

Large House Review (LHR) Committee
Monday June 23, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Select Board Chambers
Needham Town Hall, 1471 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA
AND
Virtual Meeting using Zoom
Meeting ID: **885 4714 5967**
(Instructions for accessing below)

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Direct Link to meeting: <https://needham-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/88547145967>

1. Approval of meeting minutes.
2. Debrief from Community Meeting
3. Review of survey results
4. Selection of appropriate regulatory tools.
5. Special permit requirement?
6. Modeling framework
7. Update on RFP & Consultant

LHR Committee Members:

Artie Crocker	Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee
Jeanne McKnight	Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee
Heidi Frail	Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Marianne Cooley	Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Moe Handel	Design Review Board Member / Design Review Board Designee
Tina Burgos	Finance Committee Member / Finance Committee Designee
Nik Ligris	Zoning Board of Appeals Member / Zoning Board of Appeals Designee
Bill Paulson	Real Estate Broker appointed by the Planning Board
Paul McGovern	Developer appointed by the Planning Board
Oscar Mertz	Architect appointed by the Planning Board
Chris Cotter	At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Rob Dangel	At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Joe Matthews	At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Ed Quinlan	At Large appointed by the Planning Board



Large House Review (LHR) Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 2, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Artie Crocker Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee (Co-Chair)
Bill Paulson Real Estate Broker appointed by the Planning Board
Paul McGovern Developer appointed by the Planning Board
Oscar Mertz Architect appointed by the Planning Board
Joe Matthews At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Ed Quinlan At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Jeanne McKnight Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee
Heidi Frail Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Tina Burgos Finance Committee Member / Finance Committee Designee
Chris Cotter At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Moe Handel Design Review Board Member / Design Review Board Designee (Co-Chair)
Rob Dangel At Large appointed by the Planning Board

Staff Present:

Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development
Alex Clee, Assistant Planner

Committee Members Absent:

Nik Ligris Zoning Board of Appeals Member / Zoning Board of Appeals Designee
Marianne Cooley Select Board Member / Select Board Designee

1. Approval of meeting minutes.

Upon motion duly made by Heidi Frail and seconded by Oscar Mertz, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of March 31, 2025; April 7, 2025; and May 21, 2025, as amended. By roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Review and Finalize draft agenda for June 9 community meeting and discuss breakout group questions.

The group discussed the proposed breakout groups for the June 9th meeting. Bill Paulson suggested that the questions be written to be more open-ended and less leading. It was noted that the questions are only meant to initiate discussion.

The group discussed how the groups would be led both in-person and via Zoom. It was noted that people will be able to self-select their groups, with a certain number of people included in each.

The group reviewed the prompts for each group and made changes as needed.

46
47 3. Review and Finalize survey questions.
48

49 The group reviewed the survey questions and made certain changes. There was discussion
50 regarding how to best obtain demographics in the survey, including age and how long people
51 have lived in Needham. The group considered a question regarding if those attending are
52 Needham residents. Some group members mentioned that they would like the meeting to only
53 include Needham residents. However, it was noted that those outside Needham may also have
54 important input, and that the community meeting could not exclude them. All of those who speak
55 during the meeting should identify themselves and give an address.
56

57 Jeanne McKnight suggested an additional question regarding what changes occur in a
58 neighborhood that has dealt with tear downs and if this is an issue for residents. She expressed
59 concern with front facing garages. It was noted that a question for each architectural feature
60 could not be included, but concerns could be raised during public comment. Paul McGovern
61 stated that he does not believe this Committee should focus or dictate any particular design. He
62 stated that some tear downs include a rebuilt structure that is appropriate for the Town. The
63 Committee should focus on large houses, but not necessarily tear downs.
64

65 The survey will be initialized on Friday and will likely close after a week.
66

67 4. Review of Revised Schedule
68

69 It was noted that the second public input session would be held September 15th. The
70 Committee's next meeting is June 23rd. During that meeting the consultant will be announced,
71 the group can debrief from the public input session and hear the results from the survey. The
72 group should also discuss how it would like to measure "bulk" moving forward.
73

74 It was noted that the Committee needs to have a discussion regarding if it would like for
75 relaxation on non-conforming lots to continue for certain programs.
76

77 Upon motion duly made by Heidi Frail and seconded by Oscar Mertz, it was voted to adjourn at
78 8:33 p.m. By roll call, the motion passed unanimously.
79

80 *Respectfully submitted,*
81 *Kristan Patenaude*



Large House Review (LHR) Committee Community Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 9, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Artie Crocker Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee (Co-Chair)
Bill Paulson Real Estate Broker appointed by the Planning Board
Paul McGovern Developer appointed by the Planning Board
Oscar Mertz Architect appointed by the Planning Board
Joe Matthews At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Ed Quinlan At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Heidi Frail Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Tina Burgos Finance Committee Member / Finance Committee Designee
Chris Cotter At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Moe Handel Design Review Board Member / Design Review Board Designee (Co-Chair)
Rob Dangel At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Marianne Cooley Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Jeanne McKnight Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee

Staff Present:

Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development
Alex Clee, Assistant Planner

Committee Members Absent:

Nik Ligris Zoning Board of Appeals Member / Zoning Board of Appeals Designee

1. Welcome & Foundational Presentation

Artie Crocker welcomed those present and introduced the Committee. He read the Committee's charge, which came from the Planning Board. He noted that there will be two additional community meetings starting in September.

Moe Handel explained that the Committee was chartered to review a broad range of issues related to the replacement housing currently being built in Needham, starting with the single family zone (SRB), which is the smaller of the two single-family districts, containing both conforming lots of around 10,000 s.f. and larger lots, along with pre-existing non-conforming lots prior to 1947 when the requirements change to minimum lot sizes of 10,000 s.f. The Committee's study looked at 7,000 s.f.-10,000 s.f. lots as Needham is essentially built out. Almost all new homes are built on lots created by the demolition of existing homes. Public contributions through these community meetings will provide a crucial framework for the Committee's work. Input will be factored into the final report recommendations to the Planning Board. The Committee's report will then be reviewed and refined by the Planning Board to prepare any final zoning bylaw amendments to be brought to Town Meeting. During the Planning Board's process, there will be additional public hearings to review any proposed

changes, which will require the approval of the Needham Town Meeting, tentatively targeted for the Annual Town Meeting in spring 2026. Needham is not the only community to be dealing with these issues, and so the Committee has been speaking to other similar communities to better understand their approach to regulating new homes. Needham has a history of regulating new construction of single family homes, most recently in 2017 when new regulations were established. The Committee has met thus far with representatives from Wellesley and will be meeting with Lexington and Concord representatives as well. At this meeting, the public is asked to gather in small groups where one of the Committee members will also be presented. There are four prompts to trigger discussion. The purpose is to engage people who have an interest in this issue and to hear what they think. There will be a lot of public participation at every step of this process.

Oscar Mertz stated that the Committee focused on the General Residence and SRB districts. In reviewing the requirements that are limiting factors for large houses, the two that are likely to be most restrictive are the floor area ratio (FAR) and the maximum lot coverage. These numbers are triggered depending on the size of the lot. The Committee had two sets of studies complete. The first set was regarding non-conforming lots and the second set was for conforming lots. Non-conforming lots are typically under 10,000 s.f. and have dimensions that are under the requirement for a single family lot. Conforming lots are 10,000 s.f. and above. The Committee reviewed sample houses for each category to analyze what those houses represent in terms of their size on the lots. The Committee completed surveys of its members to get a sense of whether the sample houses were considered too large for their lots. There are front, rear, and side setbacks for each lot and a frontage dimension of 80'. For non-conforming lots the frontage is under 80' which then leads to smaller setbacks. In focusing on the smaller lots, the Committee is trying to gauge how large houses on those lots are and consider opportunities for how to adjust things. Almost all of the houses studied hit the maximum FAR and some of the houses were very tall; there is a height limit of 35' in Town.

2. Small Group Discussions

The Committee reviewed the four prompts for the small group discussions:

- 1) What brought you here tonight?
- 2) How do you feel about the houses being built in Needham over the last 10 years?
- 3) Do you think the Town should be regulating/moderating house size differently than it currently does? Would a change impact you personally?
- 4) How has your neighborhood been changed over the last 10 years? Has this been a positive change or a negative change? Why?

3. Report Back to Full Group

Tina Burgos stated that her table talked about the character of the Town and its changing demographics. There was discussion regarding how to maintain what the Town currently has and how to deal with changes that the Town is facing. Many people attended the meeting because they want to become more involved with the Town given current events, particularly with Envision Needham and the MBTA Communities Act. The group spoke about valuing the old homes in their neighborhoods and throughout Town. There was discussion regarding how to

92 preserve these houses and lead people to appreciate them, such as designating their historical
93 value instead of tearing them down. There was discussion regarding the aesthetics of new builds,
94 particularly in terms of garages.

95
96 Oscar Mertz and Gabby Grappo, sophomore at Needham High School, explained that their group
97 discussed property value and that the housing materials for knockdowns are very costly. The
98 group also discussed climate change and flooding and how this relates to the issue of cutting
99 down trees. In terms of housing supply and demand, checks and balances were mentioned, along
100 with generally affordability. Smaller homes are still quite expensive in Needham. Adjusting the
101 height restrictions and considering how garages affect sizes, and lots was discussed. The group
102 noted that neighborhoods are changing over to include large houses. The ways in which potential
103 changes may impact homeowners and potential sale prices was also discussed. There was
104 discussion regarding unintended consequences.

105
106 Heidi Frail stated that her group discussed that houses in Town are getting larger and larger.
107 Older homes are being dwarfed by newer larger homes. There was discussion regarding the FAR
108 calculation and a request for space that exists to be counted, such as basements and attics. This
109 calculation should not be exemptible in any way. The group discussed the need for starter homes
110 and downsizing houses. There was concern expressed regarding how the value and taxes of
111 homes are calculated and how any changes could affect that. There was a request for a visual of
112 how any changes would alter house shapes and sizes on different sized lots. The impact to
113 neighbors should also be taken into account.

114
115 Ed Quinlan stated that it came across at his group that people feel strongly about this issue. His
116 group discussed that large houses versus small lots is a problem which the Town needs to deal
117 with. Many people said they would like to see coordination by the Committee and the
118 committees for trees and stormwater, as these are interrelated issues. There was concern
119 expressed regarding financial interests on existing homes with potential changes to regulations. It
120 was mentioned that allowing larger houses to go into the building setbacks changes the character
121 of the neighborhood.

122
123 Moe Handel stated that people at his table were very concerned about this topic and feel
124 negatively affected by the change to larger homes on single family lots in the zoning districts.
125 One comment was regarding the psychology of knowing older houses will likely be torn down
126 and a sense of impending doom when being invested in one's neighborhood. Concern was
127 expressed regarding runoff from larger newer homes and the amount of impervious surfaces
128 resulting from those newer homes. The loss of light from larger homes was discussed, including
129 other costs to the neighbors. Some people at the table moved to Needham because it was more
130 affordable than other communities, but that reality seems to be changing and many no longer
131 have the economic means to live in larger, more expensive homes.

132
133 Marianne Cooley stated that her table seemed to be agreement that people did not feel that
134 maintaining the look and feel of neighborhoods is important. It seems that the aesthetics of
135 houses will change over time. There was concern expressed regarding the setbacks from the
136 street and that significant deviations from this can lead to people perceiving the houses
137 differently. The group discussed the potential impact from trees and stormwater for new builds.

There was also concern regarding the value of homes changing. The group recognized that it would like a community with some economic diversity.

Chris Cotter stated that his group discussed that the size of the house depends on the lot. There was a bit of disagreement whether houses are too large or if there should be more flexibility. There was concern regarding setbacks mostly in terms of neighbors. Front setbacks should maintain consistency with the neighborhood. Visibility of driveways could also be an issue. There was concern regarding property values. The group discussed wanting a holistic thinking for the entire Town regarding the MBTA Community Act and other building plans being developed.

Rob Dangel stated that his group discussed a lack of diversity in both housing sizes and availability and how this will affect the demographic of the Town. There was a general consensus that the Town should be open to people from all walks of life. Large houses lead to a lack of options from an affordability perspective. There was concern regarding certain developers and wanting more information about the building process and what resident's rights in airing grievances. There was concern regarding lack of respect for local neighbors and disruption they face during and after construction. The group discussed feedback around design choices and design elements. There was discussion regarding flooding concerns and water runoff from new houses. The group discussed that FAR should include basements and attics. There was a general feeling that many trees are being lost. The group discussed why it has taken the Town so long to revisit this large house problem. There was a developer at the table and there was discussion that increasing the restrictions could drive housing costs in the wrong direction, as developers would have to adhere to more stringent regulations. Paul McGovern stated that the group discussed the impact any new restrictions would have on property values for older houses.

Joe Matthews stated that there were over 40 people in the Zoom room. There was concern expressed regarding loss of trees, water runoff, and property grading. Some people had no issue with the size of new houses and some people thought they were too large. Some people expressed that the issue is the size of the house in relation to the lot. Affordability was expressed as a concern, along with light pollution and the negative impacts of smaller distances between houses. There were concerns expressed regarding a lack of housing diversity in Town.

4. End of comments: Open mic for comments, questions, ideas

Louise Miller, 5 North Hill Avenue, stated that the Committee needs to define what issue it is trying to solve. Taste and landscaping cannot be regulated for. She noted that the Committee may need to determine which areas of Town to focus its efforts.

Doug Fox, Marked Tree Road, stated that he believes the Committee needs to be cognizant that it may take a long time before this item is revisited again. He believes that last time the Town overcorrected in trying to protect property values for those with small lots. The land is now worth more than the houses on these lots. He would like to see more balance this time. There should be proof regarding what changes or lack of changes could do.

Gary Ajamian, Meetinghouse Circle, stated that the 2016/7 changes had unintentional consequences. The efforts were well intended, but the changes triggered the tear downs occurring in Town. Now that many neighborhoods have already been transformed, the question is whether the regulations should be changed again, which could create new unintended consequences such as reducing existing home values, disrupting the redevelopment of some neighborhoods, discouraging responsible builders, and negatively impacting tax revenues.

Mara Hicks, 22 Richard Road, stated that her group discussed why larger homes are needed, but noted that the use of houses has changed a lot, such as having dual income families working from home. Houses may also include multigenerational families. Restricting certain things could prevent people from being able to use a house as needed and may lead them to buy elsewhere. She stated that she would like to see additional outdoor items regulated, such as potential pollution, grading, and drainage, instead of only the physical structure itself. Finally, some people in the group spoke about additional environmental restrictions for housing but building code addresses much of this already. Adding more of those types of restrictions could increase the price homes, making them less affordable, where affordability seems to be of great concern.

5. Closing and Next Steps.

Artie Crocker stated that the Committee will continue to meet through the summer and is conducting a survey to collect feedback. Feedback should be sent to the Committee on associated topics.

Upon motion duly made by Heidi Frail and seconded by Oscar Mertz, it was voted to adjourn. By roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude

1) What brought you here?

- Flooding and impervious surfaces
- House over 100 years, no first floor bathrooms. Age in place need first floor bathroom, will we get money back because of big lot? \$50,000 renovation, developer likely highest bidder, change - loss of competition
- Demo of street changing, no more kids in the street, different town character and facing different economic challenges. Can this be controlled?
- Want to become more involved with town especially given current town issues
- Street has maintained character because no tear downs, beautiful old homes, solid well built, type of people who are here, how do we preserve old homes? Is there a demand for new builds?
- Grew up in Needham, left and came back, renting saving to buy in Needham, co-own parents' home, giving it a glow up. Good investment, multi-generational living. Some new builders do pay attention to character of neighborhood, care about Needham
- Affordability issue, lots not large enough for new builds
- Town Meeting member & General interest
- Live on street of ranches
- General concern about knockdowns
- Outbid by developers constantly
- Impact of diversity
- Biggest complaints by residents = lack of affordable options, lack of affordability
- Want to be more informed on what Committee is doing
- Residents concerned about massive tear downs
- Interested in helping with zoning
- Engaging with developers process murky, not transparent
- Interest in Committee outcomes
- Older home is dwarfed by newer neighbors
- Enjoying increase in property values
- Height limits may not be followed
- New homes are very big including walkout basements and attics, why does FAR not count this area? Is extra space being taxed?
- Needham neighborhoods being destroyed, now houses are too expensive, could not afford to move in now, kids can't either
- Environmentally too much
- New house of 25 years ago is now the smallest house on the street, torn down despite being well maintained, replaced by much bigger house
- Needham also needs starter homes and step down homes for downsizing
- Trees are also casualty of home tear downs
- \$1 million for a starter house?!
- Sloped sites present challenges, landslide, flooding, damage to neighbors
- Fishy stuff going on regarding FAR calculations
- Question of whether a sale to new residents versus developers is more beneficial to a seller

- Feel negatively affected
- Affordability
- What is happening in neighborhoods, why are the new houses so big
- concerned, didn't want a large house, bought 1288 SF, 10 of 12 houses they looked at have been torn down
- Trees, impervious surface
- Variety of housing is important
- Water issues due to runoff from impervious surfaces and large houses
- Large house versus small lot, large houses change character
- Issue of house regulations/lot value, wants to see coordination
- House/trees/stormwater
- Big houses versus setbacks as an issue
- Physical impact/damage on my house due to adjacent construction
- Protect financial interest on existing home, older historic homes need to be preserved
- Concern with tear downs
- Houses too large
- Neighbors feel the impact regarding trees, sense of space, developers only think of tear downs
- Concern with the conflict with MBTA zoning
- Investment for life, property values for the future
- How will this impact ADUs?
-
-

2) How do you feel about the houses being built in Needham over the last 10 years?

- All garages especially in front, older houses garages in back. Is this a question of taste?
- Moved to Needham for schools and commute
- More insular environment, less social
- Families working longer and harder to afford homes and lifestyles, possibly less social
- A different town, ladder streets and island, maintain character
- Issue with developers need to be a certain size to make a profit
- All seem to be black and white and look the same
- Large and getting larger
- More baths than bedrooms
- Concerns about people being pushed out
- Not sure people need/want such large houses
- House is getting bigger
- Economy is driving large houses, is that what works best for the town?
- Likes that last LHR made regulations that did not yield flat walls
- Feels that last Committee overdid - not enough regulation, had little effect
- Wants burden of proof to be put on those proposing no changes vs regulations
- Last 10 years imbalance on how town has addressed housing issue

- Concerns about developers' accountability to adhere to regulations
- Certain developers break rules constantly
- Flooding concerns
- Concern how neighborhood changes
- Need survey specifically around slowing ? in ?
- Builders are building what people want
- Building has gotten more expensive, materials
- Bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger
- Finding more ways to game the system
- Generally, a trend that bigger is better, applied to everything
- Complicated roof lines make solar difficult
- More porches are good
- 2017 reforms failed
- Modern farmhouses are nicer than old colonials but too tall, garage further back from street is also good
- Home size is now divorced from geographic location in Town, used to be all big houses were on the outskirts past rts. etc., now are in dense neighborhoods
- Large or small, the size of neighboring houses will affect property values of all
- Loss of privacy when neighboring lots raze trees, shade and sun
- How do other towns count attics and basements?
- Too big, runoff worse
- More houses, water runoff
- Loss of character is an issue
- Discomfort over the last 10 years, need to do something regarding runoff
- Shouldn't change lot height
- Should be more incremental steps in definition
- Shading neighbors is not good
- Nice but enormous
- Setbacks are too tight
- What's installed in setbacks should be reviewed
- Site modifications are awful, loss of trees
- Depends on the size of lot
- Good things such as efficiency, concern regarding electric only, setbacks and sides concern with sunlight to the house next door, traffic, water table, front setbacks, aesthetic and dimensional appeal with the front setback
- Too big, house 2300 s.f. tear down on a 7000 s.f. lot, too small of a landscape, concern with setbacks
-

3) Do you think the Town should be regulating/moderating house size differently than it currently does? Would a change impact you personally?

- Not sure because don't know enough about FAR, include third floor in FAR?
- Nonconforming lots, adjust setbacks

- Historic homes (age, process, tear down)? Saving housing stock avoiding new construction completely?
- Yes, Yes - transparency, education community house building 101, no process for abutters, no contest process, hope and pray builders will be responsible, educate neighbors on process, want notifications, no trust, want control, more public comment and notice, disruption during construction
- Yes - FAR limitation input, hates trees being cut down, should be middle ground, has water impacts, impact - my house is worth more money, town we grew up in was more diverse demographically, not so much anymore
- Yes - wants to include attic and basement in FAR, adjust setbacks,
- No - if we make delays ability to build will lower property values, control - have a way to keep builders accountable to regulations and respect the neighbors, town lacks teeth for builders breaking bylaws
- Be transparent about results. Why can you build around the rules?
- Should be easy to understand and be enforceable, count what exists
- How will changes change home size? Please illustrate.
- Too much of a lot is covered, more coverage since 2017
- Plans to evaluate effect on home prices/valuations? Reassurance and evidence of economic impact/non-impact?
- Which problem are we trying to solve? Storm water, affordability?
- Should we focus on lot size in specific neighborhoods?
- What about auditions?
- Be mindful of the time between changes in zoning
- Don't worry about doing harm to property values
- Change in how houses are used, cost of restrictions?
- Happy with existing regulations
- Why is basement not in FAR
- FAR includes all finished space
- Basement and 3rd floor should be counted
- Houses fit well on a lot
- People seem to agree that houses are now bigger but appropriate
- Not sure what to do regarding basement and attic, if not moving the footprint may be OK, leeway for existing houses
- If very restrictive ??
-
-

4) How has your neighborhood been changed over the last 10 years? Has this been a positive change or a negative change? Why?

- Lake Dr. three houses on street knocked down, no negative impact on street, great people, kids/young people, more age diversity, flooding somewhat impact on people not what it looks like, doesn't like current color design trends

- Changes both positive and negative, likes families with kids, backyard now floods all the time, too difficult to move flooding and problems caused by new construction
- Last 10 years trending negatively, more floods because of work on Stratford Road
- Scale of house allows them to look into neighbor's yards
- Water issues because developer is not properly building
- Residents want more communication and notification from builders throughout project process
- Tear downs, debris everywhere, no accountability
- Prices of building will go up, more expensive houses with more regulations will pay less for lots
- Avon Circle - 3 new huge houses
- I think seller will keep value
- People think that smaller houses will be torn down
- People are invested in the character of the community
- Mostly attractive/positive
- Design good/site problems bad
- Attractive/raises property values
- Attractive
- Mix of good and bad
- Attractive homes
- Not as much change
- Need to think holistically with other city issues
- Interest in reviewing all houses above X amount ??
-

MISCELLANEOUS comments:

- Adjust height restrictions (lower them)
- Property value
- Housing materials are costly (getting more expensive)
- Climate change (greenery) (flooding)
- Water mitigations (trees help soak up the water)
- Include basement and attic in FAR
- Housing style changes visually in new properties
- Garages play a big role in zoning laws/how big the house is
- Supply and demand issue (too much demand)
- Checks and balances
- Adjust the bulk
- Creating restriction laws
- Affordability

- I called some people this afternoon. Here's my issue with the whole thing. I have built many 3,000 square foot houses in Needham, but I paid \$425-\$600 for the lot. So as long as people, especially seniors who are counting on the sale of their house, understand you cannot get \$1.2M- \$1.3M for your lot and then have someone build a smaller house. If someone is paying \$3M for a house, it's not going to be small. It all comes down to money, not just for builders but for people selling their homes too.
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NOTES OF JUNE 9, 2025 LARGE HOUSE REVIEW COMMITTEE COMMUNITY MEETING
ZOOM WEBINAR BREAK-OUT-ROOM FACILITATED BY JOE MATTHEWS
NOTES OF PARTICIPANT STATEMENTS TAKEN BY JEANNE MCKNIGHT

Resident: Homes on non-conforming lots are too large but should be reduced in a phased way so as not to affect current homeowners who want to sell. He knows his house is functionally obsolete and new construction would be more environmental. He lives in “the valley” neighborhood and observes that of the 150 or so houses in the neighborhood, 70 were rebuilt after teardowns. To change the regulations now might make for a “choppy” look. He thinks houses should be smaller, but change should be gradual. He is opposed to a “preventative” tendency.

Resident: She doesn’t have a concern about larger houses. She likes 3-car garages, asserting that they keep cars off the streets. She is concerned about light pollution and water runoff, rather than reducing house sizes.

Resident: She is a 34-year resident of the Heights. She had the first house she bought torn down because the cost of repair exceeded new construction. She does worry though, with big houses on smaller lots, we will have only enormous houses.

Resident: Her concern is on the demographics of Needham, with the teardown of starter homes, younger families can’t afford to live here. Big houses are OK but don’t lose houses sized as starter homes.

Resident: We are in a climate crisis, so we should be quickly moving to net energy homes, noting that peaked roofs are not good for solar. As to housing affordability, she mentioned her grandsons who can’t afford to live independently.

Resident: She is a 33-year resident of Needham and is concerned about large houses, neighborhoods lost, noting houses on Broadmeadow Road and Newbury Park, saying 6,100 sq. ft., 6 bedrooms, 7 baths is so big. Affordability is a concern – no young family can buy a \$3 million house.

Resident: She lives in the Heights and is concerned about many things related to large houses. Loss of trees, flooding that is out of control and needs mitigation, these are her concerns, not the size of new houses.

Resident: She asks if there is a way to encourage environmental [contents?], noting that yards are getting smaller, so abutters are looking into someone’s window now [privacy]. Trees are taken down. She notes that there are a lot of big houses in the Heights, some of

them huge, and asks what are our options? She might want to downsize – does the opportunity to build a big house raise the price of smaller houses [economic impact]? She is sympathetic towards those wanting to get a housing foothold, but downsizing is an issue for her.

Resident: He lives in the Olin College area. Very large houses went up on both sides of him and contractors cut down roots of trees (sugar maples) in the Town way – they died. He spoke with contractors, but they refused to be careful. Across the street from him there was also a teardown; the contractor was rude, knocking down a fence. We don't have the same buffer area that we used to have.

Resident: Said the Large House Review Committee is doing a great job. The large house issue doesn't go away. He's concerned about environmental issues, and he counts himself as a housing advocate, so he supports anything we can do to provide entry-level homes. Large houses don't look right and are being sold for astronomical prices, which may be good for Town taxes, but if we don't address this issue, the Town will change in many ways [demographic issue?]

Resident: The size of houses doesn't fit the lots. The Town is losing diversity. Could the Town give incentives to encourage renovation rather than teardown to make houses more affordable.

Resident: She is for big new houses in Needham, they are beautiful. We need to address concerns about stormwater, though. Her house is a 1,600 sq. foot house on a 6,000 sq. foot lot. Should we have new rules to allow small houses on small lots to be expanded? She thinks late 20th century houses are not attractive.

Resident: His concern is stormwater. Big houses cause it because of regrading. Because FAR doesn't include basement area, developers dig down and remove land that could handle groundwater. Such private development leads to public costs.

Resident: She lives in the Heights, and her concern is water runoff, light pollution, and loss of trees. Houses are too large for the lots; there is a lack of privacy when trees are taken down; also, a lack of affordability for young families.

Resident: She lives in the Heights. Some house sizes are inappropriate for the neighborhood and sometimes for the lot. She doesn't understand why households need so many bedrooms. She agrees with John Bulian, though [as to a phased, gradual approach?] and thinks it is difficult to figure out what to do, maybe go from 5-6 thousand square feet down to a reasonable size. She notes that we want houses for smaller families and for downsizing seniors.

Resident: Noting that he is Vice-Chair of the Planning Board, he compliments the Large House Review Committee for its efforts.

NOTE: In writing up these notes, certain words were underlined to be helpful in preparing a summary of issues. Words in brackets may not exactly what the speaker said but are inserted for clarity or are what the notetaker heard but may have misheard.

Resident - Houses too large and should be reduced, but over time; claims house is functionally obsolete from climate standpoint. Worried about value of homes; agree generally with adding more housing and varied stock; In the Valley neighborhood many already torn down, change already started, will continue.

Resident – In Needham since 2019 by Broadmeadow, current neighborhood has mix of split levels and recent builds, don't have a concern about large houses, doesn't feel Needham needs to be overregulating, lots of people moving back? (not clear what this comment is), wants 3-car garages, but has concerns over water runoff, light pollution, and tree loss.

Resident Here for 34 years, from Watertown, tore down 1st house as architect cost to rebuild was cheaper than fixing; thinks enormous houses being built on small lots; this creates feeling of little space and being too close to neighbors, can look around and know which houses will come down and be replaced.

Resident - Echo a lot of the comments living in Needham heights and is concerned about large houses; #1 is environmental impact, loss of trees, and water run-off; says she has been flooded multiple times and another teardown is occurring in the lot behind her; feels new house size and teardowns are out of control

Resident - Concern about demographic changes in Needham; loss of starter homes; no longer a community that young families can move to; this is not good for town, need to be thinking about demographics, big houses okay are okay, but don't lose starter home stock

Resident – She lives on a small lot in a cape bought in 1978; concerned over climate crisis and need to moving to build net zero homes; many large homes not sited for solar in her opinion; also tree loss; feels houses are very large; worried about affordability in town

Resident - Concerned with large houses and has been in Needham for 33 years and lives in the Broadmeadow area; she walk for a few miles everyday and can see how the neighborhoods have really changed (mentions Newbury/Broadmeadow park); she sees prices over \$3 million for 6100 sf 6-bed 6-bath; also notes that houses don't sell quickly; mass of house is so large; affordability is a concern for young people

Resident – Want to encourage more environmental construction on purpose; feels yards are getting smaller and greenery is being lost; originally she couldn't afford newton, but also didn't want to look into others' windows, which she feels is happening now; thinks tree loss construction/development are all connected; is also going on walks and noticing so many big houses; feels these aren't starter/forever home for new occupants; is worried about no options for downsizing in Needham; this is her 2nd home, may have to leave; wonder if teardowns/new construction raises price of other houses (not entirely clear of meaning)

Resident - Lives in the Olin College area, main concern are large houses, which is currently the case on either side of his cape bought in 1990; likes neighbors, but contractor damaged/removed sugar maple in the berm during construction in the neighborhood and the town footed the bill for removal; Does see that contractors have an interest in changing behavior, not being careful about trees during construction; neighbor across the street had terrible experience with contractor, damaged fence of neighbor and had to call building department; feels like large houses don't give same space buffer; feels like being at the mercy of big machines

Resident - Wants to address problem early on, seems to be no change to teardown/trees/water/environmental issues; admits it is a complicated issue; is a housing advocate, but property rights matter; feels there is problem with gigantic houses on tiny lots; has been here 13 years and seen massive change during this time and it needs to be addressed

Resident - Feels houses don't match lot size, makes people who have smaller homes feel like their house doesn't match the neighborhood; losing house diversity and green space; can't downsize/first time home owner, teardowns are so expensive so need to build large home; town should consider ways to incentivize something different

Resident - She lives on 1600 sf house on 6000 sf lot, feels house is not big enough, should just demolish house ultimately, but feels she is not able to add extension because of zoning changes; She likes new big modern houses, feels they are energy efficient and beautiful, doesn't like that houses are judged by size, houses needed to be built by code, need water mitigation,

Resident - His main concern is stormwater and water run-off; his house was were flooded in 2023, many people next to large homes of recent renovation; two things which happen is the grading of the lot being changed; building code is for internal of home, but not enough focus on external; wonders why FAR ratio doesn't include basement, as large basements displace earth, changing permeation of water in the earth; creates flooding issues for people next door and also the people in new large home

Resident - Live in the heights; her concerns are water run off, tree loss, light pollution, and houses are too large relative to the lot size; there are impacts on neighbors, a lack of privacy; increasing lack of entry level homes and starter homes.

Resident - Lives in heights as well, sizes of homes are inappropriate to neighborhood and lot, what is the need for a 6 or 7 bed room home with 6-7 baths, some neighbors are lovely, but seems families don't match, agree with another resident in that it is difficult to figure out what to do, in long run try to reduce from 6k to 5k to 4k might be good idea, personally lives in under 2k sf house from 1800s and its not as efficient

Chat GPT summary of Large House Review notes from Community Meeting of June 9:

(Please note the following summary was prepared with AI and should be reviewed as such.)

Chat GPT was asked for an executive summary of the notes and received this response below:

ChatGPT said:

Executive Summary: Public Hearing Comments (In-Person and Online)

Large House Review Committee – June 2025

The in-person and Zoom public sessions yielded a wide range of resident feedback, primarily centered on the scale of new construction in Needham and its consequences. The comments reflect a community grappling with change, with most expressing significant concern over the impacts of large house development. Here are the key takeaways:

1. Strong Concern Over Scale and Massing of Homes

- Widespread agreement that **new homes are too large relative to lot sizes**.
- Many describe a **loss of neighborhood character**, privacy, and space buffers.
- Residents expressed frustration that **older, well-maintained homes are being demolished** simply because larger homes are more profitable to build.

“Houses don’t match the lot size anymore.”

“Being at the mercy of big machines next door.”

2. Environmental and Infrastructure Impacts

- **Stormwater runoff, drainage, and flooding** were among the most commonly cited issues, especially by those living near recent large house builds.
- **Loss of mature trees** and open space was tied directly to new construction.
- Several comments called for **tree preservation** and inclusion of basements/attics in FAR calculations due to their environmental impact.

“I’ve been flooded multiple times since teardowns started behind my house.”

“Trees soak up water—we’re losing that natural defense.”

3. Affordability and Housing Diversity

- Many residents lament the **loss of starter homes and downsizing options**, with some saying Needham is no longer accessible to young families or the middle class.
- There is concern that **economic diversity is vanishing**, as only large, expensive homes are being built.

“We need housing options across income levels.”

“Needham is becoming a gated community in everything but name.”

4. Distrust of Developers and Process Transparency

- Numerous anecdotes of **contractors damaging trees, fences, and neighboring homes**, with little recourse.
- Complaints of **murky permitting processes**, insufficient public notification, and lack of enforcement.
- Some residents questioned whether developers are **gaming FAR and zoning rules**, calling for accountability and clearer regulations.

“Why are basements and attics excluded from FAR if they’re livable space?”

“There’s no process for abutters—just hope and pray the builder is responsible.”

5. Mixed Sentiment on New Construction

- A small number of participants voiced appreciation for modern, efficient homes, saying new houses **improve property values** and can be energy-efficient if done right.
- However, this view was outweighed by those worried about **visual monotony**, “cookie-cutter” designs, and excessive house-to-lot ratios.

“Some houses are beautiful and efficient—but too big for the lot.”

“It’s not just the size, it’s the effect on everything around it.”

6. Clear Desire for Policy Changes

Residents proposed a range of solutions:

- **Include basements/attics in FAR**
- **Stronger tree protection**
- **Adjust height and setback requirements**
- **Neighborhood-specific zoning** or overlays
- **More public engagement and notification during permitting**

“The town needs more teeth in enforcing its own rules.”

“We can’t just keep building bigger and hope it works out.”

Conclusion

While there are varied perspectives, the overwhelming majority of comments—both in-person and online—underscore a sense of urgency. Residents are calling on the Committee to:

- Restore balance between development and livability
- Protect environmental resources
- Promote housing diversity
- Improve transparency and accountability

These insights should serve as a strong mandate for actionable zoning and policy reform.

Chat GPT was then asked if there were “any other take aways from these notes” and received this response below:

ChatGPT said:

Yes—beyond the headline themes already covered, a few **important secondary takeaways** emerge from the in-person and Zoom public hearing notes:

1. Teardowns are Disruptive at a Human Level

Numerous comments weren’t just about aesthetics or planning policy—they were about the **daily disruption of life during construction**:

- **Noise, debris, unsafe work zones**, and property damage were cited.
- Some residents shared feeling **helpless and ignored** when voicing complaints.
- There’s a **psychological toll** of watching a familiar, quiet neighborhood become a construction zone.

“Debris everywhere, no accountability.”

“Contractors damaged our trees and fence, and no one did anything.”

2. The Town’s Identity Feels Under Threat

Long-term residents frequently described a **loss of the “Needham they knew”**:

- **Community continuity** is being eroded—fewer families with long roots, fewer kids playing outside, less neighborhood cohesion.
- Some residents fear that **Needham’s sense of place is being commodified**—houses are bought for land value alone, stripped of history.

“Demo of street changing, no more kids, different town character.”

“Now it’s just a place to build and flip.”

3. Residents Want More Communication and Control

There is a strong undercurrent of people **wanting to be more involved**, not just reactively:

- Repeated calls for **better notification to abutters** before demolition or major builds.
- Suggestions to **educate residents about zoning/FAR/lot size mechanics**.
- Clear desire for **public input at earlier stages of the building process**, not after it’s a done deal.

“Hope and pray the builder is responsible.”

“Why don’t we have more say when things go up next door?”

4. Financial Realities Are Acknowledged—but Questioned

A few residents, including some with building experience, acknowledged:

- It's **not realistic** to expect someone paying \$1.3M for a lot to build a modest 2,000 SF home.
- The **market economics do reward bigger builds**, and sellers want top dollar.

However, others push back:

- **Should town planning be shaped by market forces alone?**
- Are there **policy levers** to incentivize smaller builds?

“You can’t pay \$1.3M for a lot and build small. It all comes down to money.”

“But not everything should come down to money.”

5. Split Views on Design Aesthetics

Some residents like the **look and efficiency** of modern homes (especially modern farmhouses), while others find them:

- Repetitive (too many black-and-white homes)
- Out of place (wrong scale and style for the street)
- Poorly suited for solar or energy efficiency (due to roof angles)

This indicates that **design guidelines or review boards** could help mediate.

6. Desire for Nuanced, Targeted Policy

Rather than blanket restrictions, residents floated:

- **Neighborhood-specific zoning** (ladder streets vs. outskirts)
- **Lot-specific regulation** based on slope, tree coverage, etc.
- **Incentives for preserving older homes or building smaller**

There's a clear appetite for **thoughtful, case-based planning**, not just broad-brush reforms.

Chat GPT summary of Large House Review SURVEY:

(Please note the following summary was prepared with AI and should be reviewed as such.)

Conclusion

While opinions vary, the feedback reveals a **clear and urgent mandate**: residents expect the Committee to take meaningful steps to rein in overdevelopment, protect neighborhood integrity, and foster inclusive housing policies. The **depth of feeling and intensity of comments** must be recognized as more than anecdotal—they signal a community at a crossroads, demanding responsive governance.

Firstly, the entire document was run through ChatGPT and received the following response.

Executive Summary of the Large House Study Review Committee Survey Report (June 17, 2025)

The Town of Needham conducted a community survey to gather resident perspectives on teardowns and large house development. The findings reflect a broad consensus around the need for action and thoughtful reform. Key takeaways are summarized below:

Participation and Demographics

- Over **2,000 respondents** participated, indicating **strong community interest**.
- Respondents included a broad cross-section of **homeowners, renters, new residents, and long-term residents**.

Key Findings by Topic

1. Neighborhood Impact

- **Majority feel that large new homes negatively affect neighborhood character.**
- Concerns include **oversized homes on small lots, loss of charm, and shadowing/sightline issues**.

2. Environmental & Infrastructure Concerns

- Respondents highlighted the **loss of mature trees, increased impermeable surfaces, and worsening drainage/flooding** as major issues tied to large house development.

3. Housing Affordability and Diversity

- There is **widespread concern** that teardowns are reducing the number of **entry-level and moderately priced homes**.

- Many feel the town is losing its **economic and generational diversity**.

4. Zoning and Bylaw Enforcement

- A large number of respondents believe:
 - **Existing zoning laws are too permissive or outdated**
 - **Developers exploit loopholes** in FAR, attic/basement exclusions, and lot coverage
 - **Enforcement is weak**, especially during construction

5. Resident Priorities

- Respondents strongly support:
 - **Tighter zoning regulations**, especially regarding **mass, scale, and setbacks**
 - **Tree preservation rules**
 - **Drainage and runoff controls**
 - Preserving **neighborhood character and housing diversity**

6. Diverging Views

- A minority of respondents support **property rights and market freedom**, arguing that homeowners should be allowed to build within legal limits.
- These views, while present, are notably less common than those calling for more regulation and town control.

Conclusions

- The community is broadly aligned in its **discomfort with the current trajectory** of residential redevelopment.
- The majority want the town to take action to **preserve affordability, neighborhood character, and environmental stability**.
- There is a **clear mandate for the Committee to consider new regulations** and **strengthen enforcement** of existing bylaws.

Secondly, just the comments section was put into ChatGPT and received the response below.

Executive Summary of Resident Comments on Teardowns and Large House Development in Needham

The community responses reflect a town deeply divided over the rapid pace and scale of residential redevelopment. The primary themes emerging from the responses are as follows:

1. Loss of Affordable and Starter Homes

- **Widespread concern** that teardown practices eliminate smaller, older homes that once served as affordable starter or retirement housing.
- Residents emphasize the **lack of housing diversity**, with large homes pricing out young families, middle-income buyers, and downsizing seniors.

2. Negative Environmental Impacts

- Clear-cutting lots and excessive lot coverage have led to:
 - **Increased flooding and poor drainage**
 - **Loss of mature trees** and neighborhood green space
 - Negative effects on **stormwater management** and local ecosystems

3. Neighborhood Character and Aesthetics

- Many residents believe the new, large homes:
 - Are **architecturally out of place** and lack charm
 - **Overshadow neighboring homes**, reducing privacy and sunlight
 - Create a **cookie-cutter** appearance and erode Needham's traditional, small-town aesthetic

4. Equity and Economic Impact

- Perceived **displacement of socio-economic diversity** due to a shift toward multimillion-dollar homes.
- Concerns that town policies favor **developers and high-income buyers**, undermining long-term community health and inclusivity.

5. Regulatory Loopholes and Enforcement Gaps

- Frustration with developers **exploiting zoning loopholes**, particularly around:
 - FAR (Floor Area Ratio) calculations

- o Attic and basement exclusions
- o Inadequate **enforcement of setbacks and height restrictions**
- Multiple calls for **stricter, better-enforced zoning** and penalties for noncompliance

6. Mixed Views on Property Rights and Market Forces

- Some residents strongly defend **homeowners' rights** to maximize property value and build as large as bylaws allow.
- Others advocate for **more stringent regulations** to protect neighborhood quality and livability.

7. Quality of Life and Construction Impact

- Numerous complaints about:
 - o **Noise, dust, and traffic** from prolonged construction
 - o Negative **health, safety, and psychological effects**
 - o **Disregard for abutters' concerns** by builders and the town

General Sentiment Summary:

- **Majority opposition to current teardown trends and oversized homes:** Calls for reform, environmental protections, and preservation of housing diversity dominate.
 - A **smaller but vocal minority** supports development as part of natural market evolution and town progress.
 - Many comments stress the **urgency for action**, fearing the town is nearing or has already passed a tipping point in affordability, aesthetics, and sustainability.
-

Here's a selection of some of the more extreme or emotionally charged comments from the Large House Study Review Committee Survey:

1. Anti-Developer Sentiment

“Developers are destroying the character of Needham. They care only about profit and leave neighborhoods worse off.”

“Time to stop pandering to developers and start protecting the residents who actually live here.”

These reflect a deep **distrust and frustration** with what is seen as unchecked developer influence and a perception of town officials being complicit or passive.

2. Calls for Immediate Action or Bans

“Ban all teardowns until you fix the zoning code.”

“Put a moratorium on new construction of houses over 3,000 sq ft.”

Some respondents go as far as demanding **suspension of development activity entirely**, viewing current practices as an emergency requiring drastic measures.

3. Expressions of Outrage and Despair

“This town is being destroyed, one McMansion at a time.”

“I cry when I see what they did to my neighbor’s house and the trees they cut down.”

“If this keeps up, we’ll be just another soulless suburb.”

These reflect a **deep emotional attachment to the town’s historic character** and a sense of **personal loss and helplessness** over changes.

4. Concerns Over Class and Economic Division

“The town is being handed over to millionaires. Everyone else is being pushed out.”

“Needham is becoming a gated community in everything but name.”

There’s a clear theme of **economic exclusion**, with residents fearing the loss of diversity and **rising social stratification**.

5. Criticisms of Town Government

“The building department is asleep at the wheel.”

“Why even have zoning if no one enforces it?”

These comments suggest **intense dissatisfaction with town oversight**, with calls for better enforcement and accountability.



