

**From:** Julia Malakie <malakievvara3@gmail.com>

**To:** malakiephoto <malakiephoto@aim.com>

**Subject:** Landmarking hearing on historic Davis Tavern Thursday; Zoning Redesign underway; Citizens Police Academy! & more

**Date:** Tue, Feb 25, 2020 8:27 am

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There's so much going on this week I needed a second email!



## Public hearing Thursday 2/27 on whether to landmark Davis Tavern in West Newton Square

As I reported in an earlier email on February 3, the Newton Historical Commission at its January 23 meeting, scheduled the two buildings that are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places -- the Davis Tavern, and the Carley Realty building, for public hearings on whether they should be landmarked. The hearings are this Thursday, February 27, at 7pm in City Hall Rm 205. (Staff memo [here](#), and packet documents [here](#).)

If you care about preserving what is undoubtedly the most historically significant building in West Newton Square, please write to the Newton Historical Commission via preservation planner Katy Holmes at [kholmes@newtonma.gov](mailto:kholmes@newtonma.gov), and attend and speak at Thursday's public hearing if you can. Please also let members of the City Council know at [citycouncil@newtonma.gov](mailto:citycouncil@newtonma.gov), because a majority appear poised to suspend all landmarking activity at our Monday, March 2 meeting. Although now framed as a six-month moratorium, if they have the votes to pass it, they have the votes to extend it.

## Who was Seth Davis?

Seth Davis, pictured above in the center of his 100th birthday celebration at his home on Eden Ave in West Newton, and in a portrait at a younger age, could be described as a founding father of West Newton. His fascinating life is described in this [1887 newspaper article](#), also on the occasion of his 100th birthday. He arrived in Newton around 1802, and despite limited formal education, he eventually became an educator, teaching for 50 years, founding the Davis Academy in 1817, and promoting the study of geography, astronomy and oratory, and the establishment of school libraries.

He also worked as a surveyor, farmer, and county commissioner, was chair of the Newton Cemetery, as well as an abolitionist and temperance advocate, and is credited with planting many trees including two-thirds of West Newton's elms in his time.

A prominent businessman in the early development of West Newton, he built the hotel known as the Davis Tavern in 1831 to serve coach passengers. In 1834 when the Boston & Worcester Railroad arrived in West Newton, it served as the railroad station, becoming known as the Railroad Hotel.



According to an email from railroad historian Herbert Harwood that was forwarded to me:

Our earliest railroads had multiple challenges. They had to build their lines while trying to develop and operate new technologies — and, most of all, find the money to do it all. Not surprisingly, then, they skimmed wherever they could, and building passenger stations was one favorite area. To get themselves into business quickly, they sometimes simply used the facilities and services of an inn or tavern along the route, and designated the building as an official station. The Boston & Worcester was one of the earliest when it arrived in West Newton in the spring of 1834 and established its station at the Davis Tavern. By surviving as long as it did, the building can now claim to be the second oldest still-extant railroad passenger station in the country — the first being the former Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's facility at Ellicott

In short, it is a notable relic of the earliest phase in American railroad history, an illustration of how these pioneering companies improvised, and is the second-oldest of its kind remaining. For these reasons alone, I feel this building deserves landmark designation.

## Not dead yet: Carley Realty building



I didn't think this the building would still be here for its public hearing, and maybe it won't. At 1173 Washington Street, smack in the middle of the Washington Street frontage of the Dunstan East 40B, the fence went up literally the morning after the Zoning Board of Appeals hearing started on January 27, and workers were removing anything containing lead or asbestos a couple of days later. But here it is Monday morning during the ZBA's site visit to the area. Perhaps someone decided it was a bad look to start tearing down buildings before the ZBA voted on the Comprehensive Permit, or it's just cheaper to wait and tear down all the buildings at once, as at Washington & Walnut. I had asked for a week to investigate the possibility of moving the building, and did so. But the insurmountable obstacle was not that you couldn't move a brick building ([you can](#)), or the cost (on the order of \$100K), but the fact that there is nowhere to move it to on Washington Street (the only street wide enough for even the narrow dimension of the building).

As noted, it's individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, historically significant as the 50-year office of Doris Carley (obituary [here](#)), one of Newton's first female real estate brokers, from 1937-1987. It is also an architectural gem that I continue to believe would enhance the streetscape of

the building.



