

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT

July 27, 2018

Katherine Miller
MassHousing
One Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

RE: 136-140 Worcester Street, Wellesley, MA Site Eligibility Response

Dear Ms. Miller:

On behalf of the Town of Wellesley (“the Town”) Board of Selectmen and Planning Board, please find the following comments with respect to the *Comprehensive Permit Site Approval Application* recently submitted by Riverview Crossing, LLC (the “Applicant”) for the construction of a 64-unit residential housing structure on approximately 0.96 acres of land located at 136-140 Worcester Street, Wellesley (the “Site”).

Overview

The Town has significant concerns regarding the Applicant’s ability to execute the proposed construction in a safe and legal manner, given the Applicant’s current and past violations of state and local law. Moreover, the use is too intense for the Site (at 30x density of abutting neighborhoods); the only access to and egress from the property is eastbound on Route 9 (a major state highway that is a heavily used alternative to the Mass Turnpike for those commuting into Boston) with troubling limitations: there is no connectivity to neighboring properties; there is no reliable public transportation within 1.3 miles; the Site is too close to the Route 128/95 interchange and to Route 9 eastbound traffic (an area already congested in morning rush-hour); there is no parking on Route 9 which brings into question the containment of all construction vehicles on Site; and there is potential for substantial impact to wetlands and to a perennial stream.

Current and Historic Violations

The Applicant is “owned and controlled by Dean Behrend” according to the Comprehensive Permit Site Approval Application submitted to MassHousing. Mr. Behrend has shown egregious disregard for local zoning laws and decisions of the Town’s Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”), Building Inspector, and Wetlands Committee. Mr. Behrend owns and has conducted landscaping-related operations on the parcels known as 130 and 136 Worcester Street for nearly 30 years (a part of the Site). During that time, Mr. Behrend has repeatedly violated the Town’s Zoning Bylaw. Since 2005, the Building Inspector has issued several violation letters related to a ZBA Decision (90-17) (the “Decision”) (attached as Exhibit A) that allowed a variance for the construction of the existing garage on the Site. Mr. Behrend has, on numerous

occasions, violated the conditions of the variance, as well as Section II (6) “Home Occupations” of the Town’s Zoning Bylaw. The Decision prohibits the storage of trucks or heavy equipment at the Site, including the equipment used in Mr. Behrend’s landscape business. Additionally, the Decision prohibits the outside storage of loam, fertilizer, seed, or any other materials related to the horticultural activity on the premises. Mr. Behrend has, nonetheless, stored large volumes of these materials on the property. Finally, the Decision incorporates an Order of Conditions issued by the Town’s Wetlands Committee. Over this past year alone, Mr. Behrend was cited with 14 violations of the Decision and fined \$4,200. He has since brought the property into compliance, but the fines remain unpaid.

Last month, Mr. Behrend was fined \$42,000 by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”) for improper disposal of asbestos material related to a property in Mashpee, MA. DEP found that under Mr. Behrend’s 2016 demolition permit, he submitted the results of an asbestos inspection to the Town that showed the existing house was asbestos-free in 23 tested areas. However, he failed to submit the report for the pipe insulation wrapping that had tested positive for asbestos.

On April 14, 2018, Mr. Behrend was issued a stop work order at a single-family home project located at 16 Mountview Road, Wellesley, due to violations of several sections of the Massachusetts State Building Code, 8th Edition, and the Town’s Zoning Bylaw after modifying a structural retaining wall without building permits and without review by his structural engineer. The retaining wall failed and resulted in a landslide that damaged the abutting property located at 41 Suffolk Road and constituted a significant threat to public safety.

Additionally, Mr. Behrend, through an LLC, received a permit to construct a 24,000 square foot commercial property and a 36-unit apartment structure located at 978 Worcester Street. The LLC was foreclosed upon, went bankrupt and then sued the Town in 2014 and 2015 to release Inclusionary Zoning funds that had been escrowed for that property in exchange for a Certificate of Occupancy for the commercial component of that project. The project was foreclosed upon prior to the construction of the residential component and Mr. Behrend sought to have the Town return the escrowed affordable housing funds. The Town ultimately settled with Mr. Behrend in 2015 after striking a new deal with the new owner of the property.