Large House Review Committee Survey



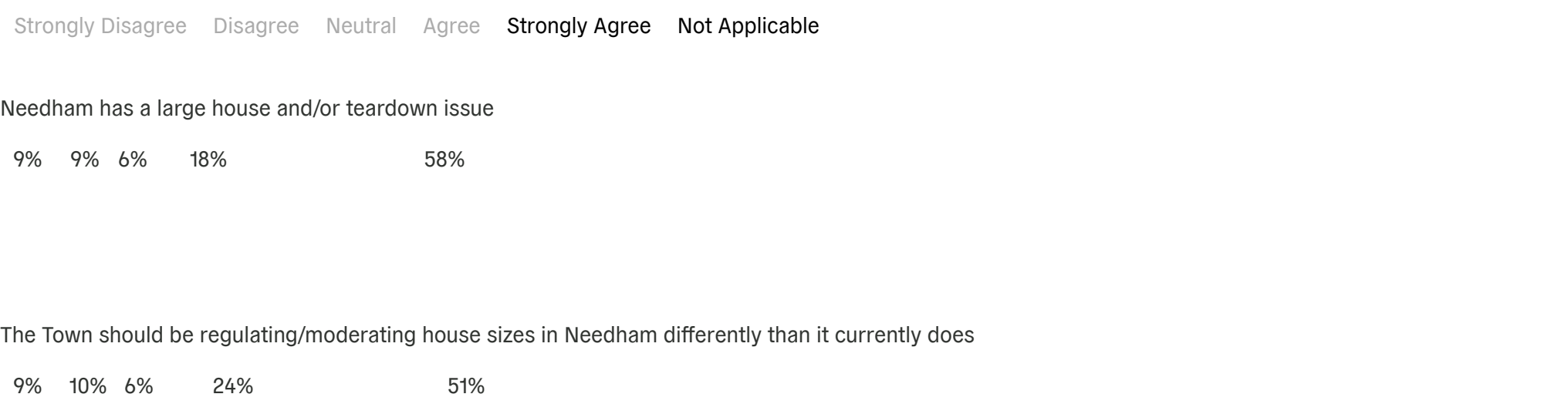
Survey Results
FINAL

06/17/2025

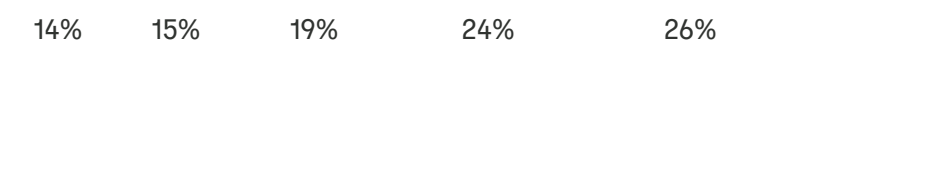
Please rate the following statements. You may elaborate on any of these statements in the open response section in question #2.

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
Needham has a large house and/or teardown issue	9%	9%	6%	18%	58%	0%
The Town should be regulating/moderating house sizes in Needham differently than it currently does	9%	10%	6%	24%	51%	0%
Large houses and/or teardowns in Needham have impacted me negatively	14%	15%	19%	24%	26%	2%
Spacing (side setbacks) between houses in Needham is acceptable	20%	34%	14%	22%	10%	0%
Spacing (front setbacks) between houses and the street in Needham is acceptable	16%	22%	21%	31%	9%	1%
Current height restrictions of new houses being built in Needham are acceptable	21%	28%	20%	21%	9%	1%
The footprint (lot coverage) of new houses being built in Needham is acceptable	39%	33%	7%	12%	8%	0%
I am comfortable with the current volume (bulk) of new houses being built in Needham	29%	30%	15%	16%	10%	0%
My neighborhood in Needham has changed negatively over the last 10 years	17%	20%	20%	23%	18%	4%
I am concerned that my house in Needham will be torn down and replaced after I sell it	17%	17%	19%	15%	27%	5%

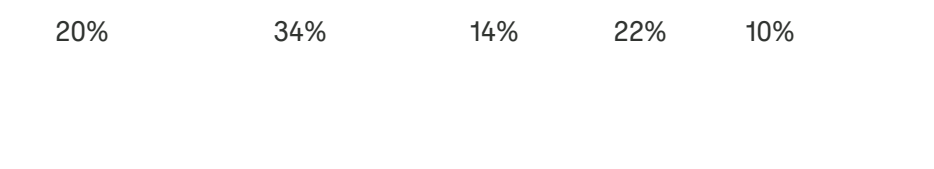
Expand all / Collapse all



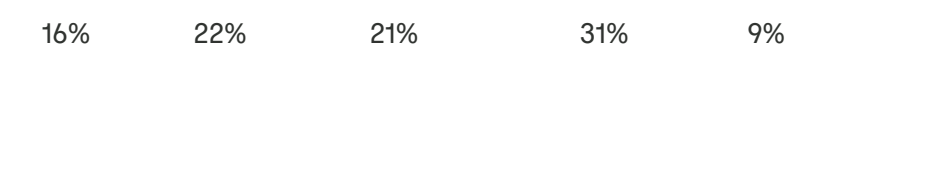
Large houses and/or teardowns in Needham have impacted me negatively



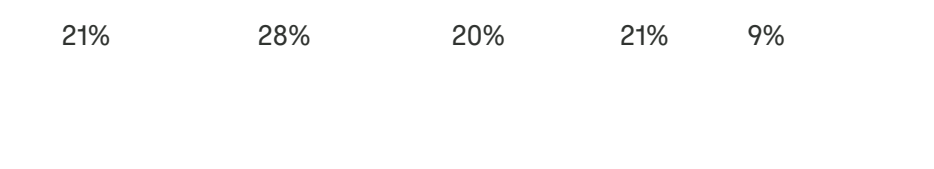
Spacing (side setbacks) between houses in Needham is acceptable



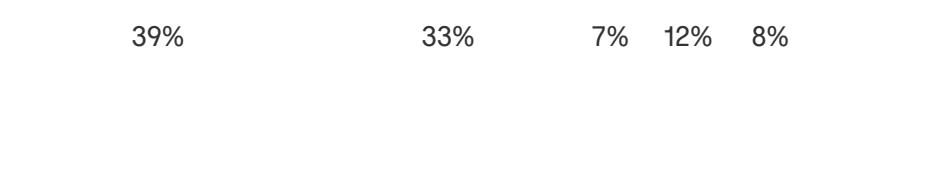
Spacing (front setbacks) between houses and the street in Needham is acceptable



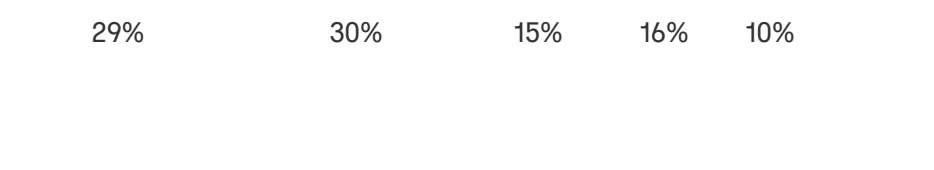
Current height restrictions of new houses being built in Needham are acceptable



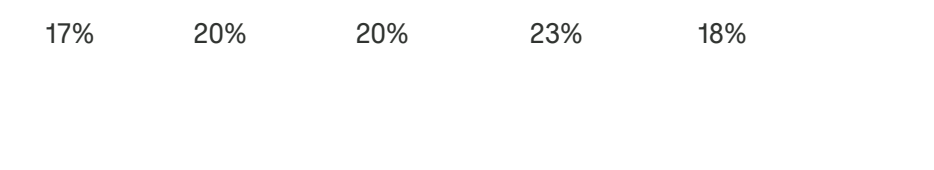
The footprint (lot coverage) of new houses being built in Needham is acceptable



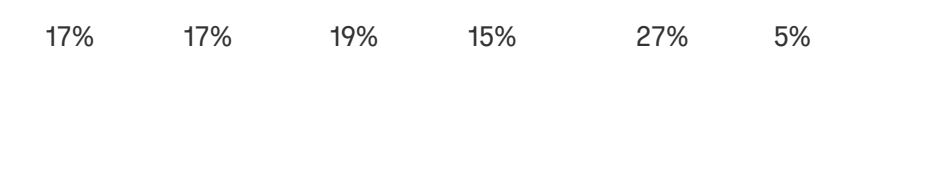
I am comfortable with the current volume (bulk) of new houses being built in Needham



My neighborhood in Needham has changed negatively over the last 10 years



I am concerned that my house in Needham will be torn down and replaced after I sell it



Please use this additional space to share any additional feedback or comments related to the large house/tear down issue in Needham including how, if applicable, you have been negatively impacted by it (as indicated in the question above).

New homes are gigantic - I wish smaller (<=2k sq ft) houses were built instead

I have no issues with developers replacing outdated, smaller homes with larger new construction as long as it follows zoning guidelines for single-family or multi-family property. My only other concern may be protection of mature trees. Efforts must be made to ensure we protect the natural beauty of our neighborhoods when possible.

Housing policy over the years in Needham has failed to provide a variety of housing. Too many medium and small houses have been replaced by larger dwellings that exclude first time buyers and seniors who live in the town. Exclusivity should not be a community goal.

I don't know much about these things. In particular, I don't know what the technical restrictions are, or what the right values would be, so I cannot comment. I think it's fine to allow construction activity as long as what comes up is not ugly, unsafe, or environmentally irresponsible. Sometimes, newly built homes do seem to be a little large relative to their lots, if that's what you are going at. This is a judgment about aesthetics only; I know nothing about safety or environmental impact. Higher population density per se is fine. If the U.S. had the same population density as the typical European country, it would have between 1 and 4 billion population. Higher density -> more friends, better infrastructure, more competitive markets.

You should be able to build whatever you want on your land as long as it's within current zoning regulations. I do think the town needs to make builders more accountable to water run off issues and make sure they address this so as to not affect neighbors.

The large house phenomenon is a function of market demand. I wish there was more housing diversity but without the ability to develop meaningful, dense, multifamily housing projects in Town, the limited lots available are driven by demand for larger houses. During the teardown and reconstruction of a house behind us we were temporarily impacted by basement flooding and rats but ultimately those issues resolved and we have a nice family living behind us. While I love my home and would love someone to cherish it in the same way that my family does, if I sell it and those buyers choose to tear it down that's their choice.

Relatively neutral about the issue, but I do think the lot coverage of some of the new builds are astonishing. They cover the entire lot and don't have backyards. I think it brings down the look/feel of the neighborhood.

The loop holds on attic and basement should be closed. And footprint requirements should be smaller but not achieved thru set backs.

Needham is a desirable place to live. Real estate taxes are a source of revenue for all the many upcoming capital projects the town would like to complete. 

We need builders to plant more trees to make up for the ones they kill.

The issue is not large houses or setbacks or height it's water flow. I have no problem requiring systems that mitigate against water flooding the streets or neighborhoods. The house sizes are fine and are being built to meet market demand.

Balance of home ownership important too; I think the water runoff is perhaps the most critical component. Whereas style is subjective and probably shouldn't be over-governed. Hopefully will play devils advocate about any proposals (eg will over restrictions impact Needham housing values etc).

I understand that many older homes will continue to be torn down, and likely should be. Houses age like everything else, and often times it makes more sense to start anew rather than fix up something that has well outlived its use. However, the sizes of newly built homes have become excessive, greatly disproportionate to their surroundings. The scale of new construction is typically out of proportion to neighboring homes, blocking views, sunlight, and casting mighty shadows upon all in their proximity. Their size is a blight to otherwise lovely neighborhoods. Their magnitude is even disproportionate to the street itself, as new homes loom large over a street whose width barely matches the size of their colossal driveway. As for the builders of these monstrosities, they care about one thing - their bottom line. If builders can earn additional profit from building an excessively large home, even at the cost of a mismatch between all that surrounds them, you can bet they will do it. While I believe in everyone's right to earn a living, Needham must ensure that builder profit is not prioritized over common sense aesthetic guidelines. It's one thing to build a huge home in a brand new neighborhood on a brand new street, a new development where every home and yard is planned to complement each other's scale in harmony. It's quite another to build a huge home next to a small green plastic Monopoly-sized home. Scale has long been overlooked to the detriment of aesthetics, and to the benefit of builder's pockets. Lastly, what brand new resident to an established neighborhood wants to move into their massive construction with their new neighbors already feeling annoyed by them, simply because their home is so mismatched to theirs? Let's set new families up for success by eliminating the resentment that comes with excessively large homes damaging the aesthetics of a neighborhood. Appearance does, in fact, matter. Set some common sense guidelines for new home footprints, front and side setbacks, as well as height. This should have been done more judiciously decades ago, but better late than never.

Water issues. No land between houses. Lack of privacy Kids won't be able to afford to live in needham. No starter homes

More and more houses are being built that do not fit with local styles and they look out of place. These are often very large and boxy, with flat frontages, they're built very high and out to the street. High Rock street (Central Ave end) has a number of these. They look like they should be in California and they are the biggest possible size. It detracts from the neighborhood feel. Also, too many mature healthy trees are torn down for these houses. There should be a restriction on the size and number of trees removed.

Yes, it is changing. Change happens. Get over it.

We are nearing retirement age and want to move to a smaller house, but there ARE NONE LEFT.

Last question is inappropriate. It is up to the owner of a home to decide what they would like to live in. I am more concerned that building restrictions will negatively affect my value when i go to sell. The new large homes have made Needham the great community it is today. I do not live in one - i live in my nice small cape - which is my choice. I have already been negatively impacted by the last zoning change - which limits my ability to add on a much needed garage due to how my home sits on the lot and the increase in the sided setbacks -

The extremely large houses in the Heights especially affect the aesthetic and feel of our neighborhood. Thru are not made with any beauty or neighborhood context in mind. You should drive down Booth St, Hill St, and Central Ave just past Hunnewell to see the latest. I don't see theese kinds of large, unattractive homes being built in Newton or Wellesley. I don't understand why we haven't addressed this yet.

None

I would like to think the select board for all that they do for our town. I am sorry there are so many rude people here, we appreciate you for all you do.

Main concern is ensuring height restrictions and side/back setbacks are reasonable (as per bylaws) and strictly enforced.

Please STOP this town wide - not just on small lots. This is the reason Needham is no longer affordable TOWN WIDE. And what is the purpose of HUGE homes on larger lots? People will still buy in Needham if there house is 4,000 Square feet rather than 5,000 SF. There is little or NO green lawn left which has changed the look, feel and stormwater flows of the town. This is a townwide issue not just a small lot issue. If you control just small lots you are going to further divide the school districts/neighborhoods into "haves" and "have nots." It is already like that and this will exacerbate that. Is the reason you are not considering large lots really "new growth money"? Bad reason.

This whole "issue" is an absurd waste of time. The people who have lived here for 50 years and seen the town change are trying to cling to some snapshot in time...the world doesn't work that way. Should we also require that people in Needham use horses to get around, because at one point there weren't cars here? Tastes have changed, and the houses being built adhere to our zoning and construction rules. It's not impacting them personally, and yet they cry foul about the kind of house someone else wants to build with the land they own. Get over it!

Needham is losing its quaint character. These humungous structures next to a small cape are an eye sore.

I would like a fee assessed to builders of large homes on tear down sites that would be donated to affordable housing in Needham, probably through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. I would like better rules applied re living space. All living space should be considered when determining the allowable size of a proposed residence. Many homes being built in Needham are larger than necessary for the builders to make a profit. About 30% of existing older homes for sale in Needham are in very good shape. I would like to see these homes sold to families. Any educational or incentive program to help with this would help middle class folks (that we need for our economy) live in Needham.

The biggest problem I have with the new homes being built is that the price point is so high that the people who would want to buy into Needham can't afford them.

There just seems to be too many loopholes with the sq footage to lot ratio. These need to be closed.

The development / modernization of new, larger, high value single family homes in Needham is a great thing and should be encouraged. There are a lot of older, run down, unattractive, not well maintained homes. Owners must have the ability to sell these homes to developers without restriction. The town should NOT attempt to regulate this.

I'd like to see new houses go either up or out, but not both. I'd like to see an incentive to do addition/renovation on existing houses, rather than tear downs, because they often have more character, so maybe different dimensional refs for tear downs? Maybe re-examine how finished space is counted? Penalize clear-cutting of lots. I've been in some new construction, 5000+ sq ft homes and it feels like the usable space is not that much increased, but hallways are larger, etc, to give the impression of a bigger house and thus greater price tag. That seems to benefit primarily the builder, and no one else, including the new homeowner. I feel like I need more education on best practices to know what I really want re: setbacks and lot coverage, I just know that today's zoning seems to encourage over-sized houses with tiny yards on quarter-acre lots, and it feels like too much house for the space.

We believe there is a shortage of starter/retirement sized homes in Needham. This initiative feels to be too late; so much of the town housing inventory of smaller homes has already been lost and rebuilt as large homes. I don't have issues with the setbacks or heights of what is being built, just the loss of smaller homes. I think the town should look for more opportunities for development of smaller homes than regulation on large homes.

Plot behind ours was rebuilt with large house, that then added large pools and deck, so much more impervious surface, and now our backyard floods much more than it used to.

We need more housing! Most zoning rules should be abolished to allow builders to build more housing. Whether multi-unit lots or large houses.

They are ugly, hate them. All the noise and air pollution due to all the demolition and construction are unacceptable. Also something must be done about the super-noisy and air polluting landscapers. They together the builders and landscapers significantly reduce the quality of life in Needham.

I am on the corner of Barrett which has had no but tear downs over several years. Two years ago the town allowed another farmhouse to be built behind me. It is so large the two car garage had to be placed behind the house. Their kitchen looks into my yard losing privacy. I paid \$6,000 to install 3 trees to provide my privacy. The town is allowing beautiful homes to be torn down and replaced by homes that are way too large for the footprint. It is ashame the town is allowing these monsters and ruining the look of Needham.

I need to get the most value when I sell. It's my largest single asset. Independent/assisted homes are expensive.

It would have been helpful to know what the current setbacks are, etc. My answers are based on visuals as I go around town. Too many "starter homes" now called "affordable housing" were torn down and huge houses built so that we're now in a situation where the town is faced with little inventory for young families.

The increase in house sizes also creates a decrease in pervious areas on lots which contributes to Needham's significant storm drainage issues. There needs to be less roof area and paved area on lots (and more vegetated area) to absorb rain water!

We cannot stop progress. We cannot go back to the "good old days". While the first large house on a street seems out of place, once there are three or four it looks fine. They may be a negative mental effect (or envy) on the neighbors with small houses, but we can't stop progress and they get over it when it when it comes time to sell their house. The large houses built over the past ten years have improved, not decreased the value of other homes. As someone who owns a house in AZ and who has visited many other cities, the setbacks and lot sizes in Needham (and most of New England) are very restrictive and out of touch with building practices in much of America. Objectively, the large houses being built in Needham are really not that large- just different. Prohibiting knockdowns would have a huge negative effect on long time residents looking to cash out. It is foolish to talk about preserving "starter homes. " At a million dollars for almost any home in Needham, there are no "starter" homes. As a member of the last large house committee, I gave these issues a lot of thought. We can and should regulate the size of new homes. The best way is through FAR limits. I thought that the current FAR limits should have been tighter. The philosophy was to get a FAR regulation in the By-law. Tightening it after we had some experience would be relatively easy. There are various ways to tighten. One is to count attic and basement space, but the calculations can be very complicated. The simplest way is to just adjust the FAR number downward. Good luck to the new committee. There are many emotional positions on the issue of any change and especially large houses, but ultimately most residents care most about the value of their houses. Knockdowns and new large houses are increasing those values.

All resident homeowners benefit from the rising real estate values, especially those with functionally obsolete homes being bought by builders.

I have no problem with teardowns but should be replaced with more reasonable sized homes (3-4k sq feet). Now homes are 5-6k sq feet with 6 bedrooms. Way too expensive and just too huge for lot size. 🐦

Deep foundations in large new housing construction in areas where there is a high water table is causing basement flooding issues and pumping which is impacting butting properties.

Allowing builders to ignore the attic space in FAR calculations is leading to giant houses built at (or perhaps above) the legal limit. I say above because I've noticed some games being played with the "ground" level of new construction. Time to lower building heights and count at least some of the attic and basement space as living quarters. Also enforce the building height regulations properly. I haven't personally been impacted by the existing regulations, aside from the fact that all the new construction looms over our house and other older houses. But I believe the regulations have the perverse effect of restricting the size of additions that a current homeowner could put on a current, regular-dimension house while allowing builders to game the rules. Also I've seen some new houses with the garage apparently the closest part of the house to the street -- I thought that was outlawed but it seems to be happening. And builders should pay for damaging street trees.

There are too many conflicting interests to make this an easy issue to deal with. It is still worth a try. Affected neighbors are left out of the teardown replacement decisions that others make.

Needham was/is a lovely, diverse family neighborhood, but it is becoming like Wellesley with ugly, cookie cutter Mac Mansions, which means it is becoming increasingly unaffordable for young families, the elderly and diverse citizens. We are in danger of becoming another bland, unfriendly community of the rich and the rest be damned.

The smaller homes being torn down could be starter homes for people who say Needham is too expensive. The multimillion dollar homes being built are changing the demographic of the town. Also the developers clear cut the property, taking away tree canopy. The houses they build are so large as to take up most of the lot, taking away open space for water to be absorbed, leading to flooding.

Incredible complexities of the issue aside, I am in favor of anything that slows the development of "mini mansions" and helps push the development of smaller "starter homes". Young middle class or even upper middle class families have been pushed out of our community because every new build is basically \$2 million plus. Any steps towards curbing this issue would be great.

Set backs for new homes - in the front, side, and back yards - need to be reviewed and changed so new homes do not take up so much space. Tree removals should be monitored also -

N/A

This is private property. Not public property! This is the private property owner's asset. In some cases the largest asset they own/maintain and pay for. The property owner should have the right to maximize their living space to the full extent of the current bylaw regulations. Why should the opinions of some regulate a private property owner's rights within or on their property the current bylaw and zoning. Unless zoning is being changed for public health or safety all zoning and bylaws should remain unchanged for private property

I'd be OK with a larger footprint construction "exception" in my neighborhood, but only if the new construction were multi-family and increased the housing supply for low to moderate income people in Needham. What I am against are multi-million dollar homes going up for only the very wealthy where there were once ranches, Capes, and moderate-sized Colonials that were affordable for "average" wage earners. Also, since I have invested in solar on my home to do my part to "help save the planet," I think it should be made much harder to knock down a house that already has a solar array installed that generates a substantial percentage of the property's electricity needs. Otherwise, this little piece of Needham will have gone 2 steps forward (i.e., solar conversion) to go 3 or more steps backwards (i.e., construction of a much larger house that has a much larger carbon footprint). With zoning that discourages "McMansions" but encourages multi-family density and solar (and other sustainable energy sources), Needham will be doing its part to reduce our collective carbon footprint.

How to make it difficult for teardowns to happen so that small houses remain in Needham ?

The ambiance and aesthetic of the town have been adversely impacted by the MacMansions. Escalating prices and ugliness are a serious issue in town. On top of that, the overdevelopment of large houses creates a situation where young people are priced out and seniors can't afford to move to a smaller dwelling in town. This eyesore must be stopped, and the town should focus on livability instead of affected opulence.

Losing the small bungalow type homes in Needham severely restricts first time home buyers to Needham. The other issue I have is the lack of green space around these large homes. And we wonder why we have a flooding problem??? The loss of mature beautiful trees is a true crime as well as an assault on the environment. Large trees shade a home and make the home more energy efficient never mind as value to a property.

The town of Needham has a difficult problem and one I don't have answers to offer. There is a market for larger homes and a higher tax outcome that benefits all of us. On the other hand, our children cannot afford to move to Needham and raise their families near us because they cannot afford starter homes that are relatively mansions compared to the old days. Much of the rhetoric is caused by the fact that humans reject change... even natural change. People who have lived here their whole lives want to preserve something that is probably irretrievable. I will say that I think the setbacks from the street are too small. I will also say that I don't think people selling their home should have the power to determine what the next buyer does with that property... It is probably reasonable to have guidelines for a percentage of the lot that can be filled with new construction and perhaps that number needs to be adjusted to preserve some medium to small homes. By preserving setbacks and heights, it would seem to me that some of the smaller and less expensive homes could be preserved for those with lower income. It may also be reasonable to set a total number of teardowns for the Needham community each year. A set number of permits could be offered by lottery or first come first served, etc. Perhaps this would encourage prospector developers (those who are flipping  properties) to move on to other communities and give encouragement to young families to improve the housing stock that exists here now. I wish the committee well with this issue because no matter what you do there will be loud complainers who just won't be happy with any outcome. Sadly, that seems to have become the norm here. Cranky, negative outliers who make a lot of noise have been grabbing for too much say in these matters.

Builder didn't build a retaining wall (slope just under the height requirement) so water flows into my yard. Another builder promised neighbors he would not cut down a beautiful and healthy tree which was just on the property line. He LIED and sent a crew over after the house was demolished to cut down the tree. To build a basement there was incessant pounding to break up the ledge for WEEKS. At least allow controlled blasting. I agree we need new/upgraded housing stock but who really needs a 4+ bedroom/6 (yes 6) bath home with no yard????

Limited 1 level homes for seniors selling their homes to move to in order to continue to live in Needham.

These questions themselves are biased in favor of limiting teardowns. It would not be fair to owners of potential teardowns to reduce the value of their lots by putting further restrictions! Why not ask that question?!? When I sell my house, I want to get the CURRENT potential sale price, not a reduced price because of a change in town laws!!

Lot coverage is concerning from a drainage/water perspective, especially when impacts neighbors. Building high/wide and blocking neighborhood views is also quite annoying.

Appears that even the current setback rules are either waived or not enforced. Neighborhoods look awful when super-tall 2 story homes tower above normal 2 story homes next door. Modest single family home stock is being decimated by overly-large replacements with the effect of preventing young families from residing in Needham. Expect that town (and our property values) will have a different problem when these overly-large homes find few buyers when this generation ages out of needing such large residences. No opportunity for current homeowners to "trade down" (move to smaller single family homes) without leaving town.

Surveys often ask the wrong questions. It isn't the volume of tear downs/ new home construction but what type of new home replaces those torn down. I live next door to a new home where a small Cape style home once existed. The new home is disproportionate to the existing neighborhood (towers over my 1950 built home), its frontal welcoming feature is a 2 car garage rather than its front entrance, each bedroom has its own bathroom, and 6 bedroom homes are replacing 3 bedroom older homes. There's no empty building lots in Needham so builders acquire lots with existing homes at high cost (due to very high assessed values here in town), have to then abate asbestos issues (including trucking asbestos out of the region), adhere to tear down regulations and pay costs of building tear down, and then build a new home with features buyers want; add a profit margin and developers end up with a home and land product way up there monetarily. This means no affordable new housing (affordable home inventory actually dropping), less opportunity for diverse ethnic groups to live in Needham, no places for seniors and others to downsize into (forcing them to exit Needham after living their lives here), and others to downsize socioeconomic issues. If we want more affordable housing here, this won't happen if left to developers because they are commercial businesses who are for profit entities, and there's no profit in constructing affordable housing. I think affordable housing must be a public /

private partnership like how we build public school buildings. Simply implementing more regulations by itself will never work. Builders always seem to find inventive ways to side step zoning rules. Also, we need to do a better job protecting historic homes by making it easier for home owners to protect their buildings through Local Historic Districts. Why is it a bylaw change requiring a Town meeting vote to protect homes on our list of Historic Places? Lastly, perhaps abutters and neighbors to locations where a tear down / new home is proposed should have a strong say over what replaces a torn down home.

We are actually planning to tear down and rebuild our own home because it is more affordable than buying one of the \$3m outrageously oversized homes on the market (of which there are currently 41 active listings. 41!!!!). Our new build will be 3k square feet and only expand our footprint by 6 percentage points. No attic. We look forward to having a moderate (large to us!) sized home that preserves our yard and does not negatively impact drainage or energy use in our neighborhood like so many of the exorbitant new builds do. I wish there were more incentives in place for others to build sensible homes if that is their wish.

Large houses affect the environment because more ground is covered with built structures creating runoff. They also cast larger shadows and consume more energy to heat and cool.

I think more thought has to be put into what type of new homes fit into a neighborhood on the part of the developers, then to just try and maximize space just for the sake of it. You can build tastefully to a high end/ luxury price point with purpose, without building big just to build big. There are existing homes that could be rehabbed into modern smart homes instead of just wiping out the character of the neighborhoods.

We live in an area (Forest St/Brookside Rd locale) that was previously 1/2 acre zoning and is now full-acre (SRA) zoning. Most of the lots are 1/4 acre but the zoning requirements don't have FAR and have allowed some ridiculously large houses (246 Forest St and less-so 936 Central Ave) to be built, far from appropriate for the neighborhood. I know this is peripheral to the LHS purview, but the zoning of some areas of the town should be addressed at the same time. There should be a way to calculate scale (combining variable FAR & variable setbacks?) of a project for each lot. And, this study is 25 years after it should have been addressed.

Large houses are being put on small lots so they tower over the neighborhood. They also eliminate much green space and cause local flooding as they are displacing more water.

We are appalled by the thought of the home where we have lived for 42 years, and where our children grew up, being torn down to make way for another 2.5M house with six bathrooms. We hear a lot about wanting to make Needham more affordable. Anything that the Committee can do to address the tear down problem would be a good place to start.

The recent change to property's assessment will only increase the tear downs. By increase land values on small lots with older smaller house you are almost guaranteed to force out our lower income residents. The very people you say you want to help. I have looked at many house. I will not give addresses but an older cape on Webster had about a 40% increase year over year while a large house on a large lot on Burr had their taxes lowered. From taxes to bike lanes the town is off track. Left building codes alone and get off the road diet.

Tear downs are good for Needham but the spacing restrictions are not stringent enough.

I will actively seek a homeowner to buy my house when the time comes. I am surrounded by clear cut lots with large new homes, and the character of the neighborhood is forever changed for the worse with the loss of tree canopy and all the other climate benefits trees provide. I am also very disturbed by the big, generally simple volume, new expensive houses that are too big for their lots. I do not believe there is a market for these very big houses but their are buyers of course because homes in Needham are very much in demand and there are not enough of them now that are affordable for younger starter families. This lack of diversity hurts Needham's future as a more economically diverse community, something it has been for decades. but is slowly becoming a more affluent and exclusive community.

As long as houses comply with relevant regulations and rules there should not be an issue with "large houses". Market forces drive housing requirements in a positive way. The town benefits greatly from enhanced valuations and tax revenue. Please who don't want a large house should not buy a large house; those who want a large house should buy one. New houses are beautiful - much more so often than the homes they replace.

My real issue is with the tear-down aspect of this process, as it destroys houses that might otherwise be affordable to buyers who are being out-bid by developers and can not afford the replacement houses being built. We are on a trajectory to eliminate opportunities for young or middle-income couples and families from buying a "starter home" in our community, unless they are among the wealthy. (Note: I'm not against wealthy people; I am for more economic diversity in our population.) I suspect that the phrase "young or middle-income couples and families" would accurately describe many of the current owners of the properties that are being torn down when they purchased those properties. How ironic that their desire for "top-dollar" is making it extremely difficult for people just like they were to live in our wonderful community. I wish there were a way to preserve the "tear-down" homes that are in good shape; I understand that that is very difficult.

Restrictions will negatively impact seniors if prices fall

The size and height of the new homes with garages so far in the front is ruining the charm of the neighborhoods. Leaving no green space behind the house is also awful for the abutters. The drainage and water run off from Hutter Ridge at the end of Webster has been a huge problem for the neighborhoods below.

Building new houses in Needham benefits developers to an extraordinary degree, even when the house causes storm water runoff problems due to house size and removal of trees. Homeowners are left to pay for these problems. The Large House committee seems to have entirely failed in their mission to limit house size seemingly by allowing exclusions or lack of enforcement. It really should be called the 'Committee to ensure developers can build the largest house possible'. This failure is also decimating mature trees which cannot be replaced in anyone's

lifetime. We need very strict standards regarding what can be built on any given lot size with NO EXCLUSIONS. Personally, living near a house that is being torn down can threaten my foundation when the basement of a nearby house is removed. I've complained to the building department who sent a older man (unidentified) to my house to tell me that builders had EVERY RIGHT to demolish a house (any way they want to) and that if it damaged my house I should just get a lawyer. WRONG !! No one has the right to cause property damage for any reason. THIS TOWN DOES NOT TREAT THE PEOPLE LIVING HERE (PAYING HIGH PROPERTY TAXES) WITH APPROPRIATE RESPECT. We should NOT be allowing ridiculously oversized homes to be built so close to existing homes.

Tear-downs make basements occupiable by significant grading changes that pitch stormwater onto all direct neighbors, sidewalks, and streets. Exempt attics (preferred) OR basements (like every other nearby town) but NOT BOTH. It's too much!

The imprint of over sized homes impacts the quality of life here in Needham. Mature trees and their wonderful colors, the canopy over the roads that makes walking enjoyable, the health they contribute to the air and ground are taken down and not replaced by trees but buildings. Water from rain, which had been absorbed efficiently by trees and yards, has no place to go. Rain overwhelms the best french drainage systems, and we find rivers running down roads that were clear initially. In addition, homes near by are negatively impacted as water seeps into homes that were for years water free. Large homes rob neighbors of the livability they enjoyed before the new builds. They impact the value of older home as they continue to live in them unhappily, accommodating the large homes and the consequences of having their basements flood, the light taken from their windows, the change in the character of the neighborhood, - or they move, fed up with accommodating the new builds. Where they thought they would retire here among friends and memories, they are driven away. It's as if the large homes are saying: "We are here, we do not care about you and how you feel about these consequences of our building, get over it, deal with it." They are bullies among us. The overreach of the large houses disrupts the visual harmony and balance of the spaces between homes, they take away breathing room and shade, so essential to the cooling of the roads and homes. The charm of our neighborhoods, like Harris Ave, is negatively impacted by homes that reach to the edges of their property, impacting privacy and space and prohibiting the natural buffer trees and other plantings provide their neighbors. They dominate, they don't compliment. They rob everyone of the congenial community that makes Needham wonderful. The large houses are expensive and only available to a few wealthy buyers and shut out many who would be wonderful citizens here. Large houses don't contribute to the environment, to the identity, and the beauty of Needham, they impact it negatively on all fronts. As I stated before: They are bullies among us.

n/a

My biggest concerns are the height of new houses and the overwhelming size given the land size. Living in the town center, I've felt my small 3-bedroom historic (1880) house is overwhelmed by larger houses, that now look down on my yard and into my windows. We have much less  privacy than we had in the 1980s when we moved in.

Living next to a McMansion that has maxed out its buildable footprint and height, is sort of like living next to a large container ship that has docked along your fence. It blocks the sun and provides no space to plant anything that might screen/soften the hulking mass.

While I likely will personally benefit from the high housing prices in Needham and the market for tear down/rebuilds, I am concerned about long-term sustainability and the lack of even moderately expensive homes (let alone affordable homes). I am also concerned about the increasing amount of impervious land coverage.

I think it is bad for the town to lose so many starter homes. Also it is bad for the town to have such expensive houses replace more affordable options. Few middle class people can afford to live in Needham and I do not like its current reputation as an extremely wealthy town. I have lived in Needham since 1983 and have seen the town change to be less diverse in income.

I am a senior citizen who purchased my home in 1976. My house is now too large for me, but there are no small (formerly called "starter") homes available for me to purchase so that I can remain in Needham.

I disagree with Front and side set backs being acceptable, but because I think the current zoning makes the houses too far apart, and too far away from the street/sidewalk. Neighborhoods where houses are closer to the street are much more pleasant to be in vs. streets where the houses are set back far from the street. I prefer a neighborhood where the houses are closer together and not as isolated. I don't mind if someone wants to build a large home on any size lot but would prefer zoning allowed more housing per lot. Many of the large homes have enough space to house a few families (also enough bathrooms!) and I think allowing that would be more beneficial to the community than trying to regulate house size. I think an unintended consequence of trying to regulate house size is that the "new smaller home" will be driven to the top of the market and not solve any of the affordability issues we have here.

These new houses are taking up a very large portion of the lots and built so high that they block light. Mature trees are ripped out if the ground and there is nowhere for water to drain. Where do we go when we want to downsize? There are no small homes. As soon as they go up for sale, a builder buys them. The town should be flush with cash with all these mansions, yet our taxes just went up astronomically. Something isn't adding up here.

As long as the new houses conform to the zoning setbacks, I am fine with whatever is built. There are a lot of very small older houses that are not worth the value of the land they are built on.

Many of these new houses are outrightly ugly and not in keeping with our New England traditions.

The issues before the committee have been debated for years. Without resolution, the town is changing over time, and some of those changes are problematic. Please hold to the schedule of bringing an actionable recommendation to next May's (2026) Annual Town Meeting. Thank you for your work on this.

I am concerned about drainage issues and the environmental impact of tearing down perfectly good houses because a larger more stylish home could be built on the lot.

Taking away all the tree space, throwing up huge ugly houses that look the same, overcrowding, ugly street signs everywhere overpricing, Needham has been selling itself out

I am also concerned about the number of mature trees that are removed due to large homes being built. Often lots near me are being essentially clear-cut, with a very negative impact on my environment.

Since moving into my home in 2020, all 3 sides around me have been torn down and rebuilt with large house. There is a wind tunnel in my backyard due to the height of these house and loss of trees.

Minor modifications may be warranted but we should embrace the fact that many people with significant means want to live in Needham, and the reality is they want large homes. If they can't find those here, they will choose other towns.

I thought that the town already addressed this issue a long time ago?

I know controlling zoning is hard. However. Allowing homes to be built with tiny front yards and tiny backyards, and very close to the street, really is a bad image for a town. And unappealing for young families. We all grew up with backyards and now today's new homes in Needham have virtually no yard space so developers can build the largest house possible. Control the setbacks. Don't allow them to build so close to the street.

I don't think this is necessarily a critical all-hands-on-deck issue, but I do think it is important. Along with the most discussed topics surrounding this issue, such as affordability and neighborhood character, I have seen with my own eyes how the steady pace of teardowns has changed the character of the town itself as one population leaves and another one takes its place. I suppose this is part of the natural evolution of communities, but it does feel like it is both accelerating and also reaching (or already passed) a tipping point. For better and for worse, Needham is not quite the same town I saw when I first started looking for a home 20 years ago.

If I ever wanted to 'downsize' there are few houses for me to consider in Needham. Someone selling wants to get as much for their investment as possible. Often this means contractors purchase these homes for top dollar, and they end up being torn down in order for contractors to make a profit. We moved into a 'starter home' in Needham 40 years ago. We upsized to 2448 square feet of living space 36 years ago. Most of the homes on our street have had additions put on rather than being subjected to tear down, but there is a large house at the end of our road where a small one stood, and the main street that I live off of has had several tear downs. Sadly, we drive through town and I often sing, "Another one bites the dust." People were so upset about the character of the town when we were considering a more generous affordable housing project, and ultimately that got overturned. Yet I think the tear down issue has contributed to ruining the character of the town. Our adult children could never afford to live here, and now that land values have skyrocketed, our taxes are now hitting the unacceptable range for us seniors. I have never before considered voting no on overrides, but when the school renovations come up for override considerations we may consider doing so. We are now being squeezed out of a community we have loved and been dedicated to. At a time of life when we want to feel safe, and want to continue to enjoy the town and our home, this may become impossible to sustain.

the large number of trees on the lot next to ours were totally cut down when the house was razed.

It would have been helpful to know the restrictions in the survey: height and setback rules

THIS SURVEY IS SO NEGATIVE. WE HAVE A BEAUTIFUL TOWN GROWING AND GETTING PRETTIER EVERY DAY!! WE SHOULD BE HAPPY, THAT BENEFITS US ALL!

We need a range of home sizes and price points in order to have a more diverse population. Diversity adds to the fabric of our community and enriches our lives.

The rate of tear downs being replaced by very large houses makes it very difficult for young families to move to Needham, and buy a starter home. So many of the capes have disappeared that seniors might have moved to, makes it hard for them to remain in town, to say nothing of the unaffordable increase in the tax rate.

My house is one of the only original houses in my neighborhood; the vast majority are teardowns rebuilt into large houses. I know that if we were to sell our house, it too would be torn down. The chances of buying another home in Needham feel very slim because most homes for sale are either so big that they're out of our price range, or they are homes that a builder will be bidding on to tear down. In order to get our current home we had to out-bid a builder, and that was over 10 years ago.

I don't have any issue with the house sizes or setbacks. However, I really want to incentivize or regulate the cutting down of healthy trees. If a developer cuts a shade tree they should be required to plant a very substantive replacement.

Monster homes built behind my house are an eyesore; the oversized homes negatively impact my neighborhood

The new builds improve the neighborhood, often replacing old houses that have not been cared for by the owners.

The size of new houses is accelerating affordability issues. They are tearing down perfectly good starter homes and building McMansions. We are losing economic diversity among our residents.

It is my opinion that many of the large house rebuilds dwarf many existing homes and present an absolutely ugly architectural statement. There is a notable contrast from other communities! The fact that new construction is limited almost exclusively to 4000 sq. ft, multi million dollar homes makes this town less appealing to us. The lack of socio economic diversity is a real downer.

I think there could be some changes to reduce size a bit while still allowing a spacious house to be built. A moderate reduction in size would still get the town the tax base increase and make for more proportionate neighborhoods. If new houses are a bit smaller people will definitely still buy them.

Young people can easily be priced out of a neighborhood. Soon only the upper middle class will live here.

House demolition has caused my house to shake. I believe that the practice of building hills for new houses to sit on is a problem.

The volume of new houses on smaller lots is too much

N/A

Too many houses that fill most of the lot. The builders are inconsiderate of neighbors. Blocking roads, etc.

I miss the socio-economic diversity, especially of young families, that Needham used to support. I also wonder if selling to a developer really is in the best interest of the seller, given the demand for \$800k to \$1.4 million homes.

There is limited if any access to buy in Needham for middle to low income families. When these large house owners move out of Needham who will be able to buy them?

Replacing normal size houses with big houses make Needham even more unaffordable for regular people. Everyone is a business consultant now.

Setbacks, height and large block houses on small lots need more control. Multi unit housing should be allowed within the same framework of control.

Smaller houses have been replaced by McMansions. There is an increasing lack of smaller houses available.

There should be more single family dwellings that have land. Presently there are too many tear downs of homes that could be kept as is and just updated. Homes are too large and are too close to other houses and the street.

The Town's Zoning and General By-Laws need to be amended to authorize the Building Inspector to enforce the zoning by-laws, including by the imposition of fines, in those circumstances where homeowners and their contractors do not comply with the by-laws including to prevent and remediate dangerous construction debris emanating from demolition, construction vehicles blocking driveways, and construction vehicles creating traffic and pedestrian hazards. Currently, the Building Inspector is without any authority to enforce the by-laws, including by the imposition of fines, other than to shut down the entire construction project which the Building Inspector is loath to do. The demolition notice requirements, if any, in the applicable by-laws should be amended to require reasonable notice to abutters prior to the demolition of sections of residences. The Town police should be authorized and mandated to protect the rights of abutters. Too often, the default position of Needham government officials, including the Police, the Building Inspector and the Planning Appeals Board is to enable and facilitate construction projects without addressing the rights of abutters. The Town's zoning and general By-Laws should be amended to prevent the wanton removal of trees which are essential to noise and flood control. There are entire streets in Needham - Brookline Avenue is a prime example - where the demolition of existing housing stock and the construction of large homes has led to the removal of the entirety of the trees which once lined Brookline Avenue. The fundamental problem is that the Planning Board and Planning Appeals Board has long been controlled and influenced by contractors and developers. This has led over the last 25 years to the indiscriminate tear downs of existing housing stock, the construction of residences without any appreciable height and set back restrictions, the construction of residences on postage stamp size lots that are disproportionate in size and height to the lots themselves and to the surrounding neighborhoods, and to the wanton removal of trees. Moreover, with the change in the hours and noise restrictions in Needham to 7 am to 8 pm 7 days a week, construction and demolition in Needham is literally nonstop. The noise restrictions should be tightened to prevent developer/contractor construction and demolition activities after 7 pm each day and with a blanket prohibition on construction and demolition activity on Sunday. Enough is enough. We are now experiencing flooding, and noise and air pollution, that is simply unprecedented for the Town. This is a direct consequence of the wanton removal of trees throughout the Town by contractors and developers. Unfortunately, from our perspective, this survey - while well intentioned - is simply too little and too late to reverse the consequences of uncontrolled and unregulated tear downs of residences, the indiscriminate removal of trees, and the construction of disproportionate homes.

