



Zoning & Planning Committee Report

Part 1

City of Newton In City Council

Monday, October 25, 2021

Present: Councilors Crossley (Chair), Danberg, Albright, Leary, Ryan, Wright, Krintzman and Baker

Also Present: Councilors Bowman, Lipof, Downs, Norton, Malakie, Humphrey, Oliver, Lucas, Kalis and Greenberg

City Staff: Deputy Director of Planning and Development Jen Caira, Director of Planning and Development Barney Heath, Assistant City Solicitor Andrew Lee, Director of Housing and Community Development Amanda Berman, Chief of Long Range Planning Zachery LeMel, Planning Associate Cat Kemmett, Community Planner Engagement Specialist Nevena Pilipovic-Wengler and ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley

Utile Consultants: Timothy Love and Lisa Hollywood

Planning and Development Board: Chair Peter Doeringer, Barney Heath, Kelley Brown, Sudha Maheshwari, Chris Steele, Kevin McCormick and Jennifer Molinsky

Others Present: NewTV

Public Hearing

#528-20

Requesting review and possible amendment to Local Preference in Chapter 30

COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT, NORTON, CROSSLEY, BOWMAN, NOEL, HUMPHREY, WRIGHT, LAREDO, KALIS, RYAN, LIPOF AND DANBERG requesting a review and possible amendment to the Local Preference Ordinance in Chapter 30 sections 5.11.8. This section requires an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Resident Selection Plan (AFHMP) for all Inclusionary Units which provides for a local preference for up to 70% of the Inclusionary Units. Various groups including The Fair Housing Committee and the Newton Housing Partnership have questioned whether the percent of local preference to current Newton residents should be lowered with the goal of increasing racial diversity in Newton.

Zoning & Planning Held 04/12/21, 07/26/21, 09/27/21.

Public Hearing scheduled for 10/25/21

ACTION: Zoning & Planning Approved 8-0; Public Hearing Closed on 10/25/21

NOTE: Chair Crossley stated that the Newton Housing Partnership hired a consultant to complete an in-depth review to determine what impacts the 70% level may have on the local preference rate in the inclusionary zoning ordinance from 70% to 25%. We are not expecting to vote on this item tonight unless the committee feels that it's ready to vote tonight. I'll go with the committee.

Director of Housing and Community Development Amanda Berman and Assistant City Solicitor Andrew Lee joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Ms. Berman presented a summary of the (PowerPoint attached) year of discussion and analysis on this item, including the Barrett Report, the proposed amendments and recommended actions beyond the scope of this one item.

Ms. Berman described the Barrett Planning Group's analysis and report, which assessed the impacts of Newton's local preference policy on the demographics of both local and non-local applicant pools versus the demographics of final tenant selection. The data shows a negative impact on people of color. Three recent rental housing lotteries were examined to assess the effect of Newton's 70% local preference policy, including TRIO on Washington Street, 28 Austin Street and the Hancock Estates at Kessler Woods.

Key findings include that the households that benefits the most from Newton's current local preference policy are white, non-Hispanic households.

Ms. Berman stated that the proposed amendments to IZ Ordinance: Sec. 5.11 is as follows:

1. To the extent permitted by law, such plan must provide for a local preference for ~~up to 70%~~ up to 25% of the inclusionary units in a project and at least one of the local preference units must be a fully accessible unit.

Chair Crossley opened the public hearing.

Josephine McNeil, 53 Taft Avenue, asked are we concerned about the overall diversity within a particular project? Are we only concerned with people who are eligible for a local preference? Because if you look at the people at the number of the racial breakdown over the entire project, it looks like it's almost 50%. It seems to me that, you shouldn't be looking at the minorities across the whole project. I'm not sure that the information we have, necessarily leads to changing the local preference. I also have questions as we looked at the local preferences across the four categories, do we have that data. How does the racial breakdown factor in because that could also be a factor. I think I would be more concerned about the people who are currently living here in Newton who win the lottery and have the opportunity to move into a unit where they're only paying 30% of their rent, as opposed to where they currently live in and may be paying 50% of their rent because we know people at the low end are overburdened. But I think more study needs to be done before you make the change.

Nancy Zollers, 154 Oliver Road, bravo to the planning department for the all the study and all the conversations over the last year, we have the best consultants too. Data from Ms. Berman and Barrett Report puts us in such a good position. It puts me in a position of supporting 70% changed amendment. It seems to me that this is a small, welcoming policy that will help us become the kind of city we hope to be. It is an alignment with Newton Housing Partnership that I'd like to support. I wish you were voting tonight.

Lizbeth Heyer, Chair Newton Housing Partnership, 25 Freeman Street, stated that she is speaking on behalf of the Newton Housing Partnership. As you know, the discussion about what I think are compelling benefits of lowering these local preference rule, since initially recommending this last year, and our initial recommendation was that we eliminate local preference altogether. Study the issue carefully. We were greatly aided by Barrett Report and assistance from Ms. Berman and others to look at this important issue on a very deep level. I appreciate Ms. Berman's presentation tonight, which I think touched on a lot of important points. The Barrett Report further underscores the importance of lowering or eliminating the local preference. Just picking up a little bit on what Ms. McNeil said, I think this is a very complex issue and there are multiple points of action. I think the Barrett Report pointed that as it relates to the group of units we're talking about, which is the inclusionary units. I agree with Ms. McNeil. There are other issues as well, relative to the entirety of the population in these buildings. But what you can do and what the council can do is a very specific action relative to the local preference policy for our regulated units. I think that's where we're focusing right now. Just to remind everybody that that Barrett Report found something significant. I'll quote this now, "news local preference policy is that if benefiting white local preference applicants over others, creating a disparate impact on other groups, particularly Black and African Americans, so based on the Barrett Report findings. The Newton Housing Partnership continues to strongly recommend that the city revise its local preference rules address the city's obligation to affirmatively further fair housing for all protected classes and address the additional barriers to tenant selection that the Barrett Report pointed out. This dramatic anti racist action would reduce barriers to accessing affordable housing in Newton that is currently applied creates a discriminatory effect and prevents you from being a city that is welcoming and accessible to all, specifically, we recommend several things. First, to reduce the local preference from 70 to 25%, we believe this percentage will still address local housing needs, important, while meaningful by reducing local preference rules to mitigate the discriminatory effect of furthering for furthering affirmative Fair Housing outcomes. It's important in considering this to highlight that 24% of new households have incomes below 80% of area median income. So those two percentages are how we concluded that a 25% local preference was a good local preference, because that's directly addressing the percentage of people in the income group living who would qualify for these units. I want to point out 25% local preference would preserve and strengthen the benefits of racial rebounds, which allows for the addition of non-local applicants in a local preference pool if the pool of minority applicants is lower than the MSA percent of minority households, which in the case of Newton's MSA is 27%. By setting the local preference at 25%, we will have a much larger 70% non-local pool for the vastly larger non-white local applicant group, which was 65% was non-white, outside of Newton, while still being able to pull non local, non-white applicants into this smaller 25% local pool. These two things combined will increase the overall likelihood of non-white applicants still winning the lottery. The Newton

Housing Partnership also carefully considered how to avoid the potential negative impact, lowering the local preference on local households with disabilities. As Ms. Berman said that only four of nine affordable accessible units in the Barrett Report bunch qualified households, suggesting that income is likely to vary, you're not local access. I want to share a little data because I think it points out how this plays out. The average annual Social Security Disability Income payment is about \$13,500 a year. A household to qualify for an 80% unit would have to earn approximately \$70,000, you can see that there's a complete mismatch between the incomes of people who are earning a disability support and the income that's required to qualify for one of these units. This is alarming and a very big problem and it suggests the need for other policies and actions to support residents with disabilities. The Newton Housing Partnership has taken this issue up. We will be working on ways to make sure that we're still able to serve local households with disabilities but it's not going to be through local preference, it's going to be through much more targeted marketing, more creative use of Section A and other supports, that are necessary for low income people with disabilities to have housing. The Barrett Report also revealed a significant additional problem that must still be addressed, even if you decide to lower the local preference and that is discrimination during the tenant selection process. These are people of color who win the lottery, but don't move into a unit. We really need to dig in and understand why that's happening and talk about additional policies and procedures that can disrupt this on this is an unacceptable outcome as well and we really want to disrupt it. The Newton Housing Partnership is already starting to work on this, and what kind of policies and strategies the city can put in place. In summary, the Newton Housing Partnership is recommending that we lower the local preference to 25% and that this would be a dramatic action that would remove discriminatory barriers to affirmatively further fair housing a new group, it's a bold action. It would really ensure that people of color have greater access to housing in Newton and open our doors to all and particularly those precious and few affordable units that we can create through our inclusionary zoning and comprehensive permit process.

Lynn Weissberg, 5 Alden Street, stated that the Newton Housing Partnership are housing professionals, they have been studying the issue. They have dug into the Barrett Report. Ms. Heyer presented her findings at least on two occasions to the partnership, a very complicated subject. I could not make the arguments better than Ms. Heyer. There is no question based on the Barrett Report findings that every single unit in any of these new permitted projects is going to be highly sought after. The ratio I believe for TRIO was for every unit, there were 36 applicants for that single apartment. We have a scarce commodity. I think we all agree that we want Newton to be more racially diverse than it currently is. Ms. Berman did an excellent summary of the Barrett Report. I think that it is time hopefully tonight, but if not tonight in the very near future, for ZAP to vote and adopt the partnerships recommendation to reduce the local preference percentage to 25%. This will be a first step. There are many steps that must be taken. But I am pleased that the committee is now at the point holding a public hearing and hopefully near a vote to reduce it to 25%. More study will need to be done. But I think from all the data that has been assembled, that reduction will lead to a more diverse group of individuals getting the units.

Andrew Steinberg, 65 Westgate Road, I would like to speak in favor of reducing Newton's 70% local preference rate. I agree with the Newton Housing Partnerships assertion and everyone who spoke

eloquently before me that this policy has discriminatory effects that must be changed. I was looking at the fact that 61 units consider that TRIO, Austin Street and the Hancock estates, like 48% of them went to white households while they were 35% of applicants. Newton is a mostly white city and our legal maximum 70% local preference rate uphold that. I don't think that is fair. I don't think that's the anti-racist city that I know we can build. I'm a student studying immigration law, and I'm deeply familiar with how systemic exclusion intersects with systemic racism but for my family migrated to this country months before the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, which tied the number of immigrants from each country, the number of residents already living in the US as of 1910 and this love favorite groups who already were in the US, such as Northern and Western Europeans at the expense of less, quote, desirable groups like my Jewish ancestors, if the Quota Act was in place a few months earlier, I may not be giving you this testimony today. I see many parallels with national nativism, prioritizing those who have already benefited from an unjust system, and what is happening to my city today. It pains me as a conscious young person who wants to live here and be proud for the rest of my life. In essence, in group favoritism might be an enticing political strategy, but it has real consequences for the most vulnerable people and dismisses the idea that they can be amazing neighbors too, if just given the chance. I encourage the council to think about this history as opposed to dismantle this artificial barrier to equity and commit to true anti racist action.

Fran Godine, 19 Crofton Road, stated as a member of Engine 6, we fully support the shift of Newton's zoning law from the inclusionary zoning law from 70% to 25%, as stated in the wonderful letter from the Newton Housing Partnership, although designed with good intentions, the recent study by the Barrett Report planning group of June 2021, requested by our own planning and development department identifies the disadvantages leading to negative impacts for Newton's goals of inclusion and the potential for discrimination violating the city's federal obligations to affirmatively further fair housing for all protected groups. The report noted that 70% local preference has benefited the white local preference applicants creating this kind of a disparate impact on other groups, particularly the black African American applicants. Further I'd commend the city considering ways to eliminate barriers for some people that some people of color face even after winning the lottery, such as potential prior evictions and inadequate credit ratings, which may be worthy of more detailed detail from applicants who would currently be fine residents. Monitoring where residents are marketed for both people of color and people with disabilities may also enable these communities to be better informed of all availabilities. The opportunity presented by the Riverside Development makes this the perfect opportunity for ZAP and the full council to consider the positive impact. This shift will allow by reducing the local preference to 25% will be advancing the opportunity for all our residents to live in a more inclusive community that we desire and protect as Newton to be.

Lisa Monahan, 1105 Walnut Street, stated that I am really impressed with the job that the Newton Housing Partnership, the planning department and the consulting firm have done in assembling this work and this analysis. I think it's amazing. I do agree that it sounds like there is further study and issues to be grappled with. But this is this reduction in the local preference percentage sounds like a no brainer, first important step. The issue that Mr. Steinberg brought up about looking at this

moment as a moment in a bigger historical context. I just want to say thank you, Mr. Steinberg that was an amazing point that you raised. I would hope that the committee votes on this.

Lucie Chansky, 259 Jackson Street, stated that she wants to support the idea that people with disabilities need to be considered for lower rental apartments. I'm disappointed in the round of recent decisions about apartments that have been made. Those people who are low income somebody mentioned 30, around \$13,000 a year have not been able to be served at all were in previous building projects. They were many of the Avalon apartments have allowed people with disabilities to live there and be affordable to them. I urge them and the counselors to continue thinking about it.

