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Contact: Jeanette Rebecchi
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October 11, 2018

Lenore Mahoney, Executive Secretary
Wellesley Zoning Board of Appeals
525 Washington Street
Wellesley, MA 02482

RE: ZBA 2018-24 – 148 Weston Road 40B

Dear Ms. Mahoney,

On March 28, 2018 and October 11, 2018 the Design Review Board (“the Board”) reviewed the comprehensive permit application submitted by Wellesley Park, LLC. (“the Applicant”) for the property located at 148 Weston Road. Please find the following suggestions for improvement that the Board feels would mitigate the impacts of the Applicant’s project.

Architecture

- **Building Height & Volume:** The height and building volume is inappropriate given the context of the site. Four stories would be more suitable. Additionally, such a large scale development is in sharp contrast to the undeveloped land found in the North 40. Permitting the construction of a five story building puts the neighborhood on a trajectory of increasing density.
- **4th Floor:** The white cladding creates the effect of adding a second penthouse floor. This floor should be treated as the same as the three residential floors below to avoid making the building look too top-heavy.
- **5th Floor Penthouse:** The penthouse floor should be setback by 12’ on all sides to reduce the building mass. The loss of several units to accomplish this would be compensated by the increased value of the remaining units.
- **Roof Form:** The use of a single flat roof exacerbates the scale of the building. The Applicant should vary the roof profile or parapet height.
- **Amenity Building:** The Board appreciates how the Applicant mimicked the style of a single-family home along the street edge. However, the 1.5-story building is grossly out of scale, surpassing the height of the neighboring two-story home and meeting the height of main building’s third floor.

- **Materials:** The overall look of the building is nearly identical to the Delanson Circle project. While the Board recognizes that this is a self-described “sister property”, the Applicant is encouraged to choose another material palette to differentiate between the two.

Site Design/Landscaping

- **Site Design:** The Board was favorable of siting the main building in the rear of the property. However, the Applicant should create a more reasonable side and rear setback given that the future of the North 40 is unknown.
- **Landscaping:**
 - Additional passive and active recreation space can be provided by thinking more creatively about the shape and size of the lawn area, and enlarging the patio located at the corner of the property.
 - Widen the evergreen planting buffer between the driveway and the property line, and plant trees a minimum of 12’ in height.
 - Create a larger landscape buffer between the street edge and main building.

Parking/Circulation

- **Fire Lane:** The Board expressed concerns about the appropriateness of using a grass fire lane, which can become compacted, muddy and rutted. Preferably, the paved driveway area would meet fire access codes.
- **Pedestrian Amenities:** The project is very car-centric. Given the increased traffic generated from this project and the nearby Delanson Circle 40B, all effort must be made to encourage walking and biking to/from the site by:
 - Adding a pedestrian walkway to connect the building to the roadway.
 - Providing bike lanes and sidewalks along Weston Road.
- **Parking:** Given that parking is prohibited on Weston Road, more visitor parking should be provided. In general, the Board expressed concerns whether the total number of spaces provided was sufficient.

Additional Information

- **Rooftop Equipment:** All roof-top equipment will be highly visible given the flatness of the roof. Sightline views should be provided on all elevation drawings and renderings.
- **Materials:** Product spec sheets are needed for all materials (windows, cladding, lighting etc.).
- **Sustainability:** How has the Applicant incorporated sustainable building techniques? Even small scale items such as energy efficient, aluminum-clad windows are important.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jeanette Rebecchi, Planner
On Behalf of the Design Review Board