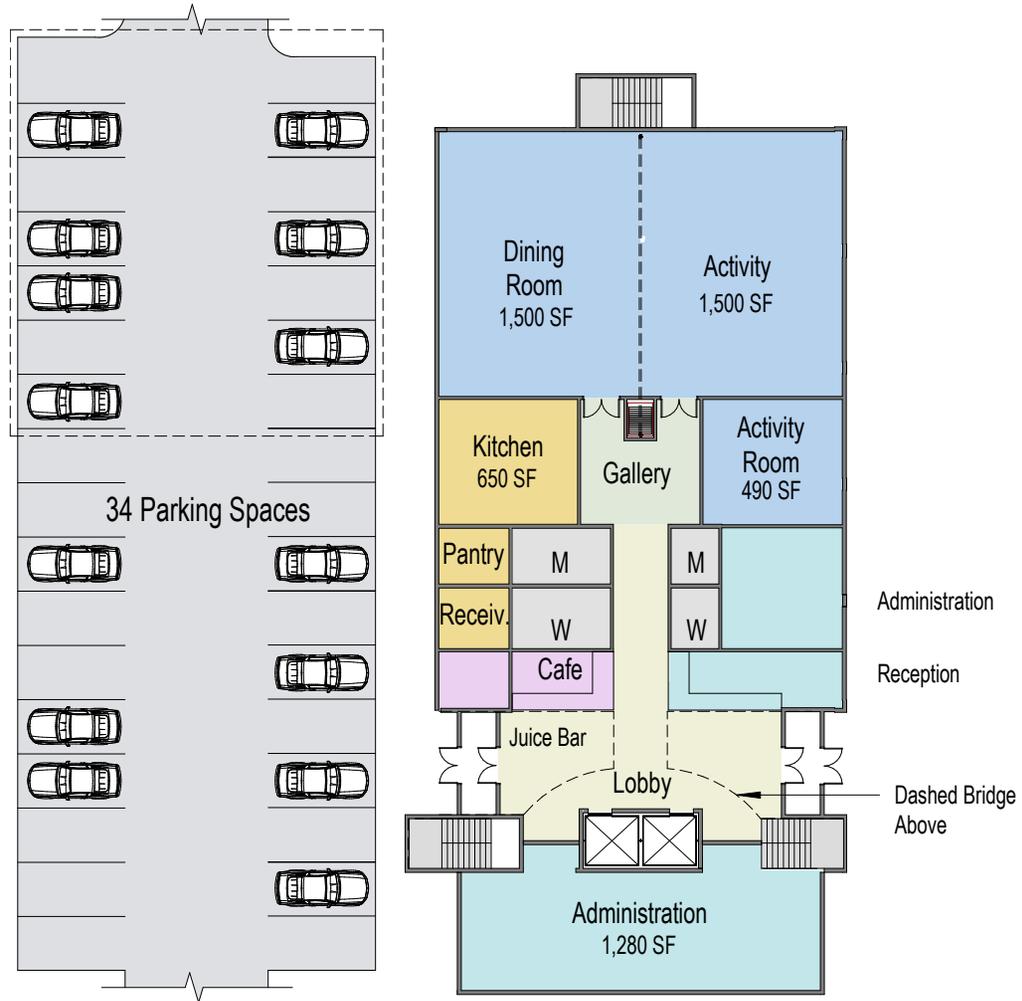
Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



