Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
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Barney S. Heath
Director

August 1, 2024

[By Electronic Mail]

Kat Miller
Planning and Programs Specialist
Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency
One Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Project Eligibility Application/Site Approval

Project Name:	Alta Newton
Location:	34 Crafts Street; 36 Crafts Street; 38 Crafts Street; 48 Crafts Street; 50 Crafts Street; 19 Court Street; 21 Court Street
Number of Proposed Units:	234
Subsidizing Agency:	MassHousing
Applicant:	WP East Acquisitions, LLC

Dear Ms. Miller:

The Planning and Development Department, on behalf of the City of Newton, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Project Eligibility/Site Approval application recently submitted by WP East Acquisitions, LLC (the "Applicant") for Alta Newton (the "Project"). This letter constitutes the City's response to your letter addressed to Mayor Fuller, dated July 2, 2025, seeking comments regarding the Project.

The Planning and Development Department (the "Department") solicited written comments from abutters to the proposed project as well as from City staff, and members of the City Council and Boards and Commissions. Comments were received from abutters, neighbors, as well as the Newton Fair and Affordable Housing Partnership which can be found compiled in Attachment A.

Comments in Response to the Project Proposal

The Planning and Development Department offers the following comments in response to the information provided by the Applicant to help MassHousing evaluate this request for Project Eligibility/Site Approval:

A. Affordable Housing

- **Affordable Housing Need.** The need for affordable housing in Newton is vast, impacting extremely low-income individuals and families to those earning upwards of 120% of the area median income (AMI). These needs continue to persist as evidenced by the latest Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data published by HUD. Of the total 31,040 households in the City, 26% are low-to-moderate with incomes at or below 80% of the AMI. Startlingly, close to 40% of *all* households in Newton, regardless of income level, are housing cost burdened, meaning those individuals or families spend over 30% of their monthly gross income on housing costs. Low-to-moderate income families in Newton are disproportionately affected by this, with 41% of all families at or below 80% AMI paying greater than 50% of their annual incomes on housing costs, making them severely cost burdened. [1] As a result, these households are likely to struggle to afford other basic needs such as food, clothing, transportation, medical care, and childcare, which force difficult trade-offs.

  In Newton, the lowest income families experience the greatest challenges related to housing. According to HUD's most recent CHAS data, approximately 16% of all households in the City, or about 4,825 households, earn at or below 50% of AMI[2]. This affordability gap amongst Newton's vulnerable populations is also highlighted by the over 1,200 families and 1,400 seniors on the Newton Housing Authority waitlist. Many of these households spend close to ten years on the Housing Authority's waitlist before receiving notification of an available unit in Newton.

  While there are a handful of pending and approved developments in the City with SHI-eligible units, these additional units will not meet the overwhelming demand for affordable rental and ownership housing throughout Newton. As of July 2025, 9.72%, or 3,219 units of the City's housing units are listed on Newton's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI).[3] However, only 5.2%, or 1,827 units, of the City's housing units are deed-restricted affordable units, set at prices affordable to households at or below 80% AMI.[4]

[1] 2017-2021 CHAS.
[2] 2017-2021 CHAS.
[3] Newton Housing Dashboard: SHI, last updated 7/15/2025
[4] Newton Housing Dashboard: SHI, last updated 7/15/2025

- **Newton's Housing Strategy and Priorities.** Newton's housing priorities stem from the urgent need for affordable housing. According to the City's *Newton Leads 2040 Housing Strategy (2016)*, since 2003 the average sale price of a single-family home in Newton has doubled from approximately $600,000 to $1.2 million. A 2021 Boston Globe article cited that more than one out of every four single-family homes sold in Newton that year went for more than $2 million and the median single-family home price from January to July 2021 was $1.5 million.[5] The rental market in Newton also corresponds to this widening price trend as most rentals in the City are only affordable to households earning 100% of the area median income (AMI) or higher. In addition, the number of households earning less than $125,000 declined by 22.2% between 2000 and 2013. The combination of escalating housing prices and the City's significant loss of low- and middle-income households over the past 15 years means that without action, Newton will become predominantly a city affordable to only the wealthy, with limited diverse housing options for younger and older Newtonians and those of more limited means.[6]

  The dearth of housing options affordable to a variety of populations at a range of incomes, including individuals with disabilities, threatens the vibrancy of our village centers, our schools, and community life. The City, therefore, has consulted with stakeholders and residents to create public plans with clear goals to guide Newton in combatting this challenge. The City's Comprehensive Plan, the *2040 Housing Leads Strategy*, the Economic Development Strategic Plan, and the Needham and Riverside Vision Plans all identify the protection and broadening of Newton's housing diversity as major priorities. The plans emphasize that the creation of affordable housing could assist in maintaining the diversity of Newton by providing housing opportunities of varying types to different populations at mixed incomes. Doing so creates the opportunity for greater economic and social diversity, as families and individuals of varying ages, ethnicities, occupations, and income levels can find a home in Newton.

  The enactment of these overarching goals and others (e.g., walkable village centers, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, co-locating housing, and public transit to address congestion) requires the implementation of key strategies, which are also outlined in the City's public planning documents. One strategy is the purposeful placement of new housing. For instance, housing development in mixed-use developments, near walkable amenities and access to transit.

