

Dear Land Use Committee of the Newton City Council:

I am a resident of Newton living in the Waban area of the city, and I would like to “cast my vote” in favor of Northland’s proposed re-development of the plot of mostly empty and underutilized land on Needham Street.

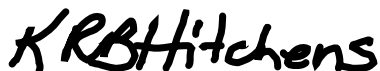
Northland’s development project proposal includes what they’re calling a “Mobility Hub”, which would enable nearby residents to take advantage of a shuttle bus service running to and from the MBTA station at Newton Highlands, the commuter rail at Needham Heights, Kendall Square in Cambridge, and a direct route to Boston for local commuters. The Mobility Hub also would provide for pick up and drop off for ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft. With the addition of over 1,000 bicycle parking spaces, this project is doing everything it can to incentivize every mode of transportation other than cars.

For Newton residents who commute outside of the city, these public transportation options could completely change how many plan their travel to and from work each day. We’re so close and such an important part of the Greater Boston area, yet we have struggled to provide adequate public transportation options that are suitable for regular commuters. I believe I speak (or write) for many of my commuting neighbors when I say that we gladly would make an effort to resign our car-commuting strategies that contribute to environmental degradation as well as heavy traffic and infuriatingly slow commute times in favor of viable public transportation options, should Newton choose to make these available.

Due to the increased volume of commuters that the Needham Street development would attract, it only makes sense for Northland to mitigate any negative effects on local traffic patterns (the gauntlet of Needham Street especially) by installing a shuttle service like the one they have proposed in the development’s Mobility Hub. This feature would be an asset to the development as well as a boon to the surrounding neighborhoods, and I, for one, plan to take advantage.

I enthusiastically support Northland Investment Corporation’s Needham Street Development, and I ask you to as well.

Truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "KRBT Hitchens". The letters are stylized and connected, with a prominent "K" and "H".

Krista Hitchens  
653 Chestnut Street  
Waban, MA