

Good evening,

My name is John Pelletier and my wife and I live car-free at 92 Central Ave in Newtonville. I support the revised Option of the Orr Block Development and rezoning to MU4. We need more housing in Newton to meet demand and these units will help fill that need.

The changes presented tonight have improved both the style and scale of the project and I was very happy to see these improvements. A first floor height of 16' along with a good sidewalks width, massing and extended sidewalks at the corner will create a more pedestrian friendly environment for this part of Newtonville.

My background is in sustainable transportation and I am a project manager in transportation at *Harvard University*. I would like to speak to both the TDM elements as well as general access.

Newtonville is a transit accessible village, I would consider the project a Transit Oriented Development.

The sheer number of areas you can get to on a single seat ride is pretty comprehensive right now. Waltham, Watertown, Allston/Brighton, Downtown, and Needham on the bus, not to mention metro west communities, Fenway, Copley on the train. In Newton you can get to Nonantum, Newton Corner, West Newton, the Highlands, Upper Falls, Auburndale and with a bit of walking or a transfer, every other village in Newton, yes even Thompsonville. Does service need to be more frequent? Of course! Do they need to run later at night, yes! But these lines already get many people, around our community, every day.

The MBTA has its own problems, but they won't magically give us more service on these routes, we need more people to be living in our transit accessible village centers and demanding transit by using the current service and lobbying our elected officials to improve what we have. That helps residents of all ages have transit that better serves them, even if they are not in village centers.

Regarding the TDM elements of this project. At Harvard we provide a 50% discount for all employees for a T pass. Our transit share was 34% this year and our drive alone was 13%. TDM measures have been proven to reduce car ownership and single-occupancy vehicle trips. These include decoupling parking rates from rent, providing a pass subsidy of some kind, information packets for new and current residents, comprehensive and secure bike parking and allowing zipcar or other car sharing on site.

Finally in terms of bike access, protected lanes need to be provided through the project site, be that curb protected where curbing is being changed or parking protected in areas that are not getting curb changes. Protected bike lanes allow for residents cycling to the village to park easily and visit shops and restaurants. They reduce sidewalk riding by providing a safe place protected from moving vehicle traffic, and they improve the pedestrian experience. Protected bike lanes should be provided on both sides of Walnut through the project extent and across the bridge to the southern part of Newtonville.

While increasing bike access on Lowell is also a good idea, it would mainly serve commuting traffic passing through. As with drivers, 75% or so of bike trips are non-commuting, which means they are going to continue using Walnut as the prime destination corridor.

Washington St is the elephant in the room in regards to access, it is one of the prime east-west corridors and connects multiple destinations and schools. As a higher speed road, full protection for folks using a bike is all the more critical. The timing of how this project will fit in with paving and other improvements will be critical and I trust our new Director of Transportation and the city will be looking hard at how we can provide short term access while planning for longer term infrastructure that would meet seamlessly with what has been proposed in West Newton.

In conclusion I fully support this development and the additional housing and transportation opportunities it brings to Newton. Thanks!