



# Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council

## Memorandum

Matt Hills  
Chair, Newton School Committee  
100 Walnut Street  
Newton, MA 02460

March 9, 2014

Re: Zervas Elementary School project

Dear Mr. Hills and members of the School Committee:

Members of the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council (NHNAC) have been contacted by a number of residents who are extremely concerned about the preliminary plans for Zervas school reconstruction and expansion. At our recent meeting (March 6, 2014), we heard from current parents and other community members who are opposed to having a new school for approximately 490 students built on the current Zervas site.

In addition, this past fall the NHNAC participated in organizing two candidates' debates where we had an opportunity to hear the concerns from a large number of members of our community. The issue deemed most important by many participants was that of our city's schools. In addition to the broad support that the community has to improving educational standards and the success of our students, many support the goal of having walkable, neighborhood-scaled schools.

As a result, at our March 6 meeting, the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council expressed a strong opinion that there needs to be a broad, inclusive process in determining the needs, scale, and location of infrastructure investments related to the Zervas Elementary School population.

We would like the School Committee to insure that there is full community awareness and substantive input from the citizens of Newton Highlands (and other areas) as part of the process of determining the options for Zervas reconstruction and expansion. The process must be one that respects the shared goals and vision of our community. Unfortunately, many feel that the process thus far has not accomplished this.

We are asking the School Committee to delay implementation of any "final decisions" regarding Zervas School reconstruction until the community has had an adequate opportunity to have its voices heard. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Srdjan S. Nedeljkovic, M.D.*

Srdjan S. Nedeljkovic, President  
On behalf of the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council