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157 LOWELL AVENUE
NEWTONVILLE, MA 02460

February 22, 2022

Zoning & Planning Committee
Newton City Council
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Dear Councilors,

A hearing on my Petition for a Village Zoning District in Newton is scheduled for Monday, February 28th. Because of the complexity of the issues and the time limitation we all are forced to recognize, I thought I would send you some background material that I hope is helpful.

Since most of our villages are zoned BU 1, I tried to follow the format in the ordinance for the BU 1 zone District. My intent was to present issues for discussion and, hopefully, adoption. Having sat in your position on the Board of Aldermen, in the state legislature and as a private citizen on a zoning advisory committee, I recognize that the decision is yours to make. Realizing that you might not agree with all I propose, I reached out to two land use attorneys, Alan Schlesinger and Terry Morris and a Human Scale development proponent, Architect Marc Hershman, for additional advice.

Alan Shlesinger suggested we use the MU 4 format and we have developed a supplemental recommendation for a Village Zone ordinance. A copy has been sent to you by separate mail. Among ourselves, we have some disagreements over various items in the documents, however, we all agree that they should be discussed.

One of life's difficulties is trying to follow the special concepts used by planners, developers, attorneys and architects. I have prepared a chart to help us follow the various terms we will be using.

Mathematical Terms:

1 Mile = 5,280 feet
1 step for an average to short person = 2.2 feet; for an average to a tall person = 2.5 feet
1/4 mile = 1,320 feet or 600 steps [2.2 feet each]
Acre = 43,560 square feet

π = 3.14
r = radius of a circle

Area of a circle = π times r squared

Area of a ¼ mile circle = 3.14 X 1,742,400 [1,320 X 1,320] = 5,471,136 square feet

5,471,136 square feet = 125.6 acres

50 Acres + 20% for streets and sidewalks = 60 acres
60 acres = 2,613,600 square feet

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A circle with a 912 foot radius contains 2,611,675 square feet or 60 acres

50 acres plus 20% for streets and sidewalks will occupy @ 48% of a circle with a ¼ mile radius [2,613,600/ 5,471,136)

Present BU 1 zone housing unit density is 36 units per acre (by special permit)
Present MU 4 zone housing unit density is 43.5 units per acre (by special permit)

Housing   Unit Density   Chart:

Zone	Units per Acre	Sq Ft of land per unit
SR 1	1.74	25000
SR 2	2.90	15000
SR 3	4.36	10000
MR 1	8.71	5000
MR 2	14.52	3000
MR 3	36.30	1200
MR 4	43.56	1000
BU 1	36.30	1200
BU 2	36.30	1200
BU 3	36.30	1200
BU 4	36.30	1200
MU 1	4.36	10000
MU 2	4.36	10000
MU 3	54.45	800
MU 4	43.56	1000

MGL Chapter 40A, §3A density requirement = 15 units per acre.

Part of my purpose in outlining the above information is to provide you with the background that has resulted in the formation of my opinion that meeting the requirements of MGL c. 40A, §3A should not be an arduous task. We have the tools in our zoning toolbox. The big issue is giving up special permit review. If planned with cautious forethought, you should be able to come up with an acceptable solution.

Thank you.

Peter F. Harrington