Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Barney Heath
Director

PUBLIC HEARING/WORKING SESSION IX MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 6, 2019

MEETING DATE: September 11, 2019

TO: Land Use Committee of the City Council

FROM: Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development
Jennifer Caira, Chief Planner for Current Planning
Michael Gleba, Senior Planner

CC: Petitioner

In response to questions raised at the City Council public hearing, the Planning Department is providing the following information for the upcoming public hearing/working session. This information is supplemental to staff analysis previously provided at the Land Use Committee public hearing.

PETITIONS #425-18 & #426-18 156 Oak St., 275-281 Needham St. & 55 Tower Rd.

Petition #425-18- for a change of zone to BUSINESS USE 4 for land located at 156 Oak Street (Section 51 Block 28 Lot 5A), 275-281 Needham Street (Section 51, Block 28, Lot 6) and 55 Tower Road (Section 51 Block 28 Lot 5), currently zoned MU1

Petition #426-18- for SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL to allow a mixed-use development greater than 20,000 sq. ft. with building heights of up to 96' consisting of 822 residential units, with ground floor residential units, with restaurants with more than 50 seats, for-profit schools and educational uses, stand-alone ATMs drive-in businesses, open air businesses, hotels, accessory multi-level parking facilities, non-accessory single-level parking facilities, non-accessory multi-level parking facilities, places of amusement, radio or TV broadcasting studios, and lab and research facilities, to allow a waiver of 1,600 parking stalls, to allow a reduction in the overall parking requirement to not less than 1900 stalls, to waive dimensional requirements for parking stalls, to waive end stall maneuvering requirements, to allow driveway entrances and exits in excess of 25', to waive perimeter landscaping requirements, to waive interior landscaping requirements, to waive lighting requirements for parking lots, to waive general lighting, surfacing and maintenance requirements, to waive off-street loading facilities requirements, to waive sign requirements relative to number, size, location or design, to waive the number of signs allowed.

The Land Use Committee (the "Committee") held a public hearing on September 25, 2018 and working sessions on November 13, 2018, December 11, 2018, January 15, 2019, March 12, 2019, April 3, 2019, April 30, 2019, May 14, 2019, June 16, 2019 and August 6, 2019 on these petitions. This memo reflects additional information received by the Planning Department as of **September 5, 2019**. The next meeting on these petitions is currently scheduled for **September 24, 2019**.

This memorandum is focused on revised Design Guidelines, the proposed rezoning from MU1 to BU4, and updates to transportation demand management commitments as well as commitments to community benefits, as submitted in a letter from the petitioner dated September 5, 2019 **(Attachment A)**.

Design Guidelines

The proposed project is of a much larger scale than typical Special Permit projects, which submit very detailed plans for review and then must remain consistent with these plans throughout development of construction documents. Given the scale of the project site and that the project would be built over several years it did not seem feasible, nor desired, for the petitioner to submit plans that included the level of detail typically expected of a Special Permit project (material finishings, exact fenestration, open space furnishings, signs, etc). Designing a project to this level of detail now would make inevitable revisions throughout the Special Permit process more difficult, would result in more significant changes during development of construction documents (and potential amendments to the Special Permit), and could result in the design looking outdated, rather than as if it evolved over time. These details are extremely important to the success of the project, however. For this reason, the Planning Department and their peer reviewer, Form + Place have developed design guidelines that will provide a framework for the incremental execution of the development **(Attachment B)**. The goal of the guidelines is to provide a degree of flexibility in the architectural details, to respond to evolving development realities, and to ensure the project as built matches the expectations set forth in the petitioner's master plan as well as in the Needham Street Area Vision Plan. For example, the Petitioner has committed to pursuing Passive House certification for a portion of the buildings onsite, which may require alterations to the design and materials.

The Design Guidelines are intended to guide small changes to the project as a result of evolution from conceptual design to final design and to ensure the details that are not yet shown meet the City's high expectations for quality design. If approved, many elements of the project will be considered fixed, and could not be significantly changed as a result of the Design Guidelines. For example, no increases to the building heights, number of units, affordable units, overall size of the project, or commitments to transportation demand management measures, or community benefits could be done without returning to City Council to amend the Special Permit. Additionally, only minor changes to building locations, footprints, program, driveway location, parking stalls, interior road network, and open spaces could be expected without needed to amend the Special Permit. What the guidelines will regulate is types of materials, overall fenestration, building entrance location and design, wayfinding and building signage, location and treatment of loading and trash, street treatments including furniture, landscaping, and paving materials, and detailed design of amenity and open space areas. It is also anticipated that if the petitioner were to return to make significant changes to the project as an

amendment to the Special Permit, the design guidelines would be used to guide those changes as well.

The Design Guidelines are intended to find a balance between the specificity and flexibility. The guidelines are broken down into three categories, District Design, Block Design and Building Design to allow for consideration of the development at a variety of scales. The district level guidelines consider the project holistically; how it fits into the surrounding context and the overall quality of the public realm within the project. The district level guidelines include some elements that will likely be fixed in place by the submitted Special Permit plans, if the project is approved. These guidelines are intended to ensure small changes to the project maintain consistency with the holistic vision and will also guide the process if larger changes are requested in the future. The block level guidelines take a more detailed look at place-making and architectural qualities of individual blocks, which may vary in their design throughout the development. The building level design criteria include many of the details that are not included in the proposed plans: material choice, articulation of buildings, fenestration, etc. All three levels include guidelines for the public realm, wayfinding, and sustainability.

The Planning Department proposes a review process for the design guidelines that is similar to the Special Permit consistency review that happens today. The submitted plans for building permit must be consistent with the approved Special Permit plans and the Design Guidelines and also must fulfill all applicable conditions from the Council Order. Prior to submitting for a building permit for site-wide or individual elements of the proposed development, the petitioner would review the applicable guidelines and fill out the evaluation form. A few sample pages of the evaluation template are attached **(Attachment C)**. The form requires the petitioner to consider the overall goals for each category as well as how the proposed project complies with individual guidelines. The template also has space for references to the plan sheets that illustrate how the project meets said guideline. City staff (and potentially peer reviewers) would review in detail and the petitioner would also be required to present to the Urban Design Commission for their assessment of consistency with the Design Guidelines. It is anticipated that most building permit requests would then be presented to the Land Use Committee of the City Council (as is done for other consistency rulings) for the committee's review and recommendation to the Commissioner of Inspectional Services. The Planning Department recommends that minor permit requests (retail tenant fit outs, etc.) that are consistent with the Design Guidelines may be able to request a consistency from the Commissioner with just a staff recommendation.

Transportation Responses

The petitioner has responded to the requests raised by the Planning Department and the City Councilors at the August 6, 2019 meeting dedicated to the transportation elements of the project. The petitioner has agreed to all of the Planning Department requests from the August 2, 2019 memo and August 6, 2019 presentation, with the exception of including a shuttle to the commuter rail or additional stops along Needham Street. This includes an initial TDM investment of $1.5 million and a cap on additional TDM investment (that kicks in if the project exceeds the maximum number of office and residential trips) of 30% in lieu of the petitioner's proposal of $1.25 million and a 20% cap. The petitioner has not agreed to an uncapped investment that was discussed at the August 6th meeting. The petitioner has also agreed to extending MBTA transit pass subsidies to retail workers, to add carpool spaces, and to considering charging to office/retail parking if necessary. The petitioner has also agreed to the methodology and timing of monitoring and reporting as recommended by the Planning

Department. This includes submitting reports every six months after the project has reached 80% occupancy and moving to annual reporting once they have demonstrated compliance for two consecutive six-month periods. After five years of consecutive compliance the reporting requirement would end, but the petitioner would be required to continue to implement the TDM measures in place at that time. The Director of Planning could however request counts and monitoring reports if conditions have changed which could affect the success of the current TDM plan.

In addition to the TDM proposals, the petitioner has agreed to reduce the number of lined parking spaces by 100, resulting in 1,350 lined stalls with an overall capacity of 1,600 vehicles with valet service. The petitioner has also agreed to undertake a traffic signal warrant analysis at the Oak Street driveway intersection to determine if a traffic signal is needed. The planning department is supportive of all of these changes.

In response to questions raised at the August 6th meeting, BETA (the City's transportation peer reviewer) has provided additional information on the sources used by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) in developing trip generation rates **(Attachment D)**.

Sewer System Infiltration and Inflow Mitigation

The petitioner has offered to pay $1.85 million towards their wastewater infiltration and inflow(I&I) mitigation requirement. The City has an I&I policy, based on state requirements and the MWRA permit, which requires the petitioner pay the City to improve its sewer infrastructure to remove extraneous infiltration and inflow at a 4:1 ratio using a rate of $19.52 per gallon (Newton's 2019 figure). The petitioner has requested that their flow rate be calculated based on their actual flow (the state's standard flow rate of 110 gallons per bedroom does not consider today's low flow fixtures). The Planning Department has conferred with the Engineering Division and in light of the petitioner's other mitigation contributions, the City finds a $1.85 million I&I payment acceptable. The payment allows the DPW-Utilities to fully fund the necessary I&I reduction work to address current and future wastewater flow conditions in this region of the City in combination with approved funding to the Sewer Fund and the City's wastewater system improvement plan.

Community Benefits

The Planning Department has previously recommended a list of potential off-site transportation improvements to be funded by the petitioner **(Attachment E)**. This list of approximately $5 million in off-site improvements is aimed at improving access to transit, improving the ability of residents and tenants of the site as well as the community to walk and bike to more places, protecting and enhancing nearby neighborhoods through traffic calming and village enhancement projects, and improving traffic safety and efficiency through new signals, road safety audits, and remote control for signals along Needham Street. The petitioner has agreed to a payment of $5 million towards these transportation improvements.

The petitioner has also agreed to provide for a spray park, in lieu of the previously proposed community building. The petitioner would also provide the land for the spray park (located along the Greenway, at the northwestern corner of the site) to the City and would spend $1 million to construct the spray park. The City would be responsible for operations and maintenance.

The petitioner has also agreed to a $1.5 million contribution to the City towards the construction costs of the Countryside Elementary School project. The payment would be phased over a number of years and is in addition to the petitioner's contributions to transportation, the spray park, and its I&I mitigation payment.

The Planning Department is supportive of the proposed $7.5 million in community benefits that will allow for much needed infrastructure improvements and significant community amenities.

Rezoning Request

The petitioner has requested to rezone the three parcels which comprise the project site from Mixed Use 1 (MU1) to Business 4 (BU4). Attached is the Planning Department's August 5, 2019 memo to the Planning and Development Board analyzing the rezoning request **(Attachment F)**. The attached memo compares the allowed uses and dimensional requirements of both the MU1 and BU4 zones and discusses the zoning goals of the Needham Street Area Vision Plan and the draft proposals for this area as part of Zoning Redesign. The rezoning request is consistent with the goals of the Needham Street Area Vision Plan and Zoning Redesign and the Planning Department strongly supports the request.

The current Mixed Use 1 zoning along Needham Street does not truly support a mix of uses and has resulted in a corridor defined by large parcels with big box retail in buildings that are set back from and oriented away from the street. This creates an unpleasant pedestrian experience and further exacerbates traffic conditions along Needham Street. By rezoning the site the proposed project is able to provide not only a mix of uses within the site but housing units that will diversify the housing stock in the area and contribute towards balancing the overall mix of uses along Needham Street. Additional density and height, reduced front setbacks, and the addition of small scale retail, service and community uses all contribute to creating a "vibrant destination with distinct identity" as contemplated by the Needham Street Area Vision Plan. The need for housing, and particularly multi-family and affordable housing options, is also identified as an important piece of the City's Economic Development Strategy and is critical to supporting the efforts of the N^2 Innovation District. Allowing a mix of uses can also improve transportation over the alternative as some residents will live and work on site and many residents and office tenants will not need to leave the site for basic amenities and entertainment. Additionally, the different uses proposed onsite have different peak traffic periods, so new trips as a result of the project are more spread out rather than concentrated during a smaller peak period, such as with office uses.

The Planning Board has not yet formally made their recommendation of the rezoning request, but at the August 5th meeting members of the board were supportive of the request and discussed whether the site should be rezoned regardless of this proposed project. As there has been broad consensus that the MU1 zone does not meet the current goals of the City or the community, the Planning Department recommends the City Council rezone the site to BU4 and consider not requiring the rezoning take effect upon exercise of the Special Permit.

Next Steps

The Land Use Committee is next scheduled to discuss these proposals on September 24, 2019. At this meeting the Planning Department will submit a draft Council Order for the Committee's review.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A	Petitioner's September 5, 2019 Letter to Chairman Schwartz
Attachment B	Form + Place Memo and Design Guidelines
Attachment C	Sample Pages from Design Guidelines Evaluation Template
Attachment D	ITE Trip Generation Sources
Attachment E	Potential Offsite Transportation Improvements
Attachment F	Planning Rezoning Memo to Planning Board

Attachment A

SCHLESINGER AND BUCHBINDER, LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

STEPHEN J. BUCHBINDER
ALAN J. SCHLESINGER
LEONARD M. DAVIDSON
A. MIRIAM JAFFE
SHERMAN H. STARR, JR.
JUDITH L. MELIDEO-PREBLE
BARBARA D. DALLIS
PAUL N. BELL
KATHERINE BRAUCHER ADAMS
FRANKLIN J. SCHWARZER
RACHAEL C. CARVER
ADAM M. SCHECTER

1200 WALNUT STREET
NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02461-1267
TELEPHONE (617) 965-3500
www.sab-law.com

aschlesinger@sab-law.com

September 5, 2019

Gregory R. Schwartz, Chairman
Land Use Committee
Newton City Council
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Re: Northland Newton Development- Docket #426-18

Dear Councilor Schwartz,

In anticipation of the continued public hearing on the Northland Newton Development on September 11th, I wish to respond to particular questions posed and suggestions made at the August 6th hearing.

