



NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY
21 HIGHLAND CIRCLE
NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02494

TELEPHONE (781)-444-3011

FAX (781)-444-1089

October 10, 2023

**Re: Public Meetings -- Redevelopment of
Linden Street and Chambers Street
Senior/Disabled Housing**

Dear Needham Resident,

The Needham Housing Authority (NHA) invites you to a briefing and community listening session about the upcoming redevelopment of our Linden Street and Chambers Street properties, which are located across the street from High Rock Middle School. NHA is working with architects Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype (<https://bhplus.com/>) on the design for the redevelopment. The team is currently completing Schematic Design drawings for the project and will seek approval of related zoning warrant articles at the May 2024 Town Meeting to allow the redevelopment to move forward. For your scheduling convenience, two dates are available. The same information will be covered at both meetings.

The Development Has Benefited Needham for Decades... Built on an 11-acre site in the early 1960s and 1970s, the adjacent Linden Street and Chambers Street properties have provided deeply affordable homes to nearly 1,000 senior and disabled individuals over the past 50-60 years. Both properties are state-subsidized public housing. The Linden Street development is currently comprised of 72 studio apartments in 18 one-story buildings. The Chambers Street development is currently comprised of 80 studio apartments in 5 two-story buildings.

...But the Apartments are Worn Out

After decades of inadequate funding, the properties are worn out and at the end of their useful lifetimes. Units lack the accessibility features (e.g. elevators) needed to serve a senior/disabled population and the studios at under 425 square feet are severely undersized based on today's living standards. As evidenced by NHA's waiting list with nearly 1,000 people for senior/disabled housing, this is also an opportunity to meet today's housing needs by adding new affordable units.



*Aerial view of the proposed Linden-Chambers Redevelopment
Hovering over High Rock School*

PUBLIC MEETINGS

**Linden and Chambers Street
Redevelopment**

**Briefing, Listening and
Q & A Session**

Tues. October 17: 7:00-8:30 pm

Mon. October 23: 7:00-8:30 pm

**Linden-Chambers
Community Room
5 Chambers St., Needham, MA 02492**



Street view – Corner of Blake Street & Linden Street

Goals of the Redevelopment

NHA is pursuing a property-wide redevelopment that achieves the following goals:

- ✓ Preserve the 152 units of deeply affordable senior/disabled units that currently exist on site.
- ✓ Increase the number of affordable units on site by approximately 95, for a total of 247 affordable units.
- ✓ Better quality of life for residents by providing appropriately sized units, elevators, centralized air conditioning & heating and better indoor environmental quality.
- ✓ Improve the site's energy efficiency and resiliency to climate change.
- ✓ Build attractive buildings with improved and increased outdoor spaces for residents.
- ✓ Provide enhanced common spaces and services for NHA residents.

Key Zoning-related Elements of the proposed Schematic Design:

Relative to requirements of existing underlying zoning districts, the key elements of the proposed Schematic Design that require 2024 Town Meeting Zoning relief include:

- ✓ Replacement of 152 obsolete studio apartments with 152 replacement units and 95 additional new units (247 total)
- ✓ Density increasing from 13.8 units/acre to 22.4 units/acre.
- ✓ All units continuing to be affordable and accessible for seniors and disabled individuals.
- ✓ Front setback from Linden Street: 80 feet (or more).
- ✓ Rear setback from Maple Street property line: 35 feet.
- ✓ Maximum height: 4.5 stories or 53 feet.
- ✓ 0.5 parking ratio per unit.



Street view -- Corner of Sylvan Street and Linden Street

Additional Schematic Design Improvements & Changes

Over the past four months of Schematic Design work, numerous other benefits have been realized to improve the overall quality of the Linden/Chambers Redevelopment Project relative to the June 2023 Conceptual Design.

These include:

- ✓ Increased setback from Linden Street from 25 feet to ~80 feet.
- ✓ Reduced maximum building height from 63 feet to 53 feet while still achieving four occupiable stories, only 2 more feet in height than three stories.
- ✓ Some apartments will be two-bedroom, providing options for seniors and disabled individuals.
- ✓ Reduced walking distance for seniors from parking-to-elevators and from elevators-to-apartments.
- ✓ 40% further reduction of intrusion into the wetlands buffer zone.
- ✓ Increased overall green space by 50% from 30,000 ft² to 45,000 ft².
- ✓ All stormwater falling on property will be managed on site; new buildings will add to flooding problems that recently occurred in the Linden St./Blake St. area.
- ✓ Number of tenants needing temporary relocation for Phase 1 construction is reduced from 40 to 24.
- ✓ Value engineering reduces estimated construction costs by ~\$10 million, keeping project budget within the range of fundability.
- ✓ ~90% of ~\$75 million project budget raised from non-Needham taxpayer sources.

