



# Memorandum

To: City Council  
From: Chair of Zoning & Planning Committee  
Re: Meeting Cancellation  
Date: August 21, 2020

---

Dear Colleagues,

Because, as originally intended, it does not make sense to switch gears and focus on mapping, we have decided to cancel the August 31 ZAP meeting. This will allow more time for Planning to prepare well-informed and well-organized content and format to help guide a productive ZAP discussion that moves Article 3 forward. Vice Chair Danberg and I agree.

At our last meeting, whether or not you said the work to date is impressive, going in the right direction, or had concerns with some of the measures proposed, most expressed a caution: "...but the devil is in the details". To be able to decide we have a product - even a next draft - ready for public hearing, we've got to have a shared understanding of how the proposed measures work to provide the development we want to encourage - as well as how each are controlled and limited to discourage development we do not want.

To structure the content of the next several meetings, Zachery LeMel needs to have a better sense from each of us what we're looking for. The 8/11 Planning Department memo from Mr. LeMel provides a framework for you to organize your questions/ comments/ concerns -and whatever additional information you feel you need.

(Link for 8/11 Memo: <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/105567/08-11-20%20Planning%20Memo%20#88-20.pdf>)

Mr. LeMel has offered to schedule a 1.5-hour session directly with each of you - (committee members first) where you can have him all to yourself to:

1. Dig into the details of the draft
2. Ask what are the most concerning, unclear, difficult, etc. issues
3. Ask what questions need to be answered before you will feel comfortable that we have a product that is workable (i.e. each Councilor's individual decision tree)

Especially for committee members, but for all interested, please try to schedule your personal session with Zachery during the week of August 31 - September 4. But if you are away that week, please seek a time as early as possible the following week, for the reasons I mention in the memo.

I urge you to do this so Zachery can compile everyone's comments into a prioritized list (i.e. more Councilors ask about something, the more important it is) and then outline the next several ZAP meetings accordingly. For the things that need more work, we can lay out the type of analyses needed, visualizations, etc. and work through them at ZAP. At each of these ZAP meetings we will seek consensus on the specific items discussed (i.e. district dimensional standards, by-right vs. SP threshold for multi-unit conversion, etc.).

Our next meeting is Monday, September 14. please let Nathan know if you can make a meeting as well on Thursday, October 1 (fifth week of the month) - to avoid the Monday holiday.

Thank you all -  
Stay well and enjoy the rest of your summer.

Deb