  In addition to the desirability of mixed-use development, Newton also recognizes mixed-income development as an integral strategy. Mixed-income projects that offer equitable housing units and amenities for both low-and middle-income and higher income

[5] "More than one out of every four homes in Newton sold for more than $2 million this year," Boston Globe, John Hilliard, August 31, 2021, https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/08/31/metro/more-than-one-out-every-four-homes-newton-sold-more-than-2-million-mayor-says/

[6] Newton Leads 2040 Housing Strategy, p. 28

individuals and families are crucial for encouraging newcomers to Newton and enabling residents stay in the community. The creation of a greater number of mixed-income developments may help to reverse the trend of Newton's shrinking low- and middle-income populations. Finally, leveraging a mix of local, state, federal, and private dollars to create affordable ownership and rental housing is crucial for Newton to meet its housing goals and create the diverse and welcoming city it desires.

- **Project Unit Mix and Affordability.** The Project will add 59 units affordable to households at 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI): 34 one-bedrooms, 19 two-bedrooms, and 6 three-bedrooms. By producing affordable units at these sizes, the Project allows individuals and families with a range of social and economic diversity to find a home in Newton. The remaining 175 units will be rented at market-rate. The Project's affordability component responds to the City's interest in adding to the permanent supply of deeply affordable housing stock as articulated earlier in this document, with 59 units being affordable to individuals and families at or below 80% AMI. Planning recommends the applicant consider incorporating deeper levels of affordability, such as units designated at 50% AMI, to address the significant need for affordable housing in the City of Newton.

B. <u>Site History</u>

In 2022, the Newton City Council had granted a rezoning to the Business 4 (BU-4) zoning district and a corresponding special permit for this site to allow a six-story building up to 72 feet in height containing elderly housing with services use. While the rezoning was conditioned upon the exercise of the special permit, which did not happen, the BU-4 zone allows for 96 feet in height and a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.5 for a six-story building. The previously approved six-story building as designed consisted of an FAR of 1.85 and included 144 parking stalls, both surface and within a parking garage. The previous approval also allowed for dimensional waivers for the parking configuration.

This prior approved project had allowed 233 residential units of elderly housing: 105 age restricted independent living units, 52 assisted living beds and 28 memory care beds. While that approval was never exercised, the approval pointed to the project's conformance with the Washington Street Vision Plan and the Comprehensive Plan to provide smaller units of housing. While the two projects are unrelated, a key difference between the 2022 project and this project is that the former incorporated varying story heights that allowed a more sensitive transition to a larger proposed building for this neighborhood in both footprint and height.

C. <u>Land Use, Site Plan Design and Sustainability</u>

The regulation for a Comprehensive Permit under M.G.L. Chapter 40B states that the Subsidizing Agency determines whether "the conceptual project design is generally

appropriate for the site on which it is located, taking into consideration factors that may include proposed use, conceptual site plan and building massing, topography, environmental resources, and integration into existing development patterns."[7]

- **Land Use and Density.** The subject property consists of seven parcels located along Crafts Street (five parcels) and Court Street (two parcels) between Washington Street and McGuire Court and opposite Lincoln Road. Together, the parcels total approximately 115,818 square feet (2.66 acres). The Crafts Street parcels are zoned Manufacturing (MAN) and consist of commercial uses each with their own associated parking areas and the Court Street parcels are zoned Multi Residence 1 (MR1) and consist of two, two-family residential uses. The Crafts Street parcels are largely hardscaped, and the areas not covered by buildings consist of broken pavement and gravel, and feature little if any landscaping. The site is surrounded by a mix of uses including multi-and single-family, public use (including a Department of Public Works building and yard), and neighborhood amenities. To the north, properties are zoned Manufacturing (MAN) and Public Use (PUB), to the south properties are zoned Multi Residence 1/Multi Residence Transit (MR-1/MRT) and Business 2/Village Center 2 (BU2/VC2), and to the northeast one block on Crafts Street is zoned Business Use 1 (BU-1).

  The Applicant proposes a singular six-story building with a total of 234 apartments ranging from one-bedroom units to three-bedroom units, of which 59 (25%) would be affordable at up to 80% of area median income (AMI). Twenty four (10.26%) of the units are designated as three-bedroom units. The plans include a 291-stall parking garage, located centrally within the building across six stories.

  It is anticipated that the project will require zoning relief for the use, type of building, dimensional standards, and parking. The MR-1 and MAN zoning districts where the project is located does not allow for multifamily buildings, therefore there are no dimensional standards to apply, and the ZBA will be required to determine reasonable standards through the comprehensive permit process. The proposed development will convert a majority of the site from commercial and automobile storage to residential use. The site itself lacks appropriate stormwater controls as a long-standing industrial area. The proposal does present an opportunity to improve site conditions including environmental conditions such as stormwater management and open space.

  Building Massing, Design and Architecture. The project proposes a six-story residential building containing 234 rental units with a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom units. The proposed building is sited in the middle of the project site and with a lot coverage of 68%, the building takes up a significant portion of the site. All existing improvements will be razed prior to construction of the site. Planning notes that a proposed conditions plan

[7] (760 CMR 56.04(4)(c))

with a zoning table from a surveyor was not provided, thus this analysis is based on the conceptual plans and narrative provided in the application.

