

Nadia Khan

From: David A. Olson
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2016 11:07 AM
To: citycouncil
Cc: Nadia Khan
Subject: FW: Washington St/Walnut St Commercial Development

From: Ben Robinson [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, September 11, 2016 5:21 PM
To: David A. Olson
Subject: Washington St/Walnut St Commercial Development

I want to in the strongest terms support the redevelopment of the Washington St/Walnut St commercial project. I live in Newtonville and South Florida, and grew up in Brookline. I spent 19-yrs as a full time resident in SFLA, and what struck me since my return to the Boston area is how regressive the building/redevelopment processes are in Newton and New England in general. Leave it to the do nothings and this area would be farm lands and large estates. I am in commercial real estate, and over my 30-year career I have been an owner's representative in most major US MSA's, I would advise Newton to look at how Atlanta handled their growth in regards to establishing a public rapid transit network. In spite of Atlanta's urban sprawl, they some 20+ years ago constructed the MRTA system, along the train corridor and in close proximity to each station stop they increase the FAR density to allow for midrise and high-rise properties. Another example is the DC/Northern Virginia, Rosslyn to Ballston METRO corridor. Similar to Atlanta, the municipality increased the FAR along a narrow commuter corridor, with concentrations geared for the station areas. Both these examples illustrate what a coordinated development plan can yield to a community when rapid transit nodes are complemented with higher density commercial development. These projects enhance the area, Newton enjoys unprecedented rapid transit and highway access, which in my opinion is woefully under realized. I would recommend Newton go the other direction and embrace a hi density FAR transit node model for the area along Washington Street, the rail and highway corridor.

Best regards

Ben

Benjamin Robinson
[REDACTED]

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