



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
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James Freas
Acting Director

June 23, 2015

[By Electronic Mail and Regular Mail]

Katharine Lacy
Monitoring and Permitting Specialist
Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency
One Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Project Eligibility Application/Site Approval

Location: 1521 Beacon Street, Newton, MA 02468
Number of Proposed Units: 48
Subsidizing Agency: Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MassHousing)
Applicant: Waban AMA Realty Ventures, LLC

Dear Ms. Lacy:

The Planning and Development Department, on behalf of the City of Newton, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Project Eligibility/Site Approval application recently submitted by Waban AMA Realty Ventures, LLC (the "Applicant") for 1521 Beacon Street, Newton, MA 02468 (the "Project"). This letter constitutes the City's response to your letter addressed to Mayor Warren, dated April 28, 2015, seeking comments regarding the Project.

The Applicant should be commended for holding a community meeting in early May, which was very well attended by the neighborhood. Written comments received by the Planning and Development Department (the "Department") from interested parties are attached (**ATTACHMENT A**); these comments have informed the City's response. As you will note, there has been an overwhelming response from the neighborhood on this project.

Newton has a longstanding commitment to the creation of affordable and equitable housing opportunities in our City and recently announced a goal to add at least 800 affordable units by 2021, so that 10 percent of our housing stock is affordable. Nevertheless, Newton has recently asserted that it has met the 1.5% general land area minimum pursuant to Chapter 40B. This issue is currently pending before the Housing Appeals Committee. Although we believe we have met the general land area minimum, we continue to welcome additional housing opportunities that are the right fit for the right place. To ensure such projects represent a good fit for the City and the respective neighborhood in which they are looking to develop in, the City strongly encourages careful siting, design, and project programming. Overall, Newton supports increasing the diversity and supply of housing, especially affordable housing, and through the *Newton Comprehensive Plan*, adopted in 2007, has a goal of encouraging “Residential development that is well located in relationship to transportation, schools, commercial services, large employers, and existing patterns of residential type and character.”¹ Additionally, the objectives of the City’s *Consolidated Plan*, including fair housing, have been considered in this review.

Overall the Planning Department is very supportive of the concept of multi-family housing at the former St. Philip Neri Church site in Waban, which is well located with respect to transportation, schools, and commercial services. However, the Department has several concerns about the Project, which mainly have to do with the massing of the proposed structures as they relate to the surrounding neighborhood context. We are particularly concerned with the height of the proposed townhouse structures facing Karen Road which look to be approximately 47 feet in height and are only 15 feet back from the property line, where surrounding structures are one- to two-story structures and required setbacks are 25 feet from the front property line. We strongly encourage the developer to increase the front and side setbacks to 25 feet and to reduce the height of these units to not exceed 36 feet.



View of existing Church from Short Street

We believe that the site plan would benefit from additional open space left in its current natural state, which would help to conserve the character of this prominent lot and help mitigate the impacts of this project on the site and neighborhood. A reduction in the footprint of the multi-family structure to be more in keeping with the footprint of the existing church on

¹ *Newton Comprehensive Plan*, 2007. Page 5-14

site would help to decrease the amount of impervious surface proposed and maintain more of a buffer with adjacent residences. The Planning Department has strongly encouraged the Applicant to consider adapting the existing Church structure into residential units, which would be welcomed by the neighborhood as preserving the site's integrity, and would lead to a project with an appropriate scale and density. In fact, we are convinced that if the Applicant were to reuse the existing Church structure and reduce the height of the townhouses on Karen Road, there would be little opposition to this project.

Finally, the Planning Department is concerned that some level of traffic mitigation is needed at three separate intersections that this project will effect. These intersections included 1) Beacon and Chestnut Street, 2) Montclair Road Short Street and Beacon Street, and 3) Oak Vale and Chestnut Street. Chestnut Street runs north-south and experiences significant queues during peak hours. Signal upgrades and turn lanes at the intersections at Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue are needed. In addition, sight lines are limited at the intersection of Montclair Road Short Street and Beacon Street, as well as at Oak Vale and Chestnut Street, and the addition of vehicles at these intersections may create safety concerns for vehicles and pedestrians that must be mitigated before development can occur.

Although the Planning Department has concerns with the proposed massing, density, and lack of open space given the existing neighborhoods single-family context, we acknowledge that the Applicant's proposal adds units of permanently restricted affordable housing at the 50% AMI threshold, which is a particular need in Newton, and the Planning Department appreciates the diversity this project brings to the City's affordable housing stock. We are however, concerned that the rest of the units are being touted as "luxury rentals," unaffordable to many seniors and working families. The City would benefit from additional units restricted at 80-150% of AMI, rather than such a stratified project.

The Department expects the Applicant to address all concerns raised in this letter should this project move forward. The Department offers the following comments in response to the information provided by the Applicant to help MassHousing evaluate this request for Project Eligibility/Site Approval:

A. Land Use, Site Plan Design and Sustainability

The regulation for a Comprehensive Permit under M.G.L. Chapter 40B states that the Subsidizing Agency determine whether *"the conceptual project design is generally appropriate for the site on which it is located, taking into consideration factors that may include proposed use, conceptual site plan and building massing, topography, environmental resources, and integration into existing development patterns."*²

² (760 CMR 56.04(4)(c))

- **Land Use and Density.** The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of parcels used for single-family residential use, as well as an actively used playground. The project site and surrounding neighborhood are zoned Single Residence 2 (“SR2”), which requires 15,000 square feet per lot and does not allow for multi-family use. Considering the site’s proximity to transportation and services, the Department believes that the site is an appropriate location for a residential use, including multi-family. However, the Department has reservations about the number of units being proposed and the massing of the proposed structures. The following table provides a zoning comparison of the zoning requirements and the proposed project.

SR2 Zone	Required	Proposed
Lot Size (lots created after 12/7/53)	15,000 square feet	69,050
Frontage	100 feet	240 feet
Lot area per unit	15,000	1,438 square feet
Setbacks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front • Side • Rear 	30 feet 15 feet 15 feet	15.5 feet (Karen Road) 10 feet 15 feet
Building Height	36	47.5 feet (Karen Road)
Max Number of Stories	2.5	5
FAR	.33	1.16
Max Lot Coverage	20%	35%
Min. Open Space	65%	35%

The Waban area of Newton is one of the least dense neighborhoods in the City, which contributes to the existing context and character of the neighborhood. By right, the subject property can accommodate four large single family houses.

The 12 proposed townhomes total approximately 29,000 square feet. The Planning Department is concerned that the proposed height of 47 feet for these units is too tall and too close to the street. The proposed 5-story multi-family structure is approximately 51,000 square feet and includes 36 units. No information was included on the height of the multi-family building. The Planning Department notes the Applicant is proposing an FAR of approximately 1.15 where .33 is the maximum allowed. The Department encourages the MassHousing to consider whether or not the proposed density is appropriate for the site given the existing surrounding neighborhood context. The Planning Department believes the proposed project exceeds a reasonable amount of development for this site and we encourage the Applicant to consider shrinking the

footprint of the proposed multi-family building, to reduce the height of the proposed structures, and to increase the setbacks to 25 feet on all sides of the structures in order to lessen the effects on the immediate neighborhood.

- **Building Massing, Design and Architecture.** In early development review meetings, the City consistently encouraged the Applicant to seek to emulate the residential character of the neighborhood and the existing church rather than design an institutional looking apartment building. The proposed project consists of one large multi-family structure and 12 townhomes. The Planning Department is supportive of the concept of the two typologies of structures on this lot so that there is a contiguous streetscape along and in keeping with both Short Street and Karen Road. The multi-family structure is 3.5-5.5 stories, reducing to 2.5-3.5 story wings on each side. Although the Planning Department appreciates the attempt to reduce the mass of this structure through architectural detailing and the stepped-down wings, this building still appears quite large and takes up much of the site along Short Street with an approximately 13,000 square foot footprint. Reducing the height (which is not noted on plans), increasing the side setbacks, and scaling back the footprint would help the building fit better between the adjacent 2.5-story houses.

The same can be said for the townhomes fronting on Karen Road which appear to tower over abutting properties at 47 feet in height. Reducing the height and increasing setbacks is imperative to help these structures fit into the single-family context on this street. Besides the massing, the Planning Department has no concerns with the proposed arts and crafts architectural style of the multi-family structure, or the transitional style of the townhouse units.

For the most part the proposed unit sizes appear appropriate and in keeping with the unit sizes sought by the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and the *Consolidated Plan*, particularly in the multi-family structure. The twelve proposed townhouse units are significantly larger, particularly when you include the attached two car garage, which unnecessarily adds to the height of these structures by taking up the bulk of the first story. The Applicant should consider reducing the height of these structures by at least one story by eliminating the garages in favor of surface parking behind the proposed townhouses.

The Planning Department notes that submitted floor plans do not note which units are proposed as deed restricted units. This should be clarified should this project move forward. The Planning Department also notes that three of the 10 affordable units are studios, which is not consistent with the overall unit mix of the project, and suggests that one affordable studio be switched for an additional affordable two-bedroom unit.

- **Open Space, Landscaping and Tree Removal.** As noted earlier, the Planning Department is concerned with the lack of open space on site considering the proposed mass of the buildings. The Applicant did not include a landscape plan in their submission although the project budget includes a substantial line item for plantings. The Planning Department encourages the applicant to consider a robust mix of fast-growing native deciduous and evergreen trees to help nestle the building into the site and to help soften the mass of the proposed buildings. The Planning Department strongly encourages the applicant to retain the existing trees on the Short Street side of the property to preserve the integrity of the site.
- **Noise, Lighting, and Construction Management.** Submitted plans include the location of some but not all mechanical equipment. The Applicant should carefully select all outdoor equipment models and their location in order to eliminate sound heard by future residents and abutters. Should this project move forward the Applicant should show any venting that is required on elevation drawings, and should submit a photometric plan and details of site lighting fixtures to ensure that there is no light spillage onto adjacent properties or the street. A detailed construction management plan will also be required as area residents will be concerned about the impact of contractor parking, drainage, dust, noise, staging, and truck traffic on the site and neighborhood streets. Such a plan should include a designated contract person for the construction along with 24-hour contact information, as well as monthly construction updates for distribution to neighbors.
- **Smart Growth and Green Building Design.** The Department believes the projects location is consistent with smart growth principles; however there is little information in the Applicant's submittal that addresses how sustainably the project will be developed. The Planning Department encourages the applicant to articulate sustainable features of the project (besides site location) should this project move forward. We encourage the building to be LEED Certifiable at the Gold level, similar to the 192 Lexington Street 40B in Newton.

The Department encourages the Applicant to consider how the efficiency and performance of the dwelling units can align with the City's policy that the site planning, preservation of trees and topography, building design, construction, maintenance or long-term operation of the premises contribute to the efficient use and conservation of natural resources and energy.

B. Affordable Housing

- **Affordable Housing Need.** Newton has a longstanding commitment to affordable housing, having created regulatory methods and undertaken actions to meet affordable

housing needs in the City (See Section C). As of December 5, 2014, 2,438 of the City's 32,346 housing units were included on the Subsidized Housing Inventory. Currently, there are four additional private developments approved with 73 SHI-eligible units and an additional seven developments in the pipeline that have an additional 608 SHI-eligible units. Of these units, 149 will be affordable to households earning 80 percent or less of the Area Median Income (AMI). Nonetheless, this will not meet the overwhelming demand for affordable rental housing as evidenced by the over 1,300 families and seniors on the Newton Housing Authority waitlist.³ In order to help address this need Newton has set a goal to add at least 800 affordable units by 2021, so that 10 percent of our housing stock is affordable.

- **Existing Housing Stock and Household Income.** Newton's housing stock is diverse in age, size, design and type. Approximately 61 percent of Newton's housing units are detached single-family homes, 25 percent are two-four family homes and 14 percent are multi-family buildings. Although the Newton median household income is \$98,500, approximately 25 percent of Newton households earn less than 80 percent of AMI.⁴ According to federal data, 17 percent of Newton renter households have a housing cost burden greater than 30% of their income, which is regarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as unaffordable.⁵
- **Unit Mix and Affordability.** The unit mix is provided in the chart below.

Unit Type	Total Units	Market Rate	Affordable	Percent Affordable	Total Unit Type
0-BR	7	4	3	42%	100%
1-BR	14	11	3	21%	100%
2-BR	15	13	2	13%	100%
3-BR	12	10	2	16%	100%
Total	48	38	10	21%	100%

As the chart above indicates, there is an unequal distribution of the affordable units across all unit types in this project. The Planning Department notes that three of the 10 affordable units are studios, which is not consistent with the overall unit mix of the project, and suggests that one affordable studio be switched for an additional affordable two-bedroom unit.