Site Constraints

The Town records indicate the project parcels (130, 136, 140, 140R, and 142 Worcester Street) have an area of 39,574 square feet. Adjacent to the parcels are two paper streets (Echo Road and Alpine Street) the ownership and rights of which are not clear or reported in the application, and that may make up the remainder of the 41,795 square feet on the application. The proposed development has a gross floor area of 50,420 square feet, a Floor Area Ratio of 1.27, and a height greater than 55 feet. The proposed project will render over 60% of the Site impervious and retains only 27.73% of the Site as “open space,” which the Applicant purports to be usable. The Town disagrees with the usable nature of the open space given that significant portion of it is at the rear of the Site where the drainage is located and the remainder of it is within a wetland.

Access Limitations

Access to the Site is limited on Route 9, essentially to vehicular traffic. There are no sidewalks along this section of Route 9 and no pedestrian connectivity to Dearborn Street (450 feet to the east) or Willow Street (562 feet to the west). Bicycle access is limited within the shoulder or breakdown lane of Route 9. Bicyclists are not often found riding along Route 9 given that the speed limit is 50 mph and vehicles are generally traveling faster than the posted limit.

Density and Proximity to Other Neighborhoods

The property is zoned Single Residence District - 15,000 Square Foot Minimum Area District, which has a maximum density under the Zoning Bylaw of 2.9 units per acre. The density for this project is more than 30 times the density of the abutting and surrounding neighborhoods. Due to the location, the 64 units

(50,420 GSF, residential) would be a self-contained neighborhood with no connectivity to anywhere else and no life services or amenities other than an 853 SF community room.

The neighborhoods in close proximity to the proposed development vary. New colonial-style homes are located to the east along Dearborn Street and to the south on Burnett Lane. Smaller cape style homes are prevalent to the west on Willow Street. The Site, currently somewhat separated from residential properties, will be built out to the property lines and will be juxtaposed to 3 Dearborn Street with minimal setbacks or screening.

Wetlands

The development is almost entirely within the jurisdiction of the *Wetlands Protection Act* (“WPA”) and appears to be built to the edge of a “bordering vegetated wetland” (“BVW”). Specifically, wetland flag WF 18 is right at the edge of the property boundary. There is “riverfront area” (“RA”) located on the southeasterly quarter of the property where a rain garden is proposed. The 100-foot buffer zone to the BVW crosses the southern half of the Site. Given the potential impact to BVW and RA along the southern property boundary, the Applicant must apply for a Notice of Intent to the Town of Wellesley Wetlands Protection Committee concurrently with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. An “alternatives analysis” will be required to minimize impact to the wetlands as part of this application. The “alternatives analysis” may reduce the scale of the activity. The *Rivers Protection Act* states that if there is no practicable alternative to locating the project in the RA, impacts must be minimized and mitigated so there are no significant adverse impacts. If proposed alterations are deemed likely to impact RA, the burden of proof would be on the Applicant to show that the project will not have significant adverse impacts to RA and the purposes of the *Rivers Protection Act*. Within the 200-foot RA, the issuing authority may allow the alteration of up to 5000 square feet or 10% of the RA within the lot, provided that certain conditions are met.

The wetlands resource areas will also be negatively impacted by the location and construction of the retaining wall, the extensive tree removal planned for the Site, the compaction of existing vegetation, the construction of drainage systems (including the structural LID stormwater management system), hardscape, and the garage, all of which will render the Site almost entirely impermeable.

The Wetlands Protection Committee must also consider impacts to wildlife habitat, sedimentation and erosion, and the protection of water quality to public and private water supplies all as identified in M.G.L. c. 131, § 40.

Traffic

The proposal includes direct ingress and egress from Route 9. Route 9, however, only allows for vehicles to access the Site heading eastbound. All vehicles must continue eastbound when exiting the Site. The Site is within close proximity of the turnaround on Route 9. So close, in fact, that those exiting the Site may miss the turnaround. If vehicles cannot make the first turn, they may turn down Dearborn Street to reverse direction through the neighborhood. Returning to the Site from a westbound direction would require turnarounds at the Cedar Street interchange a heavily congested area, particular during morning and afternoon school arrival and dismissal times. The intersection is the midpoint between the Fiske and Schofield Schools. The Cedar Street interchange is also congested during the morning and evening commuting hours, as traffic to and from Needham and Dover enter and exit Route 9 at this interchange. Vehicles may easily miss direct access to the Site due to the 50 mph speed limit and limited turning radius. Visitors driving past the Site will then have to “turn around” and either impact the neighborhood or add to the existing traffic at the Cedar Street interchange.

