

Newton Riverside - 03/28/2019 Public Meeting Comment Booklets

CATEGORY	CODE	COMMENT
Newton Community Connections		
Newton Community Connections	C	Do not overburden the City of Newton by building a monster project that will be a private village between Auburndale and Lower Falls. Have the developer pay for everything - no zoning changes
Newton Community Connections	C	"Activities" areas (restaurants, coffee shops, art spaces) need to be near the T station, i.e. be walkable for all ages incl. elders
NewtonCommunity Connections	C	Considerations seem to <u>contribute</u> to Newton with energy + activity seems to be for all ages
Newton Community Connections	C	Grove St. cannot be a connector to Newton. Gove cannot sustain more through traffic in rush hour than it does now. Also danger to kids walking on Grove St. to Willams and to buses for Brown and South
Newton Community Connections	C	No mention, no photos, no idea about the abutting villages. Principles assume no connection to other villages
Newton Community Connections	C	Access to the Charles River would be amazing. Make sure that businesses are not overly expensive. They should ne places everyone can afford to go to. Remember students and teachers live here.
Newton Community Connections	C	Too there from Newton Lower Falls
Newton Community Connections	C	How are people getting there for amenities - they are driving
Newton Community Connections	C	Could there be a small kayak/paddleboard rental at the site? Storage for kayaks/paddleboards for residents.
NewtonCommunity Connections	C1	This is the section that addresses the one commenter who mentioned that the plan doesn't show "negative impacts" but it does.
Newton Community Connections	C1	What are Newton's Values? Who makes the determination?
Newton Community Connections	C1	Any chance to include space for a year-round farmer's market?
Newton Community Connections /Transportation Hub	C1/T5	A community must have a viable traffic flow in + out. No traffic data has been provided to us to determine viability
Newton Community Connections	C2	Mark development proposal has no park or playground space for anyone
Newton Community Connections	C4	Mark Development provides no community space unlike Normandy proposal in 2010
Newton Community Connections	C4	What about including a health club with complimentary membership tot Auburndale + Lower Falls Residents?
Newton Community Connections	C4	I thought the previous special permit had management and oversight
Quality Design		
Quality Design	D	Riverside has evolved since it opened on 7/4/1959. It offers parking via a mobile phone. People can park overnight. Riverside is a maintenance hub for the D line.
Quality Design	D	Eyesore currently! Use topography - Strong Design on 128! Need <u>density</u> to get mix use amenities.
Quality Design	D	This is an opportunity to build a tremendous 21st century (incomplete)
Quality Design	D	New apartment building architecture in our area is remarkably uniform, boring, and uncreative. Please don't allow more! The hideous mish-mash at Woodland station is a good example of this contemporary style
Quality Design	D1	Very disappointed there is no height maximum
Quality Design	D1	Completely disagree with not putting limits on size. "visioning" = what it will look like
Quality Design	D2	Please add to this principle an acknowledgement that Auburndale near Riverside is largely Victorian, so that we don't end up with something architecturally jarring, like what's happened in Allston/Brighton
Quality Design	D2	Views from Auburndale/ Lower Falls matter more than view from highway
Quality Design	D2	An overwhelming mass of buildings is not an attractive asset to the area. It has no relationship to the scale, climate, feel, environment of Newton.
Quality Design	D2	Selling the project, as you are obviously being paid to do, does not "solve" the low income or elderly housing problems. Slightly fewer buildings would also make an impact
Quality Design	D4	Human scale - if this refers to sunshine, then height makes a big difference
Quality Design	D5	The trees along Grove St. mask riverside
Quality Design	D6	Part of the land is in the town of Weston
Quality Design	D6	2 Commercial (illegible) are no way to Celebrate the Charles River
Robust Newton Economy		
Robust Newton Economy	E	Important tax revenue for Newton schools.
Robust Newton Economy	E	Newton Lower Falls is not a gateway to Newton.
Robust Newton Economy	E1	Think about how to ensure that not all restaurants + retail are so highly priced that they become only for the wealthy.
Robust Newton Economy	E4	The City should cut its administrative staff. You must live in Newton if you work for the city. Compensation calls it red circle (sp?)
Housing for Newton		
Housing for Newton	H	Housing offers a balance of rental and ownership opportunities is appealing
Housing for Newton	H	Most needed: more affordable housing
Housing for Newton	H	More housing accessible to public transit
Housing for Newton	H	<u>Age in Community</u> is a terrific goal answering lack of diverse housing!
Hosuing for Newton	H	Lower income housing is good, but there is no way that it can ever come in a quantity to change the basic economic reality that Newton has become an enormously valuable location that will command high prices. Do not sacrifice Auburndale and NLF to this idea. Yes to affordable housing, but at a respectable scale for our villages.
Housing for Newton	H	Enthusiastic about housing for all ages
Housing for Newton	H	All housing should be designed so people can remain in them as they get older and may need a wheelchair
Housing for Newton	H	Housing should have requirements to include both low and minimum income affordable housing
Housing for Newton	H	I understand that condos aren't feasible on the leased land, but please maximize the number of condos on the Mark Dev owned land to the extent possible. There is a HUGE demand for condos in Newton for downsizing seniors

