



Ruthanne Fuller,
Mayor

Barney Heath,
Director
Planning & Development

Members:

Lizbeth Heyer, Chair
Mark Caggiano
Eliza Datta
Chuck Eisenberg
Ann Houston
Josephine McNeil
David Rockwell
Marva Serotkin
Albert Simmons

1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459
T 617/796-1120
F 617/796-1142

www.newtonma.gov

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Newton Housing Partnership

May 22, 2024

Chairperson Rossi
Zoning Board of Appeals
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA
02459

Dear Chairperson Rossi,

The Newton Housing Partnership (NHP) is pleased to support the Toll Brother's request for zoning relief for their proposed mixed-income housing development at 528 Boylston Street, in Newton.

This project will provide 184 units of badly needed housing, including 46 units with rents affordable to low- and moderate-income residents. Of these 46 units, nine (9) will be affordable to households at 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) and 36 will be affordable to households at 80% of AMI. This range of affordability, which the developer revised to create deeper affordability, puts this project in line with the city's goals of promoting diversity in its housing stock, goals that were established in its Comprehensive Plan, its 2040 Housing Leads Strategy of 2017 and its Economic Development Action Plan of 2019.

We are aware of the concerns raised by some in the neighborhood in connection with the project's size and impact on traffic and on-street parking. We believe the Toll Brothers response addresses these concerns by reducing the project size from 244 units to 184 units (a drop in the unit count by 25%), reducing the building height from 6 stories to 5 stories and increasing the rear setback to Hagen Road from 35 feet to 69 feet. The project sponsor has also planned for more open space amenities, improved traffic management for greater safety, and improved stormwater management.

The members of NHP are mindful of Newton's commitment to the Metro Mayor's Coalition landmark housing production goal: to build 185,000 new units by 2030 in 15 surrounding communities. This goal cannot be reached unless we find ways of producing our share of new housing units at scale, and this project's addition of 184 housing units provides a meaningful step in that direction.

We are pleased also that the proposed ZBA approval will include a condition that the affordability protections will be placed on the affordable units in perpetuity, that the affordable units will be dispersed evenly throughout the project, and that they will be of the same bedroom mix as the other units in the project.



Ruthanne Fuller,
Mayor

Barney Heath,
Director
Planning & Development

Members:
Lizbeth Heyer, Chair
Mark Caggiano
Eliza Datta
Chuck Eisenberg
Ann Houston
Josephine McNeil
David Rockwell
Marva Serotkin
Albert Simmons

1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459
T 617/796-1120
F 617/796-1142

www.newtonma.gov

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Newton Housing Partnership

Our recommendation comes with two conditions that we have encouraged the developer to pursue: to connect the households in the affordable units with agencies in the area who can provide services, such as referral to child care and job training, and that they explore enhanced methods for transportation access, such as a shuttle service to the area transit system.

The NHP is pleased to offer strong support for the 528 Boylston Street project and its contribution of badly needed units to our housing supply.

We believe this project will be of great benefit to our City.

On behalf of the Partnership,

Lizbeth Heyer, Chair

CC:
Mayor Fuller