Planning Presentation August 6th

We note at the outset that the presentation made by the Planning Department on August 6th was outstanding. Its review of the project, especially consolidating the traffic generation numbers and analysis of the traffic demand management (TDM) program, was clear and concise. From the Planning Department Report we note in particular:

- The Vehicle Trip Generation graph shows clearly the disproportionate impact which commercial uses have relative to residential uses. The trip generation during the peak hours from the residential uses will be a relatively small amount.
- The Planning Department finds that the proposed 1650 parking spaces are in the right "ballpark", and it expresses concern that reduced parking may lead to increased TNC use or spillover parking.
- We are in agreement with focusing on outcomes rather than tactics, working towards and the Planning Department's stated goals.
- The Planning Department agrees with the Northland proposal which results in a 37% reduction in Unadjusted AM trips and 58% reduction in Unadjusted PM trips measured for the residential and office portions of the project.

Gregory R. Schwartz, Chairman
September 5, 2019

In the sections on the TDM Program, TDM Plan Phase In, TDM Budget, TDM Measurement, TDM Monitoring and Reporting, and TDM Enforcement Planning set forth the Northland Proposal (left side) and Planning Department recommended revisions (right side):

- In the TDM Program section, Northland agrees with the Planning Department's recommended revisions;
- In the TDM Budget section, Northland agrees with the Planning Department's recommended revision to increase the base budget to $1.5M;
- In the TDM Measurement section, Northland agrees with the Planning Department's recommended revisions;
- In the TDM Monitoring and Reporting section, Northland agrees with the Planning Department's recommended revisions; and
- In the TDM Enforcement section, Northland agrees with the Planning Department's recommended revisions.

We note that at the August 6th hearing, certain Councilors expressed concern about the 30% cap on increased contributions above the $1.5M base commitment. Northland does not agree to any increase above the 30% recommended by the Planning Department.

Parking

The parking discussion with the Council has revolved around many equally important elements including forward-looking public policy, current and future social trends, existing conditions and competitive market constraints.

We have heard in particular Councilors Auchincloss, Downs and Noel arguing for reduced parking at the project, and while they can speak for themselves we have heard that they argue for a "virtuous cycle" in which the future will demand less parking and less parking will discourage traffic.

We have also heard in particular from Councilors Baker and Gentile who also can speak for themselves but have urged that Newton has been car-centric for a long time and is likely to be so for a while longer, so it would be imprudent not to provide for what is the condition today rather than what someone might hope might be in the future. It is reasonable for the Newton Upper Falls neighborhood to be concerned that a parking shortfall could result in parking in the neighborhood or a shift to Uber/Lyft which conserves parking at the expense of more traffic.

We are also mindful that the Newton Zoning Ordinance is the actual policy which the Council has promulgated, and the Ordinance would require approximately 2950 parking spaces for the project, so that is the baseline starting point for analysis.

Northland has been committed to striking a balance between the different views, and has sought to propose the minimum number of parking spaces which it believes can

adequately provide for the needs of the residents, office tenants, retail and restaurants, and visitors to the project. Following recent discussions with Councilors Auchincloss, Downs, and Noel, Northland proposes a further and final change in the parking plan to provide 1350 self-parking spaces and 250 valet spaces. By comparison:

	August Proposal	September Proposal
Self-Park Spaces	1450	1350
Valet Spaces	200	250
Total	1650	1600

This proposal is all about balancing and judgment. Northland was asked to consider carefully the correct parking proposal to balance the benefits and concerns about parking, and this proposal is made as a final proposal to state as clearly as we can what Northland is willing to do.

Mitigation

For the entire year of hearings on the NND, Northland has emphasized that the project should strive to mitigate the effects of development. Mitigation within and from the site and has taken a number of forms:

- The project itself is mitigation in that the mixed uses will provide on-site opportunities for live/work/play to reduce vehicular traffic as compared to an as-of-right development;
- The project will transform the 22.6 acre site, which is now almost entirely paved or impervious, to one with 10 acres of parks and open space (over 40% of the site), significantly mitigating the current "heat island" effect;
- The residential portions of three buildings will be constructed to "passive house" standards, which will significantly reduce energy consumption;
- The currently untreated storm water will be filtered and detained, using best management practices, to improve groundwater quality and reduce phosphorous run-off;
- Restoration of the South Meadow Brook will improve the existing condition of the wetlands;
- The aggressive TDM incentives and project shuttle are intended to mitigate the traffic impact of the project and are obligations imposed uniquely on this development. Northland has agreed to an initial cost of $1,500,000 per year for the funding of TDM measures;
- The project proposes 140 units of affordable housing and a building be designated an "all age friendly" building in the

hopes that these units together make a significant contribution toward housing diversity within the community and addressing the City's stated housing goals and vision; and

- The project intends to facilitate undergrounding of as much as 7000 linear feet of utility lines in and around the project. Northland understands this is a project proposal and not a request from the City, but the City and the public will nonetheless enjoy a considerable benefit from the undergrounding.

In addition to the various elements of mitigation proposed on-site, Northland recognizes that the impacts of this project extend beyond the site and into the Newton Upper Falls and Newton Highlands neighborhoods and is prepared to offer significant contributions to mitigate these impacts. We are also aware of the City Engineer's policy for Sewer Infiltration/Inflow (I/I) Mitigation updated March 7, 2019, and while we have questioned the authority for this policy, we have used it as guidance and calculated:

93,425 gpd x $19.77/gallon x 4 = $7,388,049 aggregate payment per policy

The policy contemplates that the City Council can agree to reduce the I&I payment to 25% of that amount, or $1,847,012 based on other off-site mitigation contributions made on behalf of the project. With this understanding, Northland's off-site mitigation proposal in the aggregate is comprised of the following elements:

- $1,850,000 for I&I mitigation for the Council to allocate as appropriate:
- $5,000,000 for offsite transportation mitigation for the Council to allocate as appropriate. The Planning Department has provided a list of offsite transportation planning and implementation items for consideration, and Northland has requested that there be added to the list:
  i. Future funding for improvements to the Christina Street pedestrian/bike bridge over the Charles River; and
  ii. Funding for a potential traffic or pedestrian signalat the Oak Street entrance to the project
- $1,000,000 for a community spray/splash park adjacent to the Greenway:
- $1,500,000 as a contribution towards the renovation or reconstruction of the Countryside School. Northland has worked very closely with the School Department in determining that the school system has sufficient capacity for the projected number of children from the development and we also appreciate that Councilors have consistently stated that school projections do not affect land use decisions. However, in the past several months the City has re-prioritized the Countryside School, and Northland as a

neighbor welcomes a renovation or reconstruction of the school as a great opportunity. Mayor Fuller requested that Northland consider making a significant contribution to funding that initiative, and Northland is pleased to respond.

In summary, in addition to the mitigation incorporated into NND, Northland proposes financial contributions of:

$1,850,000 for I&I mitigation

$5,000,000 for offsite transportation mitigation

$1,000,000 for a community spray/splash park

$1,500,000 for Countryside school

$9,350,000 Total

Each of these items will be paid on a schedule over the development process and will be appropriated by the Council in its discretion.

Other Hearing Issues

At the August 6th public hearing we opted not to address certain discussion items, but I stated that we reserved the right to comment further on the discussion. Four items were mentioned by Councilors which we believe require a response.

First, the project cannot and will not be phased. It has been planned and designed as a singular development with integrated open space, a balanced mix of uses, shared underground parking, permeability, and essential connectivity with its surroundings. It is one project to be constructed in a sequence with all of the infrastructure built first, including without limitation the utility systems, the underground parking, and the public spaces. Northland will not accept any phasing condition or any conditionality on the project as a whole.

Second, Northland has accepted the Planning Department recommendation on proposed investment and future increases in the TDM program, which includes an annual cap of 30% over the initial funding of $1.5 Million and an annual CPI increase. The amount in the Planning Department recommendation is what Northland is willing to do, including the annual cap amount.

Third,based on the current practices of other owners and landlords in the project's competitive trade area, Northland is not prepared to charge office employees, retail shoppers, or visitors for parking at this time.

Fourth Northland cannot agree that the initial shuttle service to Newton Highlands will stop elsewhere on Needham Street. Such a stop could either require consent of other property owners or could force the shuttle to take more than 10 minutes for the trip. The operation of the shuttle can be reviewed in the future.

Gregory R. Schwartz, Chairman
September 5, 2019

You will note that in each of the matters discussed in this letter, Northland has asked two questions: (i) is the discussion issue related to the project, and (ii) does a proposal improve the project?

Throughout the permitting process the NND project has undergone very substantial improvements from Northland's original proposal, frequently at the request of Councilors or community members. The March site plan revisions including the placing of parking underground, the increase in open space, the passive house designs, the "all age friendly" building, the groundbreaking TDM proposal and the offsite mitigation proposals all relate to items which meet those criteria. We believe that both the project and the City have benefitted greatly by the changes and the mitigation proposed.

Northland is proud of the proposal as a whole, and as such is comfortable in identifying these items to which it cannot agree.

Very truly yours,

Alan J. Schlesinger

AJS/
cc: City Council
Mayor Ruthanne Fuller
Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development
Jennifer Caira, Chief Planner

FORM+PLACE
Architecture + Planning + Urban Design

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 11 September 2019

TO: Jen Caira, Chief Planner
City of Newton Planning & Development Department
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

FROM: Michael A. Wang, AIA, LEED AP BD+C
Form + Place, Inc.

RE: **City of Newton Design Guidelines - prepared for the Northland Newton Development**

This memorandum is intended to provide an overview of the process undertaken over the past six months to develop Design Guidelines for the City of Newton in order to facilitate the review of future Building Permit submissions by Northland Investment Corporation [Northland] during their anticipated phased execution of the Northland Newton Development. It will also provide a brief overview of how the Design Guidelines are structured and how they are intended to be utilized.

PROCESS / GUIDELINES EVOLUTION

In May of 2019, Northland prepared a document entitled "Northland Newton Development Design Guidelines", which was submitted for consideration by the Newton City Council as part of Northland's Special Permit Application. This booklet was generated by Northland's design team in collaboration with Planning & Development Department staff and the City's Urban Design Peer Reviewer, Form + Place, Inc., a Newton-based architecture and planning firm.

The May 2019 Design Guidelines book was based on an outline framework generated by Form + Place and was intended to comprehensively address the full range of architecture and urban design issues typically encountered in large-scale mixed-use developments. Given the neighborhood scale of the proposed project, the framework was structured into three categories – Neighborhood Design, Site Design and Building Design – and included general City goals statements for each of the key design criteria.

This Guidelines document, prepared and presented to the Newton City Council in May by the Northland team, included diagrams and illustrations representing the proponent's intended design approach to the various Guidelines categories. Council feedback, conveyed through Planning & Development Department staff, suggested that rather than utilizing a document generated by the proponent, the City should generate its own set of Design Guidelines to be adopted as part of the Site Plan approvals process. This tool would then be utilized by the City during subsequent Building Permit applications to determine whether Northland's design details were "consistent" with their approved Site Plan.

Over the past three months, Form + Place has been working closely with Planning & Development Department staff to generate a more extensive Design Guideline tool that reflects the City's goals and aspirations. In formulating the refined Design Guidelines document, Form + Place drew upon its experience in creating similar guidelines, as well as the crafting of hybrid form-based codes, in communities throughout the northeast corridor.

In addition, considerable research was done to analyze both public sector-generated guidelines as well as design criteria formulated in support of large-scale private developments, such as the Assembly Row PUD.

In conjunction with the Design Guidelines, an Evaluation Template was created to help structure the proponent's responses to the Guidelines and, subsequently, facilitate the City's review process.

GUIDELINES STRUCTURE

The refined Design Guidelines document, as currently constituted, continues to address the full range of architecture and urban design issues found at three different scales of development – now referred to as District Design, Block Design and Building Design. It is worth noting that, as opposed to Design Standards, which are a more prescriptive tool that define specific quantifiable criteria, Design Guidelines are intended to describe design intent and recommend an expected level of design quality. As such, these Guidelines strive to ensure that the Northland development is executed in a way that is not only consistent with the project's Site Plan approval but, reinforces the City's goals as defined in the Comprehensive Plan and the Needham Street Area Vision Plan.

The District Design section of the Guidelines is intended to provide a framework for evaluating larger scale criteria meriting consideration with a development the size of Northland Newton. These include defining the project's connectivity with its surrounding context and ensuring that it has an overall development pattern that includes quality streetscapes and a thoughtfully integrated open space network. While many of these criteria will be established through the Site Plan approval process, this section provides criteria for evaluating the acceptability of subtle future variations in approach as well as the execution of design details that will be consistent in reinforcing the overall design intent.

The Block Design section focuses in a little further to help define expectations for the quality of individual blocks within the development. At this level, the Guidelines illustrate how the structure of a City block, including the critical ground floor relationship between buildings and the street, is essential to creating a vibrant public realm. Emphasis is placed on the articulation of pedestrian environments by providing examples of design strategies and elements that facilitate the successful integration of usable open space. Both functional and aesthetic concerns are addressed.

At the Building Design level, the Guidelines describe a range of architectural design tools, including massing elements, rhythm, transparency and materials, that can help create aesthetically pleasing environments by rendering buildings with appropriate scale, proportions and level of articulation. It is worth noting that these guidelines do not prescribe a particular architectural style or methodology for achieving quality design but rather set general expectations for a high level of design.

There are certain aspects of architecture and urban design that span all these scales and, as such, you will see topics like sustainable design purposefully integrated at each level of the Design Guidelines document.

UTILIZING THE GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines document includes an Evaluation Template that is broken down into sections that align directly with the structure of the Guidelines. In each subcategory within the three main sections – District Design, Block Design and Building Design – the proponent is asked to provide a brief narrative, and/or reference to documents in their Building Permit application package, to explain how their proposed detailed design is

consistent with the original vision approved during the Site Plan process. In addition, the proponent can provide a general statement at the beginning of each section clarifying their overall approach and design intent.

These Design Guidelines narratives, together with other referenced Building Permit application documents, will be reviewed by Planning & Development Department staff, who will provide an opinion as to whether the submission is “consistent” or “not consistent.” Following staff review, which may include Peer Review input, the proponent’s responses and staff comments will be forwarded to the City of Newton’s Urban Design Commission [UDC] for their “consistency” review. And following the UDC’s input, the Land Use Committee of the City Council will perform a similar “consistency” review. The compiled recommendations from this series of reviews will then be passed on to the Commissioner of Inspectional Services, who will make a determination regarding the issuance of a Building Permit[s] for the phased scope of work to be executed.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by the City of Newton, MA

September 2019

NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPMENT
DESIGN GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

This Design Guideline document was created by the City of Newton Planning & Development Department to provide a framework for the incremental execution of the Northland Newton development. Crafted in collaboration with the City's Urban Design On-Call consultant, Form + Place, Inc., the proponent Northland Investment Corporation and the proponent's design team, these guidelines were adopted by the Newton City Council during the Special Permit approvals process. This document is intended to be a tool for both the proponent, providing a degree of design flexibility to respond to evolving development realities, and the City, ensuring that the realized project matches expectations set forth in the master plan.

