



Newton Zoning Redesign

Developing a context-
based zoning code for
an evolving city.

10.05.16

Welcome!

6:15 Welcome & Background

6:30 Introduction to Zoning Redesign

6:50 Stations Exploration

7:20 Next Steps

What is zoning?

Zoning is a tool used by local governments to regulate what kinds of development can happen in which places. Zoning was first introduced in the United States in the early 20th century as a way to separate incompatible uses within a city (e.g. heavy industrial and residential uses). A zoning code regulates appropriate uses for discrete zoning districts throughout a city.

Newton's first zoning code was introduced in 1922. Since then, the code has grown from an original 16-page document to over 125 pages.



“ Newton’s zoning ordinance is difficult to understand and administer and sometimes does not result in the best outcomes for the community. ”

- Zoning Reform Group, 2011 Final Report

Zoning reform is of critical importance to the future of Newton. The Zoning Ordinance guides new construction, redevelopment, and land use patterns by creating regulations, standards, and review processes that shape the City over the long-term. The last comprehensive review and revision of Newton's Zoning Ordinance took place in 1987. Much has changed in Newton and the Greater Boston metropolitan area since then. **An updated ordinance could help the City better respond to changing market pressures, guide new development, renew Newton's village centers, and protect the City's unique residential neighborhoods.**

Newton Zoning Reform

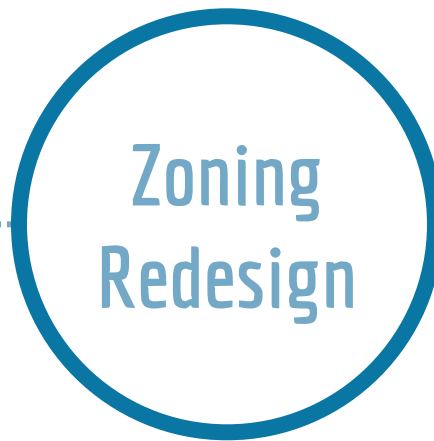
Reform Process Phases

PHASE 1



Zoning code
analysis &
reorganization

PHASE 2



Pattern book &
comprehensive
zoning code
rewrite/redesign

PHASE 3



Analyze data and
experience with
new zoning
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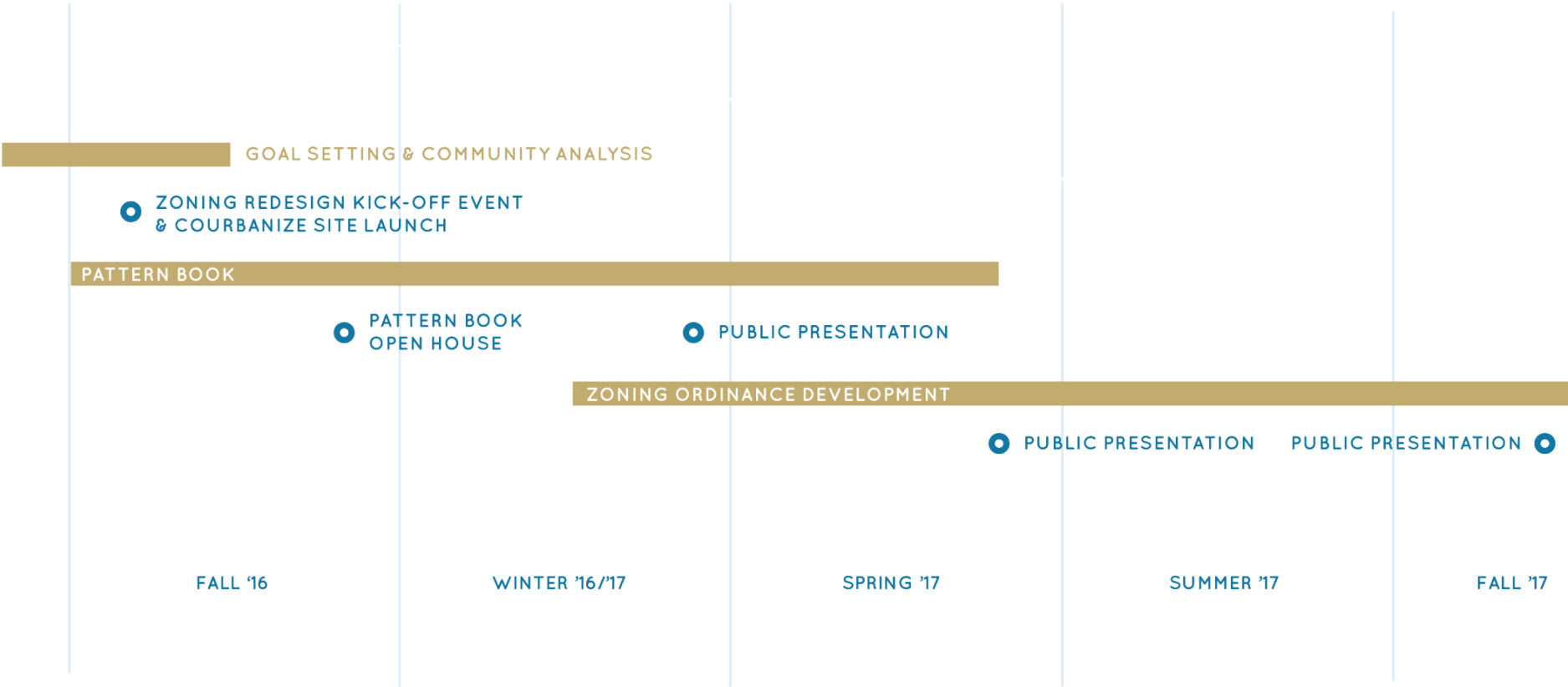
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Newton Zoning Reform