I am more worried about the loss of trees than anything else. I support some lot coverage changes but believe it is immoral to make rules solely to make teardowns less valuable.

The zoning changes put in place 10 years (or so) ago were very effective in improving the design and setbacks of new homes. Many of the older homes in Needham are not well built and the newer homes are dramatically more energy efficient. Side note is that if the rules get too restricting, developers will move to the next town and the older home values will drop significantly.

Buying a house in Needham was very difficult because we were competing with cash offers from developers. It has been sad to see houses that we envisioned living in knocked down to make way for giant houses. This also changes the demographic of the neighborhood from middle class families to people who can afford \$2M+ houses. We are very disappointed to see all of the trees that are coming down for these developments. Perhaps the town could change the zoning to mirror that of Newtonville, where a complete knockdown needs to be replaced with a multi-family house?

This is a top priority and the town must play a strong role in limiting the volume of tear downs and carefully regulating all details related to tear downs and large rebuilds. This affects everything from public safety to climate resilience, and cannot be left to the whims of the market, nor should these decisions be made by those who stand to receive financial gain from reduced regulation or oversight.

We do worry about neighboring houses eventually being torn down to build houses that are too large for the lot and change the feeling of closeness to our neighbors.

Having lived in the town for almost 20 years my neighborhood (High Rock St) has changed a lot. When we arrived it was mostly small capes with a handful of colonials. One by one they are being knocked down and replaced by 6k+ sq ft homes the tower over the remaining capes and have little to no green space. We've turned into Wellesley and essentially priced out a large part of the population. I believe restricting house sizes based on lot size could help alleviate this problem.

The house next to me was not allowed to be torn down but the builder worked around that by just putting an addition on to the back and building up. For 20 years, I never had a water problem in my backyard and now every time it rains, the water accumulates because there is not enough land to absorb it. I'm happy to share more as I have pictures from various storms where it looks like a huge pond in their backyard and all of our backyards. Additionally, the house they built is so much bigger than all the other houses in the neighborhood and just sticks out.

We live in an area where lots are large. However, around town there are large homes being built on what seems like very small lots. I also worry about houses being built in precarious spots. There is a home that was recently built with a driveway in the middle of the intersection on Central near Valonte Farms. The driveway is not long enough to turn around. This person backs into an intersection. Seems like a dangerous situation for everyone!

Water has become a real issue with weak drainage rules

In the 30 plus years my family has lived in Needham, just on my street alone, more than 15 houses have been torn down and McMansions have been built.

Builder next door has created a monstrosity. Work done on cheap, landscaping detrimental to drainage, no house now looks over our house and back yard. Plans changed significantly from what was presented to town. House has had 3 different developers since being sold. Come see and ask us more- great example of what not to do. We are 204 central ave. Given we live on the older side of town this will only happen more. Any build should have some consideration of local fit. If house is above a certain height/size rules should be strict.

Houses that are torn down are being rebuilt in massive houses that take up most of the plot of land on which they sit. Many of them look the same and the town is losing the character of its homes. It's also becoming increasingly unaffordable for families to move here because most of the houses are so large and expensive. It's limiting the diversity of residents and inhibiting to even relocate within the town as there are so few homes that are being built that are less than 4k square feet / under \$1MM.

The amount of sunlight reaching my back yard and the privacy in my yard have been impacted by the large houses now looming over it. 🦋

Teardown issue is the clear driver for rampant unaffordability and lack of starter homes. Typical buyers cannot find inventory below \$1M, let alone less than \$2M anymore as the teardown economics have incentivized FAR maximization for profit coverage. As a result, there is little ability for younger families purchase starter homes, older families to downsize to (unavailable) smaller homes, and families of diverse income ranges to enter the community at all. All of these factors drive an increased tax burden on individual homeowners who have purchased at a historically lower price and may not have the same level of income to fund these payments as the buyer of a \$3-5M home. Additionally, this jeopardizes the long term health and growth of our community and schools with the potential for declining enrollment and loss of the diverse values and perspectives this community promotes.

Flooding in my basement after a number of trees were cut down of trees in lot on street that runs behind our house . Neighbor next to us had same problem. We live on Tower Ave & lot is on Paul Revere Rd .Apparently this removal of trees was enough to upset the water table despite living at the top of a large hill! Tearing down smaller homes (even 3-4 bedroom colonials) to replace them with 6-7 bedroom houses results in less green space and too much concrete - water drainage is a problem. Many of the homes being built are also unsightly & look more like office buildings or small hotels and would be better suited on 2-3 acre lots; not 1/4 - 1/2 acres. Despite having less green space these newer homes all have irrigation systems that appear to run daily even if it is raining !! No regulation there!

Teardowns on both sides of us. Main impact has been less sunlight due to taller house on my south. All trees come down so less privacy (and shade). One house 2 doors down purchased by a developer who was rude to our neighbor, broke numerous codes, used cheap construction materials to build a tacky house. Kept huge machine parked in front for a year. Can't forbid rudeness or tacky houses can we?

The smaller houses being torn down and new large houses being built are changing the socioeconomic demographics of our town. Only super wealthy are moving in to Needham. Younger families/couples are not (as they do not want/cannot afford \$3million - 7 bedroom - 6000 sq ft houses). It's affecting school enrollment as new young families aren't moving in to Needham. I also hate seeing trees being removed to accommodate the new large houses.

The monstrosity across the street from us is at least 4X larger than the house that was here before. It has 3 floors and the 2nd floor is already above my house. WTF?!

2 large homes were built behind us after the tearing down of a beautiful \$1.8M home. For our bedroom, we had to purchase up/down shades and keep them up 3/4 of the way up to have privacy. When the other house will be occupied, we will have to keep one up shade with just a sliver down because their top floor is so high. The downstairs restroom up/down shade is always half way up because their elevated patio peeks right in. The shrubs that were destroyed would have maintained our years of privacy. This is direct impact and we do recognize it is a 1st world problem. More importantly TOO many tear downs impact the culture of the town - drive out families on fixed incomes, are prohibitive to everyday working class families, singles, town and local business employees,, etc. thereby diminishing social and economic diversity components of the town. I believe it will also increase the transient nature of residents. Currently, during the busiest RE season, so many large

house teardowns are sitting on the market with price drops going from \$50k - 250k. daily, just check Zillow. What happens if they do not sell at the exorbitant prices that are being asked? The tearing down of smaller homes INCREASED our RE taxes by 25% - this I believe to be created by developers inflating the land prices during and after the pandemic. Clearly, this is not the same boom market for developers but we will be stuck with HIGH tax rates and the town will keep on spending money. I am not sure how much you can actually regulate - the building of large homes but I hope that some actionable steps can be taken so that Needham can and will continue to sustain and welcome homeowners who enrich our lives. Needham is quite dependent on volunteers to run its boards. We need to make sure that an investment in Needham is more than an addition to the financial portfolio of our homeowners.

The larger homes have made Needham more unaffordable limiting new residents to those with substantial funds.

Aside from changing character of the neighborhood, the biggest concerns to me are environmental, trees, and the negative impact these large houses have on storm management, ecosystem destruction, and diversity.

I understand that new builds are necessary, but wish we had stricter regulations on setbacks and yard size. I also wish we had smaller new builds that were affordable for different types of families and buyers. Last, I don't love that all of the new builds are the same exact color and style. One of the things I love about Needham is the style and variety of our homes!

relentless water issues result from tearing out trees and reducing greenspace around each house, and those downhill suffer

I grew up in Needham and moved back to raise my family. Housing is extremely difficult and these \$3m houses on a street I grew up on is absolutely ridiculous. Who needs all that space and no yard? The people on this committee are realtors and contractors. Bill Paulson will never turn down a listing for a massive house nor complain that a big one is being built. I mean why would he? You can make \$80,000 on a house which is almost the average salary. The houses are ridiculous. I am really glad this committee is in place and I hope it makes a big impact for our community.

The studies and surveys have been going on for years with minimal controls put on the contractors. The noise level in Needham can be uncomfortably loud when gardening or having your windows open. Streets like Brookline that were always wet but the builders continue to remove almost all the trees from lots and jackhammer out ledge. The holes for the foundations have standing water. This is an example of the water problems caused to neighbors by excessive building also to mention the icy road and sidewalk problem in the winter. My beautiful view is gone instead I see 3 stories of a massive newish house. Needham needs to wake up and do something rather than study it. The greedy contractors are exploiting our town.

I believe in Santa Barbara, if you tore a house down, you could only add a certain percent above the torn down home's square footage. Made sense to me. 🙄

Everyone in Needham is negatively affected in terms of less pervious surface for water retention and less runoff, which leads to more flooding and less groundwater storage. This kind of wanton tear downs of perfectly good and even large enough houses is a gross misuse of natural resources and affects climate change and all of us.

Needham is becoming the town for young families with school age kids. Those families need bigger houses

Square footage measurement should be consistent across all housing in order to apply an even tax code for all owners. Why would we allow a large home to avoid square footage by excluding a basement that is likely designed to be a gym, study, bedroom, etc? The town does an amazing job managing all the complex issues we face yet HONE and now Envision are lessons to be learned from! Change is hard. What smaller steps can be taken to achieve the end goal? Allowing huge and disproportionate housing impacts all of us. Big houses may also mean big cars, big consumption, demand for parking in the center, devaluing of smaller homes and so forth. Maybe that's the way of the market but are we directing this or allowing more than we ultimately would like in town? Thanks!!!

The biggest issue I see is the impact of large scale tree removal on teardowns. For two reasons - one, the lack of water absorption from lost trees and roots and the resulting run off impact to neighboring homes, and the loss of neighborhood privacy and visual impact. Elevating of lots and water run off should be regulated, and developers and future owners should be required to make remedial changes for neighborhood protection should flooding to neighbors occur. Developers of teardowns should be prevented from tree removal in at least the setback area, and should be required to re-plant some percentage of the trees that are removed, and the replacement trees should be bigger than saplings. Other than that, I support the ability for developers and homeowners to build larger homes, including basement buildouts and third floors. I may not want 6 or 8 bathrooms, but developers and homeowners should have the right to do that on land they own. Addressing younger and older (and less affluent of all ages) needs should be done by more condo, rental and multi family homes. Town should be much less restrictive and encouraging of that. Including in-law suites by right, and less restrictions on 2 family homes.

Idiot contractors clear cut lots.

Big houses aren't a problem, but I don't like clear cutting lots. I'd be in favor of tree regulations to keep builders from clear cutting.

In some ways this ship has sailed, in that so many teardowns have happened already. I have a smaller house and don't really want to be the last one on the street. Maybe there should be a max footprint based on lot size, but I'm not sure whether anything should change. Drainage rules are important for new construction. Other than that, I am not really impacted. As long as a market prefers big over small houses I guess this will happen.

UGLY UGLY houses being built. Go to Europe for design ideas if you need a course on style. Shame on Needham.

I live on Lawton Rd where three houses were torn down and were replaced by seven gigantic houses. Even worse, the lots were clear cut.

My neighborhood has been negatively affected by tear downs. A huge house was built directly across from ours, knocking down all trees, blocking light, and causing considerable noise and Disruption for months at a time. The house that was taken down could have housed a family that would have loved to move into Needham. The fabric of the town is being destroyed and new families cannot move into Needham.

I do not understand why this is an issue our town should be worried about. People may like or dislike large homes, but no one is harmed by them.

Younger families are being priced out of Needham as all of the less expensive/older homes are being purchased by developers, torn down, and replaced with much larger new construction homes. This will have a significant negative affect on the town in the long term. We should be prioritizing renovation of existing home over demolition. I have watched several houses on my street be torn down and replaced with much larger homes in the 4.5 years I have lived in Needham. When we moved in, we purchased an average sized home on our street (~2200 square feet) and now I am guessing we might be in the bottom 1/3 to 1/4 of homes on the street/neighborhood.

The negative impact has been to the water situation when new houses are built. The footprint is much larger and there is less drainage all around. We have had to take many steps to resolve some of these issues. Plus the new houses are being built up meaning that they are way higher above the ground than the previous houses and the remaining houses that have not been knocked down are much lower down and look ridiculous next to the newer ones.

I don't think people in larger homes (ie - new builds) are concerned with these issues, and it restrictions will not impact price as builders will add more features to meet their numbers. Prices for smaller homes that aren't teardown will become more competitive and people will renovate them, spending money they could have spent on new inventory

I don't mind the bigger houses for the most part, however, sometimes the neighborhoods with many new homes look to cookie cutter and too large for the lot size. I would like to see a cap on the foundation area vs lot size

It is extremely disappointing that builders are able to so drastically change the landscape of our town to line their own pockets. And yes, my own neighborhood has been very negatively affected, and I personally have had to pay thousands of dollars to redirect water away from my home as a result of 2 teardowns on my street. One of the homes took over three years from tear down to sale. Three years of trucks coming and going. And the builder of this home moved the driveway from the main road where it had been on the previous home, to my street which is a side street. The builder also changed the address to be on my street, even though the house faces the main road. Not only does this seem unethical as it erased the many years of real estate history and pricing on MLS, but this change has resulted in dangerous driving interactions DAILY on my street, do to the confusion of delivery trucks not knowing where to go, and blocking part of our narrow , dead end street, even now that the new owners have finally moved in. Lastly, this new trend of extremely modern-looking homes that builders are throwing up quickly is very negatively impacting the look and feel of the town. I don't think it's right that such drastic designs that completely change a street or neighborhood should be built on spec. 🦋

I think the newer houses look beautiful and make the town nicer

The current zoning regulations appear to be designed for the benefit of developers and realtors. I am a 30+ year resident of Needham. Because I live in a small house, it is a prize for developers and has resulted in an evaluation that dramatically raises my property taxes. I hope to continue living in my house for another 15 years but the taxes may ultimately force me out. I have heard that I should be glad my house is worth more, but what good is having a million dollar house if you can't afford to live in it? The regulations are forcing seniors to leave the community. Seniors who frequently draw on fewer of the town's resources, i.e. no children in the schools, smaller households taking less to the transfer station, etc. When the houses on either side of me were knocked down the houses built were tripled in size. Both properties were raised. The lots were clear cut of trees and shrubs. If you take a bigger bite of the land by building a larger foundation and altering ground water flow, raise the property height, increase roof run-off and clear the trees you can guess what happens to water. I have installed sump pumps, back up pumps, paid to connect to the storm drains and installed a generator so I don't float away. I replace a pump about every two years. You can imagine my electric bill when the pumps click on every 65 seconds for days on end. I like my neighbors. Hate their houses. At the end of my street, two houses were knocked down and the houses built were advertised at over 6500 sq feet! Please amend the zoning regulations sooner rather than later. I'd like to continue living here.

Young people from Needham can no longer afford a house here

Construction of a large house on the next street (including but not limited to removal of many large trees) resulted in water damage to my property. Construction of a large house next door (including the contractor's failure to comply with permitting) resulted in damage to a large sugar maple on my property.

Wellesley has a much better idea that should be studied. Whoever buys a house has to live in it for a year before it is torn down. Wellesley does not look like a black/White House town like Needham.)

Everywhere I walk there is a loud construction site where a house has been leveled and new construction being built. It's noisy and dirty. Trees have been uprooted, animals have lost their homes. The landscape of this town is already forever changed. There should be some reasonable oversight of these changes to the town's fabric.

Loss of trees and huge houses with tiny lawns impacts neighbors with runoff and flooding issues. Be like Dover!

Needham is a vibrant bedroom community of Boston that is going through necessary upgrades from old one story houses to the type of housing that families want now. These are positive changes that reflect modern day life. I live in an old one story house as a a senior, but if I

had a growing family this would not work for us. Half the homes on our street have been torn down and replaced and it has made a terrific positive impact.

New houses selling around \$2M make it difficult for middle class families to move to Needham. Even with the increase in house value since we've moved to Needham 14 years ago, moving to a newer property is unattainable. All new houses are the same - white with black windows or modern. We need more variety of the new houses. The town is losing its charm.

we're allowing too much lot coverage. We need less house, more yard.

It's not only the size of the homes that worry me, it's the style & the cheap materials being used on the exteriors. We're going to have a town full of extremely dated homes that look worn down in a decade. These overly modern homes will be a thing of the past soon.

Huge house built next to us, and it was realigned so their back yard faces our side. Now we have noise issues as their back is next to our bedroom with tiny setback, we have much reduced sunlight. BUILDER'S fault, not the owner. Plus houses on our street keep getting torn down and every one is bigger than the last. Especially since they build up the ground level so the first floor starts much higher, causing more runoff to the older smaller houses and we have water table issues generally to begin with. Everything is less green with every new house 1 - 2 stories taller.

Too many mega mansions are being built in Needham on small lots. There are no more "starter" homes available in Needham since builders will outbid a person who would otherwise purchase the home to live in and then the builder tears it down, clearcuts all the trees and builds a huge house that takes up all the land. Also typically changes the topography and creates run off issues.

I don't believe it's equitable to allow affordable houses to be torn down and replaced by a home that houses the same amount of residents. The town should take a strong towns approach to naturally allow housing density to increase when homes are replaced. Current residents should have options to age in place rather than being forced to sell, move away and see their home torn down.

We need to be aware that various goals are often very intertwined, and that there are potential "cross-correlations" to consider when regulating. For example, in no particular order: 1. Currently, the setback for garages is 5 feet more than the regular setback. That means that a higher proportion of the lot needs to get paved. That has negative consequences for water run-off. Also, less room for plants/trees. Requiring garages being "sideways" creates even more paving. Think of the cumulative effect across the whole town! 2. There is obviously demand for new/large houses. Reducing the number of lots available for new houses - demand and supply economics - will accelerate price increases and reduce affordability. 3. The turnover of houses, ie. older houses getting replaced with new houses, is a great opportunity to progress our climate action plan. Old houses with poor insulation and oil/gas heating can get replaced by houses complying with the stretch code or even  better technology. Needless to say that better energy efficiency is also a cost saving, compared to living in an old house. PS: I am not a builder nor contractor, just an "economist" and very much in favor of (green) technological advances that progress our qualities of life.

Prior zoning had larger homes on the west side of town where there is more land to support them and they look more appropriate. Now you have 7000 sq ft homes towering next to more average size homes making them look ridiculous. There isn't enough green space surrounding these homes and now neighboring homes are flooding where they never did before. With storms only growing more intense year after year due to climate, change this is very irresponsible. These \$3M homes aren't even selling so fast. There aren't enough starter or empty nest homes left for young couples to even have a chance to move here or for people like myself who have outgrown our homes to go. I'm disgusted with the whole thing.

The hours which the building contractors work is also unacceptable. You can hear banging as late as 7 PM in the warmer weather months. There's also a negative impact on traffic as multiple trucks park along the streets during the building process.

I am concerned that not enough consideration is given to housing for people that want to downsize in Needham. A downsized house is a four bedroom house with three bathrooms. I know many people who have been in Needham a long time and raised their families and have left because they can't find an appropriate place to live. This also changes the community and the sense of community. Like every other community all Needham seems to care about is money. The contractors are not incentivized to build multifamily dwellings. They just want to build the biggest house they can possibly build on any lot. We've seen this in our neighborhood many times. Plus the downside of having to listen to all the construction and deal with all the construction vehicles on our narrow streets. I don't know what the Town thinks about trying to deal with this issue. They want the tax money as well. I'd love to know what you plan on doing with the results of the survey because I don't think you can do anything.

My neighborhood has been negatively impacted by the building of overly tall and bulky homes that not only look out of place but have caused water issues for abutting properties.

I'm shocked that builders are allowed to build such massive homes that overwhelm their neighbors. They take up the entire plot. They cause flooding. It's crazy.

...

I think tear down and house size are separate issues, not one as this survey presents. Tear down: Are we currently allowing teardown of existing homes that we should not allow to be torn down? and Large House: Should we regulate zoning to be more restrictive with regards to building size and setbacks?

I live near Mitchell school. many teardowns, one next door. suggestions: what matters is the volume of the house, not so much the footprint and height. some people want room for an ADU, which should be accommodated, but it might mean the FAR should be higher on the lot, especially small lots in central Needham. Long driveways with garages in back should be discouraged. too much asphalt and poor turning

area for cars exiting garages. what you want to avoid is a house that looms over the street, as is the case with the house on Brookline St near Mitchell at top of the hill. A problem is number of bedrooms, and on a small lot, clearly 5 is in some instances too much, but also the way people want oversized master bedrooms and extra rooms that seem to have no purpose. What also matters in the issue of setbacks is what is close to the property line. If it is a wall of house extending three floors, including a bedroom on high, then that is a problem. If it is a wall of house blocking the sun, that is a problem. People these days seem to want less back yard space, so if there is a way to compromise such that they can build closer to the back property line in order to avoid the side setback issue, perhaps that would work.

I have a new build so I don't think it will be torn down if/when we sell

A large home was built next to us after a much smaller Cape was torn down. Before and during construction the builder did not do any kind of proper containment of water or otherwise. No fencing, berm socks, hay bales or swales were used until I complained which I did for 8 very long months. During the winter our yard was a skating rink and in the spring, a pond. The next door yard was at the same level as our yard. The new build not only had a higher yard but also was much higher in the back and on the side that abutts my yard. Water was purposefully directed into our yard. At present water still comes into our backyard. After 8 months of complaining and no resolutions to my valid concerns in sight I placed a call to the building inspector and informed him that if the water issues were not immediately resolved we'd have no choice but to protect our property and sue the town and the builders. A few days or a week later the builder began work on a french drain. We remain concerned all these years later when it rains and that's not okay. Among other things the builder was irresponsible about ... he allowed his workers to burn pre treated shingles in an aluminum trash can, left overflowing dumpsters that blew debris into neighbor's yards, failed to secure the worksite with proper and safe fencing and didn't install any kind of water blocking measures. It was an absolute nightmare, our concerns remain and we're disheartened at how long it's taking for the town to remedy this situation for homeowners.

There needs to be a diversity of housing stock. Builders are taking up the smaller homes that would be ideal for new homeowners or empty-nesters (I know you have heard this before, many times!) But also, just as a matter of comfort, large houses that edge to the setbacks feel like they loom over the smaller houses and decrease the feeling of privacy and shelter. Can there be enighborhood standards for setbacks - too close out the closest and the farthest from the street, and set the median distance from curb for the others as the allowable front setback (or something like that). Also, get rid of the practice of building the lot into a small hill to maximize the allowable height - the reasonable street level should be the baseline.

At this point, any restrictions placed now on the size of new houses will limit the sale price of my house.

If a house is torn down after someone sells it that is no longer the concern of the former owner.

The amount of trees that have been cut down whenever a massive house is built is outrageous and makes the neighborhoods I walk so hot. 🦋

The very large high priced homes are very limiting in terms of availability for first time buyers, and have really changed the makeup of the Needham population. We do not see this as a positive change.

The large houses increase taxes but taxes alone make housing unaffordable.

Tear downs resulting in new oversized houses in Needham are, quite frankly, out of control. I see new houses being built as close to the property line as allowed, taking up as much space on a lot as allowed. One negative impact of that is that developers clear-cut lots to make space for these large houses, cutting down every tree in the process. Then a large house comes in, and with less ground (earth) around it, we have drainage and flooding problems. I'm not opposed to large houses, but large houses should be on large lots, like the kind on South Street and similar neighborhoods. Not in the middle of "regular-sized" lots, where they dwarf the houses around them, blocking light and as noted above, necessitating the removal of basically all trees on the property. The loopholes that allow very high houses also need to be closed (the "basement" issue, which is still not resolved). While I have my own opinions on the question of why people "need" such large houses to begin with, I see the main issue as that a large house on a regular lot impacts neighbors, wildlife, and others - and that's where the problems arise. And a secondary issue is that when perfectly usable "regular" houses are purchased to be torn down, it then limits the range of housing options in Needham and prices many people out. It is long past time for the tear down / large house issue to be addressed.

We are a new resident in one of the "tear down" houses for perspective. There are many old homes that in the coming decade will likely be torn down after residents pass. New homes can bring new younger residents, energy, and revenue. This path was one that attracted us to Needham - keep the wonderful small town feel, city center, and local businesses. - but intermix new, fresh, and younger residents. Have yet to see a 'tear down' that was too big or troublesome.

What i have seen in the last few yrs on Riverside St and Highland Terrace is teardowns where the houses/duplexes are cramed together with barely room to park a car between the houses. Also the most beautiful and majestic trees have been cut down. What used to be nice lawns, bushes, and trees have all disappeared. Now it is all impervious surfaces, and everybody suffers from flooding. This is not ecological.

Many of the new houses being built are too large for their lots and are unattractive. I can't comment on whether that should be remedied by increasing front/rear/side setbacks or limiting floor space to lot ratio.

NA

I am concerned about the amount of impervious paving surrounding many large houses. In addition to the large building footprint, developers and owners are extending driveways and constructing patios that reduce the planted area of the lot. I am also concerned about the removal and lack of replacement of shade trees in front of large "replacement" houses. This negatively affects the neighborhood.

I moved to Needham in 1977, and one of the things that drew me to this community was the kind of homes that Needham offered and supported. Each block had a unique set of homes, and the variety of styles exuded a New England charm. The homes were well spaced, and

had ample room for inviting lawns, as well as an ample supply of trees. The newly constructed homes mostly look alike, and they have no character or charm. To be more direct, I think most of the newly built homes are ugly. These new additions are leaving a larger footprint on the lawn, and they are eroding what used to be our inviting charm. Think about who is going to eventually move into these McMansions. People are having fewer children, and who is going to have the money or desire to own them down the road? I am deeply concerned about how the town is treating seniors. I would like to live out the rest of my life in Needham, but I feel like those in charge in Needham are trying to push seniors out. I live in an old house which I love, and its footprint is small, and its value has risen disproportionately as it is an attractive site for a builder because there is enough land to build a bigger home. My real estate taxes increased by almost 30% this year. I live alone and have no children who used the Needham schools, but Needham doesn't allow a reduction in taxes for people who have no children in school, a practice in place in other towns. I live amidst some of these more recently built homes, and I don't see the residents getting involved in supporting Needham. I think the town will come to regret what it has allowed to happen regarding the addition of these super large homes.

One of the problem with tear downs is they also remove trees, which negatively impacts the neighbors and our town. Would like to see greater oversight of tree removal within 15 feet of the property line unless an independent arborist deems the tree diseased

Negative impact on tree canopy and privacy and light pollution in neighborhood plus tax increases

How can we incentivize builders to build newer homes that are not 4000+ square feet, but rather new 2500 - 3,000 Square feet.

Perhaps limiting square footage on some of the newer houses would help. Most of these McMansions have six bedrooms and six baths — seriously?? This trend started over 20 years ago. Needham planning folks missed the boat. Restrictions on height/square footage should have been enforced a long time ago. The argument often heard is “golly, our house value has gone up so much; that’s great”. Perhaps, but I can’t cash out — where am I going to go??

Our neighborhood has lost the feel for a "neighborhood" and is just a group of larger and larger homes.

We have not been negatively impacted. The larger house have brought up the value of the neighborhood. Every time a house is replaced by a larger house, my house increases in value. Needham is a highly valuable neighborhood and I want to see that continue.

Needham does not need to interfere with the rights of private property owners.

Current regulations make it difficult to renovate making tear downs more likely. While the regulations have a good purpose often the negative effects override the positive.

New houses have thrown a shadow on my house. Construction took over one year, it was noisy and messy. There is constantly construction around me- there is no peace between that all the noise from landscapers. 🗨️

We are primarily concerned about oversized houses on small lots. Also, many older homeowners who have 1950s-era houses are counting on selling at current high prices in order to continue living in or near Needham when they downsize to a condo or apartment.

I suffered for at least six months with early morning banging, quite often going til nearly dark. All of the trees on that property were stripped, leaving me with an ugly view and I spent the money to remove ugly trees that weren't on my property, with permission of a neighbor. The view from our sunroom and deck were severely impacted. The lights in their back yard as like Fenway Park. It's a 3 story house in a normal neighborhood with a stark comparison. Since the 2 older homes in our neighborhood were demolished, we've had mice in our basement for the first time in 35 years. We feel they were displaced from much older homes

Living on a low part of town where the water table is very close to the surface, contractors have built large houses on mounds of earth that cause the run off to flow into their neighbors yards and basements. Larger foot prints are decreasing water absorption causing more waters with lawn chemicals to flow into sewers. Our neighbors sometimes need to have the fire department pump excess water from their backyard caused by their neighbors houses directly into the sewer system which I believe is technically illegal. But I am also very disappointed to see starter homes (who some of us would happily live in our whole lives) torn down. Such a waste-bad for the environment in so many ways.

I understand that the area of the basement as well as the attic is not taken into consideration when determining the size that a builder is permitted to build. It should be.

Once you sell your house it's no longer your house so you don't have a say. Needham is having an influx of new builds which is lovely and also has many older smaller homes. Those newer and larger homes are paying more taxes which is helpful.

I have lived in Needham for nearly 10 years. The volume of tear downs and new construction is an issue but I would suggest the town not only look at zoning for new construction but also the regulations for renovations. When I had moved to Needham it was just my wife and me and we bought a small 3 bed 1.5 bed cape on an irregular corner lot by Perry Park. As our family grew to include two young children we tried unsuccessfully to find a way to do a small addition to the home to allow it to accommodate our needs. The regulations and zoning for this addition made it not feasible and cost prohibitive to the point where moving / buying was a better option to meet our needs in a fiscally responsible way. We ended up in the situation of having to buy a new construction home that is the focus of this survey. Is it more space than we need? Absolutely. If the regulations had made the spec developer build something that was 3-4k ft instead of 5.5K ft would it have met our needs? Yes. But it still wouldn't have had the charm and history of an expanded cape. So I would really encourage us to look at not only zoning for the upper end limits and new construction but also how we encourage thoughtful renovations at the smaller end of the zoning regulations. Last item for consideration. Please think differently about how we frame this issue. My family living in a new construction tear down is not an “issue” facing our community. The language of this survey creates division. We have the opportunity to adjust our zoning to support the needs, diversity, and values of our community. But the way this is worded is divisive and in today's environment it matters. Please try to do better at bringing our community together.

We are allowing affordable housing and neighborhood character to be destroyed. It creates unacceptable burdens on infrastructure. Developers make huge profits at the expense of the prior and future homeowner with little benefit to the town, affordable housing and current residents. If a developer or homeowner is seeking a tear down it should be required to build affordable / multifamily housing in town or put a meaningful percentage of the purchase or sale price into a fund to build affordable / multifamily house (similar to contributions to land trusts in other communities).

Cut down on developers having the edge on common people having the chance to buy properties

There needs to be better control/regulations of the size of new houses relative to the lot size. Need more space between houses and the street. Many of the new house take up the entire lot. This impacts drainage, causes flooding - often in the neighbor's yard where flooding never existed. Also, so many trees have been cut down which also impacts drainage, and heat index. I'm not opposed to large houses if the lot size supports it. But I see too many huge houses now being built that cover the entire lot. This causes problems for neighbors and it should be prevented.

water runoff issues has increased as there is less ground to absorb water causing pooling of water in lower ground areas with visual pooling of water in yards.

The question in my mind is this; how do we encourage the redevelopment of homes that were initially built with low quality standards and have not been maintained well while also encouraging older, beautiful homes in town to be renovated vs torn down? Also, for those homes that will be rebuilt, how do we encourage them to look like them to look like they fit well on their lot? Here's my thought: It seems like far too many homes are being sold off-market where real estate agents and developers are preventing the homes from being listed in the free market. This private market is causing the tear down of many homes that would otherwise likely be sold to families that would renovate these homes (likely in the \$1-2m price range needing \$100-500k in renovations). Often times these homes are sold by older couples that agree to below market prices with and the price point is set based on the sole intention of these homes being knocked down. I have not done a deep analysis but have seen this happen many times over and would suggest the committee look at how many tear downs originated with an off-market sale. Perhaps one solution is this: if a home is to qualify to be torn down in Needham it should be required to be listed on the free market for a minimum of 2 weeks. This lever will force many homes in Needham back to the free market while still allowing for undesirable homes to be purchased by developers and torn down (ie a post-WWII ranch that is in bad condition) and likely preserving some of our beautiful older homes. There should be other incentives to renovate vs tear down offered as well such as tax credits. In regards to revamping the rules of new build homes I think many people in town agree that many of the homes being built look really large compared to their lot size. I think we all desire a town where each lot has a open space that compliments the home thats on it and the homes around it. Thank you 🙏

for your time in looking in to this important topic.

Makes my taxes increase, the big house can see into my windows, the type of people moving in - entitled

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Needham needs smaller more affordable housing units instead of huge mcmansions. Young and older people are being priced out of Needham. Many of the houses have finished 3rd floors and basements which don't appear to be regulated. I don't mind teardowns of old rundown houses but now the builders are paying as much as \$1.3M and tearing down quite nice homes. I found it ironic that people voted against the MBTA proposal on the grounds that it might increase students, yet these new large homes with 3-4 kids each are ok.

It

Small lots that are close to other homes should not be allowed to build massive and tall homes. The homes should be similar size to the average home size based on its nearest 2-4 homes over the past 20 years.

I'd like slightly increased setbacks from neighbors and slightly smaller footprint allowed. Beyond that I'd be concerned with changes that would negatively impact lot values

The large houses bring in only wealthy families. I wish my kids could see more middle class families in their neighbourhood and classrooms

Since the footprint of many of the new homes is so large, there is less grass/plant surface area to absorb rain water. When we first moved in 10 years ago, we didn't have much problem with flooding in our basement. With huge new houses in our and adjacent neighborhoods, we now frequently have flooding - and not just during large storms.

Housing in Needham has become unaffordable due to the lack of limitations on home size and tear down activity. From what I have seen, many if not most of the houses selling for under \$2m are sold to developers who tear them down and replace them with a house that is much larger and sells for a million or 2 or 3 higher in price. Our town has lost cohesiveness and character and now seems very inconsistent when a 1950s Cape has a 3000 sq ft modern farmhouse next door. This is throughout our community.

There is a need for multi-dwelling residences - town homes, duplexes, possibly triplexes and smaller apartment complexes. Acre plus zoning areas should be reduced to provide more housing on smaller lots.

I do not believe we have a large house problem. If we regulate and restrict the building of houses it will just drive-up prices even more. Most of the houses being knocked down are older, smaller houses in disrepair often with asbestos. It is generally good that these houses are being replaced with new houses enticing young families to move to town.

Incentives must be put in place to allow for moderately sized (and priced) homes. Additionally, renovations should be favored over teardowns.

I do not have an issue with large houses per se. My issue is large houses on small lots. My biggest concern is the ratio of impermeable surface to lot size. Obviously it would be nice if my children were able to afford to buy a house in Needham. But the issue is not large houses. It's impermeable surfaces in my opinion.

Would like to see regulations which prevent homes from taking up the majority of the lot and being completely out of proportion with the lot size. Also would like to see measures taken to reduce the number of trees being cut down in Needham.

People that want small houses for sale are out priced by developers.

I don't mind the new builds. Split levels and tiny capes don't meet today's needs. I think there should be more regulation regarding grading / amount a property can be built up, and not just gutter drainage but surface water drainage.

Paul dellaripa

That they all look alike, are too big and cost way too much for the average person.. Thank you Joanna and Chip Gaines. MA is not TX where everything has to be bigger and bigger!

There are no houses in Needham for downsizing. Statistics say my generation (70s) is causing the housing shortage because we are not moving out of the family homes. There is no place to go.

So many factors are part of decision on what to build. If there were new rules it may help drainage issues. Seems a little late to change what has been acceptable for years. Sellers and developers will be negatively impacted for different reasons. Not sure how to balance concerns. Changes would need to be phased in as a change too soon may become problematic if there was a new policy on a one day effective date. Everyone needs advance notice of when change might occur

I think that of a house will be using its attic and basement spaces as living areas (as opposed to storage, etc) those floors MUST be included in FAR calculations.

No homes for those starting it or downsizing. Less permeable surface for storm water. Fewer trees and greens for air quality. More use of toxic materials and fossil fuels to build/heat/cool these huge houses. High environmental and social impact.

Many houses on the market should be left to be bought by young people trying to get into Needham. Developers scoop these up and build multi million dollar homes pricing most young people out. Why not let a buyer renovate an older home.

Regulation in this area has unintended consequences. Changes to regulations will create more, or different, problems.

Not sure I understand the volume/bulk question.... The new larger houses are taking down trees and they are not leaving space to replant large trees (oaks, maples, etc). This is a FOREVER CHANGE to the lot and neighborhood. In my neighborhood alone there are 20+ homes that fit this description - the loss of canopy and privacy is striking. Loss of privacy with the large houses being built so close to the lot lines is real - side windows don't open up to back yards and trees, they open up to bedroom windows and you can see from one street to the street in areas because all the trees are gone. Water is being displaced in neighbor's homes - people all around the neighborhood are putting in sump pumps to compensate for the water issues in the basements. Everyone I talk to in the neighborhood with a home under 2000 sq ft wrestles with whether or not to invest in the homes because they think their home is a tear-down. Many of the people I talk to that are buying these homes are NOT looking for homes this size. They want to live in Needham but this is the only option they can find on the market. Developers and builders I talk to, including myself, just want clear guidelines. If you want a large tree or trees in the front yard (side yard, etc), just tell me that's what I have to do/plan for.

I think most of these questions have the wrong focus. I don't think the size of the houses themselves is the issue. The issue as I see it is the size of houses relative to the size of the lots in which they're built. Set backs and footprints are the issue. If the lot is deemed large great build a large house. If the lot of really large great build a really large house. I find it so difficult to understand how smart people do not correlate the tremendous loss of permeable land and loss of mature trees over the decades with the flooding issues we're experiencing. Another issue is lack of enforcing current regulations around new builds, in particular grading of lots that causes flooding of neighboring lots. I find that to be criminal. Aesthetics of the larger homes is in the eye of the beholder and not something that should be governed. The issues I noted above and probably more that I'm aware of are much much more important than straight aesthetics. I think calling this effort a "large house review" is definitely not putting the focus on the actual issues and is causing unnecessary division among interested parties. Thank you for putting out this survey and looking for solutions.

We have had increased flooding due to large houses displacing soil and removing trees adjacent to our property.

Large homes are not a problem when done correctly

Needham does not regulate the builders at all. They make them follow building codes, but most builders are extremely disruptive to neighborhood, so no regard for property lines, cleanliness, noise, dust and debris, damage to sidewalks and street during construction. Needham should be protecting the residents not just by building codes, but the entire building process.

I have no problem with the current regulations relative to tear downs. While the houses are large they are usually designed and have significant architectural design to make them attractive and fit the lot.

Visually we are impacted - streets not nearly as pretty, especially with many trees now gone. Few neighbors outdoors at large houses with tiny yards - lack of trees means AC runs constantly to keep houses cool.

I would propose a "developer" fee to be paid as a percentage of the sale price to the town if a home is sold to a developer with the express purpose of tearing what was an "affordable" house to build a larger less affordable home. The fee could be used to supplement various town

services: education, DPW, public safety, etc. It is additionally disturbing that we now have a water ban when for 20 years we have been told that the town wells are more than sufficient to supply water to the residents. Over the past 10 years the town has allowed continuous new construction, which seems oddly coincidental with the current water shortage. It would be great if the town leadership would speak to the water shortage issue. Thank you.

We already have zoning and laws. Let's not complicate and not overreach. If the zoning is not acceptable we can modify existing rules without introducing so much complexity and government overreach.

Lots of trees have come down. Every house around me has been torn down with a rebuild or had major renovations in the last few years with lots of disruptions and with multiple times when contractors have either not kept me informed or have lied about projects. I worry that everyone in Needham will have a very high salary and we will lose all socioeconomic diversity. It also feels environmentally wasteful to tear down perfectly good homes. I also notice that my 1920's home seems to require less repairs than the houses around me that are less than 10 years old. Are contractors required to follow best recycling practices on tear downs? I hope so.

Do your job and start regulating house sizes if you truly care about the spirit of our community.

Large houses are not the issue. Restrictive zoning that limits building denser and less expensive housing is the problem. This large house initiative is just another NIMBY excuse not to build affordable houses in Needham in areas near public transportation.

I am concerned about building that clear cuts the lot. D eliminates all the trees

We have teardowns on both sides of us. Both lots were completely stripped of all trees and all privacy was lost and now there are ugly white fences. The builder trespassed on one side dug up our lawn and sloped the property so there is now a puddle that forms at the back of our property. The sidewalk was torn up for a full year. No dumpster and trash blew all over the neighborhood for a year. The town building dept and police did nothing when called. The new houses now are on top of our property and can see into our home. One builder flipped the side the garage was on and now the driveway is on the opposite side which completely changes the dynamics of our yard. The worst part is the number of outside lights lining the 6,000 square foot home. It looks like a space ship and the lights are so bright. He even put in a water fountain in the front lawn that lights up at night.

Too many "mansions" the average person cannot afford Needham anymore and that's not what I want this town to be just for the wealthy. Family Generations that grew up here cannot afford to buy a house here, which is so sad. The builders come in and buy all the affordable houses knock them down leaving no choices for the average person to buy in Needham. Many Needham high school graduates want to come back to the town they cannot afford to because of the situation and it's just getting worse and the inventory is getting smaller. 🐦

Why are we allowing \$3.0 Million dollar homes to be built on streets like Warren where and across the street from Pollard Middle School where they clearly don't belong? Why are front doors only 15-20 feet from the street? Development is great but the size and scale being approved is making Needham less attractive and less approachable, and honestly, less neighborly.

Build more and taller apartment buildings in central town areas to allow for young professionals to live in Needham.

My daughter and her husband can't afford to live here. Messy builders bring rats

Be more thoughtful in the guidelines. Houses are on top of each other

The heights in particular have taken a big hit with tear downs. Entire neighborhoods like the heights are now forever changed.

They come in and tear down cheaper homes, 1st thing they do is rip out all the trees & don't replace them, put up these skyscrapers, eliminate lawn space and set us up for even worse climate change. Gotta be stopped.

the large houses make the whole area look crowded and claustrophobic, not spacious (no land) and we pay higher taxes because of the larger houses

i have not been impacted but it seems important to ensure that builders will be responsible for ensuring that they do not impact drainage on surrounding lots

The houses being torn down are being replaced with huge houses that block our sun, impact drainage and take dusk all surrounding trees. Our neighborhood is noisier and less healthy. There are fewer birds.

The proliferation of "McMansions" to replace smaller and more modestly sized houses is one of the key drivers of the soaring cost of housing in Needham. In all but Single Residence A neighborhoods (one-acre minimum zoning) they overpower the existing homes, they eliminate trees and back yards, and they change the nature of the neighborhoods. I will not go into more reasons, you know what they are. Suffice it to say that they are bad for many reasons. Many of the homes being torn down are not, in fact, small structures. Most could be renovated and/or have moderate additions to bring them up to current livability standards. I believe the Planning/Zoning Boards should lower the footprint size for these new houses - ie lower the percentage of the lot that can be built upon.

Privacy issues, water drainage issues, lack of parking. The list goes on.

There should also be consideration of water table and run off. Currently a knock down new build adjacent to us is extremely large foundation plus a pool house and in ground pool. There is no place for rainwater to go except in a neighbor yard. This is a large concern. Set backs should be increased and would like to see a ratio of land to square footage included as restrictions. However much of this feels too late as the bulk of our neighborhood has already turned over.

My issue is the cutting away of mature trees. There is NO Enforcement of the rules about this!!! HUNDREDS of mature trees have been cut down in my neighborhood in the past few years. One tear down project alone cut down at least 30 mature pines - and for what!? A new

resident who promptly put up a sign against density reasoning in the center! The hypocrisy is just breathtaking.

Bringing in bigger, newer houses will allow the community to flourish.

The criticisms levied by residents opposing replacement of 1950/60s housing stock with new, larger homes is misplaced. Single family homes are no longer starter homes in this area--condos and other multi-family dwellings are. We should encourage development of larger homes and multi-family homes in a manner consistent with community character.