Sean Roche, 42 Daniel Street, stated that he requests the ability to continue to lavish praise on Ms. Berman, Barrett Report and Ms. Heyer and the partnership, the Engine 6 steering committee which have made this a huge priority and the lovely words from Mr. Steinberg. I do want to echo Ms. McNeil's point that we really need to worry about the yield over on a project and then on the point that Ms. Heyer made that we need to improve the yield from the lottery and that lottery selection does not mean that folks get apartments and there's a lot of work to be done there. I would also like to address Councilor Wright's point about the long waiting lists for Newton residents. I think that's a legitimate concern. I think that that's in part addressed by the 25% local preference as opposed to the original proposed 0%. I would like to point out to Councilor Wright and others on the council, the way to shorten the waiting lists. For folks who qualify for affordable housing, whoever Newton is to build more affordable housing in this climate, the way to build more affordable housing is to accept that the Affordable Housing engine in his cross subsidized, affordable housing, it's cross subsidized by market rate housing. If Councilor Wright and others on the council continue to object the size and scale of developments and demonized developers and seek to limit the amount of market rate housing that's being built by comprehensive permanent and special permit projects, we are not going to get more affordable housing. You must be for affordable housing, or you must be anti-developer, but you cannot be both.

Tom Gagen, 32 Fern Street, stated that he would like to speak on behalf of the 75% for people on housing. I just think we have a great city here. It would be wonderful if we could welcome more people into our city and this is one way to balance the needs of our own residents and with people outside the city who want to come here. I hope that council approves 75%.

Chair Crossley stated the item on the table is to reduce the local preference from 70% to 25%. Mr. Gagen, are you supporting that or are you supporting the reduction to 25% so that more people from outside the city can come into the city? Mr. Gagen answered that he supports the 25%.

Doris Ann Sweet, 21 Lexington Street, stated that she wants to add my support for reducing to 25% as just it's one concrete action that we can take to mitigate racism that has historically crept its way into our zoning code. I'm so pleased to hear from both planning and having Newton Housing Partnership, there are many other possible actions in the future that will take care of some of the other maybe more administrative types of concerns that may keep people of color from becoming members of our community.

Jini Fairley, City ADA Coordinator, stated that she applauds all the work that's been done. I just would like to remind everyone here, that diversity includes disability and the Fair Housing Act. One of the protected classes, besides racial, and economic and families, etc. are specifically people with disabilities. Not that I'm opposed because everyone wants to reduce the number of apartments that are under local preference. Remember, this isn't 25% of the population. This is 25% of the units for each project that Ms. Berman clearly stated these are usually brand new construction, special permit or comprehensive permit projects. Believe it or not, that's pretty much the only place someone can find an accessible apartment. I get many calls. I'm the ADA coordinator. I also am a Newton resident. I've done housing searches for people with disabilities in my previous job for 10 years, homeless people, etc. so I know where I come from about housing. I'm just a little concerned that we're losing a part of the picture and part of that picture is that the Newton Housing Authority doesn't have a whole lot of accessible apartments. None of the 70% of privately home apartments, I mean, houses have accessible apartments. It is very, very difficult to find accessible apartment for people with disabilities who need that accessibility. Only 5% of these special projects are fully accessible. These are some of the statistics some people might not know, but at least because they are new construction. The rest of the apartments are what we call adaptable accessible. When someone calls me and says what do I do to get an accessible apartment? I said, well, I hope you get lucky and yes apply for all the new construction affordable apartments, projects that are going up. I know the research that went into this, the Barrett Report and at least one of the three places didn't even have an exception apartment in the local preference. We're comparing apples to oranges in some ways. If we do reduce this to 25% for a better racial mix, and I applaud that I absolutely do. I just want to be sure that some protected class such as people with disabilities are not suddenly at a disadvantage and discriminating against people with disabilities. This is where I feel that I'm calling some cautionary measures here. How are we going to measure? What if the three places we looked at one of them wasn't even having an accessible apartment in the local preference? How are we going to measure that this is to someone's advantage or disadvantage going forward? I'd like to see that in place before you make that decision. In an apartment project, that's 1/4 of the apartments that are going to be affordable, are going to be in this this this range when you think that only 5% of them are fully accessible in the entire project, how many do you think are going to even make it into the affordable, so this is what therefore it is so complex. I need to speak up for people with disabilities, especially those who need the accessible apartment, don't even get me going on what Ms. Chansky referred to is the income level of people with disabilities, and they cannot afford an 80% Ami project such as Austin street. They cannot afford even 50% Ami most of the time. This is this is a real problem we have. That is why four out of the nine accessible apartments only went to people who really needed it and qualify meaning they had an accessible need. I know someone who's in one of those four so it's not, it's just and they and guess what, she is a Newton resident. If we start putting it down and down, you might just be eliminating those people who are waiting to get into a more accessible apartment who live right here in our city. I don't know what color they are, and I am worried about this that they're not going to get an accessible apartment. In any case, please be careful on this and put in place a way to measure whether this move from 70 to 25% does achieve the goal you're looking for a more racially mixed city, and that we keep in mind diversity. The diversity also means disability. Inclusion also means disability, people with accessible needs.

Councilor Krintzman made a motion to close the public hearing. Committee members agreed 8-0.

Committee members comments, questions and answers:

Please clarify what does it mean in the lottery that we have close to ten-year wait list for the residents to get an affordable unit. How do residents get off the list? Ms. Berman answered that the list is used for public Housing Authority units. The Newton waiting list depends on what type of unit is desired through the City's Comprehensive Permit or Special Permit projects. Each of these projects must follow an affirmative fair housing marketing and resident selection plan which is reviewed by the City and the State requiring an outreach marketing and application lottery process for each project. Each project generates their own wait list that are separate wait list that are administered from the Housing Authority. Usually, interested residents are on multiple wait lists across the municipality where they are hoping to live. There could be a lot of people who are on that public housing authority waitlist for 10 years and apply to one of our lotteries and get a unit at TRIO for instance. They make the decision to take themselves off the Housing Authority waitlist, although it's different. With Housing Authority units, the households are only ever paying 30% of their income, regardless of if their income goes up or down. Whereas these units through our comprehensive permit projects and our special permit projects, their rent is based off the income limit of that unit. Depending on the household situation is what is most needed by that household, I would say is where they might choose to live if they are so lucky to be offered an opportunity because it is so challenging to be offered an opportunity regardless of the type of project.

Chair Crossley said that she was asked a question from a member of the Newton Housing Partnership and asked Attorney Lee if he would speak to the requirement to affirmatively further fair housing. The gentleman wonders if you can have any local preference and still meet that requirement? Have we proven to a degree that the local preference is causing a discriminatory effect, how can we have any local preferences? If that's the result, when we're supposed to be Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, is there is there a conflict there? Attorney Lee answered as Ms. Berman explained in her presentation local preference is something that's specifically provided for in a law, the city can do up to 70%. The fact that the city is taking steps to reduce that to address some racial inequality that might be an outcome of the local preference as it is today. I don't see how those conflicts with any Fair Housing Act or any goal for creating more accessibility.

I would like additional information on the issues that Ms. Fairley raise regarding disability and how this might impact them. It's really a question of income level, that's the biggest barrier. Why are only 5% of our new developments, only fully accessible, as opposed to fully adaptable?

I think the idea of monitoring to see the effect of this change is essential. Whatever we do will apply not just to Riverside but Northland once we have a new inclusionary zoning ordinance, I think it would apply because they have not pulled their building permit yet and they haven't submitted an affirmative Fair Housing marketing resident's election plan that would be approved by the city yet or the state. They will not be doing that until the first quarter of next year, but it could be early in the first quarter.

Is part of the proposal to reserve one unit for disabled people? Ms. Berman answered yes, that at least one of the local preference units will be a fully accessible unit.

There are people with disabilities that don't just have physical disabilities. I would rather understand what it is we're going to do to address the needs of housing needs for disabled people, whether it's a physical, mental, visual or hearing disability. I would like some commitment on what that really means, as we vote on this.

Ms. Berman's report quite clearly discusses that there's a real difference between physical, mental and cognitive disabilities in terms of housing needs.

Is at least one of the local preferences accessible? Ms. Berman answered yes, that is the proposal regardless of the change down to 25%, that at least one of the local preference units will be a fully accessible unit.

When does it increase to two or three units? Ms. Berman answered that with each project, we are more and more diligent about proportionality across the board. As Ms. Fairley mentioned 5% of all units in new construction are fully accessible units. What we work towards is that 5% of all inclusionary units are fully accessible. We try to take those percentages just across the board and Ms. Fairley is correct, we didn't always get it right. It is something we are extremely aware of, and it becomes a math problem, essentially. If there are 10 local preference units 5% of the 10 is point five, at least one of those units will be accessible. It's very complicated, but you just take those percentages for all these different elements across the board and that is what we do now.

Does the city meet its needs on accessible units? Ms. Berman answered that the need for affordable housing is so vast, that we don't come close to meeting our needs.

Planning Board members questions and answers:

Regarding 5% or whatever the percentage would be for accessible housing. Is that part of the zoning or an administrative practice? Ms. Berman answered that it's in ministry of practice, although I don't have the language right now, we talk about this type of proportionality we do have a provision in the inclusionary ordinance zoning ordinance that talks about that the level of accessibility across the project that it will be proportionate across the inclusionary units.

The Planning & Development Board voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

The Planning & Development Board voted 5-0-1 to approve this item, Mr. Heath abstaining.

Committee members thanked Ms. Berman for her diligence.

Straw vote:

Committee members took a straw vote to approve this item. Committee members agreed 6-2, Councilor Leary and Albright opposed as they wanted additional information. Ms. Berman stated that answers to outstanding questions would be provided.

Without further discussion, Councilor Krintzman made a motion to approve this item reducing the local preference rate in the inclusionary zoning ordinance from 70% to 25% to make deed restricted affordable housing more accessible. Council members agreed 8-0.

#88-20 Discussion and review relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING requesting review, discussion, and direction relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning & Planning Held on 01/27/20, 02/10/20, 02/24/20, 03/09/20, 03/23/20, 04/13/20, 04/27/20, 05/19/20, 06/01/20, 06/15/20, 06/29/20, 07/09/20, 07/16/20, 08/13/20, 09/14/20, 10/01/20, 10/15/20, 11/05/20, 11/09/20, 12/14/20, 02/22/21, 03/08/21, 05/24/21, 07/08/21, 09/13/21

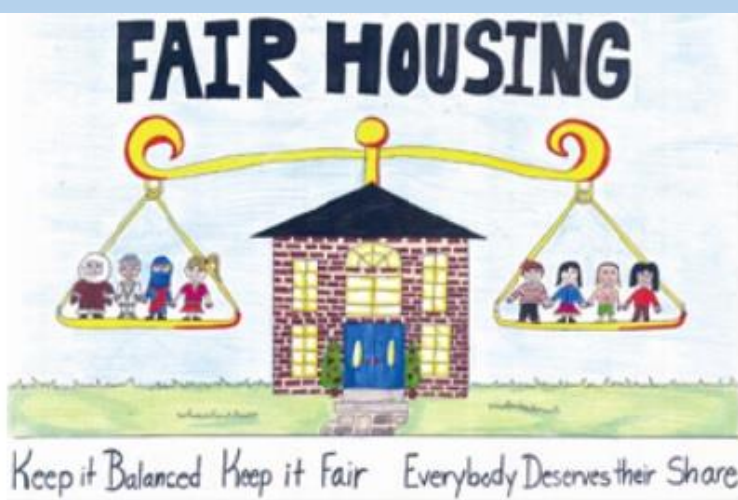
ACTION: **Zoning & Planning Held 8-0**

NOTE: This report will be available at a later date.

The Committee adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah J. Crossley, Chair



Newton's Local Preference Policy

Proposed Amendments to Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance: Section 5.11

Public Hearing - ZAP Meeting
October 25, 2021

The City of Newton
Planning & Development Department

A Year of Discussion & Analysis

- **Newton Housing Partnership July 2020 Vote**
 - Voted to adopt 0% local preference policy for Riverside to “send a strong message that Newton will not perpetuate policies that keep non-white people out of our City.”
- **WestMetro HOME Consortium’s FY21-25 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Report**
 - Obligation of each consortium community to take affirmative action to ensure that people of color, and other protected classes, have equal access to housing in that community
- **Fair Housing Committee Analysis of Lottery Results**

A Year of Discussion & Analysis, cont'd

- **Barrett Planning Group's 2021 Analysis and Report**
 - Does Newton's Local Preference Policy create a disparate impact on people of color?
- **Newton Housing Partnership Discussions and Recommendation**
 - Reduce requirement from 70% to 25%
- **Zoning & Planning Committee Discussions**
 - April 12; July 26; and September 27

What is Local Preference?

