

**Nadia Khan**

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**From:** John Sisson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 01, 2016 8:02 AM  
**To:** Marc C. Laredo; Gregory R. Schwartz; Scott F. Lennon; Jake Auchincloss; James R. Cote; John W. Harney; Deborah J. Crossley; Richard Lipof  
**Cc:** Nadia Khan; dolsen@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Letter regarding the "Orr Project" at Washington and Walnut streets

Dear Councilor Laredo and Esteemed Members of the Land Use Committee:

On November 1st, I will be staffing a public meeting for the Town of Dedham and, regretfully, will be unable to speak before the Land Use Committee in person. Still, I would like to voice my enthusiastic support for "Option A" of the proposed mixed-use development at the northwest corner of Washington and Walnut streets in Newtonville.

Having watched the project's design evolve over the past year, I am very happy to see changes the architect and developer have made for the benefit of the village center, the abutting residential properties to the north, the accessible public space around the development, and the neglected streetscape at the intersection of Washington and Walnut. This is exactly the kind of mixed-use development we should encourage in the city's village centers, especially in a transportation hub like Newtonville.

If I would suggest one change, it would be for the City Council to consider reducing the residential parking requirements, especially in a village center serviced by train and bus lines. The cost of structured underground parking prioritizes the storage of automobiles over the housing of people in a village center, and that is not good public policy.

In Dedham, which has fewer transit options, the Mixed-Use Bylaw requires only one parking space per residential unit. I believe the City of Newton is requiring 1.25 spaces per unit. For the residential portion of this project, that's 43 additional parking spaces at an estimated cost of \$20,000 to \$25,000 each. If you could decide what to do with \$860,000 to \$1,075,000, would you spend all of it on underground parking?

In Dedham Square, where I work, we have 147 residential apartments in mixed-use buildings. Sixty more apartments are currently under construction—and are already rented. Three new restaurants are under construction and, by this spring, Dedham Square will have 17 independent restaurants, from fine dining to coffee houses, including 10 establishments with liquor licenses.

You have no doubt received many arguments against this development. I respect those who voice their opposition and agree on the need for reasonable efforts to ensure this project addresses people's concerns. But the full "Option A" development, informed by this public process, should proceed.

Sincerely,

John Sisson

45 Greenlawn Avenue, Newton

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John Sisson