The building as designed reaches a height of six stories and 68 feet from grade at all elevations (distance from average grade not provided). Based on information provided in the application, the FAR is anticipated to be 2.4. The residential units will wrap around the 291-stall parking garage on all six levels of the building. As designed, the project will have vehicular access from one 20-foot-wide driveway from Crafts Street that will run along the southern property line and narrow to 14 feet to provide vehicular egress only access to Court Street.

Proposed with a 10.1-foot front setback, the building may need to be set back further from Crafts Street to create a more attractive environment for pedestrians and abutters and allow sufficient buffering for the residential units at the ground level. Planning notes that the nearby approved Comprehensive Permit at 78 Crafts Street was approved with an 8.9-foot front setback from Crafts Street, however the ground level for that building included parking and amenity space, while this project offers six residential units fronting Crafts Street at the ground level. Planning also encourages the project to consider further activation of the Crafts Street frontage through its lobby and entry area. The Planning Department encourages the applicant to submit to the City's Urban Design Commission for design review to allow for any modifications to the project prior to filing the Comprehensive Permit application. Further, the south side setback is proposed at 28.2 feet, while the north side setback is proposed at 14.9 feet from the building to the lot line, however, the setback should be measured from the transformer to the lot line, if the transformers are unenclosed. These setbacks will require waivers from the Zoning Board of Appeals; the applicant should reconsider these setbacks and adjust them to allow for increased distance from abutters.

In addition to adjusting the setbacks to be more compliant with the underlying zones and sensitive to nearby residential uses, Planning encourages the applicant to consider varying story heights and step downs when it comes to the elevations of the building adjacent to single- and two-family residential neighborhoods, especially on Court Street. If incorporated, variations in the building elevations will help to minimize the overall visual mass of the project and provide a smoother transition between the density of the proposed development and the residential neighborhood in the vicinity of Court Street. The Planning Department would also be supportive of a reduced parking ratio to allow step downs from the top floor, in lieu of garage area, while allowing for the density this project offers.

- **Open Space, Landscaping and Stormwater.** The existing site contains a mix of commercial, residential and industrial uses. The Crafts Street parcels are largely hardscaped, and the areas not covered by buildings consist of broken pavement and

gravel, and feature little if any landscaping. There are no known wetlands or related wetland buffers, streams, rivers, or ledge on the site.

The applicant will be required to comply with the state Stormwater Standards and should consult with the City of Newton Engineering Department as plans and materials are further developed. As part of this review, it will be important to understand the impact of the project on stormwater management and to ensure the project improves upon the existing conditions. This will likely be a critical point of interest of the project by City Staff, Zoning Board members, and the public.

The proposed site design maintains 32% open space and features open space surrounding the perimeter of the site, to some extent buffering the building from abutters and Crafts Street. The plans show a pool amenity area at the western property line as well as a dog run at the upper western corner of the site. Planning encourages the applicant to contemplate how the remaining open space will be programmed and whether there are opportunities for passive and active recreation and additional buffering from the property lines, especially for the dog run, shown right up against the property line at the northwest corner of the site. The applicant should find a way to include additional active and passive outdoor areas for residents, ideally incorporating areas for children to play. While there is proposed to be more open vegetated space than currently existing on the site, because of the change of use to entirely residential, it is critical that adequate and functional open space is incorporated into the site plan. Planning also emphasizes the importance of the Crafts Street frontage providing adequate street activation through open space, in addition to the building's lobby fronting Crafts Street.

The proposed project will provide a significant improvement in stormwater management where currently little stormwater infrastructure exists. In addition, the site will reduce the amount of impervious surface helping to provide enhanced stormwater treatment and reduced heat island effect from less asphalt surface.

With the project driveway running along the southern property line, the applicant should consider incorporating separated, pedestrian only pathways along this drive aisle and elsewhere throughout the site and/or the use of alternative paving materials to slow cars and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

- **Electrification, Lighting, and Construction Management.** The applicant should submit a detailed site lighting plan to ensure the lighting does not negatively impact neighboring properties. Since there are no surface parking stalls shown on the plans, lighting should be residential in scale and not trespass onto other properties and be lit at appropriate levels for a residential neighborhood. Three transformers and an emergency generator are shown within a 14.9-foot side setback. Planning notes that transformers have been more common on development projects due to electrification requirements. As a result,

more projects require transformers to supply sufficient electrical service to the project. Transformers must comply with utility company standards for location and accessibility. Should this project be approved, Planning encourages the petitioner to work with the utility company prior to construction to explore if there are less obtrusive options such as screening or relocating the transformer to a utility pole. Electrical equipment locations should be selected carefully to minimize impact to the abutters and free up usable open space on site. A construction management plan should be prepared to give assurance to the neighborhood that the contractor will mitigate the impacts of construction, including noise and vibration. The construction management plan should include a designated contact person for the construction along with 24-hour contact information.

- **Access to Public Transit and a Village Center.** The project site is located on Crafts Street in Newtonville, approximately 0.3 miles from the main commercial corridor of Washington Street, with a mix of restaurants, commercial and multi-family developments. The site is located approximately 0.3 miles from the MBTA Newtonville Commuter Rail Station on Washington Street. The site is conveniently located within walking distance of a grocery store (5-minute walk or under 0.1 miles) and many services, restaurants, services, and stores nearby on Washington Street (retail, banking, restaurants, veterinarian, and dental services). Multiple MBTA bus lines run along Washington Street (MBTA Bus 553, 554, and 556) with a stop at 641 Washington Street (within 0.2 miles).

