

Nadia Khan

From: David A. Olson
Sent: Monday, December 05, 2016 9:08 AM
To: citycouncil
Cc: Nadia Khan
Subject: FW: Orr Block

-----Original Message-----

From: Fred Goldstein
 Sent: Friday, December 02, 2016 6:52 PM
 To: David A. Olson
 Subject: Orr Block

To the City Council,

I am a Newton resident as well as a current business tenant of the Orr Block. I oppose the current Korff plan for the block. It has several issues that haven't been adequately addressed, and which will cause the building, as planned, to have a negative impact on the community.

Parking is a big problem. The original plan called for the minimum required residential parking. It is insane to believe that Newton residents will go car-free in favor of a bicycle and occasional unreliable rush-hour MBTA transit to downtown Boston. A bicycle is no substitute for a car, especially in our climate. Jobs are not all in downtown Boston; there is very poor T service to East Cambridge, Rt.

128, Wells Ave., and other places where Newton residents are relatively likely to work. This is simply NOT a Transit Oriented Development, regardless of what the developer says. A real TOD must have frequent day and night mass transit. Yet the Newtonville train inbound is in the early afternoon, and bus service, already sparse, stops around 8 PM.

Yet the plan has been revised, made worse, so that tenants don't even get a parking space, but must pay for it. They will even get a bribe, towards a T pass, if they don't use a parking space in the resident's garage. The likely impact is obvious: Residents will park on the street, on neighboring blocks beyond the meters if possible. This will worsen the parking in the neighborhood, especially in the business area, which is already bad. Employees of other buildings do not have enough parking, and compete with commuter rail riders for the few long-term spaces. The commercial spaces proposed for the building are also inadequate. Besides being too few in number, they are only 9' wide, narrower than standard, and with the high percentage of SUVs and minivans in Newton, vehicles are likely to not fit into a single space. Luxury car drivers also tend to straddle two spaces to keep their cars from being hit by doors. Thus the parking spaces should be full width, and counted accordingly. And any development on site should be required to help, not worsen, the village parking situation.

Mr. Korff's development also impacts drivers from around the city. He removes Sam's Sunoco, the last gas station in the village center. And he has acquired Jack's Gas, at Kempton and Washington, as part of his next major project, redevelopment of the land now occupied by The Barn and nearby. This will make getting cars fixed harder, and probably cause the remaining few filling stations to raise their prices, already higher than in towns to our north and west, to be even higher.

Frankly I wouldn't want to ride a bicycle along Washington St., even if it wasted space on two dedicated bike lanes. Besides the noise, the exhaust from the adjoining Turnpike makes the air quality relatively poor, and it has been found that microparticulates from freeway exhaust cause disease in residents of nearby blocks. Bicycling can be a vigorous

aerobic exercise, but the last place you want to do an aerobic activity is in freeway exhaust. Washington St. should be left alone.

Fred Goldstein
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