

To: The City of Newton Land Use Committee

Re: Northland Development Sustainable Practices

From: Timo Van Dam, Newton Centre

Land Use Committee Members:

I am a resident of Newton particularly concerned with the city's efforts to convert and develop housing and retail spaces using sustainable building practices. Northland Investment Corporation has proposed to build such a development by the old Oak Street mill building and Needham Street in the Newton Upper Falls.

Currently, there are a few large parking lots servicing some box stores occupying this plot of land. Apart from being underutilized, ugly and unkempt, the hottop and flat roofs that fill this space from an aerial perspective also create a heat island effect, absorbing and retaining heat, which leads to higher energy costs for cooling, increased air pollution and contributes to climate change (see <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/reduce-urban-heat-island-effect>).

In place of these "heat islands," Northland will build mixed-use developments with intentionally distributed green spaces (9 total) and vertical garage car parking. Building roofs will be white; sidewalks will be lined with trees; roof gardens and solar panels are being considered. The entire structure with 800 rental units (123 of which will be reserved for affordable housing use) and 115,000 square feet of retail space will be built to adhere to LEED for Neighborhood Development standards. Also, Northland will build a Mobility Hub with shuttle service to commuting locales to encourage and attract residents who will take advantage of sustainable transit options.

Clearly this is a well thought-out development. Northland has prioritized sustainability in its planning, and I ask you to support Northland and this development along Oak and Needham Streets.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TVD', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Timo Van Dam
16 Braeland Ave