Utilities

Existing water and sewer lines are present at Worcester Street in front of the property. MassDOT will commence repaving Route 9 in the summer/fall of 2018 and the Town anticipates there will be a 5-year moratorium on cutting into the pavement.

Proposed Parking

The parking for the Site includes 98 parking spaces, or 1.53 spaces per unit. The plan includes 10 stackers on the upper parking deck. The proposal does include visitor parking spaces or an area for deliveries, which is critical since **on-street parking along Worcester Street is prohibited**. In addition to the complication of stackers, the proposed parking has two parking levels with separate entrances. At best, the on-Site circulation is confusing.

Public Transportation

The Site has limited public transportation access. The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority operates the Route 1 bus along Route 9 with a limited schedule Monday through Friday. Residents seeking to take the Route 1 bus would have to walk to the Cedar Street interchange to get the bus. The Applicant has indicated they would work with the MWRTA to provide access. The Town doubts that MWRTA will change its routes for the Applicant given the directional nature of the MWRTA and the lack of ability to “turn around” on Route 9. The other public transportation services noted in the Applicant’s submittal are all located in Newton. Access to those would require a safe route along Route 9 through the 128/95 interchange. Currently, there are no sidewalk connections from the property heading eastbound until after Dearborn Street, but sidewalks have been improved through the Route 9/Route 128 interchange. There are no sidewalk connections heading west along the eastbound side of Route 9 to Willow Street or Burke Lane in order for pedestrians to reach Cedar Street for the Route #1 bus. In summary, there are virtually no public transit options in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Landscape

There are no landscaping plans submitted in the application. The proposed Site plan indicates a number of trees will be removed within the property but does not indicate in any way what proposed screening is proposed for the Site. Additionally, a retaining wall is proposed along the entire rear portion of the Site, abutting Town conservation land, which has not been detailed in any way and could potentially detrimentally impact Town-owned land. As noted above, Mr. Behrend is currently under controlled construction, requiring oversight from a structural engineer, for a retaining wall failure at 16 Mountview Road, Wellesley, MA after the retaining wall collapsed.

Construction Management

The Town has significant concerns with respect to the ability of this developer to construct this project on this Site. Parking for construction workers in addition to Site equipment will be challenging to accommodate on Site and therefore will significantly impact the adjacent neighborhoods as parking is not allowed on Route 9. Deliveries will need to be expertly coordinated and offsite parking of workers will be required. Parking, even of a temporary nature in the shoulder of Route 9, given the proximity to the Route 9 turnaround represents a significant safety concern to the Town and has the potential to significantly impede residents accessing the turnaround on Route 9. The developer has not stated in the Site application how construction would be staged and coordinated.

Wellesley’s Progress on Affordable Housing

As you are aware, the Town has recently been inundated with 40B Site Eligibility notices. While the Town has not yet reached 10% threshold of affordable housing inventory, the Town has been making steady progress over the last 15 years in increasing the Subsidized Housing Inventory and anticipates meeting the 10% by 2019-2020. The Town is in the final stages of completing a Housing Production Plan to assist the Town in expanding its range of housing, including affordable housing, housing suitable for elder residents and those who wish to downsize and remain in Town, housing accessible to members of the local workforce, and housing for young families. We anticipate this plan to be complete in September 2018. The Town has also passed a number of zoning provisions to assist with affordable housing as redevelopment opportunities in Wellesley’s commercial districts arise. As of October 18, 2017, the Town is at 6.33% of its 10% goal, with 36 units to be added to the Subsidized Housing Inventory within the next several weeks. Below are the Town’s actions that have supported development of affordable housing:

Major Recent Developments

- Housing Production Plan: The Town's Housing Production Plan ("HPP") is nearing completion with adoption by the Town expected in September 2018. The Town has held three well-attended public workshops regarding the HPP.
- **On June 4, 2018, John Hancock announced that it will be redeveloping the Wellesley Office Park site and would like to partner with the Town to construct 350 housing units.**
- In March of 2018, the Board of Selectmen with assistance from the Planning Board released an RFP to develop the Tailby and Railroad Parking Lots for affordable housing and parking. Six proposals were submitted to the Town on June 1, 2018. A working group comprised of Town staff and citizens is currently reviewing the proposals and will issue a recommendation to the Board of Selectman this summer.
- April 2018: Town Meeting approved the transfer of \$200,000 to the Wellesley Housing Authority from the Community Preservation Committee with support of the Board of Selectmen to study the redevelopment potential of the Wellesley Housing Authority's Barton Road site to create a mixed income development, replace the current 89 units of family housing with modern, improved units, and potentially add additional affordable units.

