

# Newton— Arborpoint at Woodland Station



**Site Details:** 6.9-acres, 180 apartment units, 36 affordable units

**Zoning:** 40B, Multi-Residence 3 district

**Funding:** MassHousing, MBTA, private developer

**Date(s):** 2006-2009

**Goals:** affordable housing, parking lot reuse



Aerial view of the former Woodland Station parking lot, 2011.

## Background

Since 2000, the MBTA has been trying to promote transit usage by investing in potential real estate development nearby existing transit stations that could potentially boost ridership. By selling and leasing rights to their property they are also trying to promote transit oriented developments. One of the most notable successes is the Arborpoint at Woodland Station, where the former Newton Woodland Green Line Station parking lot had been leased to the developers, National Development for a high density residential development. Having surface parking and providing for its upkeep was not a sustainable investment for the MBTA, so the transformation of this parking lot into prime real estate has provided an opportunity to better utilize this property.

## Site Development

National Development was designated as the property developers in 1999 and began to experiment with ideas for residential housing. They envisioned a residential area with a pedestrian oriented design that would fit into the existing neighborhood of single family homes and spacious golf courses. Many in the town were adamant about not introducing retail in this area because they felt that impacts of the high density developments would already introduce heavy traffic to this fairly residential neighborhood. To support this. Town officials felt that the amenities currently surrounding the development would in itself support the mixed use in this area and that mixed use comes in different combinations. Both developers and the city of Newton worked very closely with citizens to make this development as beneficial for the neighborhood and town as it would be for residents. The final product was an inviting and pedestrian friendly establishment with 180 units including townhouses and one, two, and three bedroom apartments, of which 20% of the units are affordable.

## Development Process

As part of the contract with the MBTA, one of the first projects they needed to embark on before the development of the residential component was a 550 space parking lot to accommodate the parking that would be lost to development. A parking garage was built and situated behind the



Arborpoint at Woodland Station, 2011.



Woodland Station MBTA parking lot, 2011.

development and parking spaces were also allocated throughout the development for residents. Because the site was originally a parking lot owned by the MBTA there was no zoning designated to the site. Developers sought the rights for Chapter 40B zoning, which would help them bypass local zoning laws in their development, by having 20% affordable housing. However, Arborpoint was considered a “friendly” 40B zoning law by developers, because there was no contention by the town officials, who were very supportive of providing more affordable housing units for the town through this development. The end product

was a long and narrow six story building zoned under multi-family low density development. Although this development is primarily residential housing and could have acquired more aspects of smart growth, this development is symbolic of Newton’s move toward much denser and transit accessible developments which are present in their plans in and around downtown village centers.

## Arborpoint at Woodland Station and MetroFuture Goals

### *Housing Choices*

This development has helped to address Newton’s lack of multifamily housing and conveniently helped the community in boosting their affordable housing percentage. Because this project is a 40B development, 20% of the housing units are designated affordable in order to diversify property residents.

### *Transportation Choices*

The goal of this development was to build promote access and encourage usage of the MBTA. The Woodland Green Line Station is located directly across the street from the Arborpoint development and over about 75% of the residents utilize this station as a means of travel.

### Contact Information

For more information about the development Arborpoint at Woodland Station contact Ted Tye from National Development [Tye@NatDev.com](mailto:Tye@NatDev.com).



Street view of Arborpoint housing units, 2011.

*“Arborpoint at Woodland Station was a great opportunity for the City of Newton to pursue a transit-oriented development that had great potential for boosting affordable and market rate multi-family housing in this area. In addition, this development brought city planners and neighborhoods to consider long term zoning strategies to create more compact, transit-oriented and pedestrian friendly developments.” – Ted Tye, Managing Partner, National Development*