³ As identified in WestMetro HOME Consortium Regional Fair Housing Plan FFY15-20.

⁴ U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development; Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data, 2006-2010

⁵ U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development; FY13 Estimates for Low-to Moderate Income Persons

The Project is proposing two affordable 3-bedroom units, which is greater than the State's policy of providing at least ten percent 3-bedroom units in a project. This policy ensures that new development provides some housing opportunities for families with children, which is a protected class under Massachusetts anti-discrimination law.⁶ The Project responds to the *Comprehensive Plan's* goal of seeking housing stock that matches the social and economic diversity of Newton's population, which ***"requires increasing both rental and home ownership opportunities for the entire range of low, moderate, and middle income families, for starter households as well as for senior citizens."***⁷ Housing demand for these household types is increasing throughout the region and the Department supports creating affordable units for families with children, which the Project's three bedroom units will likely attract.

C. Municipal Actions to Support the Creation of Affordable Housing

The City has been proactive in the creation and preservation of affordable housing to meet existing needs through its existing financial and regulatory programs. The City has provided its support to development projects that provide a higher level of sustainability, accessibility and a greater percentage and mix of affordability. These projects and programs will create significant affordable housing opportunities in the City.

- **Subsidized Affordable Housing Development.** The City has expended substantial municipal and federal resources to create and preserve affordable housing. Since 2008, the City has provided more than \$13.1 million in Community Preservation Act (CPA), Community Development Block Grant, (CDBG) and HOME funds for affordable housing development projects. Over 30 percent of Community Preservation funds have funded the creation of affordable housing, which is 20 percent more than the regulatory requirement.
- **Inclusionary Zoning.** Newton was one of the first cities in the Commonwealth to enact an inclusionary zoning ordinance. The ordinance requires developments requesting a special permit to create 15 percent of the units as affordable to income-eligible households. Since its adoption in 1977, the ordinance has resulted in the creation of over 250 affordable units. The inclusionary housing ordinance has proven an effective tool as development activity increases due to strong demand. Currently, 81 additional inclusionary affordable housing units are in the pipeline (including 57 units in approved projects and 23 units in pending projects).

⁶ M.G.L. Chapter 151B

⁷ City of Newton Comprehensive Plan, 2007 (page 5-12)

- **Planning Efforts and Zoning Reform.** As mentioned earlier, Newton has set a goal to add at least 800 affordable units by 2021, so that 10 percent of our housing stock is affordable. In June 2015, the Department of Planning and Development and Mayor Warren embarked on a 9-month process to develop a City-wide Housing Strategy that addresses current and future housing needs in the City. In the end, this housing strategy will identify housing development goals and provide us with a clear set of actions that will allow us to advance those goals. It is anticipated that action items will include policy and financing recommendations as well as specific locations for new development. The City is also in the process of redeveloping a municipal parking lot to create a mixed-use project in Newtonville. Twenty-five percent of these units will be affordable. These local efforts will provide additional affordable housing options geared to singles, young couples and empty nesters.
- **Local Initiative Program/Chapter 40B Proposals.** The Department is currently working with a non-profit to submit a Local Initiative Site Eligibility application that would renovate and expand an existing single family home on Taft Avenue to create two units of affordable housing. In Addition, the department has recently approved two LIP projects that will yield 16 affordable units once constructed. This includes nine units of affordable homeownership housing in a 36-unit structure on 75-83 Court Street, and 7 affordable rental units as part of the rehabilitation and expansion of two dwelling units on 12 and 18-20 Curve Street.

D. Traffic, Parking and Transportation Impacts

- **Traffic.** The Applicant did not provide a traffic impact assessment for the Project to date, and one will be required should this project move forward. Although the Planning Department generally believes that residential development is not a significant contributor to traffic, this project is located in an area that already experiences congestion during the AM and PM peak commuting hours and the Applicant will be expected to mitigate the impact of additional traffic at three intersections including (1) Montclair Road, Short Street and Beacon Street; (2) Oak Vale Road and Chestnut Street; and (3) Chestnut Street and Beacon Street.

Sight lines are severely limited at the intersection of Short Street, Montclair Road and Beacon Street. Should this project move forward, Transportation Division staff recommends that the Applicant work with the City to develop a design that would improve vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist safety through this intersection. The intersection of Oak Vale and Chestnut Street is also characterized by limited visibility, and the addition of vehicles through this intersection may create additional safety concerns for vehicle, pedestrians and cyclists. (It should be noted that portions of Oak Vale are a private road and this road is in poor condition.) Signal upgrades at the

intersection of Beacon Street and Chestnut Street are needed as Chestnut Street in particular experiences significant queues during morning and afternoon peak hours. This intersection has been identified for improvements through the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in fiscal year 2017 but has not been designed nor a funding source identified.

- **Parking.** The Applicant is proposing 82 parking spaces for the 48 residential unit (106 if you include the stalls behind the townhouse units), meeting Newton's parking requirements but leaving little open space available to residents. Transportation Division staff believe that the proposed number of parking stalls will be sufficient when considering the unit sizes, likely demographic of potential buyers, and access to public transportation at the nearby Waban Green Line Station. The Transportation Division encourages the Applicant to decouple the parking from the rent so that residents who choose to not own cars are not penalized, and to consider delaying the paving of some of the stalls until it is known that there is a need for the proposed number of stalls.
- **Site Access.** The Project will provide vehicular access from Karen Road via a 20 foot driveway. As currently proposed, the Project's common drive will be located along the western property line. The Transportation Division recommends that the Applicant incorporate a walkway adjacent to the driveway so that residents from the multi-family building are provided a defined access to Karen Road.
- **Bicycle Accommodations.** Transportation Staff encourages the Applicant to provide high quality bicycle accommodations on site in order to encourage alternative modes for trip-making, including bicycle travel to access public transportation and shared use vehicles at the Waban Green Line Station.

E. Summary of Concerns

The Planning Department is very supportive of the concept of multi-family housing at the former St. Philip Neri Church site in Waban, which is well located with respect to transportation, schools, and commercial services, and we continue to welcome the addition of diverse housing opportunities in Newton. Nevertheless we have several concerns including the massing of the proposed structures as they relate to the surrounding neighborhood, a lack of open space left in its natural state, and that some level of traffic mitigation is needed before additional development can occur. We also note that the neighborhood has been actively involved in this project and has raised similar concerns in their attached letters. The Planning Department encourages MassHousing to join us in encouraging the Applicant to consider adapting the existing Church structure into residential units and reducing the height of the townhouse units on Karen Road, which

would lead to a project with an appropriate scale and density that would be welcomed by the neighborhood.

Please do not to hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the contents of this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Freas", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Freas
Acting Director, Planning and Development Department

Cc Mayor Setti D. Warren
Donnalyn B. Lynch Kahn, City Solicitor
Applicant
Alderman John Rice
Alderman Brian E. Yates
Alderman Deborah Crossley

Attachments:

ATTACHMENT A: Comment Letters Received



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Newton Housing Partnership

May 26, 2015

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Katharine Lacy, Monitoring and Permitting Specialist
MassHousing
One Beacon Street
Boston, MA. 02108

James Freas
Acting Director
Planning & Development

RE: 1521 Beacon Street, Newton, MA., MassHousing #770

Elizabeth Valenta
Housing Development
Planner

Dear Ms. Lacy,

The Newton Housing Partnership reviewed the preliminary development plans presented by Waban Ventures, LLC for the above-mentioned project at our May 13, 2015 meeting. Based upon the preliminary information we reviewed, the Partnership had the following comments:

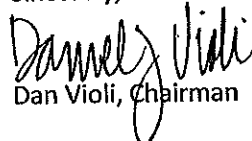
Members

Dan Violi, Chair
Matt Yarmolinsky,
Vice-Chair
Andrew Franklin
Judy Jacobson
Phil Herr
Peter Macero
Lynne Sweet
John Wilson

- 1.) **Project Affordability** - The Partnership was pleased to see that the affordable units would be targeted to households at 50% of area median income, creating affordable units for lower income households. However, the Partnership is concerned and would like clarification on the policy of rent calculations and lease renewal for tenants whose incomes surpasses the 140% above the original income limit at recertification. The Partnership also recommended that a local preference be included in the project's fair housing and marketing plan.
- 2.) **Architectural Design and Neighborhood Context** - The site and architectural plans were generally viewed favorably, with some concerns regarding building massing, especially as it would relate to the neighborhood context on Karen Road. The Partnership requested a more detailed and inclusive contextual plans and elevations to better assess impacts on the existing neighborhood fabric. In regards to the units, the Partnership would like further detail identifying handicapped accessible units and the distribution of affordable units.

We look forward to continuing the conversation and have invited the Developer to return when plans and other third party reports are complete.

Sincerely,


Dan Violi, Chairman

cc: James Freas, Acting Director of Planning
Justin Ferris, Waban Ventures LLC

Norine Silton

From: DEBORAH CROSSLEY <djcrossley26@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, June 05, 2015 1:34 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Letter to MassHousing Re: 1521 Beacon Street

Alexandra, Please include this in your report to Mass Housing.
If needed I can provide you with a signed copy.

Have a nice weekend. - Deb

Deborah J. Crossley
ALDERMAN
dcrossley@newtonma.gov
617/775-1294 cell phone

When responding, please be advised that the Secretary of the Commonwealth
has determined that email may be considered a public record.

To: MassHousing
Re: Considering Housing at 1521 Beacon Street in Newton, MA

The former site of the St. Philip Neri Church, east of Waban Village Center, is a very good location for higher density, smaller sized, mixed-income rental housing units. Such a project aligns with many objectives of Newton's Comprehensive plan adopted in 2007, which cites the many reasons Newton, which has mostly large single family homes, must diversify housing opportunities for young and old, at a broader range of affordability. However, there are several concerns related to traffic circulation, unit sizes and massing that I would like you to consider, that ought to be addressed for this to be a successful project.

CONTEXT

The site is surrounded by single family residences, very large homes on the Beacon Street side, more modest homes along Karen Road, is a half block from a well-used playground, and a short walk to the village center. Waban village is classic New England in its organization. There is much activity here: popular coffee shops, a small specialty grocer, restaurants, a cobbler, post office, bank, and a lovely old library used for community meetings and events. Waban is an MBTA stop along the Greenline. Two churches and the Angier elementary school (under re-construction) flank the west edge of the village, just over the tracks. It is pedestrian oriented - although walkability will be further improved with the reconfigured intersection in front of the Angier school, and new well timed signals at crossings, which are to be constructed soon.

VEHICLE CIRCULATION - SAFETY

However, in order to make any development on this site functional and safe, there are several failed and unsafe conditions existing at roadway intersections that must be solved. The need to upgrade critical intersections in many locations across the city is known, and the City's Capital Improvement Program includes new signals at the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut, just south of the Short Street turn off in front of the project site. The most dangerous intersection is where Short Street currently intersects at Beacon, in front of Montclair. This is where vehicles leaving the proposed development should exit, but this would not work in the current configuration. The project will not be successful unless this becomes desirable as the main point of egress from the site.

The petitioner is working with our city transportation director to rethink these intersections, and would contribute to their redesign and reconfiguration. We have not yet seen a proposed redesign, but a concept was proposed to truncate Short Street as a cul de sac to the two houses near Chestnut, create a dedicated right and/or left turn lane from Chestnut onto Beacon, and turn the rest of Short street into green space in front of the proposed apartments. This would turn the intersection of Montclair and Beacon into a much safer 'T' intersection. It should also be considered to have vehicles turn left only onto Karen Road out from the development.

Whatever the solutions, it is imperative that these conditions be resolved prior to adding development, as they do not work now.

PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS

Creating ample and safe pedestrian pathways from the project to the village is important. In addition to solving for safer intersections, the front of the project along Short Street needs to be welcoming to pedestrians; the entrance lobby at this location should be made prominent and inviting, considering widened sidewalks, benches and places to store bicycles.

NEED FOR HOUSING

Newton is in critical need of smaller housing units affordable to both a rapidly aging demographic who would like to continue to live here but are ready to give up a large house and yard which has become too expensive to maintain, as well as workforce housing, which is another way of saying - opportunity for young working people to live here. And we housing affordable to low and moderate income folks. Newton's Comprehensive plan calls for such housing to be accommodated within walking distance of village centers with public transit options, and notes that increasing density within walking distance supports local business as well.

UNIT SIZES

I applaud the development team for creating in the main building a good mix of 36 apartments from very small studios (ave. 550sf) to modest one and two bedrooms. The 20% affordable to low income units I believe will work very well at this size. However, although I see a need for the 2100sf (plus garages) townhouses as well - to serve those for whom this represents a significant downsizing, I question the size of these units (3) as affordable to folks earning up to 50% median income. These units will be difficult to furnish and maintain for someone in this income bracket, who likely as well will not have sufficient income to own a vehicle, certainly not more than one. So I would urge the developer consider reducing the size of these townhouses.

