

ARTICLE 30

THIRTIETH ARTICLE

Submitted by: Jeff Wachter; Carol Caro; Jennifer Raitt, TMM P4; Mariah Nobrega, TMM P4; Deborah Brown, TMM P1

TO SEE IF THE TOWN WILL ADOPT THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS Town Meeting passed a resolution in 2016 to study the feasibility of building age-restricted affordable housing on the Kent/Station Street Town-owned lot (Parcel No. 140-05-00) while maintaining all of the parking spaces;

WHEREAS the Committee was formed and, following a request for proposals issued by the Town, a developer was selected;

WHEREAS the cost to maintain the 44 parking spaces is estimated to cost millions more than initially proposed and will require the Town of Brookline to subsidize that amount in full;

WHEREAS many construction projects that were impacting parking options in Brookline Village have ended and a new parking garage has been constructed;

WHEREAS there is now the Brookline Village Parking Benefits District to assist with maintaining and regulating parking, improving the public realm, and recommending transportation improvements which may address parking issues;

WHEREAS Brookline is a member of the World Health Organization's international network of Age-Friendly Cities and has committed to taking meaningful actions toward becoming a more age-friendly community;

WHEREAS Brookline has an aging population in need of a substantial expansion of Brookline's supply of housing suitable for seniors;

WHEREAS Brookline's need for more housing that is affordable to seniors who make a low-to-moderate income is as acute as it was in 2016;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that this Town Meeting urges the Kent/ Station Street Senior Affordable Housing project on (Parcel No. 140-05-00) no longer maintain the requirement to keep the existing 44 parking spaces in order to bring the cost of the project to a reasonable level and to allow the Town to subsidize affordable housing, not public parking.

Or act on anything relative thereto.

PETITIONER'S ARTICLE DESCRIPTION

In the fall of 2016, Town Meeting passed a resolution (with 80% of Town Meeting in favor) that urged the Select Board to study and pursue age-restricted affordable housing on top of the Kent Street Parking lot (Parcel No. 140-05-00). A committee was formed, numerous public meetings were held to formulate a Request for Proposals. The current estimates for the Town's subsidy have increased by many millions in order to keep the existing parking and build the project above the lot. The project proposes 59 subsidized units that are badly needed to address the growing demand for housing by seniors in our community. However, the numerous strains on the Town budget and the level of funding required for parking to be maintained on site will likely prevent this project from proceeding.

Parking has been an issue in Brookline Village for years, mostly, in part, due to construction of the intersection at Washington Street and Boylston Street, the large-scale redevelopment which is now Children's Hospital, and the development on River Road which is now the Hilton Garden Inn. These projects are complete. While future projects, such as the redevelopment of 10 Brookline Place, will come in time, it is unlikely that 3 major projects like these will be active simultaneously in the neighborhood.

The municipal lot on Kent Street has 44 spaces that are mostly used during the day for employees of business in the Village to use their Commercial Passes which are \$500 for the year. The Select Board has discussed in numerous meetings their willingness to increase parking meter and commercial pass rates once COVID restrictions are lifted. By one estimate, this lot generates approximately \$80,000 per year for the Town in revenue. The cost to maintain the lot (repaving/ repairs, meters, snow clearance, and landscaping is not known at this time. Even if the rates increase, it will not compete with the urgent need of affordable housing nor the tax guarantee of a project.

This resolution is requesting that the committee and the developer be able to determine the appropriate balance between publicly available parking on-site and a feasible, fiscally responsible development that prioritizes homes for low-income seniors.

By passing this resolution, the Town can put the project back out to bid and receive a more financially feasible proposal to address affordable housing.

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Warrant Article 30 is a resolution to modify and re-offer a 2016 Town Meeting-approved resolution to explore the feasibility of building age-restricted affordable housing on the Town-owned Kent-Station Street parking lot. Article 30 would eliminate the requirement that all 39 existing municipal parking spaces be retained, allowing a reduction or elimination of retained public spaces with the objective of reducing the project cost and the required Town subsidy for affordable housing while not continuing to subsidize off-street public parking at this location.

The Housing Advisory Board (HAB) voted unanimously to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 30 in order that critically needed affordable senior housing might be created at this highly walkable location. A key impediment to proceeding under the 2016 Town Meeting resolution, after five years of effort by four successive committees, is that the onsite construction of public parking triggers State mandated prevailing wage and public bidding requirements which increase the required Town subsidy to over \$12,000,000, or over \$220,000 per affordable unit, dramatically exceeding any other Town-assisted project.