Legal Changes to Promote Affordable Housing

- The Town adopted the Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw ("IZB") in 2004 which requires residential projects in commercial districts to provide 20% affordable housing, and commercial projects over 10,000 square feet to provide 2% affordable housing (1 unit for every 50,000 square feet constructed). 2005: The Town modified the IZB to require subdivisions having more than five lots to comply with the Bylaw at 20% threshold.
- 2007: The Town modified the definition of Floor Area Ratio in the Zoning Bylaw to exclude affordable units developed under the IZB from being included in the FAR to increase density and increase opportunities for affordable housing units in commercial districts.
- New units and affordable unit funding resulting from IZB changes:
 - 2007: The Linden Square project was completed, wherein seven affordable housing units were created under the IZB (The Town recently discovered these units were missing from Town's SHI and are being added now).
 - 2007/2008: Permitting began for projects at 978 Washington Street and the former Wellesley Inn site at 576 Washington Street in Wellesley Square; these projects were delayed due to the recession, but both have now been completed, resulting in seven SHI-eligible units at 978 Worcester and 5 SHI-eligible units at 576 Washington Street. Both projects were developed under the Town's Zoning and subject to the IZB; 978 Worcester St. also resulted in payment in-lieu funds for 1 unit.
 - 2009: The permitting of a CVS resulted in the payment of in-lieu funds under the IZB.
- 2013: The Town amended the Wellesley Square Zoning District to create a special permit to increase density. This benefited and allowed the previously stalled Wellesley Inn project to proceed.

Additional New Units

- 2004: The Town's Community Preservation Committee funded \$65,000 in addition to HUD funds to create a DMR house at 4 Marshall Road (SHI).
- 2012: A project was permitted at 27 Washington Street, resulting in the development of 82 SHI-eligible units, as well as seven assisted living units not SHI-eligible but permanently deed restricted to be affordable.
- 2012: The Wellesley Housing Development Corporation purchased a two-family dwelling at Peck Ave and a single-family dwelling at 6 Mellon Road, renovating the homes and creating three affordable units. At this time the Town also purchased 9 Highland Road. Although it is not on SHI, it is affordable due to deed restriction not complying with DHCD requirements (Must wait to add on resale per DHCD).

- 2013/2014: a 40B project was approved at 139 Linden Street and added two SHI units in October 2017.

Planning Actions to Promote Affordable Housing

- The 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan recommended actions for affordable housing, including examining the feasibility of using Town-owned parcels for affordable housing and modifying the zoning bylaws to encourage housing diversity, both of which the Town has and continues to implement and explore.
- 2016 to Present: The Town has developed the first Unified Plan in the Commonwealth that brings together the Town's Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan. The complete draft is available on www.wellesleyunifiedplan.com. The Selectmen and Planning Board will adopt the final plan this month that includes a housing strategy that employs a variety of mechanisms to increase housing type and affordability.
- March 2018: Town Meeting appropriated to the Planning Board funds to develop a sub-area study and plan, with additional funds to be provided from the Community Preservation Committee, with a focus on development/redevelopment opportunities in a defined area to support the development of additional affordable housing.

For reference, 40B projects currently in Comprehensive Permit Review are:

1. Delanson Circle (90 Units) - MHP
2. 148 Weston Road (55 Units) - MassHousing
3. 135 Great Plain Avenue (44 Units) - MassHousing

40B Projects approved for Site Eligibility

1. 16 Stearns Road (24 Units)- MassHousing
2. 680 Worcester Street (Previous proposed 20 Units) - MassHousing

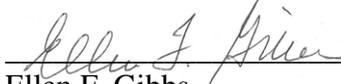
Based on all of the reasons articulated above, the Town believes that the proposed development is poorly designed and too intense for a site that is under an acre in size. A project of a more suitable scale may work well on this Site; however, the Town has serious concerns with this Applicant's ability to safely execute any plan on this Site.

Sincerely,

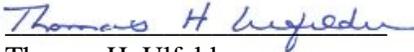
Sincerely,


 Jack Morgan, Chair


 Marjorie R. Freiman, Vice Chair


 Ellen F. Gibbs


 Beth Sullivan Woods


 Thomas H. Ulfelder



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
TOWN HALL WELLESLEY, MA 02181

JOHN A. DONOVAN, JR., Chairman
ROBERT R. CUNNINGHAM
KENDALL P. BATES

ELLEN D. GORDON
Executive Secretary
Telephone
431-1019

APR 6 9 49 AM '90

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WELLESLEY, MA 02181
WILLIAM E. POLLETTA
FRANKLIN P. PARKER
SUMNER H. BABCOCK

ZBA 90-17
Petition of Dean Behrend
136 Worcester Street

Pursuant to due notice, the Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, March 22, 1990 at 8 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room (Conference Room B) of the Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of DEAN BEHREND requesting a variance from the terms of Section II A 7 and pursuant to the provisions of Section XXIV-D of the Zoning Bylaw to allow construction of an oversized one and 1/2 story garage, approximately 40 feet by 25 feet for the dual uses of horticulture and automobile storage at 136 WORCESTER STREET, in a Single Residence District. The size of said garage is larger than a garage which is accessory to a single family use, much less customary or incidental to such use.

On March 5, 1990, the petitioner requested a hearing before this Board and thereafter due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Presenting the case at the hearing was Dean Behrend, who presented photographs of the area and of the existing house, which will be his residence when the remodeling has been completed. Mr. Behrend said that annuals and perennials would be grown inside the garage and that the extra length is needed to store soils and trays necessary for potting the plants before moving them to the greenhouse. Using the plans submitted, Mr. Behrend showed that the transfer of the plants from the garage to the greenhouse would be an internally contained process. The garage would also be used to store two automobiles.

Mr. Behrend stated that all of the equipment used in his landscaping construction business is held on his site in Natick, and none of it would ever be held on the subject property. The subject property would be used for holding plants, trees and shrubs. Large plants acquired would be temporarily planted for use at another site in the future. The subject site might also be used as a nursery, but no customers would come to the site. The additional 8,859 square foot lot would be used as a holding area for nursery stock.

Rose Cioppa, 114 Worcester Street, was concerned that fertilizer would be stockpiled on the property and that trucks would be coming through Dearborn Street. She was afraid that the property would not be well maintained as there had been problems on the site in the past.

Mr. Behrend said that the property has already been cleaned up and will be maintained in an orderly manner.

ZBA 90-17
Petition of Dean Behrend
136 Worcester Street

APR 6 9 49 AM '90

Statement of Fact

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WELLESLEY, MASS 02158

The subject property is located at 136 Worcester Street, in a Single Residence District, on a 19,370 square foot lot on which a conforming single family residence is located. The petitioner also owns an 8,859 square foot lot fronting on Worcester Street, which abuts the subject property on the easterly lot line.

The petitioner is requesting a variance to construct an oversized garage, approximately 40 feet by 28 feet which will be attached to a proposed greenhouse. The garage will be used for the storage of two automobiles as well as storage of plant and potting materials and the assembling of plant trays to be used in the greenhouse. The size of the garage is larger than that which can properly be said to be accessory to a single family use or customary or incidental to such use as required in Section II A 7 of the Zoning Bylaw which states:

"Such accessory uses as are customary in connection with the uses enumerated in clauses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, and are incidental thereto, including a private garage and a private stable."

A Plot Plan dated February 12, 1990, drawn by John J. McDonnell, Registered Land Surveyor; construction drawings and elevations dated 2/5/90, revised 2/14/90; and photographs were submitted.

The Planning Board, on March 13, 1990, reviewed the petition and were unsure whether the proposed construction is allowed by right in the district. If the use was to be determined as prohibited, the Board would oppose granting a variance.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the evidence presented. The oversized garage is larger than a garage constructed as a customary accessory use for a single family dwelling.

It is the opinion of this Authority that in this particular instance, both of the proposed uses for which the garage will be constructed are allowed under Section II of the Zoning Bylaw. Section II 5 states:

"Agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, including the use of the premises for the sale of natural products raised thereon..."

is a use allowed by right in a Single Residence District. Accessory uses customary to this use, as well as private garages are allowed by right in a Single Residence District, as stated in Section II A 7 of the Zoning Bylaw and quoted in the foregoing Statement of Facts.

It is the opinion of this Authority that the combination of the two allowed uses which necessitates the size of the garage being larger than customary can be allowed in this particular instance.

