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Barney S. Heath
Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 10, 2023

TO: Councilor Deborah Crossley, Chair, Zoning & Planning Committee
Members of the Zoning & Planning Committee

FROM: Barney Heath, Director, Department of Planning and Development
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director Department of Planning and Development

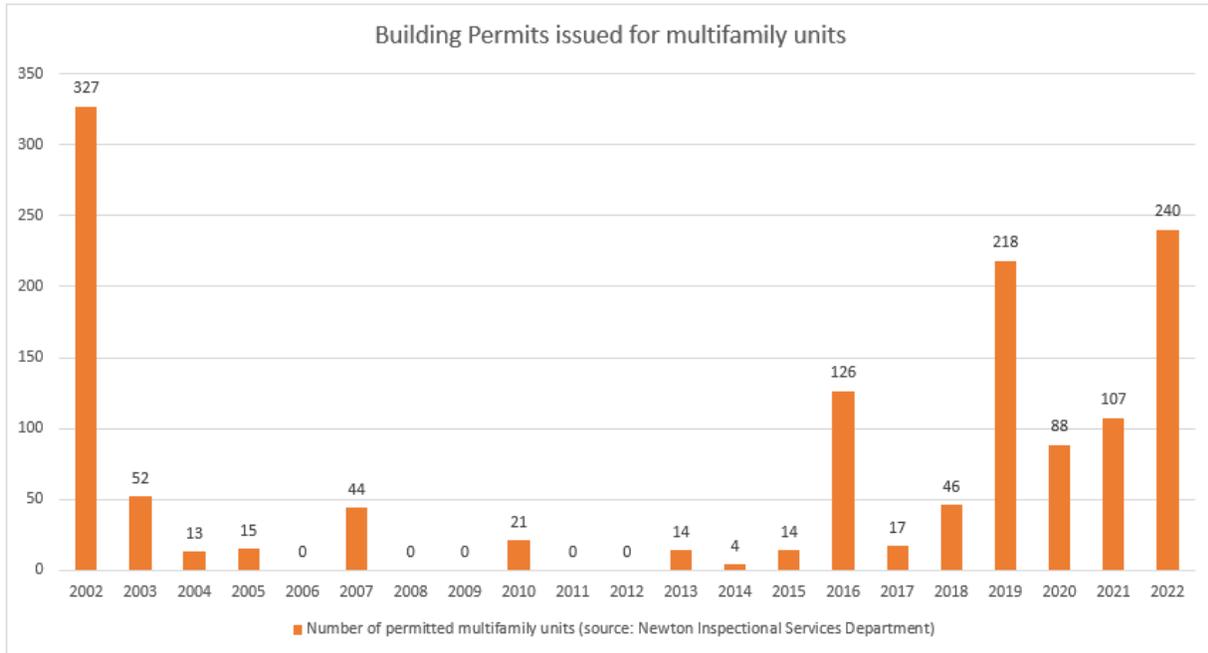
RE: **Multi-Family Housing Forecast**

CC: City Council
Planning Board
Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer

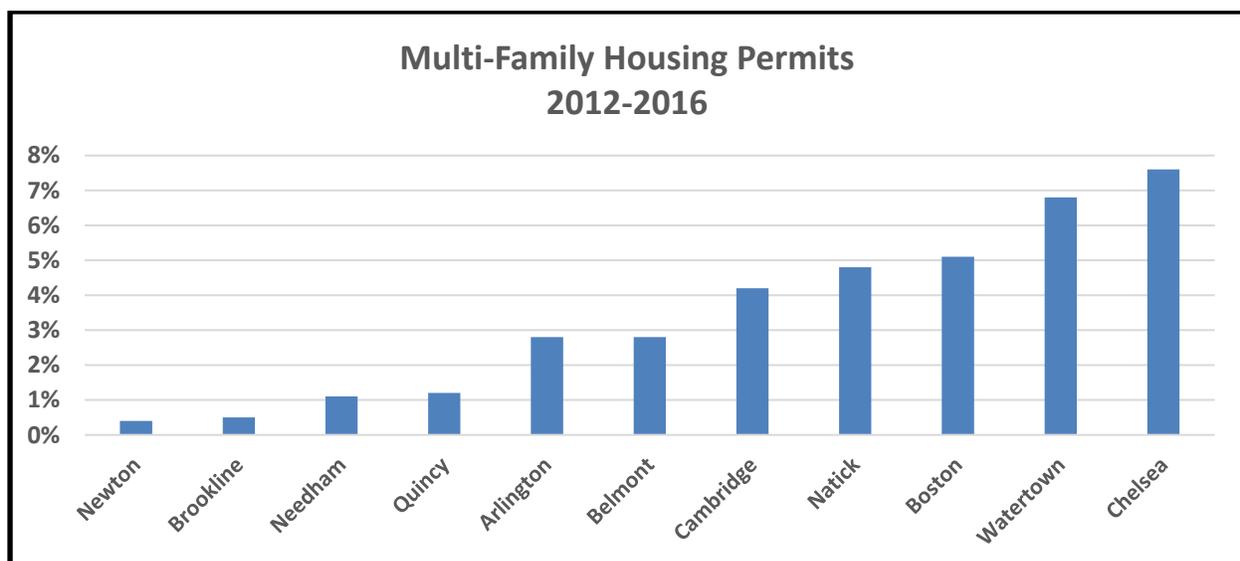
City Councilor Pam Wright presented data and information about multi-family housing permits and possible future development in the City (attached). The intent of this memo is to provide a common set of information regarding multi-family housing development.

How much multi-family housing has been built in the past twenty years in Newton?

The chart below shows multi-family housing building permits issued in Newton for the last twenty-one years. In 2002, 327 multi-family building permits were approved, followed by thirteen years of little multi-family activity. The average annual number of multi-family units issued over the roughly 20 year period equals 64 units /per year (including five years where no multi-family housing permits were issued). For context, Newton has 32,504 units of housing city-wide.



Putting the amount of building permits in Newton into the context of Greater Boston also provides perspective. The recent Boston Foundation’s 2022 Housing Report Card analyzed multi-family housing permit activity across Massachusetts cities and towns. For the five year period between 2012-2016, Newton issued 136 multi-family unit permits, or 0.4% of the total units in the Greater Boston region. This compares to neighboring Watertown (1,153 units – 6.8%), Arlington (565 units – 2.8%), Brookline (126 units – 0.5%), and Needham (126 units – 1.1%). During the same five year period, other Greater Boston communities’ numbers included Boston (15,255 units – 5.1%), Cambridge (2,249 units – 4.2%), Everett (1,182 units – 6.5%) Chelsea (1,104 units – 7.6%), Natick (710 units – 4.8%), Quincy (578 units – 1.2%), and Belmont (306 units – 2.8%). The chart below shows the comparable growth rates for the 5-year period used in the report.



The last five-year period, 2018-2022, saw Newton with a larger number of multi-family permitted units (699 – 2.2%) compared to the report’s time period. However, Newton’s growth rate remained lower compared to many other Greater Boston communities.

How much multi-family housing is currently in process?

The current multi-family housing forecast in Newton is complex and nuanced. The table below provides a listing of approved multi-family projects in various stages with the total number of units at 2,546. The table shows the affordable/market rate unit numbers, approval date by City Council (Special Permits) or ZBA (40B Comprehensive Permits), and the stage of permitting and development.

Notably 73% of all of the units comes from just four projects —Northland (800), Riverside (550), Dunstan East (292), and Riverdale (204). In addition, another 10% (279) of the total are attributable to two senior living facilities—Opus (174) and Crafts Street (105). Significantly, the approved projects generate approximately 532 units (21%) of permanent affordable housing, the vast majority of which will be reserved for households at 65% of area median income or lower, including one 100% deeply affordable project of 43 units at the West Newton Armory. In addition, one approved project will be providing, in lieu of on-site affordable units, a \$12 million contribution to the City’s overall affordable housing efforts in the city.