  While the site is well-located with access to many convenient destinations for residents, Planning would like to better understand how the applicant plans to improve upon the walking and biking conditions, including onsite facilities as well as the potential for bicycle and pedestrian improvements to facilitate connections in the immediate area. In addition to improved pedestrian connections to the neighborhood, Planning believes there could be better pedestrian connections and pathways internal to the site to facilitate residents' movement within the development and connection to Court Street.

- **Traffic, Parking and Transportation Impacts.** The Planning Department will request authorization from the ZBA to engage with an on-call consultant to respond to the Applicant's traffic study and potential impacts and mitigations. Of particular concern is safe access to and from Crafts Street and the connection to Court Street. The Project proposes adding 291 parking stalls within a six-floor parking garage for the 234 apartments. More information is necessary to fully analyze traffic impacts, parking needs, infrastructure improvements, loading, and circulation within the site.

  There will need to be careful consideration of the planning around the exit driveway to Court Street to ensure that the project needs are balanced with the potential impact on the residential abutters. Court Street is a one-way street heading east until the street turns towards Washington Street, where just that block allows two-way traffic. It will be

important that any vehicles exiting onto Court Street be directed straight to Washington Street and not the wrong way down Court Street. As this site is in proximity to a Village Center and transit, the Department supports minimizing the parking ratio to the extent feasible and incentivizing alternative modes of transportation. The applicant should review the local parking utilization data from the MAPC Perfect Fit parking study. There is no bike room or bike storage shown on the plans and as plans are further developed, Planning expects that these amenities will be incorporated. The applicant should submit a traffic impact analysis study, parking analysis, and transportation demand management plan as part of their Comprehensive Permit application.

D. Conclusion

Balancing many factors, including a previous, recent approval for a similar use, the proposed multi-family use may be appropriate for this site on Crafts Street; however, the design and level of density will be important components to consider as the site is located in a neighborhood with abutting residential, public, and commercial uses. Determining the appropriate levels of density as well as other dimensional controls such as building height, floor area, and setbacks, will require careful consideration by the ZBA along with input from City staff, peer reviewers, and the community. At the moment, Planning encourages the applicant to reduce the parking ratio, consider increased setbacks, and step-down upper stories on elevations that face residential neighborhoods, particularly on Court Street. Renderings and up to date site plans with zoning information will be pertinent to further understand the project and any impacts on the surrounding area.

We would like to see the applicant address the concerns and questions raised above, as well as those included in the attached comment letters. Once a Comprehensive Permit application is filed, City staff will provide additional analysis of the Project, both internally and through peer reviews, pending an announcement of 40B project eligibility from MassHousing.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the contents of this letter.

Sincerely,

Katie Whewell

Katie Whewell
Chief Planner for Current Planning
Planning and Development Department

cc: Mayor Ruthanne Fuller

Alissa O. Giuliani, City Solicitor
Applicant
Councilor Albright
Councilor Lucas
Councilor Micley

ATTACHMENT A: Comment Letters Received

Attachment A

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Newton Fair and Affordable Housing Partnership
MEMO

DATE: **July 25, 2025**

TO: **Brenda Belsanti, Zoning Board of Appeals Clerk**
Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development

FROM: **Newton Fair and Affordable Housing Partnership**

CC: **Lara Kritzer, Director of Housing and Community Development**
Shaylyn Davis-Iannaco, Housing Program Manager

SUBJECT: **38 Crafts Street – Comments on Project Eligibility Application to MassHousing Dated July 2, 2025**

We have reviewed the Project Eligibility Application submitted to MassHousing by Wood Partners for a 234-unit mixed-income development at 38 Crafts Street and adjacent lots, also known as Alta Newton, to be reviewed by the city's Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for a Comprehensive Permit under Chapter 40B of state laws. We look forward to meeting with the developer to hear their presentation of the project and will invite them to a future Partnership meeting at the appropriate time. We understand the comment period allowed by the City prior to the review of this application by MassHousing ends on July 25, and are responding in response to the request for comments from ZBA staff.

We will withhold comments at this time, given the very early stage of the permitting process, with one exception. We see the rent pricing for the affordable units, at 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), is $2,424, $2,640, and $2,857, respectively, for 1-, 2-, and 3-BR units. These rent levels represent 98%, 89%, and 83% of the maximum allowable rents under the rent schedule published by HUD in May of 2025. Given that the rents actually charged for the affordable units must be net of any utilities which tenants pay under 40B, we want to be sure these rents are priced at levels consistent with this requirement.

We will have more comments as the permitting process moves forward and look forward to the opportunity for further engagement on this project.

1000 Commonwealth Ave
Newton, MA 02459
T 617-796-1000
www.newtonma.gov

Katie Whewell

From: xiajiefeicn@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, July 14, 2025 10:01 AM
To: Katie Whewell
Cc: Molly LU
Subject: Req

Dear Katie,

I'm a homeowner on Lenglen Rd and received the notice about WP East Acquisitions' proposed 234-unit project on Crafts St. Lenglen Rd already has several deep potholes, and the heavy construction traffic this project will generate is likely to worsen them.