ZBA 90-17
Petition of Dean Behrend
136 Worcester Street

It is the further opinion of this Authority that a literal enforcement of the provisions of Section II of the Zoning Bylaw would involve a substantial hardship to the petitioner and that desirable relief may be granted without substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of the Zoning Bylaw.

Therefore, the requested variance is granted to construct a garage in accordance with the Plot Plan and construction drawings submitted as noted in the foregoing Statement of Facts subject to the following conditions:

1. That there shall be no outside storage of trucks or heavy equipment on the property.
2. That no equipment or vehicles used in the petitioner's landscaping business shall be kept at the subject location at any time.
3. That there shall be no outside storage of loam, fertilizer, seed or any other materials related to any horticultural activity on the property.
4. That all conditions imposed by the Wetlands Protections Committee shall be met.

The Inspector of Buildings is hereby authorized to issue a permit for the construction upon his receipt and approval of a building application and construction plans.

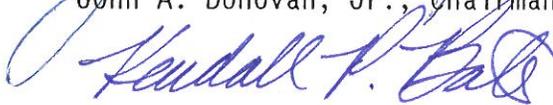
If the rights authorized by a variance are not exercised within one year of the date of grant of such variance, they shall lapse and may be re-established only after notice and a new hearing pursuant to Section XXIV-D of the Zoning Bylaw.

APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION, IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A, SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

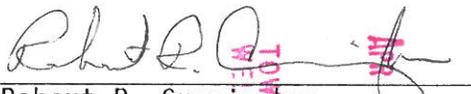
cc: Planning Board
Inspector of Buildings
edg



John A. Donovan, Jr., Chairman



Kendall P. Bates



Robert R. Cunningham

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TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
WILMINGTON, MA 02181
APR 8 9 49 AM '90

Rose Mary Donahue
9 Maple Road
Wellesley, MA 02481
(781) 237-6370

Board of Selectmen
Town of Wellesley
525 Washington Street
Wellesley, MA 02482-5992

Dear Friends:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed residential development at 136-140 Worcester Street. As a 25-year resident of this neighborhood, I am extremely concerned about the density of this project, it's environmental impacts, and the traffic that will come with addition of 64 units of housing. I know these concerns are shared by many of my neighbors.

As you know, the project is located along an extremely busy and congested stretch of Route 9, a divided state highway with a speed limit of 50 mph along the frontage of the proposed project. As one of the few east-west routes to Boston, traffic on Route 9 is very heavy, and frequently impacted by traffic on the Mass Turnpike. The proposed development is a very short distance from the Route 9 and I-95/128 interchange, where 2 large office buildings and an office park are located. The interchange, which is highly channelized to provide access to the nearby office complexes and ramps to I-95, has undergone a total reconfiguration in the last several years. This has been very disruptive to the neighborhood. Although we hope the reconfiguration will make the interchange more safe, it will not reduce the volume of traffic in the area, and the installation of 3 additional traffic signals at the interchange has resulted in additional stoppages and queuing of traffic in the area.

All access and egress to and from the project site will be via Route 9. During the morning commute traffic is generally stopped in the area of the proposed driveways, and when it is moving it is bumper-to-bumper. Even during off-peak times, traffic is frequently heavy and moving at a high rate of speed. This is also an area with a very high volume of lane changes as cars maneuver to access the office complex driveways or the ramps to I-95. Morning traffic in this area is already very challenging. The additional traffic generated by the proposed units

(plans provide for 98 parking spaces) and the lane changes that will result from exiting traffic will create an even more difficult, if not dangerous, situation.

The developer notes the close proximity of the turn-around at the Wellesley-Gateway intersection. I use this turn-around all the time, frequently entering Route 9 eastbound from the ramp at Cedar Street. (The ramp is probably twice the distance from the turn-around as the proposed site driveways.) I frequently find myself waiting on the ramp for a sufficient break in traffic to allow me to safely travel from the right merge lane to the left turn lane at Wellesley-Gateway. Unless there is no traffic, I cannot image vehicles exiting the proposed development making their way across these busy travel lanes to execute a U-turn without disrupting the traffic flow. The distance is just too short.

The residential development, as proposed, will be completely dependent on vehicular access, as there is no sidewalk network on the south side of Route 9. Putting either pedestrians or bicycles on Route 9 in this vicinity would be unsafe, and any access to public transportation will require a car. The distances to Town amenities noted in the application, while short 'as the crow flies,' are not easily walkable from the site. The location of this project will require a car to access local services.

