

Nadia Khan

From: David A. Olson
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 1:59 PM
To: citycouncil
Cc: Nadia Khan
Subject: FW: No on Current Orr Block Special Permit

From: Jenny Bell |
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 7:20 PM
To: David A. Olson
Subject: No on Current Orr Block Special Permit

Newton City Councilors,

Thank you for all that serve on the Land Use Committee and have worked tirelessly with the developer and the community on the special permit application for the parcel on the corner of Washington and Walnut Streets. While I am excited to see that parcel developed, I cannot support the special permit application in its current form due to the following reasons:

- 1) The structure is too tall. At 60 feet and 5 stories, I believe this structure is not compatible in "visual scale" to the surrounding community, especially since it abuts the Newtonville Historic District. Using the Masonic Hall as demonstrating "visual scale" I feel is disingenuous as the Masonic Hall does not have 25% of the massing that this structure will have. Also, planting a 5 story building on that corner will set a terrible precedent for developments up and down Washington St that are sure to come in the next few years.
- 2) There are not nearly enough **truly** affordable units in this project to justify the scale. There are only 24 **truly** affordable units in the project, and 20 units of naturally affordable housing will be lost to this development. That is only a net gain of **4 units**. This number of **truly** affordable units would only be acceptable in a project of 100 units if we are really trying to create **truly** affordable rental units in Newtonville.
- 3) The proposed development does not have enough parking. The parking waiver on this project should not be granted, as with 45,000 sq ft of retail space, 110 retail parking spaces will not be enough parking to sustain the businesses, especially with the shortage of public parking we already have in Newtonville. Parking should also not be de-coupled from the market unit rents, as this is only going to clog our neighborhood with street parkers trying to save money on rent. Why rent a parking space when you can park on the streets near by for free? Also, 2 Zipcars parking spaces is not adequate for a development that is supposedly transportation-option-friendly. 10 Zipcar spaces would be more of a community benefit.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion and I hope you will reconsider this Special Permit application and make it more palatable for the residents and homeowners of Newtonville.

Sincerely,
 Jenny Bell

Newtonville Homeowner
11 Rossmere Street
Newtonville, MA 02460