

Nadia Khan

From: David A. Olson
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 6:03 PM
To: citycouncil
Cc: Nadia Khan
Subject: FW: Proposed Orr Block Development

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From: HELEN NAYAR
 Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 5:51 PM
 To: David A. Olson
 Subject: Proposed Orr Block Development

Mr. Olson,
 Please pass this letter to the City Council.
 Thank you.
 Helen Nayar

To the Members of the Newton City Council:

Many of us have spoken and written to this council about the negative impact on the village of Newtonville of a dense, 5-story series of buildings with at least 160 apartments as proposed by Mr. Korff and his people. We have therefore requested that Mr. Korff's application to rezone this land be denied.

We are asking once again that this council deny the application for rezoning because above all it is not in the best interest of the village of Newtonville or of the city of Newton. The facts of this issue (not the "alternative facts") support our request.

For example,

Contrary to the developer's pitch, this area is not transit-oriented. If you doubt this, look it up under the Dept of Transportation's description of TOD.

We have and have quoted this description to LUC many times. Also, giving people coupons to the commuter rail---which runs only East-West when it runs---will not solve this critical problem. Note also the MBTA's new schedule reducing the stops in Newton further.

The traffic at this juncture (Walnut and Washinton Streets) is already very heavy. We who live here and travel this area daily experience this heavy traffic now. The developer's traffic survey does not hold water in the face of our experience. Changing a couple of lights and putting in bike lanes to nowhere and butt-outs will not mitigate this traffic. In fact, adding at least 200 cars (likely more) for the residents of this proposed development, will create traffic congestion we cannot currently imagine. It will also create many safety risks for the children going to and from F.A. Day and Horace Mann and Newton North who currently traverse these roads.

The developer's statements that office buildings are "not profitable" in this area is belied by the purchase of 313 Washington street---an office building a bit East of the Orr Block---by Grander Partner's LLC who calls this location .."a premier price alternative to downtown Boston's soaring rental prices.....Consequently the property boasts exceptional historic occupancy ---consistently more than 90%."

The former speaks to the fact that Mr Korff's plan emphasizes rental housing over commercial use. This would diminish the commercial tax base and increase the tax burden on residents. We have seen this trend in process this year. Let's turn it around by increasing our commercial base.

Newton is now organizing an all-city rezoning plan paid of course by our taxpayers. Let us not do spot rezoning of this sort and live to regret our decisions. Let us ensure open spaces and a garden city environment and safe streets. Let us not become an urban cement town.

There are many other reasons to deny Mr Korff's request that others have written you about. Important among them is that over 3000 Newton residents have signed a petition requesting this Council to deny the request for rezoning. And in a 2014 survey by Beautiful Newtonville 80% of respondents said they would prefer a development of three stories or less.

By denying this application, we are asking this Council to carry out both its fiduciary responsibilities to the city and residents and its promise to protect the welfare of the residents of this the city.

Thank you for your attention.

Helen D. Nayar
75 Grove Hill Avenue
Newtonville 02460