

VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT AMENDMENT - 2021

Strike Chapter 30, Section 4.1. Business Districts, in its entirety and insert, in place thereof, the following. (1)

4.1. VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT

4.1.1. DISTRICT INTENT

To create a zoning district for Newton Village Centers that maintains a “village scale” and answers the demands created by the recent amendment to MGL Chapter 40A, Section 3 to allow multifamily housing or mixed-use development as of right or by special permit in “eligible locations”. (2)

4.1.2. DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

A. Building Height **Building height is limited to two stories unless otherwise provided.**

- i. A flat roofed building **with allowed uses set forth in §C. I and C. ii below**, shall be limited to two stories.
- ii. A three story, flat roofed building is allowed **provided that not less than forty (40%) per cent of the floor area of said building is for residential use and further provided that ten (10%) percent of the floor area of said residential use is for units that are deed restricted for occupancy or ownership by occupants with limited assets earning less than fifty (50%) of the Greater Boston Area Median Income. Said restriction to be in a form approved by the City of Newton Law Department.** (3)
- iii. A pitched roof on any building may contain usable space under the roof, provided such usable space does not exceed 60% of the floor area of the

floor immediately below. **Such area shall not be restricted by the conditions of §4.1.2. A. ii.** (3)
iv. Dormers, as defined in Section 1.5.4.G., may not exceed ten (10) feet in width and separation between dormers shall be not less than 15 feet. No Special Permit or variance may allow for greater size, capacity or use.

B. Other Dimensional Use Standards.

- i. Building coverage shall not exceed 85% of the lot area.
- ii. No building shall be set back less than five (5) feet from a property line adjacent to a public way or private way to which the public has a right of access, excluding foot and bicycle easements.
- iii. No building shall be set back less than 50 feet from an adjoining single family or two family zoning District.
- iv. Existing non-conforming structures may be torn down and replaced. Any increase in floor space shall be vertical and shall not extend beyond the pre-existing, nonconforming building footprint.
- v. Party Walls are permitted.

C. Use Standards

- i. Commercial retail, office, hospitality or other commercial use not assigned to another use district under this chapter.
- ii. Residential use above the first floor **(including multi family use).**
- iii. All buildings, structures and additions located on a lot in single and separate ownership, may be available for use in common or in connection with contiguous or adjacent lots without the requirement of a Special Permit.

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- iv. Development of a building on a separately owned lot shall be considered a separate project and shall not require a Special Permit even though connected by party walls.
- v. **Any building construction in excess of two stories shall be subject to the provisions on section 7.4 of this chapter (Site Plan Approval).**

- D. A Special Permit** is required for:
- i. Any development in the Village Center districts of 30,000 square feet or more of gross floor area.
 - ii. Use of the roof for the installation and/or storage of mechanical systems, including HVAC equipment.
 - iii. A Site Plan Review is required in connection with a Special Permit.

- E. District Designation.**
Unless otherwise designated in Section 1.3.2 of this chapter, this zoning District shall apply to all areas previously zoned Business 1.

² *From Eastport, Maine to Kansas to the Pacific coastal towns; from Ireland to Italy, a village center is immediately recognizable by the predominance of two and three story buildings, its mix of commercial uses, residential uses and local businesses to serve the village residents.*

³ *Assume a lot in a Village Center District contains 10,000 square feet of land. 85% lot coverage times two floors (above the first floor) equals 17,000 square feet plus 5,100 square feet under the sloped roof (60% of 8,500 square feet third floor) equals 22,100 square feet for residential use. 1,700 square feet of space is for low income housing. Residential unit size will have to be adjusted to allow for exterior and unit perimeter walls, hallways and stairways.]. This formula falls within the form based concept of zoning. It provides an option for developers and land owners to expand building space and to provide housing for an economically disadvantaged portion of the population. It also qualifies to meet the goals of providing such housing without the necessity of obtaining a special permit, as set out in MGL c.40A, §3.*

FOOTNOTES

¹ *Newton has 5 Business use districts and 4 Mixed Use districts. During Zoning Redesign, these districts should be consolidated to conform to the form based standards being adopted. This is a proposal to amend areas now zoned Business 1, most significantly by allowing residential use as of right rather than by a Special Permit and limiting height of buildings.*