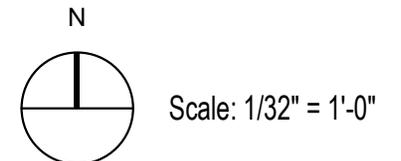
Site Plan: 33,000 sf



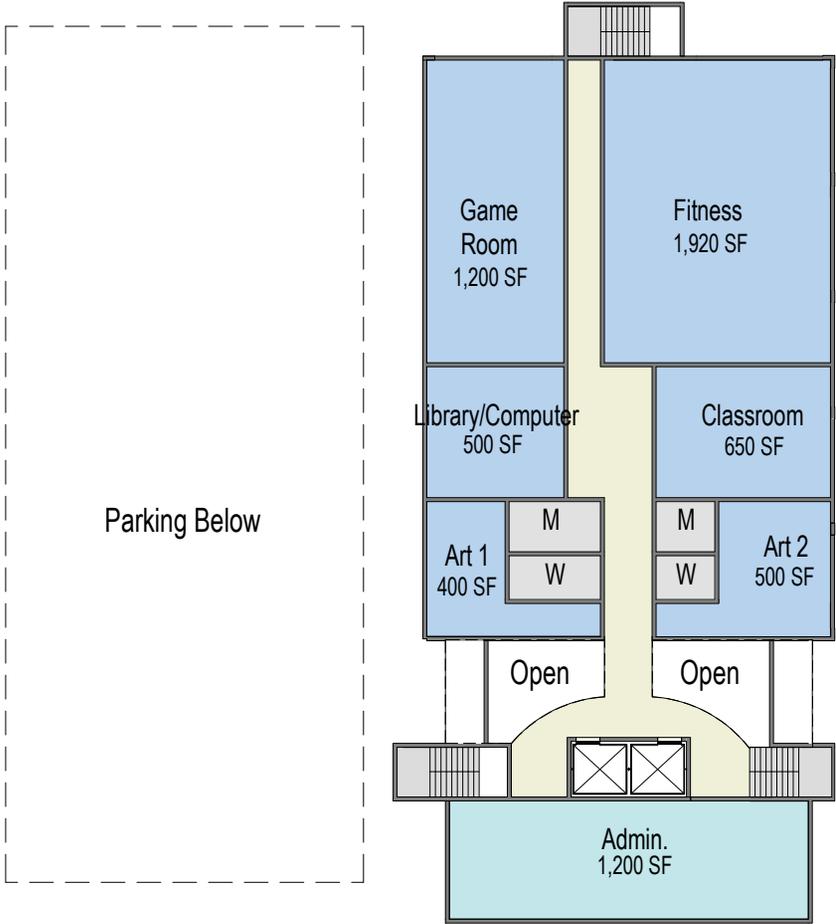
Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



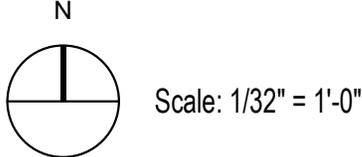
First Floor Plan: 10,000 sf



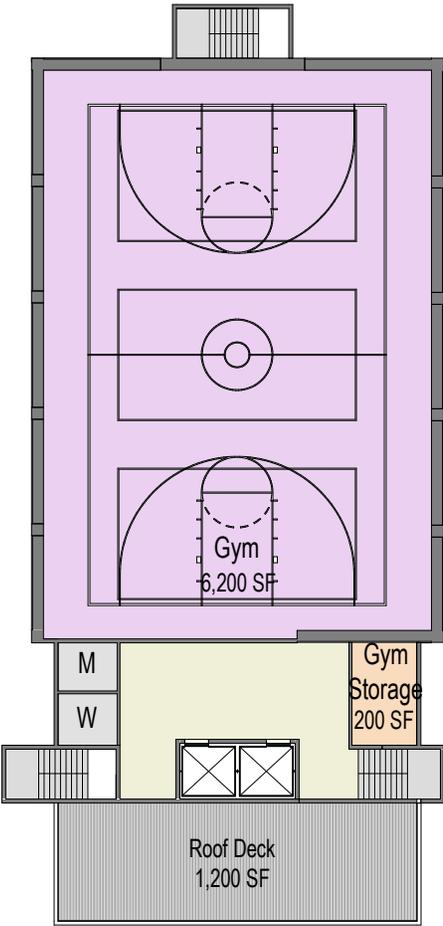
Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