- Authorized by the State through Chapter 40B
- Newton's policy lives in the Inclusionary Zoning ordinance
- Allows for up to 70% "local preference" in a project*
 - Current residents
 - Municipal employees
 - Employees of local businesses
 - Households with children attending Newton schools
- **Example: 20 affordable units in a project:**
 - 14 affordable units designated as "local preference units" (0.7 X 20):
 - Offered first to those who qualify as local preference applicants
 - 6 affordable units designated as "general pool" units:
 - Offered to all applicants, including local preference and non-local preference applicants

The Barrett Report

➤ Scope of Analysis

- To assess the effects of Newton's 70% local preference policy in three recent rental housing development lotteries: TRIO, 28 Austin Street, and Hancock Estates
- 71 affordable units (61 leased) - 1,157 total applications

Applicants	Initial Lease-Ups
27% Local Preference	72% Local Preference
73% Non-local Preference	28% Non-local Preference

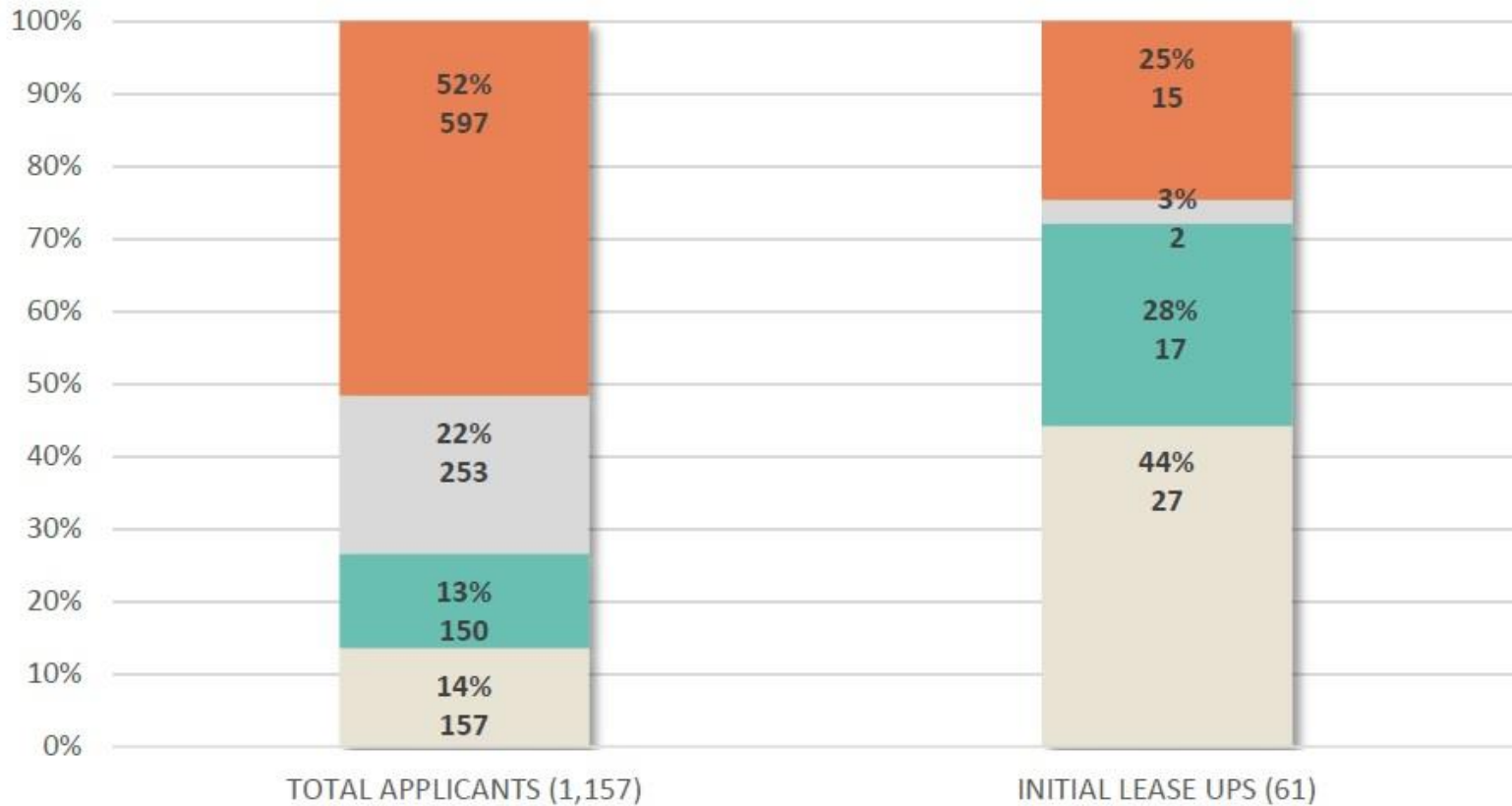
The Barrett Report: Key Findings

- The community that benefits the most from Newton's local preference policy is White, non-Hispanic local households
- Selection rates were higher for White applicants in each of the researched developments than for minority applicants overall
- Non-local preference pools were overwhelmingly made up of minorities
- The effect of local preference on households requiring accessibility features in their units is unclear and requires further study

Local Preference Applicant Pool	LP Tenants (44/61)	Non-local Preference Applicant Pool	Non-LP Tenants (17/61)	General Applicant Pool	General Pool Tenants
51% White	61% White	30% White	12% White	35% White	47.5% White
49% Minority	39% Minority	70% Minority	88% Minority	65% Minority	52.5% Minority

The Barrett Report

Applicants and Initial Lease-Ups Across All Case Studies



- LOCAL: White, Non-Hispanic
- LOCAL: Racial/Ethnic Minority
- NON-LOCAL: White, Non-Hispanic
- NON-LOCAL: Racial/Ethnic Minority

The Barrett Report

❖ Accessible Affordable Units

- 9 accessible affordable units across 3 projects that were analyzed
- Only 4 were initially lease to tenants with disabilities
- Further study needed to understand these results
- Pricing of these units may still be too high for people with disabilities

From Analysis to Action

- The identified correlation between Newton's 70% local preference policy and the percentage of minorities, particularly Black and African American applicants, that sign leases for these affordable units, as compared to their White, local-preference counterparts, sheds light on the [need to enact a change to the long-standing requirement.](#)

Recommendations for Changes to the Local Preference Requirement ^{#528-20}

Recommendations:

70%  25%

- 1) The Newton Housing Partnership voted on 8/17/21 to recommend a reduction in the policy from 70% to 25% to “mitigate the discriminatory effect of the policy and to affirmatively further fair housing outcomes”, and
- 2) To assess other “policies that prevent project sponsors from discriminating during the tenant selection process”
- 3) Require that at least one of the local preference units be a fully accessible affordable unit

Proposed Amendments to IZ Ordinance: Sec. 5.11.8.C. Inclusionary Housing Plans & Covenants

#528-20

- C. An Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Resident Selection Plan (AFHMP) for all Inclusionary Units, including Tier 2 Middle-Income Units, which, at a minimum, meets the requirements set out in in the Comprehensive Permit Guidelines of the DHCD, Section III., Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Resident Selection Plan, as in effect December 2014 as the same may be amended from time to time and:
1. To the extent permitted by law, such plan must provide for a local preference for ~~up to 25%~~ **70%** of the Inclusionary Units in a project **and at least one of the local preference units must be a fully accessible unit;**
 2. Where a project results in the displacement of individuals who qualify for a unit in terms of household size and income, first preference must be given to those displaced applicants, unless such preference would be unallowable under the rules of any source of funding for the project;

October 25th ZAP Mtg.

Questions / Comments?

Thank you!

City of Newton Zoning & Planning Committee

Village Center Zoning: Phase 1 Engagement



Agenda

1. Introduction

Context of Engagement

2. What We Learned

Takeaways

3. Looking Ahead

Zoning Considerations
Calendar

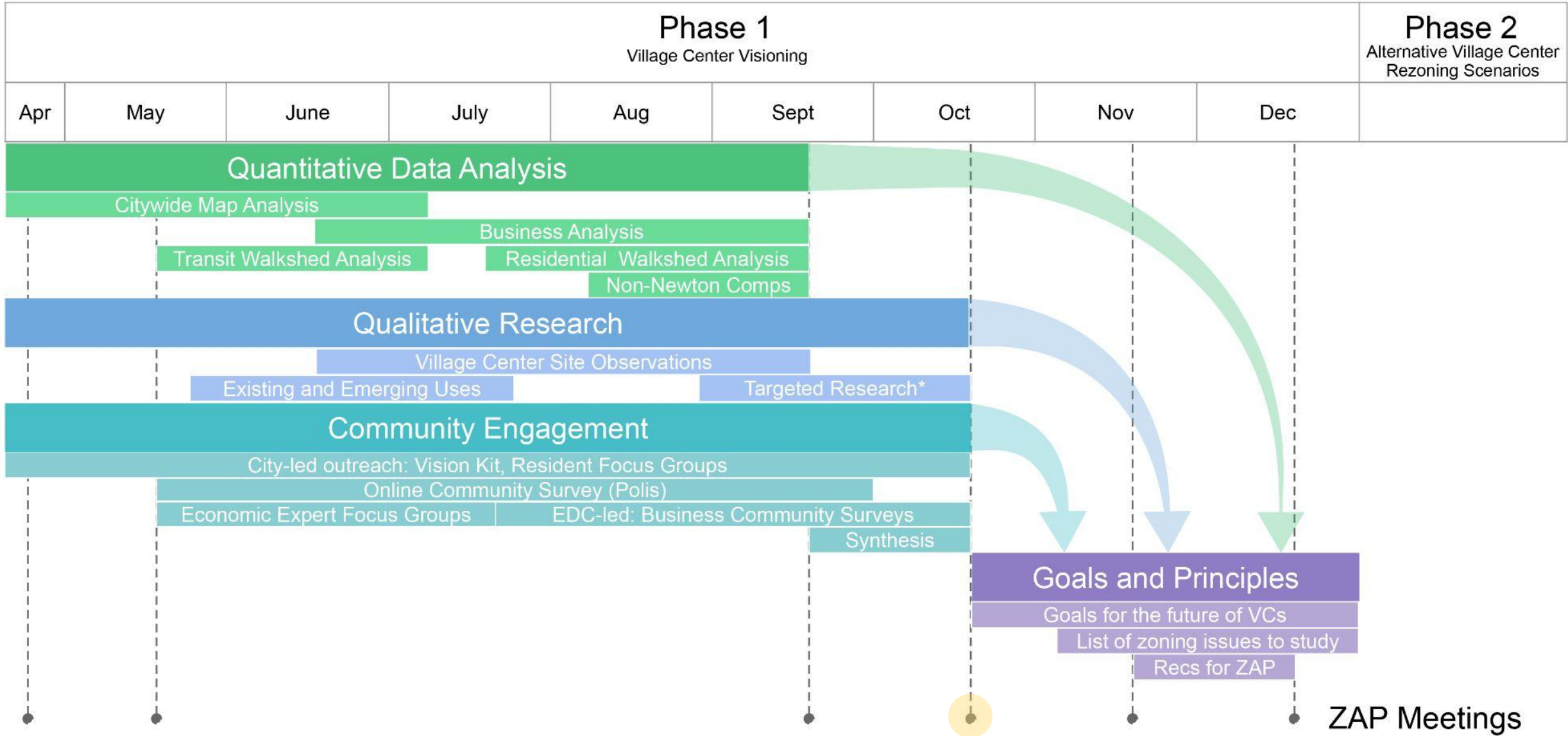
4. Discussion

2021 Calendar



Today
Present engagement results.

#88-20

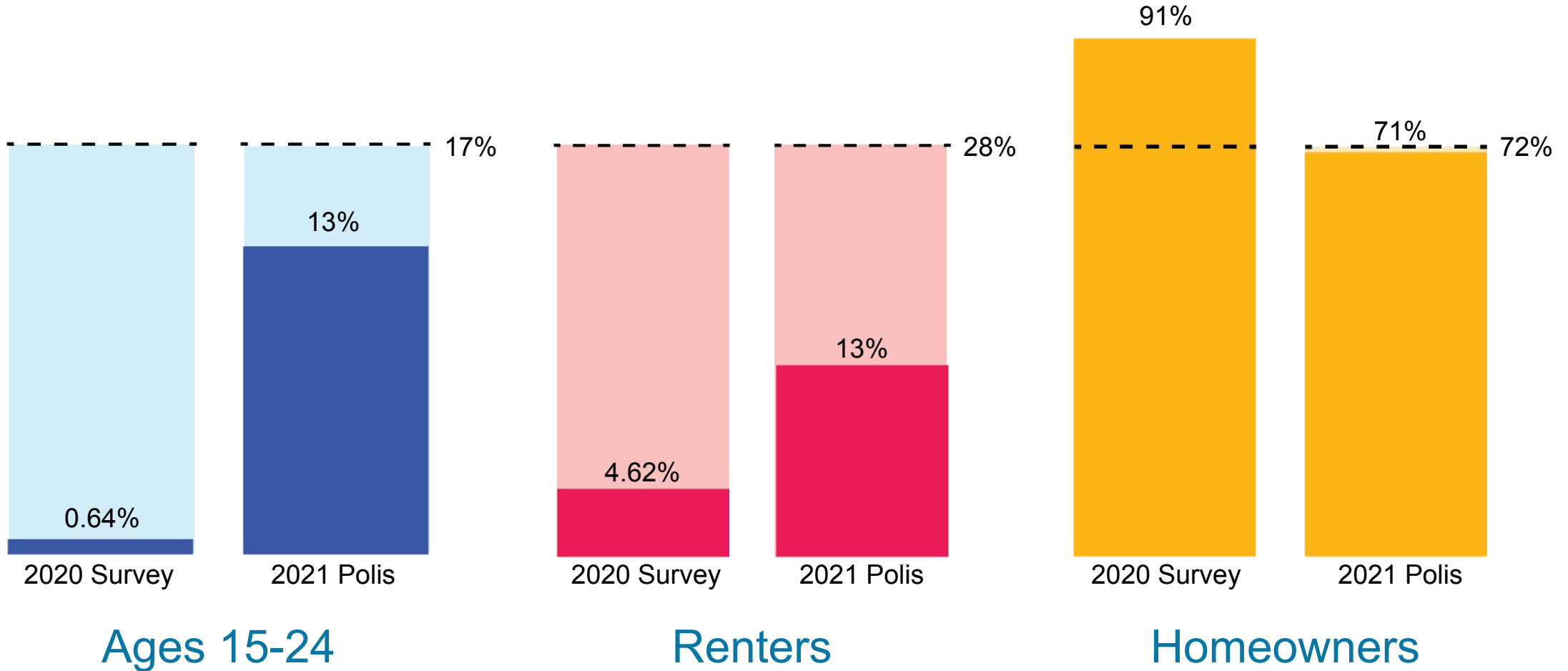


Context of Engagement



Engagement participation - broader representation (~2000 voices)

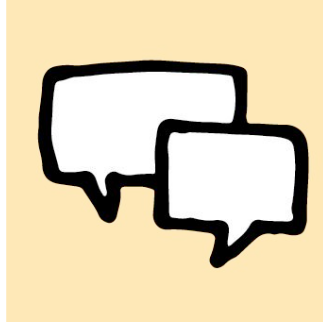
Total of
Population
(2019 5-year
ACS
Estimates)



