



Zoning Redesign: Village Centers

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

May Recap & Looking Toward June

- ZAP Continues Workshopping Village Center Zoning Ideas
- Network's Kick-Off with ~90 Members
- Newton Planning Dept on Housing & Racial Equity Panel
- Newton North High School & Zoning Redesign
- Tentative Agenda for last June ZAP Meeting



Image description: City of Newton planning staff speak with students and teachers while tabling outdoors at Newton North High School's Sustainability Day about Zoning Redesign, sustainability, housing, and transportation.

ZAP Begins Workshopping Village Center Zoning Ideas

On June 1, ZAP Chair Deborah Crossley began facilitating a workshop at ZAP focusing on better understanding the thoughts, concerns, preferences, and remaining questions that Committee members have regarding the framework and



Zoning & Planning Committee

proposed policies in the draft zoning proposals for Village Centers.

Planning staff and consultants from Utile outlined the proposals in the [ZAP memo](#) and were on hand to answer any questions.

Image description: The Zoning & Planning Committee workshop zoning proposals in a hybrid meeting on June 1. Shown from left to right are Councilors Danberg, Wright, Crossley, Leary, Albright, clerk Nathan Giacalone, planning Deputy Director Jennifer Caira, and Utile consultant Tim Love.

The goal of this and future ZAP meetings is to reach Committee consensus on the proposed zoning framework and reveal remaining questions and areas of concern. With this direction, Planning staff can continue work with Utile and the Law Department to draft ordinance language, while simultaneously engaging the community to build understanding of and get input on the village center zoning recommendations and potential mapping of zoning districts. The department and Utile will also create a first draft of design guidelines for review in the fall.

Four of the 12 key recommendations were discussed at length on June 1, and 5 on June 13. You can find [the report for the June 1 meeting here](#) and [the video here](#) (June 13 meeting report will be posted on [the ZAP website](#).) The next Zoning Redesign newsletter will provide a summary of what councilors share about each of the proposals – please stay tuned!

Network's Kick-Off With ~90 Members & Next Meeting

Zoning Redesign's new Community Engagement Network kicked-off in May, bringing together its nearly 90 members to meet each other, learn about zoning basics and the City of Newton governance, and begin preparing their own engagement plans. Network members asked a whole range of questions, digging into the complex nature of 'community engagement' around a topic as politically charged as Zoning Redesign, asking how to better engage Newton's younger generations, what was learned from the 2021 work, how to engage one's own neighborhood better, and much more.

While city staff attempted [to answer all the questions](#), Network members themselves also stepped in to answer, highlighting that the knowledge of zoning and community engagement extends beyond city government. For example, the Wednesday night meeting ended with community members brainstorming ideas for how to better highlight civic opportunities when the city does not have a local newspaper. While not explicitly zoning-related, this topic of public engagement is important and city staff hope that the Network continues to foster collective, public brainstorming on civic topics.

