

Washington Place – Washington Place_Residential Health Hazard Living Near Highway.Docx
PETITION #179-16 & #180-16

Good Day LUC chairman, council members, fellow Newtonites and concerned parties.

My name is James Pacheco. I reside in Newton Highlands on Circuit Ave. I'm a retired Engineering Consultant with over 40 years experience.

This memo is regarding the PETITION #179-16 & #180-16, NW corner of Washington and Walnut Streets – Washington Place (the "Site") submitted by Mark Newtonville, LLC (the "Petitioner").

Due to this developer's location near the major state expressway (Route 90), I believe there should be no zoning change and that residential housing should be prohibited at this site to protect the inhabitants, and the city of Newton should only allow business use zoning for all new developments within this 1,500 feet of this expressway.

If we allow this type of residential development to occur at this site, I believe that in ten years from now if we were to look back, we would all be having regrets. The city now has a choice to do the right thing to protect our future citizens. We cannot hope that science and technology will resolve these health and safety issues when months of exposure to these toxic levels of pollution near our highways are considered to be hazardous to residents.

Here is the rationale for this recommendation as published recently in highly regarded sources.

Note, there are many other articles on this same health hazard issue.

Excerpt from American Lung Association:

Living Near Highways and Air Pollution

<http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/outdoor/air-pollution/highways.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

The number of people living "next to a busy road" may include 30 to 45 percent of the urban population in North America, according to the most recent review of the evidence. In January 2010, the Health Effects Institute published a major review of the evidence by a panel of expert scientists. The panel looked at over 700 studies from around the world, examining the health effects. They concluded that traffic pollution causes asthma attacks in children, and may cause a wide range of other effects including: the onset of childhood asthma, impaired lung function, premature death and death from cardiovascular diseases, and cardiovascular morbidity. The area most affected, they concluded, was roughly 0.2 to 0.3 miles (300 to 500 meters) from the highway.

Excerpt from The Boston Globe:

New evidence of the dangers of living near highways

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/04/13/new-evidence-dangers-living-near-highways/hVygTnY4iyn9YRoNSwWtGI/story.html>

A new study of Boston residents who live or spend a significant amount of time near Interstate 93 and the Massachusetts Turnpike has found that their exposure to microscopic metals and chemicals spewed from vehicles increases their chances of suffering a heart attack or stroke.

Excerpt from Think Progress Organization:

Living Near A Highway Is Terrible For Your Health. 1 In 10 Americans Do It

<https://thinkprogress.org/living-near-a-highway-is-terrible-for-your-health-1-in-10-americans-do-it-f6359360c70e#.8yl2cpswj>

The worst air quality in the United States can be found within about 5 football fields of any highway—where 1 in 10 Americans live. Millions of Americans breathe this air every day. And as a result, they suffer from an increased risk of cardiac disease, according to a new study from [researchers at Tufts University and Boston University](#).

The study, slated for publication in the journal Environment International, looked at “ultrafine” pollutants from car exhaust rather than the larger pollutants that are traditionally the focus of air quality research. Researchers found that high concentrations of ultrafine particles—500 times smaller in diameter than the width of a human hair—are just as toxic as larger particles. While larger particles settle in the lungs, these particles penetrate into the bloodstream, causing inflammation and elevated cholesterol levels. Chronic exposure can cause dangerous plaque buildup in the arteries and eventually lead to heart attack or stroke.

Pease vote “NO” on this zone change request for this site.

Thank you for hearing my concerns.

James Pacheco

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