The character of the town has changed - from having interesting and diverse houses (size, age, styles) to oversized cookie cutter homes. There seems to be little appreciation for older and smaller homes, often built with excellent quality and unique styles. And those that aren't yet torn down are being towered over by huge homes that now sit right at the edge of the property. Homes that have land, trees and space between neighbors used to be hallmarks of a beautiful community. It is sad to see what has happened. Please at least preserve the character that is still left, and implement some common sense restrictions.

The architecture of the new homes should be regulated to fit into the character of the neighborhood the home(s) are being built in.

There should be parameters set that if a house is torn down, the new home can only be XX% larger than the original house. This would solve the negative impact to neighbors who no longer have any views out their window than the enormous house next to them and may allow for younger families to move to town instead of the 1% of wealthy people.

The amount of rear downs has gotten out of controls and is boxing out young average earning families. It's changing the look and feel of Needham as a quintessential New England town

I hope that this effort limits itself to specific issues that recent home construction has presented and does look to simply restrict residents--or prospective homeowners--from building their dream homes. I know from experience, when my family moved to Needham that we had to wait a number of years before we were able to afford the renovation/addition that we had planned from the time we purchased our "fixer-upper." And while we stayed well within the current building parameters, I would hate to see others lose the chance to make Needham their home because they needed to go to a neighboring community (or buy a prohibitively expensive larger lot) to get what they're seeking. The added threats of collateral damage from overzealous action also concern me. It's easy to foresee new restrictions causing (1) senior citizens to lose significant value on what may be their primary asset (via reduced valuations) when they're looking to downsize or (2) the town losing out on prospective tax revenue when we're already facing an override vote in the near future. There are undoubtedly legitimate concerns that should be considered (i.e., stormwater mitigation, permeable surface area, energy efficiency, old growth trees, etc.). However, restricting the building code because some residents want Needham to remain frozen in time--either by leaving modest, outdated homes untouched or limiting the opportunity for wealthy families to move to town--is something to which I am vehemently opposed. 🦋

I'm delaying selling my house because I know several huge houses will be built on the property, maybe even cluster housing of some sort. The neighborhood will be negatively affected by either circumstance. Most of the trees will be removed, woodlands compromised, more wild animals displaced, and the natural terrain changed forever. Furthermore, I cannot afford to live elsewhere in Needham unless I stay in this house! What advantage is there to this town when long time residents are forced to relocate?

The amount of trees that have been removed to clear cut lots for the new builds is unacceptable. Too many are being removed and the character and air quality of our town are being negatively impacted. Also, I fear for the ability of new families without the means to buy \$3 million plus houses being able to join our community.

Perhaps height should be calibrated with setback--with a limit of 2 1/2 stories, but less if within, say, five feet of minimum setback on front or sides. "Loft" and basement space should be counted in FAR.

I have not personally been negatively impacted but feel the town would benefit from being accessible to a broader cohort of people, especially young families and those for whom renting as opposed to owning is a better option.

I am a renter who happily lives in 840 Sq feet. I find the mega-house owners to be wealth-hoarders and NIMBYs who do not contribute to a thriving community.

Zoning changes are needed to reduce the home footprint to land area ratio. There are far too many new builds that take up almost the entire lot. This allows contractors to deforest the lot and affect water drainage and other issues. Building these large and tall structures so close to one another has transformed this once picturesque NE town into a New York City suburb. Take my word for it I know. I grew up in Queens.

The current setbacks and stormwater handling policies are atrocious and have led to significant issue and expense for neighboring properties. In our experience, the building department has been completely unhelpful at managing poor contractor behavior. I hate that these contractors come in and don't lend any care to the neighborhood or the surrounding neighbors. Over 10 mature oak trees were taken down next-door to us, which cannot be replaced. They took down one of the trees that belonged to our property, and there is absolutely no recourse because we cannot afford the attorney fees that it will cost. We are starting to look at homes and other towns because this has been such a problem for us the last several years. It's a shame because we consider this town our home but we no longer feel welcome here and I no longer recommend our town to people looking because the overdevelopment is insane, and the town does not support the current residence.

I find it crazy that 10 years ago, we were advised by an architect to not bother with a design for a partial, one-level-up addition to our raised ranch. We were told that we would never be able to get a permit for that type of design in this town. And yet, any addition would have been lower in height than these "two floor" McMansions. Additionally, the loss of both privacy and sunlight living even two houses away from these McMansions stinks.

I am concerned that once again (see MBTA/"Neighborhood housing plan" & downtown envision plan), those swimming in the like-minded manipulative/cute by half fishbowl with a bias against new larger single family homes, continue to look to advance their agenda and significant policy changes by giving the appearance of being objective and inclusive. Please remember when you were working and raising a family without the time or interest to be involved with issues like this. As the committee finalizes reports/recommendations, do not as you know town meeting members have in the recent past, presume silence or lack of participation from the opposition to policy being advanced equates to a strong sense of the town. Please stop poking the bear with overreaching policy - we do not need another town referendum vote because the vocal and engaged few are either tone deaf or set on manipulating their agenda to fruition.

We need to err on the side of protection this time. Last time we had large house study rules, we over focused on protecting property values. Property values are growing just fine in Needham-similar communities who have put more restrictions on teardown and house size. Opponents should be able to prove harm rather than the legislation have to prove no harm.

We need to encourage new home construction as much as possible, while safe guarding truly historical homes (generally speaking 1800-1900's), or those with real significance. We are competing for residents with neighboring towns and need to be aware of that. Let's make Needham more builder friendly, not less, so we can increase our tax base, have more energy efficient homes, and allow people to move-in and enjoy/live rather than headache after headache and project after project which many older homes tend to have.

The homes that are getting torn down are old, energy inefficient and filled with mold, lead paint and asbestos, amongst other contaminants. The only way to replenish the housing stock is to demolish these structures and build new, especially given that there isn't much raw land to build upon in Needham. The size of the homes that get built are what makes sense for builders and developers to take on a risky bet like developing a new home.

Ratio of hard scape and house to the lot size needs review. Loss of absorbing ground cover and clear cut old growth trees has resulted in more flooding. Taller homes impact neighbors sun access.

I think there should be rules about cutting down trees and negatively affecting neighbors drainage

I don't believe Needham has a tear down/large house problem. I think many problems that people see in this area could be solved in other ways; investing in public green spaces, planting more trees, etc.

The quality of the new construction needs to be more strictly regulated. A lot of the new construction is absolute garbage. The town needs to place a greater emphasis on protecting historic-era homes (pre- 1940) unless we just want all our housing stock to look the same. It is unacceptable how many beautiful older homes have been torn down with a nondescript mansion put in its place. I am lucky to live in one of  the few 19th century Folk Victorian farmhouses in the Heights.. because it's not 7k square feet, it's actually "affordable" for Needham.

I think the current setbacks for new builds should be reviewed. There is still too much house being built on small lots in very dense areas of town. Would love for new builds to have to follow front set back of existing house keeping in line with other neighborhood houses. Also, drainage is a huge problem. New builds are built up, take up more square footage than existing house and all water drains into neighbors yards and basements once built. Happens to every neighbor of new builds and no one cares. Building department is useless and pro builder instead of protecting interests of lifelong residents.

They clear cut for no reason the town has been significantly impacted due to changes -

I'm concerned about both the demographic impact of huge houses being built in Needham and the environmental impact of the houses (as well as the leveling of trees and lots). It's making Needham into an even more homogeneous town.

I'm concerned about the environmental impacts of large houses, as well as the socioeconomic impact

While my neighborhood has not been negatively impacted by the tear downs the town no longer has starter homes for young people unless you have a min of 1.5 million to spend.

The size of the majority of new homes has become completely out-of-scale with lot sizes. ie 6000+ sq ft homes on <= 10K lots. The extremely large foundations on smaller lots result in removal of most of the existing trees, leaving only small non-paved areas for grass or other plantings. This escalating trend is detrimental to the environment, creates potential water issues, and results in irreplaceable loss of beautiful greenery. If this trend is not curbed, our streets will become completely lined by huge homes dwarfing a few small trees, with very little green space. Additionally, many builders seem to be creating basements that are well above grade to achieve high basement ceiling height (sometimes requiring addition of fill around the foundation to meet building height requirements vs grade). Many homes in our neighborhood have required blasting of granite ledge, which can create problems with ground water flow/flooding.

People should be able to do as they wish to their property

Please don't over regulate the market.

I don't agree that FAR should include attic and basement. I think garage size should be increased to include 3 car garages to get cars off the streets. I do think Needham should institute measures to make new construction deal with water run off without making a bunch of trees planted in middle of back yard. I don't think walk out basement should preclude dormers on top of attic.

I disagree that house size should be controlled by town. Town only need to make sure that inside and outside of the structure doesn't cause any issues on neighboring houses (water flooding). Current zoning doesn't allow small houses to make additions, like garage. Therefore, it's easier to demolish and rebuild, especially for houses that have electric and other things done by old code.

Too early to tell Not ready to sell All these tear downs and mini mansions are destroying our neighborhoods. Not only are they cutting down trees and changing the landscape, but they are also pricing younger families out of town unless they have parents substantially helping them out. Who needs a 4,000 plus sq foot home - it's the builders who want to make a hefty profit.

The teardown issue has been a problem for 20+ years. These new builds coming in at 7,000 square feet on tiny lots is ridiculous! Going from an 1800 square ft ranch or split level to a massive 2.5 story 5,000+ house on a 10,000 sq ft lot is not sustainable. We have created our own housing bubble and it will burst! Spring Rd is a perfect example of how not to rebuild...houses are built at least 3' above the natural grade of the street (compared with their teardown counterpart) At 2.5 stories some of these houses tower over older homes and cause issues with drainage and foliage along the road.

Removal of trees and established greenery

I'm not at all impacted and will not be

Loss of trees equates to more noise, less privacy. Storm water run off.

Too little green space already exists in needhams neighborhoods and the homes are larger and closer together with each decade. There are no smaller homes available for younger home buyers or seniors who would like to stay in town. The town is looking and feeling more and more like Newton or Brookline.

Large houses negatively impact ground water displacement. The lack of regulations around ground water mitigation for large new builds is a big issue that negatively impacts abutters

Too many trees taken down.

Impossible to afford a reasonable house here and it doesn't seem like it's aligned with the ROI.

Worried that my demographic of 60+ yrs will not be able to live in Needham in the near future. Equally worried that our child who has lived in Needham all of her 24 yrs won't be able to continue living here.

Another frustrating aspect of the large house problem is the removal of beautiful old trees. This removal has really impacted the beauty of Needham.

Aside from the large houses on small lots, tear downs cause constant noise and parking issues on my street. There have been 5 tear downs on my street or behind me in the past 4 years. It has been constant noise with no peace!

The problem isn't "tear downs." It is the size of the new houses being built. These homes have changed the demographics, environment, and character of Needham. In terms of demographics, the large homes require purchasers with very large incomes and thus rule out housing options for buyers with more moderate incomes. As more very large houses are built, the town becomes wealthier and less economically diverse. (The MBTA housing doesn't address this issue since these will be renters, not homeowners.) These very large homes are negatively affecting Needham's environment. The loss of land and trees directly impacts immediate neighbors, but it also has negative consequences for all of us in terms of soil erosion and flooding, clean air, even habitat for animals. At a time when the world should be greatly concerned about the negative impact of climate change, we should be thinking as a town about how to decrease our carbon footprint, not expand it. (Do people really need a private bathroom for every bedroom? Does a family of 3 or 4 really need a house with 6 or 7 bedrooms?) Finally, the character of the town changes dramatically when only extremely wealthy people can purchase houses, when yards and trees disappear, and when super-sized houses make smaller homes look shabby. It's time for Needham to examine the impact that the surge of large homes has had on the community and put in place new regulations and expanded review processes.

I have been positively impacted by it. Our neighborhood in Charles River Station has really been improved by tear downs of homes that were dated and replacement by newer larger homes whose owners maintain them better. My property value is up nicely because of this and when I eventually do sell it to retire, my higher home value will give me more resources in retirement. I do think large homes should only be put on lots that can accommodate them so regulations that touch on the percent of a property that may be covered by a home make a lot of sense. Other than that, I think our current policy is good.

Very little affordable first starter homes. All new homes seem to be \$2.5m+ It's pricing new families out

We bought our first house in Needham in June 2017. Now that our family has grown we want to move to a bigger house but we cannot find anything in Needham that we can afford. The number of properties in our price range (under \$1.25 million) is scarce. It feels so demoralizing that we might not be able to move within Needham (a community that we are now very settled in) and we may have to consider neighboring towns. Almost all the new properties being built in Needham are at a price point that is so far out of reach for so many families.

My 1892 home has had so much demolition around it that bathroom tiles have shifted, wallpaper has ripped, and floorboards have developed gaps. When we have heavy rain my yard fills with water. I watched them grade the neighboring lot higher than ours, and then videoed the water cascading into our yard. Developers shouldn't be allowed to ruin the integrity of neighboring homes and yards.

New homes being built today often have very small yards and an excessive amount of "finished" square footage. Developers are maximizing profits by building as much as possible on each lot, which significantly reduces the space between houses—and with it, our sense of privacy. We need regulations that limit the percentage of a lot that can be developed to preserve the character of our neighborhoods. I love Needham's small-town feel, and I don't want it to turn into another Newton, where traffic is overwhelming and homes are packed so closely together that it feels like you're living with your neighbors.

We would like to downsize to new construction but there's nothing available - all new homes are humongous- there's nothing for a couple in their 60's

New house was allowed a huge window that completely overlooks my back yard. We no longer have any privacy. The town needs to limit windows overlooking neighboring properties.

I don't understand why we have this committee, it seems clear that our town has more meaningful issues to solve.

Impervious is an issue. More new houses are increasingly paving more of their front yard

My comment strongly disagreeing that spacing between houses and the street is acceptable relates to front-facing garages, which should be set back from the front facade of houses by a more effective regulation than is currently in effect.

My main concern is the higher potential for flooding due to less ground to soak up precipitation. While I would like to see less large homes visually, if they maintained a footprint but were taller (still within regulations), I'm fine with that.

Disagree that updating our housing stock in needham is negative. Also disagree that limiting new housing size is negative, provided the setbacks and house coverage ratios are adequate. Right now coverage ratios appear too low, and setbacks should be larger. If we tweak those we should be good. Home owners own those lots and should be entitled to do with them what they want, within our updated building standards.

I think that storm water mgmt goes hand in hand with new home construction. If the basement is so large that it displaces ground water and causes problems for the new homeowner and neighbors, that's unacceptable. The developer should be liable, not the homeowners or the town.

This is quite literally the dumbest thing I have heard in a long time. I can't believe you people are real. Go move to Canada if you want to be governed harder.

I think strengthening restrictions on street setbacks (greater distance) is very important, and meanwhile preserving trees, and this alone can mitigate the worst of the large house problems while enhancing the overall appearance and environmental protection of the Town.

I appreciate builders tearing down homes that have been poorly maintained, are no longer functional, and no longer desired by buyers. We purchased a home here four years ago. We wanted an older home with character, but couldn't find one that was maintained or wouldn't need significant repairs/remodel/reworking. We had contractors walk through houses with us, and the least expensive remodel was \$600k over the sales price. If given the option, people aren't wanting to spend a fortune on a house, and then have to spend another fortune remaking it. We  purchased a new build and are so incredibly thankful we did. Everyone we know who has purchased an older home is now looking to rebuild. Many are choosing to sell and purchase a new build. However, I think the footprint of houses going up is too big compared to the size of the lot.

Please consider options for requiring builders to mitigate water run off. I have watched my neighbor two doors down deal with insane flooding in their basement over the last few years due (presumably) at least in part to some of the development of the surrounding area. The house behind me is also a new and large house on a small footprint that tore out numerous trees and cause substantial flooding in my yard for a year until I put some new plants in to help mitigate.

The current houses being built are too large for the lot. Also trees are being clear cut as well as land being filled in which could cause flooding.

Many of the new build homes in needham are disproportionally large for the lot size and give no yard and butt up against neighboring properties. It honestly looks ridiculous and lacks class. Also, many of the designs of the new homes are tacky and cheap with a multimillion dollar price tag. We are a New England suburb and the architecture and design should reflect that.

Another issue of new larger homes is the negative effect on the environment, removing large trees, new use of the land that results in water draining into nearby properties with no obligation to remediate the situation for the affected neighbors.

It's a shame when a new house completely dwarfs what's next to it and the footprint of the house takes up a disproportionate amount of the land. Thinking of a new house on Barrett street where there is very little yard left after this huge home went up. So the neighbor back and front yard is adjacent to home now not more yard. It's just off. I live on a street with one acre lots. Only one of the teardowns I think was built too large. Most have been tastefully done. But on an acre you have room to increase a footprint without making it inappropriate and out of balance.

Making the current entry level home (2,400+sf) more affordable to renovate rather than tear down is the key. A lot of homes that are less than 2,400sf have outlived their useful lives.... Making the new constructions homes smaller is not the way to get home entry level homes in this town they will still not be entry level homes. furthermore by doing this you are taking money out of the pockets of people that have lived in this town for decades to have a new incoming resident a little.

Its a complex issue which requires a strategic view of what kind of future do we want to build for Needham. Is it something more towards a city like feel or keep its current town ethos.

Needham needs more affordable housing and wants to build it. Why build it when we already have affordable housing in Needham? At present affordable housing is, through teardowns and large house construction, creating unaffordable housing. Regulation of teardown locations and restrictions on what can be built (affordable vs. unaffordable) are sorely needed.

My strong feeling is that the large houses negatively affect the character of the neighborhood and result in clear cutting of large mature trees which cannot be replaced.

The lots and set backs should be reasonable. People are building monster houses to get more money and we need more medium size homes that are more affordable, but no apartments, that will change the neighborhood negatively. We need to keep it single family homes

I am concerned that the new large houses are not well-designed or well-constructed.

First, these teardowns are gaudy and by using all of the available lot space (effectively building to the lot lines) it fundamentally changes the nature of the neighborhoods. Second, they are drastically reducing the number of starter and mid sized homes, leaving only homes for the uber wealthy at a time when we need to finding ways to make housing more affordable. Finally, on top of all that, when developers buy a teardown, they immediately cut down all of the trees which is terrible for the environment and an awful aesthetic -- these old growth trees are irreplaceable.

The houses that developers are building take up too much of the lot, reducing area for water to be absorbed which contributes to flooding and run off. The newer houses are built up higher, looming over the older homes and making for a more crowded feeling since they are built as close to the setback as allowed. These larger homes also remove starter home inventory from the town and smaller homes that seniors would want to live in and drive up the overall cost of housing in Needham. They also clear cut the entire lot, removing old mature trees taking away the positive effects those trees have such as providing shade and oxygen. At the very least something should be put in place to discourage developers from clear cutting.

Significant reduction of mature & old trees, significantly reduced privacy, increased light pollution, drainage changes/issues, decreased neighborhood character

A very large tear down house across the street from us has negatively impacted drainage on our property and soil erosion. The large number of trees removed with each tear down also impacts drainage in our neighborhood and is diminishing the appeal and character of the town, which once was lush and tree-filled and is no longer that way. Residents who suggested greater regulation back in 2016-2017 were rebuffed. I believe Wellesley has stronger regulations on new development that restrict removal of trees, which has the effect of forcing smaller newly constructed homes. Reining in the large houses isn't technically difficult if there's political will. The challenge lies in the number of vested interests that benefit from continued McMansionization in Needham. The commute in the 2014 to 2017 timeframe was stacked with real estate agents, lawyers, developers, architects and others who all had a vested interest in seeing more tear downs. Why the town stacks these decision-making bodies with people who have an obvious financial interest in the decision is mind-boggling. I see the current committee has  at least several with similar conflicts of interest and it also has two people who were a part of that last flawed decision. Some elected officials are either indifferent to, or conflicted about, the trend. The stakeholders are well connected. I suggest the town should immediately remove from the decision-making body anyone who has an obvious conflict of interest as a starting point. That means no realtors, bankers, real estate attorneys, developers, etc. You can solicit input and advice from those people who have such expertise, but they should have no vote and they should not be a part of any closed door discussions. That's the best way to level the playing field and get to an equitable outcome. Does this committee have the integrity to remove people who have a conflict of interest? I doubt it.

My modest ranch has been overshadowed by a very large house on one side and is likely to have the same problem on the other soon (the owner recently passed away). I bought my place because it was small--the right size for a single person. There are few such options left in Needham, and with the Needham and regional housing crises (which we have failed to respond to via the MBTA Communities Act or other such instruments), housing options are becoming increasingly restricted. Stronger zoning restrictions that make teardowns less appealing and help to preserve current housing stock--or encourage multifamily housing in currently zoned single-family areas--would be a step in the right direction.

Too much lobbying power of local builders is turning Needham into a suburban wasteland and making it impossible for young families to move here.

My family came to the Town Of Needham in 1851. Needham is always been an evolving town. The day we stop evolving is the day. We are not needham anymore.

Builders should not be allowed to build large houses on small non conforming lots. Residents need to be better informed that if they own a small house in good condition they are likely to get as much or more from a home buyer than a builder.

I believe we should allow a moderate increase in height in return for a smaller footprint. There should be an emphasis on maintaining open space to help with storm water issues. This applies to both house footprint and the allowed amount of impermeable surfaces , especially on smaller lots. Finally, the trend to square box houses with flat roofs to maximize enclosed volume has been detrimental to the look and feel of the town.

none

I would far prefer the town to focus on quality of construction and neighborhood cohesion/aesthetics, rather than limits on size of homes and lot coverage.

We have had flooding which is coming off of Great Plain Ave (over the curb) and into the ladder streets. Reducing the amount of land that can absorb water (by covering such a large portion of the lots) isn't helping this situation

Houses should only be rebuilt on current footprint. No exceptions.

It's unfortunate that my kids will never be able to afford to live in needham. The 'starter' homes are about gone

We have a housing shortage in this town, state and country. We need more housing.

We need more zoning regulations around home development. The space between houses is too small, the houses take up too much of the lot, trees are unnecessarily cut down, and contractors use short cuts to make money. I watched a contractor across the street bury an old driveway in the front yard and use the back yard as a landfill. Because of what they did, my street developed a rat problem and there is now a hot spot on our street where trees once stood.

The water/flooding/drainage issues with the new builds need to be mitigated. I would be less hostile about the tear downs if the streets and yards were not flooding. Old trees need to be preserved and the clearing of lots is another major issue with these large houses.

Other towns appear more settled and more attractive than Needham because they have more mature trees and more appropriate houses for the lot size. They look settled and intentional. Needham looks like a mess of developer overreach with so many “modern farmhouse” boring box houses.

if we over regulate this it will have a far greater impact on our neighborhoods than letting the market dictate what gets built. The developers build what they think they can sell. Do I think its good to put a 8,500 SqFt house on an over sized 15,000 SqFt lot in the heights? No. But they tend to sell slowly and its not common. My greater hope is the town actually saves the increased tax revenue for a rainy day and doesn't flush it down the toilet on virtue signaling green garbage.

How will this survey be used

Small changes may be helpful to make houses slightly smaller relative to lot size. Surface (runoff) water with any major remodel should be addressed and strictly enforced (i.e. dry wells).

It took us 10 years living in Needham being able to find an older house that we could renovate and call our own. Having a yard and the existing trees that come with it was important along with a comfortably sized house. It is such a shame that these new builds are being built to the edges of the property line and eliminating yards and pricing many people out of the market.

New construction houses are too tall, too large, and too expensive. They block the sun. They mess with rain water. Constriction crews invade our streets for months at a time (even years) to build these awful huge houses. Please do all in your power to put limits on maximum size and height. Please do all in your power to increase side setbacks to 20+ feet. I don't care at all about builders or super rich new home purchasers. The citizens of Needham living in normal sized homes should not have to suffer so that some construction company or realtor can make millions. End the insanity. Thank you for your service to our town.

The lack of affordable single-family houses is the biggest issue not the size of new construction. There are very few ranches for older residents to down-size to. We were only able to buy and afford our house because someone decided they did not want to sell to a builder. We had a ton of work to do to make it livable and did alot of the work ourselves. We are currently in danger of being priced out of town even though we own a house, taxes are increasing as are interest rates,



If this isn't related to health, safety or zoning concerns; then we should not be dictating the size of a home a homeowner's lot. If their property is within the current zoning regulations, there should be no issues. The homeowner pays their taxes to the town so they should have the right to do what they want on the property they own as long as it complies with all laws and zoning.

Building up the lot height, and then building a taller house was bad for us. Building walls along the lot line, next to the abutters existing fence makes fence maintenance impossible, especially if the homeowner adds a fence ON TOP of the new wall, next to, and higher than your fence. What happens to all the leaves and junk that falls between the two?

Why oh why is building allowed 6 days a week for 13 hours a day. We have been bombarded with hammering, trucks idling, foundation shaking for this for the past few months. It is h***.

For me, it is about the size of the house. No backyards leads to kids playing outside less and less time outside entertaining which leads to less community participation. Imagine instead of spending money on a bigger house, the money is spent on the beautification on the outside of the house and incredible outside living spaces. Bigger yards might also mean less fences which would encourage neighbor interactions. And let's not forget the destruction of trees and water issues the larger houses cause. A very nice 2800-3200 sq ft house with 2 car garage can be built on a 1/4 acre lot and still have a nice yard. Let that size house build in the basement and attic if wanted. It's not about sq ft of the house but lot coverage.

Although I am surprised at the number of new large homes being built in town, I don't necessarily believe it is a bad thing. Many of the homes are very nice, although some, like the one built when they tore down our old home, are fairly ugly. In many instances, the resulting homes provide a beautiful upgrade from the previous deteriorated building. I am a bit concerned that some of the homes are too big for their lots, however. I am sure the high prices of the new homes make it prohibitive for some. Of course, the existing homes are not cheap, either. The recent zoning changes for affordable housing should address this issue. However, I am more concerned that this will lead to crowding in some areas and problematic traffic conditions.

I am current renting in Needham but was unexpectedly impacted by this issue. (there are two in my immediate neighborhood). I think Needham is at risk of compromising its character as a small town.

My home is over 115 years old in the heights.. My kids are about to graduate from high school and my taxes went up over 30% in one year with little to no warning. My concern is the cookie cutter mansions and large commercial developments that are being built to maximize developers profit at the expense of neighbors access to basics, like sunlight, and lousy water drainage. Most of the new development looks the same- white boxes, black trim, priced at 2-4mil. Are these new developments taxed at same level as us old timers? When these boxes are

being built why isn't any electric infrastructure being put underground? Why are there still Verizon poles in middle of sidewalks? Why aren't the new commers seeing the proportional tax burdens, while I still have old lead pipes on my street with no upgrades in 20 years, despite the federal funding for lead pipe removal. With all the road "improvements" that have been made, drainage on my street is worse and not better(and my garage gets flooded). The push for density and mega-development isn't factoring in infrastructure! Can the schools handle the flood of population? Eliot was bursting at the seams when my kids were there 5 years ago and it was the new school at the time. Are these McMansions going to fund Pollard? It seems that Needham is no longer a middle class community, and my time here is limited unless something changes. Every old house with local history gets knocked down for the cookie cutter McMansion. The neighbors love my massive tree, but it's the first thing that a developer will cut down. There needs to be a careful look at thoughtful development in Needham.

Drainage issues, unsightly; not blending in with the other homes on the street/neighborhood. Taking down all the trees.

X

There are some reasonable modifications Needham can make to scale back the sizes of houses particularly on smaller or undersized lots. Lots that are smaller should have smaller houses - they should not received increased FAR and smaller setbacks that disproportionately create a larger house on a smaller lot. Reductions can be made to lot coverage to protect trees that do not need to be torn down. Counting third floor livable space is obvious but basement space should only be counted if partially above ground. Garages should maybe count as well but adjust FAR accordingly. Protecting property values and growth in Needham should also be considered. Housing affordability although a laudable goal will likely not be achieved through this exercise and if it is we've gone too far in restricting builder allowances. Building some more mid sized homes on smaller lots is a good compromise. Also - you may not like the new house next to you but we can't control everything. The same holds true for a rundown house that probably needs to be torn down - those exist and we should make sure we don't limit the value of those in the future. The new energy code makes it difficult to renovate / add on to old houses without upgrading everything. I think the neighborhoods with new houses can look very nice and balanced as long as trees are maintained or replaced. The neighborhoods that look the worst are the ones with no trees and lines of new houses.

i'm not against large houses in general but the new builds are often inappropriately sized houses for smaller lots in needham heights. larger houses are fine in the 1 acre lots by dover. also eliminates smaller starter homes which makes the town increasingly unaffordable

The large homes that get built cause water problems for nearby homes. They are digging up trees, building large foundations and there is no where for the water to go. As a result, my house has flooded.

The house (2 townhouses) on the corner of manning and Otis are egregiously outsized for the neighborhood

I have not been negatively impacted but I do believe there should be a more restrictive house sq ft/lot sq ft ratio that would place additional limits on what can be built on a lot.



We have seen many negative impacts of the large houses in our neighborhood. It has significantly impacted the water tables around us and has caused us major flooding that we had not previously had in the last 20 years in our house. We noticed with the last big house on our hi that water now streams through their backyard like a river flowing and after several attempts to have the town help us remediate the problem, we spent \$15k out of pocket to install more draining from our backyard. There is a lot/house ratio problem in this town that is causing drainage issues, ruining the charm of an existing neighborhood and causing climate impacts on smaller houses.

Its so hard to compete with builders when looking to purchase a starter home or to downsize in Needham and it's really horrible!

Flooding in basement during heavy rainstorms caused, in part, by new houses covering more footprint of lots. I also very much dislike the chopping down of mature trees around town.

For me it is not so much the setbacks or height but the amount of space as a percentage of the total lot that it is allowed to occupy. Separately and maybe not exactly relevant is that the town makes it so hard for current homeowners who want to simply add on to an existing normal size house that it is counter productive. Why not incentivize people to stay in more normal size house but be able to renovate, and expand without triggering all of these other requirements like new windows, new heating system.

Loss of trees is a huge issue Clear cutting of lots should be banned Trees of a certain size should be protected

My yard now floods with the rain due to large house built behind and the grade pouring water into my yard. Town does not care and it's insulting to even try to speak with someone about it because of the cavalier, rude, holier than thou attitude you're confronted with

I've lived in Needham for 30 years and find that the houses being built where there was a tear down are massive. I would like to sell my house and buy a townhouse in Needham but they are all too large. We have allowed builders to make top dollar on postage stamp lots which erodes the look and feel of the neighborhood.

The new homes are a wonderful addition to our community.

The house should be regulated by lot size. Drainage issues should be considered.

We need more housing in Needham, but mammoth, ugly single-family houses are not the answer. The loss of large shade trees, when builders clear-cut sites for building them, is a huge problem, not just for the character of neighborhoods, but in creating heat sinks throughout the town, and exacerbating storm drainage issues. The increased footprint of large houses has contributed greatly to flooding risks in many neighborhoods, including mine, which lies between two hills that have seen significant large house development in recent years. Since on of the early McMansions replaced the house next door to me over 15 years ago, my basement started to flood regularly, and is only under control currently because I added two sump pumps to one that had rarely had to run, and a standby generator and propane tank to make sure they never stop working in a storm. My street has significant ponding in any moderate rainstorm, including around a telephone pole at the corner

of my property. Surely that can't be good for the pole over time. The loopholes on number of floors, setbacks, and footprints in new houses need to be closed, and any additional regulations added that will promote the building of neighborhood-appropriate and reasonably-priced housing, rather than what builders are currently getting away with. BTW, I was born in Needham, and have lived here my whole life, except for the period 1974-1995.

I live in the smallest house on my street. The houses around me expanded, and my basement flooded. I have a big yard, and when I go - they'll tear my house down and build something ugly. AND THEN...my neighbor's houses will flood. The size of houses and the set backs are ridiculous. They also take ALL the trees down. It is not at all regulated well.

Much construction in my area has been noisy and disruptive. I would like Needham to be more accessible for all, not just wealthy. Charming older houses have been replaced by lookalike McMansions.

I feel this issue has made it difficult for new families to settle in Needham

It's concerning to how many houses are torn down and rebuilt rather than renovated. I care about the environmental impact and want to be ensured that new houses are more sustainable and not having a negative impact on the environment.

I lived in Needham for the past 7 years and like the improvements that new houses have introduced to the neighborhood. The houses are more modern and are making the town of Needham more desirable to live in. We are upgrading schools, Police and Fire stations, making them bigger and more modern and should not prevent the same from new single residence.

We are especially concerned about the environmental impact of the complete clear-cutting of lots to accommodate the new, large homes.

The new build next to us is 6100sf on a 9100 sf lot. The house has been vacant for over 6 months.

I am concerned primarily about the decrease in tree cover, as well as the decrease in ground volume able to absorb rainwater.

The current rules incentivize tearing small single family homes and building massive mcmansions. This is part of why needham is unaffordable, and why there are no options for seniors to downsize in their hometown or young people to establish themselves here. Needham ought to allow smaller denser housing instead of these new builds built simply to look big. Id rather see a triple decker or duplex than another ugly mcmansion.

It's too late now. Nothing is affordable in this town, tear down or not. We will never be able to down size into something affordable in the near future after living here my whole life. It's become a rich, entitled, snotty town, and it will just continue to get worse.

I find it ironic that those opposed to affordable housing say that multiunit housing will "ruin the character of the neighborhood" when they're  busy tearing down perfectly good colonial houses to put up gigantic, hideous mansions. These new houses take up a huge footprint, resulting in the loss of many trees, and to my mind are far more ruinous to the character of our neighborhoods.

When there was a two-story house next door to me, the sun used to hit my driveway and walkway in the winter. Now, with a four-story townhouse next door to me, the sun rarely reaches either.

Construction noise, parking issues, street blocked by trucks. Litter blown around, music played loud. Workers at the site outside of town mandated hours.

Clearcutting lots has created a difference in flood management, noise pollution and general attractiveness

Single family homes are oversized for their lot sizes and this has a negative impact on sight lines of existing homes next to the oversized homes being built, flooding in residing yards, loss of light in residing homes, and a general loss of neighborhood aesthetics with the loss of neighborhood green space.

To each their own when building a "dream" house

As tax payers, Home owners should be free to do what they like to increase the value of their home- land/building/asset,,so long as it is not multi-family conversion (Not a Newton- which is fine, just different from Needham)

The high number of tear downs and large new builds has significantly disrupted my neighborhood. Constant construction noise and heavy vehicle traffic have impacted daily life. Oversized homes built close to property lines have reduced privacy, while the removal of mature trees has changed the landscape and ecosystem. Groundwater displacement has caused drainage issues, and pollution from construction harms the environment. These changes have also driven up home prices, making the area less affordable and accessible to a diverse community.

I don't think it is appropriate for needham to police the size of houses being built as long as zoning laws are followed.

Water drains differently now, less trees and less shade, more landscapers in the neighborhood to maintain fancy yards, developers idling their trucks all day add to air pollution and heat issues

water runoff from houses too large for the lot with zero lawn to absorb it and just the absurd imposing ugliness of these houses not even marginally relevant to this survey, but where do people who buy these houses expect their kids to run around? the decision to buy one of these ridiculous houses makes me question every decision these homeowners make for themselves and their children and how that ultimately impacts what decisions are made in the town and what their expectations are in the schools and what they value in a town like Needham - I question how we could possibly have the same reasons for wanting to live in the same town

The builds are too large for the lot sizes. However, you could build some of these giant homes in certain parts of town where lots are at least .5 acre.

I like modern architecture of new houses. They are energy efficient and have enough space for families and offices for working from home. They are easy to maintain compared to old houses that need a lot of maintenance. There are a few things that I would recommend town to consider: 1. Add inspection for water flow. 2. Allow less restricted zoning for smaller lots with small old houses to make it possible to build extension. In this case people may build additions instead of letting builders to buy their houses and build large houses. This change will promote mixed architecture.

The tearing down of smaller single family homes to build single family mansions is one of the problems contributing to higher house prices. Additionally, it is not solving the housing shortage. I would like to see lot coverage allowances decreased for single family homes. Lot coverage should be permitted to increase for multifamily or other types of denser housing developments. We need more housing here in Needham.

The government does not need to get involved in regulating any further. Hands off private business decisions and let the market dictate what happens.

A 1500 sq ft home next to mine was torn down and replaced with a 4500 sq ft home, 4 full floors, jacked up on a 'dirt skirt.' The home literally blocked out the sun from my house. And because the ground level for the new home was as raised higher than the rest of neighbors, the first floor looks directly into my second story bedrooms. All in all, the house fills almost the entire lot and towers over the other homes in the neighborhood.

Recent construction does not appear to the casual viewer to follow the side-to-side setback rules, but to be closer than acceptable.

Need regulations on mandatory water drainage systems (ie french drains) for new construction

Lost backyard privacy to large built behind us. Trees gone. Now our view is simply house. Noise when new home go up. It's constant.

Personally, I find it odd that these large houses have such small yards. I think a large house deserves a large yard. However, it is whatever the market bears. If people are willing to pay \$3M for a house that has a yard that won't fit a swingset that is up to them. As for the spacing between and set backs, it is the same thing. I feel a large house should have some room around it. However, the homes are selling with no space. When I sell my house it will be a strict business transaction. I don't care if it is knocked down or not. I know my lot will support a much larger house but my house is larger than the smaller houses that are being knocked down right now. I've been a resident for 30 years. I am now retired and the kids grown up. Yes, my house is much bigger than I need but I like the town, there is no place to go to downsize without going to a condo, and my home continues to appreciate so I will stay in it until there is a reason to move other than just being larger than I need. I do feel bad that the town is unaffordable for my children to buy here, and they do make good money. It would be nice if some smaller homes, not condos, were built but I understand that contractors will always build the largest house they are allowed to on any given lot. 🦋

Theft are not houses but buildings

I don't understand why the Reno rules are so strict. That makes everyone want to tear down instead of renovate. It shouldn't be easier to tear down than to add on and if we had some rules around how big we could make the houses then the builders wouldn't stand to gain so much by putting a huge house where two small houses used to sit. Our housing shortage issue could be fixed with some rules.

My main issue with the tear downs/huge houses is the taxes. Since living here from 2018, my property tax has increased every year and my escrow payments have been adjusted every year to cover them. They are now \$1000/month more than in 2018. Ridiculous

I believe in the part of town where lots are smaller there should be some regulation about how much space between homes to give some privacy-also some height restriction for same reason. I live in the part of town where 1 acre is mandated so it hasn't affected me as much as others in the more densely populated parts of town.

Briefly, some of the biggest negative impacts are: - property taxes increasing - no reasonably sized, affordable new houses being built - excessive removal of trees and other naturally occurring growth (harmful for the ecosystem & water absorption, etc) - constant noise from construction - constant inconvenience on roads from construction related vehicles (parked & moving)

As long as houses aren't negatively encroaching on their neighbors, I am supportive of new development that increases property values for all.

In 2013, we bought a split level home in a fantastic neighborhood in Needham. Since that time we have had two children and have considered adding on to our existing home to meet the demands of modern families. Our home was originally built in 1953 and we've gone through a pricing exercise to determine if it is more economical to renovate the entire home including electric, plumbing, HVAC, exterior facade etc. or tear it down and build a new home that works for our family and will create more value on the property. We have come to the conclusion that it is in our family's best interest to tear down the outdated, 4-level structure and build a more functional home that we will live in for the next 40 years. We have loved living in Needham and feel that the changes we've experienced over the last 12 years have been positive and have brought a lot of wonderful families into the town. I'd also like to note that I don't understand the last question of the survey and I feel the language is leading. When you decide to sell your property, you no longer have the right to make decisions on it. As long as the next owner follows the building codes and regulations, whether they decide to keep it as is or knock it down and build a new structure, it is no longer within your control. If you want to maintain control of the property, don't sell it.

Needham should be concentrating on the fact that every new house looks the same. Cookie cutter California development. Size doesn't matter, what matters is the esthetic of the new home, the quality of the building and the diversity in the architecture. Stop building the "Needham Colonial"- it is making our town boring!

Not impacted by building sizes. If you are so worried about the housing sizes, have a minimum non-building lot size requirement (yard/frontage). Don't discriminate against families who want to move into a desirable community in a new house. Maybe just tell developers

to come up with some new designs and color schemes...

Also need to regulate the design choices of new construction to match neighborhood aesthetics

In general, I believe new builds are beautifying Needham. They often replace homes that are in disrepair. That said, I support additional discussion / consideration of setback and lot size adjustments. Some new homes feel right on top of the street.

How I have been negatively impacted: damage to the interior of my home from building next door, tree destruction and clear cutting, water management problems, building lot graded higher than the original lot (neighbors now able to look down into my back yard), building noise from first thing in the morning until late in the evening,

Setbacks should be maintained and water displacement should be handled within the boundaries of the lot and not disrupt neighboring lots.

The problems, perceived and real of new home construction in Needham are directly downstream of the severe regional housing shortage and the town's very restrictive zoning regulations. It is of no surprise that when land values are very high due huge unmet demand, and the only building that is legal to construct is a single family home on a large lot, then the only construction which makes economical sense is a large, luxury single family home. Considering the supply and demand conditions in a desirable town such as Needham \$2-4 million worth of building on many of the town lots, typically 10,000 sqft to 0.5 acres is appropriate. The persistence of deteriorating cape or ranch home on highly valuable, desirable land is an economic mismatch that will, and is, be corrected by the market. As the town is specifically soliciting feedback on negative consequences, further restricting what can be constructed on Needham's build able lots will reduce the value of current owners property, and reduce the town's revenue when it is about to experience major new budgetary demands (Pollard replacement). A genuine public-good concern with the teardown of existing homes and the replacement with larger buildings is the loss of tree coverage, which has wide ranging environmental benefits. However as there are no incentives for property owners to maintain trees other than personal preference, and significant costs associated with maintenance and liability issues with trees, it is also understandable that these will be lost under current conditions. Tax rebates for owners/developers to keep mature trees on properties would incentives the maintenance and replacement of the town's canopy which is in private ownership.

Allowing new development of homes based on the market is directly improving my block and neighborhood. I am happy to see new homes going up and new families moving in.

The town has not kept up with increasing the drainage infrastructure along with the increase in larger homes. Extreme increase in the amount of water runoff due to impermeable surfaces going into small pipes that haven't changed = flooding.

My answers relate to my neighborhood. Other neighborhoods warrant different answers. These questions do not get to the core of the problem, where some builders have taken advantage of poorly conceived 2017 regulations set forth by a committee who was or was not aware of the unintended consequences. Let's be VERY careful not to tinker too much and create unintended consequences in 2025, while trying to solve unintended consequences from 2017.



I do not mind houses being torn down if they are replaced w reasonably sized houses that enhance the neighborhood. I do think Needham missed the mark by not creating a historical district downtown to keep the charm of the walkable streets in tow particularly. Fair Oaks used to be beautiful, it is now a mish mash of architecture and size.

The individual set backs don't bother me as much as the mass of new homes that are built all the way to all of the setbacks. More importantly, though, I think the owners/builders of new homes should be required to mitigate negative effects of increased ground water or drainage issues that neighboring properties suffer as a result of the new/larger construction. This has not impacted me personally, but I sympathize with friends who it has happened to.

I think owners should have the freedom to do what ever they want on their own property as long as appropriate set backs are in place. However, my concerns are not with the size of the homes built but in the lack of affordable housing opportunities and the potential decline of economic, age, and family-structure diversity in the town - which create stronger, more vibrant communities. Also, I think the fact that developers are the ones buying up all the old houses and bulldozing them to create the same \$2.5 M cookie cutter "Garage" house (where the garage, not the front door, is the prominent feature - which in my opinion is not welcoming or conducive in creating a community among neighbors), loses the character, history, beauty and diversity of the town. It also reduces green space and trees which is not good for anyone. I had an opportunity to buy a home built in 1935 in 2009, that today would have been a tear down, for under \$400K. We have made small renovations to the home over the past 16 years but have preserved the foot print and charm of the original. If developers were buying up property in Needham the way they do today. We would not have been able to compete! However, today I reap the benefits of the rising home values and taxes that those new properties bring in, so I am certainly conflicted.

