



Newton VC2 / VCOD

Village-Center Development Offering – Marketing Summary

(See Newton Zoning Ordinance Ch. 30, Art. 9 – Village Center Overlay Districts) (newtonma.gov)

Why is VC2 zoning such a big deal?

Newton's newly created VC2 district is one of the few places in the city where a buyer can actually deliver new multifamily or mixed-use without starting from a defensive zoning position. The rules were written to invite and encourage village-scale buildings: tight/zero front setbacks, 3 - 4+ story massing, and the ability to put more of the lot into the building than under base zoning. The overlay is optional - but it's the better play for density. (newtonma.gov)

Three development tracks buyers should see

1) Easiest path – lots under 15,000 sf (VC2)

Stay under 15,000 sf and design to the VC2 standards and you're in the most predictable lane. This is the "let's get it built" option.

- Base VC2 building: **up to 10,000 sf footprint**
 - Height: **3.5 stories** (≈ 56–58 ft depending on roof)
 - Village setbacks: **0' front, 0' side, 5' rear**
 - If you touch a residential/public-use line → that edge becomes **20' set back**
 - Parking can go to the rear/side with small setbacks as well as underground
- Because you're under 15,000 sf, you're typically not in front of City Council this is why this size is so attractive. (Planning can always elevate something unusual, but the path is clearly the lightest.) (newtonma.gov)

2) Growth path – 15,000 to 29,999 sf

This is for buyers who want a **wider or deeper building** or a **small mixed-use**. Same VC2 DNA - 10,000 sf footprint, 3.5 stories - but you're now in **Planning Board/Site Plan Review** instead of the lighter, staff-level review. Still very workable, still written to get housing into the village centers. (newtonma.gov)

3) Large-site path – 30,000 sf and up

At 30,000 sf+ the city wants to see **more open space (5% Beneficial Open Space)** and the review moves to **Special Permit / City Council**. This is the lane for someone who wants to do the bigger village block, courtyard, or mixed-use concept. (newtonma.gov)

Optional “go bigger” lever – Affordable Housing Bonus

Section 9 allows a developer who delivers **more affordability than the standard inclusionary** to push the VC2 envelope:

- Footprint can go **up to 12,500 sf**
- Height can go **up to 4.5 stories**
- Height can reach **≈71' pitched / 69' flat**



COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY

- The extra height can't be used within **50 ft** of a residential lot line
That lever is there specifically "to increase the supply of affordable housing" in VC2/VC3. Use it if you want the 4-plus-story look from the renderings. (newtonma.gov)

A concept that fits Newton

Luxury Flats for downsizers & empty nestor buyers:

- **Three separate VC2 buildings**
- **Each on its own ±14,500 sf lot (so all under 15,000 sf → lighter path)**
- **≈17 units per building → 51 units total**
- **17.5% inclusionary → 3 units per building → 9 affordable total**
- **42 market-rate elevator flats** in a walkable village location
That keeps each building at the friendlier lot size, makes parking more manageable, and sells better because they're luxury flats in an elevator building instead of one giant, more complicated permit. It's the "fewer, better, faster version of VC2."

What buyers should take away

- This zoning was written for this kind of project
- Under 15,000 sf = **clearest, quickest path**
- 15,000–29,999 sf = **still good, just Planning Board**
- 30,000 sf+ = **Special Permit, but more design room**
- If you're willing to do **25% affordable**, VC2 will **let you go bigger**

Due diligence (must read)

All information above is a marketing summary of Newton Zoning Ordinance **Chapter 30, Article 9 (VCOD)** and related VC2 standards. It is not a zoning opinion, not a guarantee of approvals, and not a substitute for a pre-filing meeting with Newton Planning/ISD. Buyers, developers, architects, and agents must confirm: current ordinance language; exact lot size; abutter zoning; whether the street is a Mixed-Use Priority Street; required parking; and the final review track (administrative vs. Site Plan Review vs. Special Permit) directly with the City of Newton. (newtonma.gov)

WARD SHIFMAN
REALTOR®, Real Estate Sales & Development
C: 617.633.7703
O: 617.969.2447
27 Boylston Street, Suite 310, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
ward.shifman@cbrealty.com | wshifman@me.com
wardshifman.com



COLDWELL BANKER | REALTY

Contact



COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY

Below are examples of 3.5/4.5 story buildings of various sizes. These are for discussion purposes only but are like what can be built in the new VC2 zoning districts in Newton.





COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY





COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY

