



April 12, 2021

To the residents of Nonantum and the Save Nonantum PAC supporters:

On behalf of the Newton-Needham Regional Chamber staff and board, we are writing today in hopes of moving forward after our poor wording choice in online posts about Save Nonantum PAC activities prior to the March special city council elections.

While Greg Reibman has acknowledged that the use of the term McCarthyism in one Facebook comment (shared with the Newton Civic Action Group) was inappropriate and clarified a comment on Village14.com, we believe it is important to formally apologize for the lack of professionalism and civility in these posts. Though the Newton-Needham Regional Chamber has always been a strong advocate for business and issues important to our business community, we have a responsibility to do so in a way that is respectful and we fell short in these two instances.

We also want to clarify a few important points:

- The Chamber has always appreciated and valued the longstanding traditions of the Nonantum community and its many Italian-American residents and will continue to do so.
- We have always supported the ongoing festivals, holiday celebrations and other informal activities that have long been a part of this community and will continue to do so.
- Since our founding in 1915, Nonantum-based businesses have been among our valued members; we are proud to support these local businesses in a variety of ways.
- Finally, for the record, Greg Reibman is no longer affiliated with Village 14 or any of the other bloggers on that site. Also, the chamber does not endorse and has not endorsed political candidates and will not be endorsing candidates in the future.

No disrespect was intended to the residents or businesses of Nonantum; nor were our comments designed to weaken some of the wonderful traditions that make Nonantum a special part of the Newton community. For the hurt and confusion we may have caused, we are sorry.

The economic and health challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the reinvigorated discussion around race and social justice, and a political environment that is sometimes polarized means

that important community institutions have a particular responsibility to foster dialogue on important issues. At the Chamber, we pledge to use our platforms – virtual, social media and (eventually!) in person activities – to demonstrate how we can have a civil dialogue on topics important to our community. We will continue to be strong advocates for issues important to our businesses, as well as the social, economic and public health of our community; however, we are confident that we can do so in a respectful and responsible manner.

As a gesture of our good faith and our desire to continue to support the businesses and residents of Nonantum, the Chamber intends to reach out to the St. Mary of Carmen Society to sponsor the 2021 Festival or other activities. This festival is among Newton’s most cherished annual events. It not only draws people from across the region to Nonantum, it funds the important philanthropic work of the Society.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Reibman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Greg Reibman  
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Sloane Kay". The signature is elegant and cursive, with the last name being the most prominent.

Linda Sloane Kay  
Chair of the Board