My neighborhood is less affected because we have large 1 acre lots. But my former Bird's Hill neighborhood had smaller lots and new homes were built all the way to the setback- which was way too close to the lot line. We were priced out of Bird's Hill neighborhood after 10 years and had to move further out from town center. We could not afford to buy a house on our street now. I am positive our house will be torn down when we eventually sell it.

I answered in the neutral zone mostly because I do think that the number of teardown is ridiculous. The tone of the town is being changed in that first time buyers and elderly people cannot afford to live here. And yet, I have to also admit that I don't want the problem to have a solution because my house probably would be a teardown and I want to get as much money as I can when I sell the house.

The stress and turmoil of the tear down, higher building density growth dynamic is visited upon the residents of low income housing to a greater extent than on the middle and high class occupants.

We built too few houses in Needham. The fact that so many of the houses are very large in teardowns is a symptom of the fact that we do not have enough housing supply. More multifamily, housing, and zoning that allows for more dense housing is what is needed,

I find it deeply concerning from both an environmental perspective and the home affordability perspective that the trend continues to tear down old houses in favor of creating new, much larger houses.

This issue comes up every few years because of a vocal section of the citizenry who generally oppose change and who believe the town isn't what it was 30, 40, 50 years ago. The truth is that no town has been unaffected by changing times and attempts to fight change by preventative legislation are often difficult to define and enforce and come up short in the process. Home development is a product of choices made by homeowners and is not subject to the approval of neighbors or fellow residents.

I disagree that my town can dictate how large or small the houses should be built.

I don't think making rules so that there is a wealthy area of needham with big houses and a poor area of needham with small houses is good.

Town must ensure that drainage systems can support larger homes with larger footprints (it does not seem to do so now), and be more stringent about ensuring that new construction does not negatively affect neighbors' drainage. I don't think teardowns are the problem specifically, it's the lot coverage vs. ability to handle rainwater and flooding especially if storms/floods increase over time.

The grading and drainage is a problem as many these projects raise the grade negatively impacting abutters

None

I have not been negatively impacted. The large houses made my small house more valuable.

My biggest concern is not the building of new and potentially bigger houses. I am mostly unhappy with preservation of trees and yard space. Without maintaining green space, we will have more and more issues with flooding. This is critical for all neighbors and for flood-prone areas.

Homeowners should be allowed to do what they want with their home. Developers buying homes for cash and flipping McMansions should be curbed by the town. Too much of this has happened and it has made costs rise and town aesthetic decline over the years.

N/A

We have lived through the tearing down of 3 homes on our road, with another currently in progress. We've only lived in Needham for 7 years. The noise from work, blasting through bedrock to pour new larger foundations, road closures, poor drainage on work sites, and road congestion/speeding on our street by work crews has been and continues to be extremely disruptive to every day life. My largest concern is the percentage of the lot allowed to be filled by the footprint of the new home. In many instances extremely large homes are being built on postage-sized lots resulting in the removal of all trees, leaving very little yard or green space when builders are done. This alters the landscape and natural drainage as most builders are not replacing trees that they've removed.. This seems extremely short-sited of the town to allow this kind of overdevelopment to continue and I think our beautiful neighborhoods will not have the same welcoming feeling or longstanding value if this is allowed to continue.

People let their small houses go into total disrepair knowing that they can sell them for \$1M plus. New houses all look the same (and many are UGLY) and are also way too tall for their property size (because 3rd floors are not counted in FAR).

I live in a 1900 square foot home someone could have easily torn down. I love old houses like mine. At the same time, If you want to build a huge house and can afford to buy one, cheers to you friend! Whether you're 1 person and a dog or a multigenerational family living in the 6500 sq ft mansion, you do you!

We need smaller houses and more backyards. Enough of these \$3-4+ million properties in tiny lots!

Would like some sort of incentives for smaller houses to not be torn down so we can have more diverse housing stock.

The rear setback is too low. And the footprints are too large, increasing the rear setback would help with the issue. Also, the current code allowing basement and attic space to not count as FAR is leading to too large homes, I would suggest considering allowing living space in one or the other without it counting as FAR but not both. Also, while they have gotten better recently, the garage house designs are terrible, please consider future limiting the amount the garages are allowed to extend in front of the rest of the house.

Attached garages are the problem. Bring back detached garages

It's not so much about the tearing down. There are many old homes in needham that are undesirable to buyers and need seriously updates. The issue is when a \$1.2 million home is torn down, a monstrous \$3.5 million home is built in it a place. All the trees are cut down, the lot is filled with house, there is very little yard space, water runoff, etc. Only millionaires will be able to live in Needham.

Affordable houses are being torn down and replaced with new houses with no yard space at a cost of \$2 to \$3 million. We need to incentivize new buyers to sell existing houses and fix them up, making them affordable for all income levels.

Has the town taken a survey of the housing stock by square footage? Maybe there should be a limit on the number of homes over a certain size. Maybe we have enough extra large homes and not enough moderate and smaller homes.

Every new house produces additional drainage issues for the neighborhood

Your questions are very leading. This committee seems very bias against tear downs. Yes there are some issues but not to the extent Joe Matthews is trying to make it seem. Doesn't he live/work primarily abroad and live at his parents house in needham when here? Why do we care so much for his opinion over people paying 20, 30 even 40k in taxes a year. Try to ask more unbiased and informative questions while

getting a wide base of different people on your committees and you wouldn't have the issues you had with mbta. Envision center and this. I know so many that have tried to get on drainage tree or house committees only to be turned away for other "yes" people. Just skews the committee and is a disservice to the town ultimately costing all of us

Just come to the corner of Maning and Otis. All will be clear.

One problem with the new houses is they often cut down all the old trees. This sometimes causes flooding in areas where there was not a flooding issue before. Cutting down old trees is not good for the environment.

Large/large houses are not something that bother me at all provided they are on lots large enough to accommodate them without negatively impacting neighbors or looking ridiculous with the tiny setbacks.

Somewhat concerned about large houses being built on too-small lots (we have a new one here on Plymouth Road), but then again, is it any of my business? I'm not sure. I'd like to see smaller, older houses survive to serve moderate-income people perhaps looking for their 1st house, or older, moderate-income people looking to downsize. I don't want Needham to be only for the affluent, but not sure you can legislate a solution. And how can you tell people they can't cash in on their capital gains?

I'm most concerned about the negative impact to drainage and flooding that has resulted in cutting down trees and removal of natural drainage through Needham.

Water table impacts are not taken seriously. It seems there is no direct accountability in town government for water table impacts. The conservation commission only cares about conservation land. In meetings I joined, they took no ownership for the water table impacts.

N.

Disagree with electric houses — also strict rules on addition regulations encourage tear downs instead of additions. Additions will maintain the character

We have been trying to move out of our 3 bedroom starter home. There are very few 4 bedroom homes with large backyards. Everything is small like we have, or massive and \$3 million. We are considering building a 2800-3000 square foot home on our lot. Besides the size of the homes, the character is lacking. Most new homes are big boxes or are mostly garage from the front. I wish there could be 3000 square foot homes with backyards in Needham. Especially more classically beautiful homes.

Needham is losing its character and neighborhood feel. I do a lot of walking around town and the 'kid population' seems to have dropped in recent years. (Can they all be inside those 'mansions' playing video games)?



Needham is becoming more and more of an exclusive community where only the wealthy can reside. Starter homes do not exist because builders scoop them up and sell them for millions of dollars. Ironic how Needham claims to be inclusive yet they are only inclusive for the Richie Rich's. Needham should see what other towns are doing about this issue. Newton does not let you tear down a house until 1 yr after sale closing.

Not enough small, newer homes for young families.

Our neighborhood in the Heights had turned over significantly- when we first moved in there were no young families and many older houses and wonderful neighbors but lacked the vibrancy of young children. Many homes were not built for lasting longer and had outlived their useful life- some houses have been well taken care of and were sold to families and others were bought by developers and new houses that brought more families in - these families are professionals who take good care of their yards and positively impacted our community. I am personally offended by the decisive and unwelcoming comments on tear downs- we worked hard for what we have and our very involved in making Needham and our schools a great place to live. I do not understand where all the additional tax revenue has gone because it has significantly increased as a result of larger homes .but that is another story.

I understand that it is extremely challenging to balance preserving the property values of older homes with maintaining the character of our neighborhoods. I would really like to see some incentives to encourage somewhat smaller homes, more mix of sizes, some height restrictions and change to FAR. Wellesley introduce additional approvals and fees for home over a certain size.

Will we become "The New Needham" where all or most of our houses are new cookie cutter versions of each other? Will we lose all the character of our existing houses and neighborhoods? And, with all our new building, why don't we consider a mandate for underground utilities? Just some food for thought.

Over building on Birds hill has removed natural space for water to be absorbed resulting in storm drain overflows from hazelton to beaufort that have severely impacted our yard and basement with flooding.

There are very few smaller 'starter' homes remaining in Needham. I grew up in Needham and was a 2022 NHS grad. Over the years, I've watched as many of these smaller houses were torn down and made into McMansions for a four-person household. Unfortunately, I do not think that I will be able to afford a home here unless I land in the top 5% of incomes. I think homeowners should be allowed to renovate their homes how they see fit (within reason), but there should absolutely be a progressive tax rate for home values that incentivizes keeping some of these starter homes as is.

1. Too many trees are being torn down. 2. Only wealthy people can afford the large house, which will prevent town diversity. 3. Houses are taking up the entire yard. 4. People pull into their garages and you never see them. Makes the neighborhood unfriendly.

It's often the height of some of the new construction that impacts neighbors the most, in my opinion. It blocks light, it makes it appear larger

than it might actually be, it's ugly, it makes it seem more like a city than, what once was, a pretty suburb.

I have no issue with large homes being built, as long as the lot size can reasonably accommodate them. Over the last 10+ years a tremendous number of small to medium sized homes have been torn down, regardless of their condition. What's built in their place is almost always the maximum square footage allowed by the town, because naturally builders want to make the most profit possible. On smaller lots this leaves very little land surrounding new builds. My biggest concern is the loss of permeable surface to absorb rain water & melting snow. This issue is made worse when unethical builders (thankfully not all) have chosen to regrade lots and direct water into neighboring yards causing flooding for OTHER existing homes. Since we unfortunately can not trust everyone to do what's right, Needham has to create building codes to hold builders accountable. A number of areas around town have experienced serious flooding in the past few years and I believe this in one way we can stop it from getting worse.

I find it unacceptable that these large houses have loopholes in which the third floors have not been taxed. That needs to change. I have to pay taxes on all my square footage they should too. I also lose privacy in my yard these houses are tall and are able to look down into your yard the smaller houses didn't. Also, for diversity these large houses guarantee that only the very rich will move into the town. Diversity which the town "prides" itself on means must be affluent median income families are not welcomed.

N/A

2 of the 3 houses around ours (side and back) are teardowns. The house behind us is up a slight hill, and the replacement of a small 1-2 story home with a giant 4-story home has blocked out much of the sunlight in our backyard and in our home. We have also had flooding issues we hadn't previously had. I don't object to new homes being built, but consideration should be taken of the homes surrounding a teardown.

Removal of trees, water runoff, blocking of sun.

Our neighborhood (Beaufort Ave) has been directly impacted by the volume and size of tear downs "up hill" from us. Devastating floods (most recently Aug of 2023) have shown that the storm drain infrastructure that was built to support a much different neighborhood many years ago now can not handle the runoff of water due to larger footprints, deeper basements, and expanded driveways all of which change the way properties can absorb rainwater.

Additionally, there is no place to downsize in Needham

The biggest issue here is the deepening of the housing crisis as the town becomes less affordable. If every house sold is being bid on by builders who want to turn it into a mansion, no one of moderate means can afford to move to the town, only the richest.

The current situation is actually preventing us buying a house in Needham, the huge houses being built means they are totally out of our price range. We are a two parent working family and still we cannot afford to buy which says a lot for when it comes to our children wanting to do the same. 🐸

My family has benefitted from a so called large house. We have two families living in the same house and we use every inch of the house almost daily. Had a house like this not been built, we would not be living in Needham. It also means that we get to reduce the burden on the housing market by only occupying 1 home. The idea of being able to own your own home means that you get to decide what happens. If the builders are doing nefarious things by actively impacting neighboring properties, then the town should limit permits to those builders. The review process of the permits should be tighter and there should be a remediation period where neighbors can voice issues of negative impact on their property. We currently have trees on our neighbors old properties that are negatively impacting our properties. At least one of our neighbors is also not actively updating their property which is negatively impacting us to. Financially it won't make sense to build a small house when that house inevitably gets knocked down if the setbacks are changed. There are many old houses on the market that need to be torn down or they do not work for current household structures. When they come down, they are more Energy efficient, more optimal for current lifestyles. I think it is important to let the market dictate what can be built. If people want larger setbacks, perhaps they can move to Weston or other towns that have larger lot sizes. The best way to show that people don't like the big houses is if people don't buy the big houses, but they are getting bought up. I don't think the town should be in the business of controlling private property or it can become a slippery slope.

Fewer regulations for building and denser zoning will allow for more housing stock.

The town should stay out of this issue. The town government has enough control over the citizens and what we can do with our property. There is no problem to solve.

There should be some restrictions to building such huge, tall houses on these lots and no land left. They are also cutting down trees and the existing houses could have had additions, work done or been gutted if the new owner chose to. Nothing affordable for anyone new.

Should preserve trees and I worry about water with small homes being torn down with big ones going up in their place.

The ability to build huge homes creates incentives for developers that aren't in the best interests of the community. It also means that there are fewer potentially affordable starter homes for young families that may not have extremely high incomes.

It's natural progression as things change, but definitely more oversight and guardrails needed. Some of the new builds are absolutely ridiculous for the size of the site and are completely overbearing on the environment around them.

I have lived in Needham since 1983. Our home was a fix me upper but we felt so blessed to be able to buy in this town that we didn't care. In fact, we just replaced the back fence that my husband did in 1996 by a professional. I have 3 children (one is actually a teacher in this town)

that could not afford to buy in this town due to the fact that most starter homes have been tear downs and they could not afford the “McMansions” that went up in there place. The town needs to do more to monitor the tear downs happening in this town. It is out of control!!!

The new houses are too big for the lot size in many cases. This is contributing to flooding issues in the town. They block light from neighboring houses and yards.

Tearing down the trees for the new huge houses is my biggest concern for aesthetics, privacy, rain water issues and just concern of tearing down a tree just to fit the largest house possible on the land.

I really do not see that there is a significant issue around large homes here in Needham. I do agree you want to make sure homes built are appropriately sized and spaced, but the homes I see here in Needham are that on both fronts. I do agree that there needs to be a balance and small starter homes are important to retain, but I hope we can avoid trying to tinker with rules around a perceived large house problem and wind up adversely impacting our community and attractiveness for new home buyers. The reason for tear downs and new larger homes is driven by the market and desire to live here in Needham, let's not disrupt that. If we want to solve a problem, focus on property taxes which are outrageous here.

I am more concerned with the number of large trees being cut down which absorb a lot of water and provide necessary shade and carbon dioxide absorbtion. And then there is the storm water that is flooding properties due to lack of permeable ground. And then there is the awful attitude of the builders themselves who have a lack of respect for neighbors properties. Most of my friends have been impacted by a neighbors house being torn down to be replaced with a larger one, each having reasonable complaints about how the builder was disrespectful.

In general new houses are built do too much to maximize square footage and regulation needs to either make the footprint smaller or lower the allowable number of floors the house can be to eliminate oversized houses on small lots.

With all the information about global warming, why do we continue to clear-cut lots, cut down trees, and build structures that cover most of the property?? Doesn't that add to the problem? Trees and open space help cool the Earth. Moreover, the loss of habitat for animals(explosion of rabbit population along with coyotes). When I moved to Needham several decades ago, I was attracted to the charming suburban feel of the town(moving from Boston after years). I loved the tree-lined streets and open spaces(referring to front, back, and side yards around houses). Now, on many streets, the feeling has been lost, leaning towards a more city feeling, like West Roxbury. I know with time things change but is it always for the better?

I worry that my kids will only be in school with people who can afford 3 million dollar houses



I am concerned about builders clear-cutting lots and removing mature trees even at the edges. I'm concerned about new houses with too narrow setbacks looming over their neighbors.

Greed, obsession with carcinogenic lawn chemicals to create a fake unnatural lawn, and endless noise pollution from gasoline powered lawn equipment. Needham is quite the mixed bag. Huge houses built like crap that probably won't last more than 50 years. Tiny little yards. Etc etc.

The trend of a decreasing supply of starter homes is my main concern on this issue. However, I do not think the town should regulate away the opportunity for a current resident to receive maximum value from sale of their property. With respect to the size (footprint and volume) of the houses being built on smaller lots (less than or equal to 10,000 sq. ft.) the impact to neighboring properties needs to be addressed: flooding issues, loss of mature trees without replacement, privacy concerns, and blocking of sunlight are examples of things that the design and positioning of new construction on lots should consider.

We need to find new places for downsizing older residents. The small capes are largely in disrepair and/or do not offer what many of us want to move into for later life. Same with starter homes. Build townhomes.

I have been negatively impacted by this issue on our street because a total of 3 houses were demolished, entire lots cleared of mature trees (so many of them), and 7 houses in total have been built. The house immediately next to ours is extremely close. Many roots of our mature trees were cut and have been damaged, so I wonder what the future health of our mature trees will be like. For over a year, I have had to deal with large trucks on our street and in front of our house. This massive construction project has completely changed the character of our street/neighborhood for the worse.

I am worried about rain drainage with the big houses. It is upsetting and stressful to be receiving random text message offers to buy my house so they can tear it down.

The negative impact in my neighborhood is the removal of smaller homes from the housing stock that prevent older adults to downsize and remain in Needham and young adults to be able to buy homes and start families and enjoy Needham's excellent schools. My neighbors have been impacted more directly by flooding issues related to houses taking up too much ground area. I am very concerned about the loss of old growth trees as well.

The main issue I see is that it is becoming increasingly difficult even for average middle class families to afford living in Needham because every older/smaller house that may be a great starter home for a family is purchased by a contractor in cash, leaving no opportunity for anyone else. I think there's more that can be done, including limiting the size of any new house that can be built on a lot, relative to the tear-down (for example, can be up to 20% larger), or imposing additional city tax on tear-downs or houses/lots where no one is living for over 6 months (there have been some lots where it took the builder over 12 months to even start building). On the flip side, there could be town laws to encourage keeping older homes and renovating rather than tearing down (lower property tax % or a discount to those living in older homes vs. new construction, or other incentives). Thank you!

Mature Trees need to be protected as well. They provide shade, beauty and help manage the water table.

The teardowns that surround me are so large in terms of maximizing footprint (height and footprint) that they feel like they are in my yard. I've had to spend a lot of money to try and recreate privacy. Their lights, both inside and outside glare directly into my house and yard, causing me to keep shades pulled, again, to have some privacy.

Water and runoff are significant issues made worse by a) removing not just the house but all mature trees on the lot (which take up huge amounts of water in a rainstorm), and b) with the new construction filling nearly edge to edge of not all, but many lots. In addition, contractors often raise the level of the site, sending runoff--including herbicides and pesticides used on lawns--onto their neighbors' property and into storm drains. The impact on water and storm systems impacts us all, and we all pay for that. The other significant issue, from my perspective, is that the buildings that result from the tear-down are affordable only to upper income families. I don't want us to become another Wellesley, frankly. We need more diversity--and not just economic diversity--if we want to thrive, and I do.

All the 2-4 million dollar houses are changing the character of Needham and making the town too expensive for most home buyers, including many of the people who work for the town, schools, hospital or local businesses...

Overly large houses impact sunlight and water drainage negatively.

While the "value" of our house has increased significantly since we bought it, we still feel negatively impacted. We see less and less diversity and less ability for different kinds of people and families to move into our neighborhood. This has a negative impact on our children in school, our family, and the appeal and vibrancy of our community.

Most important to me is the mass of a house on a relatively small lot. If someone wants to live in a 6 BR 7 bathroom house that is over 6,000 sf, that's fine, but does that size house belong on a 10,000 or smaller lot? That is what is really changing what Needham looks like. Can the FAR be modified to correct this? If there are concerns about how owners of potential teardowns might lose out, can adjustments to the zoning bylaws be done over time? I am also deeply concerned about the loss of starter homes and homes for downsizing seniors. Is there any discussion about zoning for over 55 housing in Needham? There are plenty of empty nesters who would like to remain in Needham but there are not many options.

The review committee needs to define the problem it is trying to solve.

Trees down, visibility down

-The Town of Needham is entering into dangerous territory of property rights...make sure Heidi Frail & Joe Mathew's parent's house would be buildable in whatever they are proposing for the zoning changes otherwise this is a perfect example of hypocrisy. -Needham is not a "starter home" town and never has been. My in-laws have lived here since 1983 and their move to Needham was their second home, after purchasing in a less expensive town until they could afford the move. Our first home was in Dedham and it took some time for us to be able to afford a property in Needham. Needham is not somewhere a kid fresh out of college would typically be able to purchase a home, that is an unreasonable expectation and if the parents of said child would like them to reside in Needham then they can live with their parents, such as Joe Mathews does. -Not all of the homes being torn down are worth saving, the cost to renovate vs. the cost to build new are not too far apart when you actually compare and with a renovation homeowners typically have to "settle" for certain aspects of their home they wish they could change, such as a 1 car garage, 7' ceilings on the first floor, etc. -It would have been helpful to the committee if they selected a builder who has actually built a new construction home IN Needham, not just renovations. You need someone that has New Construction experience in Needham, or maybe you should have had two types of builders involved because you'll get two very different perspectives. -By trying to "stop" new construction to "save" the perceived starter homes you are discounting the fact that a family with 3 children can move into the "saved" home at a much lower tax base, while the New Construction home is paying upwards of \$30k in taxes for the same number of children or possibly less because the children are attending private school, therefore putting less of a financial burden on the town than the family that moved into the "starter" home. -Your committee cannot control the open real estate market and part of it's charge should not be to try, this is ridiculous to say New Construction is only a bad feature when it's brought plenty of money into this town which, allows the town to spend it on things like an Engineer for the "Envision Needham Plan" that majority don't want... -It is insulting to continually bash new construction when many of our neighbors live in those homes and have decided to make Needham their home. It is not inclusive or kind to talk of your neighbors' homes in such a way.

I don't want to be forced to move if my neighbors sell and a builder comes in and put in a large house next to me that looks out of place. These houses affect the light and backyard privacy then too.

town government needs to use restraint controlling how homeowners use their property

The character of the town is being damaged by the type of housing currently being built - by size and character. Current construction by builders is to build a house as large as possible - using the cheapest materials - to maximize the builders profit.

There should be more regulations on lot coverage (no asphalt parking g lots covering front lawn like just happened on greendale . Larger houses are in demand . Why would you limit home values increasing by making investing in NEEDHAM less desirable by developers . I like that my land is worth much more than when I bought my home ! I consider NEEDHAM a smart investment.

Houses are too big and too expensive. I cannot afford a larger house than I currently live in, and my children, physicians with good incomes, cannot afford to buy a home in Needham. Things have escalated very rapidly since the pandemic, dramatically affecting the character and affordability of the town. I am also concerned about the number of trees being destroyed

Sometimes they construction very early and park on both sides of street blocking school busses and delivery trucks. My neighborhood. Is in constant construction

People should be able to have whatever house they want. I don't understand why Needham wants to regulate houses, too many rules on numerous projects.

Too many trees cut down!

It feels like there's a contingent in Needham that is averse to change and development. It's what happens - homes get older and out of style, new homes are built. A town that doesn't develop drowns in the past.

The teardowns have only gotten more extreme -- crazy big homes on small lots, clear cutting of all trees and plants. Sometimes it makes me mad but mostly now it just makes me sad and jaded. It can't last forever, and what will be left when there is no more room to grow? How can we say we value trees as a town when our aggregate behavior says otherwise? How can we say we value sustainability when we practice conspicuous consumption for a single family home that houses 3-5 people?

I am comfortable with the current volume (bulk) of new houses being built in Needham, but not the size & the footprint. I don't think tear downs can be avoided since a lot of the homes are old & small, but the size of the new homes being built is too extreme.

Needham is losing it's small town charm and historic New England atmosphere because of the rapid growth of large houses and teardowns. Additionally, the lack of space on most lots presents serious environment risks such as flooding.

This is ruining the town. Please keep Needham Needham and stop this trend. Green space is important and we are losing it with this tear down trend. And it is the reason Needham is not "affordable" Plenty of small houses for sale but they are scooped up and torn down.

Lifelong Needhamite former elected town-wide official, who has sold three family houses as teardowns yielding 6 new units at an aggregate price of \$4 million to the great benefit of my working class family and to the surrounding neighborhoods. We need to permit these large homes to be multi-residents and to permit larger numbers of unrelated people to live in single units

Please drive by Otis Street and see the 2 family that the town allowed to be built. Hight and footprint dominate neighborhood. I'm generally pro development to improve the tax base, however, characteristics of neighborhood don't get consideration under current rules.

I think it's really hard to stop the current trend - household needs have changed. I would like to see a focus on maintaining green space and tree cover within tear-downs, so perhaps only regulation around percentage of a lot that can be used for housing vs. ground cover.

Most concerning is the rapid loss of green space both by taking up a bigger footprint of earth and also by tearing down existing trees.  Needham could take a lesson from many communities (ie on Cape Cod) which have strict re-vegetation requirements when doing a tear-down or even removing vegetation for an addition. We have strict building requirements how about some strict environmental requirements?

The increase in large homes is not providing housing diversity, such as starter homes, and it's not setting Needham up for the future. Can schools, roads, emergency services, etc., adequately accommodate the number of people living in 6 bedroom homes?

Loss of the feel of a close-knit community with taste

Owners need a place to indicate if they want to sell on the condition that their homes will not be razed. People love their older homes and don't want greedy developers destroying them. Also, private homeowners should have a 10-day period to buy before developers.

I see no reason to police others' private property or choice of home design. If the lot can support a larger house, the owner should be allowed to build it.

I know there's a separate tree commission working right now, but I hope that their work informs yours as well. We need more canopy, for shade, air quality, beauty, and root systems to absorb big storms!

Mcmansions are ugly, wasteful and unnecessary

Why not ask other towns, like Wellesley, how they solved this problem rather than reinventing the wheel?

The town should raise tax rates for larger houses. From my understanding the rate decreases after baseline square footage

Because of tear downs it has become nearly impossible for first time home buyers to afford to purchase a house here. Also, the ability for home owners to upgrade to their next home has become difficult.

In many instances it is a good thing to tear down old homes and build new ones. They're prettier, more energy efficient, and fit the needs of modern families better. I live next to and across the street from homes built in 2017 and 2018. My home was built in the 1800s. The larger homes don't bother me at all. Needham's current setbacks and zoning restrictions are more than adequate.

Not happy with the aesthetics of a lot of the new builds. Don't fit in with neighborhood.

The town needs to fix the loophole that allows builders to build houses with massive finished basements and third floors that do not count against lot coverage calculations. There are numerous houses in my neighborhood that were torn down and the new construction jammed massive houses on 6700 sq. ft lots. That is well below the 10,000 sq ft zoning and is an eyesore.

the large house itself is not an issue--the unintended consequences of the large house need to be addressed:1.limit building time of day.2.make fines more substantial to time violators 3. require new homes to not cause rain run off into neighbors homes4.set up a good neighbor fund where every new const.home must donate \$1000 to this fund.4.give a tax credit to those who have old homes on old lots. the

tax formulation is crazy, it basically is valuing my home as a tear down. that could be a future use, but it should be taxed as a non tear down, arms length transaction/valuation.

Stop clear cutting trees.

Hope the town will consider a maximum percentage of lot size for houses being built. The overly large house trend on tiny lots is having a negative impact on the character of the town. It also is not good for the environment, stripping green space on lots, increasing the heat factor as fewer trees/shrubs for shade and for bird and insect life - which is all important for humans too.

70 woodbine

Not counting significant square footage under the roof of new construction to stay under the limit is foolish.

Needham becomes less affordable every time a smaller house is removed

I feel strongly that we should not permit the destruction of mature trees to allow huge houses to be built in Needham.

Tear downs create ancillary problems eg construction traffic, construction noise, landfill waste of house remnants, drainage flow, wildlife disturbance, loss of green space. In addition, zoning standards should consider solar/green energy use.

A couple issues for me: 1. We're losing green space. Could there be a percentage of lot that is built on vs. just the distance from border. I think you are calling lot coverage. Keep the same footprint. Definitely limit height. 2. We need to keep Needham affordable. We need to keep small homes for young, old and diversity.

All the new houses look the same. (Re: Edge Properties). Developers changing the look and charm of Needham. And pricing on housing in Needham makes it nearly impossible for young families (my son and his wife bought in Natick) to buy or even rent. And it's making things harder for seniors to stay and impossible for seniors to downsize in Needham. No lower priced housing anymore in Needham. My small ranch will be a tear down for sure- but there is nothing wrong with it. It's just greed by developers. I could sell it for 850k+ and they will rebuild and sell it for 2.5M+. As a single mom, I've lived here with my kids since 2006 (previously renting in Needham) and then both my kids came back to live with me at certain times, as adults. And my daughter lived with me along with my grandson. The house is loved and livable but not by Needham standards anymore. It's greed and lack of caring by the town - and all of the houses look the same (as mentioned)- like Stepford homes (and chopping of trees!). Sorry for the rant!

I think it's supply and demand. Let things take their course with the existing guidelines. If people don't want giant houses they won't buy them and thus they won't be built.



The lots in Needham look ridiculous with the size of the homes. There's absolutely no yard space once new homes are built.

New construction of large homes has made water management during storms more difficult on my property.

concerned new regulations will effectively create a design board which will be a few people who will control what gets built in town and what styles are used. unnecessary consolidation of control over people in town. let the market figure it out

More controls for the current "McMansion" needs to be in place, or an incentive to renovate the existing structure.

Front setback between houses and street are too small. Larger setbacks would allow wider walkway and pleasant to walk or bike city.

Pool Cabana's need height restricted and set backs to adjacent properties need to be larger.

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Tear-down replacements loom over other houses in their neighborhoods--they are out of proportion to the landscape. They are also cookie-cutter black and white houses, with huge garages at the front. Is there any way to encourage architectural initiative to restore the interesting, attractive appearance of neighborhoods? And is there a way to prevent excessive tree-cutting so that the lots can be filled with house?

I want to encourage diversity in our town and worry with too many large homes the town will become unaffordable for most, especially young families.

The McMansions are visually oppressive and environmentally unsustainable.

All that vast impermeable surface on those lots with behemoth houses and their vast parking areas is drowning me. My vassment has become a reservoir for the run off from the houses of those self entitled overhoused rich people. Want to divide Needham -- continue favoring big houses for rich people that ruin the little houses of middle class. Tired of paying the price of big ugly ersatz farmhouses. Hate them. Ugly, polluting, harmful to streams and rivers. Nothing good. You are drowning me.

I live next to an older home and gentleman. I have delayed making yard improvements because I know it will be teared down soon and landscaped negatively. I do not want to make an investment until I see what issue I will need to mitigate. I have watched neighbors seriously impacted by flooding issues due to builders.

Tempest in a tea pot. A nonissue created by a minority of constant complainers.

The problem is that most of the new housing being built is for the luxury market. There is either "affordable" housing or luxury housing; we are losing the market in the middle. Because our neighborhood is built on rock ledges, new housing usually entails enduring weeks/months of daily hammering. It destroys the quiet enjoyment of our home.

Lack of concern for scale of other homes on street. Maximizing lot build outs is too much. Trees removed should be linked to tree plantings elsewhere to protect nature.

There needs to be regulation with formula of house size/height to the lot size with setbacks based on size of the lot.

The last zoning by law change had an unintended result of rewarding owners with large lots and penalizing owners of smaller lots. More restrictions will negatively impact the resale market and hurt the economic engine that drives Needham vitality and attractiveness. There are plenty of starter homes in Needham. Eventually all homes will need to be torn down after 50 or 75 years!!!

Some new houses in Needham are towering over their neighbors and negatively impact everything from drainage to neighborhood feel. Developers have different goals and priorities than residents and need rules to govern them. Maximum profit for them creates houses that are too large and expensive for residents. We looked for years for a larger house that was 3500 ft but all the new houses were 5000 ft +. These big houses are not needed or good for the environment but they are what developers build. We need to find a way to have developers build houses for normal people, not the rich.

The only positive aspect of the current large house construction for me is that the value of my house has increased significantly..This will allow me to sell the house to a builder somewhat hassle free. However the downsides are substantial. More trees are being cut down, green space is being diminished, rainfall is not landing on soil to be absorbed by the earth, greater demand for energy to heat and cool these oversized houses. I would like too see the zoning changed to prevent such large houses or to at least make them multi-tenant structures to provide more housing at hopefully a lower cost. This would enable young families, town employees (particularly police and fire department employees) to actually live in the town they serve and protect.

This is a leading and toxic question; it frames something that is not an issue as if it were.

They've got to stop selling houses to builders to make giant houses from nice home starters or smaller homes for older families

We feel as long as the new house is built tastefully, there is no problem

With a smaller, nonconforming lot size, I am worried that changes will adversely impact the value of my property. My house was built in 1932, and I have to believe that it will be a tear-down when I decide to sell it. I think careful consideration needs to be given to avoid making lot coverage requirements or setback requirements too restrictive for smaller, nonconforming lots.

I was born in Needham in 1950 and lived here until 1963. We moved away and did not return until a married in 1981. We lived in Needham, with 2 children, again until 1995 when we moved. We returned to Needham in 2016 and now live in a condo. So I have seen a lot of change, some for the good but mostly for the bad. The worst by far is the enormous influx of GWH - great white houses. this unbridled development is really discouraging to see. Needham used to pride itself in have a diverse economic make up. Now it has fallen into the trap of uniformity, which is unhealthy 🐦

no homes for young people, no homes for older people, Loss of trees and shade, increase erosion.

My largest issue is that to get the footprint they remove all the trees and landscaping which has a long term detrimental impact on our town. lost 38 beautiful oak trees on the property behind me when a teardown was done

Since I moved to needham nine years ago there has been continual loud construction noise. This year alone hit a peak. Within a couple of months we had three tear downs of well maintained homes that were replaced with homes all at least 9,000 square feet each. People say our property value will go up, but what is the value of your home when you live with the constant noise of large trucks backing up, nail guns, cement trucks, large amounts of stone being cut on site, plus the dust for cut stone, workers hollering (they have to to be heard because the house is so large), diggers, supply trucks, etc.. needless to say, we don't enjoy outside of the house much lately. Then there are the port-a-potties on the sidewalk, workers trucks lining sidewalks and fly away garbage in our yards that doesn't make it to the giant dumpsters. There is also the loss of hundreds of mature trees, on our street alone. With this is also loss of animal habitat. I know just from the reduced owl activity and increase of voles and other rodents that are being flushed out of dug up properties and into our yards. One of my neighbors that lives at the bottom of the hill has had a waterlogged yard due to acres of tree loss and permeable surface loss. They have also had their own trees fall due to becoming waterlogged. Another neighbor, was threatened by a builder after their tree fell on builders new home. Our neighbor's tree roots were likely compromised due to the tree clearing from builder. Builder forced neighbors to spend money cutting additional trees on their property or he would sue.

We have been here for 30 years and I am horrified by what has happened to the town. There is constant construction, all of the trees are taken done, there are no lawns, the town is downright ugly. I honestly have become demoralized trying to understand what the town could be thinking having all of these (already large!) single family homes taken down. There seems to be no long term thinking, everything is about the short-term profit. It is the town's responsibility to keep this a nice place to live. I know that the town has climate goals that it has committed to - how can you allow so much demolition if we're committed to these goals? This is an educated, affluent, supposedly progressive town and I don't understand how anyone is okay with this.

The combination of height and bulk (massing, which may effectively be FAR) is driving the negative impact much more than setbacks. That said, one approach could be to require greater setbacks for 2.5 floors to encourage true 2 story construction. The 2.5 story height seems prone to some abuse, with more structures that effectively deploy three levels of living and loom over their neighbors.

This seems like something a small group of uber-enviros is pushing because they want everyone else to live the way they want to live. More green Needham pushing a useless climate agenda on the town.

I moved one year ago to a Needham condo, but owned a Needham home for 38 years prior.

I moved to Needham in 1987 and worked for the Town of Needham at Glover Now Beth Israel for 10 years and then worked for NPS for 25 years. I can no longer afford to live in Needham as a retiree and am now forced to sell my home due to the recent 350,000 assessment increase that occurred in a single year. My real estate taxes alone are now more than what my entire social security can cover so I have no choice but to move from what will become yet another "Teardown" ranch. There is no hope in Needham for retired seniors. I filed for the first time ever for an abatement and was denied.

Need to limit very large houses to large lots. We lost our early morning sun to a three story house built almost on top of us in our backyard. We also lost privacy due to 3rd story windows that look down over our fence and landscaping.

need one level houses for senior, e.g. ranches which are being mostly torn down. need affordable housing for town employees and children of current residents.

My original residence on Dedham Avenue was torn down. My second residence on Mayflower Road was torn down. A number of residences in our current Emerson Place/ Emerson Road neighborhood have been torn down. We have seen and experienced the negative impacts of uncontrolled housing demolition of our neighborhoods. We have lived in Needham for 50 years. Poorly regulated tear downs/ huge footprints and heights DESTROY. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

It would be nice to indicate at least upper limits on the above question.

The tear downs make it impossible for first time buyers of modest means to move to Needham... The loss of trees is terribly unsightly; zoning laws need to better address this. The following can't be solved through zoning, but it is ridiculous how large these homes are and how many bathrooms they provide.

I would like to see some limit on how many trees are taken down. I would like Needham to have affordable housing so that young people can buy a starter home.

Could there be zoning for 2 family houses that are within close proximity to schools or public transportation. ? Also we need housing for elderly so we can downsize.

many houses look too large on the lots- need to also include all oversized basement window wells, A/C and generator units in setbacks - if lower level built out - needs to be included in taxable FAR.

Property owners have rights that should not be impinged

My home is an older home that we have have worked hard to take care of and preserve. However, it is surrounded by homes (on all sides) that have either been torn down or will be torn down when sold. Our yard is currently overlooked by these homes and we now lack privacy. When I look out my kitchen window, I now look into the kitchen of the new construction home behind me. This has negatively impacted the quality of our life and the usability of our outdoor space.

The modest houses in my neighborhood are being torn down and replaced by much larger houses. The most recent one built is 8,222 square feet (the house, not the lot), is out of character with the neighborhood, and has exterior LED light strips that create significant light pollution. While the house was listed as sold a year ago, no one lives in the house. The house is listed as sold at \$3,350,000, which has caused an increase in my real estate tax though the value of my house has not changed.

I use to live in the Mitchell School Area and with all the tear downs I believe it changed the water run off in the neighborhood.

Part of what drew my family to my neighborhood in Needham was the diversity of houses in appearance, size, design aesthetic, etc. Once we moved in, we realized this seems to be reflected by friendliness and kindness of our neighbors. There spate of new construction even in the last 3 years has resulted in oversized houses that all look the same, with owners we've barely met and who don't seem to want to be engaged in the community (of course with the caveat that this is a very small sample size and not necessarily representative of Needham as a whole).

Very large house built next door replacing a smaller colonial home on a heavily wooded lot, majority of trees lost on the lot resulting in wide open lot with large house - to the point where I get reflective heat off the newer house. Privacy significantly reduced!

We bought a new house in Needham after it was built and put on the market by a developer. Some would say we are part of the "problem," if they perceive there to be an issue. However, the house we bought has a large yard even after a large house was built on the property. I do feel other large houses leave too little yard space which likely does impact drainage, green space/ trees, etc. Needham was built on swampland from what I understand, and we have seen that our yard gets very wet in the rainy seasons and have dealt with flooding in our basement as well. Developers are not likely to consider these issues, which likely don't affect their ability to sell a home - but do affect the homeowner. The town could help on this front.

I know the issue is complicated and thank you for trying to make it better. I do believe that SOME additional limits should be imposed with the goal of protecting our town's environment, open space between (huge) houses, water permeability, etc.

The new houses that are too large for their lots and lack mature trees undermine the beauty of Needham and create a crowded feel. And they are replacing starter homes that allow young families to live here and elderly people to downsize. Just as the town creates regulations in other areas that some people may feel infringe on their rights, I think it is necessary to make tough decisions that overall benefit the town.

Don't change the rules now and devalue our property!!

There are cases where 5000 sq ft houses are being built on tiny lots, in neighborhoods where all the other houses are less than half the size. These houses ruin the character of those neighborhoods. These aren't multi family houses that are increasing our town's housing stock or improving housing affordability -- they're single family McMansions. Our town would be significantly better off without them.

Larger & taller houses create more shadows on my property. Builders have cut down very large trees to accommodate the huge houses.

The only concern I have is with lot coverage because it impacts water absorption, runoff, and trees, as these impact the town and not just the property itself. Dictating anything else is overreach.

Needham has such great history as a town, and the old houses add a lot of charm. New houses should be built to blend in with the town and be appropriately sized for the lot.

One issue not addressed in this survey is the removal of healthy trees that is part of the large house/teardown issue and the negative impact it has on our community. Also, I moved to Needham in 2002 and the entire time of I have lived in Needham the large house/tear down issue has always been present but never thoughtfully addressed. I hope now there will be meaningful action taken. Finally - it doesn't help that as homeowners it is very hard to make renovations/changes to our houses because of existing town rules and regulations. It seems much more straightforward for new construction builds. There should be a different set of requirements for teardowns/new builds as opposed to renovations of older properties that do not significantly expand the square footage of the home.

I would like to maintain economic diversity in Needham; that goal is not possible without affordable housing.

Trees cut down seems to impact character of neighborhood and have an impact on water drainage. Huge homes don't appear to be as well built as the older homes they are replacing.

Teardowns are replacing moderate size/cost homes with homes that are just too big with huge homes shoe-horned into small lots. There should be rules about flooding/drainage impacts and I'd like to also see rules about tree preservation.

I am very happy to have learned about this survey and am thankful to be given the opportunity to voice an opinion that I feel otherwise would have fallen on deaf ears. As a younger person in this town, who has lived here all of their life, I am extremely discouraged, saddened, and angry with how Needham has allowed record numbers of houses to be torn down and replaced by mega-mansions. I work for and in this town and would love to make this town my forever home (when I am ready to buy a house). However, with the current pattern of house sales, especially the buying of homes by companies who just want to tear them down, I will never be able to live in the community I have grown up in, serve, and love dearly. Like many people my age, we do not have an expectation for houses to be purchased for cheap, in fact I work very hard to earn what I need to earn to become a homeowner someday, but we currently don't even have a fighting chance. Our town is missing out on the addition of wonderful people to our community by eliminating smaller homes for sale. If you want to help to continually diversify Needham (diversify: age, race, ethnicity, etc.), affordable housing is a must. Building large houses that the average person cannot afford is not the way. Please don't continue to let our town go down this path we are on. Also, the new houses are ugly, just saying. Thank you for reading 🙏 and for your time.

I live in a house that was new construction after a tear down and could not be happier with our home

I have a non conforming lot that was reduced by land taking when Highlnd ave was expanded . I am worried I would not meet new requirements. Plus I do not feel I have an obligation to keep my house under the “ starter home category “ as has been suggested .why can't us starter homes upgrade to something more luxurious if wanted ? Didn't ask about storm water run off but that was a big issue resulting from storm water issues . Newton requires tear down a to install tank to collect the water which seem to work .

I am very distressed by the huge number of tear downs in Needham. I believe we are all negatively impacted by the huge wastefulness of this process and the massive amount of material that ends up in landfills. Many older homes are in excellent shape and could be preserved. I am also distressed by the destruction of critical green space, including beautiful old trees, that are cleared away in this process. There need to be some kind of disincentives put in place to discourage tear downs.

I think the other issue is that these giant house are also really cheap looking and the cut down all the trees.

Tear downs limit who can enter Needham by taking away great starter homes or homes that can be renovated over time. This leads to an unaffordability issue. Houses close to the road increase the appearance of bulk. Greater setbacks in the front would lessen this issue. Zoning should also be amended to be more lenient or flexible for people with existing homes to renovate. This would encourage existing homes to be modified instead of torn town and fully replaced.

People should be able to do what they want with their land within reason. We can't stop change, change is what happens. Needham at one point was largely farm land. Subdivisions replaced these lands. This was much more change than teardowns.