These Design Guidelines were formulated to embody the goals and objectives of the Needham Street Area Vision Plan, which was adopted in August of 2018. This community-driven Vision Plan provides recommended implementation strategies for development along the Needham Street corridor and in surrounding neighborhoods, identifying environmental, transportation, land use and design aspirations.

The guidelines are organized into three distinct categories - district design, block design and building design - to allow for careful consideration of the proposed development at a variety of scales. Guidelines at the district level are intended to evaluate the implementation of the project holistically, taking into consideration the overall quality of the public realm and the projects connectivity to the surrounding context. Block design and Building design criteria are intended to allow the City to take a more detailed look at the place-making and architectural qualities of the proposed development and consider its merits.

PROCESS

Following Special Permit approval, and at each phase of implementation of the master plan, the proponent will be required to file a building permit application. In each instance, the proponent will fill out the Design Guideline Evaluation Template, explaining how the proposed development responds to the recommended design criteria and is consistent with the approved Special Permit application. In addition to the written responses to the Design Guidelines, the proponent can reference site and architectural drawings required in the Building Permit application to illustrate the design intent.

The City will then undertake a consistency determination process, which will include a review and recommendation by Planning & Development Department staff and/or their Peer Review consultants. The application will then be reviewed by the Newton Urban Design Commission, followed by the Land Use Committee of the City Council, each providing input as to the consistency of the submittal, before final consideration for approval by the Commissioner of the Newton Inspectional Services Department.

NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN GUIDELINES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Prepared by:
CITY OF NEWTON STAFF:

BARNEY HEATH
Director of Planning & Development

JENNIFER CAIRA
Chief Planner

JAMES FREAS
Deputy Director of Planning & Development

MICHAEL GLEBA
Senior Planner

SHUBEE SIKKA
Urban Designer

ON-CALL URBAN DESIGN CONSULTANT:

FORM + PLACE

MICHAEL A. WANG, AIA, LEED AP
Principal

JOHN M. RUFO, AIA
Principal

MEAGHAN MARKIEWICZ
Project Designer

In collaboration with:
NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPER:

Northland
INVESTMENT CORPORATION

DEVELOPER'S CONSULTANT TEAM:
Stantec Urban Places, CUBE3 Studios, SOM

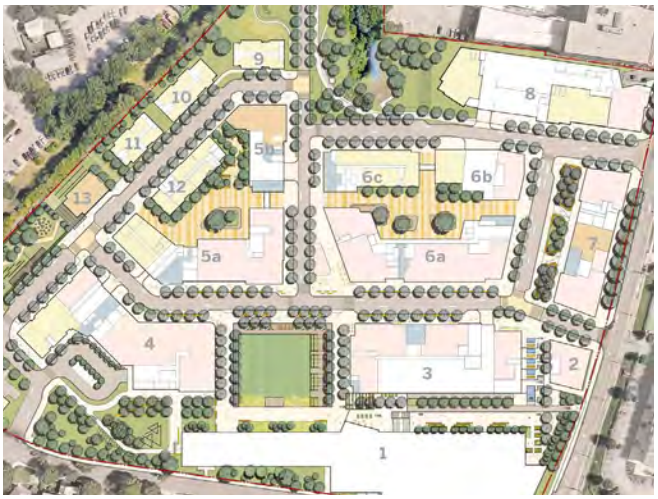
REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

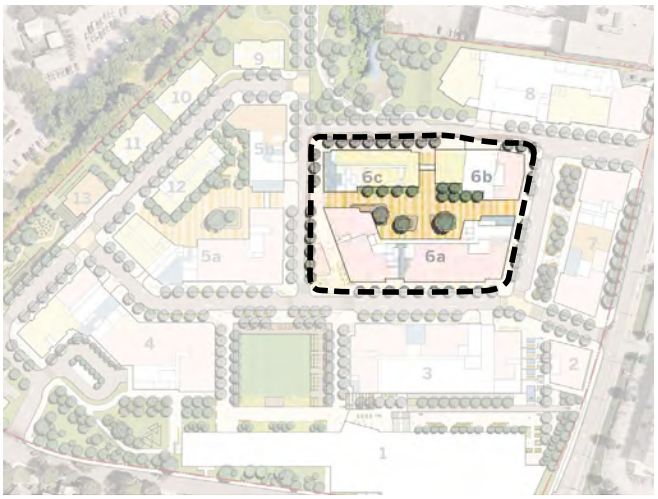
CITY OF NEWTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN [2007]
http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/53304

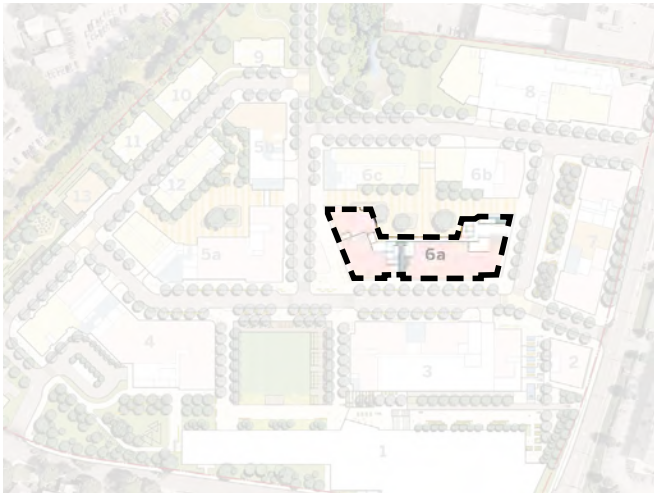
NEEDHAM STREET AREA VISION PLAN [2018]
http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/91211

NEWTON CITY ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 30: ZONING ORDINANCE [Updated 2019]
http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/69436

TABLE OF CONTENTS







DISTRICT DESIGN

BLOCK DESIGN

BUILDING DESIGN

DISTRICT DESIGN

These District Design Guidelines are intended to promote development that is consistent with the City's goals, as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and the Needham Street Area Vision Plan. Large-scale projects should utilize consistent development patterns that facilitate respectful visual and physical connections to surrounding neighborhoods. Place-making strategies that result in compact, walkable environments focus on the purposeful design of built form and its role in defining the public realm. Integrating usable open space and a hierarchy of street typologies will help achieve the goal to create a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. Sustainable community development should minimize environmental impacts by incorporating efficient building and infrastructure systems and preserving existing natural resources.

1 | CONNECTIVITY TO SURROUNDING CONTEXT
- A. Compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan and the Needham Street Area Vision Plan
- B. Vehicular Connectivity
- C. Transit Connectivity
- D. Open Space Network: Pedestrian and Bike Connectivity
- E. Visual Connectivity
- F. Cultural / Historical Connectivity

2 | BLOCK STRUCTURE
- A. Consistency of Development Pattern
- B. Variation in Block Structure
- C. Terminating Views and Framing Views
- D. Block Massing

3 | STREET DESIGN
- A. Reinforce a Hierarchy of Streets within a Neighborhood
- B. Relationship of Buildings to Street Types

4 | PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN
- A. Place-making Goals: Function and Character of Open Space
- B. Quality of Amenities
- C. Integration of Public Art [local, historic]
- D. ADA compatibility
- E. Programming

5 | SIGNAGE
- A. Consistency
- B. Integration
- C. Aesthetics

6 | SUSTAINABILITY NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN [LEED ND]
- A. Smart Location and Linkage
- B. Neighborhood Pattern and Design
- C. Green Infrastructure and Buildings

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 1
CONNECTIVITY TO SURROUNDING CONTEXT

GOAL | District-scaled developments should focus on addressing transitions to their abutting contexts – which can be diverse in nature – knitting together with existing fabric in ways that are sensitive to surrounding communities.

A. COMPATIBILITY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND THE NEEDHAM STREET AREA VISION PLAN

A.01| Reinforcing the Vision Plan

The Vision Plan reinforces the goals outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan, placing emphasis on the most pertinent issues related to land use, transportation and environmental issues, as well as placemaking and building design. Larger developments should play a significant role in helping to realize area goals by striving to incorporate the key tenets of the Vision Plan.

B. VEHICULAR CONNECTIVITY

B.01| Connecting to Existing Street Networks

Larger developments should establish logical connections to existing area street networks in such a way as to promote compatibility with the surrounding context. This may include establishing a hierarchy of access points for various vehicle types.

B.02| Varied Street Types

The purposeful layout of different street types within a district-scaled development can help shape vehicular circulation patterns and promote safer, more aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environments. This should include locating access points to parking and service close to vehicular site entries and incorporating wayfinding signage.

B.03| Street Design

Street design should support areas of higher volume and lower volume vehicular flow by utilizing design tools such as raised intersections and sidewalk bulb-outs in primary pedestrian circulation areas.

C. TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY

C.01| Transit Promoting Vibrancy

Transit interfaces should be carefully integrated into the overall district design to promote vibrant pedestrian environments and support local area businesses through their synergistic placement.

C.02| Public Transit Integration

Limiting public transit to certain streets can create safer and more pleasant pedestrian and bike environments.

Public realm connections and open space networks

Utilize a hierarchy of streets and open spaces

Paved raised intersections promote pedestrian safety

Transit nodes can help create vibrant streetscapes

C.03| Multi-model Transfer Locations

Street sections that incorporate new multi-modal transfer locations should be designed to accommodate the anticipated flow of pedestrians and provide room to adequately integrate urban furniture and amenities.

C.04| Minimize Adverse Impacts

Proposed transportation enhancements should minimize adverse impacts on abutting neighborhoods by considering the routes, timing and drop-off points for shuttles to nearby transit nodes.

D. OPEN SPACE NETWORK: PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIVITY

D.01| Connect to Existing Networks

Pedestrian and bicycle environments should be designed to promote connectivity with existing networks in abutting neighborhoods.

Connect to existing bike/pedestrian networks

D.02| Compatible Streetscapes

New streetscapes should incorporate design elements compatible with the surrounding context including paving, landscaping, lighting and urban furniture. In certain instances, branding a new neighborhood with a specific set of design elements can be appropriate.

Integrating paving, urban furniture and landscaping

D.03| Wayfinding Signage

Providing wayfinding signage at important nodes – including identifying bicycle storage facilities and public parking garages - is encouraged.

E. VISUAL CONNECTIVITY

E.01| Transition Zones

The development should incorporate transition zones along its "edges" that help mediate scale and provide visual continuity to existing areas. In addition to adjustments in height and bulk, this can also involve the finer-grain use of compatible materials and methods of architectural articulation.

Using mixed-use to transition from commercial centers

E.02| Enhance Key Visual Corridors

Neighborhood edge design should also strive to preserve and enhance key visual corridors within the existing community, whether views of architectural monuments, site lines to open space or the clarity of important gateways.

F. CULTURAL / HISTORICAL CONNECTIVITY

F.01| Celebrate the Cultural Context

Celebrate the cultural and historical context of the development site and surrounding areas.

F.02| Historic Mill Building

Respect and enhance views of the historic Mill Building.

F.03| Palimpsest

Record the history of the site through the preservation of buildings, artifacts and/or development patterns whenever feasible. Embrace the educational opportunities inherent in documenting the layers of history of "place."

Preserve and record the culture and history of the site

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 2

BLOCK STRUCTURE

GOAL | The block structure of the development should promote a thoughtfully scaled, walkable public realm where quality streetscapes and diverse open spaces are reinforced by street patterns, as well as building siting and design.

A. CONSISTENCY OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

A.01| Pedestrian Friendly Blocks

The scale and geometry of blocks within the development should be designed to promote a vibrant pedestrian experience and be compatible with surrounding development patterns. "Super blocks" should be avoided by introducing a secondary network of streets - such as back alleys - and by incorporating through-block pedestrian connections in larger blocks.

A.01| Blocks with Multiple Buildings

Blocks consisting of multiple buildings are encouraged. Finding a balance between buildings that have individual [yet compatible] architectural expression and elements that provide continuity [cornices, etc.] is desirable.

Multiple buildings creating a consistent streetscape

B. VARIATION IN BLOCK STRUCTURE

B.01| Influence of Existing Open Space

Variation in block structure caused by integrating existing open space networks, waterways or topography can create interesting hierarchical moments.

B.02| Focal Points can Offer Relief

Carefully planning the location of new green spaces, plazas and/or iconic buildings [such as a pavilion building] can provide needed relief from an overly consistent development pattern.

Prominent buildings relating to open space

C. TERMINATING VIEWS AND FRAMING VIEWS

C.01| Hierarchy in Design

A higher level of architectural design should be incorporated into buildings that terminate important or signature views, or will have a prominent visual location in the community.

C.02| Buildings as Gateways

Buildings that help frame views, or act as a "gateway" to a neighborhood, should be appropriately designed to introduce their larger context.

Designing transitions through gateway buildings

D. BLOCK MASSING

D.01| Transition Areas

Variation in the overall massing [bulk] of blocks within a large development and/or district is desirable when utilized to transition to abutting neighborhoods or open spaces, especially where it is important to mitigate adverse impacts such as shadows.

D.02| Block and Street Design Coordination

Variation in the massing and height of individual buildings within a block is encouraged, provided that the overall block expression is compatible with the design of the streets and/or open spaces that they are helping to define.

Varied building facades can create a unified streetscape

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 3
STREET DESIGN

GOAL | Incorporating a clear hierarchy of streets into a neighborhood development will inform the design of street sections and, thus, guide the safe accommodation of vehicles, give priority to pedestrians and bikers, and shape the relationship of buildings to streetscapes.

A. REINFORCE A HIERARCHY OF STREETS WITHIN A NEIGHBORHOOD

A.01| Complete Streets

Identify primary, secondary and tertiary streets that each embrace the design tenets of "Complete Streets" and safely accommodate all desired forms of circulation.

