



main: 617 • 674 • 5100 fax: 617 • 674 • 5101

Massachusetts Biotechnology Council
300 Technology Square, Eighth Floor
Cambridge, MA 02139

February 2, 2015

Newton Board of Aldermen
Scott F. Lennon, President
Newton City Hall, Room 105
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Re: Comments on Atrium Wellness Center (Petition #2-15)

Dear President Lennon and Honorable Aldermen:

The Massachusetts Biotechnology Council is a non-profit association of more than 680 biotechnology companies, hospitals, non-profit research and academic institutions, and others dedicated to advancing the research, development, and manufacture of medical products that improve, extend and save lives.

We are pleased to offer this letter of support for the approval of a special permit for Atrium Center, in order to allow laboratory uses at the site.

We are part of an industry that has historically taken the lead in developing safety guidelines for its workers and the greater public – often in advance of public laws and regulations. As a result, in the 30+ year history of biotechnology in Massachusetts, no incident has occurred within a biopharmaceutical laboratory which has had an adverse effect upon the larger community. This standard of performance is maintained not only because the industry is highly regulated and controlled, but also because good laboratory and manufacturing practice and safety considerations of the highest standard are essential for our industry to continue to provide its lifesaving products.

MassBio encourages communities that host biopharma companies to adopt the National Institutes of Health Guidelines on rDNA Research as part of their health regulations (see our *Community Guide to Biotechnology* at www.massbio.org/economic_development/bioready_communities). The City of Newton has already taken this step. Any biotechnology company operating in Newton, therefore, that is working with regulated biological agents will have an institutional biosafety board (IBB), with community representation, per NIH guidelines. For BSL-1 and BSL-2 level facilities, laboratories comparable to high school and medical office labs in terms of use of biological agents, adherence to these guidelines provides appropriate protections for laboratory workers and the community beyond.

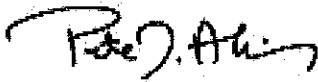
We are often contacted by municipal officials about laboratory uses in mixed-use commercial buildings. Again, because of the highly regulated nature of the industry, laboratory uses in mixed use buildings are commonplace. We also note, not only would a biopharmaceutical tenant need

to adhere to NIH standards, for example, it would also have to follow a number of other local, state, and federal regulations (see again, *Community Guide*).

The biopharmaceutical industry exceeds 60,000 employees, 500 companies, and has grown in employment by 40 percent over the past decade in Massachusetts. The 167 drug products developed and commercialized by Massachusetts-headquartered companies have a patient population focus of 230 million people in the U.S. alone. We would be pleased to support Newton in this project and others in increasing the viability of Newton as a destination for this important industry.

We appreciate your review of our comments. Please contact us if you need additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Abair". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "A".

Peter Abair
Director, Economic & Global Affairs