The site is also an important part of the local ecosystem. Construction will result in the removal of dozens of mature trees, if not clear-cutting of the entire site. This will significantly impact drainage in the area, which is already quite wet, and the replacement of green space with so much impervious surface is sure to impact drainage on abutting properties and the nearby conservation land. Light pollution from the site will also likely have negative impacts on the sensitive natural resources that abut the site, and the extensive construction activities required for a project of this size will inevitably disrupt the established habitat on this area.

I also have concerns regarding the density of the project. The massing of the proposed building will overwhelm the existing family neighborhood. At a height of 55 feet, the proposed five-story building will loom over nearby residences, and the current design includes many large windows. The light emanating from the building, along with that required for on-site surface parking, will greatly impact residents, including those to the north of Route 9. A building of this scale and design will forever alter the character of the neighborhood, and not in a beneficial way. Unfortunately, it appears that there was no effort to

design a project that would blend into and enhance the established neighborhood in which it is located.

I strongly support the Towns efforts to increase Wellesley's affordable housing, but this project is just too dense for this location. Furthermore, the project is not designed to integrate the proposed residential community into the existing neighborhood, but rather to isolate it. With two-thirds of proposed affordable apartments configured as one-bedroom units, the development will provide limited opportunities for families in need of affordable housing in our community — something that is sorely needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal, and for the work you are doing to increase affordable housing options in Wellesley.

Sincerely,


Rose Mary Donahue

Yuncong Zhang, Jianhua Tang
137 Worcester street.
Wellesley, MA 02481
(646)321-7170

Board of Selectmen
Town of Wellesley
525 Washington street
Wellesley, MA 02482-5992

Dear Board of Selectmen,

My name is Yuncong Zhang. I am writing this letter to express our concerns regarding the proposed affordable housing development at 136-140 Worcester st. While we totally understand and support that there should be more affordable housing built in Wellesley, we think this is not an ideal location for such development.

Our biggest concern is the unavoidable negative impact on traffic. There are few factors: 1) This project is right in the middle of where traffic needs to turn west/east on route 9. Imagining all the cars coming out of this site who needs to go route 9 westbound, has to enter eastbound first, merge all the way to the left turn lane within an incredibly short distance, and probably get stuck on waiting for a left turn light. All the traffic that coming from east then needs to go around at cedar street, where traffic situation is already pretty bad, to get back to the site. 2) This is a big intersection in junction of route 95/128. Again during rush hour, the cars going eastbound are lined up until cedar street. Not mentioning the hassle for the neighborhood and public traffic, I can not imaging how the potential residence can easily and safely get in and out of the site. 3) There are 2 big office buildings that right around this traffic intersection. 4) this site is in the middle of Fiske and Schofield schools. It will make school traffic and school buses more challenging to get around. 5) public safety. There are no side walks in front of the site, and no public transportation near by, and no commercials that's within walking distance from the site. It is not safe for the potential residence to do anything outside of the site without a vehicle. In a case of an emergency such as fire and medical, a worsened traffic will only have a negative impact on those who needs to be served quickly.

The traffic is our biggest concern for this project. Please remember that it is not just a problem for the neighborhood. It is going to be a problem for ANYONE who needs to drive through this area on daily basis.

Second thing is environmental concern. Because this is a heavy traffic intersection, it is so nice and necessary to have this green space as a buffer to the car pollution and dust. There are also many creatures who lives in this green space. Personally speaking, every once a while we get water problems in our basement and I know many of our neighborhoods have the same problem. It makes me worried if the trees get removed how is that going to impact the water table in this area.

Having a 64 unit residential complex built in this proposed location means more traffic, more pollution and less green space. These are all negative impacts for our neighborhood.

We are also concerned about the building construction itself. At a height of 55 feet, 5 story, it

is going to impacting how much natural light that many surrounding houses are getting. Many houses have little kids play in their yard, like myself have a 2 and 4 year old. We don't know how conformable we are to have a 5 story building right across the street from us, having many units that can look directly into our yard. We also think the design of the building is not blending to the neighborhood at all.

Last thing worries me is the reputation of the builder. We have learned that Mr. Behrend had many previous violations. We feel unsafe to have this developer doing any project near our neighborhood.

Your consideration and time is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely

Yuncong Zhang, Jianhua Tang