Housing for Newton	H	This is a great opportunity to create innovative housing options that are currently unavailable in the area (Micro units, etc.?) Be Bold!
Housing for Newton	H1	Housing for all levels include middle income people (not just low+high income families)
Housing for Newton	H1	Yes accessible units! People with disabilities need housing too
Housing for Newton	H1,2,3	Affordable housing at below market place for only Newton seniors by a lottery. Development in Waban, Newton Center and Chestnut Hill
Housing for Newton	H2	Please add a principle that addresses the lack of affordability of \$300/square feet apartments, as proposed elsewhere by Mark Development in Newton
Housing for Newton	H2	Allow pets in rental units
Housing for Newton	H2	Affordable housing should not be used to justify housing densities and heights that are not consistent with the city of Newton
Housing for Newton	H3	The phrasing of this principle implies that Newton has to accept the number of units the developer wants + then somehow "prepare" for the effects, without addressing our lack of space + limited funds to add yet more school buildings. An understanding of Newton's commitment to maintaining educational excellence + special education should also be a consideration + a principle.
Housing for Newton	H3	Should say "pay for" implications, not "prepare"
Housing for Newton	H3	How will you prepare the schools?
Model for Sustainability		
Model for Sustainability	S	Leave it as open space - the T is always in financial crisis because it spends more than it has! Political.
Model for Sustainability	S	Excellent, that foot (and bike) access to Charles river are being integrated
Model for Sustainability	S	Supports amenities so (illegible) do not need cars! Restore Charles River!
Model for Sustainability	S	Yes pedestrian access, Yes to S3, Yes to all of this.
Model for Sustainability	S	No matter how green - 657 plus residences will pollute and endanger the ecology
Model for Sustainability	S	Riverside is not TOD - T only goes one way and so is highway access
Model for Sustainability	S	Traffic configuration will overwhelm any green advances
Model for Sustainability	S	What about density???
Model for Sustainability	S	Would love this to be a model for sustainable development. Maximize solar, capture rainwater, etc.
Model for Sustainability	S	Stormwater runoff into the Charles. Check out excellent model at Wellesley College next to Wang Center
Model for Sustainability	S1	Include car sharing opportunities with electric vehicles for those going carless. Also include substantial opportunities for EV charging for office workers, commuters, residents. Make sure to have ample places to park/store bikes for workers, residents, and visitors.
Model for Sustainability	S1	How will residents go food shopping? Get to medical appointments? Get anywhere that isn't on the green line? The idea that people are going to live car free lives outside of a city are purely fantasy. This development will introduce thousands of cars to Newton, with a massive increase in the City's carbon footprint.
Model for Sustainability	S2	Require development be net zero where are the solar compacts? It's a heat island
Model for Sustainability	S4	No mention of micro-climate impact of increased local traffic
Model for Sustainability	S5	You mention the need for thoughtful + respectful design along Grove St. Please add the same for the area above the river. It's currently serene around the river when you're on the water. Please add a principle to protect the river for boaters, so that it doesn't feel like Cambridge, but remains rooted in Newton, e.g. no looming buildings affecting the feel of the Charles.
Transportation Hub		
Transportation Hub	T	Protected from cold weather space on platform
Transportation Hub	T	Covered, protect parking spaces for bicycles (as in Washington DC subway stops)
Transportation Hub	T	Advocate for improvement to Green Line; Grove St. improvements
Transportation Hub	T	Direct access/exit in all 4 directions off + on coming from all directions
Transportation Hub	T	It would be great to have the line (rail) reestablished along the river from Riverside to Auburndale MBTA station and on to Cambridge. But this would need much more parking
Transportation Hub	T	No mention about increased bus service - no commuter bus service, no regional bus service.
Transportation Hub	T	Transportation hub - greatest volume from cars and green line. Pedestrians and cyclists already have access
Transportation Hub	T	Add more bus service to riverside - access to Natick, etc. (advocate for all). Bike racks needed as well
Transportation Hub	T	Two-way access is necessary
Transportation Hub	T	Bus connections to Waltham, Wellesley, Needham, Natick. Bus to downtown Boston
Transportation Hub	T	"advocate" does not mean it will happen
Transportation Hub	T	Cannot have shared T package because of day and night events
Transportation Hub	T	This is the weakest link of the project. The "D" line currently has a low level of service. Unless the service can be improved, the proposed development will add to the suffering of people now living in Newton. Hopefully we can witness the new/enlarged trolleys before the project density is decided.
Transportation Hub	T	Love Improving trails to and along the Charles river
Transportation Hub	T	Would love to see direct transport from this location to Kendall Square - new MBTA route or private shuttle?
Transportation Hub	T	Let's not make the mistake of inducing traffic by providing too much parking. Would love to see the land maximized for housing and commercial, not wasted on excess parking!
Transportation Hub	T	Is there a creative solution for those handful of days a year when there are daytime Sox games, parades, etc.? Park + ride from Framingham/Dedham/etc. I hate to think of wasting all that valuable land for parking just to handle those peak/exception days.
Transportation Hub	T1	"Advocate" for improvements is pretty meaningless. They need to be in place pre-development + permit approval. The MBTA can't be relied on to magically improve because of a new development, and the City Council should take this into account.
Transportation Hub	T1	Riverside was open 7/4/59 as the D line. Grove St. is a scenic road way with bad pavement
Transportation Hub	T1-T2	We should certainly advocate for improving MBTA service to Newton. But we should not go forward with this development on the assumption that it will happen any time soon. Improvements to public transportation should precede and enable development.
Transportation Hub	T2	Development will be a barrier to future of commuter rail to Riverside
Transportation Hub	T2	Require a free shuttle to Auburndale commuter rail station for workers + residents