What the engagement was - what we had planned



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



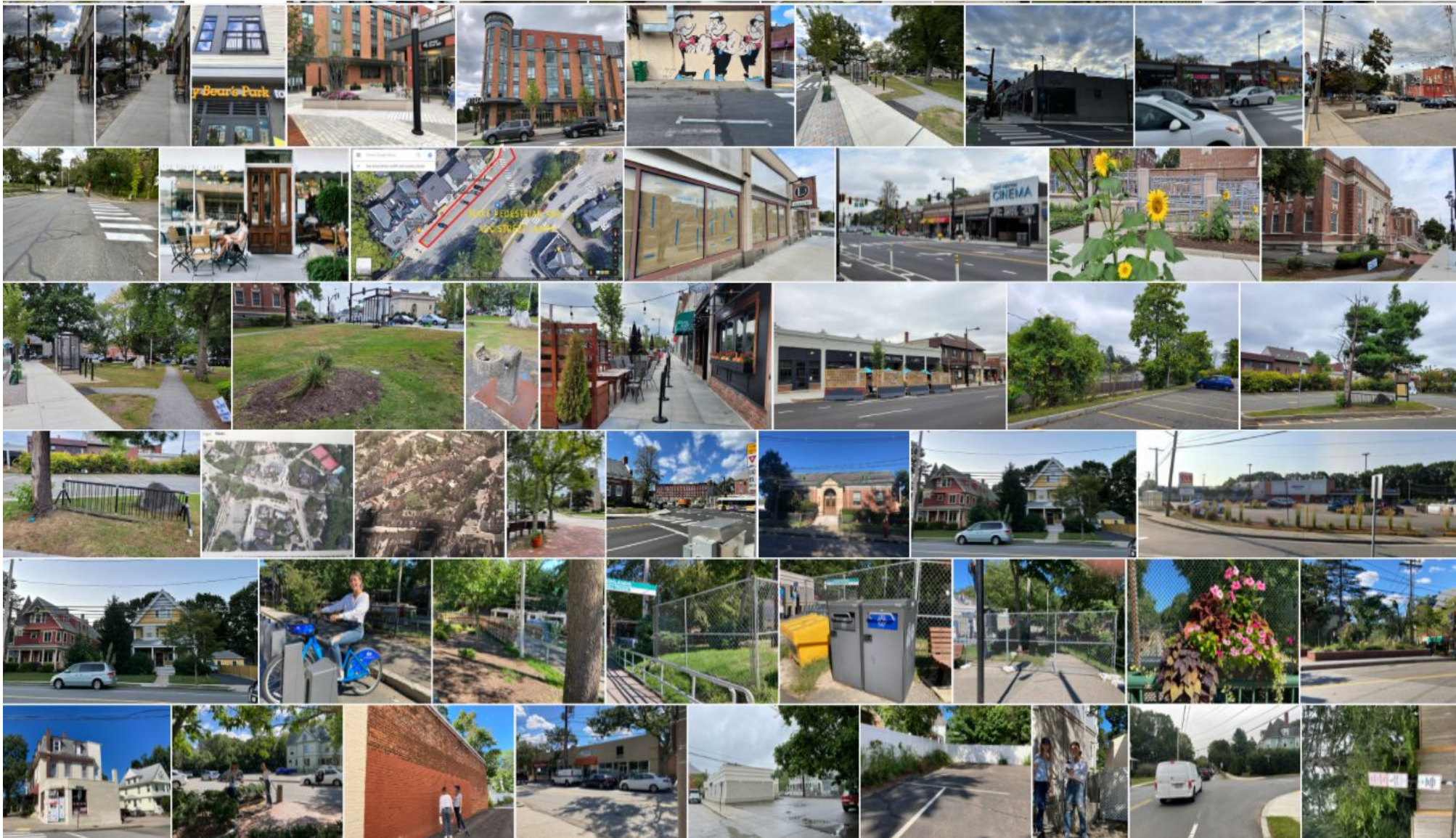
History presentation
88 attendees/
viewed 165 times



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

Vision Kit submissions

#88-20



Themes

What's a Village Center?

What are the defining features of a village center? Where does it begin and end? Why did you pick this one?

[Click Here](#) to submit your photo & idea

[Click Here](#) to submit just text

Environment



Find elements in your village center(s) that support a greener future.

What does the 'green future' of your village center look like? Are there more places for things like walking and biking, trees and plants, rainwater collection, or solar panels?

[Click Here](#) to submit your photo & idea

[Click Here](#) to submit just text

Shopping, Eating & Working



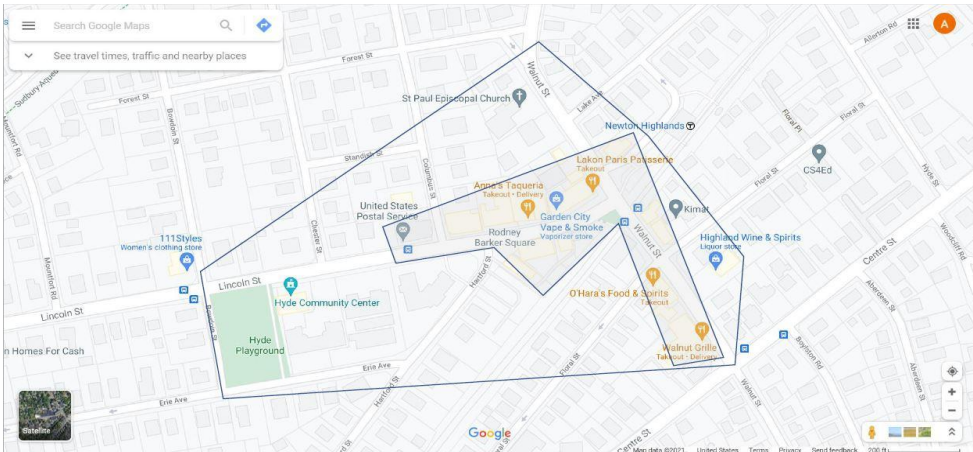
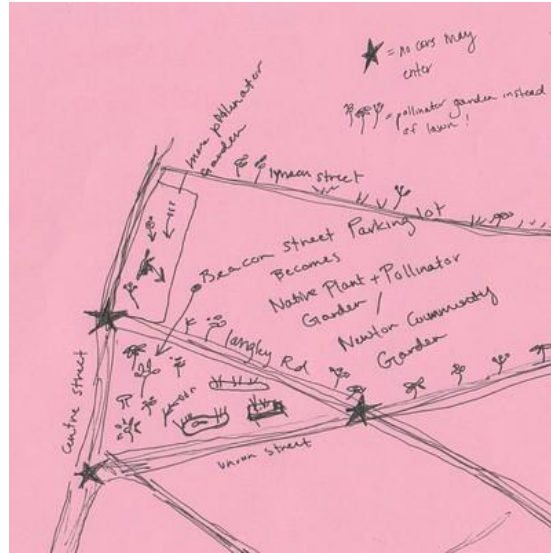
Go to the stores and restaurants you often visit, or ones you are looking forward to revisiting when safe to do so. What do you prefer to buy in person versus online?

What businesses would you like to open up? Would you like to be able to work in a village center?

[Click Here](#) to submit your photo & idea

[Click Here](#) to submit just text

Vision Kit submissions - maps



Vision Kit submissions - collages



Vision Kit submissions - historic and other images



What the engagement was - additional opportunities

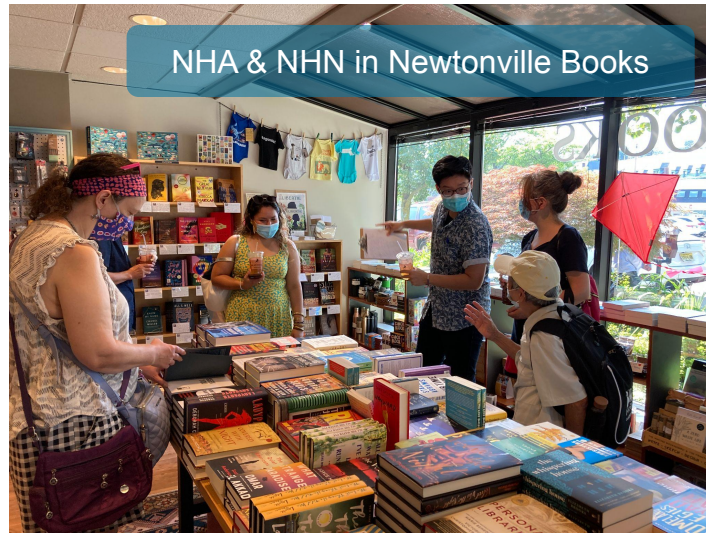
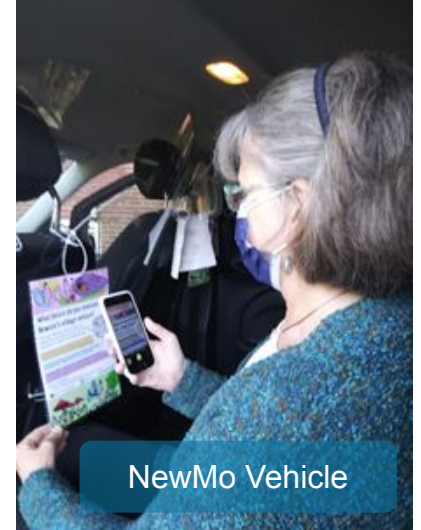


您对牛顿乡村中心的未来有何设想?

牛顿市希望听取您的体验和想法，为分区更新提案提供信息!

从五月下旬至七月，请参与：
在线调查 // 自助式愿景套件 (Vision Kit)

登录 newtonma.gov/zoningredesign
@Newton Planning and Development @NewtonPlanning



What the engagement was - additional opportunities



YMCA



Interns' Vision Kit in Newton Centre



Festa in Nonantum



Newton Free Public Library



Upper Falls Village Day

Where?

Site Observation



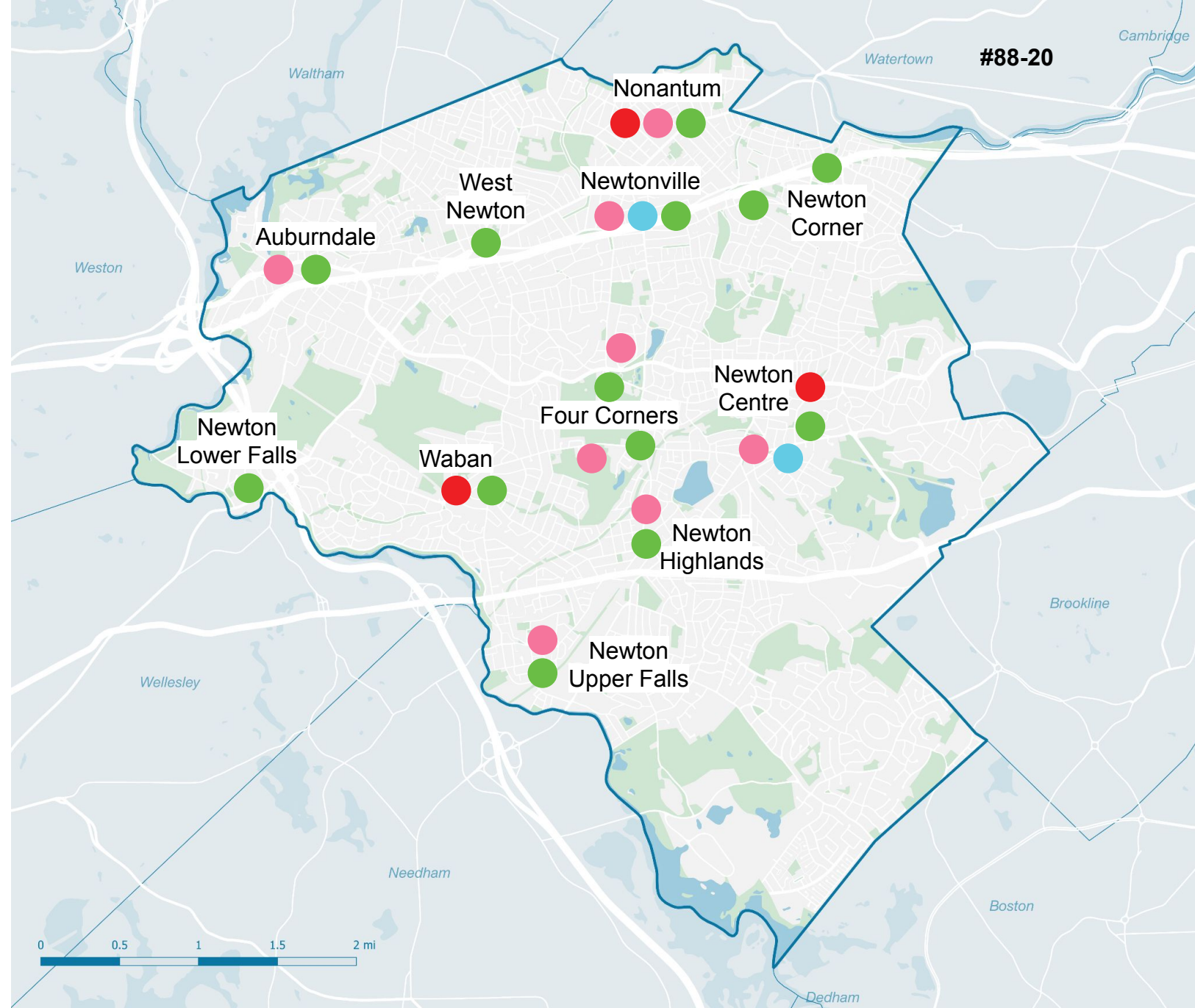
NHA & NHN Tours



High School Interns



Staff Tabling



Who we reached out to & heard from

- co-hosted focus group
- submitted a Vision Kit
- staff tabled at event of

Neighborhood Area Councils

- Newton Highlands
- Newtonville NAC
- Upper Falls NAC
- Waban NAC

Commissions, Committees & Departments

- Commission on Disability
- Council on Aging
- Youth Commission
- Department of Health & Human Services (workers)
- Department of Planning & Development (workers)
- Historic Newton
- Human Rights Commission
- Newton Senior Center
- Transportation Advisory Group
- Economic Development Commission
- Citizens Commission on Energy
- Parks, Recreation + Culture Planning & Development Board