A.02| Street Section Design

Street sections should incorporate dimensional standards that promote the intended functionality and placemaking character of vehicular and pedestrian environments. A typical street section should consider the accommodation of pedestrian circulation zones, amenity / landscape zones, parking lanes and travel lanes.

A.03| Mixed-use Streets

Street sections should reflect the uses, or mix of uses, that front onto them by defining an appropriate building / sidewalk interface, which may vary at building entry points.

B. RELATIONSHIP OF BUILDINGS TO STREET TYPES

B.01| Building Entry Locations

Primary building entries should be placed to enhance important pedestrian environments and should occur at a frequency compatible with the use contained within.

B.02| Ground Floor Transparency

Ground floor façade articulation and a high degree of storefront transparency reinforces a vibrant pedestrian environment.

B.03| Minimize Vehicular Impacts

Service and parking access should be located to minimize the impacts of vehicular movements on streets that are more pedestrian focused.

Street sections accommodate amenities in many ways

Landscaping, dining and storefront circulation zones

Ground floor transparency creates a vibrant street

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 4

PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN

GOAL | Neighborhood developments should strive to incorporate a diverse range – both in scale and function - of publicly accessible open spaces for active and passive use.

A. PLACEMAKING GOALS: FUNCTION AND CHARACTER OF OPEN SPACE

A.01| Programmable Civic Space

Primary civic spaces should have the flexibility to accommodate a wide range of public gathering activities, ranging from programmed events to markets.

A.02| Flexible Recreational Spaces

Recreational spaces should consider the accommodation of both structured and unstructured activities as an amenity for the community. Recreational areas can assist with stormwater management goals.

A.03| Contemplative Spaces

Contemplative spaces are generally considered for more passive uses and can be logical places to incorporate public art, historic relics or other educational amenities.

A.04| Restored Natural Environments

Restored natural environments are often marvelous places to stroll and bike and can help meet sustainable goals for a project / neighborhood.

B. QUALITY OF AMENITIES

B.01| Integrate Amenities

As with streetscape design, the thoughtful integration of quality amenities – urban furniture, equipment, water features, etc. – as well as landscaping and hardscape into open space can greatly enhance its enjoyment.

C. INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC ART [LOCAL, HISTORIC]

C.01| Create Identity with Public Art

The strategic placement of public art should enhance the pedestrian experience, encourage the use of a public space and give it an identity.

C.02| Local Artists

Integrating local artists can strengthen ties to an existing community.

C.03| Historic Relics

The display of historic relics from the site and local areas can provide an added educational benefit.

C.04| Contextual Public Art

Public art should be complementary to its context through devices such as its meaning, style and/or materiality.

Integrate places for public gathering

Flexible space with quality design and amenities

Giving a place identity through public art

D. ADA COMPATIBILITY

D.01| Accessible Open Space

All places of public accommodation must be accessible to persons with disabilities.

E. PROGRAMMING

E.01| Programmed Public Space

The programming of public open space should be considered early in the design process and is essential to maintaining its meaningful long-term use.

The programming of public space can shape its design

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 5
SIGNAGE

GOAL | Signage, at the District Design level, is critical for both wayfinding and branding of place and, as such, should be integrally designed to reinforce the quality of the built environment and the public realm.

A. CONSISTENCY

A.01| Sign Family

Establish a Sign Family that promotes consistency in design should be a primary consideration across the full spectrum of district / development-level signage, whether building-mounted or free-standing, such as pylons, monuments, kiosks, etc. [Note: see building design section for retail/tenant signage]

B. INTEGRATION

B.01| Placement and Compatibility

Whether branding a district or providing wayfinding, the placement, proportions and scale of signage and environmental graphics should be designed to be compatible with the public realm and/or building architecture that it references.

C. AESTHETICS

C.01| High Quality Materials

Signs should be fabricated out of high-quality materials that are both durable and consistent with landscaping features and/or building materials.

C.02| Appropriate Sign Illumination

The illumination of district level signage should complement site and building lighting goals.

Wayfinding signage integrated into the public realm

Graphic consistency throughout the sign family

District signage integrated into building architecture

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 6

SUSTAINABILITY NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN [LEED ND]

GOAL | Low impact development that includes restored and/or new open space, incorporates green infrastructure and promotes climate resiliency, is desirable.

A. SMART LOCATION AND LINKAGE

A.01| Minimize Environmental Impacts

Minimize the adverse environmental impacts of new development and avoid greenfield development.

A.02| Compact Development

Minimize sprawl by developing in infill locations or on previously developed sites; Provide access to transit.

B. NEIGHBORHOOD PATTERN AND DESIGN

B.01| Encourage Walkability

Design a block structure that promotes compact, walkable, mixed-use development and connects coherently to the existing, adjacent community.

B.01| Access to Usable Public Space

Create pedestrian-first environments that provide access to usable public space.

C. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDINGS

C.01| Reduce Construction and Operation Impacts

Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of the construction and operation of buildings and neighborhood infrastructure.

C.02| Energy Efficiency

Utilize energy efficiency strategies for reducing pollution and green-house gas emissions.

C.03| Preserve Natural Resources

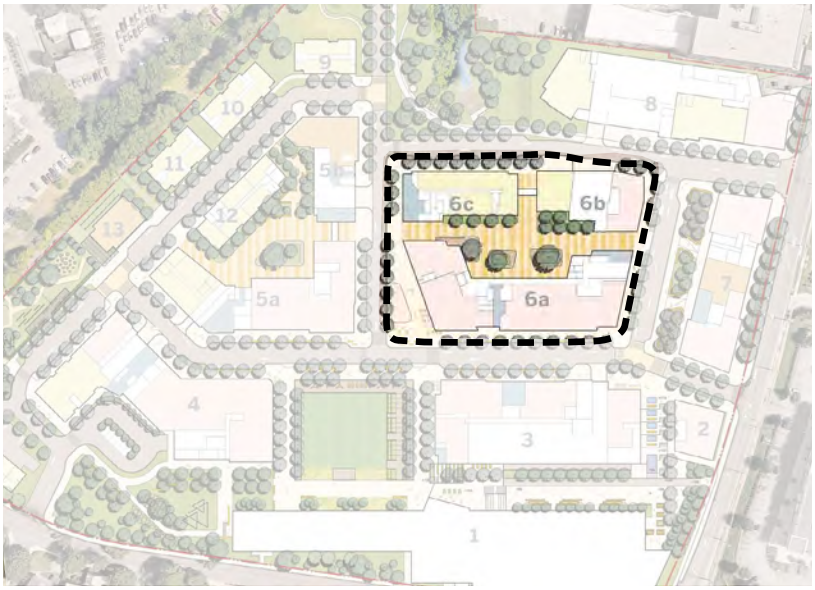
Preserve existing natural resources and minimize impacts to natural hydrology.

C.04| Avoid Heat Islands

Minimize heat island effect by mitigating large paved areas, such as surface parking lots.

Parking below grade allows for more usable open space

Creative ways to reduce heat island effect



BLOCK DESIGN

These Site Design guidelines are intended to focus on the development of individual blocks. Foremost, it is critical that buildings are sited in such a way as to purposefully reinforce adjacent desirable development patterns. While each context has a unique set of variables, new buildings should consider appropriate alignment with abutters as they seek to promote continuity of the streetscape environment and help to define the public realm on which they front. The integration of public open space can happen at many different scales, and through-block connections [pedestrian mews], pocket parks and back alleys all play important roles in implementing a meaningful place-making strategy. A highly articulated public realm should include quality design elements, ranging from urban furniture and lighting to landscaping and paving. The location of, and access to, parking and service areas should be considered carefully to minimize visual impacts on pedestrian environments and abutters. Sustainable site design practices should be integrated in support of Newton's environmental goals.

1 | BUILDING / STREET RELATIONSHIP

- A. Programming / Use
- B. Continuity of Street Wall
- C. Mid-block Pedestrian Connections
- D. Hierarchical Moments [increased visual interest]

2 | OPEN SPACE INTEGRATION

- A. Variation of Sidewalk Widths
- B. Courtyards / Pocket parks
- C. Linear Parks, Alleyways and Through-block connectors

3 | STREETSCAPE / OPEN SPACE DESIGN ELEMENTS

- A. Urban Furniture
- B. Walls and Fences
- C. Landscaping and Street Trees
- D. Lighting
- E. Paving

4 | PARKING AND SERVICE

- A. Location and Access
- B. Screening and Landscaping

5 | SUSTAINABLE SITE DESIGN

- A. Construction Activity Pollution Prevention
- B. Site Assessment and Development: Protect / Restore habitat
- C. Open space
- D. Rainwater Management / Heat Island Reduction / Light Pollution Reduction

BLOCK DESIGN NO. I

BUILDING / STREET RELATIONSHIP

GOAL | The placemaking qualities of individual blocks starts with the siting of a building, its relationship to adjacent buildings, how its ground level shapes the pedestrian experience and by the mix of uses continued within it.

A. PROGRAMMING / USE

A.01| Ground Floor Uses

The programming of ground floor spaces within buildings should directly reinforce the street typology that they are fronting on, and provide purposeful continuity from, or transition to, adjacent blocks. Cross synergies on double-loaded streets can further embellish a vibrant pedestrian environment, especially in hierarchically important retail settings.

B. CONTINUITY OF STREET WALL

B.01| Well-defined Pedestrian Experience

Mixed-use or commercial buildings located in walkable large-scale developments should be sited to provide a well-defined pedestrian streetscape experience by generally having aligned facades with other buildings on a block.

B.02| Ground Level Facades

Depending on the width of streets and the relative height of buildings, upper levels of facades may step back to provide relief, but ground level facades should maintain a high level of consistency.

B.03| Building Alignment

Some variation in building alignment is encouraged to accommodate outdoor dining, areas for street activities and entry / drop-off.

B.04| Public-Private Transition Zones

On residentially focused streets, a well-defined zone of landscaping may be integrated between the sidewalk and the building to provide a public-private transition zone and a degree of privacy. Though set back, the alignment of building facades is still desirable.

C. MID-BLOCK PEDESTRIAN CONNECTORS

C.01| Pedestrian Mews

Pedestrian mews are encouraged to break down the scale of larger blocks and provide opportunities for connections to areas behind buildings.

C.02| Wrapping Storefronts

Wrapping the corners of pedestrian mews with transparent storefronts helps activate these secondary spaces.

Continuity of storefronts at the ground level

Variation in sidewalk width to accommodate dining

Mews add human scale to the pedestrian experience

D. HIERARCHICAL MOMENTS [INCREASED VISUAL INTEREST]:

D.01| Primary Building Entries

Primary building entries provide an opportunity to break the rhythm of a façade and introduce a forecourt, porte cochere or other variation that provides a hierarchical moment to tie together building and street.

D.02| Scale Transitions at Corners

Buildings that address a block corner play a unique role in defining a transition from one streetscape to another, each of which may have an entirely different sense of scale. Building corners are often seen from longer distances and different angles and, as such, may incorporate recessed areas or tower elements that can frame an urban gateway.

Building corners can be key transition moments

BLOCK DESIGN NO. 2

OPEN SPACE INTEGRATION

GOAL | While continuity of street wall can be critical to a well-defined block, the integration of open space at a variety of scales offers opportunities for unique environments and the accommodation of public amenities.

A. VARIATION OF SIDEWALK WIDTHS

A.01| Sidewalk Design

In mixed-use or commercial settings, the purposeful widening of sidewalks to accommodate outdoor dining, merchandising or other street activities can create a vibrant pedestrian environment. Change of paving materials can often help define clear zones for activities and circulation.

A.02| Landscaping Zones

The widening of sidewalks to include zones of landscaping can offer buffering from vehicular activity and provide protected areas for contemplation.

Well-articulated sidewalk zones

B. COURTYARDS / POCKET PARKS

B.01| Gathering Spaces

Courtyards and pocket parks are often the most enjoyable spaces found in urban / village centers as they can offer relief from a busy streetscape. These spaces can be ideal locations for intimate gatherings or outdoor dining.

B.02| Unique Pocket Park Design

Pocket Parks can accommodate water features, unique landscaping, public art and other amenities.

B.03| Human Scale Focus

Human scale is a key ingredient for creating an enjoyable pocket park space.

Pocket parks can offer a unique experience

C. LINEAR PARKS, ALLEYWAYS AND THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTORS

C.01| Secondary Building Frontages

In more urban settings, the connected back yards or alleys behind buildings can be another opportunity to design usable open space and create secondary, semi-public interfaces with buildings.

C.02| Designing Back Alleys

While the areas behind buildings often need to accommodate surface parking or parking garage access, loading and trash pick-up, the clustering of these functions and the thoughtful use of landscaping, screening and paving can make these spaces pleasant to walk through and look out onto.

Alleyways can be both functional and lively places

BLOCK DESIGN NO. 3

STREETSCAPE / OPEN SPACE DESIGN ELEMENTS

GOAL | An engaging public realm should offer a diverse range of highly articulated and well-appointed pedestrian environments that are functional in all seasons.

A. URBAN FURNITURE

A.01| Contextually Appropriate Style

Urban furniture should be consistent with the language and materials of the surrounding architecture and public realm.

A.02| Movable and Fixed

While built-in furniture [large benches, terraced seating] can be designed to compliment placemaking goals, movable furniture [tables and chairs, benches, lounge chairs] provide a degree of flexibility for multi-purpose spaces.

A.03| Durable Materials

Choose materials that are durable, preferably locally-sourced, four-season and weather predictably.

Combine movable and fixed furniture for flexibility

B. WALLS AND FENCES

B.01| Consistent with Context

Walls and fences should be contextually consistent with the language and materials of the surrounding architecture and public realm.

B.02| Embellish with Landscaping

Walls and fences located to provide screening or enclosure – for areas such as surface parking, mechanical equipment, trash/recycling - should be embellished with landscaping on the public side where possible.

B.03| Quality Materials

Use quality materials that are durable – avoid vinyl and chain link fences.

Site walls can be used to highlight areas or screen

C. LANDSCAPING AND STREET TREES

C.01| Indigenous Species

Use indigenous species that provide seasonal coverage and variation.

C.02| Consistent with Surrounding Context

Choose plant materials that provide continuity and consistency with the surrounding context.

