



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Newton Housing Partnership

November 7, 2019

Ruthanne Fuller,
Mayor

Honorable Mayor Ruthanne Fuller
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton, MA 02459

Barney Heath,
Director
Planning & Development

Dear Honorable Mayor Fuller,

Members:

Mark Caggiano
Eliza Datta
Chuck Eisenberg
John Hennessey
Lizbeth Heyer, Acting Chair
Kathy Marchi
Josephine McNeil
Marva Serotkin
Stephen Tise

Let me thank you again on behalf of the entire Newton Housing Partnership for entrusting us with the important job of advising you and the City Council on efforts to expand affordable housing opportunities in Newton. As we continue our work to advance your commitment to be a city that is affordable and welcoming to all, we are pleased to submit this letter in support of the Northland project that is currently before the City Council for a Special Permit that will bring an unprecedented 140 affordable housing units to Newton.

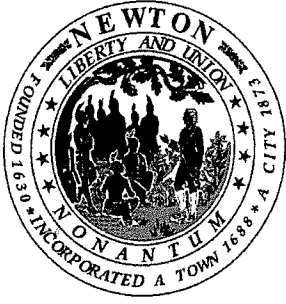
Earlier this year the Partnership appointed a four-member working group to evaluate the Northland petitioner's application. Working group members attended public hearings to better understand the project's impacts and listen to public comment. The petitioner also gave a presentation at a Partnership meeting that provided all Partnership members with a detailed understanding of the project, particularly the housing components, and the opportunity to comment and ask questions.

Based on our extensive review, the Partnership voted unanimously to support the project's Special Permit application. The Northland project's thoughtful design, public amenity spaces, mix of uses and transportation plan support the project's scale, which in turn supports desperately needed affordable housing in our community. The 800 new housing units also make a significant dent in the supply and demand equation, an important tool to solving our region's housing crisis and represent your commitment to the Metro Mayor's Coalition landmark housing production goal: to build 185,000 new units by 2030 in 15 surrounding communities.

The project complies with Newton's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, including the number and type of affordable units and the distribution of the units throughout the project. We were particularly impressed that one of the residential buildings will have extensive universal design features that will allow older adults to stay in their apartment as their physical abilities change. This is especially important for older adults who want to downsize and remain in our vibrant community but have few affordable and accessible options in Newton. We were also impressed with the extensive sustainability features and the proposed shuttle service, a creative way to solve the last mile gap in public transit access between the site and the Newton Center T stop.

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www.newtonma.gov




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On behalf of my colleagues on the Partnership, we thank you for supporting this well planned and important project and encourage the City Council to vote in support of the Special Permit.

Sincerely,

Ruthanne Fuller,
Mayor



Lizbeth Heyer
Acting Chair, Newton Housing Partnership

Barney Heath,
Director
Planning & Development

CC:

Council President Marc C. Laredo
Councilor Susan Albright
Councilor Jacob D. Auchincloss
Councilor Lisle Baker
Councilor Barbara Brousal-Glaser
Councilor Allan Ciccone, Jr.
Councilor James R. Cote
Councilor Deborah Crossley
Councilor Victoria L. Danberg
Councilor Andreae Downs
Councilor Leonard J. Gentile
Councilor Maria Scibelli Greenberg
Councilor Rebecca Walker Grossman
Councilor David A. Kalis
Councilor Andrea W. Kelley
Councilor Joshua Krintzman
Councilor Cheryl Lappin
Councilor Alison M. Leary
Councilor Richard A. Lipof
Councilor Christopher J. Markiewicz
Councilor Brenda Noel
Councilor Emily Norton
Councilor John Rice
Councilor Gregory R. Schwartz

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