MASSING AND CONTEXT

I think it's difficult for most folks to look at renderings of a single project absent its familiar context: particularly to illustrate relative scale and proximity to adjacent structures. The petitioner has agreed to illustrate streetscape showing the building in the context of the adjacent properties along both Short Street and Karen Roads. In addition, they have agreed to prepare cross sections through the site to illustrate the relative scale of the proposed to existing buildings.

My guess is that the massing along Short Street, where the 3.5 story building reduces to a 2.5 story building (the half stories within a dormered roof) on each side, may fit well between the adjacent 2.5 story houses, depending on the setback.

However, I imagine that the 3.5 story town homes, especially those in very close proximity to the adjacent 2.5 story home to the east, and south of the one and two story homes across the street - would be overwhelming, again, depending on the setback from Karen.

I would both like to see the street elevation here as well as ask the developer to consider reducing the height of these townhomes along Karen Road, and/or increasing the setback to Karen.

Thank you for taking these thoughts into consideration, as you think through the project eligibility requirements.

Sincerely,

Deb Crossley
Alderman at Large, ward 5

WABAN AREA COUNCIL

www.wabanareacouncil.com
wabanareacouncil@newtonma.gov

May 14, 2015

Ms. Alexandra Ananth
Chief Planner for Current Planning
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459

Re: Proposed Development at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban

Dear Ms. Ananth:

We are writing to comment on the Project Eligibility application recently submitted by Waban AMA Realty Ventures LLC (the "Applicant") for a proposed development at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban (the "Project"). As you know, the Waban Area Council is an elected local council that hears, responds to, and represents concerns of the village of Waban. All nine members of the Council agree on the contents of this letter.

We are familiar with the findings that Mass Housing must make in order to grant the Project Eligibility Letter, and our comments here are directed at the following requirement:

that the conceptual project design is generally appropriate for the site on which it is located, taking into consideration factors that may include proposed use, conceptual site plan and building massing, topography, environmental resources, and integration into existing development patterns (such finding, with supporting reasoning, to be set forth in reasonable detail); 760 CMR 56.04(4)(c).

While we believe that a rental development with affordable housing may be an appropriate use of this site, we are concerned that the current design of the Project falls short of the "generally appropriate" requirement because of: (1) the massing and scale of the buildings relative to surrounding structures, (2) the lack of green or open space in the design, and (3) the introduction of such a large number of cars into the neighborhood and the attendant traffic and safety issues.

Massing and Scale

We recognize that a 40B development will by its nature introduce buildings into the neighborhood that differ from surrounding buildings in terms of massing and scale. In this case however, we believe that the Applicant proposes to introduce buildings that are so large relative to surrounding structures that they may not be "generally appropriate" for this site.

The 12 proposed townhomes along Karen Rd. are 3 ½ stories high, with roof peaks at 47 feet. The towering clusters are lined close together along the street. Immediately across the street the existing homes are all one- and two-story homes. Similarly, the four- to five-story apartment building along Short St. presents a massive structure taking up most of the property's frontage on Short St. and dwarfing neighboring homes.

Notably absent among the drawings we have seen are any street-scape or aerial renderings that illustrate the size of the proposed buildings relative to surrounding homes. A review of Mass Housing's own "Handbook: Approach to Chapter 40B Design Reviews" makes clear that such contextual illustrations would provide MassHousing with valuable information in assessing whether the current design is appropriate for the site. In addition, the 40B regulations require that the Project Eligibility application include "a locus map identifying the site within a plan of the neighborhood, accompanied by photographs of the surrounding buildings and features that provide an understanding of the physical context of the site" 760 CMR 56.04(2)(c). We have not seen any such photographs in the copy of the application that the City of Newton has made available online.

We believe such drawings and photographs are critical to assess whether this design is appropriate for the site and relates properly to neighboring homes.

Lack of Green and Open Space

The current design is dominated by buildings and pavement. There is no meaningful green space. Similarly, the design does not allow for any open space to be viewed from the street. We have heard concerns from immediate abutters that the height of the townhomes would keep them in perpetual shade, especially during winter months. Renderings of the Project that show the design relative to the surrounding area may reveal a stark contrast between the Project and surrounding area in terms of green and open space.

Traffic Problems Posed by the Project

The Project would add 48 units and 106 parking spaces to the site. All traffic would exit out onto Karen Rd., a street with 11 homes. The Applicant intends to route traffic from Karen Rd. onto Montclair Rd. and then out onto Beacon St. at an

intersection that many neighbors avoid because of the difficulties posed there. The other alternative for cars exiting the site would be to travel out to Chestnut St. via Oakvale Rd. (a private road) at another difficult intersection, or to wind through the neighborhood to the north before exiting onto Chestnut St. While we are aware that traffic details are typically worked out further along in the 40B process, and know that the Applicant has expressed willingness to work on traffic solutions, in this case the traffic problems surrounding the site should be taken into account in determining whether a 48-unit development is sustainable at the site. We urge you to ask representatives from Mass Housing to examine traffic issues during the site visit. We add that we hope this Project can be better designed as a transit-oriented development.

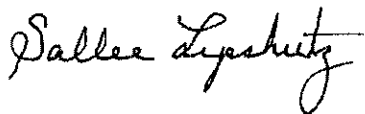
Conclusion

The foregoing expresses concerns that we have heard from the community regarding the proposal. We hope that the Planning Department will incorporate into their comment letter these concerns regarding massing and scale, the lack of green and open space, and the traffic challenges posed by the site. In addition, we ask that you point out the lack of contextual illustrations in the Applicant's submission. While detailed design elements of the Project can be addressed during later phases of the 40B process, we think that the problems outlined herein are so serious as to require resolution prior to the grant of Project Eligibility.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Waban Area Council



By: Sallee Lipshutz, President

cc: Hon. Mayor Setti Warren
Ms. Katharine Lacy, MassHousing
Ald. Deb Crossley
Ald. John Rice
Ald. Bryan Yates

Norine Silton

From: Doris Tennant <dtennant@tlawgroup.com>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 5:16 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: I support 1521 Beacon Street.

I've lived in Newton for the past 26 years, raising my children here and establishing an office for my law practice in my neighborhood of Newtonville. I expect Newton to continue to be my home for the next many years. I've lived in six residences in Newton, including one in Newton Upper Falls in addition to the others in Newtonville, and I've had many different kinds of neighbors—wonderful ones and cranky ones, homeowners and renters, clean ones and sloppy ones. I have not yet been able to discern which of life's many circumstances account for the kind of neighbors I have. The well-to-do ones are not necessarily any cleaner or nicer than the ones who have less. The best I can tell what dictates good neighbors has to do most with how much they care about others.

From what I understand, there is some opposition to the 1521 Beacon Street project based on concerns such as traffic and scale, each of which can and should be adequately addressed. In addition, some folks seem to be concluding that renters are prone to trashing their homes and not being part of the class of people that is characteristic of Newton. I've been a renter too, for close to half the time I've lived in Newton, and renting did not make me care less about my environment or make me inclined to store junk on my porch. I've had disputes with my neighbors from time to time and had to work with those situations, which had little to do with whether my neighbors owned property, had certain degrees, or had more or less money. I'd be happy to have 1521 Beacon Street project next door to me. I don't want to live in a bubble. Life is much more interesting than that.

Doris Tennant
14 Churchill Street
Newton, MA 02460

Norine Silton

From: Katherine Ballou <kathyballou@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 8:31 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: I support 1521 Beacon Street.

Newton needs housing like that proposed for 1521 Beacon St. The project is well thought out and fits with the surrounding area. Please do not let a small group of narrow minded neighbors derail this project. Thank you.

Katherine Ballou
261 Dorset Rd.
Waban

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Bonnie Rosenberg <brr4321@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 9:20 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: I support 1521 Beacon Street.

Norine Silton

From: Robbins, Joe <jrobbins@baincapital.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2015 8:04 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Proposed 1521 Beacon St. Development

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to provide comments on the proposed re-development of the St. Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban. Overall, the replacement of the existing structure and site with a more useful and valuable development is to be applauded. That said, the current version of the plan proposed by the new owner, while containing some worthwhile features, can be improved.

Specifically, the current plan should be amended in three areas.

First, the 48 proposed units (with 10 designated as SHI-eligible) represents too high a density for the site and its surrounding infrastructure to incorporate safely. The site has very limited road access to the main thoroughfares of Beacon and Chestnut. The developer is proposing a main entrance on to Karen Road, which is a low-density side street whose primary egress to Chestnut comes via an already dangerous, non-lighted intersection. Additional traffic through here will be very difficult to bear safely, and a traffic light on Chestnut is not viable given the density of traffic on that road in the morning. The remediation of the Montclair intersection, with the developer has proposed, is laudable and should be supported as a mitigant, but a smaller-scale development (say, 9 townhomes plus an apartment building with 15 units) with less car traffic would be much safer for what is a heavily pedestrianized area frequented by small children, dogwalkers, and recreational users of Lincoln Field.

Second, the 108 parking spaces, most of which are to be situated above-ground, lead to a site that is mostly used for pavement, in stark contrast to the surrounding neighborhood. There is no physical reason (only economic concerns) to place so many parking spaces above ground as opposed to in a combination of below- and above-ground locations. This is already being done at several other Newton developments. Reducing the number of total units will alleviate this problem to an extent by reducing the total parking spaces required, but a below-ground structure with a well-placed entryway will allow for a substantially improved site plan.

Finally, while the developer's team has made an effort to blend the proposed complex into the surrounding neighborhood, more can be done to integrate more seamlessly with its environs. The building as proposed would be the tallest structure within a good distance and its unique profile would immediately stand out in an area filled with more classic New England designs. The site plan— in which the building sits amidst hundreds of square yards of pavement — would overly emphasize the distance of the building from the surrounding neighborhood and would separate residents from the pedestrian areas around them.

Some changes that would ameliorate this situation:

- A lower-profile, longer building more closely and directly fronting Short Street (rather than a taller, more square building with more set-back)
- Multiple, direct pedestrian access points on to a rebuilt Short Street sidewalk
- Limited above-ground parking behind the building
- Tall trees on either side and amidst the site between the town homes and the apartment (in lieu of the now-reduced paved parking lot)

I would recommend looking at 457 Washington St. and 31 Highland Avenue in Newton for examples of more traditional designs that are well-integrated into their areas.

Overall, I believe that a reduction in above-ground parking allotment, the inclusion of more green space, and more immediate access to Beacon Street will enhance the quality of life for residents of the building and improve the overall integration of the development into the surrounding community, all without compromising the developer's ability to develop the site profitably or the goals of the 40b program. As a resident of the area, I hope you will use all possible efforts to ensure the best possible plan for the site, and I appreciate the chance to provide my comments.

Sincerely,

Joseph Robbins
Waban, MA

Joseph Robbins
Principal
Bain Capital Partners, LLC
o (617) 516-2073
m (617) 510-9438
f (617) 516-2010
jrobbins@baincapital.com

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Bain Capital, LLC
Boston, MA USA
+1 (617) 516 2000

Norine Silton

From: Liz Baum <lizbaum3@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2015 6:09 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; gwatson@masshousing.com
Cc: Alexandra Ananth; William Berman
Subject: We support 1521 Beacon Street.

We (the below signed family) support the 1521 Beacon Street project. The proposed housing would be walking distance to the "T", so it is a great location for multi-family housing from which resident commuters would be able to easily access the T. It is also walking distance to Angier School, so it would be well suited for young families with children of elementary school age. The proposed housing also would contribute toward affordability in housing and diversity of residents that this city desperately needs to have in order to be inclusive and welcoming to all people, including those who work in our community yet who cannot afford to live here or to send their children to school here.

Newton does not need more single family homes in our community. Instead, we need to add multifamily housing that welcomes renters and others to share in our beautiful city and in the bountiful services that we have to offer.

Thank you for your support of 1521 Beacon Street.

Sincerely,

Liz Baum
Bill Berman
Noah Berman
Joshua Berman
Daniel Berman
27 Metacomet Road
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Fran Godine <godine@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 4:40 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: I support appropriate housing for this site

Dear Aldermen,

I write to support the need for diverse and affordable housing in Waban. The former St Philip Neri church site would be an excellent possibility for this if design, traffic flow, parking, and density are appropriate for the neighborhood. The current developer has presented a plan which, with modifications for the impacts noted, appears valuable.

Due to difficulties Michael Argiros, the current owner, has had with being responsible to town officials in Somerville, I hope there is a way to hold him accountable to avoid this kind of situation in Newton. Perhaps you would seek to place conditions on his work into a Board Order.

