



# Friends of Newtown Seniors (FONS) Roundtable

September 24, 2024,

**Discussion Highlights**

Newtown Senior Center

## Shopping in Newtown

A small group of seniors met at the Senior Center to discuss shopping in Newtown. Two tag lines capture the essence of the discussion

- Plenty of Food and Drugs (grocery stores and drug stores)
- A town of ‘used to have’

### Shopping patterns

Participants were given a survey about Newtown Shopping

1. How often do you shop in Newtown? Few times a month was greater than Few times a week
2. How often do you go outside Newtown to shop? 1 to 3 times a month was the most common answer
  - a. Costco and other stores on Federal Road can be reached without driving on I84
  - b. Trader Joe requires travel on I84 and is too far away
3. Percentage of shopping on-line? 20% (Skewed to the high side by a 50% response)
4. Do you use drive through or curbside pick-up? All but one person responded “Never”

### Used to have

- Equestrian tack shop
- Art supply store
- Clothing store
- Bike shop
- Panera Bread and the little place on West Street behind the Meeting House. (bakery)
- Etc.

### Stores that would be successful in Newtown

- Book Store
  - Staffed by book lovers
  - With a coffee shop
  - With Art Supplies
  - On Fairfield Hills where there is a lot of foot traffic
- Dress Store offering the basics
- Trader Joe
- Bring back the “Used to have” stores above
- Cozy Coffee Shop where customers can linger and socialize
- Fast casual food



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### **Store that many in at the Roundtable didn't know were in Newtown**

- Gift Store (Queen Street)
- Toy Store (Lexington Gardens)
- Bakery (Uncle Matt's)
- Butcher Shop

### **Inhibitors to shopping in Newtown**

- Not enough options
- Left turns out of strip malls on South Main Street

### **Would a senior discount program make you more likely to shop in Newtown?**

- On the survey most said yes
- During discussion the absence of places people want to shop became a main point against the value of a senior discount program
- Some Newtown retailers give senior discounts if asked:
  - Newtown Hardware
  - Dunkin

### **Questions and Follow-up**

- What is the income distribution of Newtown?
- Where do the very wealthy Newtown residents shop?