Builders have shown little concern for grade changes when building McMansions in Needham which often creates water runoff/draining problems for neighbors. Should be illegal! Too many families are priced out of ever being able to purchase a home in Needham and the large houses which are built using every bit of setback allowed, look ridiculous!

No

The house behind mine has been torn down. The house they plan to build will block my view from the back of my house. instead of seeing lawns and trees, I will see the side of their house. It appears the house will be approximately ten feet from my backyard fence. I have lived here for 44 years and this is extremely upsetting.

I think the certain designs of houses negatively impacts the look of neighborhoods. Also, the amount of homes that are built on lots is ridiculous. Trees are being torn down and wildlife is negatively impacted.

We live next door to a recent tear down. The amount of disruption in the entire neighborhood during the process was chaos for the environment plus our family. They took down over 25 trees in one afternoon. It was chaos for a few years.

Impact to flooding of basements

There have only been a few knock downs in my neighborhood. Two older homes were happily renovated. But there are many homes owned by people who have been here for 30 or more years. When they sell, I'd hate to see the neighborhood filled with white and black McMansions that fill the lots edge to edge and front to back. Also, I think you should have done this survey a decade ago. But at least you're doing it now.

Setbacks, height (with wording to prevent triple decker look), lot coverage seem like the best tools. Can't regulate style, or insist footprint be same on new build as the torn-down house had.

The overall character of the town is changing in a way that cannot be corrected in the future. We are forcing long time residents out of town and preventing most young families from moving in. Surface water problems and other local consequences in our neighborhood from teardowns/house size are also major issues.

Less shade due to trees cut down, more water issues. Views negatively impacted by height of houses.

There is no clear and consistent set of rules to hold developers accountable once they have acquired a building permit. Some developers build responsibly and others do not. The town should invest in more resources to keep developers accountable.

I believe the town needs to move forward and not remain stuck in the past. New homes should not be regulated by the town, there needs to be variety and differences, to make it an interesting environment.

We are losing our town. It will no longer be small or quaint. Homes with no yards resemble a city, not a town. Why don't you just say you can use X% of a lot - regardless of where it is. This is a fair approach instead of trying to "cityfy" certain areas and protect others. Terrible mistake in zoning has been made which needs to be corrected. Looks like it's been for developers, not citizens. While developers have gained, citizens have lost especially those that have been impacted by stormwater. Yards are good to have, they are healthy, they supply oxygen, they soak up water, and they provide tranquility in a difficult world. Surrounding this conversation is that people 55 and over want to leave their homes and move into congregate housing. This is a myth. THEY DO NOT. Seniors want to remain independent and in their homes. And help keep Needham....Needham!

Density seems to have exploded since the last review that seemed to be intended to curb the size of houses. Seems as though the plan was actually to help builders and residents lost out.

Given the high land cost, developers must build the largest and most expensive house that they think they can sell. Only by applying reasonable limits to the house footprint varying with lot size can the character of Needham neighbors be enhanced (rather than become overcrowded). Sideyards may be the biggest problem as they are being minimized in order to maximize the size of the house while preserving as much of the front (for the driveway) and the backyard (for a little patch of lawn). I might propose that houses be no closer than 20 feet from any plot boundary. 🦋

Needham officials seem to be on the side of developers at the expense of residents and home owners. sad.

Given the high land cost, developers must build the largest and most expensive house that they think they can sell. Only by applying reasonable limits to the house footprint varying with lot size can the character of Needham neighbors be enhanced (rather than become overcrowded). Sideyards may be the biggest problem as they are being minimized in order to maximize the size of the house while preserving as much of the front (for the driveway) and the backyard (for a little patch of lawn). I might propose that houses be no closer than 20 feet from any plot boundary.

I don't believe regulation is the issue. The market is speaking loudly. When an older home goes for sale, the choice is up to the seller to sell to a builder or a family. Regulation runs the risk of resulting in unintended consequences that reduce the property value for the entire town.

I am disappointed with how Needham has been so lenient with the zoning of new homes./tear downs. I would like to see changes but it almost feels like it's too late - the damage has already been done. So many beautiful neighborhoods have been damaged. I hope to see things change.

After 60 years in Needham I wish to downsize but there is no housing stock left forcing me to leave the town. Small homes should not cost 7 figures. It prohibits young families from moving to town unless they are in technology, investments, medical or legal fields. We have limited who our neighbors will be. And, for the rest of us who have been here for decades, it is increasingly difficult to maintain the homes we have forcing us to establish residency in towns we are not familiar with. Change is inevitable but this type of evolutionary process is bordering on elitism. Is that what we want to be known for?

The town should not be unilaterally ruining the investments of owners of smaller homes and parcels in order to protect the aesthetic sensibilities of the owners of homes on larger parcels. What people do with their houses is their business. If people want to live in the country, they should move there. Needham isn't the country.

Issue-lot levels are being raised, which affects runoff onto neighbors' yards. It also affects the sidewalk and drainage issues. The builder raised the lot level next to me. This meant the driveway was higher, so the town put in the sidewalks to go with the driveway. The sidewalk over my driveway was raised and the water can no longer leave my driveway, resulting in large puddles. In the winter, this freezes, but I still need to be able to get from my driveway to my front walk. So, the choice is walk on ice and possibly fall, with all that entails (I broke my back a few years ago (not from this), so am particularly concerned about this, or plow through the snow across the front yard to avoid the ice. Depending on the snow depth, this is not a great option, either. Before this large house went in, it was not a problem. This large amount of asphalt also makes the water run off towards the end of my front walk, which means ice at the end of my front walk in the winter, as well. I contacted the town, nothing happened. Much later, contacted them again, but they said they had no record of the first contact, but that they would make one.

Still nothing happened. I went to the DPW office and spoke to someone, who said he would be out that day to look at it. Still nothing happened. Finally, after a few years trying to resolve this, I got completely fed up, so sent an email to the selectmen explaining this problem and letting them know that if nothing got done, that my next letter would be to a lawyer. Then, finally, someone came out. Of course, they could not do anything until this spring. The sidewalk is now marked to be fixed, but it does not look like this is going to make the problem go away. When the young man from the town came out, he said that the town can not get companies to come out to do small jobs. He also suggested that the "easiest" solution for the sidewalk issue at the end of my walk would be for me to have someone come and raise my walk so that the end of it is higher! Easiest for the town, perhaps. First of all, I don't have the money to do something like that. It is a flagstone in concrete walkway that connects to the front patio. And, secondly, I don't see why that expense should be mine when it wasn't a problem before this sidewalk thing happened due to the construction of this big new house. Also, because the land is higher, water runoff runs over my wooden retaining wall, which means it will rot out faster. This never happened before the new, big house went in. When they were putting the house in, I talked to the young inspector, saying I was concerned about water that could run into my yard because there used to be a low place between the two properties that would fill with water each spring. He very dismissively said, "Why should he have water in his yard?" I feel like there is no hope. The inspectors seem to let the builders get away with things. The fact that I am older, and female, doesn't mean real concerns should be dismissed. When the house was going in, the builder did not want to terrace that yard to meet mine, so said he would regrade my yard for free, and slope it towards the new neighbor's house. He would slope that yard toward mine, and then let all the runoff go out to the back of our properties. But the back of our properties abuts the neighbors behind, so I could not agree to something like that! And all this is just so the builder can put in the biggest house for the least amount of money and make the biggest profit. How much money does one person need (not want, but truly need), anyway? Greed seems to be ruling development. Why are the builders allowed to get away with these things? Do I (or others) need to suffer life debilitating injuries before someone will pay attention? I am a senior living on a very limited budget. It seems like money rules (look at the issues we have faced recently in the town), so, basically, I am screwed. I hope you can do something about this large building issue. I now feel great sympathy with those going through urban renewal. It seems like the town is being taken over by the moneyed interests and destroying a lot of the sense of community that used to exist here.

Please stop clearcutting lots.

There is no place for the town in regulating this issue beyond what is already in place

Flooding issues due to less greenery and trees to absorb rainwater.

A house of a similar size and style to ours was replaced by an ultra modern house which does not fit in anyway to the rest of the neighborhood. New builds should be expected to fit into the style of the adjacent homes in the neighborhood to maintain the character and feel of the community. 🦋

None

I believe that the large house/tear down issue is affecting the town negatively in the following ways: 1) making it almost impossible for moderate income families to move here; 2) making it difficult for seniors to sell because there is no place they can afford to move to, 3) adding to the potential for a bubble in house values, which could lead to a broad falloff in values in the area; 4) turning Needham into a rich person's town; and 5) creating so many construction sites around town that you cannot avoid the disruption. There's a giant house being built on Harris, near where we live, that has been under construction for two years -- it's taken way too long and it's way too big. That's right after the very large house on the corner of Harris and Webster was built with a three car garage. Our friends who just sold their house on Bradford will be a tear down even though it's a lovely house from the 1920s with incredible woodwork. and charming detail. It's just so unfortunate.

If you change the rules now, my small house will not be worth what it could be because lot is large and itself is in horrible condition so will be torn down. If you make it more difficult to put a larger house, I lose value.

I do not object to tear downs - however I think that the home size should be scaled to the lot size and not just build the biggest house possible. Not scaling the house size to the lot has also overinflated the value of a lot. This has probably lead to homes that could have been a nice starter home or downsizing home to be overpriced and too expensive and for families to buy and deigned for builders to purchase and build an oversized home.

Needham should be welcoming new developments and families into the town and providing more opportunities for housing for families

Concerned with the clear cutting of mature trees by developers

New house construction is a positive thing for Needham.

Not only are the new houses too large, but they are also built with insufficient parking which results in more cars being parked on the streets. Additionally, as part of the construction, mature trees are taken down, eliminating homes for wildlife and shade for pedestrians.

Please indicate whether you currently rent or own your own home in Needham

I own my own home in Needham 96% (1,108)

I rent a home in Needham 2% (24)

Other 2% (23)

not a resident or business in Needham

Resident

I own my own townhouse.

Rent apartment

I’m a builder in Needham. Those that I purchase from are very appreciative of the price they are getting.

Grew up here 25 years

Live with aging parent

I live with property owners.

Apartment living

I grew up in Needham and now I rent

Family trust

Live with parents

Live with family

I am a college student living at my parents' home in Needham

Parents own home

just moved out of town

Job provides my housing

I own a condo, but owned a home in Needham for 35 years,

I currently own a condo

my mother owns the house

I still live with my parents because I cannot afford to move out.



How long have you lived in Needham?

0-2 years 3% (37)

2-5 years 9% (99)

5-10 years 15% (170)

10-20 years 21% (247)

more than 20 years 52% (602)

In which category is your age?

18-24 years	0% (3)
25-34 years	2% (18)
35-44 years	18% (205)
45-54 years	25% (290)
55-64 years	23% (261)
65-74 years	22% (251)
75 years or older	10% (116)

In which Needham Public Schools district do you reside?

Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (240)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	19% (218)
Mitchell Elementary School	18% (213) 
Eliot Elementary School	11% (124)
Newman Elementary School	31% (356)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (4)

Please rate the following statements. You may elaborate on any of these statements in the open response section in question #2.

Overview

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
Needham has a large house and/or teardown issue	9%	9%	6%	18%	58%	0%
The Town should be regulating/moderating house sizes in Needham differently than it currently does	9%	10%	6%	24%	51%	0%
Large houses and/or teardowns in Needham have impacted me negatively	14%	15%	19%	24%	26%	2%
Spacing (side setbacks) between houses in Needham is acceptable	20%	34%	14%	22%	10%	0%
Spacing (front setbacks) between houses and the street in Needham is acceptable	16%	22%	21%	31%	9%	1%
Current height restrictions of new houses being built in Needham are acceptable	21%	28%	20%	21%	9%	1%
The footprint (lot coverage) of new houses being built in Needham is acceptable	39%	33%	7%	12%	8%	0%
I am comfortable with the current volume (bulk) of new houses being built in Needham	29%	30%	15%	16%	10%	0%
My neighborhood in Needham has changed negatively over the last 10 years	17%	20%	20%	23%	18%	4%
I am concerned that my house in Needham will be torn down and replaced after I sell it	17%	17%	19%	15%	27%	5%

Expand all / Collapse all

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Applicable

Needham has a large house and/or teardown issue

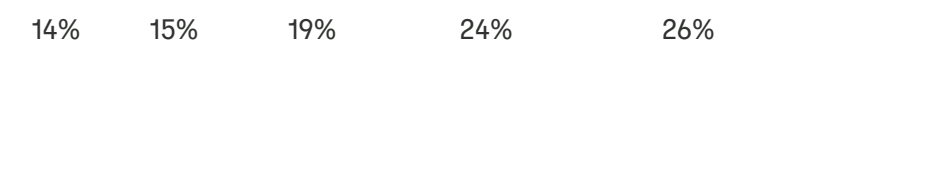
9% 9% 6% 18% 58%

The Town should be regulating/moderating house sizes in Needham differently than it currently does

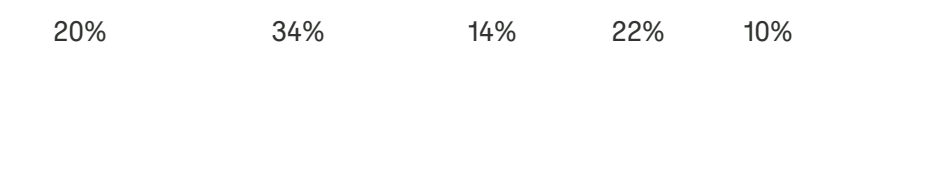
9% 10% 6% 24% 51%



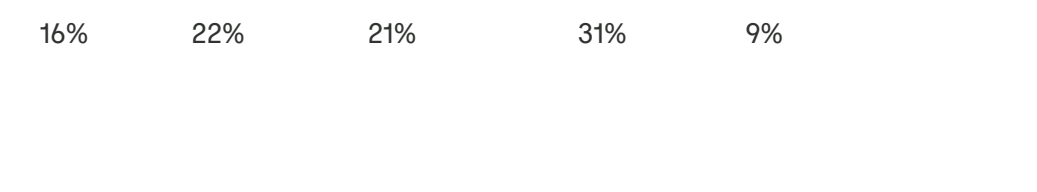
Large houses and/or teardowns in Needham have impacted me negatively



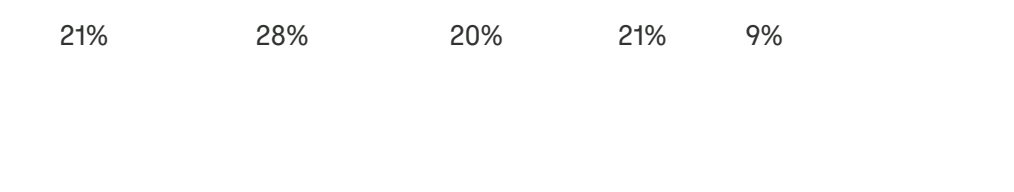
Spacing (side setbacks) between houses in Needham is acceptable



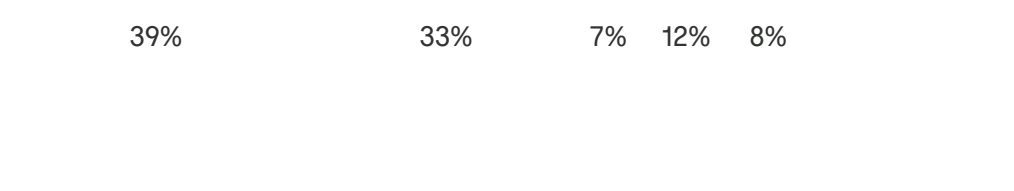
Spacing (front setbacks) between houses and the street in Needham is acceptable



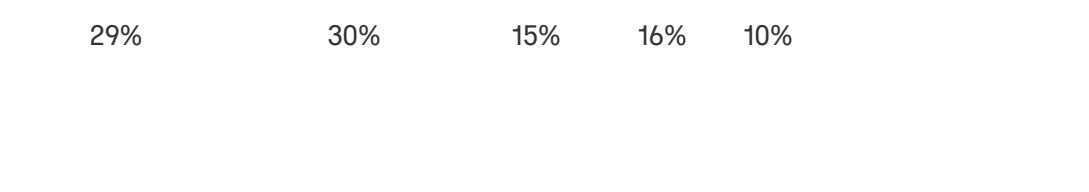
Current height restrictions of new houses being built in Needham are acceptable



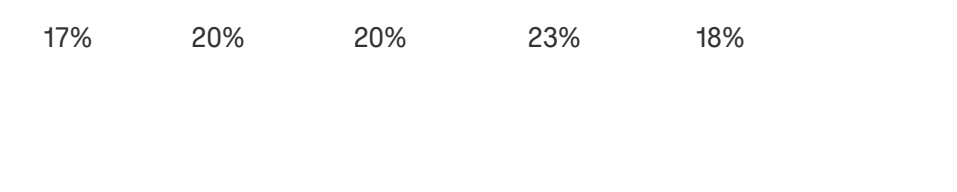
The footprint (lot coverage) of new houses being built in Needham is acceptable



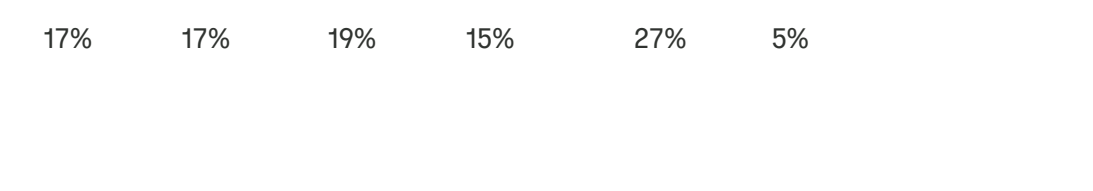
I am comfortable with the current volume (bulk) of new houses being built in Needham



My neighborhood in Needham has changed negatively over the last 10 years



I am concerned that my house in Needham will be torn down and replaced after I sell it



Breakdowns for: Needham has a large house and/or teardown issue

Gender

Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.

Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	8% (9)	Strongly Disagree	3% (4)
Disagree	11% (12)	Disagree	7% (9)
Neutral	8% (9)	Neutral	3% (4)
Agree	20% (23)	Agree	13% (18)
Strongly Agree	54% (61)	Strongly Agree	74% (101)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	10% (86)		
Disagree	9% (84)		
Neutral	7% (61)		
Agree	19% (170)		
Strongly Agree	56% (503)		
Not Applicable	0% (1)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	12% (4)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	15% (5)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	9% (3)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	12% (4)
Strongly Agree	100% (3)	Strongly Agree	52% (17)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	5% (2)	Strongly Disagree	5% (3)
Disagree	8% (3)	Disagree	12% (7)
Neutral	13% (5)	Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	15% (6)	Agree	14% (8)
Strongly Agree	60% (24)	Strongly Agree	69% (40)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	4% (3)	Strongly Disagree	2% (1)
Disagree	5% (4)	Disagree	5% (2)
Neutral	5% (4)	Neutral	2% (1)
Agree	21% (16)	Agree	17% (7)
Strongly Agree	64% (48)	Strongly Agree	73% (3🐦)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	10% (86)
Disagree	9% (84)
Neutral	7% (61)
Agree	19% (170)
Strongly Agree	56% (503)
Not Applicable	0% (1)

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	100% (1)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	9% (2)
Disagree	9% (2)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	14% (3)
Strongly Agree	55% (12)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	6% (1)
Disagree	17% (3)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	11% (2)
Strongly Agree	67% (12)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	13% (3)
Neutral	4% (1)
Agree	25% (6)
Strongly Agree	58% (1🦉)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	4% (1)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	9% (2)
Agree	17% (4)
Strongly Agree	70% (16)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	8% (2)
Disagree	20% (5)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	20% (5)
Strongly Agree	52% (13)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	7% (2)
Disagree	3% (1)
Neutral	7% (2)
Agree	13% (4)
Strongly Agree	70% (21)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	6% (2)
Disagree	16% (5)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	13% (4)
Strongly Agree	65% (20)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	10% (2)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	10% (2)
Agree	19% (4)
Strongly Agree	62% (13)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	3% (1)
Neutral	6% (2)
Agree	16% (5)
Strongly Agree	74% (2🦉)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	5% (1)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	18% (4)
Strongly Agree	77% (17)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	100% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A		Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	10% (86)
Disagree	100% (1)	Disagree	9% (84)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	7% (61)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	19% (170)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	56% (503)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (1)

Breakdowns for: The Town should be regulating/moderating house sizes in Needham differently than it currently does

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	7% (8)	Strongly Disagree	4% (5)
Disagree	15% (17)	Disagree	6% (8)
Neutral	9% (10)	Neutral	6% (8) 🦜
Agree	24% (27)	Agree	25% (34)
Strongly Agree	46% (52)	Strongly Agree	60% (81)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)
Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	10% (93)		
Disagree	10% (92)		
Neutral	6% (50)		
Agree	24% (214)		
Strongly Agree	50% (456)		
Not Applicable	0% (0)		

Age Range
 Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34			35-44		
Strongly Disagree		0% (0)	Strongly Disagree		12% (4)
Disagree		0% (0)	Disagree		12% (4)
Neutral		0% (0)	Neutral		9% (3)
Agree		33% (1)	Agree		24% (8)
Strongly Agree		67% (2)	Strongly Agree		42% (14)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
45-54			55-64		
Strongly Disagree		5% (2)	Strongly Disagree		3% (2)
Disagree		15% (6)	Disagree		12% (7)
Neutral		15% (6)	Neutral		5% (3)
Agree		13% (5)	Agree		21% (12)
Strongly Agree		53% (21)	Strongly Agree		59% (3🐦)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
65-74			75 years or older		
Strongly Disagree		5% (4)	Strongly Disagree		2% (1)
Disagree		8% (6)	Disagree		5% (2)
Neutral		7% (5)	Neutral		2% (1)
Agree		29% (22)	Agree		32% (13)
Strongly Agree		51% (38)	Strongly Agree		59% (24)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	10% (93)
Disagree	10% (92)
Neutral	6% (50)
Agree	24% (214)
Strongly Agree	50% (456)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

Precinct

The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	100% (1)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	14% (3)
Disagree	14% (3)
Neutral	5% (1)
Agree	27% (6) 🦉
Strongly Agree	41% (9)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	6% (1)
Disagree	11% (2)
Neutral	11% (2)
Agree	11% (2)
Strongly Agree	61% (11)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	8% (2)
Neutral	17% (4)
Agree	25% (6)
Strongly Agree	50% (12)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	4% (1)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	9% (2)
Agree	22% (5)
Strongly Agree	65% (15)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	4% (1)
Disagree	20% (5)
Neutral	4% (1)
Agree	32% (8)
Strongly Agree	40% (10)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	7% (2)
Disagree	3% (1)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	27% (8)
Strongly Agree	63% (19)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	6% (2)
Disagree	16% (5)
Neutral	3% (1)
Agree	26% (8)
Strongly Agree	48% (1🦉)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	10% (2)
Disagree	5% (1)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	29% (6)
Strongly Agree	43% (9)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	10% (3)
Neutral	6% (2)
Agree	26% (8)
Strongly Agree	58% (18)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	5% (1)
Disagree	5% (1)
Neutral	9% (2)
Agree	18% (4)
Strongly Agree	64% (14)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	100% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	100% (1)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	10% (93)
Disagree	10% (92)
Neutral	6% (50)
Agree	24% (214)
Strongly Agree	50% (45🦜)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

Breakdowns for: Large houses and/or teardowns in Needham have impacted me negatively

Gender		Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.	
Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	16% (18)	Strongly Disagree	5% (7)
Disagree	23% (26)	Disagree	10% (14)
Neutral	16% (18)	Neutral	23% (31)
Agree	19% (22)	Agree	27% (37)
Strongly Agree	25% (29)	Strongly Agree	31% (42)
Not Applicable	1% (1)	Not Applicable	4% (5)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	15% (137)
Disagree	15% (136)
Neutral	19% (173)
Agree	24% (215)
Strongly Agree	25% (226)
Not Applicable	2% (18)

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	15% (5)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	12% (4)
Neutral	33% (1)	Neutral	27% (9)
Agree	33% (1)	Agree	27% (9) 🐸
Strongly Agree	33% (1)	Strongly Agree	15% (5)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	3% (1)
45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	15% (6)	Strongly Disagree	9% (5)
Disagree	23% (9)	Disagree	17% (10)
Neutral	23% (9)	Neutral	16% (9)
Agree	23% (9)	Agree	16% (9)
Strongly Agree	18% (7)	Strongly Agree	43% (25)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	7% (5)	Strongly Disagree	10% (4)
Disagree	17% (13)	Disagree	10% (4)
Neutral	16% (12)	Neutral	22% (9)
Agree	28% (21)	Agree	24% (10)
Strongly Agree	28% (21)	Strongly Agree	29% (12)
Not Applicable	4% (3)	Not Applicable	5% (2)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	15% (137)		
Disagree	15% (136)		
Neutral	19% (173)		
Agree	24% (215)		
Strongly Agree	25% (226)		
Not Applicable	2% (18)		

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2		NEEDHAM A	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	14% (3)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	14% (3)
Neutral	100% (1)	Neutral	18% (4)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	18% (4)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	32% (7)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	5% (1)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	11% (2)
Disagree	17% (3)
Neutral	22% (4)
Agree	11% (2)
Strongly Agree	39% (7)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	4% (1)
Disagree	25% (6)
Neutral	17% (4)
Agree	29% (7)
Strongly Agree	21% (5)
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	4% (1)
Disagree	13% (3)
Neutral	17% (4)
Agree	22% (5)
Strongly Agree	43% (10)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	24% (6)
Disagree	24% (6)
Neutral	8% (2)
Agree	16% (4)
Strongly Agree	24% 🦜
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	10% (3)
Disagree	7% (2)
Neutral	27% (8)
Agree	33% (10)
Strongly Agree	23% (7)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	10% (3)
Disagree	13% (4)
Neutral	23% (7)
Agree	39% (12)
Strongly Agree	16% (5)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H			NEEDHAM I		
Strongly Disagree		10% (2)	Strongly Disagree		3% (1)
Disagree		33% (7)	Disagree		10% (3)
Neutral		5% (1)	Neutral		16% (5)
Agree		29% (6)	Agree		19% (6)
Strongly Agree		19% (4)	Strongly Agree		48% (15)
Not Applicable		5% (1)	Not Applicable		3% (1)
NEEDHAM J			NEWTON 8-1		
Strongly Disagree		14% (3)	Strongly Disagree		0% (0)
Disagree		9% (2)	Disagree		0% (0)
Neutral		36% (8)	Neutral		100% (1)
Agree		14% (3)	Agree		0% (0)
Strongly Agree		23% (5)	Strongly Agree		0% 🦜
Not Applicable		5% (1)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
WENHAM 1A			Unknown		
Strongly Disagree		0% (0)	Strongly Disagree		15% (137)
Disagree		100% (1)	Disagree		15% (136)
Neutral		0% (0)	Neutral		19% (173)
Agree		0% (0)	Agree		24% (215)
Strongly Agree		0% (0)	Strongly Agree		25% (226)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		2% (18)

Breakdowns for: Spacing (side setbacks) between houses in Needham is acceptable

Gender

Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.

Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	16% (18)	Strongly Disagree	24% (32)
Disagree	27% (31)	Disagree	38% (52)
Neutral	11% (13)	Neutral	12% (16)
Agree	35% (40)	Agree	18% (25)
Strongly Agree	11% (12)	Strongly Agree	7% (10)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	1% (1)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	19% (176)		
Disagree	34% (311)		
Neutral	15% (133)		
Agree	21% (192)		
Strongly Agree	10% (89)		🦜
Not Applicable	0% (4)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	12% (4)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	36% (12)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	12% (4)
Agree	67% (2)	Agree	30% (10)
Strongly Agree	33% (1)	Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	3% (1)

45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	15% (6)	Strongly Disagree	26% (15)
Disagree	40% (16)	Disagree	29% (17)
Neutral	8% (3)	Neutral	10% (6)
Agree	30% (12)	Agree	28% (16)
Strongly Agree	8% (3)	Strongly Agree	7% (4)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	25% (19)	Strongly Disagree	15% (6)
Disagree	31% (23)	Disagree	37% (15)
Neutral	15% (11)	Neutral	12% (5)
Agree	20% (15)	Agree	24% (10)
Strongly Agree	9% (7)	Strongly Agree	12% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	19% (176)
Disagree	34% (311)
Neutral	15% (133)
Agree	21% (192)
Strongly Agree	10% (89)
Not Applicable	0% (4)

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	100% (1)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	14% (3)
Disagree	32% (7)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	23% (5)
Strongly Agree	18% (4)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	22% (4)
Disagree	33% (6)
Neutral	17% (3)
Agree	17% (3)
Strongly Agree	6% (1)
Not Applicable	6% (1)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	17% (4)
Disagree	42% (10)
Neutral	13% (3)
Agree	29% (7)
Strongly Agree	0% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	35% (8)
Disagree	30% (7)
Neutral	13% (3)
Agree	17% (4)
Strongly Agree	4% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	16% (4)
Disagree	28% (7)
Neutral	16% (4)
Agree	28% (7)
Strongly Agree	12% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	20% (6)
Disagree	40% (12)
Neutral	7% (2)
Agree	27% (8)
Strongly Agree	7% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	16% (5)
Disagree	39% (12)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	23% (7)
Strongly Agree	10% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	24% (5)
Disagree	29% (6)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	29% (6)
Strongly Agree	5% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	10% (3)
Disagree	35% (11)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	29% (9)
Strongly Agree	13% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	32% (7)
Disagree	23% (5)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	32% (7)
Strongly Agree	14% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	100% (1)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A		Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	19% (176)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	34% (311)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	15% (133)
Agree	100% (1)	Agree	21% (192)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	10% (89)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (4)

Breakdowns for: Spacing (front setbacks) between houses and the street in Needham is acceptable

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	9% (10)	Strongly Disagree	16% (22)
Disagree	22% (25)	Disagree	26% (36)
Neutral	17% (19)	Neutral	27% (37) 🦜
Agree	39% (45)	Agree	22% (30)
Strongly Agree	13% (15)	Strongly Agree	7% (10)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	1% (1)
Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	16% (148)		
Disagree	22% (198)		
Neutral	20% (183)		
Agree	32% (288)		
Strongly Agree	9% (83)		
Not Applicable	1% (5)		

Age Range
Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34			35-44		
Strongly Disagree		0% (0)	Strongly Disagree		3% (1)
Disagree		0% (0)	Disagree		21% (7)
Neutral		0% (0)	Neutral		30% (10)
Agree		100% (3)	Agree		36% (12)
Strongly Agree		0% (0)	Strongly Agree		6% (2)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		3% (1)
45-54			55-64		
Strongly Disagree		8% (3)	Strongly Disagree		10% (6)
Disagree		25% (10)	Disagree		26% (15)
Neutral		25% (10)	Neutral		21% (12)
Agree		30% (12)	Agree		33% (19)
Strongly Agree		13% (5)	Strongly Agree		10% 🦜
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
65-74			75 years or older		
Strongly Disagree		20% (15)	Strongly Disagree		17% (7)
Disagree		19% (14)	Disagree		37% (15)
Neutral		24% (18)	Neutral		15% (6)
Agree		25% (19)	Agree		24% (10)
Strongly Agree		12% (9)	Strongly Agree		7% (3)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	16% (148)
Disagree	22% (198)
Neutral	20% (183)
Agree	32% (288)
Strongly Agree	9% (83)
Not Applicable	1% (5)

Precinct

The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	100% (1)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	5% (1)
Disagree	27% (6)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	41% (9) 🦉
Strongly Agree	14% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	11% (2)
Disagree	33% (6)
Neutral	28% (5)
Agree	17% (3)
Strongly Agree	6% (1)
Not Applicable	6% (1)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	4% (1)
Disagree	33% (8)
Neutral	17% (4)
Agree	42% (10)
Strongly Agree	4% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	30% (7)
Disagree	22% (5)
Neutral	22% (5)
Agree	13% (3)
Strongly Agree	13% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	12% (3)
Disagree	20% (5)
Neutral	24% (6)
Agree	32% (8)
Strongly Agree	12% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	13% (4)
Disagree	17% (5)
Neutral	30% (9)
Agree	30% (9)
Strongly Agree	10% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	10% (3)
Disagree	26% (8)
Neutral	23% (7)
Agree	26% (8)
Strongly Agree	16% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	14% (3)
Disagree	29% (6)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	43% (9)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	13% (4)
Disagree	23% (7)
Neutral	32% (10)
Agree	23% (7)
Strongly Agree	10% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	18% (4)
Disagree	18% (4)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	36% (8)
Strongly Agree	14% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	100% (1)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	100% (1)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	16% (148)
Disagree	22% (198)
Neutral	20% (183)
Agree	32% (288)
Strongly Agree	9% (8🐦)
Not Applicable	1% (5)

Breakdowns for: Current height restrictions of new houses being built in Needham are acceptable

Gender

Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.

Man

Strongly Disagree	17% (19)
Disagree	21% (24)
Neutral	19% (22)
Agree	28% (32)
Strongly Agree	15% (17)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

Woman

Strongly Disagree	24% (33)
Disagree	35% (48)
Neutral	21% (28)
Agree	15% (20)
Strongly Agree	4% (6)
Not Applicable	1% (1)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	21% (191)
Disagree	28% (255)
Neutral	20% (184)
Agree	21% (186)
Strongly Agree	9% (83)
Not Applicable	1% (6)

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	9% (3)
Disagree	100% (3)	Disagree	15% (5)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	39% (13)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	27% (9) 🦒
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	3% (1)
45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	10% (4)	Strongly Disagree	28% (16)
Disagree	33% (13)	Disagree	26% (15)
Neutral	20% (8)	Neutral	14% (8)
Agree	25% (10)	Agree	22% (13)
Strongly Agree	13% (5)	Strongly Agree	10% (6)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	27% (20)	Strongly Disagree	22% (9)
Disagree	29% (22)	Disagree	34% (14)
Neutral	16% (12)	Neutral	22% (9)
Agree	17% (13)	Agree	17% (7)
Strongly Agree	11% (8)	Strongly Agree	5% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	21% (191)		
Disagree	28% (255)		
Neutral	20% (184)		
Agree	21% (186)		
Strongly Agree	9% (83)		
Not Applicable	1% (6)		

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2		NEEDHAM A	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	27% (6)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	27% (6)
Neutral	100% (1)	Neutral	18% (4)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	18% (4)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	17% (3)
Disagree	17% (3)
Neutral	39% (7)
Agree	11% (2)
Strongly Agree	11% (2)
Not Applicable	6% (1)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	21% (5)
Disagree	33% (8)
Neutral	13% (3)
Agree	33% (8)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	30% (7)
Disagree	17% (4)
Neutral	30% (7)
Agree	13% (3)
Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	16% (4)
Disagree	24% (6)
Neutral	16% (4)
Agree	32% (8)
Strongly Agree	12% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	13% (4)
Disagree	27% (8)
Neutral	23% (7)
Agree	27% (8)
Strongly Agree	10% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	23% (7)
Disagree	26% (8)
Neutral	19% (6)
Agree	16% (5)
Strongly Agree	16% (5)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H		NEEDHAM I	
Strongly Disagree	14% (3)	Strongly Disagree	23% (7)
Disagree	38% (8)	Disagree	42% (13)
Neutral	24% (5)	Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	19% (4)	Agree	16% (5)
Strongly Agree	5% (1)	Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)
NEEDHAM J		NEWTON 8-1	
Strongly Disagree	23% (5)	Strongly Disagree	100% (1)
Disagree	36% (8)	Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	9% (2)	Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	18% (4)	Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	14% (3)	Strongly Agree	0% 🐦
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)
WENHAM 1A		Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	21% (191)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	28% (255)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	20% (184)
Agree	100% (1)	Agree	21% (186)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	9% (83)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	1% (6)

Breakdowns for: The footprint (lot coverage) of new houses being built in Needham is acceptable

Gender
 Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.

Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	31% (35)	Strongly Disagree	47% (64)
Disagree	39% (44)	Disagree	34% (46)
Neutral	6% (7)	Neutral	7% (10)
Agree	14% (16)	Agree	6% (8)
Strongly Agree	11% (12)	Strongly Agree	4% (6)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	1% (2)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	39% (354)		
Disagree	32% (293)		
Neutral	7% (65)		
Agree	13% (116)		
Strongly Agree	8% (74)		
Not Applicable	0% (3)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	67% (2)	Strongly Disagree	36% (12)
Disagree	33% (1)	Disagree	36% (12)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	15% (5)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	6% (2)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	28% (11)	Strongly Disagree	47% (27)
Disagree	43% (17)	Disagree	31% (18)
Neutral	3% (1)	Neutral	2% (1)
Agree	18% (7)	Agree	12% (7)
Strongly Agree	10% (4)	Strongly Agree	5% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	3% (2)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	41% (31)	Strongly Disagree	39% (16)
Disagree	32% (24)	Disagree	44% (18)
Neutral	8% (6)	Neutral	10% (4)
Agree	8% (6)	Agree	5% (2)
Strongly Agree	11% (8)	Strongly Agree	2% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	39% (354)
Disagree	32% (293)
Neutral	7% (65)
Agree	13% (116)
Strongly Agree	8% (74)
Not Applicable	0% (3)

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	100% (1)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	41% (9)
Disagree	27% (6)
Neutral	5% (1)
Agree	18% (4)
Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	39% (7)
Disagree	33% (6)
Neutral	17% (3)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	11% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	29% (7)
Disagree	54% (13)
Neutral	13% (3)
Agree	4% (1)
Strongly Agree	0% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	52% (12)
Disagree	35% (8)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	4% (1)
Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	36% (9)
Disagree	28% (7)
Neutral	4% (1)
Agree	20% (5)
Strongly Agree	12% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	30% (9)
Disagree	53% (16)
Neutral	3% (1)
Agree	7% (2)
Strongly Agree	3% (1)
Not Applicable	3% (1)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	42% (13)
Disagree	32% (10)
Neutral	3% (1)
Agree	13% (4)
Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	3% (1)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	48% (10)
Disagree	29% (6)
Neutral	10% (2)
Agree	10% (2)
Strongly Agree	5% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	39% (12)
Disagree	39% (12)
Neutral	10% (3)
Agree	3% (1)
Strongly Agree	10% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	45% (10)
Disagree	27% (6)
Neutral	5% (1)
Agree	14% (3)
Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	100% (1)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A		Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	39% (354)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	32% (293)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	7% (65)
Agree	100% (1)	Agree	13% (116)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	8% (74)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (3)

Breakdowns for: I am comfortable with the current volume (bulk) of new houses being built in Needham

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	26% (30)	Strongly Disagree	37% (50)
Disagree	25% (29)	Disagree	35% (47)
Neutral	16% (18)	Neutral	16% (22) 🦜
Agree	19% (22)	Agree	10% (13)
Strongly Agree	13% (15)	Strongly Agree	3% (4)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	0% (0)
Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	28% (254)		
Disagree	29% (266)		
Neutral	15% (135)		
Agree	16% (147)		
Strongly Agree	11% (101)		
Not Applicable	0% (2)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34			35-44		
Strongly Disagree		33% (1)	Strongly Disagree		9% (3)
Disagree		67% (2)	Disagree		36% (12)
Neutral		0% (0)	Neutral		21% (7)
Agree		0% (0)	Agree		24% (8)
Strongly Agree		0% (0)	Strongly Agree		9% (3)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
45-54			55-64		
Strongly Disagree		30% (12)	Strongly Disagree		41% (24)
Disagree		28% (11)	Disagree		24% (14)
Neutral		10% (4)	Neutral		10% (6)
Agree		18% (7)	Agree		16% (9)
Strongly Agree		15% (6)	Strongly Agree		9% 🦜
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
65-74			75 years or older		
Strongly Disagree		32% (24)	Strongly Disagree		39% (16)
Disagree		29% (22)	Disagree		37% (15)
Neutral		23% (17)	Neutral		15% (6)
Agree		9% (7)	Agree		10% (4)
Strongly Agree		7% (5)	Strongly Agree		0% (0)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	28% (254)
Disagree	29% (266)
Neutral	15% (135)
Agree	16% (147)
Strongly Agree	11% (101)
Not Applicable	0% (2)

Precinct

The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	100% (1)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	32% (7)
Disagree	27% (6)
Neutral	5% (1)
Agree	18% (4) 🦉
Strongly Agree	18% (4)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	39% (7)
Disagree	28% (5)
Neutral	17% (3)
Agree	6% (1)
Strongly Agree	11% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	25% (6)
Disagree	33% (8)
Neutral	21% (5)
Agree	13% (3)
Strongly Agree	8% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	39% (9)
Disagree	22% (5)
Neutral	22% (5)
Agree	9% (2)
Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	12% (3)
Disagree	32% (8)
Neutral	32% (8)
Agree	16% (4)
Strongly Agree	8% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	37% (11)
Disagree	30% (9)
Neutral	7% (2)
Agree	17% (5)
Strongly Agree	10% (3)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	29% (9)
Disagree	35% (11)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	19% (6)
Strongly Agree	3% 🦜
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	29% (6)
Disagree	33% (7)
Neutral	24% (5)
Agree	14% (3)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	42% (13)
Disagree	39% (12)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	3% (1)
Strongly Agree	3% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	41% (9)
Disagree	18% (4)
Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	18% (4)
Strongly Agree	9% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	100% (1)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	100% (1)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	28% (254)
Disagree	29% (266)
Neutral	15% (135)
Agree	16% (147)
Strongly Agree	11% (10🦜)
Not Applicable	0% (2)

Breakdowns for: My neighborhood in Needham has changed negatively over the last 10 years

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	21% (24)	Strongly Disagree	6% (8)
Disagree	27% (31)	Disagree	24% (33)
Neutral	13% (15)	Neutral	20% (27)
Agree	21% (24)	Agree	26% (36)
Strongly Agree	16% (18)	Strongly Agree	19% (26)
Not Applicable	2% (2)	Not Applicable	4% (6)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree	18% (161)
Disagree	18% (162)
Neutral	20% (184)
Agree	22% (201)
Strongly Agree	18% (163)
Not Applicable	4% (34)

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	15% (5)
Disagree	33% (1)	Disagree	30% (10)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	15% (5)
Agree	33% (1)	Agree	18% (6) 🦉
Strongly Agree	33% (1)	Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	15% (5)
45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	23% (9)	Strongly Disagree	17% (10)
Disagree	40% (16)	Disagree	17% (10)
Neutral	8% (3)	Neutral	14% (8)
Agree	15% (6)	Agree	24% (14)
Strongly Agree	13% (5)	Strongly Agree	26% (15)
Not Applicable	3% (1)	Not Applicable	2% (1)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	7% (5)	Strongly Disagree	7% (3)
Disagree	27% (20)	Disagree	17% (7)
Neutral	23% (17)	Neutral	22% (9)
Agree	24% (18)	Agree	37% (15)
Strongly Agree	20% (15)	Strongly Agree	15% (6)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	2% (1)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	18% (161)		
Disagree	18% (162)		
Neutral	20% (184)		
Agree	22% (201)		
Strongly Agree	18% (163)		
Not Applicable	4% (34)		

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2		NEEDHAM A	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	9% (2)
Disagree	100% (1)	Disagree	27% (6)
Neutral	0% (0)	Neutral	14% (3)
Agree	0% (0)	Agree	23% (5)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	23% (5)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	5% (1)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	6% (1)
Disagree	39% (7)
Neutral	17% (3)
Agree	17% (3)
Strongly Agree	22% (4)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	13% (3)
Disagree	29% (7)
Neutral	13% (3)
Agree	29% (7)
Strongly Agree	13% (3)
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	9% (2)
Disagree	9% (2)
Neutral	26% (6)
Agree	17% (4)
Strongly Agree	35% (8)
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	16% (4)
Disagree	32% (8)
Neutral	16% (4)
Agree	16% (4)
Strongly Agree	16% 🦜
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	17% (5)
Disagree	17% (5)
Neutral	27% (8)
Agree	20% (6)
Strongly Agree	20% (6)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	19% (6)
Disagree	19% (6)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	32% (10)
Strongly Agree	6% (2)
Not Applicable	10% (3)

NEEDHAM H			NEEDHAM I		
Strongly Disagree		14% (3)	Strongly Disagree		3% (1)
Disagree		33% (7)	Disagree		29% (9)
Neutral		19% (4)	Neutral		3% (1)
Agree		14% (3)	Agree		42% (13)
Strongly Agree		19% (4)	Strongly Agree		23% (7)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
NEEDHAM J			NEWTON 8-1		
Strongly Disagree		23% (5)	Strongly Disagree		0% (0)
Disagree		23% (5)	Disagree		0% (0)
Neutral		27% (6)	Neutral		0% (0)
Agree		18% (4)	Agree		100% (1)
Strongly Agree		5% (1)	Strongly Agree		0% 🦉
Not Applicable		5% (1)	Not Applicable		0% (0)
WENHAM 1A			Unknown		
Strongly Disagree		0% (0)	Strongly Disagree		18% (161)
Disagree		100% (1)	Disagree		18% (162)
Neutral		0% (0)	Neutral		20% (184)
Agree		0% (0)	Agree		22% (201)
Strongly Agree		0% (0)	Strongly Agree		18% (163)
Not Applicable		0% (0)	Not Applicable		4% (34)

Breakdowns for: I am concerned that my house in Needham will be torn down and replaced after I sell it

Gender

Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.

