



Ruthanne Fuller  
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Barney S. Heath  
Director

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 9, 2023

**TO:** Councilor Deborah Crossley, Chair, Zoning & Planning Committee  
Members of the Zoning & Planning Committee

**FROM:** Barney Heath, Director, Department of Planning and Development  
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director Department of Planning and Development  
Zachery LeMel, Chief of Long Range Planning

**RE:** **#38-22 Discussion and review relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance regarding village centers**  
ZONING & PLANNING COMMITTEE requesting review, discussion and possible ordinance amendments relative to Chapter 30 zoning ordinances pertaining to Mixed Use, business districts and village districts relative to the draft Zoning Ordinance. (formerly #88-20)  
**#39-22 Requesting discussion on state guidance for implementing the Housing Choice Bill**  
COUNCILOR CROSSLEY on behalf of the Zoning & Planning Committee requesting discussion on state guidance for implementing the Housing Choice element of the MA Economic Development legislation. (formerly #131-21)

**MEETING:** June 12, 2023

**CC:** City Council  
Planning Board  
Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer

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### Multi Residence Transit (MRT) District Analysis

Planning staff released Version 2.0 of the proposed Village Center Overlay District (VCOD) on May 5, 2023. Version 2.0 introduced a new district, the Multi Residence Transit (MRT) zoning district. This district is intended to facilitate new small-scale multi-family housing similar in size to the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the preservation of existing homes through conversion to multiple apartments or condos. Discussions at ZAP have focused on finding the right metrics for the MRT district. The Planning Department along with consultant Utile and economic consultant Landwise Advisors, have done additional studies to better understand the architectural form and economic feasibility of both new construction and conversion in the MRT district.

The attached presentation (Attachment A) shows a series of case studies using two existing sites, one in Newton Centre and one in Newton Corner. For each site Utile analyzed a new construction building with 4 units with both a 1,500-sf footprint (the proposed maximum in MRT) and an 1,800-sf footprint as well as a conversion option with 6 units and a 50% increase in the existing building's footprint. Landwise Advisors created a conceptual pro forma for each scenario and determined the residual value, which is what the developer can pay for the land plus profit. Landwise has concluded that both new construction

and conversion can work economically. Utile and Landwise will present these scenarios in more detail at the upcoming ZAP meeting.

**Next Steps**

Planning staff along with consultants from Utile will present an overview of the Village Center Overlay District to the full council on June 20 at 6pm.

ZAP will open a public hearing on the VCOD on June 26 at 7pm. In advance of the public hearing Planning staff have sent out over 6,000 postcards to property owners and occupants within the proposed VCOD boundaries as well as to abutters and abutters to abutters.