In addition, particulars, such as the signage for rental information, might be specified in some way as part of the design elements, so we are not burdened with large banners in our village center, but it is in keeping with other rental signage on Wyman St for example. I do not know what parameters you have to address this, but considering the lack of responsiveness to Somerville it may be necessary to consider these details now.

Sincerely,
Fran Godine
19 Crofton Rd.
Waban

Norine Silton

From: Andrea Kelley <rtcdesign@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 8:45 PM
To: 1521beaconstreet@newtonma.gov.
Subject: In support of St. Philip Neri redevelopment

To Whom it may concern,

I understand that the current proposal is a 40B, but I still want to speak to why a mixed income housing project on this site makes sense, and to support moving forward in a positive direction.

This is an excellent location for such a project: close to a village center with access to the T, near a neighborhood school, shops, grocery, etc. The density is do-able and a certain critical mass is necessary.

Some fine tuning is still in order, but I trust that with input from the Planning Dept, the Board and Aldermen and developer can work these out. Issues I'd like to see further refined include: site planning and building massing of the Beacon Street building to take more advantage of creating compact and denser buildings to then gain more open space benefit, re-thinking the vehicular access so it's not all entry and egress off one driveway from Karen Road, increasing the bike-friendly aspects to enhance bicycle over car use by noting where bike storage is, having designated bike/pathways into and on the site.

Newton has a great need for more diverse housing types, especially located near the village centers. This site offers the ability to address the crucial creation of more choices for residential units along with being walkable, transit-access, and bike friendly.

Andrea

Andrea W. Kelley, M.L.A.
Principal
Rockwood Terrace Consultants
Landscape Design and Site Planning
28 Putnam Street
Newton MA 02465

617-633-0900 c
617-527-1467 w
rtcdesign@aol.com

Norine Silton

From: Emily Prenner <premiily@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 12:53 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Letter in support of St. Philip Neri

Hello -

I live at 702 Chestnut Street, about .3 of a mile from the former St. Philip Neri church. The proposed conversion and development of the church property to 48 units of rental housing seems to be an ideal reuse of this property. As housing prices have risen in Newton, projects like the proposal for SPN help us to preserve the ability to welcome new families, to provide appropriate housing options for our seniors, and to provide less expensive housing options. The need for this type of varied housing is something we need more of in Newton, and I am quite happy to have it here in Waban.

The site itself has the added benefit of being very near to shopping, banking, and other supports. Residents will be able to easily walk to the T, allowing them to commute by public transit rather than by car. The project is also located directly between the brand new and expanded Angier and the proposed new and expanded Zervas elementary schools.

While I encourage the developer to work with the neighborhood and City to address issues such as traffic mitigation and construction impact, I support this project, and I hope it will move forward.

Thank you,
Emily Prenner

Norine Silton

From: Nancy Zollers <dr.nancy.zollers@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 3:28 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Supporting apartments at former St Philip Neri site

We need apartments in Waban.

As I testified at WAC meeting, it was nearly impossible to find an apartment for my mother in law who needed to live near us in Waban. And I would love apartments in Waban for my twenty-something daughters.

Let's promote the apartments with less parking to reduce cars and promote walking to Waban shops, but let's promote the apartments.

Nancy Zollers

Norine Silton

From: dee_na@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 7:16 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Letter of support

I am writing to support the project at 1521 Beacon St., Waban. I have lived in Ward 5, Precinct 4 for over 32 years and hope to remain in Waban for as long as I am able.

The time has come for each village to address the issue of more diverse housing options to meet the needs of young blossoming professionals, Newton's senior citizens wishing to downsize, and moderate and low income families. As a parent of 3 children who attended the Newton Public Schools over a span of 21 years, I continue to be dismayed at how few of our teachers can afford to live in Newton!

Neighboring communities are facing similar housing challenges. Times are a changing and Newton has to stand up and make the necessary changes to remain vibrant and on cutting edge.

The proposed development at 1521 Beacon St. has issues which concern me, but they do not have to be deal breakers.

Traffic flow and safety need to be addressed by the developer and the city. I trust that this will be done and I look forward to a presentation with a comprehensive plan.

It is very hard for me to visualize the height of the townhouses on Karen Road in relation to other houses on this road. I would appreciate a drawing of this. If the proposed development is way out of line with the existing homes, I would ask for an adjustment.

Overall, I think that the project is attractive and would like to see it go forward.

Thank you,

Deena David
60 Rokeby Rd. Waban

Norine Silton

From: Cullys4@aol.com
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 12:26 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: We support 1521 Beacon Street.

To the Planning Department--

Newton cannot be the inclusive, forward-moving community that we want it to be without more--and more diverse-- housing, and given the limited opportunities to develop new housing, we need to seize chances when they arise. 1521 Beacon St is just such an opportunity. The developer has shown a willingness to meet with neighbors, and I understand his plans have changed in response to their concerns. While there still maybe some needed changes to address traffic concerns in the neighborhood, the scale of the project and number of affordable units seems appropriate. I think we can all agree that the processes and committees/departments of local and state government should drive decision making, not fear of change and misinformation.

Development at 1521 Beacon Street strikes me as an opportunity to fix a persistent problem. We are very fortunate to live in a safe, stable and thriving community that has been created by many committed citizens and capable public officials over decades, and it is incumbent on us to make the opportunity to live in such a place available to all.

We urge you to seek and report on the many positive aspects of this project and focus on reasonable remediation for any concerns. I hope the Planning Department will do everything it can to advance this important development opportunity.

Alicia Ianieri and Paul Cullen
32 Brewster Road
Newton Highlands

Norine Silton

From: John Sisson <sisson.john@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:23 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth; Deborah J. Crossley; John Rice; Brian E. Yates
Subject: Letter of support for 1521 Beacon Street development plans

To whom it may concern,

As a Newton resident and voter interested in the development of apartment and condominium housing within walking distance of public transportation and our city's historic village centers, I am writing to voice my strong support for the housing development proposed at 1521 Beacon Street.

Development of that site will create new housing for downsizing seniors, families, and single people who would like to live in this community and do not presently have options to do so. I myself hope to be a downsizing senior at some point, and I hope housing like this may be available in Newton when that time comes.

I often run, bike, and drive through the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut streets. Traffic there has been listed as a concern by residents opposed to this development. However, the majority of that vehicular traffic does not originate in Waban, nor would the addition of 48 rental units appreciably change traffic patterns there. The traffic study should bear this out. Beacon Street has been, is, and will continue to be a well-utilized east-west route for local travel, just as Chestnut Street is a well-utilized north-south route. In this case, traffic is a canard, as opposition to this development is no one's attempt to address existing traffic concerns.

My thanks to developer for proposing this project, thanks to for the hard work of the City's elected officials and staff, and thanks to other residents -- both supporting and opposing -- for helping shape the development to best suit the neighborhood.

John Sisson

--

John Sisson
45 Greenlawn Avenue, Newton, MA 02459
(781) 929-6621 | sisson.john@gmail.com
<https://www.linkedin.com/pub/john-sisson/3/a93/226>

Norine Silton

From: David Ruben <druben@me.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:25 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth; Nancy Englander
Subject: We support 1521 Beacon Street

Hello,

As residents of Ward 5, we would like to express our support for a project in our neighborhood that includes as much affordable housing as possible. When we moved to Newton 23 years ago, our street and neighborhood were much more diverse than they are today — a change clearly due to skyrocketing housing prices. If we want to keep Newton from becoming a homogeneous wealthy enclave — if we want to live in a community that welcomes young people, people of color, etc. — then we will need to find ways to create appropriate, relatively affordable housing options. This project sounds like a step in that direction.

We hope that the density and traffic concerns can be addressed. However, if allowing non-millionaire families to become our Newton neighbors means that we have to sit an extra minute at the Beacon and Chestnut traffic light — well, that's a price we are happy to pay.

Best,
David Ruben and Nancy Englander
47 Harrison St.
Newton MA 02461

Norine Silton

From: Kathleen Hobson <kathleen.hobson@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:37 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: I support 1521 Beacon Street.
Attachments: 20150511145225310.pdf; DAG NGB TAB letter SPN May 8 2015 final SUBMITTED.pdf

To the Newton Planning Department:

I am writing in support of the 40B development proposed for 1521 Beacon Street.

Newton can't be the inclusive community we claim to want to be without more--and more diverse and affordable--housing, and we need to take our opportunities as they arise. 1521 Beacon Street is just such an opportunity. It's also an easy walk from downtown Waban and the T station, and so conforms to a key principle of Zoning Reform, which would allow denser development around village centers and transit hubs.

The developer has had many meetings with small groups of neighbors, and his plans have changed in response to their concerns. There is still room for improvement, but I'm confident the established process will take care of this. I have no problem with the scale of the buildings. Traffic congestion and safety need to be addressed, but fears over it should not be allowed to derail the project. In fact, it could be seen as an opportunity to fix existing problems. The developer has said he is willing to work with the City on this.

There is a vocal and well-organized group of neighbors opposed to the project. They cite traffic and scale as their main concerns, but at a meeting on May 6 (and in comments in the Newton TAB), these seemed to be a thin veneer for darker thoughts aimed squarely at the people who might come to live among us (renters! kids! poor people!). If project opponents are allowed to prevail, we could have another fair-housing case on our hands. Remember Engine 6.

Yours truly,

Kathleen Hobson
128 Dorset Road, Waban

Letter to Newton TAB published on 5/20/15:

Once Upon a Mattress (and a Refrigerator)

The article about the proposed housing development on the St. Philip Neri site in Waban last Wednesday and comments in public meetings about the project have suggested that the entire community is opposed and that the majority of concerns are about traffic and scale. We disagree.

We live in Waban. There is vocal opposition, but we also know many people who welcome the project. Traffic impact and building scale are legitimate concerns that the developer needs to address. What he cannot address, because U.S. fair-housing law forbids it, is the seeming determination of some opponents to prevent the people who might live in the development--48 renting households, a quarter of them low-income--from finding a home in Waban.

We have read in the TAB, heard first-hand at public meetings, or read in letters circulated among neighbors about fears over "changing the character of Waban," over renters as "transient" and prone to distasteful habits like "storing old mattresses and refrigerators...in their balconies" and participating in "prostitution rings." We have heard about a preference for "keeping Newton a certain class." Unfortunately, this pernicious tone has been characteristic of recent conversations about Newton/Waban housing proposals. What must it be like for our neighbors currently living in rental housing to hear what some Newton residents assume about them?

We are concerned that some St. Philip Neri opponents seem to believe there is a single, unified view of housing and the "character" of Newton. This misunderstanding seems to make them feel justified--as they did last Wednesday night--in jeering, booing, and interrupting those who voice support for housing proposals that would address diversity in our community. We are reminded of the community meetings on Engine 6, two years ago.

People will inevitably have strong feelings about changes to their neighborhood, but we need to realize that the tenor of community conversations creates the climate in which housing proposals are considered. Respectful discourse that recognizes differences of opinion helps everyone make balanced decisions. Let's get this right with St. Philip Neri, and proceed courteously, inclusively, and mindful of the imperatives of fair housing.

Dolores Acevedo-Garcia
Pine Ridge Road

Nanci Ginty Butler
Wyman Street

Housing plan in focus

By Jim Morrison
jmorrison@wickedlocal.com

The developer of the former Saint Philip Neri property on Beacon Street in Waban will host a public meeting so residents can learn more about the proposed affordable housing project and offer feedback.

The meeting will be held Wednesday at 6:45 p.m. at The Windsor Club, 1601 Beacon St.,

Michael Argiros, the developer, is proposing to build a total of 48 rental units (36 studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments in one building and four, 3 1/2-story townhomes containing 12 additional units), with 105 parking spaces accessed from Karen Road. Ten of the units would be affordable to families making 50 percent of the Area Median Income.

However, since all of the residences will be rentals, all 48 would count toward the city's total number of affordable housing units under state Chapter 40B.

Kathy Winters, a member of the Waban Area Council, said she has heard from residents who are primarily concerned about the size of the development and the impact it will have on traffic.

