

Memorandum



Subject: Newtonville Unified Design Style

Date: December 14, 2016

To: Newton City Council, Newton Planning Department,
Mark Newtonville, Austin Street Partners

CC:

From: Newtonville Area Council

AREA COUNCIL

To the members of the Planning Department, City Council, and the development teams for Austin Street Partners and Washington Place:

2016-2017

Please find attached a recommendation, unanimously forwarded to you by the Newtonville Area Council. We have spoken before about the unique opportunity we have to visually unify the village, and feel strongly that the City should develop a set of standards for the village to be used by these and future projects within Newtonville. We have also attached excerpts from a similar design standard set that was prepared to guide development in the Fort Point Channel section of Boston for your reference (for form, not content).

Peter Bruce
Joy Huber
Marc Kaufman
Wayne Koch
Thomas Kraus
Colleen Minaker
Susan Reisler
Helene Sroat
Tim Stone

We encourage the Planning Department to take the lead in developing these design standards, with the opportunity to take advantage of the design resources of the private development teams. The Newtonville Area Council would be pleased to offer our services as well in facilitating this process. We acknowledge that the Washington Place team, Planning Department members and City Councilors have previously voiced support for our goal of creating a unified village look and feel.

We understand that this goes beyond the scope of the deliberations of the City Council regarding the Washington Place project. If such guidelines already existed, they could just be referenced in a Council Order as part of a special permit. However, given that these guidelines likely will not exist by the time the Council Order is being drafted in January, we would like you to consider inserting some language, perhaps as a finding, that encompasses this issue.

Thank you,

Respectfully submitted for the Newtonville Area Council,

Thomas Kraus
President, Newtonville Area Council

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NAC Recommendations for Village Center Hardscape Standards

WHY CREATE A PLAN AND STANDARDS

The Newtonville Village Center has a long-neglected infrastructure suffering dangerous intersections, too wide cross walks on very busy streets, narrow and uneven sidewalks, inconsistent pedestrian lighting with poor illumination. In other words, it is a bad environment for automobile traffic but even worse for pedestrians.

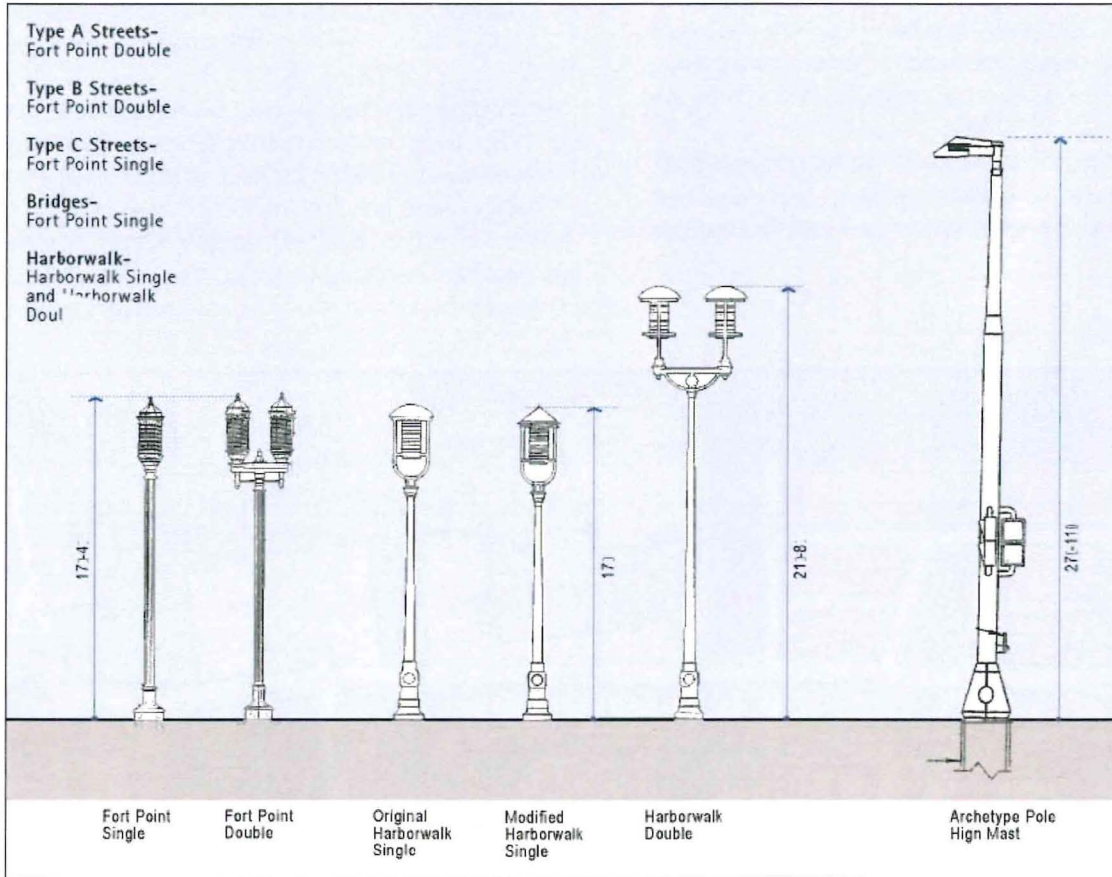
The Area Council has been lobbying the city for improvements for years and now it appears that the city and private developers may be ready to act. This is good news for Newtonville, but implementation will inevitably be executed by multiple public and private entities over an extended period. Therefore, we encourage the City to create a masterplan for street improvements in the village center as well as a set of standards to be followed by all parties. This will facilitate keeping the village center, north and south of the Mass Turnpike, consistent and coherent and allow for a unified approach should other sites be considered for development in the future. The confluence of Washington Place, Austin Street, and the city's hardscape program offers the opportunity to implement this common design across three distinct projects, covering a substantial portion of the village center.

