

Newton needs more senior housing

Newton has a critical shortage of accessible one-floor housing options for our rapidly growing senior population. Seniors are by far the fastest growing segment of Newton's population. By 2030 seniors will make up more than a third of Newton's population. An amazing 88 percent want to stay and age in Newton.

As a volunteer who has worked closely with Newton seniors for the past 10 years, I have had the good fortune to meet many long-time Newton residents in their 80s and 90s who prize their independence and are eager to remain in Newton. However, many can no longer manage stairs and need assistance in maintaining their homes and yards.

Many would like to simplify their lives by downsizing to an apartment or condominium with an elevator. They are especially eager to move to housing in a village center where they can walk to the post office, supermarket and pharmacy. But sadly such housing is very scarce.

Newton now has an opportunity to increase the supply of housing for our aging population. The city council is considering proposals for new housing on Needham Street, Riverside Station and Washington Street. I urge citizens who are looking for suitable housing in Newton for themselves or aging relatives to learn about these proposals. You can show your support by testifying at Land Use Committee hearings and by writing to your city councilors.

The housing shortage for seniors is an urgent problem in Newton. We all need to work together to ensure the construction of housing suitable for our rapidly growing senior population.

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