The timing and even the eventuality of seeing all 2,546 of these units being built has been threatened with climbing construction costs and higher interest rates. As widely discussed, the timetable and economic challenges at both Riverside (550) and Dunstan East (292) made these projects more of a wait-and-see in terms the developer requesting building permits, plus an anticipated construction period of 18-24 months before occupancy. Northland (800 units) is proceeding with site work but has not yet applied for a building permit for construction of any of the units. Of the 2,546 approved multi-family units only 353 units (14%) are currently under construction with another building permit applications under review for another 205 units (8%).

Other “housing pipeline” projects referenced in the memo would have even a longer road than the previously approved projects mentioned above and also would face the same uncertain economic markets.

Should the prospect of additional multi-family housing in the future be a reason to forestall future planning?

Newton, like its Greater Boston neighbors, is part of a housing ecosystem in crisis. Governor Healey included in her Inaugural comment the following: *“If we want Massachusetts to be a home for all, we need to build more place to live, and we need to make sure those homes are within reach. High housing costs are unacceptable for our people, our businesses, and our state’s future. We rise and fall as a state with the choices and commitments of every neighborhood. Today I’m asking every citizen to join this cause. That means building more housing next to transit hubs, taking another look at zoning, and preserving the housing we already have”*.

The recent Massachusetts MBTA Communities Law was developed to address this crisis. And Newton, as a rapid transit community under the regulations must adopt zoning, which provides for the capacity for future multi-family housing equal to 8,330 units. The Planning Department and Zoning and Planning

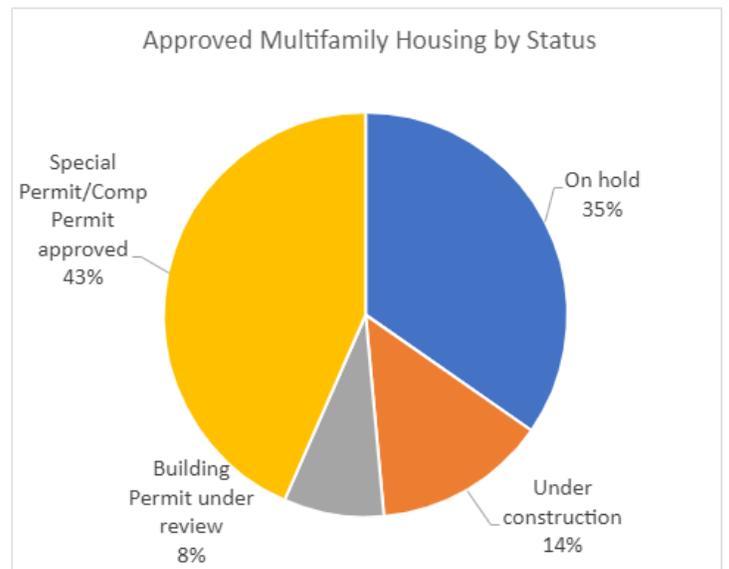
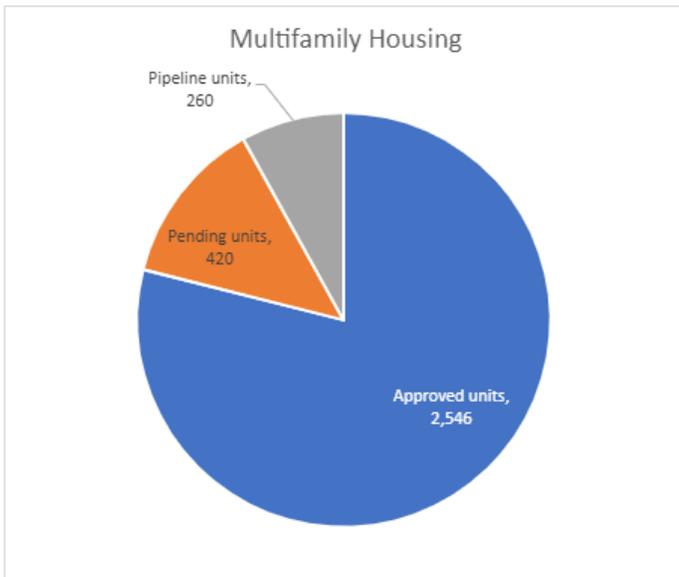
Committee have been engaged in thoughtful and formidable discussions around proposed village center zoning to provide for a good portion of this required capacity. Efforts need to proceed to identify appropriate locations for this capacity.