Transportation Hub	T2	Don't activate the rail spur. Make it a path. It's less than a mile walk to commuter rail.
Transportation Hub	T3	Tree lined. A scenic roadway.
Transportation Hub	T3	Increased traffic on Grove will be seen as safety issues at Williams Elementary School
Transportation Hub	T3	Widen Grove St for bridge lanes only
Transportation Hub	T3	If there is residential use at Riverside, they will need to get to Star Market and other shops
Transportation Hub	T3	It is a myth that there will be direct access to 128! All cars coming to and from the site from the north and going south leaving the site will use Grove street
Transportation Hub	T3	The number of bikes is grossly exaggerated! Where will these people be coming from? Weston? Wellsley? Natick? Waltham? Needham?
Transportation Hub	T5	Grove Street is a 2-way road. It gets over 15k cars daily. The pavement is taking a beating - fix it
Transportation Hub	T5	Road diets are a joke. Both the south and north ramps to 128 need to be addressed.
Transportation Hub	T5	Two-way access from the site into 128
Transportation Hub	T5	I'm not drinking the "road diet" kool-aid. The logical conclusion is to tear up all the roads and replace them with bike paths. Presto! No traffic! If a certain number of people want to get from point A to point B, you can discourage them from using a road by keeping it narrow (or making it narrower), but traffic is just going to move to other roads.
Transportation Hub	T5	This is not true! Traffic on Grove street bow is okay. Obviously more cars can only make it worse, not in any way better.
Transportation Hub	T6	Stop telling us not to drive. Newton lacks transit connections to the Village - have everyone at City Hall ride a bike to work. We are not Cambridge or Boston walk-oriented.
Transportation Hub	T6	Parking garage + increased congestion will discourage commuters from using Riverside
Transportation Hub	T7	"Preparing for Future Trends" should be more definite, to require that any development be small + nimble enough to allow for tail + bus terminal expansion as needed in the future. A principle could be that development <u>not</u> interfere with future expansion of transit at Riverside. Additionally, a design principle should be that all 4 directions of 128 (on and off) be provided for in the highway access principle/issue.
Transportation Hub	T7	If future transportation option increase popularity of mass transit. There would be increased parking available for commuters
General		
General		Commendable presentation. Particular plusses for me: access to the Charles, trails, recreation opportunities, as well as retail space. I envision expanding my walking options. How about bike trails next to Grove Street since the City seems overly challenged in managing potholes?
General		More affordable housing was a definite plus for me. My children can't afford to live in this City they grew up in (I've been here since 1969!)
General		Hadn't thought about electric vehicle stations, but that's a great idea. We must do more for a sustainable life and prepare for diff lifestyles required by climate change.
General		I like locally owned (and small) business opportunities.
General		Most of the photos used in presentation were of <u>dense</u> cities with high skyscrapers, not of surrounding areas as they exist. Food trucks in front of sky scrapers. Really! I feel that the most important principle should be density in keeping with area surrounding the site. I did not see that listed anywhere in the draft vision plan. I only heard it mentioned very briefly in section D. The Riverside development should not be detrimental to Auburndale + Lower Falls!
N/A		Councilors Must certify that any development does not negatively impact villages - principles do not address this requirement
