

## Green Newton's Statement to the Land Use Committee, May 14, 2019

Dear Members of the Newton City Council Land Use Committee,

We all know young people whom we love. And we all know, or should know, that climate change poses a threat to their prosperity, longevity and happiness. U.N. climate scientists state that greenhouse gas emissions must be cut by 45% by 2030 or we'll face a harsh future and a less hospitable planet.

Newton will experience much more flooding, damage to our buildings and infrastructure, power outages and dangerous heat waves. Newton residents will experience a compromised economy and more social chaos.

Green Newton has been assessing the Northland project with climate change in mind. If it's built right, this project will help Newton do its part to address climate change. If it isn't, and Northland is built in a standard polluting way, it will dig our hole even deeper. We hope and expect to wind up supporting a Northland project that makes us proud.

Green Newton's Building Standards Committee has met with Northland management three times regarding these principles, and we have exchanged many emails. The meetings thus far have been encouraging.

We're pleased that Northland management has spent considerable time and money to deepen their understanding of the green building principles we espouse. They hired one of the nation's most respected consulting firms (Steven Winter Associates) to advise them about green building and Passive House design; their sustainability consultants who spoke at the Land Use meeting are also terrific; they enrolled their local consultants in a Passive House course; and they toured a PH multi-housing complex.

Considering the importance of the Northland project, the need to respond to climate change and the current status of the project, Green Newton will support granting a Special Permit for the Northland project if the following conditions are met.

- **Require Passive House certification for appropriate new-construction buildings.**
- **If any of the remaining buildings are not Passive House certified, the developer shall submit a document for Planning Department review that describes the energy efficiency measures that will be taken instead.**
- **Fossil fuel will not be used to heat or cool any of the buildings.**
- **Set an enforceable, ongoing metric regarding the number of cars leaving the property and impacting traffic.**
- **Require a robust analysis of embodied carbon for the project.**

These provisions are consistent with the four principles [<https://www.greennewton.org/advocacy/10655-2/>] that Green Newton uses to measure all building projects.

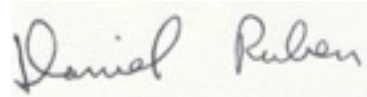
1. Require Minimize Passive House building certification. Passive House is the best building standard at this time. It far surpasses LEED in minimizing building operating energy.

2. Minimize embodied carbon, which is the carbon dioxide produced by the manufacture and transportation of building materials.
3. Buildings must be all-electric and off the natural gas grid. As our electricity grid gets greener, so will these buildings.
4. Minimize the carbon footprint for transportation to and from buildings.

Regarding the fourth principle, we believe that Northland's current transportation plan is sound. The company will reduce single-occupancy automobile trips by operating a robust shuttle system and by limiting parking spaces. Together, these ideas will attract tenants who won't drive every time they leave the property.

Let's establish the framework for a Northland project that makes Newton proud. Let's do right for the young people we love.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Ruben". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Dan Ruben

Chair, Green Newton

Representing Green Newton's Sustainability Committee (Peter Barrer, Beverly Craig, Paul Eldrenkamp, Jonathan Kantar, Lois Levin, Jim Purdy, Peter Smith, Jay Walter, Marcia Cooper)

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#### **Addendum**

As part of principle 4, above, developers should be required to provide EV-ready conduit for charging stations to every residential parking space.