Could you please require the applicant to repave or otherwise restore Lenglen Rd as a condition of approval? Ensuring the road is resurfaced would protect residents, construction vehicles, and emergency services alike.

Thank you for considering this request. I appreciate your help.

Best,
Jeffy
Sent from my iPhone

From:	Bob Kavanagh
To:	Barney Heath; Ruthanne Fuller; Katie Whewell
Cc:	Marc C. Laredo; Tarik Lucas; Susan Albright; David Micley; Rena Getz; John Oliver; Stephen Farrell; Alan Lobovits; Alison Leary Mooradian; Julia Anne Malakie; Michael Rossi; Brooke Lipsitt
Subject:	Proposed 40B-Alta Newton- MH ID No. 1284
Date:	Thursday, July 24, 2025 2:00:45 PM
Attachments:	Map of 3 40B projects.pdf

[**DO NOT OPEN** links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe. **]**

I am writing in regards to:
Proposed 40B-Alta Newton
Newton, MA
MH ID No. 1284

Since this will be the 3rd 40B project approved for this neighborhood, 77 Court Street and 78 Crafts Street being the other two, I have little faith that the MHA or the Newton Planning Department has given any thought to the impact that the additional 234 units of MH ID No. 1284 will have on a neighborhood of small single family and multi-family homes.
MH ID No. 1284 will raise the total 40B project units in our neighborhood to 567. I have found no other neighborhood in Newton, Middlesex County of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that has been subject to such development under the guise of 40B affordable housing. If I am incorrect, please inform me of where more 40B have been approved by the MHA in such a compact area.
With the foregone approval of MH ID No. 1284 by MHA, two (2) additional homes will be destroyed on the north side of Court Street alone. This brings the total demolished homes on Court Street to five (5). These 5 homes contained 13 dwelling units and these units had rents lower than what MH ID No. 1284 is proposing for the 'affordable' units being built.
Again, I feel certain that the MHA, the Newton Planning Department, the Newton ZBA and Newton's current Mayor have no real idea what the approved 40B projects have done to housing costs in our neighborhood. Real estate values on Court Street have increased at a faster rate than those in other parts of the city like Waban. These 40B developments have made this area less affordable. The state and local authorities who approve of these large scale developments are responsible for this gentrification and the resultant rise in rents and housing costs overall.
Finally, it is difficult for concerned residents to comment in any meaningful way given the lack of information coming from MHA, the developer or the Planning Department. This neighborhood is treated like mushrooms by city and state boards.
I have attached a map showing the extent of the 40B projects in our neighborhood. Again, I cannot find any other area in all of Massachusetts with this type of 40B development.

Robert Kavanagh
69 Court Street

Newtonville, MA 02458
617-964-1136

Dear Mayor and Council President, Director of Planning & Development and Chief Planner,

Thank you for your service to the Newton community. I am writing this letter to express my concerns about the 38 Crafts Street "40B" Housing Project proposed by WP East Acquisitions. The project will consist of one (6) six-story building with 234 units of rental apartment housing and a 291 space garage, on a 2.66 acres site.

• Currently, Court St is a two blocks long residential street made up of mostly young families and older residents who value the peace and quiet. We had two "40B" projects on the street already (see the picture below), **#1** is 77 Court St (36 units), **#2** is 65 Court St (307 units, 78 Crafts Street Newton LLC). Our neighborhood's density growth is already exponential. If the **#3** "40B" (including 19 Court St and 21 Court St) with 234 units is allowed, there will be a disaster to our community and our quality of life will be shattered. It is unfair and unheard of in any city planning.

