

Dear Councilor Schwartz and Members of the Land Use Committee:

Please pass the new Northland proposal to construct a housing, office, and retail development that would occupy the lot between Oak and Needham Streets and the Upper Falls Greenway. I believe this development will benefit the City of Newton in two primary respects:


- 1. by providing the largest single injection of affordable housing in the city's history*
- 2. by installing a public transportation mobility hub with routes to popular nearby MBTA and commuter rail locations and other high-travel commuting and common interest destinations in Newton, Cambridge and Boston.*

Though Newton has always been a highly desirable, suburban city, with average housing prices currently soaring near the 1 million dollar mark, our city is excluding the young, vibrant and culturally diverse individuals that Newton needs to maintain its relevance while continuing to invest in its elite schools, libraries, local business and other resources. The ~120 affordable housing units promised by Northland's multi-use development will establish in brick and mortar our city's commitment to housing security and affordability for all of our neighbors. It will also bolster our local economy, cultivating millions in tax income which the City of Newton can use to invest back into our community. Lastly, local affordable housing with access to green spaces and walkable paths, as well as the public transportation access to other points in Newton and Boston will provide lovely and livable housing options for Newton seniors on fixed incomes - a population growing locally almost as fast as Newton's home prices.

The public transportation access referenced above would be provided by Northland in what they are calling a "mobility hub". Operated by the 128 Business Council, this shuttle service would be located on the Needham Street portion of the development and would provide shuttle service to residents outside of the development as well as inside, thereby attempting to reduce local traffic and our residents' carbon footprint.

Please pass Northland's development proposal and fortify the affordable housing access, relevancy and sustainability of Newton.

Sincerely,



Abraham Brownell