"I think the prevailing

SEE HOUSING, C1

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

HOUSING

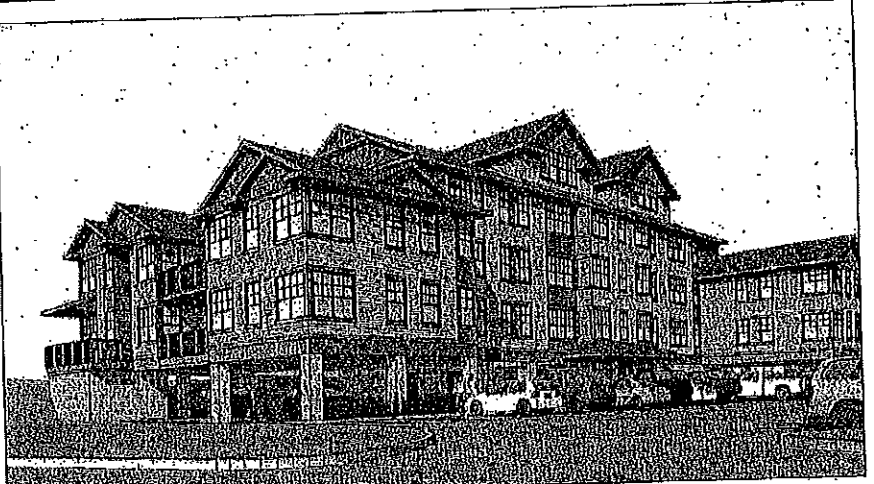
From Page A1

view that I've heard is that people are concerned about the size and massing and the height of the buildings relative to the surrounding buildings," Winters said. "We haven't heard a huge outcry from people who are dead set against it, they're just concerned about the size."

Attorney Steve Buchbinder, of Schlesinger and Buchbinder, represents Argiros. He said his client has worked very hard to come up with a design that will fit in with the neighborhood. He has already met with residents in small groups to hear their concerns.

"First of all, there is a concern that we're introducing affordable housing into the neighborhood," Buchbinder said. "There is also concern about the number of units on the site and the size of the larger building and the height of the townhouses."

Buchbinder said residents are also concerned about the impact the new development would have on traffic, especially given the fact that the nearby intersection of Chestnut and Beacon streets is already problematic. To address



A graphic rendering of the housing project proposed at the site of the former St. Philip Neri Parish in Waban. COURTESY PRELLWITZ AND CHILINSKI ASSOCIATES

that concern, his client has commissioned a traffic study, which is still in process.

Buchbinder said the traffic expert conducting the study will be at the community meeting and will explain to residents that 48 additional units in the neighborhood would not create a traffic problem. Buchbinder also said it is also possible that his client will do some traffic design work for the city and contribute to some road improvements.

Buchbinder said his client filed with MassHousing for site eligibility at the end of April and the city has 30 days to respond.

Dorothy Roberts lives with her husband and family just down the street from the proposed development, in the two-story Victorian home she grew up in before the Saint Philip Neri church was built. Dorothy said a development like the one Argiros currently proposes would change the character of the neighborhood.

"We're not opposed to someone building four or five McMansions on that site," Roberts said. "But he's changing the character of Waban. What's really disappointing is, if he gets his way, the [new Angier School] will be obsolete before it has a year under

its belt. We come from a different point of view. It shouldn't be weighted to heavily toward the developer and his need for profit."

Roberts said she thinks the development, as proposed, would overburden the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut streets. She said she hopes a lot of people show up, get informed, and give their feedback to the developer.

"Whether you're a new resident or an established resident, everybody is going to be negatively effected by the traffic," Roberts said.

—Follow @JimMorrisonTAB on Twitter.

Norine Silton

From: Liz Baum <lizbaum3@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 9:03 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: I support the proposed project

To the Newton Planning Committee:

I support the above referenced housing proposal at 1521 Beacon Street. Our neighborhood (Waban) is blessed with a village that offers a T and accessible public transportation, a hospital, an elementary school, a library brach and many other public (and private) services.

We already have pushed away a smaller affordable housing proposition (Engine 6), which action was shameful and publicly portrayed our village and city in an unfavorable and unwelcoming light. This is not the city into which I thought I was moving when I chose to raise my children here over a decade ago. We must welcome people to our village and our city and show that we care about affordable housing and most importantly, that we care about others in this world. We must practice what we preach.

Liz Baum
27 Metacomet Rd
Waban, MA

PS- I have written this email in support of this housing development also on behalf of my three adult sons and my husband-- Bill, Noah, Josh, & Daniel Berman.

Norine Silton

From: Lynn Weissberg <lweissberg@swglegal.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 9:28 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: I support 1521 Beacon Street.

Dear Planning Board,
I am writing in support of the c. 40B proposal to develop 1521 Beacon St. It is well-documented that there is a shortage of affordable housing in Newton; this project would add 12 affordable units to the City's meager supply. Once again, there is fierce opposition which is not based on fact, but on fear of change. Newton must be a community that will welcome diversity. This project will help achieve that goal.
Thank you for your consideration of the project.

Lynn Weissberg
5 Alden St.
Newton Centre

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the individual to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender of the message. Thank you.

Norine Silton

From: Nanci Ginty Butler <nanciginty@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 9:47 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Writing in support of 1521 Beacon Street.
Attachments: 20150511145225310.pdf; DAG NGB TAB letter SPN May 8 2015 final SUBMITTED.pdf

To Whom it May Concern:

I'd like to submit this letter to register my full support of the 40B development proposed for the former St. Phillip Neri church site at 1521 Beacon Street.

As a clinical social worker, I have worked with vulnerable Newton residents (across the economic spectrum) for 14 years. From this perspective, I am very aware of the dire need of affordable housing here in our city. Furthermore, when it came time for my husband and I to purchase the home we would raise our children in, we expressly chose Newton as an ideal Boston suburb offering a wide range of cultural and economic diversity. This is a value important to us- I want my children to grow up with people from all kinds of different backgrounds as we strongly believe this helps to create well-adjusted, open, kind, tolerant, and peaceful adults. We intentionally chose to buy a home on Wyman St. in Waban for its housing diversity. Wyman Street has both single family homes, two family homes, and apartment buildings (including two that are designated as affordable housing). It is an absolutely lovely street, with very little traffic (despite the number of housing units here and the fact that it is a cross street between Chestnut and Beacon). Neighbors are friendly, and not prone to leaving "mattresses" or "refrigerators" out on the curb, unlike the stereotype it seems some of my Waban neighbors have come to believe about persons who rent their homes. It has been incredibly disappointing to see so many viable projects that would bring in diversity and affordable housing be denied (thinking of Engine 6, for one), as lower income families have been forced to move out of Newton because of cost, and as the schools my children attend have become less and less diverse. This is not the progressive, welcoming, role model City where we chose to settle and raise our children, and I would like to see this trend reversed. It is time to take a stand and approve a project that will bring affordable housing to Waban.

I understand that many have expressed concerns about scale, traffic, and safety. I firmly believe that these concerns can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, without reducing the number of desperately needed affordable units the project will add to the community.

Attached you will find a letter I co-authored with fellow Waban Resident Delores Acevedo-Garcia, published in the Newton Tab on 5/20/15, in support of the project, as well as a link to the video of the May 4th meeting where you can see me around the 32:45 mark expressing my support for including this rental housing in Waban.

St. Philip Neri Development Meeting



St. Philip Neri Development Meeting
ing

View on www.youtube.com

Preview by Yahoo



Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Best,
Nanci Ginty Butler
38 Wyman St
Waban

Norine Silton

From: dolores acevedo-garcia <dacevedog@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 3:07 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: I support 1521 Beacon Street
Attachments: DAG NGB TAB letter SPN May 8 2015 final SUBMITTED.pdf; DAG AD WAC SPN letter to MH May 14 2015.pdf

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of the proposed development for the Saint Philip Neri (SPN) site in Waban. Our family has lived in Waban since August 2003. We are abutters to the proposed development.

Newton and Waban need denser, affordable, rental housing, which this development will provide.

The building scale of the neighborhood has been increasing in the last decade. Therefore, the relative impact of this development on changing the neighborhood building scale is not nearly as large as opponents suggest.

Those opposed to the development voice traffic concerns. However, the city and developer have the potential to work together to address traffic and actually improve traffic, not only in relation to the new development but in general in the area around SPN.

Scale/massing and traffic are arguments used by opponents because they have been educated by their organizers that their concerns about the "character of the neighborhood", "overcrowded schools" and renters as less than desirable neighbors have fair housing overtones and should be avoided. Regrettably, the social climate in Waban is not conducive to affordable or fair housing. This is a neighborhood that has had a recent history of vitriolic opposition to more diverse housing options. Although those opposed to denser housing have been educated by their organizers to limit their anti fair housing opinions in communications with state/city agencies, sadly, this is not only the undercurrent but the concerns they have voiced explicitly during community meetings and emails (please see attached letter to the Tab (May 20, 2015) and Village 14). Without a 40B development, denser, affordable, rental housing would not be possible in this neighborhood

We are all open to a better design for the proposed development, but it must be one that does not compromise the number of affordable units (currently 12). For example, I would like the City to work with the developer to reduce the number of parking spaces they are proposing in order to disincentivize car use and promote more walking, biking and T rides.

In their recent letter to the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, the Waban Area Council (WAC) misrepresented the views in this neighborhood as unanimously opposed to the proposed development (see attached letter to WAC member). While there is a vocal opposition to denser, rental, affordable housing, there are also Waban residents and abutters like my family who support this development. It is hard to speak up because the tone is one of disrespect for those who want more affordable housing and care about diversity, but we are here and support this project.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely,

Dolores Acevedo-Garcia

129 Pine Ridge Road

Norine Silton

From: Lois Levin <loisalevin@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2015 12:05 PM
To: Kathleen Hobson
Cc: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Re: I support 1521 Beacon Street.

Thank you for sending this message. I am in the Spaulding hospital recovering from a serious injury. It will probably be a few months before I recover. I'd like to be more involved with this.

Best,

Lois A Levin

On May 29, 2015, at 8:36 AM, Kathleen Hobson <kathleen.hobson@verizon.net> wrote:

To the Newton Planning Department:

I am writing in support of the 40B development proposed for 1521 Beacon Street.

Newton can't be the inclusive community we claim to want to be without more--and more diverse and affordable--housing, and we need to take our opportunities as they arise. 1521 Beacon Street is just such an opportunity. It's also an easy walk from downtown Waban and the T station, and so conforms to a key principle of Zoning Reform, which would allow denser development around village centers and transit hubs.

The developer has had many meetings with small groups of neighbors, and his plans have changed in response to their concerns. There is still room for improvement, but I'm am confident the established process will take care of this. I have no problem with the scale of the buildings. Traffic congestion and safety need to be addressed, but fears over it should not be allowed to derail the project. In fact, it could be seen as an opportunity to fix existing problems. The developer has said he is willing to work with the City on this.

There is a vocal and well-organized group of neighbors opposed to the project. They cite traffic and scale as their main concerns, but at a meeting on May 6 (and in comments in the Newton TAB), these seemed to be a thin veneer for darker thoughts aimed squarely at the people who might come to live among us (renters! kids! poor people!). If project opponents are allowed to prevail, we could have another fair-housing case on our hands. Remember Engine 6.

Yours truly,

Kathleen Hobson
128 Dorset Road, Waban

<20150511145225310.pdf>

Letter to Newton TAB published on 5/20/15:

<DAG NGB TAB letter SPN May 8 2015 final SUBMITTED.pdf>

Norine Silton

From: Ellen Lubell <elubell@tlawgroup.com>
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2015 8:06 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Support of 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Newton Planning Department:

I am writing in support of the 40B development proposed for 1521 Beacon Street.

As a homeowner and business owner in Newton, I want to see this community become more inclusive and diverse. A key ingredient is the creation of more affordable housing, including projects like 1521 Beacon Street. It's walk-able from Waban center and the T station, and the developers have been responsive and willing to address concerns that have been raised regarding traffic and safety. It's time to make fair housing a priority in Newton.

Sincerely,
Ellen Lubell

Home
80 Temple Street
Newton, MA 02465

Business
Tennant Lubell, LLC
288 Walnut Street, Suite 500
Newtonville, MA 02460

Norine Silton

From: James Freas
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 11:25 AM
To: Alexandra Ananth
Subject: FW: St Philip Neri Development

From: Setti D. Warren
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 11:22 AM
To: James Freas; Terry Crowley; Dori F. Zaleznik
Subject: FW: St Philip Neri Development

Fyi - hw

From: Connie Fitzgerald [<mailto:cmacton78@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 11:06 AM
To: John Rice
Cc: Setti D. Warren; wabanareacouncil@mail.ci.newton.ma.us
Subject: St Philip Neri Development

Dear Alderman Rice:

My name is Connie Fitzgerald. My husband Tom and I have lived at 39 Nehoiden Rd in Waban for the last 31 years. Like many of our neighbors, we have followed the proposed development plans of St. Philip Neri with dismay. Far from adding to the fabric of life in the village, this rental development looks to be a stick in the eye to the residents of Waban. The size and scope and scale of Mr. Argiros' plans for the property are out of place on that piece of land.