Man		Woman	
Strongly Disagree	23% (26)	Strongly Disagree	9% (12)
Disagree	14% (16)	Disagree	18% (25)
Neutral	18% (21)	Neutral	14% (19)
Agree	15% (17)	Agree	16% (22)
Strongly Agree	27% (31)	Strongly Agree	37% (50)
Not Applicable	3% (3)	Not Applicable	6% (8)

Unknown			
Strongly Disagree	17% (156)		
Disagree	17% (158)		
Neutral	19% (175)		
Agree	15% (139)		
Strongly Agree	25% (228)		
Not Applicable	5% (49)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Strongly Disagree	0% (0)	Strongly Disagree	24% (8)
Disagree	0% (0)	Disagree	15% (5)
Neutral	33% (1)	Neutral	24% (8)
Agree	67% (2)	Agree	12% (4)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)	Strongly Agree	21% (7)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	Not Applicable	3% (1)

45-54		55-64	
Strongly Disagree	33% (13)	Strongly Disagree	16% (9)
Disagree	23% (9)	Disagree	21% (12)
Neutral	10% (4)	Neutral	16% (9)
Agree	15% (6)	Agree	10% (6)
Strongly Agree	18% (7)	Strongly Agree	38% (22)
Not Applicable	3% (1)	Not Applicable	0% (0)

65-74		75 years or older	
Strongly Disagree	9% (7)	Strongly Disagree	2% (1)
Disagree	16% (12)	Disagree	7% (3)
Neutral	17% (13)	Neutral	12% (5)
Agree	17% (13)	Agree	20% (8)
Strongly Agree	32% (24)	Strongly Agree	51% (20👉🏻)
Not Applicable	8% (6)	Not Applicable	7% (3)

Unknown	
Strongly Disagree	17% (156)
Disagree	17% (158)
Neutral	19% (175)
Agree	15% (139)
Strongly Agree	25% (228)
Not Applicable	5% (49)

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	100% (1)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	0% (0)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Strongly Disagree	23% (5)
Disagree	9% (2)
Neutral	9% (2)
Agree	14% (3)
Strongly Agree	45% (10)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Strongly Disagree	6% (1)
Disagree	22% (4)
Neutral	17% (3)
Agree	17% (3)
Strongly Agree	39% (7)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Strongly Disagree	13% (3)
Disagree	13% (3)
Neutral	21% (5)
Agree	17% (4)
Strongly Agree	33% 🦜
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM D

Strongly Disagree	13% (3)
Disagree	9% (2)
Neutral	26% (6)
Agree	13% (3)
Strongly Agree	35% (8)
Not Applicable	4% (1)

NEEDHAM E

Strongly Disagree	12% (3)
Disagree	24% (6)
Neutral	8% (2)
Agree	16% (4)
Strongly Agree	32% (8)
Not Applicable	8% (2)

NEEDHAM F

Strongly Disagree	20% (6)
Disagree	7% (2)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	20% (6)
Strongly Agree	33% (10)
Not Applicable	7% (2)

NEEDHAM G

Strongly Disagree	23% (7)
Disagree	19% (6)
Neutral	6% (2)
Agree	10% (3)
Strongly Agree	35% (11)
Not Applicable	6% (2)

NEEDHAM H

Strongly Disagree	29% (6)
Disagree	19% (4)
Neutral	33% (7)
Agree	10% (2)
Strongly Agree	10% (2)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Strongly Disagree	10% (3)
Disagree	13% (4)
Neutral	13% (4)
Agree	26% (8)
Strongly Agree	39% (10) 🦉
Not Applicable	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Strongly Disagree	5% (1)
Disagree	32% (7)
Neutral	18% (4)
Agree	14% (3)
Strongly Agree	18% (4)
Not Applicable	14% (3)

NEWTON 8-1

Strongly Disagree	0% (0)
Disagree	0% (0)
Neutral	0% (0)
Agree	0% (0)
Strongly Agree	100% (1)
Not Applicable	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

Strongly Disagree

0% (0)

Unknown

Strongly Disagree

17% (156)

Disagree

100% (1)

Disagree

17% (158)

Neutral

0% (0)

Neutral

19% (175)

Agree

0% (0)

Agree

15% (139)

Strongly Agree

0% (0)

Strongly Agree

25% (228)

Not Applicable

0% (0)

Not Applicable

5% (49)



Please indicate whether you currently rent or own your own home in Needham

Overview

I own my own home in Needham	96% (1,108)
I rent a home in Needham	2% (24)
Other	2% (23)

not a resident or business in Needham

Resident

I own my own townhouse.

Rent apartment

I'm a builder in Needham. Those that I purchase from are very appreciative of the price they are getting.

Grew up here 25 years

Live with aging parent

I live with property owners.

Apartment living

I grew up in Needham and now I rent

Family trust

Live with parents

Live with family



I am a college student living at my parents' home in Needham

Parents own home

just moved out of town

Job provides my housing

I own a condo, but owned a home in Needham for 35 years,

I currently own a condo

my mother owns the house

I still live with my parents because I cannot afford to move out.

Breakdowns

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
I own my own home in Needham	98% (112)	I own my own home in Needham	96% (130)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)	I rent a home in Needham	3% (4)
Other	2% (2)	Other	1% (2)

Unknown

I own my own home in Needham	96% (866)		
I rent a home in Needham	2% (20)		
Other	2% (19)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
I own my own home in Needham	100% (3)	I own my own home in Needham	97% (32)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)	I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)	Other	3% (1)
45-54		55-64	
I own my own home in Needham	100% (40)	I own my own home in Needham	100% (58)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)	I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)	Other	0% (0)
65-74		75 years or older	
I own my own home in Needham	93% (70)	I own my own home in Needham	95% (39)
I rent a home in Needham	4% (3)	I rent a home in Needham	2% (1)
Other	3% (2)	Other	2% (1)

Unknown

I own my own home in Needham	96% (866)		
I rent a home in Needham	2% (20)		
Other	2% (19)		

Precinct

The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2		NEEDHAM A	
I own my own home in Needham	100% (1)	I own my own home in Needham	95% (21)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)	I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)	Other	5% (1)

NEEDHAM B

I own my own home in Needham	100% (18)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

I own my own home in Needham	100% (24)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

I own my own home in Needham	91% (21)
I rent a home in Needham	4% (1)
Other	4% (1)

NEEDHAM E

I own my own home in Needham	96% (24)
I rent a home in Needham	4% (1)
Other	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

I own my own home in Needham	97% (29)
I rent a home in Needham	3% (1)
Other	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

I own my own home in Needham	100% (31)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

I own my own home in Needham	100% (21)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

I own my own home in Needham	97% (30)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	3% (1)

NEEDHAM J

I own my own home in Needham	91% (20)
I rent a home in Needham	5% (1)
Other	5% (1)

NEWTON 8-1

I own my own home in Needham	100% (1)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

I own my own home in Needham	100% (1)
I rent a home in Needham	0% (0)
Other	0% (0)

Unknown

I own my own home in Needham	96% (866)
I rent a home in Needham	2% (20)
Other	2% (19)

How long have you lived in Needham?

Overview

0-2 years	3% (37)
2-5 years	9% (99)
5-10 years	15% (170)
10-20 years	21% (247)
more than 20 years	52% (602)

Breakdowns

Gender	
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.	
Man	Woman
0-2 years	0-2 years
1% (1)	1% (1)
2-5 years	2-5 years
7% (8)	6% (8)
5-10 years	5-10 years
11% (12)	16% (22) 🦜
10-20 years	10-20 years
14% (16)	18% (24)
more than 20 years	more than 20 years
68% (77)	60% (81)
Unknown	
0-2 years	4% (35)
2-5 years	9% (83)
5-10 years	15% (136)
10-20 years	23% (207)
more than 20 years	49% (444)

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
0-2 years	0% (0)	0-2 years	3% (1)
2-5 years	0% (0)	2-5 years	21% (7)
5-10 years	67% (2)	5-10 years	48% (16)
10-20 years	0% (0)	10-20 years	15% (5)
more than 20 years	33% (1)	more than 20 years	12% (4)

45-54		55-64	
0-2 years	0% (0)	0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	10% (4)	2-5 years	2% (1)
5-10 years	20% (8)	5-10 years	7% (4)
10-20 years	50% (20)	10-20 years	19% (11)
more than 20 years	20% (8)	more than 20 years	72% (42)

65-74		75 years or older	
0-2 years	0% (0)	0-2 years	2% (1)
2-5 years	4% (3)	2-5 years	2% (1)
5-10 years	4% (3)	5-10 years	2% (1)
10-20 years	5% (4)	10-20 years	0% (0)
more than 20 years	87% (65)	more than 20 years	93% (38)

Unknown	
0-2 years	4% (35)
2-5 years	9% (83)
5-10 years	15% (136)
10-20 years	23% (207)
more than 20 years	49% (444)

Precinct
 The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.



COHOES 1-2

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	0% (0)
5-10 years	0% (0)
10-20 years	100% (1)
more than 20 years	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	5% (1)
5-10 years	18% (4)
10-20 years	23% (5)
more than 20 years	55% (12)

NEEDHAM B

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	11% (2)
5-10 years	6% (1)
10-20 years	11% (2)
more than 20 years	72% (13)

NEEDHAM C

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	8% (2)
5-10 years	17% (4)
10-20 years	13% (3)
more than 20 years	63% (15)

NEEDHAM D

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	17% (4)
5-10 years	4% (1)
10-20 years	13% (3)
more than 20 years	65% (15)

NEEDHAM E

0-2 years	4% (1)
2-5 years	8% (2)
5-10 years	12% (3)
10-20 years	20% (5)
more than 20 years	56% (14)

NEEDHAM F

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	3% (1)
5-10 years	13% (4)
10-20 years	17% (5)
more than 20 years	67% (20)

NEEDHAM G

0-2 years	3% (1)
2-5 years	6% (2)
5-10 years	19% (6)
10-20 years	16% (5)
more than 20 years	55% (17)



NEEDHAM H

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	5% (1)
5-10 years	19% (4)
10-20 years	5% (1)
more than 20 years	71% (15)

NEEDHAM I

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	3% (1)
5-10 years	16% (5)
10-20 years	13% (4)
more than 20 years	68% (21)

NEEDHAM J

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	0% (0)
5-10 years	5% (1)
10-20 years	23% (5)
more than 20 years	73% (16)

NEWTON 8-1

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	0% (0)
5-10 years	0% (0)
10-20 years	100% (1)
more than 20 years	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

0-2 years	0% (0)
2-5 years	0% (0)
5-10 years	100% (1)
10-20 years	0% (0)
more than 20 years	0% (0)

Unknown

0-2 years	4% (35)
2-5 years	9% (83)
5-10 years	15% (136)
10-20 years	23% (207)
more than 20 years	49% (444)



In which category is your age?

Overview

18-24 years	0% (3)
25-34 years	2% (18)
35-44 years	18% (205)
45-54 years	25% (290)
55-64 years	23% (261)
65-74 years	22% (251)
75 years or older	10% (116)

Breakdowns

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
18-24 years	0% (0)	18-24 years	0% (0) 🦒
25-34 years	1% (1)	25-34 years	1% (2)
35-44 years	13% (15)	35-44 years	13% (17)
45-54 years	16% (18)	45-54 years	19% (26)
55-64 years	18% (21)	55-64 years	24% (33)
65-74 years	32% (36)	65-74 years	30% (41)
75 years or older	20% (23)	75 years or older	12% (16)

Unknown

18-24 years	0% (3)
25-34 years	2% (15)
35-44 years	19% (173)
45-54 years	27% (246)
55-64 years	23% (207)
65-74 years	19% (174)
75 years or older	9% (77)

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
18-24 years	0% (0)	18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	100% (3)	25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	0% (0)	35-44 years	97% (32) 🦜
45-54 years	0% (0)	45-54 years	3% (1)
55-64 years	0% (0)	55-64 years	0% (0)
65-74 years	0% (0)	65-74 years	0% (0)
75 years or older	0% (0)	75 years or older	0% (0)
45-54		55-64	
18-24 years	0% (0)	18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)	25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	0% (0)	35-44 years	0% (0)
45-54 years	100% (40)	45-54 years	4% (2)
55-64 years	0% (0)	55-64 years	95% (54)
65-74 years	0% (0)	65-74 years	2% (1)
75 years or older	0% (0)	75 years or older	0% (0)

65-74		75 years or older	
18-24 years	0% (0)	18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)	25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	0% (0)	35-44 years	0% (0)
45-54 years	1% (1)	45-54 years	0% (0)
55-64 years	0% (0)	55-64 years	0% (0)
65-74 years	99% (74)	65-74 years	5% (2)
75 years or older	0% (0)	75 years or older	95% (39)

Unknown

18-24 years	0% (3)		
25-34 years	2% (15)		
35-44 years	19% (173)		
45-54 years	27% (246)		🦜
55-64 years	23% (207)		
65-74 years	19% (174)		
75 years or older	9% (77)		

Precinct

The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

COHOES 1-2		NEEDHAM A	
18-24 years	0% (0)	18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)	25-34 years	5% (1)
35-44 years	100% (1)	35-44 years	23% (5)
45-54 years	0% (0)	45-54 years	27% (6)
55-64 years	0% (0)	55-64 years	14% (3)
65-74 years	0% (0)	65-74 years	14% (3)
75 years or older	0% (0)	75 years or older	18% (4)

NEEDHAM B

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	17% (3)
45-54 years	6% (1)
55-64 years	50% (9)
65-74 years	17% (3)
75 years or older	11% (2)

NEEDHAM C

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	9% (2)
45-54 years	26% (6)
55-64 years	13% (3)
65-74 years	35% (8)
75 years or older	17% (4)

NEEDHAM D

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	4% (1)
45-54 years	17% (4)
55-64 years	13% (3)
65-74 years	57% (13)
75 years or older	9% (2)

NEEDHAM E

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	4% (1)
35-44 years	16% (4)
45-54 years	16% 🦜
55-64 years	24% (6)
65-74 years	20% (5)
75 years or older	20% (5)

NEEDHAM F

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	7% (2)
45-54 years	10% (3)
55-64 years	23% (7)
65-74 years	40% (12)
75 years or older	20% (6)

NEEDHAM G

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	19% (6)
45-54 years	19% (6)
55-64 years	19% (6)
65-74 years	32% (10)
75 years or older	10% (3)

NEEDHAM H

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	5% (1)
35-44 years	5% (1)
45-54 years	19% (4)
55-64 years	24% (5)
65-74 years	43% (9)
75 years or older	5% (1)

NEEDHAM I

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	16% (5)
45-54 years	16% (5)
55-64 years	16% (5)
65-74 years	26% (8)
75 years or older	26% (8)

NEEDHAM J

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	9% (2)
45-54 years	18% (4)
55-64 years	27% (6)
65-74 years	27% (6)
75 years or older	18% (4)

NEWTON 8-1

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	0% (0)
45-54 years	0% 🦜
55-64 years	100% (1)
65-74 years	0% (0)
75 years or older	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

18-24 years	0% (0)
25-34 years	0% (0)
35-44 years	0% (0)
45-54 years	100% (1)
55-64 years	0% (0)
65-74 years	0% (0)
75 years or older	0% (0)

Unknown

18-24 years	0% (3)
25-34 years	2% (15)
35-44 years	19% (173)
45-54 years	27% (246)
55-64 years	23% (207)
65-74 years	19% (174)
75 years or older	9% (77)

In which Needham Public Schools district do you reside?

Overview

Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (240)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	19% (218)
Mitchell Elementary School	18% (213)
Eliot Elementary School	11% (124)
Newman Elementary School	31% (356)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (4)

Breakdowns

Gender			
Responses broken down by the gender of the respondent. Currently, most public data only supports man, woman, and unknown.			
Man		Woman	
Broadmeadow Elementary School	19% (22)	Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (29)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	25% (28)	Sunita Williams Elementary School	16% (22) 
Mitchell Elementary School	18% (21)	Mitchell Elementary School	20% (27)
Eliot Elementary School	12% (14)	Eliot Elementary School	12% (16)
Newman Elementary School	25% (29)	Newman Elementary School	31% (42)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)	I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)
Unknown			
Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (189)		
Sunita Williams Elementary School	19% (168)		
Mitchell Elementary School	18% (165)		
Eliot Elementary School	10% (94)		
Newman Elementary School	31% (285)		
I am not a Needham resident	0% (4)		

Age Range

Responses broken down by age of the respondent. Respondents for whom age are unknown are not included in these breakdowns.

25-34		35-44	
Broadmeadow Elementary School	33% (1)	Broadmeadow Elementary School	18% (6)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)	Sunita Williams Elementary School	21% (7)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)	Mitchell Elementary School	18% (6)
Eliot Elementary School	33% (1)	Eliot Elementary School	18% (6)
Newman Elementary School	33% (1)	Newman Elementary School	24% (8)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)	I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)
45-54		55-64	
Broadmeadow Elementary School	28% (11)	Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (12)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	10% (4)	Sunita Williams Elementary School	26% (15)
Mitchell Elementary School	20% (8)	Mitchell Elementary School	16% (9)
Eliot Elementary School	18% (7)	Eliot Elementary School	12% (7)
Newman Elementary School	25% (10)	Newman Elementary School	26% (1🦜)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)	I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)
65-74		75 years or older	
Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (16)	Broadmeadow Elementary School	12% (5)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	16% (12)	Sunita Williams Elementary School	29% (12)
Mitchell Elementary School	21% (16)	Mitchell Elementary School	22% (9)
Eliot Elementary School	8% (6)	Eliot Elementary School	7% (3)
Newman Elementary School	33% (25)	Newman Elementary School	29% (12)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)	I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

Unknown

Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (189)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	19% (168)
Mitchell Elementary School	18% (165)
Eliot Elementary School	10% (94)
Newman Elementary School	31% (285)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (4)

Precinct

The geographic area in which the respondent lives. This is determined by the location of the reported household.

COHOES 1-2

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)
Mitchell Elementary School	100% (1)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	0% (0)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM A

Broadmeadow Elementary School	5% (1)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)
Mitchell Elementary School	5% (1)
Eliot Elementary School	91% (28) 🦉
Newman Elementary School	0% (0)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM B

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	78% (14)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	22% (4)
Newman Elementary School	0% (0)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM C

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	4% (1)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	96% (23)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM D

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	100% (23)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM F

Broadmeadow Elementary School	3% (1)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	80% (24)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	17% (5)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM H

Broadmeadow Elementary School	100% (21)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	0% (0)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM E

Broadmeadow Elementary School	28% (7)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	4% (1)
Mitchell Elementary School	8% (2)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	60% (15)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM G

Broadmeadow Elementary School	45% (14)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	6% (2)
Mitchell Elementary School	39% (12)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	10% 🦜
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM I

Broadmeadow Elementary School	23% (7)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	23% (7)
Mitchell Elementary School	55% (17)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	0% (0)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEEDHAM J

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	5% (1)
Mitchell Elementary School	68% (15)
Eliot Elementary School	23% (5)
Newman Elementary School	5% (1)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

NEWTON 8-1

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	0% (0)
Newman Elementary School	100% (1)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

WENHAM 1A

Broadmeadow Elementary School	0% (0)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	0% (0)
Mitchell Elementary School	0% (0)
Eliot Elementary School	100% (1)
Newman Elementary School	0% (0)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (0)

Unknown

Broadmeadow Elementary School	21% (189)
Sunita Williams Elementary School	19% (168)
Mitchell Elementary School	18% (165)
Eliot Elementary School	10% (94)
Newman Elementary School	31% (28🦉)
I am not a Needham resident	0% (4)



Confirmation of Metrics - LHRSC

JUNE 2025

Dimensional regulations for consideration

- **Floor Area Ratio** – change definition, reduce
- **Garage** – include in FAR calculation
- **Setbacks** – front setback (exception rule) for unique neighborhood character if greater than 20'
- **Height limit** – desire for lower height
- **Lot coverage** – likely need to reduce
- **Design rules** – possible design changes, but perhaps not within scope
- **Lot size** – N/A
- **Tree by-law** – N/A (other committee)
- **Stormwater/drainage regulation** – N/A (other committee)

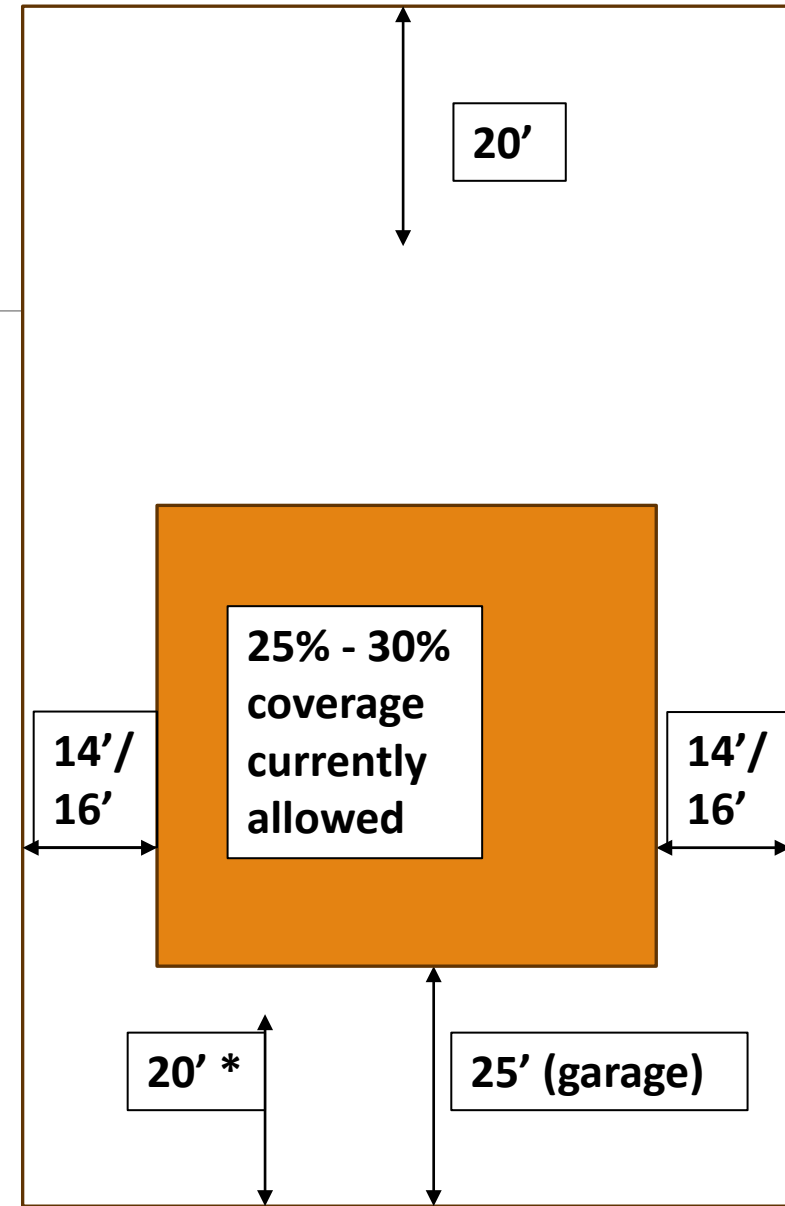
4.2.3 Table of Regulations for Rural Residence-Conservation, Single Residence A, Single Residence B, and General Residence Districts, for Buildings and Structures Created Through New Construction on any Lot

Except as otherwise provided in Section 4.2.4 for public, semi-public and institutional uses, no building or structure created through New Construction shall be constructed, altered, or relocated on any lot except in conformance with these regulations:

District	Min. Lot Area (sf)	Min. Frontage (ft)	Front Setback (ft)	Side Setback (ft)	Rear Setback (ft)	Max. Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.)	Max. % Lot Coverage	Max. Stories	Max. Height (ft)
Rural Residence Conservation	43,560	150	50	25	25	NR	15%	2-1/2	35
Single Residence A	43,560	150	30	25	15	NR	NR	2-1/2	35
Single Residence B	10,000	80	20 (h) (i)	14 (a) (j)	20	.36-.38 (g)	25%-30% (b)	2-1/2	35 (e) (f)
General Residence	10,000	80	20 (h) (i)	14 (a) (j)	20	NR	30%-35% (c)	2-1/2	35 (e) (f)

Setbacks

- **Side setbacks:** Some interest; potentially tie side setbacks to lot frontage for new construction
- **Back setbacks:** desire for bigger backyards, but no specific ideas
- **Front setbacks:** * propose an exception rule to support unique neighborhood blocks in town with a consistent setback character when it is greater than the 20' requirement.
- *examples: Fair Oaks Park, Webster, Warren,*
- Note: 12'/14' side yard setback for non-conforming lots.



Height limit

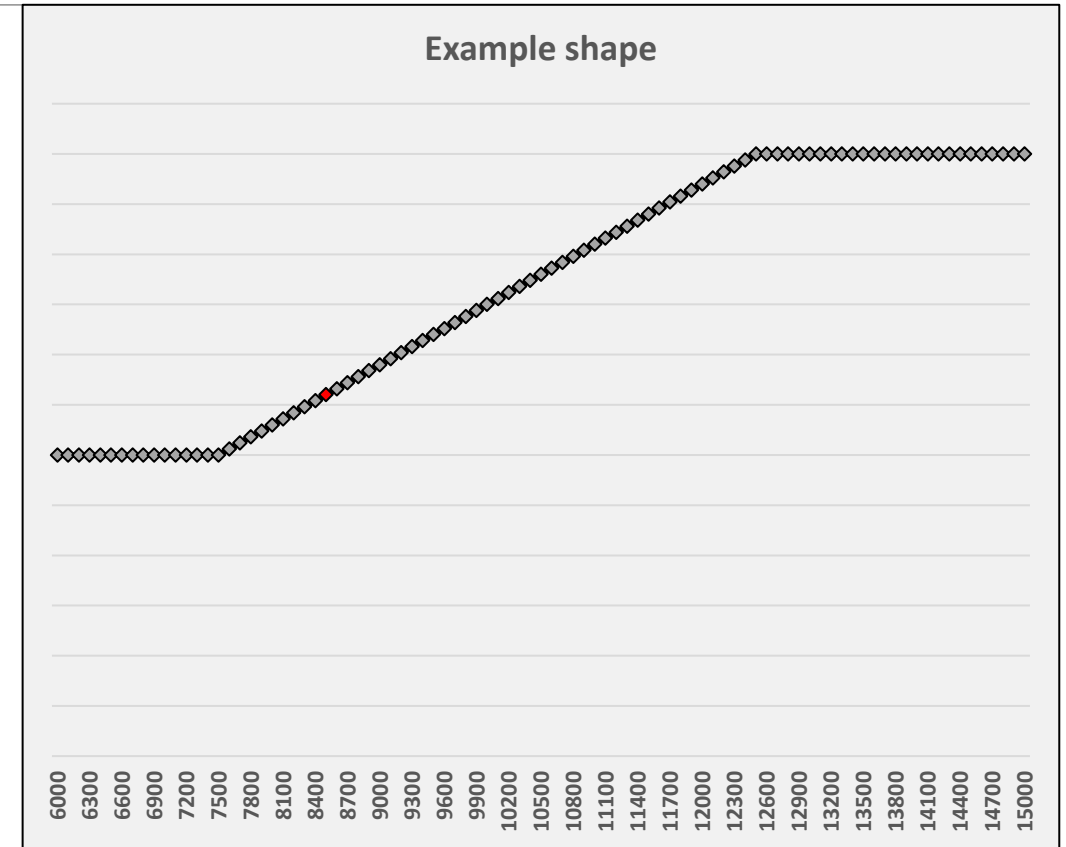
- **Height limit:** Clear interest in reducing height limit from 35' (current limit).
 - Reduction to 33' would have little functional impact on house. To 32'/31' begins to create some functional/design changes. Below that begins to prevent habitable third floor spaces.
- **Designs:** Interest in fixing definition of half story to ensure that sides have 2-story limit and/or sloping roofs. Flat roof third floors are limited to no more than half the size of second floor. (see sample house of undesirable design).
 - Some interest in controlling gables/dormers to reduce size perception of house
- **Lot grading height changing/retaining walls:** interest in more regulation of manipulation of finished grade height to create taller house.
 - However, can be addressed apart from dimensional regulations.

Lot coverage

- Some interest in reducing lot coverage given review of smaller lots. The coverage can be coordinated with analysis of a reduction in the FAR requirements. All the examples were close to the current coverage limits: for lots containing < 5,500 sf – 30%; <6,000 sf – 29%; <6,500 sf – 28%; <7,000 sf – 27%; <7,500 sf – 26%; for lots containing at least 7,500 sf – 25%.
- Could be interest in reducing limits, particularly for the smaller lots, but will need to coordinate with houses on medium and larger lots. May also consider reducing limits for lots as they increase above 7,500 up to lots above 10K, 15K and 20K. May be a formula that works in sliding scale and is based on the lot size.
- Options on several proposed limits to be tested in the modeling of reduction studies by a consultant to the committee.

Floor Area Ratio

- Apparent agreement to count 3rd floor (attic) and garage
- Basement could be counted if it triggers a “greater than 25% exposed” requirement (to be studied).
- Divided on whether to count basement. Could be a moot point regardless as “shape” of FAR limit is likely to be redone.
- Question: best way to count FAR?
 - Interior space of 5’ or greater is done in several towns. Confirmed to be able to achieve goal.
 - Strong consideration to use Wellesley’s definition (TLAG) which includes 1, 2, 3 and garage (on first floor)
- The main question: where is the limit going to be?
- Example new curve. Includes minimum allowance at low end of lots and maximum allowance at higher end.
- More parity between smaller and larger lots.



Example showing sliding scale: house sizes related to lot sizes

Summary of LHR Considerations

Proposal

- 3rd floor space with interior ceiling height of 5' or greater and garages count towards FAR
- FAR limits changed to reduce the bulk of homes in comparison to what is allowed currently
- FAR limits changed using a measuring method that is graduated based on the actual size of the lot (*house sizes to be more appropriately scaled to the size of the lot*)
- Lot coverage limit reduced (*this may also be a formula to support house coverage more appropriately scaled to the size of the lot*)
- Height limit reduced – Adjust maximum ridge height and refine definition of “half story” for sloping and flat roof house designs, particularly along the side elevations abutting neighbors
- Setbacks – consider adding an exception rule: to support unique neighborhood blocks in town with a consistent setback character when it is greater than the 20' requirement.

Examples: Fair Oaks Park, Webster, Warren

Ideas from Wellesley – *a possible Special Permit process?*

- The current approach is to have firm as-of-right limits for all lots. Wellesley introduces another option – soft limits coupled with more permissive limits under a review process.
 - Working group did not favor the “tiered” approach of Wellesley’s limits - dimensional regulations like FAR should be tied to square footage of lot (similar concept to Concord).
- Wellesley offers a successful example that controlled numbers and sizes of large homes on similar 10K and 15K lot districts – similarities include lot sizes, strong property values, and community support for a LHR process.
- A Wellesley-like approach using a Large House Review process is time intensive, requiring hiring of additional staff and/or establishment of an appointed/elected entity to evaluate new construction.
- A process for evaluation would have to be created. Wellesley offers a blueprint, but there has not yet been a discussion on whether that was seen as desirable for Needham.
 - Could Needham investigate the use of a Special Permit process for homeowners/builders who want to go beyond the tightened house size criteria of an amended LHR bylaw. Having an “out” option is a positive.
 - The downside is the increased review process complexity and need for additional staff and/or volunteers.

Research on recent construction

Large House Study - FAR Rules/Tests - Summary
Houses <10,000 SF (Non-Conforming Lots)
6/10/2025

Sample	Lot Size SF	Lot Cov. Limit %	Lot Area Actual %	Livable Area		Calculated Floor Area Ratio		Max Livable Floor Area (See Note 1) Similar to MLS Listing	
				As Designed N.I. Garage	FAR Limit	Floor 1,2	Floor 1,2,3,+G1	Based On FAR Floor 1,2,3,+G1	Based On Lot Coverage Limit
House 1	7,000	26%	23.4%	5,458	38%	46.0%	62.4%	3,750	6,064
House 2	7,000	26%	24.1%	4,004	38%	37.9%	55.3%	3,306	4,320
House 3	7,274	26%	22.4%	3,759	38%	37.9%	37.9%	3,767	4,364
House 4	7,353	26%	25.0%	4,245	38%	35.1%	49.2%	3,992	4,415
House 5	7,828	25%	24.8%	5,276	38%	38.0%	57.0%	4,219	5,319
House 6	8,159	25%	22.3%	4,857	38%	37.9%	55.5%	3,895	5,446
House 7	8,171	25%	21.7%	4,722	38%	37.4%	50.6%	4,095	5,434
House 8	8,250	25%	22.1%	4,962	38%	37.7%	54.5%	4,135	5,614
House 9	9,191	25%	24.4%	5,858	38%	37.6%	56.0%	4,776	6,004
House 10	9,801	25%	23.1%	6,417	38%	37.7%	58.1%	4,914	6,945
House 11	9,953	25%	20.1%	5,349	38%	31.1%	46.3%	5,063	6,655
House 12	7,932	25%	22.2%	4,023	38%	38.7%	44.6%	3,968	4,535
House 13	8,300	25%	23.1%	5,360	38%	38.4%	55.3%	4,392	5,802
House 14	7,000	25%	24.9%	5,081	38%	40.3%	68.1%	3,466	5,101
House 15	8,844	25%	21.3%	4,713	38%	33.8%	44.7%	4,598	5,522
				23.0%	4,939 Ave			4,156	5,436

Bylaw Requirements		Note 1: Includes livable area on ALL floors, not including garage (typ of R.E. Listing)	To change the values regarding Bylaws, adjust values in main Summary sheet
X = FAR Changeover	12,000		
FAR for lot < X	38%		
FAR for lot >= X	36%		
Lot Coverage Limit	25%	SRB Lot Coverage Limit = 25% when lot > 7,500 SF,	
	25%	26% between 7000-7499 SF	
= Adjustable for Testing alternate values			

Research on recent construction

Large House Study - FAR Rules/Tests - Summary
Houses >10,000 SF (Conforming Lots)
6/10/2025

Sample	Lot Size SF	Lot Area Limit %	Lot Area Actual %	Livable Area	FAR Limit	Calculated Floor Area Ratio		Max Livable Floor Area (See Note 1) Similar to MLS Listing	
				As Designed N.I. Garage		Floor 1,2	Floor 1,2,3,+G1	Based On FAR Floor 1,2,3,+G1	Based On Lot Coverage Limit
House 1	10,001	25%	24.1%	6,765	38%	37.9%	58.2%	5,270	7,018
House 2	10,001	25%	23.5%	6,525	38%	37.8%	56.2%	5,200	6,941
House 3	10,001	25%	25.7%	6,709	38%	40.1%	54.9%	5,548	6,532
House 4	10,061	25%	24.7%	5,851	38%	37.5%	51.5%	5,048	5,922
House 5	10,045	25%	24.4%	4,982	38%	31.9%	40.1%	5,267	5,105
House 6	10,149	25%	22.7%	6,092	38%	35.8%	49.0%	5,566	6,709
House 7	10,568	25%	24.3%	6,351	38%	37.9%	51.9%	5,486	6,534
House 8	10,785	25%	24.5%	6,588	38%	37.9%	50.6%	5,700	6,722
House 9	10,877	25%	22.3%	6,521	38%	36.8%	46.4%	6,119	7,311
House 10	11,761	25%	22.6%	6,687	38%	35.3%	49.2%	5,981	7,397
House 11	12,092	25%	21.7%	6,547	36%	35.8%	47.3%	5,748	7,543
House 12	12,615	25%	16.2%	5,146	36%	26.9%	35.1%	5,776	7,941
House 13	12,932	25%	19.9%	5,798	36%	30.9%	39.0%	5,990	7,284
House 14	14,326	25%	19.6%	7,268	36%	32.8%	37.7%	7,021	9,270
House 15	14,314	25%	26.0%	7,225	36%	35.1%	44.9%	6,548	6,947
House 16	16,406	25%	22.8%	8,936	36%	34.7%	38.0%	9,145	9,798
House 17	32,679	25%	14.0%	10,117	36%	20.8%	25.6%	14,462	18,066
				22.3%	6.712 Ave			6.463	7.826

Bylaw Requirements

X = FAR Changeover
 FAR for lot < X
 FAR for lot >= X
 Lot Coverage Limit

12,000
 38%
 36%
 25%
 25%

Note 1: Includes livable area on **ALL** floors, not including garage (typ of R.E. Listing)
 To change the values regarding Bylaws, adjust values in main Summary sheet
 SRB Lot Coverage Limit = 25% when lot > 7,500 SF,
 26% between 7000-7499 SF

= Adjustable for Testing alternate values

Real Estate Research Goals

We are performing a value analysis to understand how potential changes in the zoning code affect anticipated selling prices of existing smaller homes. This includes a review of smaller homes that were sold to a developer and torn down as well as smaller homes sold to homeowners who have remained in the current structure. The intent is to understand the impact to prospective sellers if developers are restricted on the proposed house size and what magnitude, if any, that changes the current market value of the house.

Schedule and next steps

- **June 2025** – first community meeting primarily for listening and collecting concerns
- **Summer 2025** – LHRSC continues to meet to research Needham and other town data and work with consultant teams on modeling house size reduction options and real estate property sales value impacts
- **September 2025** – second community meeting to present research results, consultant analyses and collect feedback
- **Fall 2025** – Integrate feedback for final proposals
- **November 2025** – third community meeting to present final LHR proposal
- **November/December 2025** – hand-off to Planning Board



TOWN OF NEEDHAM
Planning and Community Development
500 Dedham Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492

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3D Concept House Modeling

INFORMATION FOR RESPONDERS

Purpose

The Town of Needham is seeking professional architectural and design consulting services to assist the Town in preparing 3D eye-level model views of select single-family houses for the Town's Large House Review Study Committee.

Submission Process

Responses are due by June 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. The response must be emailed to Pcentral@needhamma.gov by the deadline. The response must be complete, and all the required documents and information provided. The successful quoter must execute the Town's contract electronically. The Town will forward the contract to be executed via DocuSign

General Contract Terms

The successful respondent must sign the Town's Short Form Agreement (hereinafter called the Contract) and satisfy the insurance requirements which are disclosed in this request for quote package before any goods or services are provided. Respondents are advised to have their legal counsel review the specimen contract prior to submitting a quote. The specimen contract has been attached for your reference.

The Town may terminate the contract at any time upon written notice for any reason including its own convenience or for cause, including but not limited to, failure to perform the work required under the contract, failure to document satisfactorily to the Town amounts being charged, failure to have any necessary local, State or Federal licenses and/or permits, failure to pay any and all required taxes, failure to comply with any local, State or Federal regulations pertaining to services to be provided, failure to promptly correct any performance or lack of performance which conflicts with the Town's use, and failure for satisfactory behavior of all staff and management. In the case of a termination for cause, the Town shall give the Contractor written notice as provided in the contract.

Quantities

Unless otherwise stated, the quantities set forth herein are estimates only. Any quantities indicated on the Price Form or elsewhere in the request for quote package are estimates only and are given solely as a basis for the comparison of quotes. The Contractor shall have no claim for additional compensation, or refuse to do the work called for, or provide the requested items, by reason of the actual quantities involved being greater or lesser by any amount than those called for in the request for quotes.

Rule for Award

The contract will be awarded to the responsive and responsible respondent offering the lowest price. There will be only one contract awarded under this quote. The Town reserves the right to reject any and all quotes as determined to be in the best interests of the Town and to waive minor informalities.

The Town herein declares its express purpose not to award the contract to any respondent unable to furnish evidence, satisfactory to the Town, that it has sufficient ability, experience, and capital to execute and complete the work in accordance with the contract.

The Town reserves a period up to thirty (30) calendar days following the submission deadline for quotes in which to evaluate and award the contract.

The Town will send the contract to be executed by the successful respondent via DocuSign to the individual identified by the respondent as the person to sign the contract on behalf of the respondent. The respondent will sign the contract and forward proof that the required insurances and bonds are in place. The Town will then counter sign the contracts and the respondent will be notified by DocuSign when the contract has been completed. The respondent should download and print the fully executed contract for future reference. Unless otherwise noted by the Town in writing, the terms and conditions contained therein are NOT negotiable.

Taxes

Purchases made by the Town are exempt from the payment of all Federal excise tax and the payment of Commonwealth of Massachusetts sales tax and any such taxes must not be included in the bid prices. If requested, the Town will provide the awarded respondent with a copy of the Certificate of Exemption.

Payment and Discount Terms

Payment terms for the Town of Needham are net 30 days. Indicate discounts, if any, for payments made within less than 30 days. The Prompt Payment Discount "Clock" begins at the date of receipt of the invoice, or the date of the receipt of the product and/or service, whichever occurs later.

The unit prices shall be the basis for payment for purchased items and/or services. Payment shall be based on the items or services purchased. Invoicing may be performed after delivery, work has been completed, or monthly, for items or services that have been fulfilled.

Invoices are to itemize charges. The Town will not be responsible for payment of any charges not itemized to the Town's satisfaction. Pre-payment is NOT allowed. Invoices must include the Town's purchase order number. The Purchase Order number may change with each fiscal year.

Payment is subject to appropriation, or the availability of other funds designated for the purchase.

Detailed Specifications

In response to concerns expressed at the May 2024 Annual Town Meeting as to the impact new or expanded single family homes are having on the character of the surrounding residential neighborhood, the Needham Planning Board appointed the Large House Review Study Committee to develop recommendations on how best to ensure that new residential construction in the Town's Single Residence B and General Residence Districts will complement existing buildings, settings and neighborhood character. The Committee is tasked with exploring how the updating and upgrading of residential structures in such neighborhoods can and should be done, while at the same time conserving the neighborhood's distinctive qualities as change occurs. As part of this work the Committee will be modeling three (3) sample house construction drawing sets (plan, section and elevation) to illustrate floor to floor height reductions, floor plan area reductions and roof/eave elevation adjustments.

The following is the Scope of Services for the Town of Needham 3D concept house modeling

architectural/design services project.

The Town of Needham seeks proposals from architecture and design consultant professionals experienced in 3D modeling to assist the Town in preparing 3D eye-level views of three Committee selected sample house construction drawing sets. Said sample house construction drawing sets are to be further modeled reflective of Committee identified parameters.

The scope of work will include, but not be limited to, the following:

Consultant will receive from client:

- Three (3) sample house construction drawing sets (plan, section, and elevation)
- Marked up drawings to illustrate the modifications to be made to the sample house models including:
 - floor to floor / height reduction,
 - floor plan area reduction and,
 - floor plan area reductions: #1, then #2, and then #3 (three area reductions each combined with the height reduction).
- Three (3) eye-level model views of original house for each of three sample houses
 - eye-level views are from the front corners and from head on
- Each reduction study is to combine both height and plan changes for the reduction #1 and again for reduction #2 and #3.
- One (1) set of new model views combining all three modifications to the original house
- Three (3) sets of eye-level model views of the combined reduction models for each of three sample houses; a total of three (3) modified model views per house
- A separate house modeling study will look at a non-gabled house design (NC house #7) to prepare options for roof design changes of modified single slope, flat roof, and pitched roof. Study includes original sloped roof houses, modified sloped roof setback, flat roof options, and pitched roof option (attic). Each of four (4) roof options should be shown in a side-by-side comparison with original house using the three views; front corners and head on.