Councilors

- Reached out to all Councilors
- 12 Councilors of 5 Wards

Stakeholders

- 350Mass Newton Node
- Bike Newton
- Boston College Graduate Student Union
- Boys & Girls Club
- Chestnut Hill Association
- Chinese American Association of Newton (CAAN)
- ● *Cultural Development (City)*
- Culture Center of Taipei
- Economic and Cultural Office
- Defund Newton Police
- Engine6
- Families Organizing for Racial Justice (FORJ)
- FUUSN - Social Action Council
- ● Green Newton
- Green Newton - School Connections

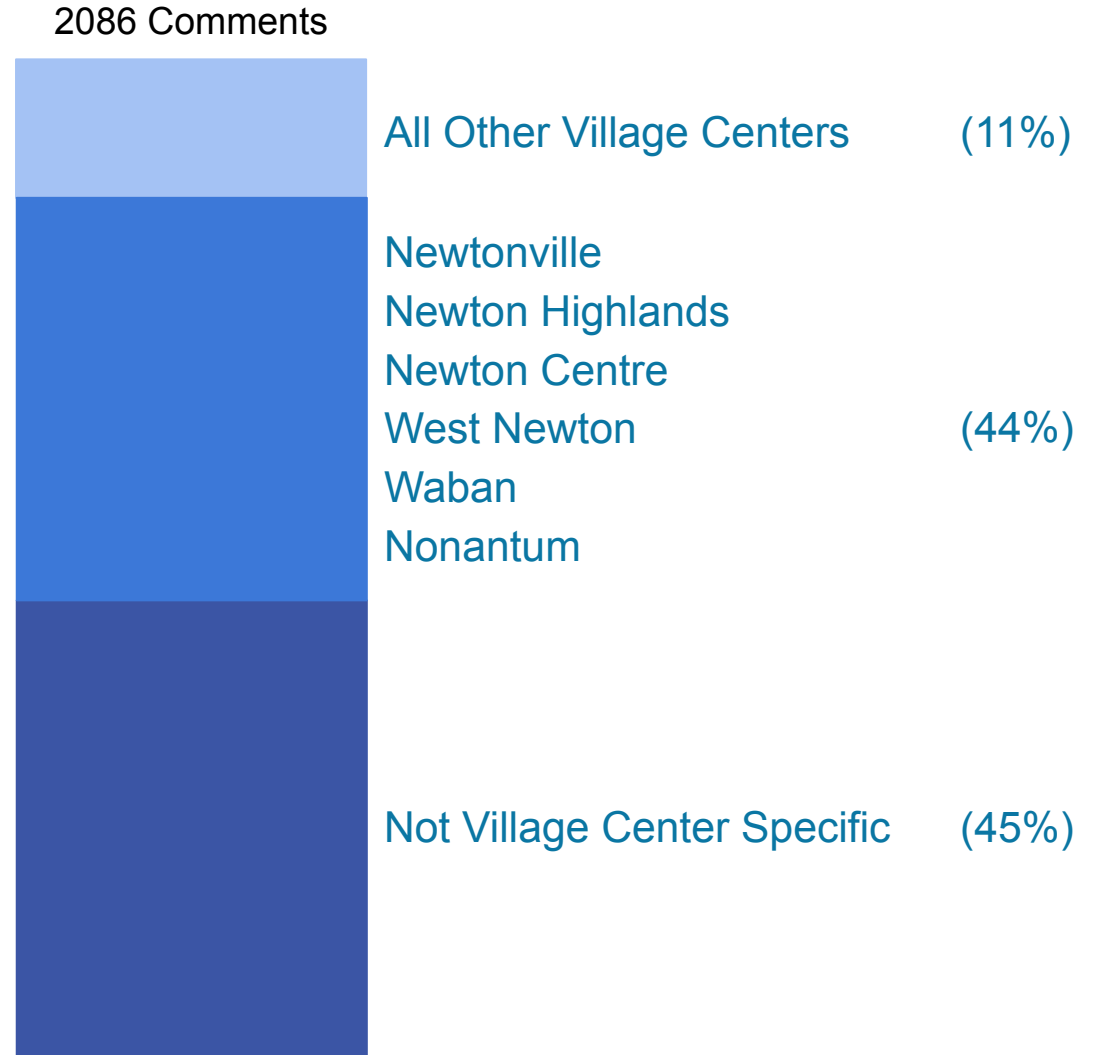
- Green Newton - Youth Group
- Harmony Foundation
- Hyde Community Center
- League of Women Voters - Newton
- Myrtle Baptist Church
- New Art Center
- Newton Center for Civic Engagement
- Newton Coalition of Black Residents
- Newton Community Development Foundation
- *Newton Housing Authority*
- Newton Interfaith Clergy Association (NICA)
- Newton Lower Falls Improvement Association
- *Newton Neighbors Helping Neighbors*
- NNHS & NSHS's Sustainability Courses
- Newton Open Studio

- Newton Public School System (PTOs + Teachers + Social Workers + Students)
- Newton Talks Race
- Newton Teachers Association
- NNHS NextGen Voices
- Right-Size Newton
- Safe Routes to School Task Force
- St. Mary of Carmen Society
- Team Sangiolo
- Temple Emanuel Social Justice Group
- Temple Shalom
- The Village Bank
- Tour de Newton
- U-CHAN
- Understanding Our Differences
- Waban Improvement Society
- Welcoming Newton

How much we heard about each village center

Staff asked community members to cite specific examples of village centers that already modeled what they hope for.

Community members reflected on hopes for village centers in general as well as cited specific wants or needs.



How we synthesized the information - tagging



Value T	Theme	Sub-Theme/Category	Specific comment	Village Center
4.8	Environment Environment	Create and implement sidewalk lighting standards	Dense shrubbery, changes in level and inadequate pedestrian links between the upper and lower parts of the village fragment it, leading to a suboptimal retail environment and/or excessive car travel over very small distances. Without eliminating the well-tended planting, it should be quite easy to establish a better connection, both visual and pedestrian between the two parts of the village.	Waban West Newton
4.12	Environment	Use shared parking to reduce parking footprint in village centers	this is a very sad water fountain There are a lot of surface parking lots in west newton, both private and public. These spaces create "heat islands" and incentivize driving. Is there a way to consolidate these lots into a garage and adapt the parking lots for more environmentally conscious uses?	West Newton
4.5	Environment	Embrace alternatives to driving	A multi-modal bike/bus interchange that makes it easy to get around without a car! It would be nice if there were more destinations in Newton I could take the bus to	West Newton
2.1	Housing	Balance Housing Needs with the Need for Commercial Space	This area would be a great place for housing with retail on the 1st floor. Though it has been nice to have the empty space for outdoor dining	Newton Highlands
2.1	Housing	Balance Housing Needs with the Need for Commercial Space	Two or three stories of housing should be built above these stores on Lincoln St., including Post Office	Newton Highlands
2.1	Housing	Balance Housing Needs with the Need for Commercial Space	Housing should be built here, 3 stories above the stores. Stores could remain.	Newton Highlands
-	Housing	Seek high-quality design that is responsive to context	Can DRT define encourage building styles and elements and such that work for each village rather than responding to individual projects each time?	Newton Highlands
2.3	Housing	Pursue diverse housing choices to meet changing housing needs of a diverse population.	While Newton Highlands is one of the more compact Village Centers and one with a narrower thru street and narrower sidewalks, I do not feel like the buildings are too tall. In fact I think they all ought to be able to be at least 3 stories.	Newton Highlands
2.3	Housing	Pursue diverse housing choices to meet changing housing needs of a diverse population.	Is there an opportunity to build a multi-use building over the public parking lot? It is over 16k square feet of space.	Newton Highlands
2.6	Housing	Need more affordable housing	MU4 should have 25% affordable.	Newtonville
2.11	Housing	Encourage mixed-use projects in villages and commercial corridors, especially those with mass transit.	Good location for multi-unit development at the corner of Langley and Union across for the T. The building to the right is currently for sale. Redeveloping these properties would help strengthen governance so the city and developers and businesses are working together to improve our city centers, MBTA and T stations.	Newton Centre
1.13	Housing	Require new construction and major renovations to maximize energy efficiency, maximize the use of renewable energy including thermal energy, and use electricity for heating and cooling.	1188 Centre St Citizens Bank—very ugly and has potential to be beautiful and multifunctional and in a perfect location walking distance from everything essential. Any similar development must be done in tandem with building complete streets so that new residents will not worsen traffic and increase GHG emissions by driving. High energy efficient and 100% fossil fuel free development should be prioritized and other environmental benefits to restore local ecology through rain gardens/landscaping/trees. In the heart of Newtonville, 28 Austin St, a Mixed-use development with affordable units. Allowing more similar development could strengthen	Newton Centre



- Environment [1.01-1.07]
- Housing [2.01-2.10]
- Shopping, Eating + Working [3.01-3.12]
- Transportation [4.01-4.10]
- Village Center Context [5.01-5.06]
- Regulatory Process [6.01-6.05]
- Accessibility [7.01-7.06]
- Arts + Culture [8.01-8.04]
- Inclusive, Diverse + Welcoming Spaces [9.01-9.09]
- Zoning Redesign Engagement + Process [10.01-10.08]



How we synthesized the information - tagging

- Environment [1.01-1.07]
- Housing [2.01-2.10]
- Shopping, Eating + Working [3.01-3.12]
- Transportation [4.01-4.10]
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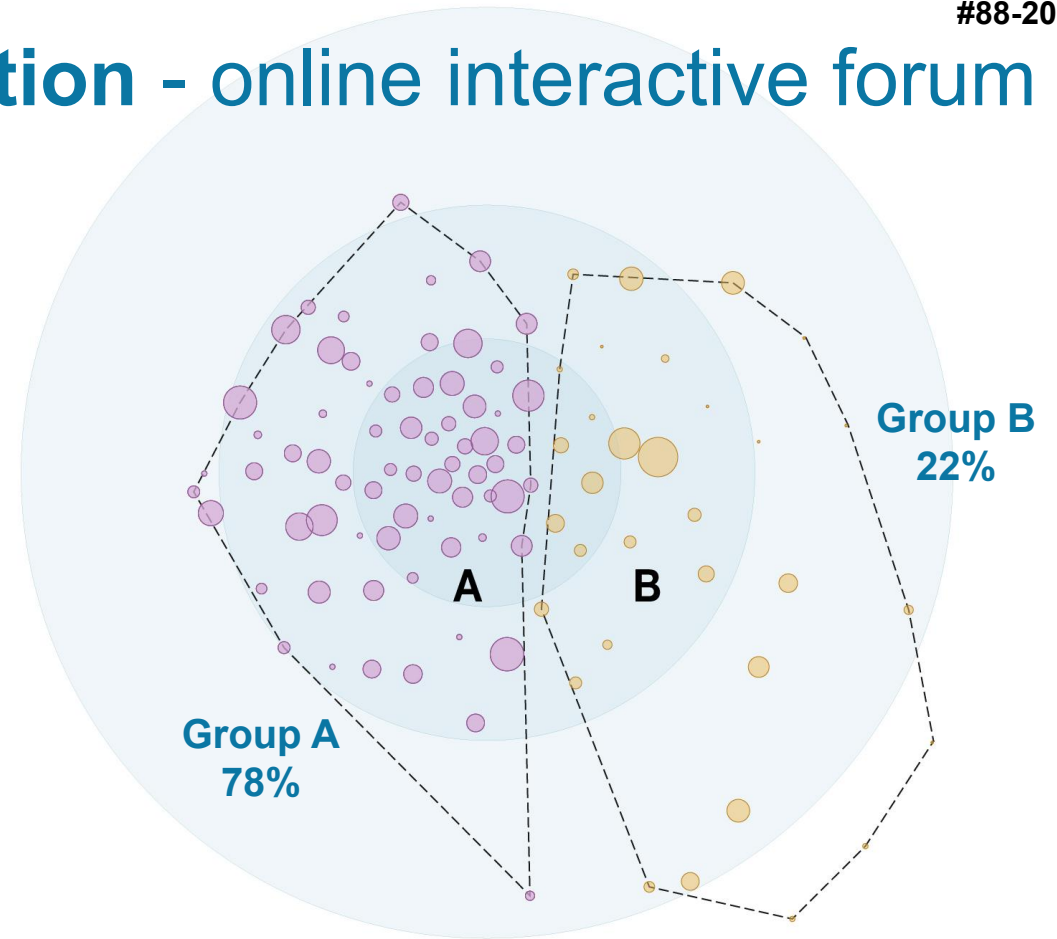


Accessibility [7.01-7.06]

Theme	Sub-Theme	Tag #	Count
Accessibility			7
Accessibility	Make sidewalks and curbcuts more accessible for people with physical disabilities	7.01	50
Accessibility	Incorporate Universal Design into spaces and amenities, through updates to current infrastructure and requirements of new development	7.02	35
Accessibility	Need more seating options in public space	7.03	13
Accessibility	Accessible all four seasons (including winter!)	7.04	3
Accessibility	Need more accessible parking stalls	7.05	2
Accessibility	Observation - accessibility options currently in VCs	7.06	1

