

Nov 2 2015,

Dear Ms Elpern and Mr Normandin,
Dear Ms Polodny, Dear Mr Bolter.

I was deeply offended by the editorial piece of Oct 9, 2015.

This piece attacked my reputation as one of the officers of the Newton Villages Alliance, when it said that "the NVA and its supporters... never articulate the real reason for their passionate opposition: Affordable housing brings the 'wrong' kind of people to Newton."

The NVA has never said anything against diversity of people: on the contrary, we fight to keep the modest homes that exist in the city. We fight to keep units with lower rents from being replaced by luxury units. To insinuate the contrary in print without a shred of evidence is offensive and malicious.

If your Editors-in-Chiefs had had the courtesy of talking with any of the NVA officers before writing their editorial, they would have been told that the neighborhood 'character' we want to protect has nothing to do with the kind of people who live there. It has everything to do with the architecture and the history of the neighborhood. If they had been present at any Newton Historical Commission meetings where demolitions of buildings older than 50 years old are discussed, they would have heard the term "neighborhood character" meaning historical/architectural context.

I understand how someone who is not familiar with the work of the Historical Commission might possibly misinterpret the meaning of the word 'character'. However, a good journalist checks facts and takes the trouble of making a couple of phone calls. A good journalist does not make accusations that dirty someone's reputation: accusing us of not wanting 'undesirables' is going too far.

As the mother of a student who was Editor-in-Chief, I know it is a lot of work, especially when getting ready to go to press. I also understand about the freedom of expression and hope you will publish this letter since 'letters to the editors are welcomed'.

I also hope you give the NVA and me the courtesy of an apology for slandering our reputation.

Thank you,
Isabelle Albeck (mother of Simone NSHS '89, David NSHS '91 and Margot NSHS '95.

Response from Veronica Polodny:

Ms. Albeck,

We will be publishing your letter to the editor in our issue on November 6th; though due to spacing issues we will have to cut the final paragraph. However, as we were within our journalistic rights and stand by our rationale, we will not print an apology or a retraction.

Volume 32 Senior Staff