Deliverables: Level of modeling detail should include plan, elevation and façade articulation elements including windows, doors, garage doors, chimneys, and projecting eaves, bay windows and porches. Models are to be white box, with no materials rendered in texture or color.

Presentation Format:

- Each combined reduction study model (3 per house x 3 houses) should be presented in three side-by-side comparison views with the original model; total of nine (9) model views compared to each of three (3) sample houses – (27) total side-by-side comparison views.
 - eye-level views are from the front corners and from head on
- For each reduction option (3 per house x 3 houses = 9 total), prepare a set of three exhibits putting the original and three options between two neighbors so the changes can be viewed “in context” – the neighbor houses can be the original house models for the other two sample houses.

All work must be completed by August 15, 2025.

Meetings

- The consultant shall be available to meet with staff and Large House Review Committee representatives two times over the course of the project.

Minimum Qualifications

- Demonstrable experience related to 3D modeling. Applicants must have a minimum of three years of experience in 3D modeling and who have a portfolio showcasing a range of projects, including those similar in scope and complexity to the requested project.

Submittal Requirements

- Cover letter describing the consultant's experience, identifying recent clients and conveying an understanding of the Scope of Work and an ability to proceed expeditiously recognizing that it is the Town's expectation that the work will be completed in early July.
- Completed and signed Respondent Information Form and Quote.

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Quote Form		
Item		Total Anticipated Cost
A	Total Cost for Specifications:	\$
B	Prompt Payment Discount	___%/ __ Days

Company Name _____

Address _____

Print Name and Title _____

Authorized Signature and Title _____

Date _____ Telephone _____

Acknowledgement of Addendum _____

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3D Concept House Modeling

CERTIFICATE OF NON-COLLUSION

The undersigned hereby certifies that s/he will comply with all laws and regulations applicable to awards made subject to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30B.

The undersigned certifies under penalties of perjury that this bid is in all respects bona fide, fair, and made without collusion or fraud with any other person. As used in this paragraph the word "person" shall mean any natural person, joint venture, partnership, corporation or other business or legal entity.

Signature of Individual Submitting the Bid

Individual Full Name (Print/Type)

Name of Business (Print/Type)

Date

Chapter 30B
Consulting Services Contract
Under \$50,000
enter contract number

THIS AGREEMENT for **enter description** (hereinafter the "Project") is made the _____ day of _____, _____ by and between **enter name of company** a corporation (*or partnership, etc.*) organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (*or the State of* _____), with a usual place of business at **enter legal address**, hereinafter called the **Consultant**, and the Town of Needham, a municipal corporation duly organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting through its Town Manager, hereinafter referred to as the **Town**.

Whereas the Town desires to obtain the services of Consultant and Consultant represents it has expertise and experience to provide the services described herein for the benefit of the Town therefore the parties agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1. AGREEMENT DOCUMENTS

The Agreement consists of the following, and in the event of conflicts or discrepancies among them, they shall be interpreted on the basis of the following priorities:

1. This Agreement;
2. The Request for Quotes;
3. The Consultant's Quote dated **enter date**;
4. Drawings required for the Project, if applicable and
5. Copies of all required bonds, certificates of insurance and licenses required under the contract;

EACH OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO. These documents form the entire agreement between the parties and there are no other agreements between the parties. Any amendment or modification to this agreement must be in writing and signed by an official with the authority to bind the Town.

ARTICLE 2. SCOPE OF THE WORK

The Consultant agrees to perform such professional services as are set forth in this Agreement. The Consultant will perform such services with the standard of professional care and skill customarily provided in the performance of such services. The Consultant agrees to perform as set forth in Agreement to the satisfaction of Town.

The parties may from time-to-time extend the scope of services and deliverables or omit services and deliverables previously agreed to, and the provisions of this Agreement shall apply to all such additions and omissions. All such additions and omissions must be in a writing executed by both parties in order to be effective.

Any discrepancy or conflict between the terms or conditions in any attachment and the terms of this Agreement shall be decided in favor of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 3. TERM OF AGREEMENT

The work to be performed under this Agreement shall be commenced immediately and shall be entirely completed by _____. This term may be extended beyond such completion date if the Town agrees to the extension in writing. The Consultant hereby agrees that if he fails to carry on the work with reasonable speed or stops work altogether without due cause, as determined in each case by the Town, the Town may give notice to the Consultant in writing to proceed with the work or to carry on the work more speedily. Three days after the presentation of such notice if the work is not proceeding to the satisfaction of the Town, the Consultant shall be considered to have defaulted in the performance of this Agreement.

-- or --

This Agreement shall be for a term of _____
ending on _____, 202

year(s), commencing on _____, 202 and
, unless sooner completed and subject to annual

appropriation. This term may be extended beyond such completion date if the Town agrees to the extension in writing, in which event the Agreement may be extended at the sole option of the Town, and upon the terms described therein.

Notwithstanding verbal or other representations by the parties, or an earlier start date indicated in an Agreement, the effective start date of performance under an Agreement shall be the date a Contract has been executed by an authorized signatory of the Consultant and the Town, or a later date specified in the Agreement, or the date of any approvals required by law or regulation, whichever is later.

ARTICLE 4. THE AGREEMENT SUM

The Town shall pay the Consultant for the performance of this Agreement a sum NOT TO EXCEED \$**enter dollar amount figure** (enter amount in words dollars), including all reimbursable expenses.

ARTICLE 5. PAYMENT

The Town shall make payment as follows:

- a. The Town shall make payment thirty (30) days after receipt of an invoice for work performed or materials supplied the previous month.
- b. With any invoice the Consultant shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Town that the goods or supplies have been delivered, or that the work has been completed and that all payrolls, material bills and other indebtedness connected with the work has been paid. The billings shall include, if applicable, all charges for consultants, subcontractors, plans, equipment, models, renderings, travel, reproductions, postage and delivery, and all other expenses. There shall not be any markup for overhead, administration, or profit for any of the above-listed services. The Town reserves the right to require reasonable additional supporting documentation from Consultant. All requests for payment shall be on forms acceptable to or approved by the Town.
- c. If for any reason the Town makes a payment under this Agreement in error, the Town may recover the amount overpaid or, if applicable, may apply any overpayment to a future installment payment.
- d. The Consultant shall be deemed to have waived its right to payment for any fees earned or expenses incurred if not invoiced to and received by the Town within 45 days after completion of the project.
- e. The Town is not responsible for payment of invoices sent to an address other than specified at the end of this Article. **Furthermore, the Town is not responsible for any Invoice that does not reference the Town's Purchase Order number that encumbered the funds to pay for services provided under this Agreement.**
- f. Invoices for services procured under this Agreement are to be sent to:

**Attn: manager
title
address**

ARTICLE 6. PROMPT PAYMENT DISCOUNTS

The **Consultant** will allow a Prompt Payment Discount for payment made by the **Town** within the number of days from the date of receipt of the invoice, or the date of the receipt of the product or service, whichever occurs later as follows:

Prompt Payment Discount %	Payment Issue Date w/in
Enter percent%	Enter days Days

ARTICLE 7. TAX EXEMPT STATUS

The **Town** represents that it is exempt from federal excise, state, and local taxes, and that sales to it are exempted from Massachusetts sales and use tax. If in the future the **Town** becomes subject to any such taxes, the **Town** shall reimburse the **Consultant** for the tax paid by the **Consultant** on behalf of the **Town**. Any other taxes imposed on the **Consultant** shall be borne solely by the **Consultant**.

ARTICLE 8. NONPERFORMANCE

In the case of any default on the part of the **Consultant** with respect to any of the terms of this Agreement, the **Town** shall give written notice thereof, and if said default is not made good within such time as the **Town** shall specify in writing, the **Town** shall notify the **Consultant** in writing that there has been a breach of the Agreement and thereafter the **Town** shall have the right to terminate this Agreement and secure the completion of the work remaining to be done on such terms and in such manner as the **Town** shall determine, and the **Consultant** shall pay for the completion of such work and reimburse the **Town** for all expenses incurred by reason of said breach. The **Consultant** in case of such breach shall be entitled to receive payment only for work completed satisfactorily prior to said breach, so long as the total paid hereunder does not exceed the Agreement sum, and the amount of any balance due the **Consultant** shall be determined by the **Town** and certified to the **Consultant**.

ARTICLE 9. TERMINATION

In addition to the provisions of Article 8, the **Town** shall have the right to terminate this Agreement if funds are not appropriated or otherwise made available to support the continuation of the Agreement after the first year.

The **Town** reserves the right to suspend indefinitely or terminate the contract and the services to be rendered by **Consultant** for any reason upon seven (7) days' prior written notice. In the event of termination prior to completion of all work described in the Agreement, the amount of the total fee to be paid **Consultant** shall be determined by **Town** on the basis of the portion of the total work actually completed up to the time of such termination.

The **Town** shall also have the right to immediate termination:

- a. any material misrepresentation made by the **Consultant**.
- b. any failure by the **Consultant** to perform any of its obligations under this Agreement including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i. failure to commence performance of this Agreement at the time specified in this Agreement due to a reason or circumstance within the **Consultant's** reasonable control;
 - ii. failure to perform this Agreement with sufficient personnel and equipment or with sufficient material to ensure the completion of this Agreement within the specified time due to a reason or circumstance within the **Consultant's** reasonable control;
 - iii. failure to perform this Agreement in a manner reasonably satisfactory to the **Town**;
 - iv. failure to promptly re-perform within reasonable time the services that were rejected by the **Town** as erroneous or unsatisfactory
 - v. discontinuance of the services for reasons not beyond the **Consultant's** reasonable control;
 - vi. failure to comply with a material term of this Agreement, including, but not limited to, the provision of insurance and nondiscrimination; and
 - vii. any other acts specifically and expressly stated in this Agreement as constituting a basis for termination of this Agreement.

The **Consultant** shall have the right to terminate this Agreement if the **Town** fails to make payment within 45 days after it is due.

ARTICLE 10. EMPLOY COMPETENT PEOPLE

The **Consultant** shall employ only competent people to do the work. Whenever the **Town** shall notify the **Consultant** in writing that any person under the **Consultant's** employ is, in the **Town's** opinion, incompetent, unfaithful, disorderly, or otherwise unsatisfactory, or not employed in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement, such

person shall be discharged from the work and shall not again be employed on the Project, except with the consent of the **Town**.

ARTICLE 11. CHANGE IN SCOPE OF SERVICES

If this Agreement is pursuant to G.L. c. 30B, the **Town** may increase the quantity of supplies or services, or both specified in this Agreement provided:

- a. the unit prices remain the same or less;
- b. the procurement officer has specified in writing that an increase is necessary to fulfill the actual needs of the **Town** and is more economical and practical than awarding another contract;
- c. the **Town** and **Consultant** agree to the increase in writing;
- d. the increase in the total Agreement price does not exceed 25 percent but an Agreement for the purchase of gasoline, special fuel, fuel oil, road salt or other ice and snow control supplies shall not be subject to this limit; and
- e. the **Town**, with the agreement of the **Consultant**, may reduce the unit price for supplies or services or both specified in an Agreement to be paid by the **Town** at any time during the term of the Agreement or when an option to renew, extend or purchase is exercised.

ARTICLE 12. NOTICE

All notices required to be given under this Agreement shall be given in writing and shall be effective upon receipt by hand delivery or certified mail to:

The Town of Needham: Kate Fitzpatrick
Town Manager
Town Hall
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492

The Consultant: Enter Name
Title
Company Name
Address
City, State Zip

ARTICLE 13. INSURANCE

- a. The **Consultant** shall, at its own expense, obtain and maintain general liability and motor vehicle liability insurance policies protecting the **Town** in connection with any operations included in this Agreement, and shall have the **Town** as an additional insured on the **Consultant's** liability policies, as noted in the **Town's** procurement package. General liability coverage shall be in the amount of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate for bodily injury liability and \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate for property damage liability. Motor vehicle coverage shall include coverage for owned, hired and non-owned vehicles and shall be in the amount of at least \$1,000,000 per person and \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury liability and \$1,000,000 per occurrence for property damage liability.
- b. In the event this Agreement is for professional services, the **Consultant** shall carry professional malpractice or Errors and Omissions liability insurance with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 aggregate, with a maximum deductible of \$ 25,000.
- c. All insurance coverage shall be in force from the time of the Agreement to the date when all work under the Agreement is completed and accepted by the **Town**. Since this insurance is normally written on a year-to-year basis, the **Consultant** shall notify the **Town** should coverage become unavailable or if its policy should change.

- d. The **Consultant** shall, before commencing performance of this contract, provide for the payment of compensation and the furnishing of other benefits by an insurance company duly licensed to do business in accordance with G.L. c. 152, as amended, to all employed under the Agreement and shall continue such insurance in full force and effect during the term of the contract.
- e. Certificates and any and all renewals substantiating that required insurance coverage is in effect shall be filed with the contract. Any cancellation of insurance whether by the insurers or by the insured shall not be valid unless written notice thereof is given by the party proposing cancellation to the other party and to the **Town** at least fifteen days prior to the intended effective date thereof, which date should be expressed in said notice.
- f. The Certificate Holder shall read as follows:
The Town Assigned Contract Number and Contract Title
Town of Needham
1471 Highland Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492

ARTICLE 14. INDEMNIFICATION

The **Consultant** shall indemnify, defend, and save harmless the **Town** and all of the **Town's** officers, agents and employees from and against all suits and claims of liability of every name and nature, including costs of defending any action, for or on account of any injuries to persons or damage to property of the **Town** or any person, firm, corporation or association arising out of or resulting from any act, omission, or negligence of the **Consultant**, its subcontractors and its and their agents or employees in the performance of the work covered by the Agreement and/or failure to comply with terms and conditions of the Agreement, but only in respect of such injuries or damages sustained during the performance and prior to the completion and acceptance of the work covered by the Agreement and to the extent such injuries or damages are not covered by the **Town's** insurance. The foregoing provisions shall not be deemed to be released, waived, or modified in any respect by reason of any surety or insurance provided by the **Consultant** under the Agreement.

ARTICLE 15. CORI CERTIFICATION

Services Do Require a CORI check

Services Do Not Require a CORI check

If the above certification is checked "Services Do require CORI check," the **Consultant** hereby acknowledges the right of the **Town** to conduct a criminal background check on all individuals providing such services under this contract, in accordance with state law.

In accordance with G.L. c. 6, §§ 167-178B, the Town may request and obtain all available criminal offender record information (CORI) from the Criminal History Systems Board on any of **Consultant's** employees who may have unsupervised contact with children, the disabled, or the elderly during the performance of their work under this Contract. The Town's assessment of CORI records is based on regulations issued by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, 101 C.M.R. 15.00-15.17.

Pursuant to G.L. c. 6, §§ 178C-178P, the **Consultant** also authorizes the **Town** to use local and national sexual offender registry information (SORI) to determine if any of the Consultant's employees pose an unreasonable risk to children, the disabled, or the elderly during the performance of their work under this Agreement.

ARTICLE 16. RESERVED

ARTICLE 17. GUARANTEE OF WORK

- a. Except as otherwise specified, all work shall be guaranteed by the **Consultant** against defects resulting from the use of inferior materials, equipment, or workmanship for one year from the date of final completion of the Contract.

- b. If, within any guarantee period, repairs or changes are required in connection with guaranteed work, which in the opinion of the **Town** are rendered necessary as a result of the use of materials, equipment or workmanship which are inferior, defective, or not in accordance with the terms of the Contract, the **Consultant** shall, promptly upon receipt of notice from the **Town** and at its own expense:
 - i. Make goods and services conform to this Agreement;
 - ii. Make good all damage to the **Town**, or equipment or contents thereof, which, in the opinion of the **Town**, is the result of the use of materials, equipment or workmanship which are inferior, defective, or not in accordance with the terms of the Agreement; and
 - iii. Make good any work or material, or the equipment or site, which is disturbed in fulfilling any such guarantee.

ARTICLE 18. USE OF CONSULTANT'S DRAWINGS, SPECIFICATIONS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- a. All Drawings, Specifications, and other documents (including sketches, computations, test data, survey results, photographs, renderings, models, and other material peculiar to the Services) prepared by the **Consultant** or **Consultant's** Consultants shall become the property of the **Town** upon payment of sums due under the contract. The **Town** acknowledges the copyright of the **Consultant** and the **Consultant's** Consultants.
- b. The **Town** may use the Drawings, Specifications and such other documents prepared by the **Consultant** or the **Consultant's** Consultants as needed for the construction, maintenance, repair, or modification of the **Project**.
- c. The **Town** shall hold the **Consultant** and the **Consultant's** Consultants harmless and release from any claims arising out of any use of or changes to the documents made by the **Town** or his representatives during any other construction not a part of this contract.
- d. The **Consultant** shall not be compensated for any services involved in preparing changes that are required for additional work that should have been anticipated by **Consultant** in the preparation of the bid documents, as reasonable determined by **Town**.

ARTICLE 19. GOVERNING LAW

This Agreement and performance hereunder are governed in all respects by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and all other applicable by-laws and administrative rules, regulations, and orders.

ARTICLE 20. CONSENT TO VENUE

- a. The **Consultant** agrees that it shall commence and litigate all legal actions or proceedings arising in connection with this Agreement exclusively in the Dedham District Court or in the Norfolk Superior Court, both of which are located in the County of Norfolk, Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The aforementioned choice of venue is intended to be mandatory and not permissive in nature, thereby precluding the possibility of litigation commenced by the **Consultant**, with respect to or arising out of this Agreement, in any court or forum other than those specified in this paragraph.
- b. It is further agreed that the parties to this Agreement hereby waive their rights to a jury trial.
- c. Each party hereby waives any right it may have to assert the doctrine of forum non conveniens or similar doctrine or objection to venue with respect to any proceeding brought in accordance with this Article and stipulates that the Norfolk Division of the Superior Court Department of the Massachusetts Trial Court shall have in personam jurisdiction and venue over each of them for the purposes of litigating any dispute, controversy, or proceeding out of or related to this Agreement. In the event the **Consultant** commences suit or other proceeding in any other court or forum, it agrees to immediately dismiss its suit or other proceeding and if it fails to do so and the Town acts to dismiss or otherwise dispose of the suit, the **Consultant** shall dismiss its suit and be liable to the **Town** for the reasonable legal fees and costs needed to have the matter dismissed.

- d. The **Consultant** hereby authorizes and accepts service of process sufficient for personal jurisdiction in any action against it as contemplated by these paragraphs by postage prepaid, registered mail, return receipt requested, to its address as set forth in this Agreement.
- e. The **Consultant** shall not enter into any agreement with or employ the services of any subcontractor unless the agreement with the subcontractor provides that the subcontractor is subject to and will comply with the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 21. WORK PRODUCT

Upon payment of all amounts due under this Agreement, the **Town** shall become the owner of all work product, specifications, plans, maps, data, conclusions, computations, and electronic data created under this Agreement. The **Town** agrees that the information contained therein was produced specifically for this Agreement and agrees to hold the **Consultant** harmless from any liability of the **Town's** use of these documents in any future project not directly related to the subject matter of this Agreement. Prior to engaging the services of any Subcontractor, the **Consultant** shall provide to the **Town** a writing from the Subcontractor that he assents to this Work Product Article.

ARTICLE 22. SUBCONTRACTING

The **Consultant** shall not subcontract any of the work, which it is required to perform under this Agreement to any corporation, entity, or person without the prior written approval of the **Town**.

ARTICLE 23. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

All of the services to be performed under the terms of this Agreement will be rendered by the **Consultant** as an independent contractor and not the agent, partner, or employee of the **Town**. The **Consultant** and **Consultant's** workers are not employees of **Town** and are not entitled to tax withholding, Workers' Compensation, unemployment compensation, or any employee benefits, statutory or otherwise. None of the terms of this Agreement shall create a principle-agent, master-servant or employer-employee relationship between the **Town** and the **Consultant**.

The **Consultant** shall not have the authority to enter into any contract or agreement to bind the **Town** and shall not represent to anyone that **Consultant** has such authority.

The **Consultant** represents and warrants to the **Town** that in performing the services called for in the Agreement that the **Consultant** will not be in breach of any agreement with a third party.

ARTICLE 24. BINDING AGREEMENT AND ASSIGNMENT OF INTEREST

This Agreement shall be binding upon the **Town** and the **Consultant** and the partners, successors, heirs, executors, administrators, assigns and legal representatives of the **Town** and the **Consultant**. Neither the **Town** nor the **Consultant** shall assign, sublet, or transfer any interest in this Agreement without the written consent of each other, and such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

ARTICLE 25. ANTI-FRAUD PROVISIONS

To prevent potential fraudulent activity regarding any electronic payments that may be processed under the terms of this Agreement, the **Town** and the **Consultant** agree as follows:

Any banking information needed for the processing of electronic payments under the Agreement initially will be exchanged by the parties through encrypted means to the primary points of contact for the Agreement. Any subsequent changes will be communicated through a live phone conversation and/or video conference.

No change in either party's banking information will ever be communicated to the other party in an email or text message, and both parties should treat as such emails or texts as fraudulent.

If an unencrypted email, or any text message, purporting to be from one party regarding banking information is received by the other, the receiving party agrees to utilize their own contact information to contact and advise the other regarding any such email or text message, NOT the information that may be listed in the email or text message.

The parties will inform any third parties assisting either of them with electronic payments of the provisions of this section and require them to comply with the same.

ARTICLE 26. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

By execution of this Agreement with the **Town**, the **Consultant** acknowledges that the **Town** is a municipality for the purposes of G.L. c. 268A (the Massachusetts conflict of interest statute), and agrees, as circumstances require, to take actions and to forbear from taking actions so as to comply at all times with the obligations of the **Consultant** based on said statute.

ARTICLE 27. CONFIDENTIALITY

The **Consultant** shall comply with G.L. c. 66A (the Massachusetts fair information practices statute) if the **Consultant** becomes a "holder" of "personal data". The **Consultant** shall also protect the physical security and restrict any access to personal or other **Town** data in the **Consultant's** possession, or used by the **Consultant** in the performance of this Contract, which shall include, but is not limited to the **Town's** public records, documents, files, software, equipment, or systems.

ARTICLE 28. RECORD-KEEPING AND RETENTION, INSPECTION OF RECORDS.

The **Consultant** shall maintain records, books, files, and other data as specified in the Contract and in such detail as shall properly substantiate claims for payment under the Contract, for a minimum retention period of seven (7) years beginning on the first day after the final payment under the Contract, or such longer period as is necessary for the resolution of any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, or other inquiry involving a Contract. The **Town** shall have access during the **Consultant's** regular business hours and upon reasonable prior notice, to such records, including on-site reviews and reproduction of such records at a reasonable expense.

ARTICLE 29. SEVERABILITY

If a court declares one or more of the provisions of this Agreement invalid, the validity of the remaining provision of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby.

ARTICLE 30. CERTIFICATIONS

By executing this Agreement, the **Consultant** under the pains and penalties of perjury, makes all certifications required under the certifications listed below, and has provided all required documentation and disclosures, or shall provide any required documentation upon request.

The **Consultant** is qualified and shall at all times remain qualified to perform this Agreement; that performance shall be timely and meet or exceed industry standards, including obtaining requisite licenses, registrations, permits and resources for performance; and that the **Consultant** shall provide access to records to town officials; and the **Consultant** certifies that the **Consultant** and any of its subcontractors are not currently debarred or suspended by the federal or state government under any law or regulation.

The **Consultant** shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

The **Consultant** certifies that there is no authorization to deliver performance for which compensation is sought under this Agreement prior to the effective date and that any oral or written representations, commitments or assurances made by a Town representative are not binding and the **Town** may not back-date this Agreement in order to cover the delivery of performance prior to the Effective date. The **Town** has no legal obligation to compensate a **Consultant** for performance that is not requested and is intentionally delivered by the **Consultant** outside the scope of the Agreement.

The **Consultant** certifies it has not been in bankruptcy and/or receivership within the last three calendar years, and the **Consultant** certifies that it will immediately notify the **Town** in writing if there is any risk to the solvency of the **Consultant** that may impact the **Consultant's** ability to timely fulfill the terms of this Agreement.

The **Consultant** shall affirmatively disclose the details of any pertinent judgment, criminal conviction, investigation, or litigation pending against the **Consultant** or any of its officers, directors, employees, agents, or subcontractors of which the **Consultant** has knowledge, or learns of during the Agreement term. **Consultants** must affirmatively disclose any potential structural change in its organization at least 45 days prior to the change.

If incorporated, the **Consultant** certifies that it has identified the Consultant's state of incorporation, and the **Consultant** certifies compliance with all filing requirements of both the incorporating state and the Massachusetts Secretary of State. If the **Consultant** is a foreign corporation, the **Consultant** certifies compliance with all requirements for certification, reporting, filing of documents and service of process.

ARTICLE 31. RESERVED

ARTICLE 32. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH MASSACHUSETTS TAX LAWS

The **Consultant** certifies Tax Compliance with Federal tax laws; State tax laws including G.L. c. 62C, G.L. c. 62C, s. §§ 49A (the **Consultant** has complied with all laws of the Commonwealth relating to taxes, reporting of employees and contractors, and withholding and remitting of child support and is in good standing with respect to all returns due and taxes payable to the commissioner of revenue); reporting of employees and contractors under G.L. c. 62E, withholding and remitting child support including G.L. c. 119A, §§ 12;

Taxpayer Identification Number

Taxpayer (Corporate) Name

BY: _____
Corporate Officer (if applicable)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have executed this Agreement the day and year first above written.

CONSULTANT: _____

By*: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

** My signature above certifies that I am duly authorized, or that I have attached a signed Certificate of Vote from my Board of Directors giving me authority, to sign this Contract.*

TOWN OF NEEDHAM, by its Town Manager:

Kate Fitzpatrick

DOCUMENT WAS REVIEWED FOR COMPLETENESS

Town Employee
Title:

Date

CERTIFICATION AS TO DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS AND TOWN USE

Department Manager

Date

CERTIFICATION AS TO CHAPTER 30B COMPLIANCE

Chief Procurement Officer

Date

CERTIFICATION AS TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Funds have been appropriated or otherwise reserved by the Town for the purposes set forth in the Contract herein for the current fiscal year only.

Town Accountant

Date

CERTIFICATION AS TO FORM
(Required for agreements \$25,000 or more)

Town Counsel

Date

Alexandra Clee

From: Marianne Cooley <mcooley@nethorizons.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 5, 2025 8:23 PM
To: Planning
Subject: For Large House Committee

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello all,

I'm sending this while I am thinking about it.

I just finished watching the tree bylaw hearing.

I wonder if reinstating the setbacks for non confirming lots can help with tree preservation? It seems that those lots are so built out to the edge that one can not help but damage tree roots in the process. If we could have room, we might hang into some more trees, or get to the point where you require preservation or replacement with some other similar trees on the property.

From talking to builders, I understand that many people buying houses ask that the lot be clear cut because they do not want the "inconvenience" of a tree.

Alexandra Clee

From: Catherine Hogan <cmahogan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 10:47 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Large House Review Committee

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I am very grateful for the work being done by the Large House Review Committee and having the opportunity to submit the survey regarding the large house issue .

In the survey we commented on the negative impact the building of a larger home had on us and our neighbor. Removing all the trees in order to build a large house apparently increased run-off in the immediate area and resulting in flooding of our basement and that of our neighbor.

Another issue is the lack of smaller homes available for downsizing .Many long-term residents whose families have grown do not have the opportunity to stay in Needham despite their involvement in the town.
By the same token there are no starter homes available- too many tear downs !

Several years ago one of our neighbors decided to downsize after her husband passed away. They had raised their family in Needham and she was still very much involved in the community. Fortunately, she was able to purchase a ranch house a few streets over and sell her home (a 4 bedroom colonial with a large back yard) to a young family . After she had been in the house for several years her son and his family moved back to this area from another state . They added onto the ranch house so they could move in with their mother who was now dealing with a cancer diagnosis and treatment . I do not believe this scenario would be possible in Needham today.

I am happy to see the town addressing all the issues surrounding homes that are much too big for the plot they are being built on. Many of these homes would be more appropriate on two acres of land and not on 10,000 square feet!

Thank you for your time and effort
Catherine Hogan
140 Tower Ave

Sent from my iPhone

Alexandra Clee

From: Joanne Neale <jmneale@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 13, 2025 8:49 AM
To: Planning
Subject: Additional input for Large House Review Committee and Tree Preservation Committee

Hello,

I recently came across this very interesting in-depth discussion of Seattle's approach to increasing housing, while also addressing concerns regarding the existing tree canopy, which is essential to moderate increasingly high temperatures.

While Needham is not building multi-family housing at the rate Seattle is, there are many valuable lessons to be learned by reading this article and the sources cited in it.

<https://www.npr.org/2025/06/11/nx-s1-5340711/climate-urban-housing-trees>

I am sending this to both working groups as I believe the tree preservation and large house issues are inextricably linked.

Please be sure that this information is forwarded to all members of both Committees. Thank you for your consideration.

Joanne Neale
GARDEN MENTOR
<https://www.gardenmentor.net>
44 Dartmouth Avenue
Needham, MA 02494-1925
781.444.3553
617.823.9494 cell
jmneale@gardenmentor.net

Residential landscape consultation, design, and plant shopping services, specializing in low maintenance, environmentally responsible landscapes



CLIMATE SOLUTIONS WEEK

In Seattle, preserving trees while increasing housing supply is a climate solution

JUNE 11, 2025 · 6:00 AM ET

By Bellamy Pailthorp, Parker Miles Blohm

knkx

5-Minute Listen

PLAYLIST

DOWNLOAD

EMBED



The Boulders development, built in 2006 in Seattle's Green Lake neighborhood, features a mature tree along with a waterfall. The developer also added mature trees salvaged from other developments — placing them strategically to add texture and cooling to the landscaping.

Parker Miles Blohm/KNKX

Climate change shapes where and how we live. That's why NPR is dedicating a week to stories about solutions for building and living on a hotter planet.

SEATTLE — Across the U.S., cities are struggling to balance the need for more housing with the need to preserve and grow trees that help address the impacts of climate change.

Trees provide cooling shade that can save lives. They absorb carbon pollution from the air and reduce

stormwater runoff and the risk of flooding. Yet many builders perceive them as an obstacle to quickly and efficiently putting up housing.

Sponsor Message

This tension between development and tree preservation is at a tipping point in Seattle, where a new state law is requiring more housing density but not more trees.

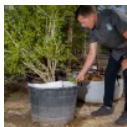
One solution is to find ways to build density *with* trees. The Bryant Heights development in northeast Seattle is an example of this. It's an extra-large city block that features a mix of modern apartments, town houses, single-family homes and retail. Architects Ray and Mary Johnston worked with the developer to place 86 housing units where once there were four. They also saved trees.





Architects Mary and Ray Johnston saved more than 30 trees in the Bryant Heights development they worked on.
Parker Miles Blohm/KNKX

"The first question is never, how can we get rid of that tree," explains Mary Johnston, "but how can we save that tree and build something unique around it." She points to a row of town homes nestled into two groves of mature trees that were in place before construction began in 2017. Some grow mere feet from the new buildings.



NPR'S CLIMATE SOLUTIONS WEEK
Faced with rising temps, Las Vegas is embracing a simple climate solution: More trees

The Johnstons preserved more than 30 trees at Bryant Heights, from Douglas firs and cedars to oak trees and Japanese maples.

One of Ray Johnston's favorites is a deodar cedar that's more than 100 feet tall. The tree stands at the center of a group of apartment buildings. "It probably has a canopy that is close to over 40 feet in diameter," he notes.

This cedar cools the nearby buildings with the shade from its canopy. It filters carbon emissions and other pollution from the air and serves as a gathering point for residents. "So it's like another resident, really — it's like their neighbor," Mary Johnston says.

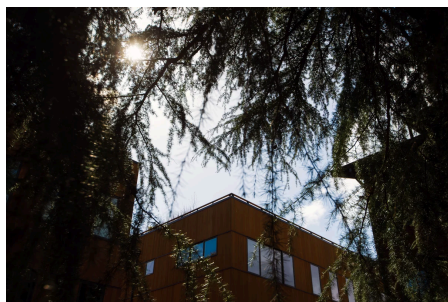
Sponsor Message

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Preserving this tree required some extra negotiations with the city, according to the Johnstons. They had to prove their new construction would not harm it. They had to agree to use concrete that is porous for the walkways beneath the tree to allow water to seep down to the tree's roots.

The developer could have easily decided to take this tree out, along with another one nearby, to fit another row of town houses down the middle of the block. "But

it never came to that because the developer was enlightened that way," Ray Johnston says.



Preserving some trees in Bryant Heights required extra negotiations with the city of Seattle.

Special concrete that is porous was used for the walkways beneath certain trees, allowing water to seep down to the trees' roots.

Parker Miles Blohm/KNKX

Housing pushes trees out

Seattle, like many cities, is in the throes of a housing crunch, with pressure to add thousands of new homes every year and increase density. Single-family zoning is no longer allowed; instead, a minimum of four units per lot must now be allowed in all urban neighborhoods.

The City Council recently updated its tree protection ordinance, a law it first passed in 2001, to keep trees on private property from being cut down during development.

"Its baseline is protection of trees," says Megan Neuman, a land use policy and technical teams manager with Seattle's Department of Construction and Inspections. She says the new tree code includes "limited instances" where tree removal is allowed.

"That's really to try to help find that balance between housing and trees and growing our canopy," Neuman says. Despite the city's efforts to preserve and grow the urban canopy, the most recent assessment showed it shrank by a total of about half a percent from 2016 to 2021. That's equivalent to 255 acres — an area roughly the size of the city's popular Green Lake, or more than 192 regulation-size American football fields. Neighborhood residential zones and parks and natural areas saw the biggest losses, at 1.2% and 5.1% respectively.

Seattle says it's working on multiple fronts to reverse that trend. The city's Office of Sustainability and Environment says the city is planting more trees in parks, natural areas and public rights of way. A new requirement means the city also has to care for those trees with watering and mulching for the first five years after planting, to ensure they survive Seattle's increasingly hot and dry summers.



NPR'S CLIMATE SOLUTIONS WEEK

How homeowners are saving on insurance by upgrading their houses against disasters

The city also says the 2023 update to its tree protection ordinance increases tree replacement requirements when trees are removed for development. It extends protection to more trees and requires, in most cases, that for every tree removed, three must be planted. The goal is to reach canopy coverage of 30% by 2037.

Developers generally support Seattle's latest tree protection ordinance because they say it's more predictable and flexible than previous versions of the law. Many of them helped shape the new policies as they face pressure to add about 120,000

homes over the next 20 years, based on growth management planning required by the state.

Sponsor Message

Cameron Willett, Seattle-based director of city homes at Intracorp, a Canadian real estate developer, sees the current code as a "common sense approach" that allows housing and trees to coexist. It allows builders to cut down more trees as needed, he says, but it also requires more replanting and allows them to build around trees when they can. "I definitely have projects I've done this year where I've taken out a tree that, under the old code, I would not have been able to do," Willett says. "But I've also had to replant both on- and off-site."

Willett recalls one development this year where he preserved a mature tree, which required proving that the site could be developed without damaging that tree. That also meant "additional administrative complexity and costs," he explains.

Still, Willett says it's worth it when it works.

"Trees make better communities," he says. "We all want to save the trees, but we also need to be able to get to our max density."

But Tree Action Seattle and other tree-protection groups frequently highlight new developments where they say too many trees are being taken out to make way for housing. This tension comes after a devastating heat dome hovered over the Pacific Northwest in the summer of 2021. "We saw hundreds of people die from that, hundreds of people who otherwise wouldn't have died if the temperatures hadn't gotten so high," says Joshua Morris, conservation director with the nonprofit Birds Connect Seattle. He served six years as a volunteer adviser and co-chair of the city's Urban Forestry Commission, which provides expertise on policies for conservation and management of trees and vegetation in Seattle.



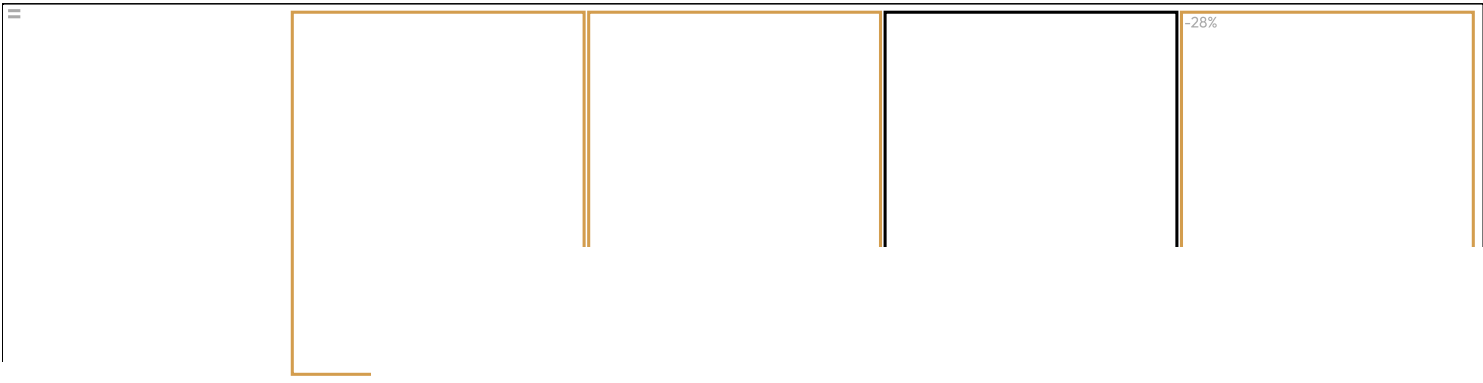


Joshua Morris, conservation director with the nonprofit Birds Connect Seattle, served six years as a volunteer adviser and co-chair of Seattle's Urban Forestry Commission.

Parker Miles Blohm/KNKX

"We know that in leafier neighborhoods, there is a significantly lower temperature than in lower-canopy neighborhoods, and sometimes it can be 10 degrees lower," Morris says.

Sponsor Message



Making space for trees

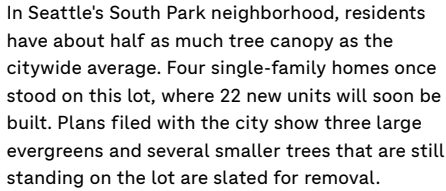
Seattle's South Park neighborhood is one of those hotter neighborhoods. Residents have roughly 12% to 15% tree canopy coverage there — about half as much as the citywide average. Studies show life expectancy rates here are 13 years shorter than in leafier parts of the city. That's in large part due to air pollution and contaminants from a nearby Superfund site.

In a cleared lot in South Park, 22 new units are going in where once four single-family homes stood. Three big evergreens and several smaller trees are expected to be cut down, says Morris. But with some "slight rearrangements to the configuration of buildings that are being proposed," Morris surmises, "an architect who has done an analysis of this site reckons that all of the trees that would be slated for removal could be retained. And more trees could be added."

Tree removals are allowed under Seattle's updated tree code. But removing larger trees now requires developers to plant replacements on-site or pay into a fund that the city plans to use to help reforest neighborhoods like South Park.

Groups such as Tree Action Seattle point out that these new trees will take many years to mature — sacrificing years of carbon mitigation work when compared with existing mature trees — at a critical time for curbing planet-warming emissions.

Morris says the trees that will likely be cut down for this development might not seem like a big number.



Charleston, W.Va., and Nashville, Tenn., says Portland State University geography professor Vivek Shandas. "If we don't take swift and very direct action with conservation of trees, of existing canopy, we're going to see the entire canopy shrink," Shandas says.

He says trees have been cut down all over the city for years — thousands per year.

"At that scale, the cooling effect of the trees is diminished," says Morris, "and the increased risk of death from excessive heat is heightened."

Building codes aren't keeping up with climate change

Tree loss is not limited to Seattle. It's happening in dozens of cities across the country, from Portland, Ore., to

	\$66	\$53	\$
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He says current municipal codes don't adequately address the implications of climate change. The Pacific Northwest, Shandas says, should be preparing for increasingly hot summers and more intense rain in winter. Trees are needed to provide shade and absorb runoff.

"So that development going in — if it's lot edge to lot edge — we're going to see an amplification of urban heat," Shandas says. "We're going to see a greater amount of flooding in those neighborhoods."

Climate change is intensifying hurricanes and raising sea levels while also playing a role in wildfires. Such extreme conditions are outpacing building codes, explains Shandas, and he fears this will happen in the Northwest too.

Shandas says how developers respond to the building codes that Seattle adopts over the next 20 to 50 years will determine the extent to which trees will help

people here adapt to the warming climate.

That matters in Seattle, where the nights aren't cooling off nearly as much as they used to and where average daytime highs are getting hotter every year.



The Bryant Heights development is a modern mix of apartments, town houses, single-family homes and retail. Architects Ray and Mary Johnston worked with the developer to place 86 housing units where there were initially four.

Parker Miles Blohm/KNKX

A solution in the design

Architects Ray and Mary Johnston see part of the solution at another Seattle development they designed around an existing 40-year-old Scotch pine.

The Boulders development, near Seattle's Green Lake Park, transformed a single-family lot into a complex with nine town homes. The developer added mature trees he salvaged from other developments — transplanting them strategically to add texture and cooling to the landscaping.

Mary Johnston says building with trees in mind could also help people's pocketbooks. Boulders, she says, is an example. "Since these units have air conditioning, those costs are going to be lower because you have this kind of cooler environment," she says. Ray Johnston says places like this shady urban oasis should be incentivized in city codes, especially as climate change continues.

"Would you rather be living here with the shade we have ... or would you rather be in a much more urban, treeless, shadeless environment, where you can't hang out outside?" he asks.

More from NPR's Climate Solutions Week

Homes are increasingly at risk from floods. Elevation can help

Why taking apart buildings piece by piece is a climate solution

How homeowners are saving on insurance by upgrading their houses against disasters

Copenhagen is adapting to a warmer world with rain tunnels and 'sponge parks'

This city is exploring an unconventional solution to water scarcity: sewage [KUER](#)

This Oakland block tried to quit fossil fuels. Here's what they learned [KQED](#)

Why knowing your neighbors can be an important climate solution

Alexandra Clee

From: BARBARA MCDONALD <oaklangley@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 13, 2025 8:47 AM
To: Planning
Subject: Working Group Breakout Session

Dear Planning Board:

I would like to let you know that during my tables breakout session there were several of us in the group that do not want any significant changes made to the existing zoning at this time, without presenting hard data, and concrete examples detailing the specific issues.

We also recommend that the three groups tree committee, water mitigation committee, and large house review committee merge and form one group to review large houses as a whole, going forward.

Data and facts should be provided, as to what exactly the issues are that this group is trying to resolve. Specific examples of the complaints will help define the committees mission.

Regards,

Barbara McDonald

Sent from my iPhone

From: [lawrhome1](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Large House Review Committee comment - FYI
Date: Friday, June 13, 2025 1:20:16 PM

My wife and I owned a Needham home for 38 years before selling in 2024 and moving into a Needham condo. We were concerned that when we sold our house, a buyer would replace it with a McMansion. Since we could afford to do so, we decided not to sell to a builder and instead accepted an offer of \$100,000 from a family. Although we understand that many people's finances may not allow this, there are individuals like us who have taken a financial hit in the interest of preserving the quality of their neighborhood. We tried to set an example of doing what one can, rather than complaining and asking someone else to take action. Lawrence and Valerie Kistler.

From: [patricia doyle](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: large house committee
Date: Monday, June 16, 2025 6:14:26 PM

Hi,

Our neighborhood, which used to be primarily ranches and capes, has changed drastically. The cape on 107 Valley Road has almost tripled in size. It is just coming on the market in its new form.

The ground around the house is significantly higher than it used to be. This is an issue with many new houses. The houses that were build on the old Grace eLutheran Church property look like they could slide right down the hill upon which they now rest. Runoff (at least from the driveway) goes onto Greendale, then across the street to the land next to the highway.

Raising the level of the ground not only affects runoff, but the sidewalk is often put in to match the driveways, which are now higher. This can cause water to not drain properly off of adjoining properties. It is not good when someone is allowed to build a huge house, impact water drainage and cause problems for property abutters. Inspectors do not seem to care.

Good luck. And thanks for try8ing to aaddress this.