How does anticipated multi-family housing development relate to proposed Village Center Zoning?

The proposed village center zoning encourages development that fosters compact, pedestrian-oriented villages with a mix of residences, shops, offices, institutions, and opportunities for entertainment and is aligned with the vision of the City's future from plans such as the Comprehensive Plan, Housing Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, and Climate Action Plan. Housing will greatly help the vitality of our village centers by providing an opportunity for smaller, more diverse housing types in walkable village centers and near transit. Newton's village centers, many of which are adjacent to mass transit and near goods and services, are well-situated and stand to benefit from multi-family housing. Much thought has gone into carefully calibrating the proposed village center zoning to fulfill many objectives. Careful calibrations are in process as the Zoning & Planning Committee considers a revised version 2.0.

Anticipated Multifamily Housing	
Approved units	2,546
Pending units	420
Pipeline units	260
Total units	3,226

Approved Multifamily Housing Units by Status		
Status	Number of units	Percent of total
On hold	883	35%
Under construction	353	14%
Building Permit under review	205	8%
Special Permit/Comp Permit approved	1,105	43%
Total units	2,546	100%



Address	Housing Units				Approvals		On Hold	Building Permit		Construction Underway	Occupancy Permit	
	Market Rate Units	Affordable Units		Total Units	City Council - Special Permit	Zoning Board of Appeals - Comp. Permit		Under Review	Issued		Under Review	Issued
		at or below 80% AMI	at or below 110% AMI									
283 Melrose St (Turtle Lane) *	14	2	0	16	3/2016, 9/2021		X					
Golda Meir - 160 Stanton Ave	8	50	10	68		12/2018			X	X		
424-432 Cherry St	3	0	0	3	3/2019, 12/2021							
15-21 Lexington St	19	4	1	24	12/2019			X				
Northland - 156 Oak St **	660	120	20	800	12/2019							
956 Walnut St	6	1	0	7	12/2019			X				
264 Pearl St	3	0	0	3	12/2019				X	X		
20 Kinmonth Rd	20	3	1	24	12/2019				X	X		
Riverdale - 2-4 Los Angeles St	153	51	0	204		7/2020			X	X		
280 Newtonville Ave	15	3	0	18	7/2020							
Dunstan East - 1149 Washington St ***	219	73	0	292		7/2020, 11/2021	X					
Riverside - 355 Grove St	439	88	23	550	10/2020, 9/2021		X					
63-65 Broadway	3	0	0	3	2/2021				X	X		
1149-1151 Walnut St	20	4	1	25	5/2021		X					
Opus - 777 Winchester St	165	9	0	174	9/2021			X				
1092-1094 Chestnut Street	4	0	0	4	9/2021				X	X		
1114 Beacon St	28	5	1	34	11/2021				X	X		
667 Boylston St	4	0	0	4	11/2021				X	X		
967-969 Washington St****	23	4	1	28	12/2021							
145 Warren St	5	0	0	5	12/2021				X	X		
50 Highland Ave	4	0	0	4	12/2021				X	X		
383 Boylston St/50 Jackson St	10	2	0	12	3/2022							
34 Crafts St	105	0	0	105	11/2022							
416-418 Langley Rd	6	0	0	6	11/2022							
136-144 Hancock St	14	2	0	16	12/2022							
120 Norwood Ave	4	0	0	4	12/2022							
24 Wilson Cir	5	0	0	5	12/2022							
106 River St	8	1	0	9	1/2023							
1314 Washington St	41	8	1	50	1/2023							
1 Jackson St	6	0	0	6	1/2023							
West Newton Armory	0	43	0	43	1/2023							
Total units	2,014	473	59	2,546								
Percentage of total	79%	19%	2%	100%								

