



Zoning Redesign

The City of Newton's project to redesign the zoning code

Takeaways from Village Center Engagement

- **What We Learned** From the 2021 Engagement for Village Centers + Future Public Info Session on November 15
- **Local Preference**
- **November ZAP Meetings'** Tentative Agendas

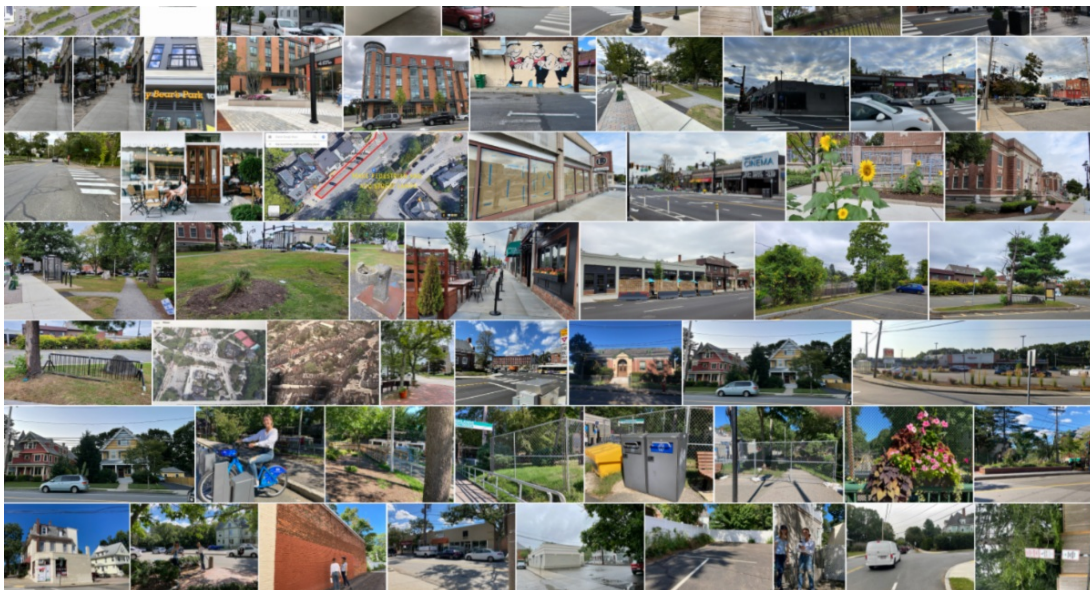


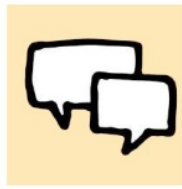
Image Description: A snapshot of some of the photos staff received through Vision Kit submissions. You can see all of the photos and read their accompanying observations [at this Flickr Page](#).

What We Learned from First Village Centers' Engagement Phase

The 2021 community engagement phase updates to Newton's village center zoning districts heard from over 1,700 community members! People contributed to the online interactive forum, submitted Vision Kits (through photos and observations and other formats), a comprehensive representation of community stakeholders including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color), LGBTQ+, renters, homeowners, business owners, housing and environmental advocates, interfaith, multi-cultural arts and other interests – participated in small group sessions and interviews. [Find all of this input here.](#) Stay tuned for additional engagement opportunities centered around the specific zoning policy recommendations that come out from this engagement in the coming year.



Vision Kit
290 participants /
102 submissions



Online interactive forum
1,249 participants



Equitable focus groups
139 participants
18 community facilitators



Economic development engagement
41 participants



History presentation
88 attendees/
viewed 165 times



On-the-spot Surveying
Over 500 engaged in-person

Staff synthesized the community input to identify the shared observations, hopes, and concerns from the Vision Kit submissions and the focus group meeting minutes; [you can review this synthesis and it's methodology here.](#)

From the synthesis, staff found the majority of public input prioritizing:

- Creating more communal & public space + activation
- Increasing accessibility to buildings and infrastructure within Village Centers
- Incorporating climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces
- Helping small businesses to begin, stay and thrive in Village Centers
- Making permitting process easier, clearer, and multi-tiered
- Adding more diverse housing options and encourage mixed-use projects (although to what extent had a spectrum of opinion)
- Prioritizing safe and accessible routes to and through village centers, especially walking and biking

Accessibility is an issue ..it's really hard to get fully accessible housing without getting buildings that are big enough to have an elevator. But if we build multi-families where each flat is one floor instead of townhouses, maybe that could work.
(Older adults Focus Group)

The many non-vehicle interests are competing for a small amount of space... We simply need more outdoor non-vehicular space in our villages for people
(Vision Kit Submission)



People with Disabilities



Ages 65+

Everyone who makes policy for the city should try to navigate the city for a day in a wheelchair and see how hard it is with the way things are now.
(People with disabilities Focus Group)



Image Description: This slide is one of many from the October 25th ZAP meeting, listing quotes and photos from community members' Vision Kits and Focus Groups. This one focuses on 'Increasing accessibility to buildings and infrastructure within Village Centers.'

Each of these takeaways have multiple sub-themes, which you can see and read in the [staff memo](#) and [presentation](#) given to the Zoning and Planning Committee (ZAP) on Oct 25th.

Have questions about this community engagement process and results? Hear the presentation at

6pm on Monday, November 15th, and ask your questions during a Q+A session that will last until 7:30pm. [Register here for the virtual session!](#)

Local Preference

At the October 25th ZAP meeting, ZAP voted unanimously to recommend the reduction of the Local Preference requirement from 70% to 25%. You can read through the [staff memo here](#). You can access the meeting [audio here](#) and the [report here](#). This change was unanimously approved by the City Council on November 1.

Dates of Upcoming ZAP Meetings *(agenda items are not finalized and subject to change)*

Review October's meeting reports at [ZAP's website](#). For November:

November 8th, 2021 at 7pm Agenda ([formal agenda linked here](#)):

- #180-21 – Review proposed amendments to MU4 Special Permit Criteria (Public Hearing)
- #392-21 - Authorization to acquire property at 163-144 Hancock Street and 169 Grove Street, known as The Walker Center for Ecumenical Exchange (discussion and possible vote)
- #438-20 - Request for creation of a Municipal Housing Trust in Newton to support affordable housing development (continued discussion on draft ordinance)
- #88-20 - Committee discussion on the detailed outcomes from the multiple forms of engagement, May – Sept. (continued discussion)

November 18th, 2021 at 7pm Agenda:

- #390-21 – Requesting zoning amendments to allow for veterinary uses in the Business 4 zoning district (intro discussion and set a Public Hearing)
 - #88-20 - Village center zoning prioritizations based on the engagement results and quantitative analysis (Utile presentation and continued discussion)
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City of Newton, Massachusetts
617-796-1120 | zoningredesign@newtonma.gov | www.newtonma.gov/zoningredesign