How we synthesized the information - online interactive forum

- **1,427** people voted (based on logins or individual devices)
- **1,249** people grouped (978 in Group A, 271 in Group B)
- **124,427** votes were cast
- **484** statements were submitted
- **87.19** votes per voter on average



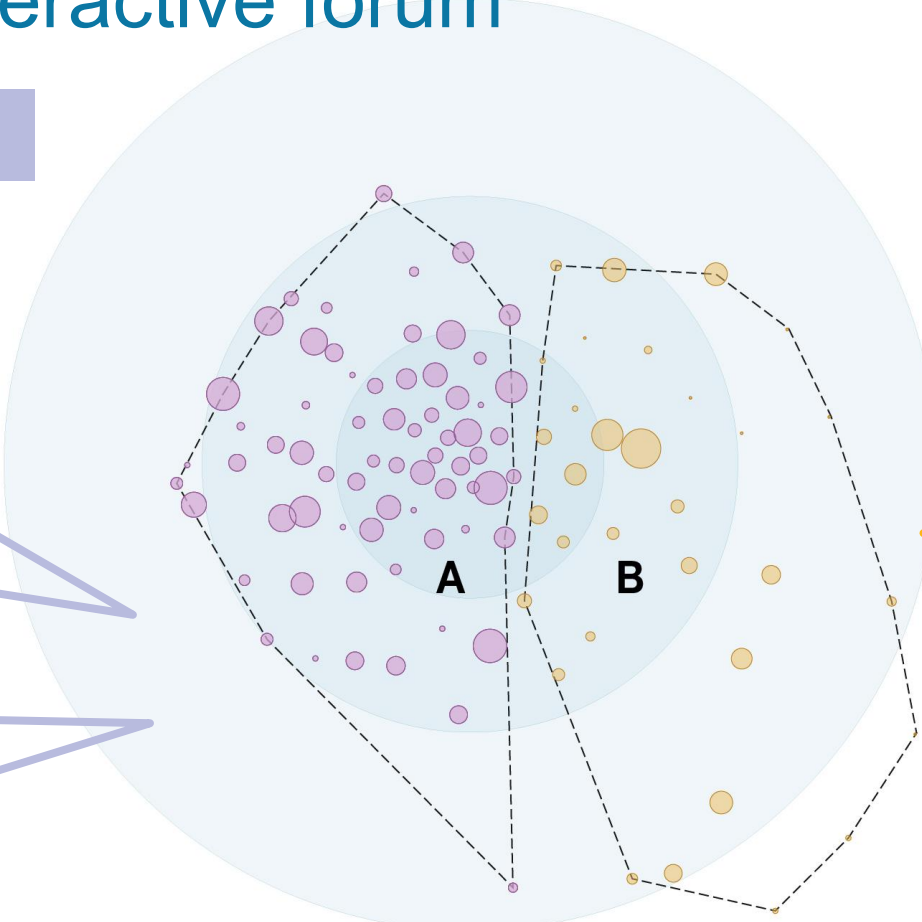
Groups - online interactive forum

Group A (78% of respondents)

Group A agrees with
and Group B disagrees with:

Increasing density in village centers will increase walkability and encourage people to do more trips without their cars.

We need multi-unit housing in and near the village centers. Preferably by right.



Group B (22% of respondents)

Group B agrees with
and Group A disagrees with:

I moved to newton for what it was, don't try to radically change it.

3-4 story blgs a in VCs is a major change/bad idea. It only takes a few taller buildings to make a canyon. NO MORE TRIO HULKS

Both Groups Agree:

Village Center should have places to do errands, get a bite to eat, go to an event and also to "just hang out" and talk and people watch.

Once I am in a Village Center, being able to easily and safely walk to all the businesses is important to me.

More outdoor seating, dining, meeting places. COVID has taught us that we can (and like to) hang out outdoors.

What We Learned



***almost all photos in this presentation come from community member Vision Kit submissions**

What we learned - takeaways

Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces

Communal & Public Space + Activation

More Diverse housing options and encourage mixed-use projects

Increase ease to get to Village Centers, especially through alternatives to driving

Increase accessibility to buildings and infrastructure within Village Centers

Make the permitting process easier, clearer and multi-tiered

Increasing the ability for small businesses to begin, stay and thrive in Village Centers

Communal & Public Space + Activation

People want more communal and green spaces: indoors + outdoors where they can naturally bump into people, activated for events and public art and markets, and feel included and seen.



Communal & Public Space + Activation

Keep and expand outdoor dining

Rethink parking lots for these uses

Some current public spaces do not feel inclusive nor representative

Use zoning tools to encourage or require public art and creative uses in public and private new development

Love the NewArt OutDoors and Murals

Limited space for teens/young people to gather

Create village center branding for arts, culture, history, and civic life

Balance housing needs with the need for open/ public space

Appreciation for existing park/recreational areas

Communal & Public Space: More + Activated



Great night for music and community gathering at the Hyde Playground. Could there be places like this in other villages?
(Vision Kit Submission)

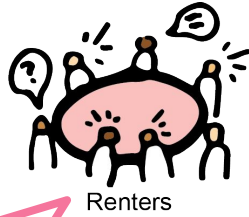


Rehab Nonantum Children's Library roof, stairs, landscaping, open for community use, restore library use
(Vision Kit Submission)

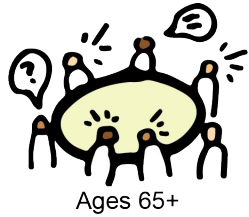
Communal & Public Space: More + Activated



LGBTQ+



Renters



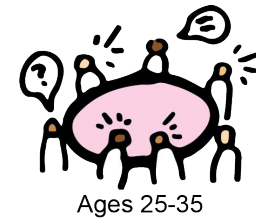
Ages 65+



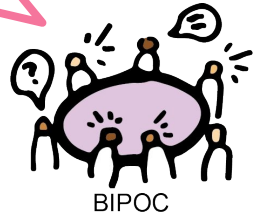
Creative Community



People with Disabilities



Ages 25-35



BIPOC

Because I live in a building, with limited space for storage and other extra needs, and on a fixed income, I want my village center to help fill/provide my needs, and other general community needs that could be met through the public realm.

(Renter Focus Group)

I have to go to other cities and towns to eat my food, hear my music, etc. I know this won't happen overnight. But maybe we can have more temporary spaces so these things can happen on a regular basis. I love my community and I want to keep my money here.

(BIPOC Focus Group)

Because of the resistance a number of Newton citizens demonstrated when they learned that a group home was opening in their village/neighborhood, there needs to be public education about the value and benefit of inclusion.

(People with Disabilities Focus Group)

Dedicated spaces to just be a young person that is not affiliated with a school or actual building. Example: open space with tables and chairs, green spaces to sit on and play games, spaces for young people to just "be."

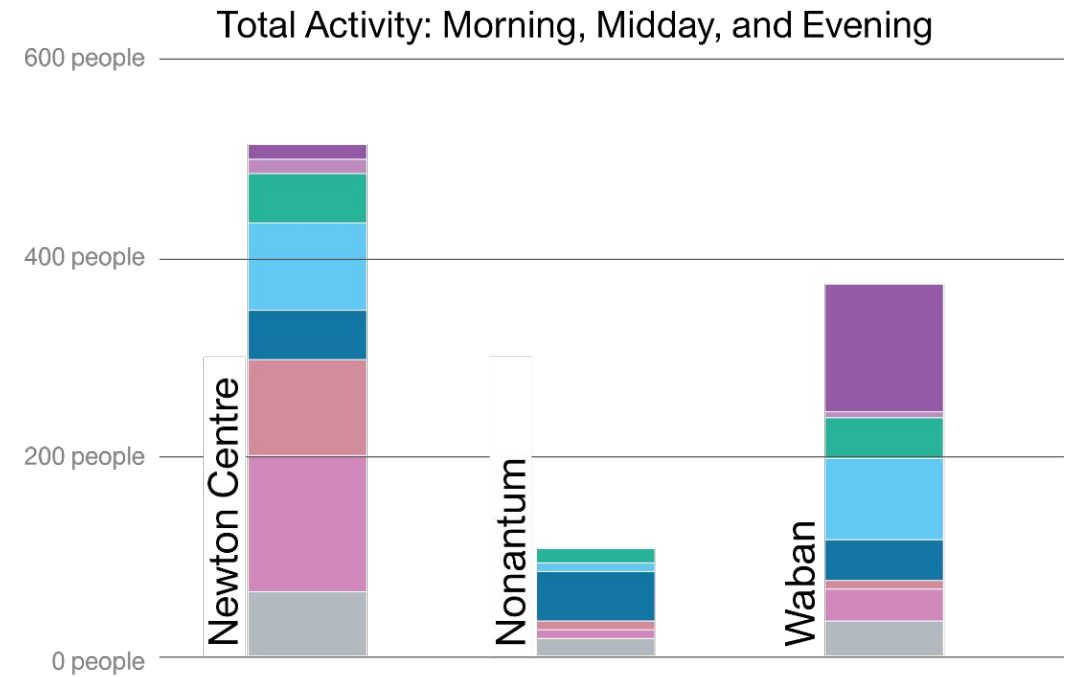
(Age 15-24 Focus Group)

Ages 15-24

Communal & Public Space: More + Activated



Encourage activity at all times of day to support businesses
 (Economic Development Focus Group #2)



Key: Activities

- Recreation, play, exercise
- Cultural activity
- Working
- Talking, socializing
- Using phone
- Commercial activity
- Consuming food or beverage
- Waiting for transportation

Observed July 2021, 7-9am, 12-2pm, and 4-6pm. Gathered information contains aberrations due to the season, weather, the pandemic, differences in the data collectors, etc.

Communal & Public Space: More + Activated

More Agreement

Less Agreement



Outdoor dining brings vibrancy to village centers

87% agree

The pandemic has shown the importance of sidewalks and streets for businesses. We should (...) make it easier for businesses to use the open space in village centers moving forward.

82% agree

Outdoor performance space (for music, visual art, theatre) belongs in our village centers.

67% agree

There should be public spaces which can be enjoyed without buying anything

85% agree

Village centers should have a center-- a public green space to congregate-- in the spirit of a European plaza.

70% agree

Each village center will have a space for cultural & community events that can be used by all.

60% agree



Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces.

People want more and better green spaces, more trees, and stronger commitments to climate resiliency



Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces.

Increase green space and street/park tree canopy coverage throughout the City in public and private spaces

Want better maintenance of and improvements to city parks, playgrounds, public spaces, and other recreational facilities

Appreciate existing park/recreational areas

Focus on natural climate resilience - encourage natural areas, native species habitat, stormwater management capacity, and passive recreational potential

Environmental justice is important

Focus on built climate resilience - require new construction and major renovations to maximize energy efficiency, maximize the use of renewable energy, and use electricity for heating and cooling

Promote pollution and waste reduction through allowing residents to live low-carbon lifestyles

Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces.

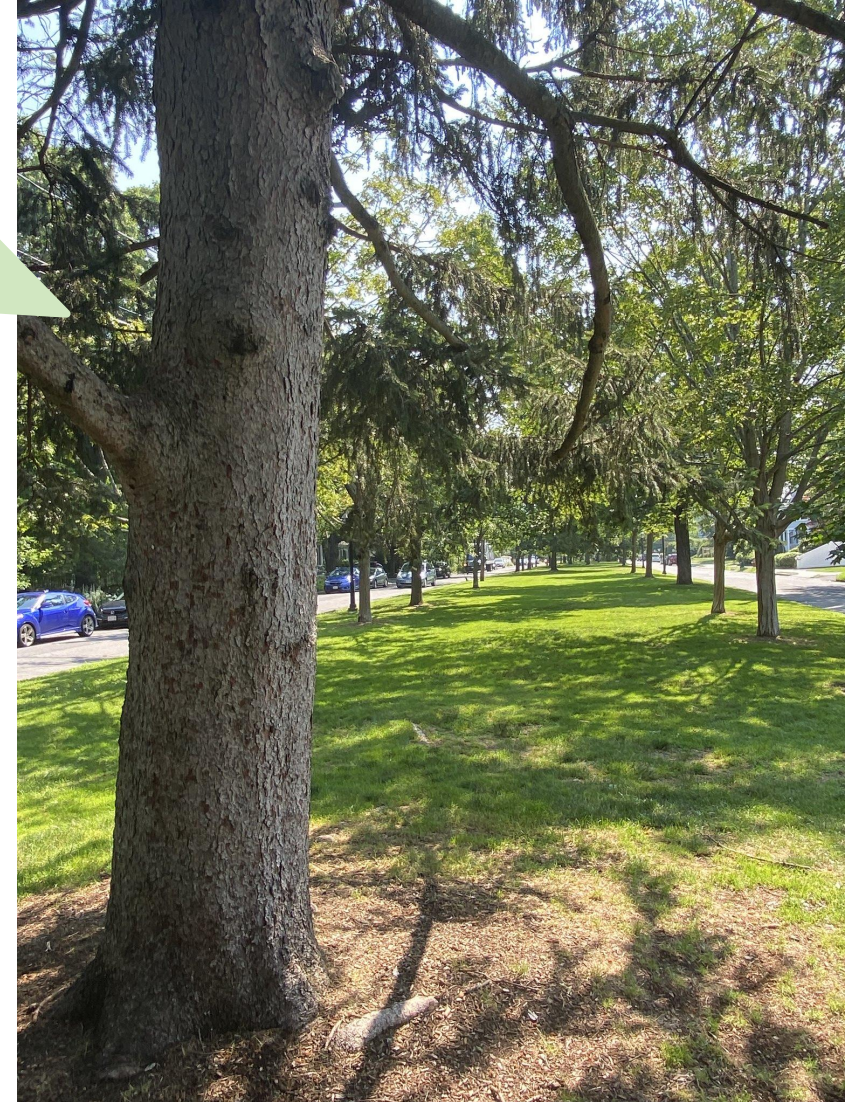


Want more green spaces, nature and beautification required in all new developments.