Waban is a wonderful place for families. We have no night life, save the Waban Kitchen. The plans of Mr. Argiros call for multiple studios and one bedroom apartments, which suggest he envisions single people flocking to this neighborhood. He underestimates the number of cars that would flood the surrounding streets and he totally underestimates the parking required for these housing units, allowing for 7 (seven) visitor parking spaces to meet the needs of 48 (forty-eight) housing units. As many residents have pointed out, the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut Streets is tied up with traffic in the morning rush hour and again late afternoon into evening. Moreover, the configuration of the streets on that corner, with Short St, Karen Rd and Oakvale and Beacon mean that more than 100 cars will be added to the fray. And any traffic study done now, while Angier School is under construction, does not reflect the real situation on the streets in the morning and again in the afternoon while the school is in session. As we live on a private road, we fully understand the concern of the home owners on Oakvale who envision an influx of cars on a street that they, not the city, are required to maintain.

As Mr. Argiros pursues his plans for this over-sized 40-B housing project, we hope the city is ready to challenge this development at every step of the way. While Mr. Argiros may live in Westwood, surrounded by his acres of open land, those of us who live in an inner suburb have the right to have some say in a project that will directly impact the quality of life in the village for years to come.

Sincerely,

Connie and Tom Fitzgerald

Norine Silton

From: Debby Belt <deborahfbelt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2015 10:50 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments

Hello, I'm a Waban resident and very concerned about the development of this project for safety related reasons. This area is already very congested and I can not imagine the traffic and congestion due to all of these new units. I would much prefer a limited amount of town houses or free standing houses.

Thank you

Debby Belt
6 Wamesit Road
Waban MA 02468

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Peter Tasgal <ptasgal1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2015 12:05 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; gwatson@masshousing.com
Cc: Peter Tasgal
Subject: Proposed Development at 1521 Beacon Street in Newton (Waban)

Dear City of Newton Planning Department / Gregory Watson:

My name is Peter Tasgal, and I am writing to express my concerns related to the proposed housing development at 1521 Beacon Street in Newton (Waban).

My key concerns related to the project are summarized as follows:

- **All Rental Units:** The current plan includes 48 units, all rentals, the residents of which are likely to be more transient than the current area population and likely to be a lesser part of the community given their more transient nature.
- **Incremental 100+ Residents to Neighborhood:** By my estimation, the 48 units as currently constituted will house an incremental 100+ residents. Can the local area handle such an influx of population and what would be the effect on our schools (the local school being the Angier School which is in the process of being re-built). As a comparison, I would be interested in knowing what has been the effect of the Avalon Apartments at Newton Highlands (located at 99 Needham Street in Newton) on the Newton School System.
- **Traffic Congestion:** The plan calls for 106 parking spots. This will certainly add significant congestion to the already heavily congested intersection of Chestnut Street and Beacon Street (At the corner of 1521 Beacon Street). I understand the only exit will be from Karen Road, however a significant amount of that traffic is likely to feed into the Chestnut and Beacon intersection. I personally am a resident of 35 Gammons Road, in close proximity to the site, and can attest that numerous cars currently use Gammons Road to avoid the aforementioned intersection.

I am certainly not against residences being built at the location, as it would be naïve of me to think that a 70,335 square foot lot would be kept empty. However, if this location were to be used for individual housing the incremental population would likely be significantly less than with the proposed development. I estimate the current plan will add 107 residents compared to 18 residents if single family housing were developed (see calculations below).

Estimated incremental population based on individual homes:

- *Lot Size: 10,000 Square Feet*
- *Homes Built: 7.0*
- *Average Household Size in Waban (per census): 2.6*
- ***Estimated Incremental Population: 18 residents***

Estimated incremental population based on current plan:

- *7 Studio Units x 1.0 residents per unit = 7.0 residents*
- *14 1-Bed Units x 1.5 residents per unit = 21.0 residents*
- *15 2-Bed Units x 2.5 residents per unit = 37.5 residents*

- *12 Townhomes x 3.5 residents per unit = 42.0 residents*
- ***Estimated Incremental Population: 107.5 residents***

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed development plans. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information / feedback.

Peter

Peter Tasgal
35 Gammons Road
Newton (Waban), MA 02468
617-794-4058
ptasgal1@gmail.com

Norine Silton

From: JacobsonG@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2015 6:19 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri Development

The major concern has to be traffic. I pass through the area on Beacon or onto Chestnut many times a week. An auto accident near the subject intersection caused brain damage and subsequent fatality to my 18 year old neighbor several years ago. The traffic seems at its upper limits now. Please limit the development to that which safe traffic conditions can be foreseeable.

Gary Jacobson
Neshobe Rd.
Waban

Norine Silton

From: David Arkowitz <darkowitz@VISTERRAINC.COM>
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2015 6:13 PM
To: Alexandra Ananth
Cc: David Arkowitz
Subject: Karen rd proposal

Dear Alexandra,

I just left you a voice mail, I am unable to attend the meeting tonight, but I strongly oppose this project and am extremely disappointed that it has even progressed to this stage.

My family and I reside at 627 Chestnut St. in Waban, where we have lived since 2006.

Although I am still learning about this proposed development, based on my current understanding, I am extremely concerned and I have summarized these concerns below.

In addition, based on Newton's policies and infrastructure considerations, I would expect that the town would have very similar concerns.

Summary of my Concerns

- Stress on the infrastructure, i.e., roads, sewers, storm drains. Currently Newton has difficulties in sufficiently maintaining the local roads, this development would just exacerbate the situation.

- Additional traffic congestion. The proposed development, with 48 units, could result in approximately 100 additional cars in the area. All one needs to do is drive on Beacon St. between Walnut and Chestnut St. or on Chestnut St. between Rt. 9 and Commonwealth Ave. between 4 pm and 7 pm on any weekday to get a full appreciation of the current congestion challenges. Adding up to 100 more cars in a relatively densely populated area will make this much worse.

- Reduction in green space. My understanding of this proposed development is that the overwhelming majority of the plot will be buildings and parking. Therefore, most of the existing green space will be eliminated and trees will be cut down. I find this unacceptable; this area is already densely populated, so a meaningful reduction in the green space changes the overall aesthetics of the neighborhood and harms the environment by both generating additional carbon emissions from 48 additional housing units and their occupants and cutting down trees that importantly absorb carbon.

- Harm to neighborhood aesthetics and feel. When we first moved into our home, we were informed by Newton that there were a number of regulations that we needed to adhere to in order to preserve the aesthetics and feel of the neighborhood. For example, we installed a fence around our property and had to abide by certain conditions relating to the height and setback, given that Chestnut St. is considered a "Scenic Road." Moreover, one of our neighbors had to actually modify his fence while it was being installed because of these rules. Clearly the rationale behind these and other similar conditions is to preserve a certain look and feel in specific areas in Newton. I am baffled how, on one hand these regulations can be in place (and I support these regulations and others that preserve the neighborhood),

and on the other hand, Newton is considering allowing the construction of a **four-story building**, comprised of 36 studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, facing Short Street.

In summary, I believe that the proposed development, as currently outlined, would have a dramatic and deleterious impact on the neighborhood. I do, however, believe that there is an opportunity for an alternative, more modest, development on the land, but it would need to sufficiently address the concerns that I have listed above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

David Arkowitz

627 chestnut st

Waban

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Norine Silton

From: Eve Bould <evebould@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2015 9:12 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Proposed development concerns

Hello,

As a resident of Waban, I am very concerned that the proposed development will be a detriment to the area. My primary concerns are:

- 1) Traffic created by 106 additional cars would create terrible congestion in an already congested area.
- 2) The planned set backs will not meet the scale of the project. The apartment building will dwarf the street and the other houses nearby.
- 3) There is not sufficient landscaping shielding the project from the street; again, related to the set backs, the project will dwarf the street aesthetically.
- 4) The traffic pattern via Karen Road will be unsustainable; traffic and cars parked on weekends at the field nearby is already very high.

Sincerely,
Eve Bould
Chestnut St
Waban

Norine Silton

From: Robert Friedman <rob.friedman@chillsound.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2015 3:17 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St Philip Neri Development Plan

After attending the meeting at the Windsor Club last evening we wanted to let you know that we oppose the development plan. The density of this development will aggravate an already bad traffic situation in the Waban area which needs to be addressed given the current density, and that is without Angier School in use and this proposed 48 unit development.

Needless to say the height and mass of the development will also have a negative effect on the quality of life and character of our neighborhood.

Thank you for your help in limiting this development to the construction of single family homes in keeping with its current zoning.

Rob & Faith Friedman
189 Windsor Road
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Deb Silverstein <dsilverstein1950@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 9:16 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Cause for Concern

I am writing to express my overwhelming concern about the scope and size of the proposed development. The number of units and the size of the main apartment building strikes me as something that is totally antithetical to the neighborhood. It is zoned for single family residences for a reason. The developer is pushing a 40B project down our throats because he overpaid for the property to begin with. He would not make a profit if he built what is allowable by right.

Furthermore, the traffic study that was presented at the May 6 meeting was completely flawed, having been conducted when Angier School was not in session. In addition, the traffic study didn't even consider weekend traffic around Lincoln Field.

Concerned Waban Resident,
Deborah Silverstein
40 Lawmarissa Rd.
Waban, MA

Norine Silton

From: Silverman, Andrew <asilverman@crp.com>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 10:41 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: My concerns about the development at the St. Philip Neri Site in Waban, MA

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 48 unit development at the St. Philip Neri ("SPN") site in Waban. I am strongly against the project for three principal reasons; 1) traffic density 2) impact on the fabric of the village 3) aesthetics.

Spending any amount of time at the Chestnut Street/Beacon Street intersection either on a weekday morning or evening, it seems obvious that it is highly trafficked intersection, even without the Angier School being open. One can only imagine how the current traffic issue will continue to worsen once Angier reopens.

The traffic is not just a nuisance; it is also a safety issue to kids walking to/from school, commuters walking to the T-station and everyday citizens walking around the community. The idea that this problem will not significantly worsen with a 48 unit development is hard to imagine.

Using, admittedly, back-of-the-envelope math 48 units equates to 48 families. Assuming the demographics of these families are similar to that of the overall community, it is not a stretch to imagine that 48 families equates to 4 people per family, or roughly 200 additional people (48 families x 4 people/family) in that small area. These 48 families will likely bring with them 2 cars per family; or 100 additional cars.

Again, given that the Chestnut/Beacon intersection is already very busy, I don't understand how pouring another 200 souls and 100 cars into what is a relatively small area, will do anything other than turn what is currently a problem into an untenable situation.

So for me this not an issue about making living in Newton affordable, everyone ultimately wants to get more and pay less. This is an issue of common sense. How can pouring this magnitude of people and cars into what is already a problem area do anything but significantly degrade the quality of life in Waban?

As to the fabric of the village, I would ask the reader to spend some time in the area of the proposed development. While the intersection is a problem, as described above, the village itself is lovely. Its beauty stems in part from the many families who own homes in Waban and are personally and financially invested in making it a warm, welcoming and nice place to live.

Now, I have no objection to rental units on a one off basis. Just because someone cannot or chooses not to buy a home in my neighborhood does not make them "bad" or undesirable. It just is what it is. But, I do object to the idea of dropping 48 rental units and 48 families who are renters, and thus more transient and therefore less invested in the community, into what is literally the heart of the village. For doing that stands to forever change the fabric of that part of Waban.

The final point I would like to raise is one of aesthetics. The project, as it is currently proposed, would be similar to building the current Boston City Hall in the heart of a tree lined and classic New England home adorned area. The two styles are incongruous.

A three story, industrial style apartment complex in the heart of "Wonderful Waban"? How does that make any sense? Finally, I am not opposed to the basic principal that one should have the ability to do what he or she wants with their property. With the caveat, however, that those actions do not negatively impact others. Judging by the attendance at the community meeting on May 6th at the Windsor Club, the community is clearly opposed to the current project because it understands that it will negatively impact the place we call home. So for that reason, I do feel empowered to oppose the planned development and to strongly urge the City of Newton to prevent the planned development from progressing.

Andrew Silverman
6 Glastonbury Oval

Waban, MA

Andy Silverman
Capital Resource Partners

31 State Street 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02109
617-478-9615 (direct)
617-721-3363 (mobile)
asilverman@crp.com | www.crp.com

Norine Silton

From: Pamela Mathews <pam@mathewshome.net>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 11:14 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Stuart Mathews; Karen Day; Ray Noveck; cbpitts@gmail.com
Subject: Concerns about the proposed development

Dear Alderman Rice and colleagues in the City of Newton:

My name is Pam Mathews and we live at 77 Windsor Road, on the corner of Moffat and Windsor, a couple of blocks from the proposed development. We also own a rental property behind us at 194 Moffat, which has been leased to the same family since we bought it from our elderly neighbor. We rent it at an affordable rate, and our tenant (who is a contractor) takes good care of the property in exchange. It has been a positive experience for us.