. • The concern with the Infrastructure Impacts

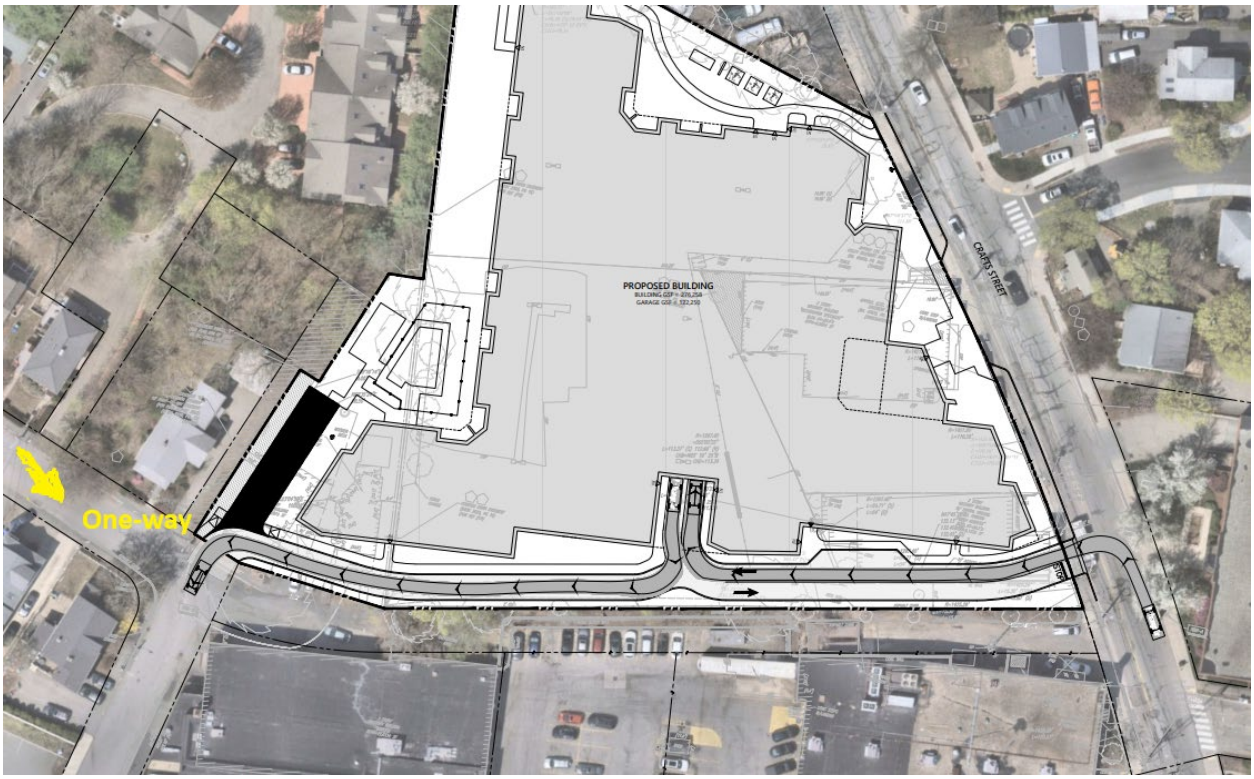
1. Strain on Electric Grid. Adding that many new units will severely tax the existing electric grid especially during the summers.
2. Strain on Sewer System. The current sewer system on Court St is already prone to backing up during big rain storms. Adding that many new units will make it even worth.
3. Strain on Water System. Adding that many new residents to an already densely populated area will cause a drop in water pressure.

• The concern with the Environmental Risks

1. Increased Flood Risk. This area is prone to flooding when there's a lot of rain. As to raise the level of new gigantic building, all the rainwater will flow down to the surrounding neighborhood, increasing likelihood of flooding.
2. Increased Fire Risk. There are many trees and when the weather is very dry, it only takes one carelessly discarded cigarette butt to ignite a fast-moving fire which will endanger all the houses along Court St, especially the townhouses immediately adjoining the proposed development.
3. Increased Pollution Risk. The proposed development will add 291 parking space to this two-block dense neighborhood, these 291 vehicles and delivery trucks will have huge contributions to the pollution and global warming.

• The concern with the Community Safety and Traffic Congestions (see the picture below)

1. Increased Safety Risk. Court St is a narrow one-way street. Currently this is a neighborhood where people feel it's safe for children to play outside. The proposed development will open a drive-way from Crafts St to Court St, these 291 vehicles and delivery trucks and bypass vehicles will come out of 21 Court St, these west bound vehicles will go wrong way on the one way street. Court St will be a safety nightmare.
2. Increased Traffic Congestions. The proposed development will have 291 vehicles and delivery trucks and bypass vehicles come out to Court St, then all the traffic on Court St will be congested, it will be extremely difficult to get out to Washington St.



• The WP East Acquisitions proposed project is *entirely inconsistent* with the **Washington Street Vision Plan** which calls for diverse housing options, community gathering spaces, locally owned small businesses, artist spaces, and innovation clusters. Indeed, the project is a mockery of the Vision Plan, since it does not meet a single one of its *guiding principles*. The proposed project approval will heighten the community's growing skepticism that the myriad of expensive "studies" and "reports" by the City are all publicity stunts done in bad faith.

There are a number of physical planning principles in the Vision Plan that should be used to guide the development for Washington Street through Newtonville to the Crafts Street. In page 78 of the Vision Plan, this is one of the Area-wide Planning Guiding Principle:

Require gentle transitions to adjacent neighborhoods

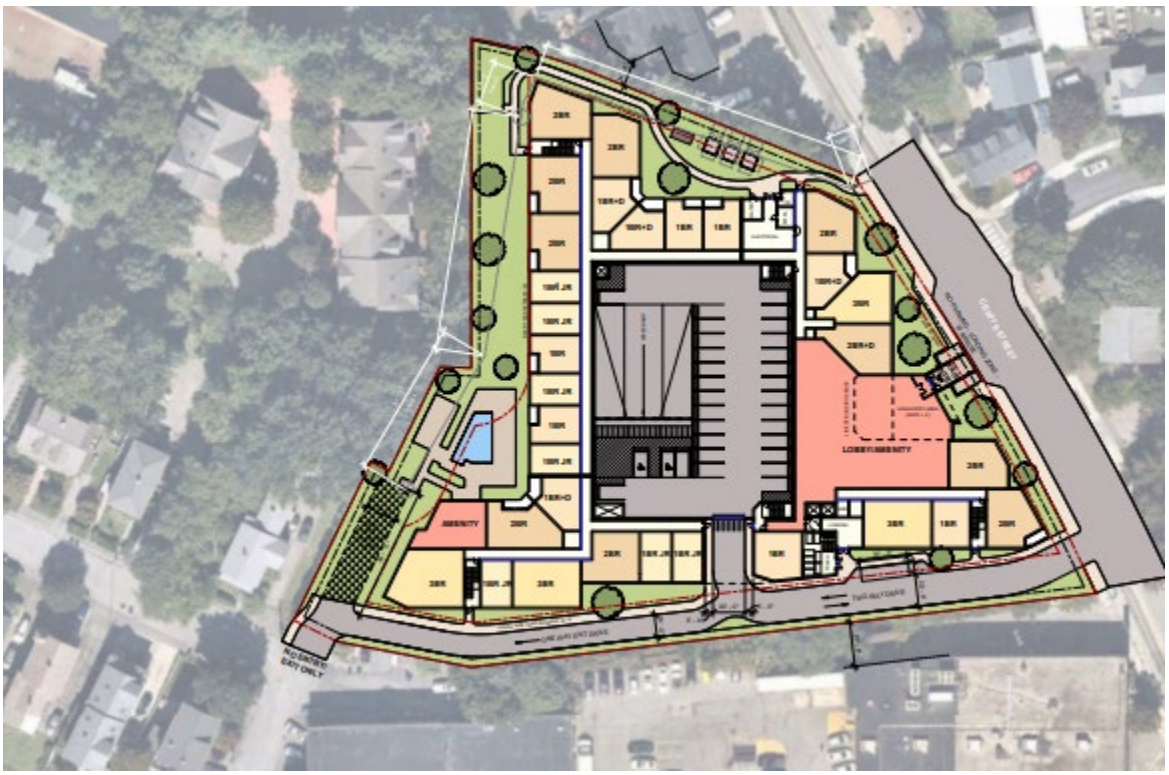
In page 82 of the Vision Plan, there is an illustration for **"**Require gentle transitions to adjacent neighborhoods:"

The WP East Acquisitions proposed project do not comply with the Vision Plan. Its proposed 234 units building (see the 5 pictures below), in height of 6 stories right next to the (west side) 2-3 stories residential houses on Court St. The Vision Plan specifically requires "that building heights be lower adjacent to residences in order to be complementary to the scale of surrounding neighborhoods."

SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

EAST ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

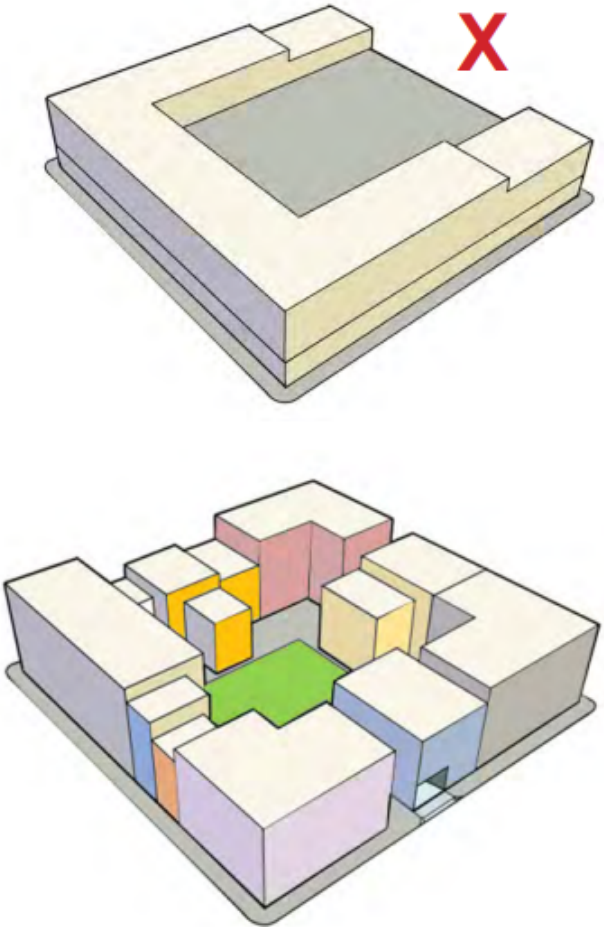
NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



In page 86 of the Vision Plan, this is one of the Area-wide Planning Guiding Principle:

Encourage variety in building size and shape

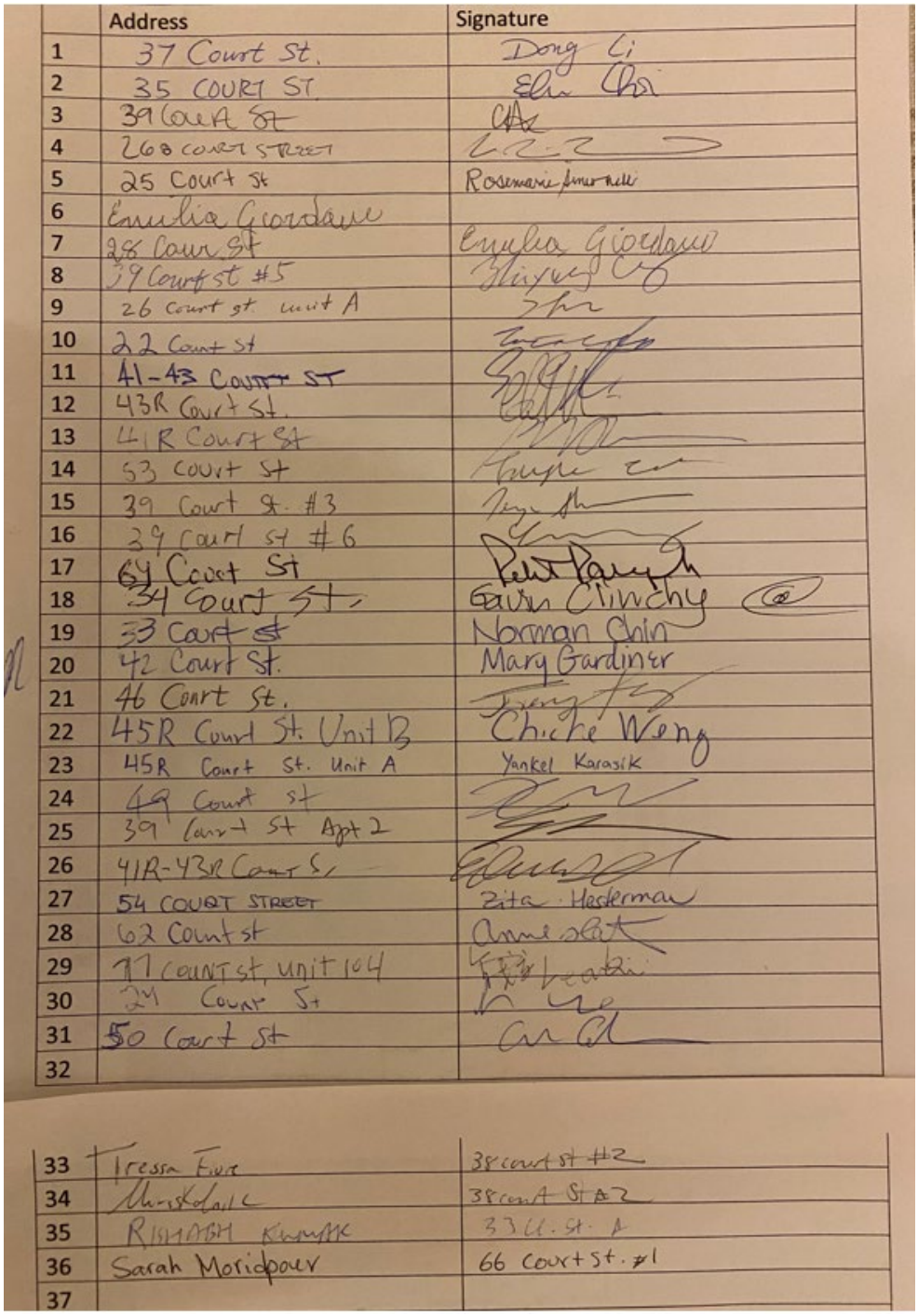
A distinguishing characteristic of both West Newton and Newtonville is that the buildings in these villages developed incrementally over time and are therefore distinctive from each other, varying in height, width, materials, and other aspects of their design. These building patterns are another essential feature that defines the unique sense of place of Newton. The vision recommends that zoning for Washington Street require that new development reinforce these building patterns. In particular, where a larger new development is proposed that might include multiple buildings or stretch over an entire block, such a development should be required to reinforce the idea of multiple buildings with varying heights, materials, and other design distinctiveness. In addition many of the most iconic buildings are historic, meaning new development may want to draw upon such historic elements.



The City once again displayed great foresight in commissioning the Washington Street Vision Plan. And once again, it would be a great shame if the City were to disregard this important document.

In my conversations with other Court St residents, it is clear that the objections to the WP East Acquisitions proposed project are not objections to development per se. I believe that the majority of Newtonville residents support development which increases the supply of affordable housing, but we strongly against any development project which do not comply with the Vision Plan, which will badly impact our community and our environment and our safety and our quality of life.

Below is the copy of signatures from the very concerned residents on Court St:



	Address	Signature
1	37 Court St.	Dong Li
2	35 COURT ST.	Elin Choi
3	39 Court St	
4	268 COURT STREET	
5	25 Court St	Rosemarie Amarelli
6	Emilia Giordano	
7	28 Court St	Emilia Giordano
8	39 Court st #5	
9	26 Court st unit A	
10	22 Court St	
11	41-43 COURT ST	
12	43R Court St.	
13	41R Court St	
14	53 Court St	
15	39 Court St. #3	
16	39 Court St #6	
17	64 Court St	
18	34 Court St.	Gavin Clinchy
19	33 Court St	Norman Chin
20	42 Court St.	Mary Gardiner
21	46 Court St.	
22	45R Court St. Unit B	Chiche Wong
23	45R Court St. Unit A	Yankel Karasik
24	49 Court St	
25	39 Court St Apt 2	
26	41R-43R Court St	
27	54 COURT STREET	Zita Hesterman
28	62 Court St	
29	77 COURT St, Unit 104	
30	24 Court St	
31	50 Court St	
32		
33	Tressa Fuse	38 court st #2
34	[illegible]	38 court St #2
35	RISHABH [illegible]	33 Ct. St. A
36	Sarah Moridpour	66 Court St. #1
37		

Again, thank you for your service to Newton.

Sincerely,

Dong Li

37 Court St