(Vision Kit Submission)

A good location for pollinator gardens is the green space along Centre St across from CVS and Tango Mango. Pollinator gardens help with biodiversity and promote healthy ecosystems, educate the public about the importance of pollinators, encourage community beauty and peace.

(Vision Kit Submission)



Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces.



Village centers should strive to be net zero or as close to zero GHG emissions if possible, and should support nature/biodiversity and water replenishment.
 (Vision Kit Submission)

Parking lot behind Walgreens - good for slower chargers, biggest lot with most open spaces often and easy to get in and out. Another idea: this space could be developed into new apartment buildings with some affordable housing units and then add EV charging spaces at the end of that process.
 (Vision Kit Submission)



Attendees suggested requiring solar panels on buildings especially those with flat roofs, commercial parking lots, and the Cold Spring Park parking lot. Parking lots with longer term parking should include electric charging stations. However, concerns about the aesthetics of parking lot solar panels were raised.
 (Vision Kit Submission)



Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces.

More Agreement

Less Agreement



We should believe the scientific consensus on climate change and plan for a sustainable future that is less car dependent

71% agree

It would be great for the environment/climate change and for local businesses if more people could live in or near village centers

65% agree

Buildings like the one just approved in Newton Highlands are good for village centers and the environment. There should be more like this

41% agree

The city should prioritize planting trees where there are fewer trees in the city

79% agree

More public green spaces -- parks, playgrounds on the north side of Newton

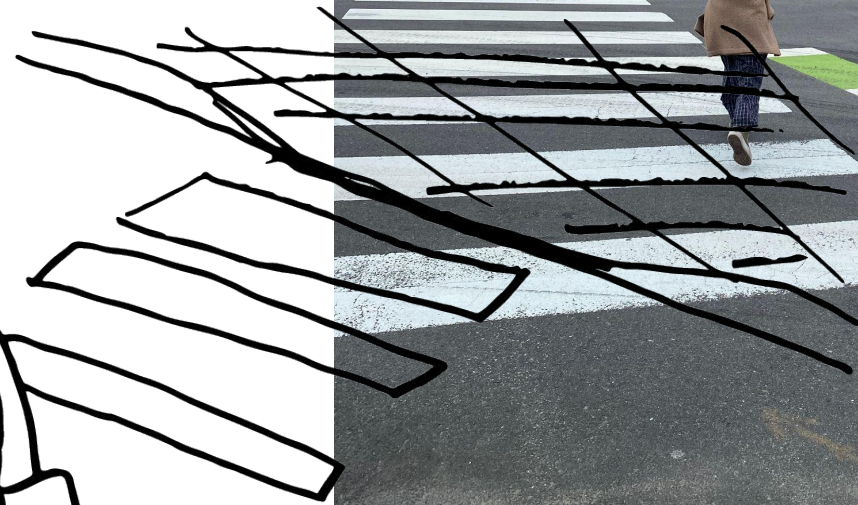
65% agree

We need to find ways for people to live near villages to help deal with climate change. Less driving. Fewer cars.

60% agree

Increase accessibility to buildings and infrastructure

Increasing accessibility across a broad spectrum is a key value, and we should work towards inclusivity through updates to current infrastructure and requirements in future development



Increase accessibility to buildings and infrastructure

Make sidewalks and curbcuts more accessible for people with physical disabilities

Need more seating options in public space

Accessible all four seasons (including winter!)

Need more accessible parking stalls

Incorporate Universal Design into spaces and amenities, through updates to current infrastructure and requirements of new development

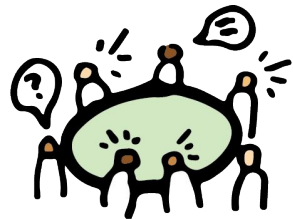
Increase accessibility to buildings and infrastructure

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.

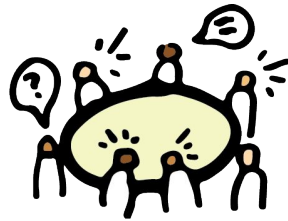
(Older adults Focus Group)

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)



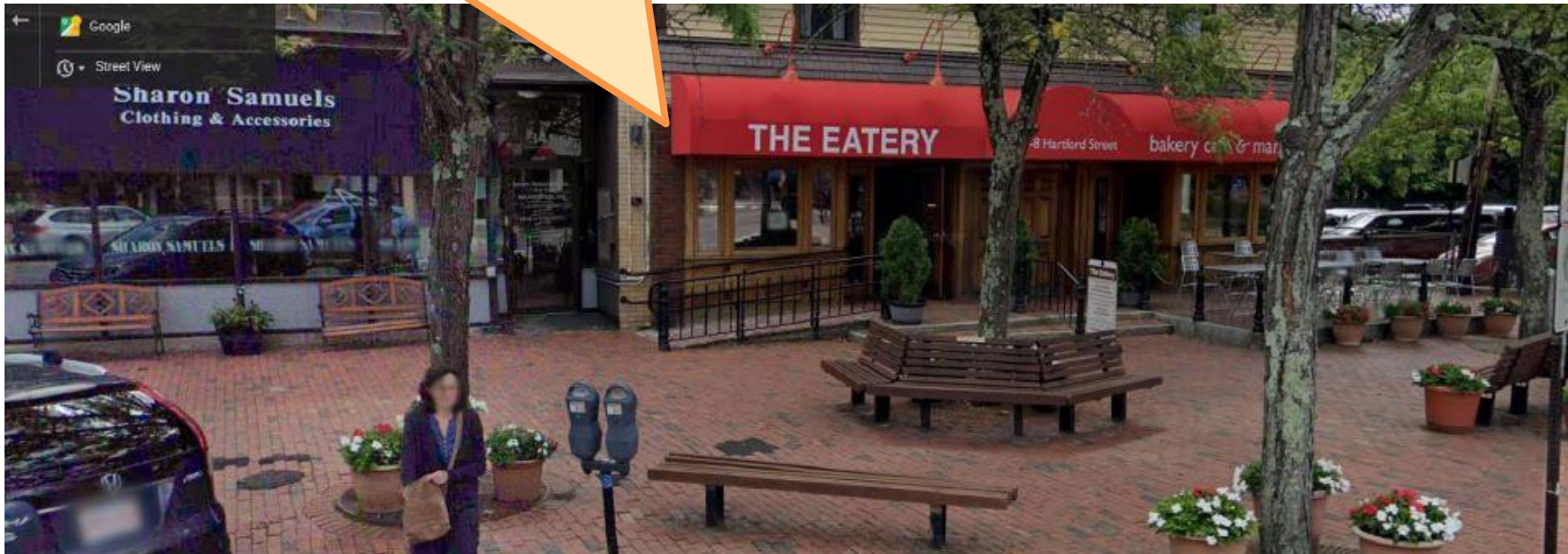
Increase accessibility to buildings and infrastructure

BAD: The brick, while pretty, is difficult to keep smooth enough to not impede safe travel by foot and for people with limited mobility or in a wheelchair. **GOOD:** Benches. Ramp up to historic building.

(Vision Kit Submission)

My ideal village would have a number of crosswalks, traffic lights with crossing instructions that you can hear and enough time to cross the street, curb cuts for wheelchairs and strollers, benches near the bus stops, a bank, a pharmacy, a restaurant or pizza place, and a post office. Also, store owners would be very good about shoveling their sidewalks in winter.

(People with disabilities Focus Group)



Increase accessibility to buildings and infrastructure

More Agreement

Less Agreement



Once I am in a Village Center, being able to easily and safely walk to all the businesses is important to me.

84% agree

Traffic in village centers and neighboring streets needs to be slowed down and intersection violations addressed

51% agree

We need to include renewable energy technology and accessibility modifications for disabled people in our village center buildings.

69% agree



Allow small businesses to begin, stay and thrive

Encourage and support small, local, and independent business that contribute to the vibrancy of village centers



Allow small businesses to begin, stay and thrive

Encourage a mix of commercial uses (retail, office, etc.) in village centers

Observation - Newton has strong purchasing power

Promote businesses that have longer operating hours and nightlife uses

Develop more programs to attract small businesses in village centers (incubator spaces, pop-ups in vacant storefronts, and subsidized rent)

Better understand and provide more support to existing businesses

Allow small businesses to begin, stay and thrive

The adaptability of retail space is important. Allowing larger spaces to be broken down into smaller spaces, with shared infrastructure, creates density and the conditions for smaller more local retail.

(Brokers and Consultants and Developer Focus Groups)



Pop-up retail can incubate new businesses

(Brokers and Consultants and Developer Focus Groups)

Nonantum has something special - mix of uses? narrowness of street? It is a tight knit community where business owners know each other. (Business Owners Focus Group)



Likely increase in demand for offices, both typical and co-working, as well as fast-casual dining for lunch meetings.

(Brokers and Consultants and Developer Focus Groups)

Allow small businesses to begin, stay and thrive



These are some of the businesses that make West Newton Square interesting and unique. Need to keep small storefronts like these, some <15ft wide, to have room for variety, and affordable small spaces.
(Vision Kit Submission)



**Too many banks!
newton center NEEDS
more PRODUCTIVE
businesses!!!**
(Vision Kit Submission)

Waban small businesses have closed in part because there is insufficient housing and more housing built above these businesses would help them thrive.
(Vision Kit Submission)



Allow small businesses to begin, stay and thrive

More Agreement

Less Agreement



Village Centers need a variety of boutique businesses, not just banks and nail salons.
86% agree

My village center needs more useful everyday shops like a grocery, hardware, clothing, and shoe stores.
67% agree

There's a chronic lack of small business stores, somehow rents must be come down to have more diversity.
63% agree

Village centers could do more to attract arts and cultural uses, including permanent venues and pop-up/temporary opportunities.
71% agree



More Diverse Housing Options and Encourage Mixed-Use

Housing in village centers should be varied (size, type, price, etc.) to meet the needs of Newton's diverse population. Designs should be sustainable and high quality to fit within the different village centers.



More Diverse Housing Options and Encourage Mixed-Use

Encourage development projects in villages and commercial corridors, especially those with transit

Pursue diverse housing choices to meet changing housing needs of a diverse population

Create more affordable housing options overall, as well as specific projects for people with disabilities, seniors, and other vulnerable populations

New development of big apartment complexes is not affordable and increases prices overall in the neighborhood

Seek high-quality design that is responsive to context

Balance housing needs with the need for commercial space and open/public space

Maintain, reduce or limit density currently permitted

Concern about teardowns

More Diverse Housing Options and Encourage Mixed-Use

More Agreement

Less Agreement

Allow more housing above stores in our villages

72% agree

Housing should be part of our village centers.

68% agree

3-4 story mixed use buildings in VCs would keep our village economies strong, provide needed housing in walkable locations, build community.

62% agree

I would like to see more housing in the villages but it needs to be aesthetically congruent with interesting architecture...

61% agree

3-4 story blgs a in VCs is a major change/bad idea. It only takes a few taller buildings to make a canyon. NO MORE TRIO HULKS

31% agree

I think it's important for the local stores and restaurants in villages to have enough people living nearby to support their businesses.

66% agree

We need to find ways for people to live near villages to help deal with climate change. Less driving. Fewer cars.

60% agree

I'd like to make sure that the spirit of the village and not a high density city, including traffic, is preserved in all improvements.

54% agree

More Diverse Housing Options and Encourage Mixed-Use

More Agreement

Less Agreement

Newton needs more affordable housing for different income levels.

68% agree

Not everyone can afford a down payment so there should be more rental opportunities near village centers

60% agree

Newton needs more homes or ... apartments that are smaller so they will be less expensive

58% agree

I wish there were smaller housing to own options in Newton!! I bought a house twice as big as what I wanted ... 55% agree

working class people should be able to live in Newton

78% agree

Young people/ students should be able to afford a place to live near/around a village center in Newton

60% agree

Older adults (like me) need apt. bldgs. near village centers – small, but big enough for elevators (12-24 units?) -- so we can drive less.

58% agree

People who already own houses please stop gatekeeping homeownership for millenials. There's not enough houses at any size in boston area. 50% agree

If we make Newton high density we leave people no choice - all cities around will be high density - let's keep Newton single family!

21% agree

More Diverse Housing Options and Encourage Mixed-Use

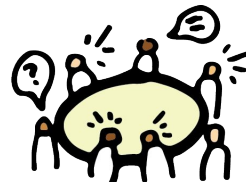


The new apartment buildings in Newtonville have breathed fresh air into this village center. It has felt slow and almost dying for almost a decade, but the improvements (such as Bram Way) are palpable. We need denser housing with commensurate retail to continue to revitalize this part of the city.

(Vision Kit Submission)

In order for Newton to remain a viable city, it needs an availability of housing options. I live in West Newton village center and see that place in dire need of help. I think having more housing there will actually be very helpful.

(Older adults Focus Group)



Ages 65+

We need to continue addressing housing shortages in village centers (ownership & rentals, market rate & affordable).