General		I can't imagine a more developer friendly "vision plan." The city should be an advocate for citizens and take a skeptical stance toward developers.
General		The pictures in the slides for current retail market overview don't look like they belong with Auburndale.
General		How will the tall buildings affect neighboring homes' solar panels?
N/A		Not isolated or barrier - should be a connection integrating lower falls and Auburndale villages together
N/A		More permeability through development desired: bikes, nature, walking trails
N/A		I cannot include a code for my comments because you do not have a code for impacts on Lower falls and Auburndale. You seem not to have heard the Vision plan must include that the surrounding neighborhoods are very concerned about scale. There is no diversity of opinion on this point in the neighborhood. The "make it larger" comments do not come from Lower Falls and Auburndale. It is unfair to suggest otherwise. The category you need to add about protecting the surrounding neighborhood must include: traffic, destruction of character, visual impacts, noise impacts, construction impacts, the inadequacy of public transit.
General		The notion of a carless lifestyle at riverside is naïve. It is a 14 acre site, no one wants to, or will confine their lives to a 14-acre site.
General		I'm an 18-year resident of Auburndale and couldn't be more thrilled about the prospect of a vibrant, mixed-use development at Riverside. We in Auburndale have very limited retail & restaurants - I love the idea of biking over to Riverside to shop and dine. And even can see myself downsizing there when the time comes. Along those lines, please do maximize condos to the extent possible, because many of us when we sell our single family homes will want to put that equity into another purchase (and avoid a huge capital gain tax on the gain from my house). Please don't let NIMBY attitudes take this project down. Even they will love it once it's there, I'm sure.
General		Please add a principle that addresses avoidance of the possible negative impacts on neighboring villages + the city as an important design/development consideration. Everything from the city, developer + CivicMoxie is just too rosy. Overcrowding happens; school populations increase beyond expectations, etc.
General		Please add a principle to review what happened in Lexington when school demographics were wrong as part of a negative impacts principle
General		Please add a principle that federal authorization of any highway work be a condition of a special permit. Please also add a principle that <u>actual</u> MBTA improvements be a condition of a special permit.
General		Please add a principle that Newton needs to prevent relentless disruption of life near Riverside during construction.
General		I am pleased that the vision plan is considering the various ways that Riverside can become part of the community rather than separate from the community. I am also pleased that a requirement to provide a significant number of permanently affordable units is included.
General		Needs neighborhood impacts on both Lower Falls and Auburndale - nothing so far - just what the developer wants! Disappointed with this presentation as it is biased towards the developer not the residents A peer consultant group should not be part of the planning department friends - separate opinions Riverside can only be developed once, so let's think about doing it right! We are not a gateway - the T needs more for the storage space/need green line car
General		Commercial, residential, retail, commuters, Red Sox games, Downtown events - Can Riverside serve all these uses? Will it gridlock internally if anything goes wrong (car breakdowns, accidents, etc.) If it is not feasible to serve all users, how do we prioritize?
General		Not one principle addresses concerns about size, scale, height, density. Where is that conveyed in the visioning?

