

To the Newton City Council:

I am writing to urge Newton City Council to support the Northland development plan for the area between Needham Street to Tower Road and to the Upper Falls area of Newton. Not only will the Northland plan transform some of the unmanicured and unsightly areas of overgrowth over by South Meadow Brook and convert old and barely-used parking lots and buildings into green space and local businesses, but it also has - I believe - correctly assessed Newton's need to attract Boston-employed young singles, couples and families to retain and reinvigorate the community that has made Newton such a desirable place to live for decades.

Boston-employed millennials are well-educated, skilled, engaged citizens who, often, are not looking to purchase (or cannot yet afford) large single-family homes, but who would appreciate and want to preserve and build community resources in Newton (the Newton Free Library, Crystal Lake swimming, and the Hemlock Gorge trail, to name a few). The 800+ residences promised by the Northland development plan along with the mobility hub that would provide shuttle transportation to the Highlands MBTA stop and Needham Heights commuter rail - among others - would enable Newton to attract these community-building young people as well as their spending power.

Other Boston-area cities, such as Melrose, for instance, have encouraged developments that afford less green space and local business options than that proposed by Northland, and they have seen their communities become stronger. This proposal goes above and beyond the norm of development seen in surrounding communities. Northland's plan will entice millennial residents, Newton will capture their hearts, and the whole city will benefit. For these reasons and more, I urge you approve the Northland's proposal for Needham Street as soon as possible. Thank you.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Leavey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Joe Leavey
15 Southwick Rd.