C.03| Street Tree Design

Street trees provide a myriad of health and social benefits, non the least of which is reducing heat island effect in village and urban contexts. Street trees should be spaced based on their mature canopy size, generally ranging from 25'-50' on center.

C.04| Sustainable Design Features

Incorporate sustainable design features, such as stormwater management, into landscaped areas where possible.

Plantings as an integral part of placemaking

Trees lining a mixed-use street

D. LIGHTING

D.01| Activate the Ground Level

Site lighting enhances the public realm by activating the ground level. Lighting can be integrally designed into landscaped areas, site walls, bollards, etc. to provide visual interest and help highlight pedestrian walkways and gathering areas.

D.02| Coordinate Site and Building Lighting

Site lighting should be designed to compliment building mounted lighting, and should be focused adequately to minimize negative impacts on users and abutters.

Site and building lighting activating the ground plane

E. PAVING

E.01| Quality materials

High quality specialty paving can play an important role in creating a human-scaled environment, defining zones for circulation and creating focal points for activities and is, therefore, especially important to integrate into hierarchically significant pedestrian environments.

E.02| Design for All Seasons

Paving materials and installation should consider the impacts of freeze-thaw cycles and snow removal.

E.03| Consider Modular Systems

Modular systems offer the flexibility of easy maintenance and replacement, helping to preserve the original aesthetic over time.

Specialty paving in pedestrian environments

BLOCK DESIGN NO. 4

PARKING AND SERVICE

GOAL | Parking and service areas should be visually unobtrusive and designed to be accessed from specific locations that minimize impacts on key pedestrian environments and abutters.

A. LOCATION AND ACCESS

A.01| On-Street Parking

On-street parking in areas with adequately designed street sections is desirable.

A.02| Architectural Treatments / Liners

Above-grade structured parking and service areas should be sited and designed to minimize visual and functional impacts on pedestrian environments. Parking structures located behind buildings are preferable. When fronting directly on primary pedestrian streets, parking structures should incorporate significant architectural façade treatments and include active uses at the ground level.

A.03| Minimize Pedestrian Impacts

Clustering parking and service areas allows for shared access points, minimizing vehicular crossings of pedestrian environments. Access points should be located on hierarchically less important pedestrian streets and away from primary building entries, when possible.

A.04| Sidewalk Continuity

Where curb cuts are needed, they should be kept to the minimum functional width and utilize small radii.

B. SCREENING AND LANDSCAPING

B.01| Visual Buffers

The perimeters of surface parking lots and service areas should incorporate visual buffers, such as fences, walls and landscape elements to provide separation from pedestrian environments and abutters.

B.02| Landscaped Parking Areas

Surface parking lots should integrate internal landscaping islands and trees to help provide an environment for abutters to look out on and to reduce heat island effect.

On-street parking creates safer pedestrian environments

Artist studios / retail space line first floor garage bays

Landscaping buffers outdoor dining from parking area

BLOCK DESIGN NO. 5

SUSTAINABLE SITE DESIGN

GOAL | Site design should employ accepted sustainable site practices consistent with achieving a LEED certifiable status.

A. CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY POLLUTION PREVENTION

A.01| Construction Containment

Reduce pollution from construction activities by controlling soil erosion, waterway sedimentation and airborne dust

A.02| Control Plan

Implement a soil erosion and sedimentation control plan.

B. SITE ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: PROTECT / RESTORE HABITAT

B.01| Promote Natural Habitat

Evaluate site design options for promoting natural habitat and minimizing impacts to human health

B.02| Conserve and Restore

Conserve natural areas and restore damaged areas, such as daylighting South Meadow Brook

C. OPEN SPACE

C.01| Provide Usable Outdoor Space

Provide outdoor space for active and passive use that is physically accessible.

D. RAINWATER MANAGEMENT / HEAT ISLAND REDUCTION / LIGHT POLLUTION REDUCTION

D.01| Rainwater Management

Manage on-site runoff and improve water quality by respecting the natural hydrology of the site.

D.02| Reduce Heat Islands

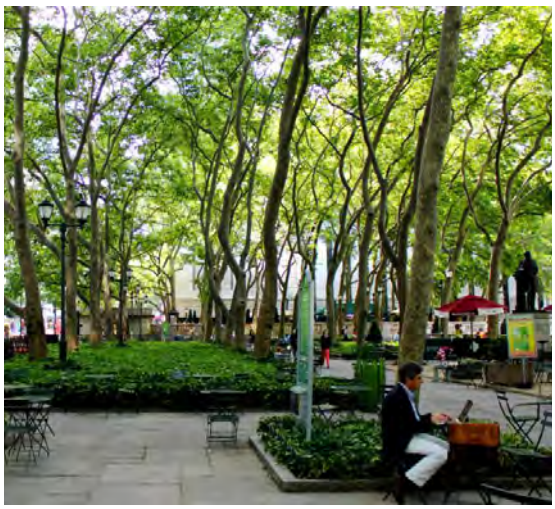
Utilize sustainable site development strategies that reduce heat island effect.

D.03| Minimize Light Pollution

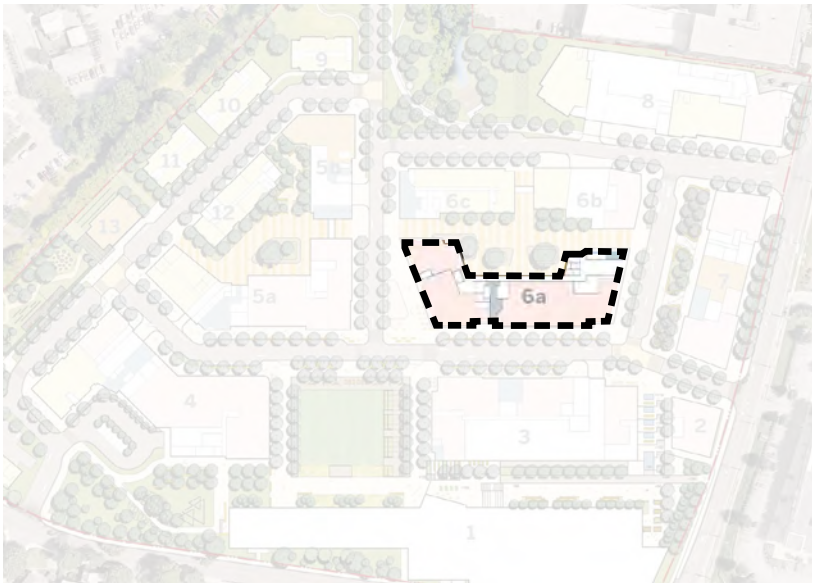
Minimize the light-polluting impacts of development by reducing up-lighting and light trespass.

Restoring natural habitat for bioretention

Green Streets help with rainwater management



Reducing heat island effect



BUILDING DESIGN

These Building Design guidelines have been developed to ensure that the architectural character of new construction, as well as adaptively reused buildings preserves and enhances the land use and design goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to larger scale issues that define how buildings should relate to their surrounding community context, these guidelines are intended to describe design parameters for how buildings contribute to creating highly articulated, human-scaled environments. At the immediate site context level, it is the ground floor interface that is often most critical for creating vibrant streetscapes. As such, these guidelines offer both recommendations for overall façade organization and articulation as well as specific ground floor design strategies that include transparent storefronts, high quality materials and thoughtfully integrated signage and lighting. Buildings should also strive to utilize best building practices and incorporate the tenets of green design so as to minimize adverse impacts on the environment.

1 | OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER
- A. Compatibility with surrounding context
- B. Holistic approach within a development

2 | BUILDING HEIGHT / MASSING
- A. Height
- B. Massing
- C. Consistency of the Base

3 | FAÇADE ARTICULATION
- A. Creating an Understandable Framework
- B. Hierarchy of Articulation
- C. Architectural Elements
- D. Fenestration

4 | GROUND LEVEL DESIGN
- A. Façade depth
- B. Transparency
- C. Continuity
- D. Entries
- E. Signage

5 | ROOFSCAPE DESIGN
- A. Roof Forms
- B. Visual Impacts
- C. Sustainable Design

6 | MATERIALS
- A. Visually Compatible with Context
- B. High Quality, Durable, Genuine
- C. Green

7 | BUILDING EXTERIOR LIGHTING
- A. Accentuate Architectural Expression
- B. Enhance Surrounding Public Realm
- C. Light Pollution

8 | SUSTAINABLE DESIGN : GREEN BUILDINGS
- A. Water Efficiency
- B. Energy and Atmosphere
- C. Materials and Resources
- D. Indoor Environmental Quality
- E. Innovation in Design
- F. Regional Priority

BUILDING DESIGN NO. I
OVERALL ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

GOAL | The architectural character of a building should be judged holistically for its relatedness to its surrounding context, not purely by its style or vernacular.

A. COMPATIBILITY WITH SURROUNDING CONTEXT

A.01| Traditional Contexts

In neighborhoods with more traditional / historic architectural character, new construction and adaptive reuse projects should have a quality of design that is compatible with existing buildings of architectural merit. Innovative and current design approaches are acceptable as well, provided that they are respectful of their context through the use of architectural devices such as appropriately scaled massing, façade articulation and complimentary materials.

A.02| Evolving Contexts

In transitioning contexts, innovative and current design may be more appropriate, especially if building design helps achieve an active, human-scaled environment.

A.03| Addressing Multiple Contexts

A larger development can abut a range of surrounding contexts with varying architectural character and uses and, in these instances, the articulation of each frontage should strive to be compatible with the area that it adjoins.

B. HOLISTIC APPROACH WITHIN A DEVELOPMENT

B.01| Consistency in Design

Buildings within a larger development should have a reasonable consistency in their design approach. This may be achieved by making a connected contribution to defining a shared streetscape, for example, or through using compatible materials and detailing.

B.02| Purposeful Variation

Purposeful variation in design, such as integrating a signature building in a prominent location, can be appropriate, provided that its relationship to immediately adjacent buildings and the surrounding public realm is thoughtful.

Innovative design in a traditional context

Current design in an evolving context

Transitioning to a residentially-scaled context

A signature building in a prominent location

BUILDING DESIGN NO. 2
BUILDING HEIGHT / MASSING

GOAL | The overall height and bulk of a building, or collection of buildings, should be appropriately scaled for the public realm that it is helping to define, and make a meaningful contribution towards activating its immediate context.

A. HEIGHT

A.01| Context Appropriate Height
Concentrate areas of greater height where contextually appropriate. This may be adjacent to large open spaces, in areas with specific topographic characteristics, or to provide a focal point for an important view corridor.

A.02| Building Height Transitions
Transition the height of buildings to relate to the surrounding context such as residential neighborhoods or village centers. While this may often suggest stepping down in scale, there are instances where more height is appropriate to complete the definition of an adjacent public space or existing streetscape.

A.03| Variation in Building Height
Some variation within a development can be desirable to create visual interest. Variation in overall height should be balanced with tying together buildings with unifying architectural elements, such as intermediate cornice lines or other datums.

A.04| Building / Street Scale Relationship
Building heights should be compatible in scale with the streets that they front on. A well-defined street section consists of buildings adequate in height to define a street of a certain width.

A.05| Building Orientation
The orientation of buildings, and their relationship to open space, should be considered to minimize the negative impacts of shadows, wind, heat and other influences of nature.

B. MASSING

B.01| Relating to Human Scale
Consider breaking-down the facades of buildings with larger footprints to appear as multiple buildings that are more likely to relate to human scale and follow existing development patterns.

B.02| Major and Minor Volumes
Incorporating secondary volumes to achieve major and minor readings is one way to address overall building scale and avoid large monotonous elevations.


Context appropriate height adjacent to open space


Varied building heights helping to transition scale


Height variation with consistent base


Visual appearance of multiple buildings

B.03| Facade Step Backs

Stepping back facades at upper floors is one way to help buildings be compatible with narrower streets and minimize impacts on abutters.

B.04| Hierarchical Moments

Facades with a repetitive bay structure can provide visual interest by introducing hierarchical massing moments at important locations such as corners or building entries.

Multiple volumes and step backs create interest

C. CONSISTENCY OF THE BASE

C.01| Ground Floor Continuity

Create reasonable continuity of the ground floor environment to establish human scale and the completeness of the pedestrian environment.

C.02| Building Alignment

The alignment of adjacent buildings relative to the street [sidewalk width] should be considered, with purposeful variation integrated to announce primary entries, accommodate outdoor dining, etc.

Ground floor storefront continuity

BUILDING DESIGN NO. 3

FACADE ARTICULATION

GOAL | The articulation of facades should reinforce the qualities of a human-scaled environment by providing visual interest in ways that create both harmony as well as moments of hierarchical importance.

A. CREATING AN UNDERSTANDABLE FRAMEWORK

A.01| Use an Organizing Rhythm

Utilizing an organizing rhythm, such as the regular expression of structure or changes in materials, can help avoid the appearance of endless, unarticulated lengths of façade.

A.02| Human-Scaled Proportions

Establish human scale and proportions through devices such as the traditional vertical breakdown of façade into base, middle and top.

A.03| Dynamic Qualities

Purposeful massing shifts, plane changes and stepping volumes, including bays, can give a dynamic quality [sense of movement] to facades by providing depth and helping to establish hierarchy.

A.04| Visual Interest through Variation

Variation from traditional architectural façade design techniques, such as a unique use of scale, proportions and materials, can be acceptable, if not contextually insensitive.

Organizing rhythm

Non-traditional facade in a traditional setting

B. HIERARCHY OF ARTICULATION

B.01| Articulation on Key Frontages

A higher level of articulation should be incorporated on hierarchically more important frontages. While the level of detail can be simplified to a degree on secondary and tertiary facades, the overall quality of design and use of materials should be consistent.

B.02| Focal Points

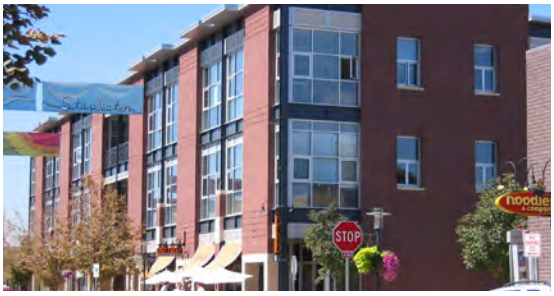
Areas of elevated architectural expression should be incorporated at key focal points, such as building corners, primary entries and in response to surrounding urban conditions [vistas].