Relevant to my comments below, I work in the non-profit sector. I am a freelance grantwriter who focuses on directing resources to young people and their families who live in Boston's lower income neighborhoods. My most recent employer (who I left in 2012) is St. Stephen's Youth Programs, located in Boston's Villa Victoria neighborhood. As you may know, the Villa was an innovator in low income housing development. Reacting to the failure of large block housing projects in other cities, the Villa's buildings are purposely designed to be low (two stories) and organized in clusters to mimic single family homes and encourage a sense of community. There are also green spaces and places for the community to gather. My office was actually located a mile away in Lower Roxbury, adjacent to Orchard Gardens and several other public housing developments. Many of these developments follow the example of the Villa in that they feature low, townhome style buildings. Unfortunately, they do not offer as much green or community gathering space, and the neighborhood suffers because of that.

I attended the presentation by Mr. Argiros' team on Wednesday and like many of my neighbors, I was completely taken aback. With time to reflect on the plans and designs, I remain astounded that these are the best he has to offer. I can't believe he is seriously proposing that monolithic 36-unit apartment building – in the scale of the new Angier school – with no significant green or community space. It is a sad statement that Mr. Argiros' plans compare unfavorably to the design of public housing developments in Boston's truly challenged lower income neighborhoods, despite the fact that he has the potential for plenty of high rent units to ensure a profit. They demonstrate that his company does not care about providing the type of development that would serve his new residents well or ensure that they seamlessly integrate into the surrounding neighborhood and larger Waban community. A speaker at the meeting on Wednesday mentioned the Wyman Street apartments as a positive example of affordable housing in Newton. As you may know, this development consists of 15 two-bedroom units in three two-story buildings, with yards between. That seems like a dream after what I've seen is planned for 1521 Beacon.

As a nearby resident, I also have concerns about the construction period (where are all the trucks going to go exactly?) and the increased traffic and parking on residential streets that aren't designed to accommodate 100 more residents. Montclair, in particular, is a narrow street that can barely handle extra traffic from school bus stops and sports games as it is.

Lastly, it makes me sad that the gateway to Waban may become Mr. Argiros' 36-unit apartment building. I remember when we first came to look at our new house here, driving from a busier area closer to the city and coming into Waban on Beacon Street, making a right just past the church which is now slated for demolition. Everything got a little quieter, there were more trees, it was little more peaceful. Yet, we could walk to a town center, and Boston still felt nearby. That mix of suburban and urban is what makes Waban special. The community should be allowed to preserve that balance.

I would like to close by asking you to take an active role in doing anything in your power to block the 1521 Beacon Street development as currently proposed. I hope you will work with your colleagues in the City of Newton to put as much as pressure as possible on Mr. Argiros to take a step back and come up with a plan that reflects the best practices of affordable housing design and honors the priorities of the community where (according to his lawyer) he would like to build a legacy for his children.

Thank you for listening,

Pam Mathews

Pamela Larson Mathews
617-797-6688 (mobile)
pam@mathewshome.net

Norine Silton

From: Charles & Michelle Nyman <nyman2@me.com>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 11:18 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri proposed development

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you with concerns about the proposed development of the St. Philip Neri property. I personally feel that the site should be developed or converted to green-space as the current parking lot is an eyesore. That being said, the current proposal is significantly flawed and will have a profound negative impact on the immediate community for the following reasons.

Firstly, the proposed scale of the project with a total of 48 units and 106 parking spaces, will result in a substantial increase in traffic. I am aware of the traffic study conducted by the developer. I could not have imagined a more perfect situation to find in favor of the developer. Firstly, he acknowledged that the Beacon Chestnut area is already a problem intersection however he conducted the study when the Angier school is closed and credit the baseline Church which is vacant at 8 cars per hour. This leads to the flawed conclusion that the increase traffic will only be negligible. I strongly challenge this finding and suggest that independent study be conducted taken these factors into account.

Secondly, Oakvale is a private way yet was seen as a point of access for this development. Should the owners of Oakvale close the private way this will even further increase the traffic.

Thirdly, the developers traffic study only considered the immediate intersections associated with proposed development. I however live on Moffat road which is currently used as a cut through to avoid the Beacon-Chestnut intersection. Current traffic levels and speeds far exceed what would be considered safe for a residential street and this will only increase with further traffic because of the proposed development.

Finally, the scale of the project far exceeds any structure in the area, both in terms of square footage or vertical height. All the renderings intentionally to do not include the current abutting properties as that would highlight this obvious fact.

In closing, I request that the application be resubmitted at a smaller scale. I have no objections to apartments or 40B being in our community, I believe they serve an important purpose, I do however object to a project of this scale which would result in a significant negative impact.

As an elected member of our community I hope you will consider the community first and foremost when making your decision.

Respectfully,

Charles Nyman

Norine Silton

From: Ann Quandt <annlothropquandt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 9:39 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri Church

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the possibility of a 40B development of the St. Philip Neri church land. These are the reasons why we cannot let the 40B development proceed as it is currently planned (48 units).

- 1) Newton has already exceeded the land threshold for 40Bs. As a community we will engage lawyers and other resources to ensure we are able to uphold our rights as a community.
- 2) 48 additional units presents a significant safety concern. There is already an untenable amount of traffic at Beacon and Chestnut. This large number of units would only add to what is already an unsafe situation.
- 3) the look and feel of our community will be compromised. This is something we have all invested in and value will be lost if we allow such density to be implemented.
- 4) given the 3 points above, this is a situation where we need to find a friendly compromise - possibly something around 20 units, no apartment building.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Ann Quandt
857-294-3017

Please excuse typos, sent from my phone.

Norine Silton

From: Amy Fournier Campbell <mogulames@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 9:58 PM
To: John Rice
Cc: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Philip Neri development

Alderman Rice,

I am writing to you to express extreme concern for the proposed Philip Neri development project. Not only are there obvious concerns with parking, safety, aesthetics, impact on schools with such a dense housing complex, but there is a far greater concern around the impact that it will have to the level of civic involvement of the members of the Waban community. The civic mindedness and stewardship of residents is why we moved to Waban and spend countless hours volunteering to make it a home.

Waban has a special charm to it. It's held together and improved because of the commitment of its residents who see Waban as their home and as their responsibility to steward. Examples can be seen all over - the Windsor Club, one of only 2 of Newton's neighborhoods club that is still around and thriving due to the efforts of its volunteers; the Waban Library Center, which over the last 5 years has been open and running and offering wonderful programs for the community, all through the hard work of volunteers; the Waban Improvement Society, which provides scholarships for Waban students and provides community building events for Waban residents. This stewardship comes from homeowners who have a vested interest in the future of their community. Study after study shows that this level of involvement does not exist from renters who tend to be more transient and do not have a strong commitment to their town. If the development of the Philip Neri site goes through as currently proposed, it will ruin the fabric of the Waban community which will have far reaching negative impacts on the City of Newton and its ranking as a top place to live.

The proposed Philip Neri development is all about profit. It has nothing to do with preserving Waban's community feel. The proposed development would put in an unprecedentedly dense housing structure that does not make sense in Waban. I know that Argiros hired a consultant to analyze traffic but it does not take an engineering degree to realize that a housing complex with 105 additional parking spots at the intersection of Beacon St. and Chestnut St. would negatively impact the flow of traffic. Children ride their bikes freely around Lincoln playground and the additional traffic off of Karen Rd. would cause a significant safety impact. Another obvious issue would be the impact on the already over-populated schools.

Towns that are ranked the best in the country have worked hard to maintain their charm and personal feel. Stowe, VT is a prime example of a town that has imposed strict zoning ordinances to ensure that the character of the town is not sold out to the highest bidder. I remember years ago when McDonalds tried to go into Stowe. The planning commission made the barrier to entry so difficult in keeping with the zoning ordinances that McDonalds did not last long. The planning commission was smart enough to know that once you start to significantly change a community, you change how its residents feel about it and how they take care of it. This clearly has been in the case in several of Newton's other villages and it would be tragic to allow that to happen in Waban.

We recognize that change needs to happen, but there are other options that would be more appropriate for Waban - low-income, single family residences or even a row of McMansions would be a more suitable option for the property. The residents of Waban have made it clear that this type of development is inappropriate and not wanted in Waban, please do your job and represent your constituents by vetoing this project.

Thank you for your time.

Amy and Stephen Campbell
Waban residents and voters

Norine Silton

From: Daniel Muehlschlegel <danny@muehlsch.de>
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2015 11:05 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Susanne Muehlschlegel
Subject: Philip Neri development

Dear Newton Government,

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen of Waban. I live on Fredana Rd. with my wife and 2 young children (age 4 and 6). Fredana Rd is directly connected to Karen Rd, the site of the proposed Philip Neri development. Similar to many others in the neighborhood, both my children learned to ride their bikes on the Philip Neri church parking lot, and frequently bike and walk on Karen Rd. to Lincoln field and playground. We are now extremely concerned that a development close to the **size of the new Angier school with 48 units and 106 parking spots** will completely change the neighborhood and our way of life. The Waban triangle is a relatively secluded residential neighborhood with small side streets and already problematic entry and exit points. If you ever tried to leave the Waban triangle during morning rush hour via Oakvale or Karen Rd., you would have experienced how difficult and dangerous this endeavor is. Having this many new residents with their cars would be **very dangerous for the many small children** walking and riding their bikes to Angier school once it reopens in January 2016, given the awkward infrastructure of the Waban triangle.

The **traffic study conducted by the developer is flawed** in its design and methodology – Angier school is closed and all the kids in the neighborhood are getting bused to Carr School in Newtonville. It did not take into account that Oakvale is a private way owned by 6 residents.

The neighborhood is in no way opposed to low-income housing. We are opposed to a developer using that as a false pretense to thrust a massive development onto a residential neighborhood. Of the 48 units, which are being described as “very high end”, **only 10 are designated as low-income**.

We are also not convinced that the developer has the know-how to be successful with a project of this scale. This is the first of its kind for Mr. Agiros with current and prior developments being retail and lower-end rentals. As an example, the rental units are being marketed as high-end for older people to downsize, yet they do not have any amenities (e.g. gym, pool), do not have an elevator, and are tall with many stairs.

So in summary, I have **significant concerns regarding the safety, feasibility, and long-term sustainability** of this proposed project and the impact it will have on Waban and Newton as a whole. I hope you will take these concerns very seriously and represent the concerns and values of my family and our neighbors appropriately.

Sincerely,

Danny Muehlschlegel

Danny Muehlschlegel
15 Fredana Rd

Newton, MA 02468

8th year Pan Mass Challenge Rider

Will you help me find a cure for brain cancer? Please support my efforts at <http://www2.pmc.org/profile/DM0280>

Norine Silton

From: Bouldcj <bouldcj@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 09, 2015 9:28 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri

The proposed rezoning of the St. Philip Neri site is extremely concerning and displays a fundamental disconnect between planner's understanding of and the reality of the impact on the surrounding community.

Traffic at Beacon and Chestnut Streets is already overtaxing not only the capacity of those streets but also the surrounding streets. Northbound vehicles on Chestnut attempting to avoid the light at Chestnut and Beacon already use the residential streets of Plainfield and Pine Ridge to shave some time, often traveling at higher speeds. Similarly, the surrounding streets of Oakvale Rd., Karen Rd., and Montclair Rd., in particular, are incapable of handling the additional traffic that a proposed 106 vehicles would definitely bring, without causing significantly higher risk to pedestrians and other vehicles.

While Sunday's brought a number of cars to the church, they rarely filled the lot. The other days of the week, there were fewer than 5 cars in the parking lot at any time.

There is also a significant question about the capacity of the Newton School System and the Angier School in particular to absorb the potential number of children that the proposed 48 rental units would draw. Plans for the Angier School were developed based on the current zoning. For this property, that means 6 single family homes.

The proposed plan is insufficient to maintain the aesthetic value of the neighborhood. Standoff from the street is inadequate and the distance from neighboring houses is 10 feet on one side. This high density footprint presents a hardship for our neighborhood.

Lastly, we resent a developer who lives in a 12,000 square foot mansion in Westwood with no visibility to his neighbors, claims to be a "proponent" of high-density development, and has a reputation for being neglectful manager of low-income housing projects. Clearly, he is taking advantage of 40B statu

Norine Silton

From: Paul Osterman <osterman@mit.edu>
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2015 8:05 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed development of St. Philip Neri, at the corner of Beacon and Chestnut. My understanding is that the proposal calls for 48 units and 106 parking spots. This seems to me to be excessive and will create enormous traffic problems on Chestnut Street, Beacon Street, and neighboring interior streets. I do not oppose development per se but strongly believe the development should be responsible and this does not meet that criteria. I very much hope that you will do what is necessary to arrive at a more appropriate solution.

Best.

