

From: Theresa Park [mailto:tpark@newtonma.gov]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2006 8:46 AM  
To: tpark@newtonma.gov  
Subject: Joining a NCTF Subcommittee

THE NEWTON CENTRE TASK FORCE  
IS SEEKING  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION  
ON ITS ROADMAP TO COMPLETION

The Newton Centre Task Force is accepting expressions of interest (EOI) from the public to work with Task Force members to formulate three distinct approaches to realizing a rejuvenated Newton Centre.

There will be three subcommittees, each chaired by a Task Force member and distinguishable by the level of change and growth considered. The suggested starting points for discussion, which will ultimately be determined by each subcommittee, are as follows:

- \* Approach 1/"Better Not Bigger" - better signage, landscaping, traffic management, etc.
- \* Approach 2/"Moderate" - 50 residential units, 100K SF of commercial space, an alternative use in the Triangle, and a parking garage in the center's vicinity
- \* Approach 3/"Higher End" - an overlay district, 150 residential units, 200K SF of commercial development, parking garage in the center's vicinity, and civic use

If you would like to join a subcommittee:

1. Submit a brief expression of interest (EOI) and identify the subcommittee that most closely adheres to your vision for Newton Centre and that you wish to serve on.
2. Review the process overview (see Attachment A) and agree to abide by the guidelines in your EOI.
3. Email your EOI, along with your address, phone number and email address, to Theresa Park at tpark@newtonma.gov <mailto:tpark@newtonma.gov> by June 30, 2006. A kickoff meeting is tentatively scheduled for 8 a.m. on July 5, 2006.
4. All participants are expected to be familiar with the Task Force's Initial Findings Report, as well as the EDC report, Newton Centre Renaissance. Copies are available on-line along with additional information about the Task Force at [www.ci.newton.ma.us/newtoncentretaskforce](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/newtoncentretaskforce).

ATTACHMENT A

I. Subcommittee Overview:

1. Task Force members will volunteer to serve on a Subcommittee that most closely adheres to his/her vision so that the best possible plan for the approach can be derived.

1.

Subcommittee members will select a chair and facilitator to guide the process. The chair and facilitator should be Task Force members. If there is more than one candidate interested in serving as chair, one option is to allow each candidate to speak on how he/she expects to run the process.=20

1.

Subcommittees will include participation from non-Task Force members.

1.

Each subcommittee will follow the guiding principles outlined in Section III.

1.

Subcommittee chairs are responsible for scheduling meetings and managing work tasks.

1.

Subcommittee groups should complete their work by September 9, 2006.

1.

An on-site, half-day workshop will be held with Dodson Associates in mid/late September for all three subcommittees. Dodson will offer input on design issues and provide illustrators to render each group's vision.

1.

A series of Task Force meetings will be scheduled to identify a common ground among the three approaches.

1.

A public forum will be scheduled in the fall to present the Task Force's result to the public.

## II. Operating Guidelines:

1.

Notices of subcommittee meetings will be provided to Theresa Park, preferably by email, at least 48 hours in advance for posting.

2. Following Task Force members will act as a resource to and active participants in all three groups:=20

Candace Havens, Traffic & Parking=20

Rob Gifford, Finance

Jane Shoplick, Design

Ann Hochberg, Zoning

(3) There will be periodic checking-ins between the Task Force Chair, Task Force Coordinator and Subcommittee Chairs.

### III. Sub-Committee Guiding Principles:

Alternative plans developed by the three sub-committees ("better not bigger," moderate and higher end) should conform to the following guidelines:

1.

Improve the Status Quo: All three plans should seek to improve Newton Centre, relative to the status quo, in the following areas:

- \* Traffic
- \* Parking
- \* Pedestrian Experience
- \* Streetscape
- \* Diversity/vibrancy of retail offerings

(Note: Improvements could be realized at any point along the spectrum of change/development. For example, without adding a single square foot to the Centre, one could advance the objective of enhancing the diversity and vibrancy of retail offerings through: i) the creation of a merchants/owners association that would seek to recruit targeted tenants; or ii) recommend zoning changes that would facilitate the movement of non-retail uses (i.e. bank branches) to upper level space.)

(2) Mitigation Plan: for merchants, abutters, property owners and other direct stakeholders. All plans should anticipate and offer a remediation/mitigation plan for any negative impacts on the constituencies most directly affected by proposed changes to the Centre.

1.

Financing Plan: All plans should provide a financing scheme for proposed capital and operational improvements. Significant funding requirements should look to sources outside of the current City's capital and operating budget, such as state, federal and non-profit grants, private capital, business improvement districts, smart growth districts and district improvement financing (DIF) bonds.

2. Flexibility: Targeted densities, development or lack thereof should be a starting point, as opposed to a prescription, for each of the sub-committees. For example, a sub-committee may choose to scale up or scale down from its initially targeted scope. Two, or even all three, committees could ultimately merge into a single vision (anything is possible!).

#### Suggested Assumptions for Starting Point:

- \* Approach 1/"Better Not Bigger" - better signage, landscaping, traffic management, etc.
- \* Approach 2/"Moderate" - 50 residential units, 100K SF of commercial space, an alternative use in the Triangle, and a parking garage in the center's vicinity=20
- \* Approach 3/"Higher End" - an overlay district, 150 residential units, 200K SF of commercial development, parking garage in the center's vicinity, and civic use=20

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