Visual interest through architectural elements

C. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

C.01| Additive and Subtractive Components

Include architectural elements – both additive and subtractive - that provide visual interest, depth and rhythm such as canopies, awnings, bays, balconies, pilasters, cornices, porches [residential]. These components can help to refine the scale and proportions of important facades.



Composition with varying fenestration typologies

D. FENESTRATION

D.01| Contextual Typologies

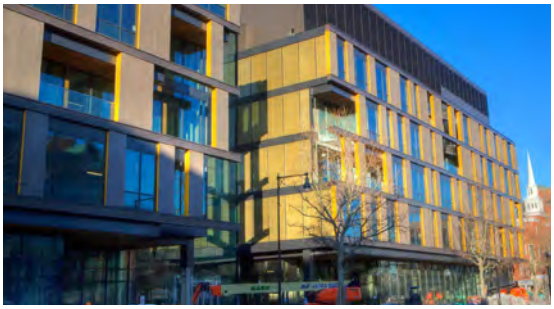
Incorporate fenestration typologies that are contextual and thoughtfully composed. As with other facade elements, avoid large, unarticulated areas of glass, or overly repetitive patterns, that do not contribute to defining a scale and proportions appropriate for the building or the larger context.

D.02| Transparency and Use

Facades, overall, should have a degree of transparency that is appropriate for the uses contained within, while helping to activate the public realm.

D.03| Detail Thoughtfully

The thoughtful detailing of windows including the style of trim, the use of mullions, the choice of color and materials, together with their depth contribute to the overall quality of a façade.



Use-appropriate transparency [lab building]

BUILDING DESIGN NO. 4

GROUND LEVEL DESIGN

GOAL | In mixed-use environments, an active and engaging ground level is essential for defining a lively pedestrian streetscape.

A. FACADE DEPTH

A.01| Engaging Storefronts

Incorporate storefront recesses [such as at entries] and pop-outs [including projecting bays] to provide a high degree of visual interest for pedestrians.

A.02| Protection from the Elements

Utilize canopies, awnings, trellises and other projecting building components that provide protection from the elements for pedestrians and allow for more façade transparency.

Protective canopies at storefront transition zone

B. TRANSPARENCY

B.01| Ground Floor Pedestrian Environments

In primary pedestrian environments, a high degree of visual transparency into ground floor spaces should be integrated, especially between 2' and 8' above grade.

B.02| Activate Secondary Spaces

Transparent storefronts should "turn the corner", including at mid-block pedestrian mews, to activate secondary spaces.

Storefronts turning the corner to enliven mews

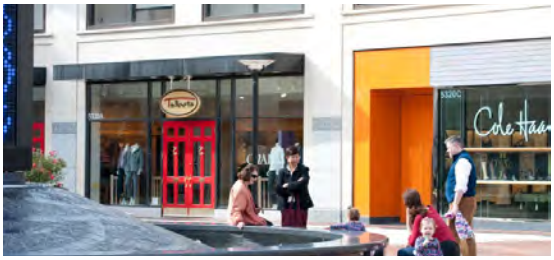
C. CONTINUITY

C.01| Architectural Framework

Employ façade articulation elements to provide a continuous framework for the pedestrian environment as storefronts transition from lease to lease in a mixed-use environment.

C.02| Articulate Storefronts

Avoid large stretches of unarticulated storefront; Storefront continuity will reinforce an engaging pedestrian experience and make for a more successful retail environment.



Continuous bay framework for retail storefronts

D. ENTRIES

D.01| Primary Entry Design Quality

Primary building entries should incorporate a higher level of architectural design by utilizing quality materials, lighting and appropriate signage.

D.02| Primary Entry Location

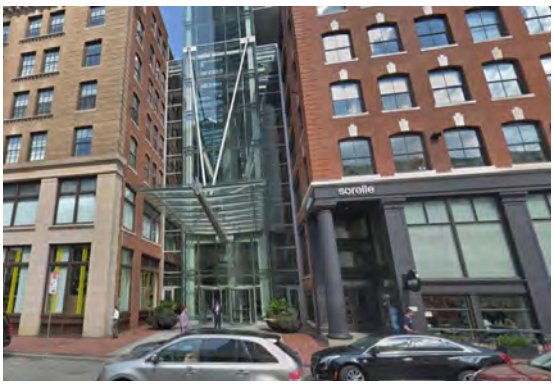
Primary building entries should be concentrated on hierarchically more important pedestrian streets to increase activation.

D.03| Separate Service Locations

Where possible, service and loading access should be located discreetly and not proximate to primary building entries and active storefronts.

D.04| Connect Interior and Exterior Spaces

Restaurant and retail spaces that open onto the street are encouraged to utilize operable storefronts to promote an active connection between interior and exterior spaces, provided that facades retain a degree of definition and negative impacts, such as noise, are properly mitigated.



Quality materials highlighting primary entrance

Opening up storefronts onto the streetscape

E. SIGNAGE

E.01| Integrate into Facade Design

Building signage should be thoughtfully integrated into the overall façade design and be appropriately scaled and located relative to the use that it is referencing.

Integrating a variety of signage into facade design

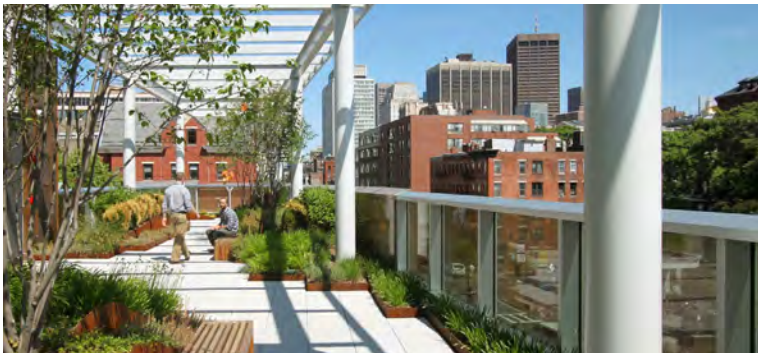
E.02| Ground Floor Signage Location

Ground floor storefront signage - wall-mounted [parallel and perpendicular], window graphics, canopy-mounted, awning - should be incorporated into the ground floor design and located, generally, below the second-floor window sill level.

E.03| Contribute to Streetscape Environment

While understanding the importance of branding, the illumination, materiality, scale and attachment of building signage should be compatible with the overall building architecture and contribute to a consistent streetscape environment.

Building-mounted signage organized in a facade zone



BUILDING DESIGN NO. 5
ROOFSCAPE DESIGN

GOAL | The design of roofs should consider the visual impact on abutters, while looking for opportunities to incorporate sustainable design features and amenities.

A. ROOF FORMS

A.01| Compliment Surrounding Context

Roof forms - flat or pitched - should be integral to the overall building composition and be complimentary to the surrounding context.


Unique roof forms where context appropriate

B. VISUAL IMPACTS

B.01| Low Roofs

Attention should be given to the visual impact of low roofs on abutters, including the selection of quality materials.

B.02| Cluster and Screen Equipment

Mechanical equipment should be clustered and located near the center of buildings, where possible, and adequately screened with quality materials consistent with overall building design.


Cluster roof equipment to allow for usable space

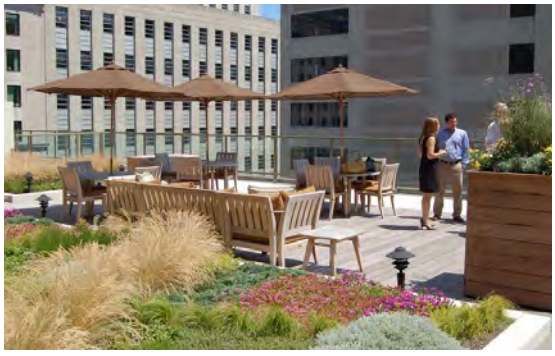
C. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

C.01| Green Roof Technology

Sustainable design features, such as green roof technology, are encouraged.

C.02| Renewable Energy Systems

Renewable energy systems, including rooftop solar arrays, are encouraged, and should be designed to minimize visual impact on abutters.


Incorporate green roof technology

BUILDING DESIGN NO. 6
MATERIALS

GOAL | The selection of a high-quality palette of materials should be both contextual and forward-thinking in terms of design and sustainability.

A. VISUALLY COMPATIBLE WITH CONTEXT

A.01| Compliment Existing
Materials should be genuine in their appearance and application, and complement the existing context, including adjacent historic buildings and properties.

A.02| Mindful of Architectural Goals
Use materials purposefully to compliment architectural goals related to scale and proportions.

A.03| Consistent with Street and Site
Building materials should be compatible and consistent with streetscape and site design materials.

B. HIGH QUALITY, DURABLE, GENUINE

B.01| Context Appropriate
Materials should be high quality, durable and appropriate for local climatic conditions.

B.02| Authentic Detailing
Materials should be detailed in a way that is authentic [for example, wrap the corner], promotes longevity and helps maintain a high-quality finish over time.

B.03| Ground Level Importance
Ground level materials should be of the highest quality and be capable of handling physical impact while maintaining a high level of appearance.

B.04| Focus on Building Entries
Building entry areas should receive extra focus. in terms of detailing and finishes.

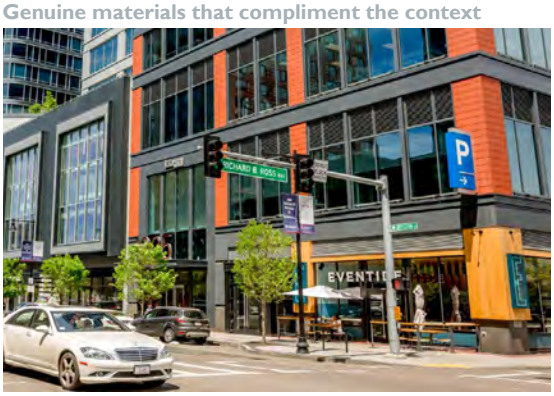
C. GREEN

C.01| Locally Sourced
Where feasible, incorporate materials that are locally sourced.

C.02| Renewable
Where feasible, incorporate materials that are renewable, recycled and natural.

C.03| Life Cycle
Where feasible, incorporate materials that have a favorable Life Cycle Assessment, minimizing the environmental impacts over the entire life of the material.

Genuine materials that compliment the context



Materials helping define the quality of a streetscape

Added architectural detail at building entries


Incorporating renewable materials

BUILDING DESIGN NO. 7
BUILDING EXTERIOR LIGHTING

GOAL | Lighting should accentuate architectural expression and enhance the quality and safety of pedestrian environments.

A. ACCENTUATE ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

A.01| Highlight Key Features

Building mounted lighting should be positioned to highlight hierarchically important features of facades – parapets, piers, corners, entries - providing a sense of scale and proportion during nighttime hours.

B. ENHANCE SURROUNDING PUBLIC REALM

B.01| Focus on Ground Plane

Building lighting should work in collaboration with site lighting to enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment by focusing on illuminating the ground plane, particularly in active use areas.

B.02| Create a Safe Environment

Lighting should help promote a safe environment by enhancing wayfinding, marking key entry points and helping vehicular traffic to see pedestrians.

C. LIGHT POLLUTION

C.01| Avoid Animation

Avoid flashing or irregular light.

C.02| Prevent Light Trespass

Follow commonly accepted guidelines for preventing light trespassing – shielding, intensity, orientation - to avoid negative impacts on the night sky and abutting parcels.

Highlighting architectural features of a building

Highlighting architectural features of a building

Site and building lighting contributing to place-making

A range of light sources creating a vibrant environment

BUILDING DESIGN NO. 8

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN: GREEN BUILDINGS

GOAL | New construction and major renovation projects should utilize best practices as required to achieve Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design [LEED] certifiability, and strive for passive house certifiability. High performance buildings have less of an impact on the environment, cost less to operate and maintain, and are healthier for those who occupy them.

A. WATER EFFICIENCY

A.01| Water Saving Strategies

Employ project-specific water-saving strategies including indoor water use, irrigation water and water metering.

B. ENERGY AND ATMOSPHERE

B.01| Energy Use Reduction

Utilize a holistic approach to energy use reduction including energy-efficient design strategies and renewable energy sources.

C. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

C.01| Life-cycle Approach

Incorporate a life-cycle approach to improving performance and promoting resource efficiency that focuses on minimizing the embodied energy and other impacts associated with the extraction, processing, transport, maintenance and disposal of building materials.

D. INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

D.01| Quality and Comfort

Address indoor air quality, as well as thermal, visual and acoustic comfort, through design strategies that enhance air quality, lighting quality, acoustic design and control over one's surroundings.

E. INNOVATION IN DESIGN

E.01| New Technologies and Strategies

Incorporate new technologies and building design strategies that represent the most current and evolving approaches to sustainable design.

F. REGIONAL PRIORITY

F.01| Focus Locally

Focus on local environmental priorities that address regional concerns and utilize environmental assets.

