

Dear Councilors and Land Use Committee Members

I am writing to state my support of the Northland development project slated to be built up on the land currently occupied by the Marshalls Shopping Plaza by Oak and Needham Streets near the Upper Falls Greenway. I support this project for two primary reasons: 1. It will contribute 123 new affordable housing rentals to the city; and 2. It will provide more housing options that will attract millennials to the city.

The first benefit of this project - the injection of affordable housing - is an unequivocal benefit to the community. I recently learned that it regularly takes a decade to receive affordable housing in Newton via a waiting list. Clearly, there is just not enough housing available for those who find themselves in a time of life where they require this benefit. This is an injustice that requires immediate remedying.

Secondly, our city of mostly single family homes faces the unpalatable truth that we risk becoming an ever more parochial community as our current population ages because we do not offer enough variety of housing options to attract residents and families in their early careers. Who - just starting out - can afford a 1 million dollar pricetag on a residential home? If we want our city to maintain its reputation as a progressive, suburban, connected and globally aware community, we need to make sure we know how to attract millennials to invest in our schools and city as a whole. Today's millennials are looking for work/life balance; they are much more likely to change jobs every two to three years - potentially requiring a change in location; and they are adopting transit-oriented residences and other environmentally sustainable commuting options. These values directly contradict the purchase of exorbitantly expensive single-family homes that tie up family purse-strings and necessitate car travel to and from work each day and more than one car per family.

Supporting developments like the one proposed by Northland that will increase housing options in Newton is a forward-thinking step for our city.

Thank you for your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Stavis'. The signature is stylized with a large 'E' and a long, sweeping tail that loops back.

Emily Stavis  
Newton Centre