HARDSCAPE STANDARDS

The specific items that we would like to see have village standards:

- **Street Lights-** We would like to see a low scale, historic in character, street lamp that will be spaced to provide even street and sidewalk illumination. The light poles should be equipped to allow for hanging baskets and banners.
- **Street Furniture (benches, planters, and bicycle racks)-** The city should select street furniture as preferred standards so that all projects maintain a consistently high level of quality.
- **Tree Pits and Grates-** Consistent detailing for the planting and irrigation as well as the material of actual grating inserts should be specified.
- **Cross Walks and Curbing-** Cross walks should be identified by a change in material rather than a painted identification. The number of pedestrians using crosswalks in the village center during school and business hours means that indicators need to be highly visible in all weather conditions and levels of wear. It would also be desirable that curbing material (as well as cross walks) be specified so that long term maintenance and upkeep are not issues.
- **Concrete Sidewalks-** A consistent thickness, structure, color, and finish for concrete sidewalks needs to be specified to eliminate the possibility that the current patchwork of mismatched and uneven sidewalks does not occur in the future.

Street Light Standard



Signage

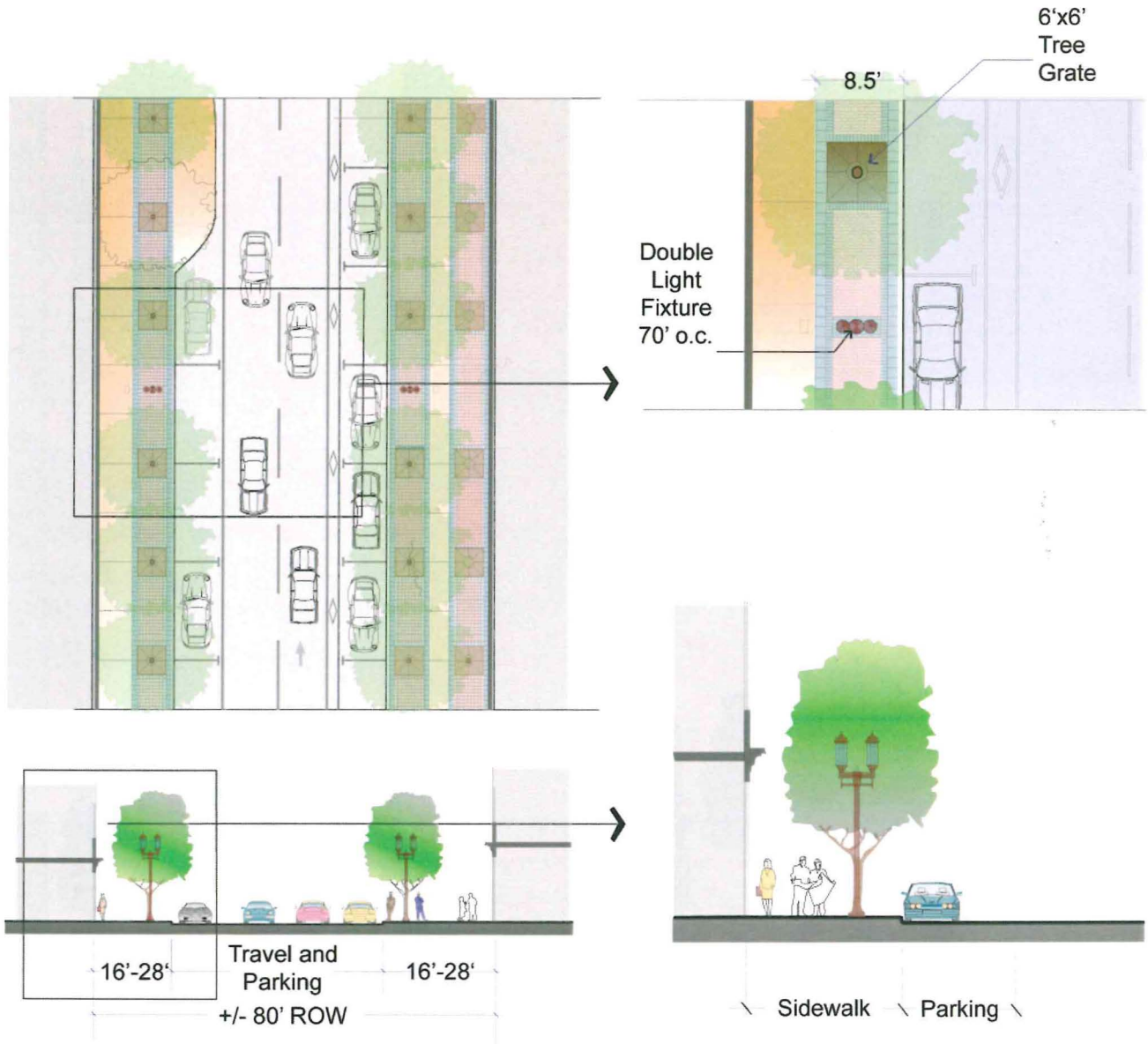


Street Lamp



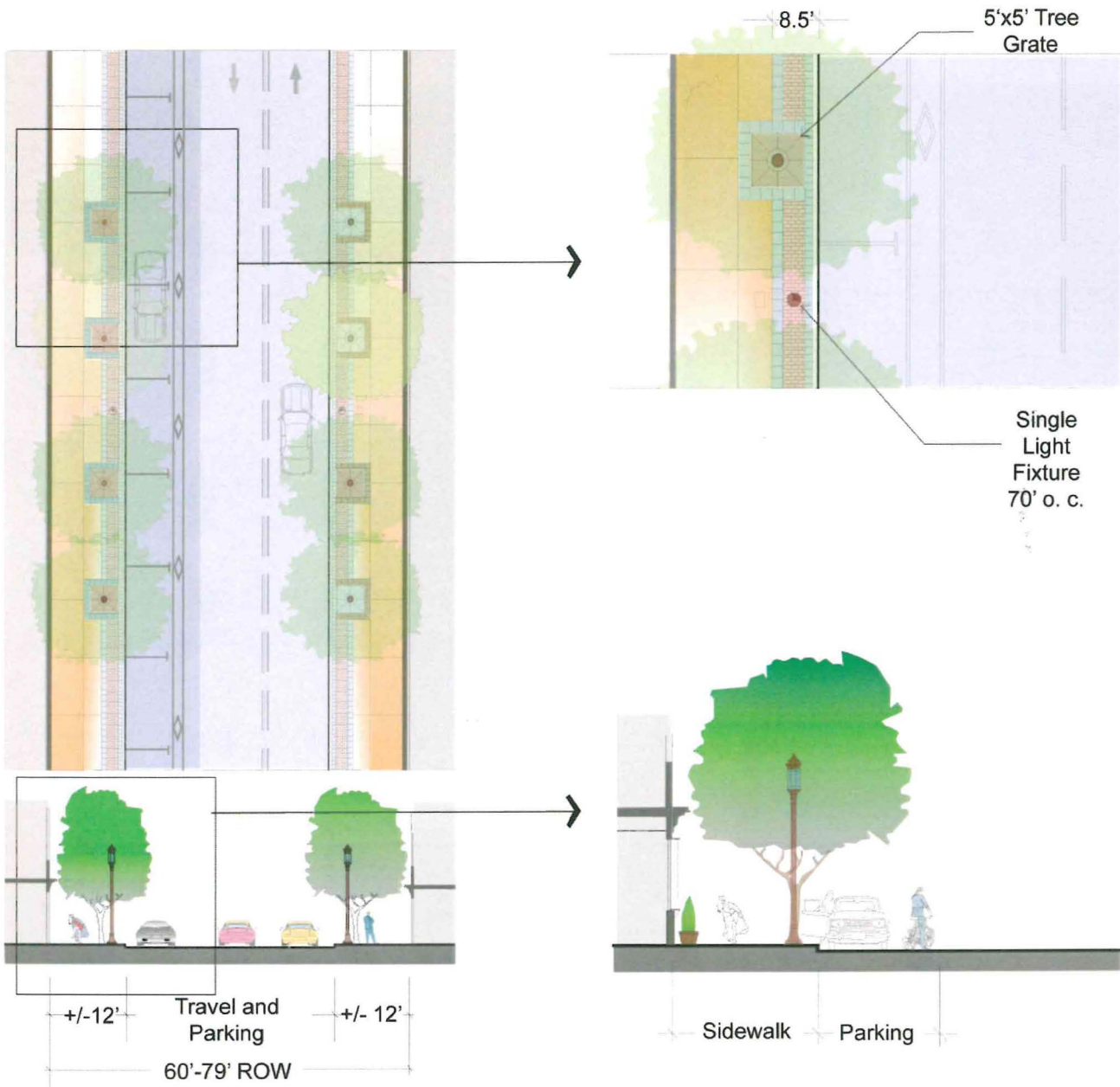
Street Sign

Type A Street:
Illustration for A Street or West Service Road



* Final street dimensions and lane delineation to be determined upon site survey and traffic engineering.