Quality indoor space through daylighting

Sustainable architecture that uses innovative designs

Attachment C

DESIGN GUIDELINES
EVALUATION TEMPLATE

NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by the City of Newton, MA

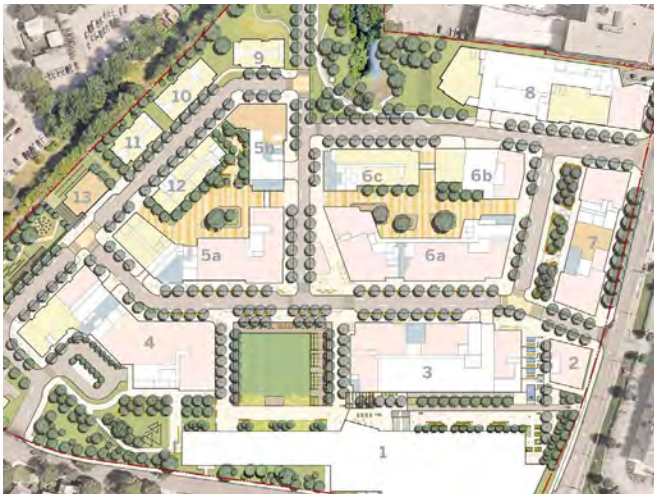
September 2019

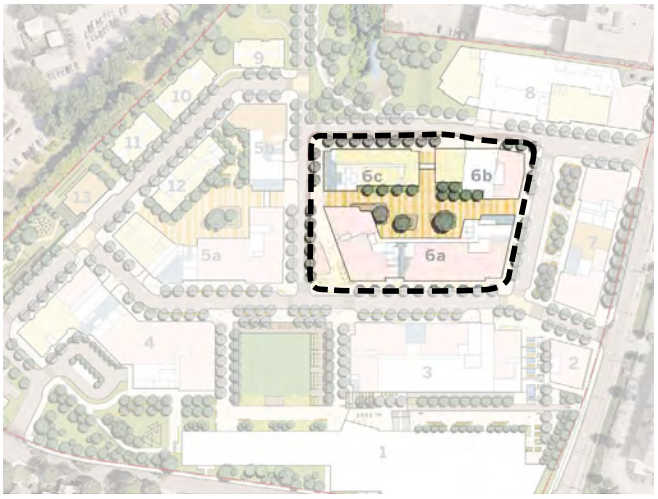
NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPMENT

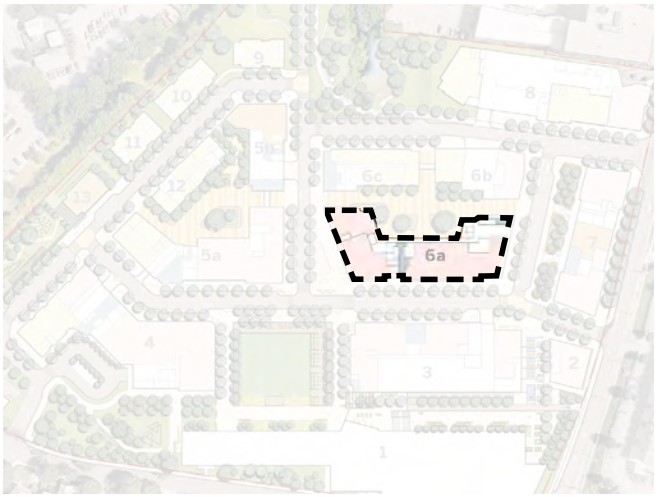
DESIGN GUIDELINES

EVALUATION TEMPLATE

TABLE OF CONTENTS







DISTRICT DESIGN

BLOCK DESIGN

BUILDING DESIGN

DISTRICT DESIGN

Applicant general comments for building design: (250 word max.)

General city comments: Consistent ☐ Not Consistent ☐

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. I

CONNECTIVITY TO SURROUNDING CONTEXT

GOAL | District-scaled developments should focus on addressing transitions to their abutting contexts – which can be diverse in nature – knitting together with existing fabric in ways that are sensitive to surrounding communities.

A. COMPATIBILITY W/ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & THE NEEDHAM STREET AREA VISION PLAN

A.01| Reinforcing the Vision Plan

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

B. VEHICULAR CONNECTIVITY

B.01| Connecting to Existing Street Networks

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

B.02| Varied Street Types

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

B.03| Street Design

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

C. TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY

C.01| Transit Promoting Vibrancy

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

C.02| Public Transit Integration

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

C.03| Multi-model Transfer Locations

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

C.04| Minimize Adverse Impacts

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

D. OPEN SPACE NETWORK: PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIVITY

D.01| Connect to Existing Networks

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

D.02| Compatible Streetscapes

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

D.03| Wayfinding Signage

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

E. VISUAL CONNECTIVITY

E.01| Transition Zones

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

E.02| Enhance Key Visual Corridors

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

F. CULTURAL / HISTORICAL CONNECTIVITY

F.01| Celebrate the Cultural Context

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

F.02| Historic Mill Buildings

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

F.03| Palimpsest

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

DISTRICT DESIGN NO. 2

BLOCK STRUCTURE

GOAL | The block structure of the development should promote a thoughtfully scaled, walkable public realm where quality streetscapes and diverse open spaces are reinforced by street patterns, as well as building siting and design.

A. CONSISTENCY OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

A.01| Pedestrian Friendly Blocks

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

A.02| Blocks with Multiple Buildings

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

B. VARIATION IN BLOCK STRUCTURE

B.01| Influence of Existing Open Space

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

B.02| Focal Points can Offer Relief

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

C. TERMINATING VIEWS AND FRAMING VIEWS

C.01| Hierarchy in Design

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

C.02| Buildings as Gateways

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

D. BLOCK MASSING

D.01| Transition Areas

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

Document references:

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Sources

The *Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition,* is a publication of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) that summarizes trip generation data submitted voluntarily to ITE by public agencies, developers, consulting firms, student chapters, and associations. Data has been aggregated over several years dating between the 1980's to late 2010's. Summarized trip generation data is provided for each land use in Volume 2 of the *Trip Generation Manual*. A summary statement explaining the source of the data is provided for each land use, followed by a list of sources. These sources are listed in Volume 1, Appendix A of the *Trip Generation Manual*.

The following summarizes the above for **Land Use Code 221: Multifamily Housing (Mid-Rise)***,* taken from Page 71 and 72 of the *Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition, Volume 2: Residential (Land Uses 200-299)* and Appendix A of the *Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition, Volume 1*.

> "Sites were surveyed in the 1980's, 1990's, 2000's, and 2010's in Alberta (CAN), British Columbia (CAN), California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ontario, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin."

It should be noted that Appendix A lists from whom or where the data was obtained. It does not specify specific locations of where the data was collected.

Source Number	Source	Year
168	*Trip Generation at Special Sites*, Virginia Highway and Transportation Research Council	1984
188	RBA Group, Atlanta, GA	1984
204	*Trip Generation Rates for Multiple Family Residential Developments and Neighborhood Shopping Centers.* Chicago Area Transportation Study	1982
305	NCHRP Report 323 - *Travel Characteristics at Large-Scale Suburban Activity Centers*. Transportation Research Board	1987
306	NCHRP Report 323 - *Travel Characteristics at Large-Scale Suburban Activity Centers*. Transportation Research Board	1987
321	Montgomery County, Silver Spring, MD - Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Comm.	1986
357	City of Rapid City, SD	1995
390	Creative Transportation Solutions, Burnaby, British Columbia, CAN	1994
436	Traffic Planning and Design, Maitland, FL	1991
525	J-U-B Engineers Inc., Orem, UT	1998
530	Knoxville County Metropolitan Planning Comm., Knoxville, TN	1996
579	DKS Assoc., Portland, OR	2001
638	C3 Consulting Group, Wellesley, MA	2003
818	Arlington County, VA	2012
857	ITE Student Chapter, UC Berkley, CA	2012
866	Spack Consulting, St. Louis Park, MN	2016
901	Kittleson & Assoc., Portland, OR	2016

Source Number	Source	Year
904	Langan Engineering and Environ. Services, Lawrenceville, NJ	2012
910	R.J. Burnside & Assoc. Limited, Pickering, ON	2015
912	Langan Engineering and Environ. Services, Lawrenceville, NJ	2015
918	Fehr & Peers, Los Angeles, CA	2016
934	Stephen G. Pernaw & Company, Concord, NH	2016
936	Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Milford, DE	2014
939	Parsons Corporation, Southfield, MI	2012
944	Gibson Transportation Consulting, Los Angeles, CA	2012
947	Cambridge Systematics, Tallahassee, FL	2012
948	Parsons Brinkerhoff, Tampa, FL	2012
949	District Department of Transportation, Washington, DC	2013
959	Wisconsin DOT, Madison, WI	2016
963	California DOT, Sacramento, CA	2015
964	California DOT, Sacramento, CA	2015
966	City of San Francisco, CA	2014
967	City of San Francisco, CA	2014
969	City of Calgary, AB	2016
970	City of Calgary, AB	2016

Attachment E

Northland Transportation Off-Site Mitigation Funds

(shown in 2021 dollars)

Type	Description	Notes
Bike/Ped	Extend Greenway to New. Highlands	Design and construct extenstion of existing Greenway bicycle and pedestrian path to Newton Highlands. The likely plan extends the current path in its current form to Curtis Street. The path then becomes a 2 way PBL or sidepath on the north side of Curtis and west side of Winchester, before connecting under Rt 9 to a bicycle boulevard/neighborway on Floral Street.
Bike/Ped	Extend Greenway to Eliot Station	Design and construct Greenway spur to Eliot Station. The likely plan creates a path through either the DPW yardor Eversource property, then creates a bicycle boulevard/neighborway on Frances Street, Margaret Road and Suban Place. Plan requires improving both sides of access to the pedestrian overpass over Rt 9.
Bike/Ped	Oak/Christina St ped bridge	Creating a public pedestrian and bicycle route over pedestrian bridge at 27 Christina Street with an eye towards extending public access via a path parallel to Needham Street to Industrial Place and Tower Road.
Complete Streets	Upper Falls Village Enhancement Project	Design for Upper Falls village enhancement project to improve roads, sidewalks, lighting and signals in Upper Falls Commercial area at Oak and Christina
Traffic	Provide Traffic Management System	Creation of a traffic management system to enable City transportation staff to remotely collect, review and react to traffic conditions in real time. Includes closed circuit video equipment, roadside count stations, computer work station for office and staffing.
Traffic	Install New Signal Equipment	Upgrade Chestnut/Rt 9 traffic signal equipment with associated improvements to signal timing
Traffic	Upgrade Signal Equipment	Upgrae Chestnut/Oak/Eliot signal equipment and make any necessary improvements to signal timing
Traffic	Study and Install Traffic Calming	Plan, design and implement traffic calming on Chestnut Street. Analyze and prioritize streets for improvements based on vehicle speeds, crash history, pedestrian trip generation rates and traffic volumes. Design and implement improvements including geometric changes, instalation of RRFB equipment, speed humps and/or other approved techniques to increase safety and reduce speeds.
Traffic	Study and Install Traffic Calming	Plan, design and implement traffic calming on Upper Falls roadways. Analyze and prioritize streets for improvements based on vehicle speeds, crash history, pedestrian trip generation rates and traffic volumes. Design and implement improvements including geometric changes, instalation of RRFB equipment, speed humps and/or other approved techniques to increase safety and reduce speeds.
Traffic	Provide Signal Coordination	Coordinate timing of signals Rt 9 / Winchester and Centre/Walnut
Traffic	Install TSP Upgrades	Design and install upgrades to Needham St signals to enable transit signal priority for MBTA buses and/or approved shared vehicles/shuttles. Design changes to signal timing. Install equipment.
Traffic	Study - Road Safety Audit	Conduct road safety audit on Centre/Walnut
Traffic	Study - Traffic operations	Review traffic operations for Newton Highlands MBTA including reviewing pedestrian and bicycle safety access and concerns, shuttle bus drop off/pick up, general passenger pick up and drop off. Make recommendations as per study.
Traffic	Study - traffic queue	Review traffic queuing and operations at Oak/Needham and recommend improvmeents.
Traffic	Study - emergency vehicle access	Study emergency vehicle access to Needham Street via Mechanic St
Transit/Shuttle	Transportation Alternatives Analysis, overarching transit improvement study	Feasibilty study of improved/faster transit for Upper Fallsof multiple options: 1. Infrastructure improvements @ Winchester for bus lane, 2. Greenway shuttle, 3. Green line extension to Needham, with new stop @ Greenway, 4. Move Eliot Station to CVS @ Rt 9. Study should include cost estimates and potential timeline, key stakeholders, as well as comparative advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Barney S. Heath
Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 5, 2019

TO: Planning and Development Board

FROM: Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development
James Freas, Deputy Director of Planning and Development
Jennifer Caira, Chief Planner

SUBJECT: **Petition #425-18** for a change of zone to BUSINESS USE 4 for land located at 156 Oak Street (Section 51 Block 28 Lot 5A), 275-281 Needham Street (Section 51, Block 28, Lot 6) and 55 Tower Road (Section 51 Block 28 Lot 5), currently zoned MU1.

CC: City Council

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Planning and Development Board and the public with technical information and planning analysis conducted by the Planning Department. The Planning Department's intention is to provide a balanced review of the proposed project based on information it has at the time of the public hearing. Additional information about the project may be presented at or after the public hearing for consideration at a subsequent working session by the Planning and Development Board.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

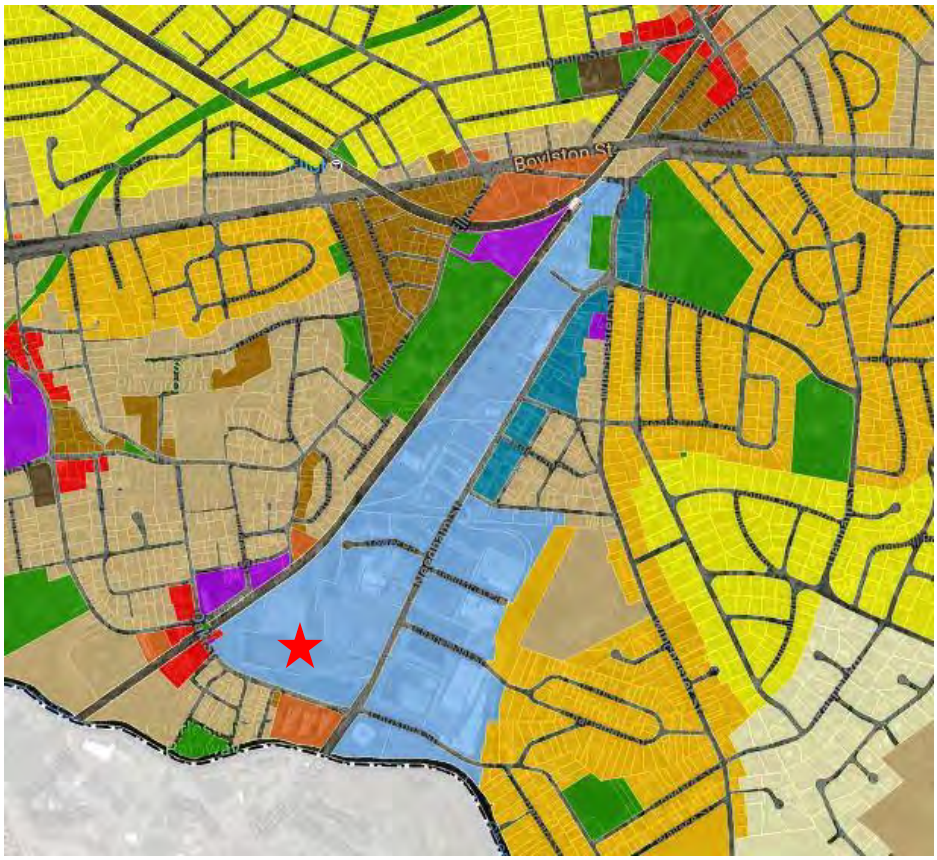
The subject property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Needham and Oak streets in a Mixed Use 1 (MU1) zoning district. The site consists of three parcels that, taken together, measure approximately 22.6 acres: 156 Oak Street (referred to herein as Parcel 1), 55 Tower Road (Parcel 2), 275-281 Needham Street (Parcel 3).

