

January 5, 2017

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Newton City Clerk

To: Mayor Setti Warren
Newton City Councilors

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David A. Olson, CNC

I am a Newtonville homeowner. I have been proud to own a two-family building which I rent out for reasonable rent to my tenants. Now I find that there is a five-story apartment complex going up on the corner of Washington and Walnut Streets, where the rents are going to be almost double what I charge my tenants. And this is in addition to the apartment building going up over the Austin Street parking lot.

The North side of Newton has always been the place for people who work hard and save money to live a reasonably good life. Yet now it seems that greed is taking over our part of Newton. And the neighborhood that I know will be different. It will be a playground for the wealthy people who can afford outrageous rents. It will cause Washington Street to become another Route 9, inviting developers to build what regular people cannot afford.

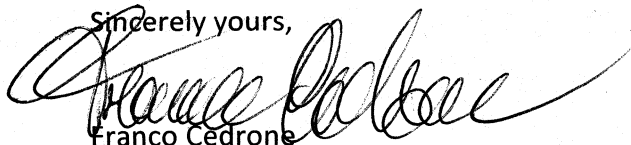
But the worst thing is that some Newton politicians think that they are "improving" the neighborhood and at the same time providing "affordable housing." It is the opposite. Affordability is leaving Newtonville. Advertising a project as "affordable" is a way to justify what is unjust.

That is the kind of arrogance that should have no place in an elected official—an official who is a representative of the people.

What is reasonable is to keep the current zoning of the Orr Block. There will still be a new building. The developer has a right. But to give a gift to a developer by allowing a 164-unit high-rent apartment complex is to ignore the community that you represent. And it could eventually destroy the great community that we have now.

Please vote NO on the rezoning of the Orr Block.

Sincerely yours,



Franco Cedrone