

Dear Councilors,

As a long time resident of Newton, I've seen the city change over the years. Overall, Newton has become an even better place to live and work. But one unfortunate by-product of having such an outstanding community is that affordable housing becomes scarce. This disproportionately impacts senior citizens across the city, many of whom are on a fixed income or stretching their retirement accounts as far as they can.

This isn't a tough reality just for Newton seniors--it is also a tough reality for younger professionals who just can't afford to live in the community where they grew up. This is a major problem and it threatens the vibrant diversity of our community. To combat this troubling trend, Newton needs to make some adjustments and better plan for the future. Northland's Needham Street development should be a cornerstone of that planning.

The Needham Street development would put 123 affordable housing units on the Newton real estate market upon its completion. We need these new units. I completely understand why some in the community are concerned about more traffic in the area, but I believe that the challenges there do not outweigh the benefits of more affordable housing. Beyond that, Northland has taken some excellent steps to lessen traffic impacts that I think people in the neighborhood should be open-minded about. I, for one, am very excited to utilize the development's proposed Mobility Hub.

Please approve this project and bring more affordable housing to Newton.

Thank you for your consideration,

Aimee Sprung  
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Waban, MA