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Barney S. Heath
Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 10, 2020

TO: Councilor Deborah Crossley, Chair, Zoning & Planning Committee
Members of the Zoning & Planning Committee

FROM: Barney Heath, Director, Department of Planning and Development
Zachery LeMel, Chief of Long Range Planning

RE: **#88-20 Discussion and review relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance**
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING requesting review, discussion, and direction relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance.
Other docket items to be taken up within the context of Zoning Redesign include #30-20, #38-20, and #148-20

MEETING: July 16, 2020

CC: City Council
Planning Board
John Lojek, Commissioner of Inspectional Services
Alissa O. Giuliani, City Solicitor
Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer

Upcoming Meetings (7/16)

Presentations from Architects and Builders

The Planning Department has engaged local architects and builders to lend their professional expertise in reviewing the draft Zoning Ordinance. This effort, known as the Architects Focus Group, runs in parallel with ZAP and other community engagement as part of the overall Zoning Redesign project. At the upcoming meetings on July 9 and July 16, participants of the Architects Focus Group will have the opportunity to present to, and take questions directly from, the Committee, other City Council members, and the Planning and Development Board. Topics that may be discussed relevant to Article 3 include Building Components, nonconformities, sustainability, FAR vs. Building Types, and Alternative Lot/Building Configurations. Presenters may showcase case studies using their recent projects in Newton as relevant to the given topic. Staff hopes this leads to a productive conversation, with results that will further help revise and update Article 3 to not only achieve the stated goals and objectives, but also make it more intuitive and user friendly.

Zoning Redesign – Discrete Topic Review

Zoning Redesign represents a comprehensive effort to update Newton's Zoning Ordinance so that it not only achieves the City's goals and objectives, but also resolves problems experienced in applying the

Current Zoning Ordinance. The City Council has observed rules that make enforcement difficult, manipulation easy, and which often do not support current best practices. For example, certain waivers are routinely granted in the Special Permit process.

In order to recommend solutions, and stay on schedule, the Chair of Zoning and Planning (ZAP) has proposed taking on discrete topics within the draft Zoning Ordinance by City staff with specific expertise at the same time the Committee continues to review Article 3 and subsequent Articles within the draft. When appropriate, staff will consult with other boards and commissions, such as the Land Use Committee and Urban Design Commission.

These discrete topics would be taken up in Committee as they fit within the Article-by-Article timeline presented earlier this year as recommendations. These discrete topics may include:

- Measurement
 - Height & massing
 - Grading & retaining walls
- Signs
- Outdoor lighting
- Transportation
 - Transportation Demand Management (TDM)
 - Motor vehicle parking (minimums and maximums) and loading facilities
- Environmental/Sustainability
 - Environmental site design
 - Sustainable building design
 - Stormwater management
- Allowed Uses
 - Categories
 - Adaptive Reuse
- Cultural Arts

Staff are particularly interested in hearing from Councilors about specific issues in these areas and perhaps others that they have encountered over the years that might benefit from a new approach as part of Zoning Redesign.

Looking Ahead

In addition to the upcoming ZAP meetings, staff plan to host another public office hours on July 22nd and two Architects Focus Groups (July 15 and 29). As mentioned above, the Planning Department is working to update and revise the Article 3 zoning language in advance of the ZAP August meetings.