



TOWN OF BROOKLINE
Massachusetts
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



Andrew M. Pappastergion
Commissioner

February 10, 2014

Jesse Geller, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
333 Washington Street
Brookline, MA 02445

RE: The Residences at South Brookline

Dear Chairman Geller:

Following a review of the plans submitted by Chestnut Hill Realty for the proposed Residences at South Brookline 40B project, the Department of Public Works offers the following comments and concerns which have been identified by staff and requests that the Board take necessary steps to ensure that they are addressed by the petitioner.

Drainage and Storm Water Run-Off

The area of the greenbelt behind Beverly Road has historically been in a wet condition. A large culvert collects the runoff from area streets and discharges this runoff into the stream within the abutting D. Blakely Hoar Sanctuary. The Department notes that the developer is proposing use of pervious surfaces throughout this project to manage storm water and prevent surface flow to the storm water system. Use of this material requires implementation of a regular maintenance program to remove collected sand, silts, and other materials to ensure the system continues to work as designed. Failure to continue this maintenance program will prevent water infiltration through the system making it nonfunctional. Therefore the Department recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals require the developer to submit a 'Pervious Pavement Operation and Maintenance Protocol' outlining the maintenance program that, at a minimum, includes the required maintenance to prevent clogging of pavement surface with sediment; snow and ice removal; and inspection and repair to ensure the system continues to function as designed.

Sewer Contamination

The existing storm drain on Gerry Road, a private way within the existing development, which discharges into the D. Blakely Hoar Sanctuary, continues to experience occasional sewer contamination. This ongoing issue has been identified by staff from the Department of Public Works and discussed with the petitioner to no avail. Therefore the Department is opposed to any additional flow resulting from this proposed development to this outlet until the issue is definitely resolved by the petitioner.

Level of Service at Signalized Intersections

Staff is concerned that the number of vehicle trips generated by the large project will significantly reduce the level of service and cause delays for motor vehicles and pedestrians at the intersections of Independence Drive/Grove Street at Beverly Road/Russett Road, Grove Street at South Street/Walnut Hill Road, and Independence Drive at VFW Parkway. It is the Departments understanding that your Board has hired a peer review consultant for traffic and therefore we request that they investigate this potential issue and require appropriate mitigation measures to ensure no reduction in the level of service.

Emergency Vehicle Access

While we expect the Fire Department to issue their own letter, based on the plans provided to us staff is concerned that large emergency vehicles will have a hard time exiting the driveway and parking lot locations throughout the development. Therefore the Department requests that your peer review consultant pay close attention to this issue and require the submittal of auto-turn analyses to ensure safe ingress and egress, especially to buildings 6, 7, 11, 12, and 13.

Pedestrian Safety on Independence Drive

The existing crosswalks located at the curb cuts for the private roads (Sherman/Thornton and Gerry Roads) into the development on Independence Drive currently utilized by residents of Hancock Village require pedestrians to cross a 4 lane minor arterial roadway and have a history of pedestrian related accidents. Staff is concerned that additional crossings as a result of the increase in the development proposed by this project will lead to additional pedestrian related motor vehicle accidents. Studies examining the accident rates at crosswalks have shown that pedestrian related accidents are more common at un-signalized midblock crosswalks and therefore if the pedestrian crossing volumes are to increase these crosswalks, the Department requests that the Board require the upgrade of these crosswalks with additional safety precautions as mitigation.

Additionally the project calls for the usage of two additional curb cuts on Independence drive for ingress and egress for residents of buildings 1 through 7. The Federal Highway Administration has issued several reports which outline the increase in motor vehicle accident and decrease in safety on arterial roadways with the increase in access points on them. Accident data provided by the Brookline Police Department includes 12 reported motor vehicle accidents in a 2 year time period on Independence drive with 83% (10 out of 12) occurring in the vicinity of the existing curb cuts for Hancock Village. The Department is concerned that additional access points will result in increased motor vehicle accidents and will require mitigation and changes to Independence Drive to ensure pedestrian safety.

Impact on Residential Streets

Ingress and egress for Buildings 8 through 13, which includes the largest building proposed as part of this project, are currently designed via Asheville Road which is classified as a local roadway under Town of Brookline jurisdiction. Based on the limited data we have it appears that vehicle trips generated by the expansion could double on this residential roadway and negatively impact the community through an increase in motor vehicle volumes and speeds which will reduce the safety for all roadway users. Besides the continuation of the blocked access to the development on Thornton Road at Russett Road, the Department requests that the Board require the petitioner to provide significant monies to decrease the safety hazards through the installation of town approved traffic calming devices as mitigation.

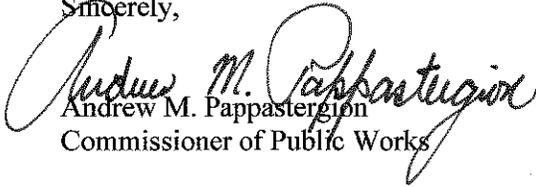
Available Parking Supply & Transportation Demand Management

Staff is concerned that the location of the proposed development has limited access to public transportation with only the MBTA 51 Bus Route stopping in the area. This bus route runs between the MBTA D & C Green lines in Cleveland Circle and the MBTA Orange & Commuter lines in Forest Hills with 2 stops on Independence Drive at Sherman/Thornton and Gerry Roads. However during the recent Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority plans to address their operational and financial constraints the 51 bus route was scheduled to be canceled. Although this plan was put off in favor of fare increases, the future of the 51 bus route remains questionable and therefore it is unrealistic to use it as a potential mode of transportation when factoring how people will travel to or from this location.

Although Hancock Village currently provides its own shuttle service to public transit locations, given the large number of potential residents resulting from this proposed development we are concerned that the capacity of the current shuttle and the number of proposed parking spaces for the 13 buildings will be inadequate to meet their increased demand. Therefore the Department requests that the Board require the petitioner to implement Transportation Demand Management plan including adequate parking spaces per unit, onsite bicycle facilities, increased shuttle services, and others to meet the transit demands of their residents.

The Department of Public Works is committed to working with the petitioner, the Board, and your peer review consultants throughout this process to achieve a design that meets the goals and objectives of all parties involved.

Sincerely,


Andrew M. Pappastergion
Commissioner of Public Works