



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

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Barney S. Heath  
Director

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**M E M O R A N D U M**

To: Councilor Danberg, Chair of the Reuse Committee  
Members of Reuse Committee

From: Barney S. Heath, Director of Planning & Development   
Neil Cronin, Chief Planner for Current Planning

Date: October 16, 2020

Subject: Reuse of Parcel ID 83036 0003A on Countryside Road

CC: David Olson, City Clerk  
Andrew Lee, Assistant City Solicitor  
Jonah Temple, Assistant City Solicitor

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The subject property is the site of the former Baldpate Water Tower off Countryside Road (the "Site"). The Site contains 16,900 square feet of land, but has no frontage on Countryside Road, and is located within the Public Use (the "PUB") zone in Newton Centre. The Site has three abutters: 197 Countryside Road is improved with a single-family dwelling located within the Single Residence 1 (the "SR-1") zone; 483-655 Dedham Street is improved with a golf club use also located within the SR-1 zone; and 421 Dedham Street is improved with a multi-family use located within the Multi Residence 1 zone (**Attachment A**).

The Site was created in 1955 when the City took the land from a larger parcel for municipal purposes. At that time, the zoning ordinance required newly created lots in the SR-1 zone to have at least 140 feet of frontage and contain at least 25,000 square feet of lot area. Because the parcel has no frontage and only 16,900 square feet of lot area, the parcel is substandard for a new lot in the SR-1 zone. As such, variances would be required from the Zoning Board of Appeals to convert the lot from an unbuildable to a buildable lot. Further, the parcel could not be combined with an adjacent parcel to create a buildable lot for the below reasons:

- 197 Countryside Road has 160 feet of frontage and 25,878 square feet of lot area. If combined with the Site, the combined parcel would have 160 feet of frontage and 42,778 square feet of lot area. To create two separate buildable lots, the combined parcel would require 280 feet of frontage and 50,000 square feet of lot area;

- 483-655 Dedham Street is a golf club use and creating a separate buildable lot using the Site's lot area would require 140 feet of frontage along Winchester Street and 8,100 square feet of lot area be taken from the parcel; and
- 421 Dedham Street is a multi-family use approved by Council Orders #55-80, #55-80 (2), and #55-80 (3). Any new dwelling on this parcel would require an amendment to the Council Orders.

To inform the Reuse Committee's (the "Committee") deliberations, the Planning Department spoke with the Assessing Department who stated that unbuildable vacant lots are valued at between \$4 and \$10 per square foot, which results in a value of between \$67,600 and \$169,000 for the Site. Should the Committee recommend the parcel be sold or leased, the Site should be rezoned from the PUB zone to either the SR-1 zone or the MR-1 zone, assuming the winning bidder is an abutter. Once the site is rezoned, the winning bidder would have to file a plan at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds to combine the Site with their property.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**ATTACHMENT A:**      Zoning Map

# Attachment A Baldpate Water Tower Zoning Map

*City of Newton,  
Massachusetts*



## Legend

- Property Boundaries
- Single Residence 1
- Multi-Residence 1
- Public Use



The information on this map is from the Newton Geographic Information System (GIS). The City of Newton cannot guarantee the accuracy of this information. Each user of this map is responsible for determining its suitability for his or her intended purpose. City departments will not necessarily approve applications based solely on GIS data.

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
Mayor - Ruthanne Fuller  
GIS Administrator - Douglas Greenfield

02.35 50 75 100 125 150 175 200 225 250 275  
 Feet

Map Date: October 16, 2020