Zoning Redesign: Anticipated Project Timeline





The Future of Zoning in Newton

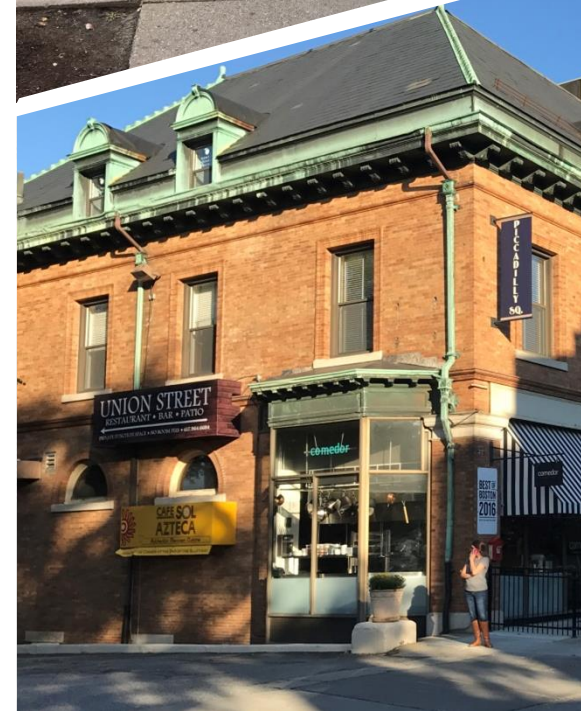
The Zoning Redesign initiative aims to create a zoning code that is more flexible, predictable, and context-based in order to encourage development/ redevelopment within Newton that is in keeping with the city's celebrated character while directing growth and economic development to the most appropriate areas.

Traditional Zoning

Traditional or “Euclidian” zoning is designed around the principle of separation of land uses and guidelines designed to facilitate the approval process for proposed developments that conform to the code.

Context-based Zoning

Context-based zoning is an evolution in thinking when it comes to zoning policy. In place of an ordinance that attempts to regulate simply by land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, etc.), context-based zoning aims to understand, respect, and build off of the design and character of existing neighborhoods to help steer new development/ redevelopment efforts.



Newton Zoning Reform

Principles for a New Ordinance

- Be easy to use, administer, & enforce
- Be well-organized, indexed, and cross-referenced
- Use clear, precise, & contemporary language
- Be internally consistent
- Produce predictable, desired results
- Balance flexibility & predictability
- Support the vision expressed in the Comprehensive Plan



Newton Zoning Reform

Themes for a New Ordinance

1. Better organize the ordinance for ease of use
2. Simplify & streamline the permitting & review process
3. Recognize that each village center & commercial corridor is unique
4. Encourage mixed-use residential redevelopment in village centers
5. Create “soft transitions” between village centers & residential neighborhoods
6. Allow moderate, flexible growth on commercial corridors
7. Rationalize & streamline parking regulations
8. Protect neighborhood character & scale
9. Create more diverse housing opportunities
10. Institute a better process for managing change of religious & educational institutions
11. Improve natural resource conservation & sustainability

Zoning 101



coUrbanize & Engagement Opportunities



Pattern Book & Context-based Zoning

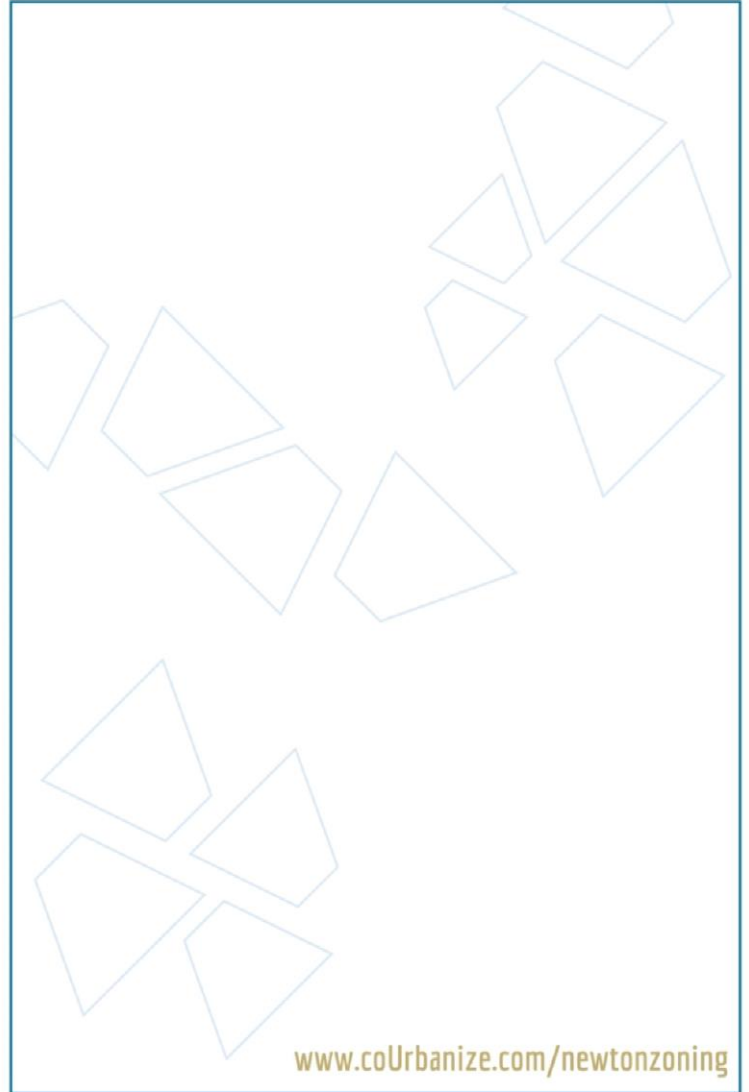


Ask us your questions!



Newton Zoning Redesign

What's your question?



www.coUrbanize.com/newtonzoning

A blurred background image of a red wooden fence in a rural setting. The fence is made of three horizontal rails and a vertical post. In the background, there is a white house with a blue roof, surrounded by green trees and a clear sky. The overall scene is out of focus, creating a soft, dreamy atmosphere.

Next Steps