* Construction on hold pending resolution of ISD enforcement

** Demolition underway but construction timing unknown

*** Demolition underway but permitting and construction has been put on hold pending market conditions

**** Special Permit under appeal

Address	Proposed Housing Units				Pending Approvals	
	Market Rate Units	Affordable Units		Total Units	City Council - Special Permit	Zoning Board of Appeals - Comp. Permit
		at or below 80% AMI	at or below 110% AMI			
160 Charlemont St	307	103	0	410		Filed 9/2022
71 Commonwealth Ave	5	0	0	5	Filed 10/2022	
194 Adams St	5	0	0	5	Filed 1/2023	
Total units	317	103	-	420		
Percentage of total	75%	25%	0%	100%		

Multifamily Housing Units - Forecast	
Address	Total
528 Boylston St	244
41 Washington St	16
Total units	260



Memorandum

To: Barney S. Heath, Director of Planning and Development;
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director

From: Councilor Pam Wright

CC: City Council

Re: Housing Pipeline

Date: January 30, 2023

On Monday, January 23, 2023, I stated that since 2020 there are over 3,500 new units that have been approved or are in the pipeline. Approved units were permitted either through the special permit process in Land Use or as comprehensive permits issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals as a chapter 40B project. The pipeline units are projects at which preliminary discussions have been held with the Councilors of the appropriate ward or in development review team (DRT) meetings with the Planning Department. **These numbers are accurate and supported by the Planning Department's own data.**

On June 24, 2022, Deputy Director Caira provided housing data to the City Council (the relevant portion of her report for total housing is included at the end of this memorandum). In her report, she stated that 2,306 units had been approved but had yet to be constructed and 206 units were pending approval. This is a total of 2,512 new units.

The table below was presented in Director Caira's email.

FUTURE CONSTRUCTION

Approved but not yet constructed (non-congregate housing only)					
Address	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	Total
283 Melrose	0	6	10	0	16
432 Cherry				3	3
15-21 Lexington	4	13	7	0	24
280 Newtonville		8	10		18
Northland	80	360	320	40	800
956 Walnut				7	7
1149-1151 Walnut	8	10	7		25
15 Riverdale	20	87	74	23	204
160 Stanton Avenue		59	10		69
264 Pearl				3	3
20 Kinmonth	0	13	9	2	24
Riverside	27	291	208	24	550
Dunstan East	19	165	85	33	302
Opus (333 Nahanton)		68	106		174
1114 Beacon	0	16	17	1	34
967-969 Washington		1	27		28
145 Warren			4	1	5
383 Boylston/50 Jackson				12	12
1092-1094 Chestnut Street					4
667 Boylston				4	4
Total	158	1,097	894	153	2,306
Percent of Total	7%	48%	39%	7%	100%

Pending Approval (non-congregate housing only)					
Address	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	Total
304 Walnut	2	16	9		27
1314 Washington	0	21	23	6	50
34 Crafts	0	85	44	0	129
Total	2	122	76	6	206

The Planning Department's June data only included projects that had been approved or were significantly along in the approval process as of June 2022. There are at least an additional 1,135 units under active consideration or have been approved that were not included in Ms. Caira's list, as shown below (approved projects are highlighted in yellow). Please note that this is not an all-inclusive list, and it omits a number of projects, especially smaller ones. Furthermore, to be conservative, I used 1,000 units in my talking points, not 1,135 units since some of these projects may still change.