General		<p>What community groups were interviewed? Was there equal balance of opinions represented? I don't think the Newton Villages Alliance was contacted.</p> <p>Photos showed Dublin, Scottsdale, etc. much larger cities than Newton</p> <p>Real Estate presentation was not the point of Visioning. Was supposed to be <u>resident</u> input.</p> <p>Don't need big building as a "Gateway"</p>
General		Has there been any work done to understand the increased traffic through the local neighborhoods which will result from the development?
General		It was very hard to tell tonight if the presentation was a real vision plan for the citizens of Newton or a Mark Development Vision Plan. It really seems like a very one-sided presentation in favor of the developer.

Newton Riverside - 03/28/2019 Public Meeting Comments - Board Comments

Newton Community Connections

Should fit within scale of Auburndale and Lower Falls. Bring them together. Don't create "a new village" as developer proposes

I like ide of management for a community space

Pocket parks are a plus

Thank you for thinking of aging Newton folks.

Quality Design

Please address potential adverse impacts of development on neighbors as part of visioning! (and how to mitigate)

I completely agree! I don't see any of these principles addressing neighbor concerns

I completely disagree with not setting limits on size, height, scale, density. "Visioning" is what we want site to look like! If "human-scale" refers to feeling comfortable, sunlight, etc. Then height should be addressed!

D2 shows a 3-story building! Mark Development is proposing a 14 to 18 story building! Why not set height limits as part of visioning?

Robust Newton Economy

While I agree Newton needs more commercial tax base, I'm not crazy about this "gateway" concept. I resent the real estate developer presentation tonight. I thought the visioning was to get resident input, not what developers think should be in our neighborhood.

"Gateway" - you drank the developer's kool-Aid

Medical office - No!!! - 10 minute appt's = traffic

Housing for Newton

H3 should say "pay for" implications, not just prepare! More housing = more infrastructure cost and less tax revenue

H3 I trust schools to prepare for more children. Children = plus. Families are good for Newton

H1: Variety of Housing needs now - this helps.

Agree!!

Model for Sustainability

Original planning department proposal for vision process was inadequate + led to distrust + lack of credibility

Recent city study of student enrollment has no credibility with residents

Provide clear quantitative thresholds* for determining acceptability vs respectability (*Example: you may go 10% higher than Indigo; x is set back y feet... set it all back y feet (don't fudge it); next to street 3 stories are okay, further back you can have 5 stories (cap it in terms of feet for height, Washington street stories are too tall)

Address neighborhood scale not just "human scale"

Why cant roof top mechanicals be covered w/ solar canopies?

Transportation Hub

EV chargers, resident and commuter access

Shuttle to Auburndale? Waltham station?

Bike storage, bike repair station, showers

Car sharing with EV

Onsite amenities are part of traffic mitigation

Accessible path for bikes should be in the principles discussion for transportation too. Video on trails (1/24) can this go on website

Sidewalk on the golf course side?

Q& A questions (transportation)

Could Grove St. be widened?

Level of service - thoughts on incorporation into this? LOS a poor way to evaluate roads improving LOS degrades ped/bike/vehicle safety and can't control LOS over time. Best to provide options to get out of car

What buy in is there from MBTA to improve service

Old plan had an exit on 128

What is the MBTA doing to expand the capacity of the Greenline?

It should be called "partial direct access" we need assurance from federal highway that this will happen

On peak days grove street traffic can add a lot of time