

**350Mass Newton Node approved the following statement  
at its 5/19/20 meeting**

We urge the Newton Planning Department and the ZAP as they review changes to the Zoning Code to place a high priority on encouraging the construction of energy efficient multi-family projects within walking distance of Green Line T stops, commuter rail stops and bus lines.

Recently, some publications (for instance, the New York Times) have questioned the wisdom of investments in Transit-Oriented Development. Because of social distancing they expect a decrease in public transit use and a preference for single family housing. While this concern is relevant and deserves further study, climate change is too important to let go of obvious solutions.

Passive-house or equivalent standard constructed multi-family Newton housing projects are essential in the fight against climate change. Efficient multifamily projects use less energy for heating and cooling than single family homes.

If multifamily housing is not built here near public transportation, alternative locations in Newton or outside the city will require use of car transportation (still not yet 100% renewable electric).

Overall such projects reduce fossil fuel use for heating and transportation, which are the largest sources of greenhouse gases in Newton.

Finally, it is important to recognize that multi-family housing is not the same as over-crowded apartments. Claims that multi-family housing will exacerbate the Covid-19 crisis are not based on good evidence.

## 350Mass Newton Node

### ADOPTED RESOLUTION October 20, 2020

350Mass Newton Node endorses the effort by the City to rewrite the Zoning Ordinance with goals as defined by the Zoning and Planning Committee (ZAP) \*. We are glad to see the Oct 6, 2020 memo from the Working Group and the Newton Citizens Commission on Energy, and we applaud many of its innovative recommendations. We recognize the complexity of the task ahead and the variety of competing voices in the political process.

350Mass Newton Node emphasizes the goals of Climate Action and Climate Justice by reducing building carbon emissions, facilitating carbon-free transportation and enabling the development of more affordable housing.

We urge the City to adopt zoning reform that:

- Building on Newton's Climate Action Plan, wherever feasible minimizes GHG emissions in new construction, renovations, and transportation
- Maximizes by-right multifamily housing throughout the City
- Allows more housing near village centers and transportation routes
- Encourages small residential units for affordability and energy efficiency
- Minimizes onsite parking requirements
- Minimizes tear-downs with resulting embodied carbon impact
- As enforceable standards become available, minimizes embodied carbon in new construction

\*ZAP goals for zoning reform are

1. Housing: A zoning code more responsive to a demand for housing that serves a range of incomes. Promote sustainable community development patterns.
2. Sustainability: Environmental stewardship, fiscal strength and meeting community needs.
3. Context: Preserve and protect what we like in our neighborhoods. Encourage new development to fit in the context of our neighborhoods and villages.