The property is bounded by Needham Street to the east, Oak Street to the south and the Upper Falls Greenway to the west; the northern tip of the property has frontage on Tower Road. It is currently improved with various commercial and industrial buildings as well as accessory parking. The existing building at 156 Oak Street was constructed circa 1900 and is proposed for preservation and incorporation into the proposed development. The remaining buildings on the project site, including a 1979 strip mall, would be razed.

The Petitioners are proposing to construct a multi-building mixed use development incorporating 800 residential units, 180,000 square feet of office space, 115,000 square feet of retail, personal service, and restaurant space, and public open spaces. The petitioner proposes approximately 1.4 million square feet of gross floor area in 17 proposed structures with heights ranging from two to eight stories. The proposal also includes 1,450 on-site parking stalls and 200 valet spaces within garages and surface parking, as well as accommodations for 1,100 bicycles. In anticipation of the proposed mixed use redevelopment project, the petitioner is seeking to rezone all three parcels to Business 4 (BU4).

I. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

The Northland Site consists of three parcels located at the northwest corner of Needham and Oak streets. All three parcels are currently zoned Mixed Use 1 (MU1), as are the other parcels in the immediate area along the Needham Street corridor, with exceptions being a Business 2 (BU2) zoned parcel district at the southwest corner of Needham and Oak streets and a Mixed Use 2 (MU2) district on the east side of Needham Street several hundred feet to the north. The neighborhoods to the east and west of the Needham Street corridor exhibit a diverse mix of zoning designations, including Single Residence 2 and 3 (SR2 and SR3), Multi Residence 1 and 2 (MR1 and MR2), Business 1 and 2 (BU1 and BU2), Manufacturing (MAN) , as well as Public Use (PUB). Specifically, districts immediately adjacent to the Northland Site include the BU2 parcel referenced above, as well as MU1 and BU1 districts, to the south (across Oak Street), MAN, MU1 and MU2 to the west, and a SR3 district to the east.



The current land uses on the Northland Site and other parcels in the area reflect this diverse zoning. Of the three Northland parcels, 55 Tower Road is industrial, while the other two are currently considered commercial properties, a mix that generally characterizes the uses along the Needham Street corridor. The area to the south , across Oak Street, includes single- and multi-residential uses, as well as some commercial and open spaces. The neighborhood to the west also includes single- and multi- residential and commercial uses, as well as some industrial, and non-profit uses. Across Needham Street are commercial and industrial uses; further to the east the uses are predominantly single- and multi- residential with some interspersed vacant and open space parcels with Winchester Swamp located to the north of Charlemont Street. The Needham Street corridor is primarily comprised of retail, restaurant and service uses with a few office buildings, the Avalon residential development, and a few industrial uses towards the southern end.

II. REZONING REQUEST (Petition # 425-18)

The petitioner has requested that the site be rezoned from its current MU1 designation to BU4. The Planning Department recognizes that, given its size and location, the site lends itself to redevelopment as a mixed use development and generally agrees that the current MU1 zoning, although it allows for limited residential and commercial uses, might be considered dated and

inappropriate for the site.

A. Mixed Use 1 vs. Business 4 Zoning Comparison

Zoning Dimensional Requirements:

	MU1	BU4
Lot size	40,000 sf min	10,000 sf min
Density	10,000 sf of lot area per residential unit	1,200 sf of lot area per residential unit
Height	4 stories/ 48 feet max	8 stories/ 96 feet max
Floor Area Ratio	2.00 max	3.00 max
Front Setback	Equal to Building Height	10 feet max
Side Setback	Abutting res: ½ bldg. height or 20' Other: 7.5'	Abutting res: ½ bldg. height or 15' Other: ½ bldg. height or equal to abutting side setback
Rear Setback	Abutting res: ½ bldg. height or 20' Other: 7.5'	Abutting res: ½ bldg. height or 15' Other: 0'

The zoning dimensional requirements of the Mixed Use 1 zone are designed to accommodate buildings with a large footprint on a large parcel. The Business 4 zone allows more floor area, significantly more height, and smaller setbacks (particularly at the front setback). The most significant difference between the two zones is the density of housing allowed. At one unit for every 10,000 square feet of lot area the MU1 zone would only permit four residential units at the minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet and the Northland site at over 22 acres could only include approximately 100 residential units. By comparison, the BU4 zone allows one unit for every 1,200 square feet of lot area, or 822 units. By comparison, the Avalon development on Needham Street has a density of one unit per 1,155 square feet of lot area. This is similar to other recent multifamily developments such as Washington Place and Austin Street which have even more units per square feet than the BU4 zone would allow.

The above table and analysis assumes the maximum build-out allowed by Special Permit. Without seeking a special permit a building could be built by-right in either zone to a maximum of three stories with a 1.50 floor area ratio. In either zone a Site Plan Approval by the City Council would be required for the construction of 10,000 square feet and a Special Permit would be required for the construction of 20,000 square feet.

In addition to the dimensional control differences between the two zones, the uses allowed in each zone vary. Uses such as residential, office and large scale retail are permitted in both

zones, however *t*here are many uses that are only permitted in either the MU1 or BU4 zone. A comparison of those uses is below:

	MU1	BU4
Elderly housing with services		X
Club, clubhouse		X
Hospital		X
Library, museum or similar		X
Convalescent or rest home		X
Theatre, hall		X
Animal service	X	
Business services	X	
Drive-in business		X
Fuel establishment	X	
Funeral home		X
Hotel		X
Job printing		X
Open air business		X
Personal Service		X
Radio or TV studio		X
Radio or TV transmission station	X	
Retail, under 5,000 sf		X
Vehicle repair, sales and service	X	
Veterinary hospital	X	
Assembly or fabrication of materials	X	
Manufacturing	X	
Telecomm and data storage	X	
Wholesale business or storage	X	
Adult business	X	

The MU1 zone is tailored more towards industrial uses and those uses that would require a large footprint. Housing is permitted but at such a low density the only apartment building built in the MU1 zone was done by Comprehensive Permit (Avalon) where zoning regulations can be waived. By comparison, the BU4 zone allows for a wider range of uses and for uses that are oriented towards the public and contribute to a vibrant pedestrian environment.

B. Needham Street Area Vision Plan

The Planning Department's review of the proposed rezoning and development along Needham Street is informed by the "Needham Street Vision Plan" the product of an extensive community based planning effort the Department undertook in collaboration with local residents. The Vision for Land Use in the Needham Street Area Vision Plan (Vision Plan) states the "Needham Street area will be a vibrant destination with a distinct identity. The area will have a diversity of homes, businesses, and gathering places for community life". There was consensus during the visioning process that the current zoning along Needham Street, particularly the MU1 zone, did not allow for the type of place the community desired. A strong theme from the visioning process was that a true mix of uses was desired and despite the name, the Mixed Use 1 zone does not permit this. The MU1 zone is oriented towards office and industrial uses and prohibits small scale retail, most community uses, and discourages residential uses, while the Vision Plan proposes a mix of uses along Needham Street linking the villages of Upper Falls and Newton Highlands. The Vision Plan also includes goals for creating a diverse housing stock, increasing support for small local businesses, and creating a range of community gathering spaces.

Relevant action items from the Vision Plan include:

- Amend zoning along Needham Street to encourage mixed uses, including housing, community uses, smaller commercial uses, and compatible manufacturing/production uses (e.g. breweries, artisans, R&D lab space, etc.)
- Encourage a range of housing unit types and sizes to accommodate all ages and incomes
- Reduce minimum lot area per unit in the zoning ordinance to encourage the production of a range of housing types
- Allow small-scale retail by-right
- Amend zoning to allow broader range of civic and cultural uses as well as private entertainment and recreational uses

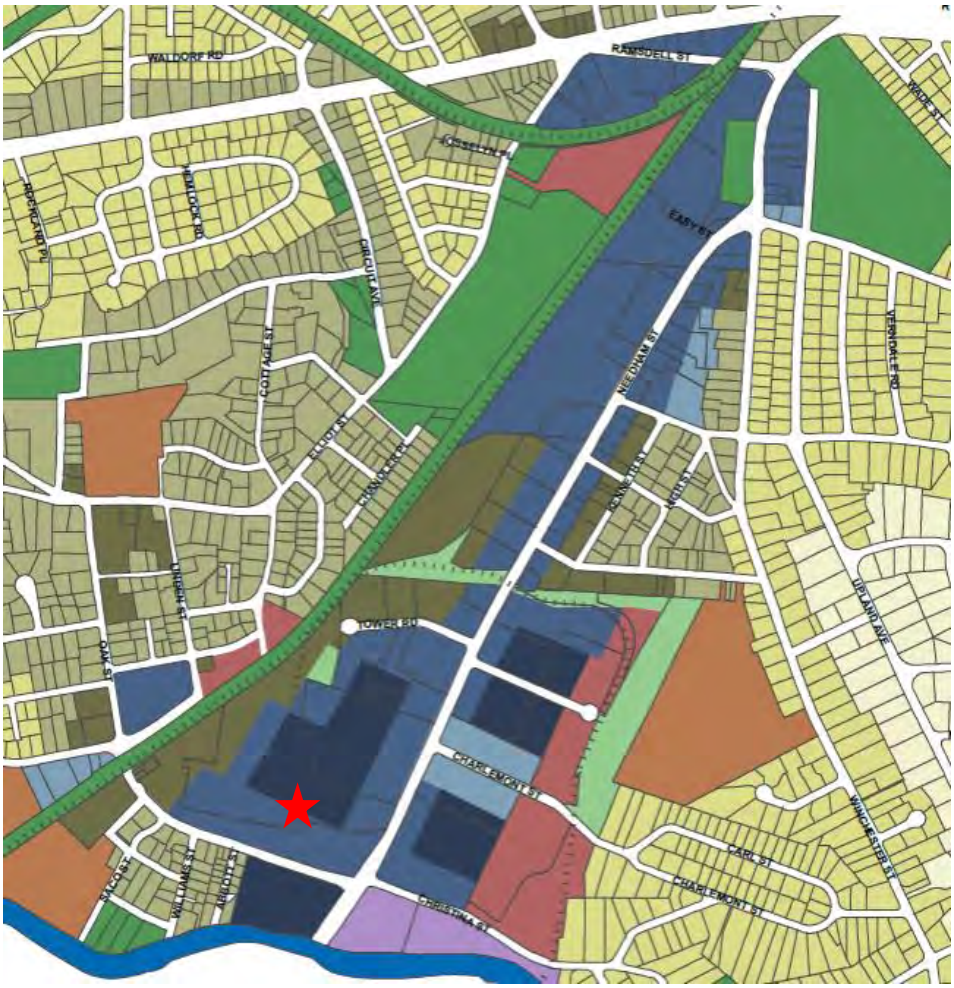
The goals of the Vision Plan are largely inconsistent with the current Mixed Use 1 zone. While further amendments to the zoning through Zoning Redesign are necessary to meet all of the action items proposed by the Vision Plan, a rezoning to BU4 accomplishes many of the goals and helps implement the vision for Needham Street by allowing for increased and more diverse housing, small-scale retail, personal services, and community oriented uses in buildings that

are oriented towards the street.

C. Zoning Redesign Recommendations for Needham Street

The area along Needham Street is one of the few areas in the Zoning Redesign process where the recommended zoning districts were not based on the existing context. In this case, zoning was identified based on the recommendation of the Needham Street Area Vision Plan. The proposed zoning used a combination of the three Village Districts to vary the density, height, and types of buildings along the corridor.

The zoning recommendation primarily calls for the application of the Village 2 district along most of the corridor representing buildings of up to 4 stories and a mix of business and residential uses. The Village 3 district is proposed for centralixed locations at the wider end of the Needham Street area, with up to 10 stories allowed (there is also a Village 3 designation proposed on the Charles River reflecting the existing building on that site, which is more than 5 stories tall). The Village 2 district surrounds the applications of the Village 3 district thus stepping down the height to the surrounding areas. The Village 1 District, with a 3 story max, was used to step down height between the Village 2 and a close by residential neighborhood as well as to create a potential viewshed from an adjacent higher land area out to the corridor.



III. REZONING RECOMMENDATION

The current Mixed Use 1 zoning along Needham Street does not truly support a mix of uses and has resulted in a corridor defined by large parcels with big box retail in buildings that are set back from and oriented away from the street. This creates an unpleasant pedestrian experience and further exacerbates traffic conditions along Needham Street. By rezoning the site the proposed project is able to provide not only a mix of uses within the site but housing units that will diversify the housing stock in the area and contribute towards balancing the overall mix of uses along Needham Street. Additional density and height, reduced front setbacks, and the addition of small scale retail, service and community uses all contribute to creating a "vibrant destination with distinct identity" as contemplated by the Needham Street Area Vision Plan. The need for housing, and particularly multi-family and affordable housing options, is also identified as an important piece of the City's Economic Development Strategy and is critical to supporting the efforts of the N^2 Innovation District. Allowing a mix of uses can also improve transportation over the alternative as some residents will live and work on site and many residents and office tenants will not need to leave the site for basic amenities and entertainment. Additionally, the different uses proposed onsite have different peak traffic periods, so new trips as a result of the project are more spread out rather than concentrated during a smaller peak period, such as with office uses.

The rezoning request is consistent with the Needham Street Area Vision Plan and the preliminary draft of Zoning Redesign. For all of these reasons, the Planning Department recommends approval of the rezoning from MU1 to BU4.