West Newton Armory Joint Area Planning Group (JAPG) meets TONIGHT, Tuesday, 7-9pm, Rm 205. They will be reviewing Armory case studies, which I believe refers to other Armory which have been adapted for other uses. I'm hoping to finally make it to this one, after having competing meetings with earlier meetings of this group! Agenda [here](#).



Zoning Redesign discussion at Feb. 24 Zoning & Planning meeting

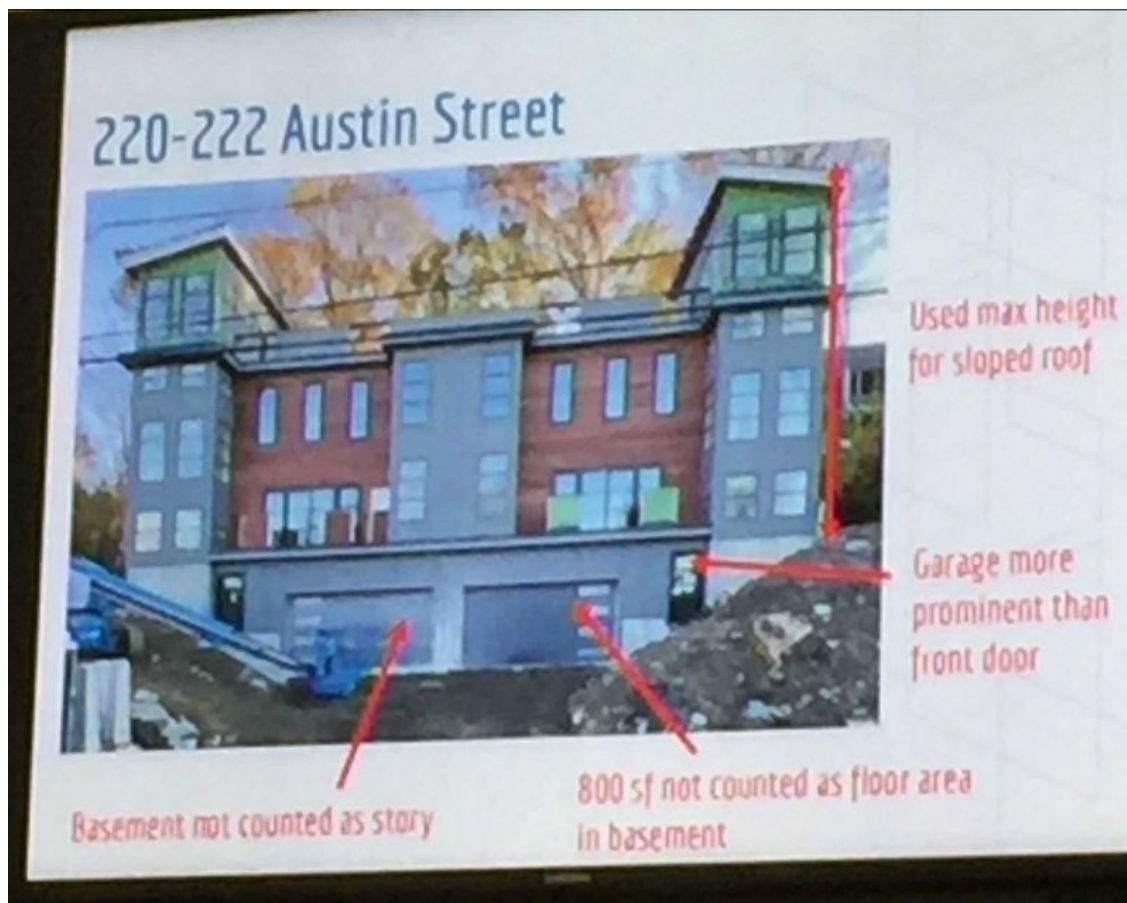
## Citywide Zoning Redesign process has resumed; what would you like to not happen?

The video above is my livestream of last night's Zoning & Planning Committee (ZAP) meeting's presentation by the Planning Department on how they plan to approach citywide Zoning Redesign this term. It's not the first meeting on this topic, but is as good an overview as any so far this term. Despite the rush to rezone Washington Street, leading to the \$500,000 no-bid consulting contract to the Principle Group in early 2018, the current plan is to proceed with citywide rezoning, and incorporate Washington Street into that.