Overview of Network Members' Neighborhood Blocks & Community Spaces

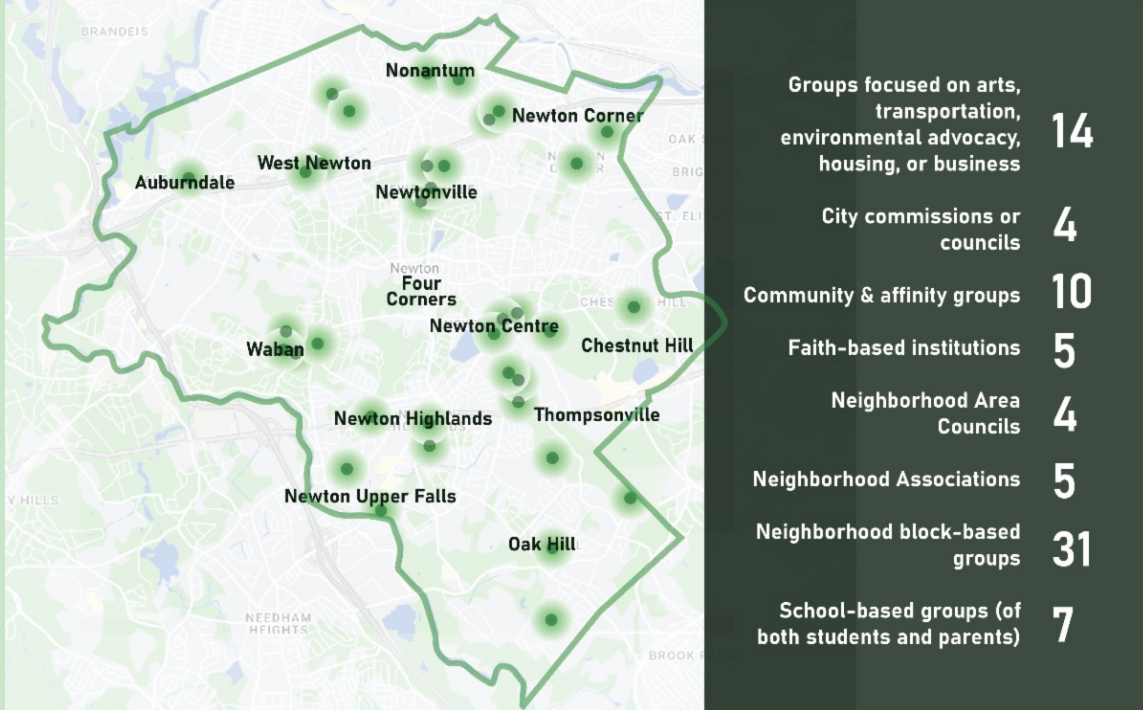


Image description: A map of Newton showing the city's 13 Village Centers and the locations of the neighborhoods that Network members signed up to engage. To the map's right, a breakdown of all the spaces that Network members signed up to engage, in addition to neighborhoods.

All material for the Network, including the presentation slides and video, agendas, Q+A and more, can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ZRNetworkDocuments>

Join us for the network's second virtual meeting, happening on Tuesday, June 21st, from 6-7:30pm (focused on Network members, with Q+A for all attendees from 7:30-8pm) to test-drive parts of engagement material for the fall and get into the nitty-gritty of network members' engagement plans. All zoom links for the Network's meetings can be found here (click on the green bar that says 'Network Meetings'): <https://newtonma.gov/zoningredesign/vc>

Newton Planning Department Will Speak on Panel at The Boston Foundation's event "Representation in the Housing Process: Best Practices for Improving Racial Equity"

On Wednesday, June 15, 10-11am, The Boston Foundation will host a virtual event for the release of "Representation in the Housing Process: Best Practices for Improving Racial Equity," a report by Boston University prepared for the Massachusetts Coalition for Racial Equity in Housing. The report highlights the community engagement process carried out by Newton's planning department for the Village Center zoning work in 2021 due to its focus on equity and inclusion. Following a presentation of the report ensues a panel discussion on how community engagement can be more equitable in housing processes; panelists will include Newton planning staff. [Learn more about the event and register here.](#)

High Schoolers Engaging with Zoning Redesign

The Department of Planning & Development, and especially the Zoning Redesign team, have had the great fortune to spend a lot of time at Newton North High School in May. City staff in housing, environmental planning, transportation, and zoning all had a table at NNHS to share information about their work and civic opportunities for the school's Sustainability Day. Later in the week, Zoning Redesign staff participated in a panel focused on housing and zoning for the school's first Civics Day, hosted by the student club Next Generation Voices as well as gave a presentation during one of the students' enrichment blocks.

In all three exciting events, city staff highlighted what urban planning, zoning and Zoning Redesign are, shared what the 2021 engagement looked like and what community members shared, and highlighted how younger people can get involved for the fall.

Six high school students are members of the Zoning Redesign Community Engagement Network and will continue working with planning staff on engaging younger people on zoning!

Last ZAP Meeting in June

Review May and June's meeting reports at [ZAP's website](#). See the tentative agenda for the last meeting of June (these are not finalized and are subject to change):

Monday, June 27th, 2022 at 7pm:

- #298-22 Appointment of Fred Brustman to the Auburndale Historic District Commission
- #348-22 Appointment of Scott Aquilina to the Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission
- #290-22 Appropriation of \$890,000 of the City's Inclusionary Housing Funds
- #289-22 CPC Recommendation to appropriate \$3,000,000 in CPA funding
- #38-22 - Discussion and review relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance regarding village centers (cont. Workshop - TBD)



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