



Chairman Marc Laredo
Newton City Council Land Use Committee
Newton City Hall
1000 Comm. Ave.
Newton, MA

Jan. 13, 2017

Dear Chairman Laredo:

The Newton-Needham Regional Chamber enthusiastically supports the proposed mixed use project at Washington Place.

Washington Place will contribute substantially towards the revitalization of Newtonville; bringing new customers and vitality to our village merchants and restaurants and open up new opportunities for existing businesses that may choose to move there or for new business enterprises. The exciting inclusion of a public space dedicated to the arts, with programming overseen by the NewArts Center, will add considerably to Newton's cultural vitality.

Washington Place will also provide homes for our seniors, our differently abled people, our millennials, our young couples and others who are struggling to find housing that meets their needs and/or lifestyle. This is a matter that is of great concern to businesses as they struggle to find housing to support their workforce. The allocation of 25% of the units as affordable, in perpetuity, including 10% as middle-income units, would contribute significantly to the housing crisis that exists in both Newton and Eastern Massachusetts.

The project's thoughtful, historically-respectful design, courtyard, brickwork and step backs will enhance the visual appeal of to a drab stretch of a vital commercial corridor. Sidewalk, bike lane and traffic improvements benefit this precarious intersection.

Washington Place's proposed re-zoning to MU4 is consistent what the then-Board of Aldermen had in mind when creating this new zone specifically for mixed use village centered, transit-oriented, mixed-use developments.

On behalf of Newton-Needham Regional Chamber's Board of Directors, which has voted unanimously in support of Washington Place, we urge the Land Use Committee and City Council to approve the MU4 zoning change and special permit for this exciting enhancement to our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Greg Reibman', with a long, sweeping underline.

Greg Reibman
President, Newton-Needham Regional Chamber