The plan is to tackle the residential zones first. An objective shared by just about everyone except developers is to reduce the number of smaller houses lost to teardowns, and avoid excessively large new builds. To that end the Planning Department has asked members of ZAP, including member from Ward 3 Pam Wright, for examples of what they would like to fix:

"We are interested in learning directly from you about how the current zoning regulations are working in your neighborhoods—what's going well, and what's not going well—and about your concerns or expectations for how new zoning regulations would work in the ward. Please show us your examples of development that we should avoid in the future. Please show us any new successes or existing conditions that should be emulated. And please show us anything else that you think we should see in your ward."

So, if you've got something that fits that description, please send the address and a photo by this weekend to Pam at [pwright@newtonma.gov](mailto:pwright@newtonma.gov), especially if it's in Ward 3 (roughly, West Newton). (And you can cc me, too!) It doesn't have to be as extreme as the example below to be considered for Pam's tour of Ward 3 examples, which will probably happen next week.



## MISSED THE NORTHLAND CONVERSATION at the Emerson Community Center? Video coming, & another event in Highlands Sunday 3/1



If you missed Sunday's Committee for Responsible Development/Right Size Newton-sponsored event in Upper Falls, don't worry. They videotaped it, and it should be viewable as soon as today.

I have also been told that they will be holding a similar event on Sunday, March 1, from 4-5:30pm at the Women's Club at 72 Columbus Street in Newton Highlands.

A couple of takeaways from this past Sunday:

- The 10 acres of open space being touted in all those "Yes" mailings you've been getting is not 10 acres of usable park-like green space. Most of it is 'laneways' (essentially, interior roads with pavers instead of asphalt) sidewalks, and berms (the strips between sidewalks and streets).
- For those concerned about the traffic impact of multiple 40Bs if a "No" vote prevails, that is highly unlikely. According to 40B attorney Dennis Murphy, the fact that the three parcels have been in common ownership (even if under different LLCs) for a number of years (15 years, for the most recently acquired parcel), means that if past legal precedent is followed, the lots would be considered a "merger by operation of law" for zoning purposes. That means that Northland could only do one 40B development, not three. A 40B anywhere in Newton would be limited to about 640 housing units under the "large project" rule: the size is limited to 2% of existing housing units in a municipality, which for Newton is about 32,000. [Clips of Dennis Murphy](#) have already been posted.

**Why you're getting so many "Yes" mailers? They've raised over \$319,000!**

The [8-day prior to election report filed by "Yes for Newton's Future"](#) shows total

Northland Investment Corporation of \$28,148. (Can't tell who paid for the texts that people have reported getting on their phones.)

Committee for Responsible Development treasurer Simon French tells me the "No" campaign has raised just under \$29,000.

If you'd like a lawn sign to help equal the playing field, contact the Committee for Responsible Development:

<https://rightsize2020.org/volunteer/>



## First Citizens Police Academy in decades accepting applications



Something fun and educational is returning! For the first time since sometime in the 1990s, the Newton Police Department is running a Citizen's Police Academy, See details in the announcement below from Office Brett Ferolito. He tells me there are 12-15 spaces for the public. Based on attending what may have been the last such program in the early 1990s (I remember because my mother was still alive!), **I highly recommend** it if you have these Tuesday evenings free. They do hope to make it an annual thing, so hopefully there will be more opportunities, but sign up now if you're interested!

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, the Newton Police Department will be starting a Citizens Police Academy. This is an informational program designed to provide citizens of Newton with an inside look at the inner workings of a modern police department. The Academy will meet every Tuesday night until June 9<sup>th</sup> from 7 PM to 9PM at Newton Police Headquarters in West Newton.

Instructors will present information on the various functions and roles of a Police Department, to include but not be limited to Patrol, Dispatch, Traffic, Internal Affairs, Crime Analysis and Community Services. Participants will also get hands on training with firearms, observe a Police K9 demonstration, and be put through several non-physical training scenarios.

We have limited spots available for the public. Any interest in the program email Community Outreach Officers Brett Ferolito and/or Justin Lau at [bferolito@newtonma.gov](mailto:bferolito@newtonma.gov) and [jlau@newtonma.gov](mailto:jlau@newtonma.gov) for a digital version of the application or further questions. We will be accepting applications until Monday, March 9th.

(Competing with Historical Commission, same time, different building)

Next NewCAL Community Meeting)  
Thursday, February 27, 7pm at the  
Senior Center, 345 Walnut St



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