HAB members recognize, however, the legitimate concerns of other stakeholders—most notably the important nexus between the need for accessible public parking and the continued viability of Brookline Village’s retail and other commercial activities. We understand that the Article 30 Petitioners, who share the HAB’s desire to provide new affordable housing at this location, also wish to maintain as much parking as is feasible. Accordingly, HAB recommends that the issuance of a new Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop affordable senior housing at the Kent-Station Street parking lot should recognize this ancillary objective.

MOTION OFFERED BY THE PETITIONERS

Voted that the Town adopt the following resolution,

WHEREAS Town Meeting passed a resolution in 2016 to study the feasibility of building age-restricted affordable housing on the Kent/Station Street Town-owned lot (Parcel No. 140-05-00);

WHEREAS the Committee was formed, including a stipulation in their mission to retain all of the public parking on site, and, following a request for proposals issued by the Town, a developer was selected;

WHEREAS the cost to maintain the 39 parking spaces is estimated to cost millions more than initially proposed and will require the Town of Brookline to subsidize that amount in full;

WHEREAS Brookline is a member of the World Health Organization’s international network of Age-Friendly Cities and has committed to taking meaningful actions toward becoming a more age-friendly community;

WHEREAS Brookline has an aging population in need of a substantial expansion of Brookline’s supply of housing suitable for seniors;

WHEREAS Brookline’s need for more housing that is affordable to seniors who make a low-to-moderate income is as acute as it was in 2016;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that this Town Meeting urges the Kent/ Station Street Senior Affordable Housing project on (Parcel No. 140-05-00) no longer maintain the requirement to keep all of the existing 39 parking spaces in order to bring the cost of the project to a

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reasonable level, while keeping as many parking spaces on site as feasible, and to allow the Town to subsidize affordable housing, not public parking.

SELECT BOARD'S RECOMMENDATION

The Select Board will not be making a motion under Article 30.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION

A report and recommendation will be included in the supplemental mailing.

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ARTICLE 30

SELECT BOARD'S SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

On May 17th the Select Board held a public hearing on Article 30 in order to consider new compromise language on the article. The intent was never to eliminate any substantial amount of parking for local business employees. The petitioners looked to create some certainty that as the process moves forward and ultimately results in housing, that the 37 merchant parking spaces be maintained and, if not on site then very close by. The new language makes it clear that this housing project only moves forward once the Transportation Board has identified and secured parking for these merchant spaces. At this stage, it is not possible to identify exactly where those spaces are going to be preserved. Currently there are parking permits for 60% of the spaces along the streets in commercial areas. The goal is to have staff work with all the stakeholders to identify potential parking spaces and then go through a very public process before the Transportation Board, in the most unconstrained manner.

The Select Board voted FAVORABLE ACTION on the following motion:

WHEREAS Town Meeting passed a resolution in 2016 to study the feasibility of building age-restricted affordable housing on the Kent/Station Street Town-owned lot (Parcel No. 140-05-00);

WHEREAS the Committee was formed, including a stipulation in their mission to retain all of the public parking on site, and, following a request for proposals issued by the Town, a developer was selected;

WHEREAS the cost to maintain the 39 parking spaces is estimated to cost millions more than initially proposed and will require the Town of Brookline to subsidize that amount in full;

WHEREAS Brookline is a member of the World Health Organization's international network of Age-Friendly Cities and has committed to taking meaningful actions toward becoming a more age-friendly community;

WHEREAS Brookline has an aging population in need of a substantial expansion of Brookline's supply of housing suitable for seniors;

WHEREAS Brookline's need for more housing that is affordable to seniors who make a low-to-moderate income is as acute as it was in 2016;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that this Town Meeting urges the Town to pursue affordable senior rental housing on the Kent/Station Street site (Parcel No. 140-05-00) in a manner

that is cost-efficient for the Town. A revised RFP will be issued only after the Town's Department of Planning and Community Development and the Transportation Board after appropriate study have secured adequate sites during construction and upon completion for the 37 permitted merchant full-day public parking spaces and 2 Zipcar spaces currently located on the Kent/Station Street lot, whether or not located on the site, and with only potentially removing a limited number of metered public parking spaces currently available in Brookline Village. Adequacy shall be determined by the Transportation Board and EDAB after holding public hearings.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>Aye:</u>	<u>Abstain:</u>
Hamilton	VanScoyoc
Greene	
Aschkenasy	
Sandman	