In discussion with city or councilors

Address	Total units	status
24 Wilson Cir	5	approved
528 Boylston (Route 9) 40B	244	40B
63-65 Broadway	3	approved
Santander Bank 1314 Washington St (50 units were pending in previous list)		approved
106 River St	9	approved
416-418 Langley	6	approved
300 Elliot St	4	DRT
340 River	6	DRT
189 Adams	18	councilors
290 Watertown	5	UDC
136-144 Hancock (Walker)	16	approved
20 Shawmut park	3	DRT
Newton Centre -Citizens/Langley Pl	42	councilors
162 Lowell	3	DRT
Maguire Ct	173	councilors
194 Adams	5	councilors
120 Norwood	4	approved
1 Jackson St	6	approved
California St	12	councilors
72-80 Ober St	4	DRT
Charlemont 40B (by Northland)	410	40B
34 Crafts (105 plus 52 assisted living)		approved
50 Highland Ave.	4	approved
West Newton Armory	43	40B
20 Clinton St	4	councilors
71 Comm Ave	6	LU
Dudley Rd (75-125 units)	100	city
Total	1135	

NOTES:

- “LU” project is in land use for review.
- “DRT” project went through the development review team to verify it’s a viable project. I’ve only included small projects since these typically get approved and have less issues.
- “40B” projects are not reviewed by the city council but the ZBA, Zoning Board of Appeals, who have minimal oversight.
- “Councilors” means the project with drawings were presented to the councilors of the ward and/or neighborhood. For bigger projects, they may be shaped here for a quicker land use approval.
- “City” is the Dudley Road property sale, and the chosen developer will design 75 to 125 units. I used the average.

But these additional units are not the only ones under active consideration. There are at least 466 more units that I have not included in my list because these projects are in preliminary stages and further down the timeline:

Location	units
WN cinema - 3 properties	150+
793-821 Washington St	50
41 Washington St	16
Dunstan West	250

Furthermore, there are likely to be several other significant projects in the city in the next few years, including the following:

- The Star Market lot on Commonwealth Avenue in Auburndale (2.8 acres), was recently sold for \$25,000,000 to a developer.
- 1650 Washington Street (the 1.9 acre Chetwynde site) is for sale.
- 112 apartments at 129 North Street (Albemarle Gardens), a 4.4 acre site, just sold for \$30,000,000 and may likely be redeveloped with much greater density.

To conclude, the numbers I cited at the Zoning and Planning Committee meeting are very conservative. If we do nothing else regarding our zoning code, in the next few years we are likely to see an increase of at least 4,000 – 5,000 units of housing since 2020 – a fifteen percent increase. Of course, this would be before any additional development that is likely because of the new MBTA Communities Act.

Note 1: Number of units in 2020: 33,054 per Ms. Caira's email on 6/24/22 Housing Data for City Council used in housing calculation increase percentage. Chart is copied below.

City of Newton Housing Snapshot

Last updated: 06/21/22*

*Approved and Pending numbers updated

Housing Units

Housing Units *							
	Single Family	Condominium Units	Two Family Units	Three Family Units	Apartment Units	Accessory Apts	Total Housing Units
2010	17,210	4,391	5,890	888	3,535	3	31,917
2015	17,214	4,705	5,692	864	3,899	18	32,392
2020	17,184	5,235	5,386	819	4,328	102	33,054
Approved**		58			2,286		
Pending**		0			206		

Apartment Units by Bedroom						
	Efficiency Units	Studio Units	One Bedroom Units	Two Bedroom Units	Three Bedroom Units	Four Bedroom Units
2010	10	122	1,693	1,427	243	40
2015	12	131	1,875	1,567	268	46
2020	12	150	2,010	1,808	298	50
Approved	0	158	1,097	894	137	0
Pending	0	2	122	76	6	0

Sources: Existing housing units and apartment units by bedroom are provided by the Assessing Department, accessory apartments are provided by the Inspectional Services Department, and approved/pending and affordable housing data are provided by the Planning Department

* Two- and three-family units represent the total number of units, not the number of buildings. For example, one two family building contains two units. The number of two- and three-family units have decreased over time, which is likely due largely to the conversion to condos, not demolition of those units. Apartment units represent the total number of apartments, not apartment buildings. And properties assessed as "mixed-use" have been added to the single family units as those are primarily how Assessing classifies home businesses. Housing units do not include beds in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, congregate homes and dormitories.

** Approved and Pending numbers represents Special Permits that have been approved by or filed with the City Council and Comprehensive Permits that have been approved by or filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals. Approved housing units are expected to be phased in over a period.