More Diverse Housing Options and Encourage Mixed-Use

Housing of all levels and housing that's affordable for young people to move into. Common experience for Newton young people to be asked "why don't young people stay here?" It's point blank, too expensive. (Ages 15-24 Focus Group)

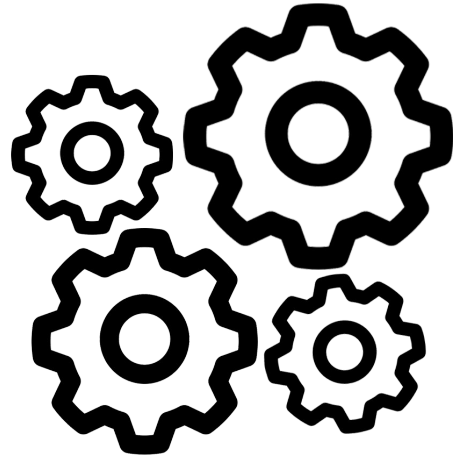


Ages 15-24



Make the permitting process easier, clearer, and multi-tiered

Fix the regulatory barriers that prevent desired projects at all scales



Make the permitting process easier, clearer, and multi-tiered

Align the Zoning Ordinance with the City's Contemporary values

Develop village center design guidelines

Incentivize the preservation and reuse of the City's historic fabric

Maintain the Special Permit process for larger projects

Make the permitting process easier, clearer, and multi-tiered

If village zoning could allow for more flexibility on how space is used and allow for faster transitions, ability to pivot as opportunities arrive,
 (Vision Kit Submission)

As an affordable housing developer, we do not even look at zoning, we just assume 40B.
 (Developers Focus Group)



Certainty is needed and Newton doesn't have it! The City needs to make the rules before the developers show up, otherwise we are always reacting and behind the curve.
 (Developers Focus Group)



Lots of potential for old factory buildings along California Street.
 (Vision Kit Submission)

Make the permitting process easier, clearer, and multi-tiered

More Agreement

Less Agreement



It should be easier to building housing that is more affordable right near or in villages -- simplify the process with clear guidelines.

60% agree

Newton should make the process easier to build affordable housing by either non-profit or private developers -- whatever it takes to do it.

50% agree

If want to attract more business to village center then streamline process at city hall to make more business friendly and cost effective

44% agree

Multifamily buildings should be easy to build near transit

61% agree

We need multi-unit housing in and near the village centers. Preferably by right.

49% agree



Increase ease to get to Village Centers, alternatives to driving.

People want to be able to visit village centers easily- and not just by car. There is a strong interest in embracing alternatives to driving, prioritizing the pedestrian experience, and increasing connectivity overall.



Increase ease to get to Village Centers, alternatives to driving.

Embrace alternatives to driving by expanding access to public transit, local transit, and walking and biking infrastructure

Re-envision major traffic corridors to improve safety for all travel modes

Improve public transit routes and frequency

Improve road safety for pedestrians at crosswalks and intersections

More development will cause more traffic

Prioritize pedestrian-focused core of village center

Find ways to decrease, de-emphasize, combine, or repurpose parking

Availability and quality of parking is an important aspect of village centers

Concern about potential impacts of creating new bike lanes

Increase ease to get to Village Centers, alternatives to driving.



I would like to bike more, but I don't always feel safe. I take public transit when I can, but need greater interconnectivity.
(25-35 Focus Group)



We moved our business to Newton Highlands from Newtonville 3 and half years ago with the hopes that locating on the green line would make it easier to attract young staff. It's generally turned out to be true and I also take advantage of the bus from Needham. It is one of the top two or three reasons we stay in this location.
(Vision Kit Submission)

New Blue Bikes rack and newly accessible T stop are both great. This makes Newton Highlands a great place for more people to live near.
(Vision Kit Submission by 350mass.org)



Increase ease to get to Village Centers, alternatives to driving.



There are a lot of surface parking lots in west newton, both private and public. These spaces create "heat islands" and incentivize driving. Is there a way to consolidate these lots into a garage and adapt the parking lots for more environmentally conscious uses?

(Vision Kit Submission)



This area with the large parking lot and one story buildings could be a multi story multi-use building. Could have a design like Austin Street with parking and retail on the 1st floor. This is just blocks from the T.

(Vision Kit Submission))



Increase ease to get to Village Centers, alternatives to driving.

More Agreement

Less Agreement

Living within walking distance of a village center is important to me.
74% agree

Village Centers should be safely reachable by bicycle
73% agree

It's difficult to get between city centers without a car
70% agree

It is not realistic to not expect folks to drive their cars. We need parking in the village centers
56% agree

Easy parking in the village center is more important to me than the walking and biking experience
32% agree

It should be easy, safe, and cheap to travel without a car (using public transportation, biking, walking, etc)
74% agree

I prefer a balanced, or shared approach to transport in Newton and our village centers (between cars, bikes and walking).
66% agree

Increasing density in village centers will increase walkability and encourage people to do more trips without their cars
55% agree

Looking Ahead



Continued discussion

- More information, including raw data, available at <https://www.newtonma.gov/government/planning/village-centers>
- ZAP discussion to continue on November 8

Engagement Results



[Click here for the Community Feedback Compilation](#)

The 'Community Feedback Compilation' document shows how city staff organized all of the community input, gathered through the channels listed below (except for the Online Interactive forum, which has [its own report](#)), and identified patterns in thoughts and observations.



VISION KITS - PHOTOS



VISION KITS - OTHER



INTERACTIVE FORUM



HISTORY WEBINAR



FOCUS GROUPS



BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- Spanish, Chinese & Russian +
- Vision Kit +
- Online Interactive Forum +

Where does zoning come in? - zoning impact matrix

	Zoning Considerations						Non-Zoning Considerations
	Dimensional Standards	Development Standards	Allowable Uses	Allowable Density	Permitting/ Process	Incentive	
Communal & Public Space: More + Activated		X			X	X	X
Increase the ability for small businesses to begin, stay and thrive in VCs	X	X	X	X		X	X
Climate resiliency through built structures and green spaces		X		X		X	X
Increase accessibility to buildings and intersections within VCs		X			X		X
Make permitting process easier, clearer + multi-tiered	X	X	X		X		X
More diverse housing options and encourage mixed-use projects	X	X	X	X	X		X
Increasing ease to get to Village Centers, especially through alternatives to driving				X		X	X

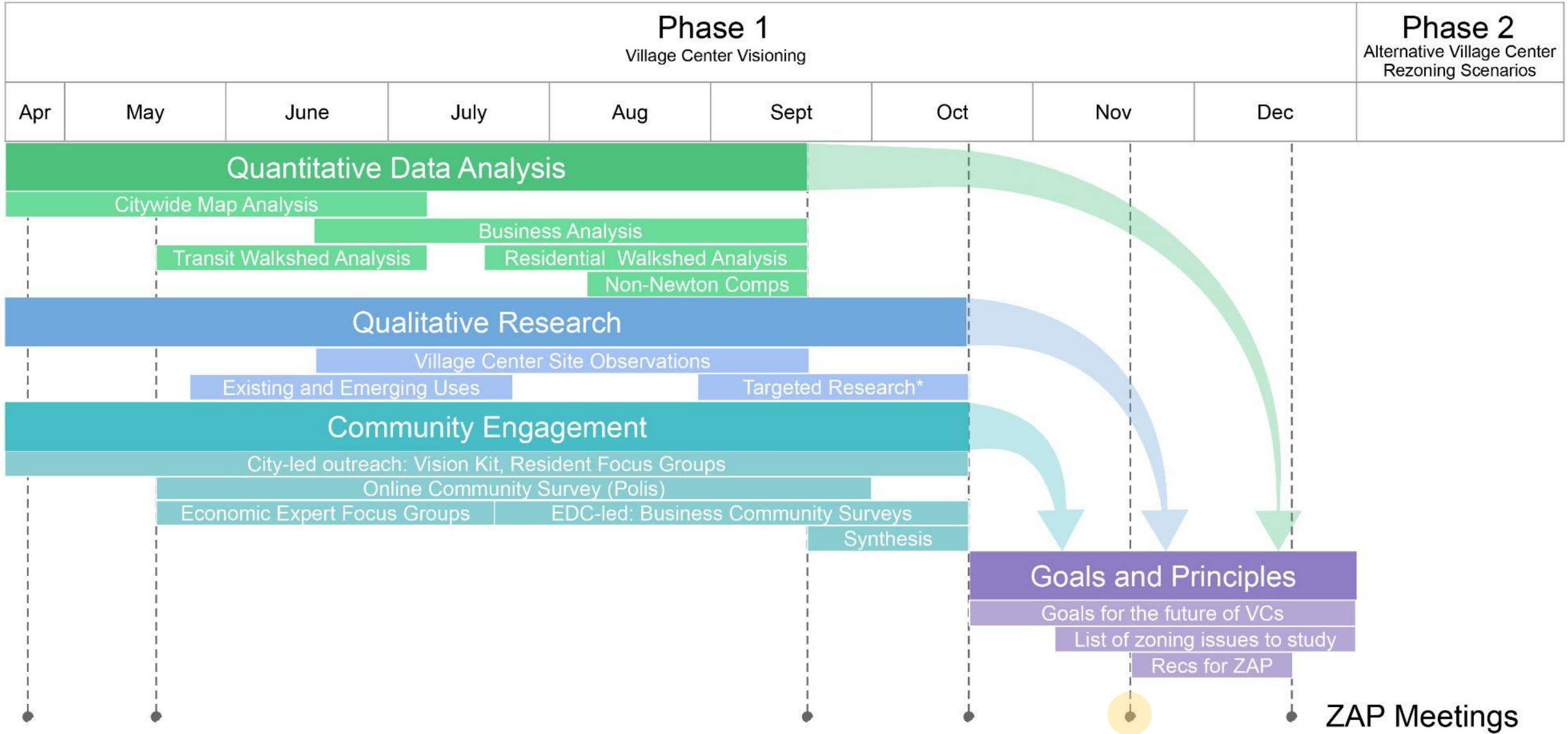
2021 Calendar

November 18 ZAP Meeting

Present draft goals and principles for the future of Village Centers based on engagement and analysis.



#88-20

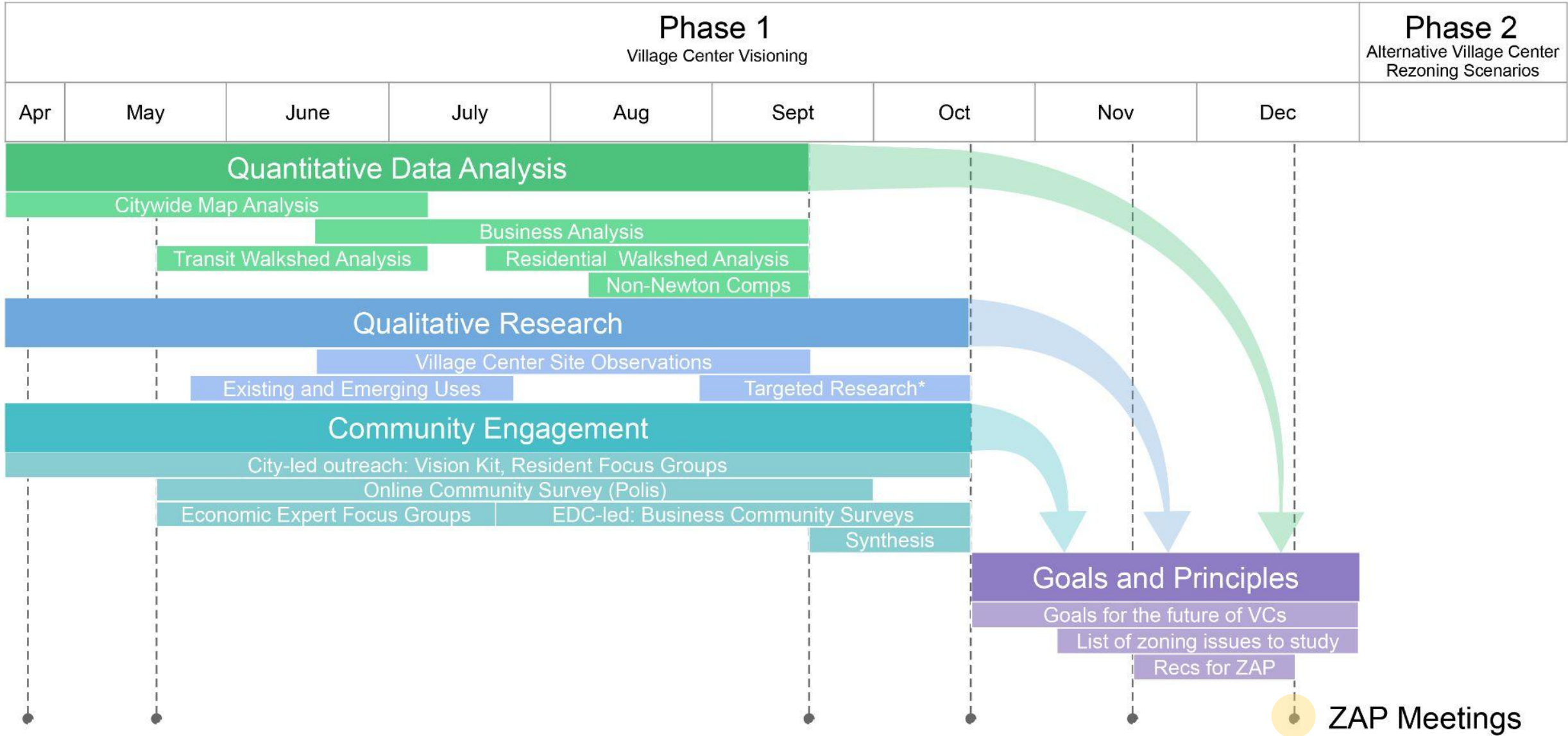


2021 Calendar

December ZAP Meeting
Present zoning issues to study in the next phase based on goals and principles.



#88-20



Public info session - 6pm on Monday, November 15

Virtual webinar version of this presentation with a Q+A for community members until 7:30pm

[Register here](https://newtonma.gov/zoningredesign/vc), at newtonma.gov/zoningredesign/vc or email zoningredesign@newtonma.gov for the registration link



Thank you!