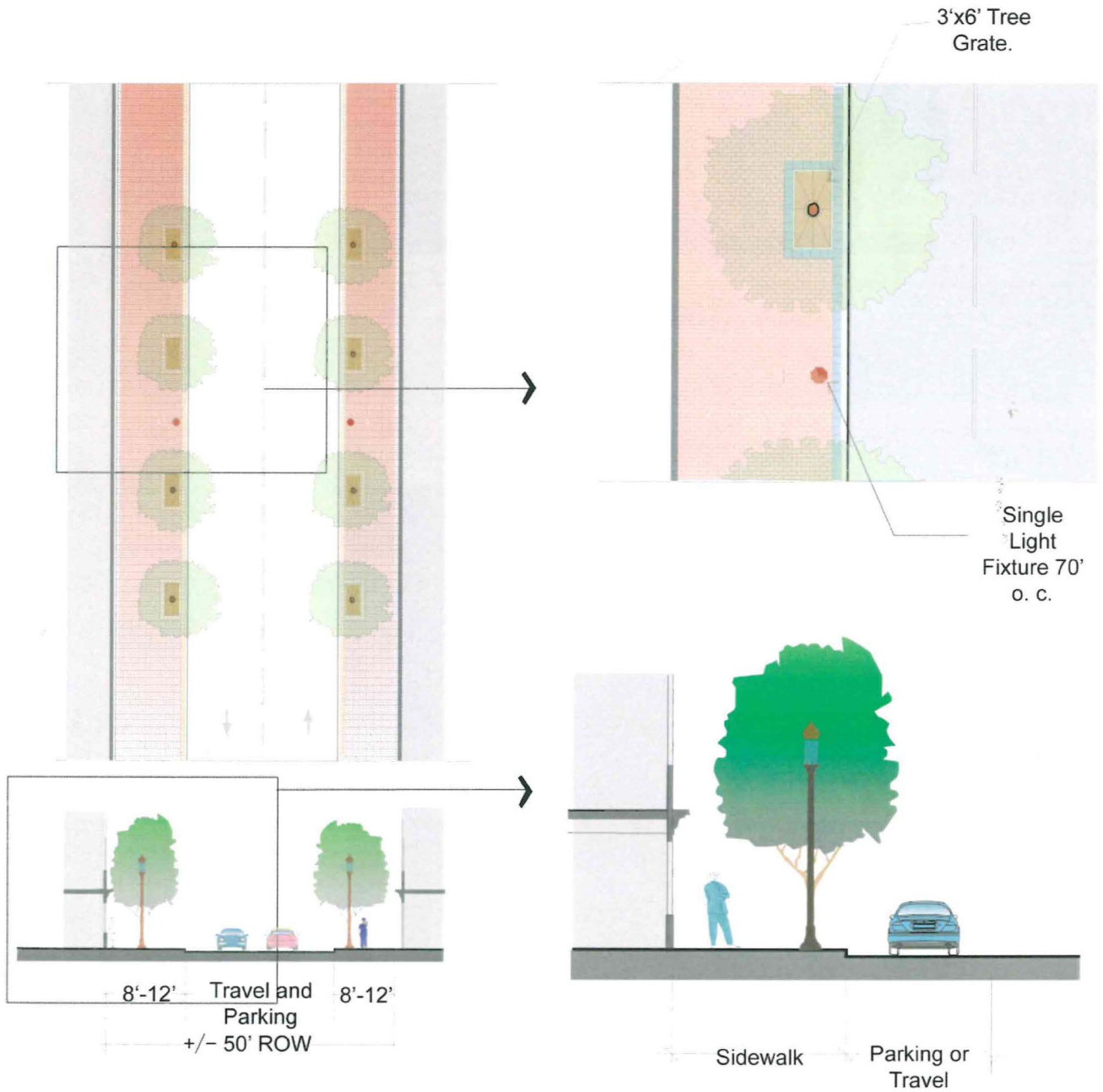
Type B Street:
Illustration for Necco Street, Binford Street
or Richards Street



* Final street dimensions and lane delineation to be determined upon site survey and traffic engineering.

Streetscape Sections

Type C Street:
Illustration for West First Street, New Street or
Melcher Street



* Final street dimensions and lane delineation to be determined upon site survey and traffic engineering.