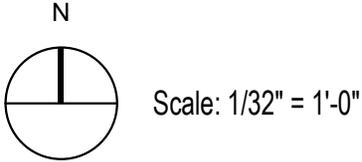
Second Floor Plan: 10,000 sf



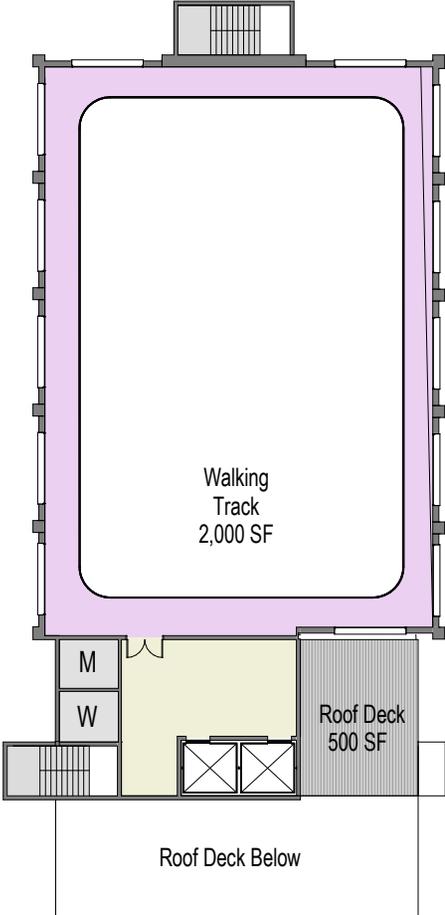
Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



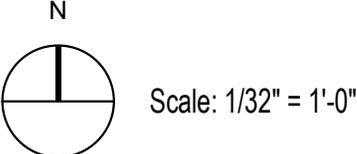
Third Floor Plan: 9,000 sf



Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



Fourth Floor Plan: 4,000 sf



Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



Aerial View from Northeast



Newtonville New Construction: 4 Stories



Street View from Southeast

Site Option Statistics

	345 Walnut Street, Newtonville			Newton Centre Triangle		
	Option 1 new & existing	Option 2 new 3-story	Option 3 new 4 story	Option 1 new 2 story	Option 2 new 3-story	Option 3 new 4-story
NewCAL Building Area* ¹ (square feet)	31,500	31,500	31,500	31,500	31,500	31,500
Floor Levels	5* ²	3	4	2	3	4
Available Roof Deck Area (square feet)	none	none	1,700	none	2,700	1,700
Current Parking at Walnut Street lot	13					
Proposed Parking Spaces in NewCAL lot	26	34	34			
Increase in Parking Spaces	13	21	21			
Revised Parking as a percent of Current	200%	262%	262%			
Number of covered parking spaces	27	14	0	0	8	0
Area of Coverd Parking (square feet)	9,200	4,200	none	none	6,500	none
Current Parking in Newton Triangle Lot				152		
Revised Parking in Newton Triangle Lot* ³				92	127	127
Decrease in Parking Spaces				-60	-25	-26
Revised Parking as a percent of Current				61%	84%	83%
Number of covered parking spaces	27	14	0	0	8	0
Area of Coverd Parking (square feet)	9,200	4,200	none	none	6,500	none

Note:

- 1) Building area includes all enclosed program area but not the covered parking
- 2) The existing building is at half level relationship to grade creating 5 different levels although the highest floor is 3 levels above grade
- 3) Parking for Newton Centre site reflects parking in entire lot

After considering Newton Centre, the working group voted unanimously for the Newtonville site, due to the time it would take to complete the project, the absence of a village plan, impacts to the neighborhood, community support or opposition, cost, and other factors.

Next Steps

Fieldwork and Existing Building Analysis

- Site Survey
- Soil Borings
- HazMat Testing
- Structural Site Visit
- Architectural Site Visit

September

Existing Conditions Report

- Geotechnical
- HazMat
- Structural Engineering Report
- Architectural
- Traffic and Parking
- Zoning and MAAB Code

October

Feasibility Study

- All new option plans and site plan
- Renovation / Addition Option plan and site plan
- Structural engineering design

November

Cost Estimate

November

Renderings

November

Assemble Final Presentation

December

Schedule: Meetings and Milestones

Date		Time	Event
Tuesday	09/22/20	7:30PM	Council on Aging Meeting
Wednesday	09/23/20	7:00PM	City Council PF/PS meeting
Thursday	09/24/20	7:00PM	Newton Historic Commission
Tuesday	09/29/20	9:30AM	Working Group Meeting
Thursday	10/01/20	6:30PM	Community Update Meeting
Friday	10/02/20	8:00AM	Newtonville Area Business Meeting
Thursday	10/08/20	7:00PM	Newtonville Area Council Meeting
Tuesday	10/13/20	9:30AM	Working Group Meeting
Wednesday	10/14/20	6:00PM	DRC meeting
Tuesday	10/27/20	9:30AM	Working Group Meeting