Paul Osterman

Paul Osterman
NTU Professor
MIT Sloan School
100 Main Street, E62-336
Cambridge, MA 02139
osterman@mit.edu
617-253-2667
web.mit.edu/osterman/www/index.html

Norine Silton

From: Eve Bould <evebould@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2015 4:11 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Joel Grinberg
Subject: Fwd: FW: Lincoln park pictures #1/2
Attachments: DSC00065.jpg; DSC00068.jpg; DSC00071.jpg; DSC00075.jpg; DSC00079.jpg; DSC00083.jpg; DSC00085.jpg

Hello Planning Committee for the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street:

Attached are photos depicting the current traffic issues on Montclair, which would be exacerbated by the proposed development.

Please take a look.

The community's concerns are captured very clearly here. Karen Road and Montclair CANNOT absorb the traffic associated with 48 NEW HOUSEHOLDS in the parcel that is CURRENTLY ZONED FOR SIX HOUSEHOLDS.

The side streets adjacent to the proposed development are already maxed out with traffic and congestion on game days (most weekends) and practices (most afternoons in the spring, fall, and some of the summer).

The safety of the families in our communities as well as the families entering our community to make use of the fields must be taken into consideration.

Respectfully,
Eve Bould

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Joel Grinberg <j_grinberg@hotmail.com>
Date: Sun, May 10, 2015 at 3:38 PM
Subject: FW: Lincoln park pictures #1/2
To: Eve Bould <evebould@gmail.com>

Norine Silton

From: Eve Bould <evebould@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2015 4:16 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Joel Grinberg
Subject: Fwd: FW: Lincoln park pictures #2 /2
Attachments: DSC00089.jpg; DSC00094.jpg; DSC00096.jpg; DSC00098.jpg; DSC00104.jpg; DSC00107.jpg; DSC00108.jpg

Hello Planning Committee:

Attached are additional photos that depict a typical game/practice afternoon on Montclair and Karen Road, adjacent to the proposed development.

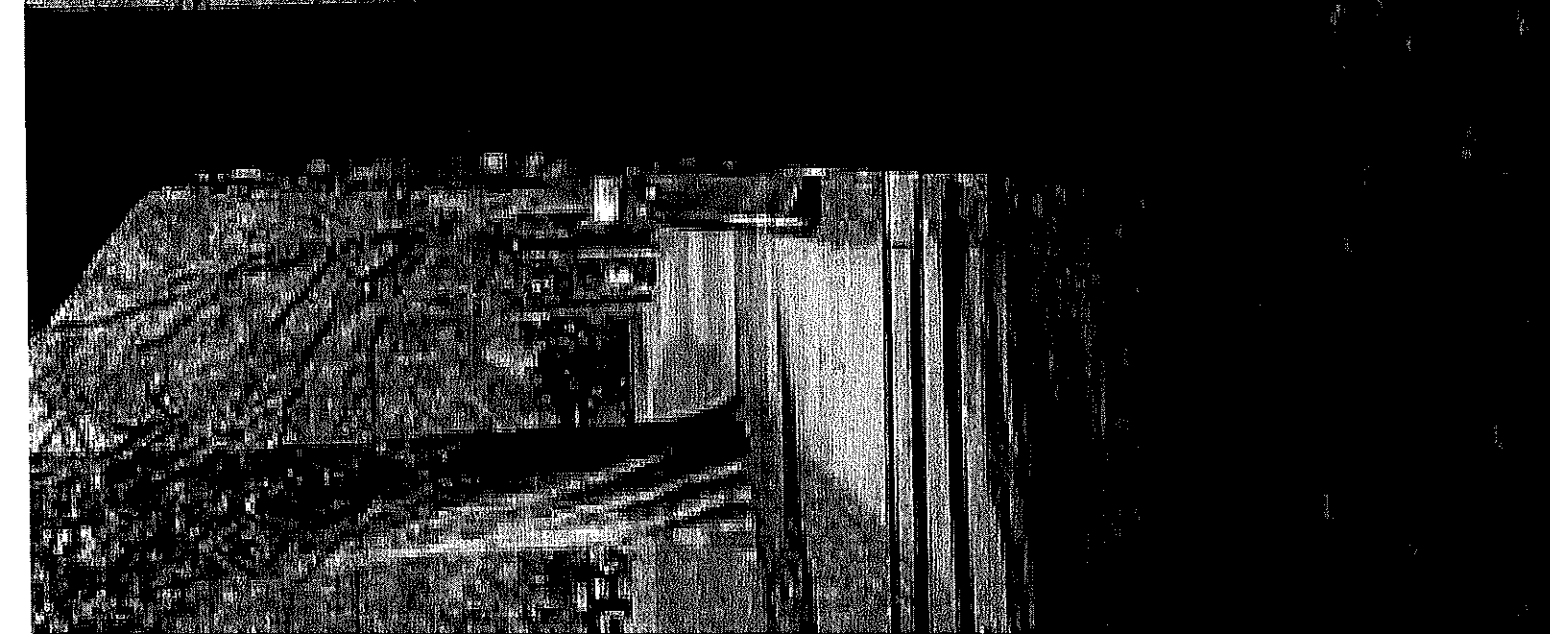
Please take safety concerns into consideration in the evaluation of this project.

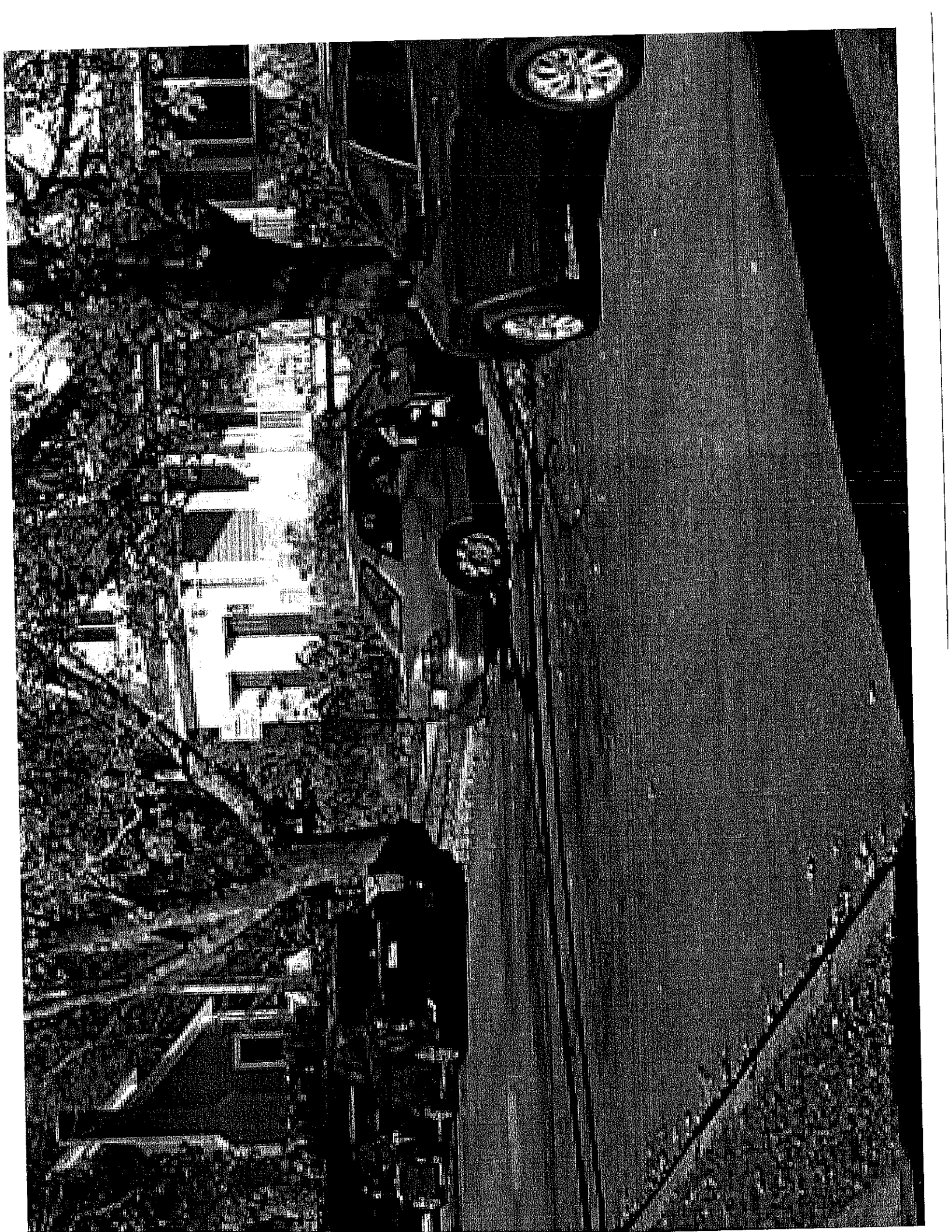
As you can see in these photos, traffic on game/practice days (most days in the summer, fall, and spring) is already a major concern.

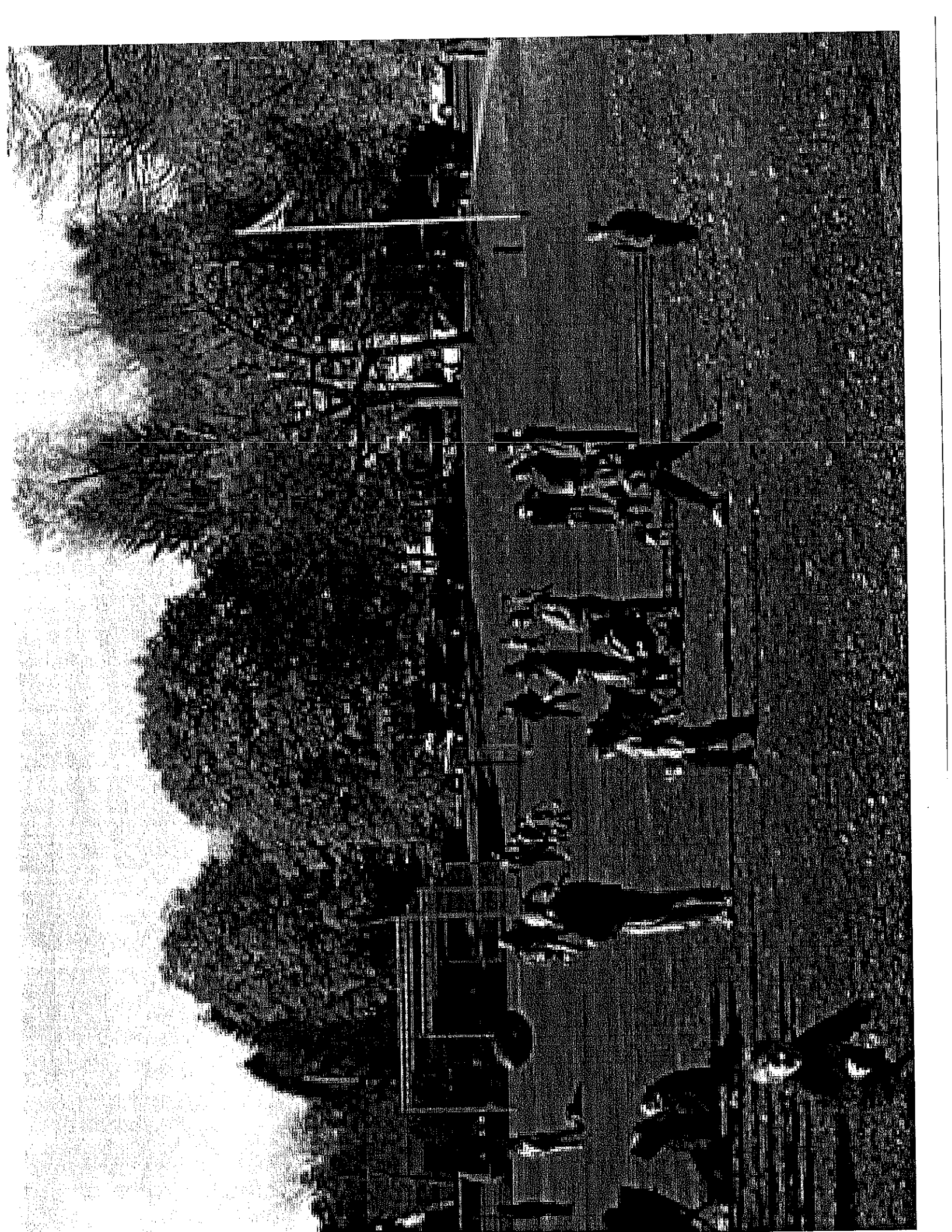
The church generated traffic only on SUNDAY MORNINGS, which is not a popular time for games or practices. The church didn't exacerbate this issue in the same way that a 48-household development would. For the sake of everyone's safety, please keep this area zoned for 6 households.

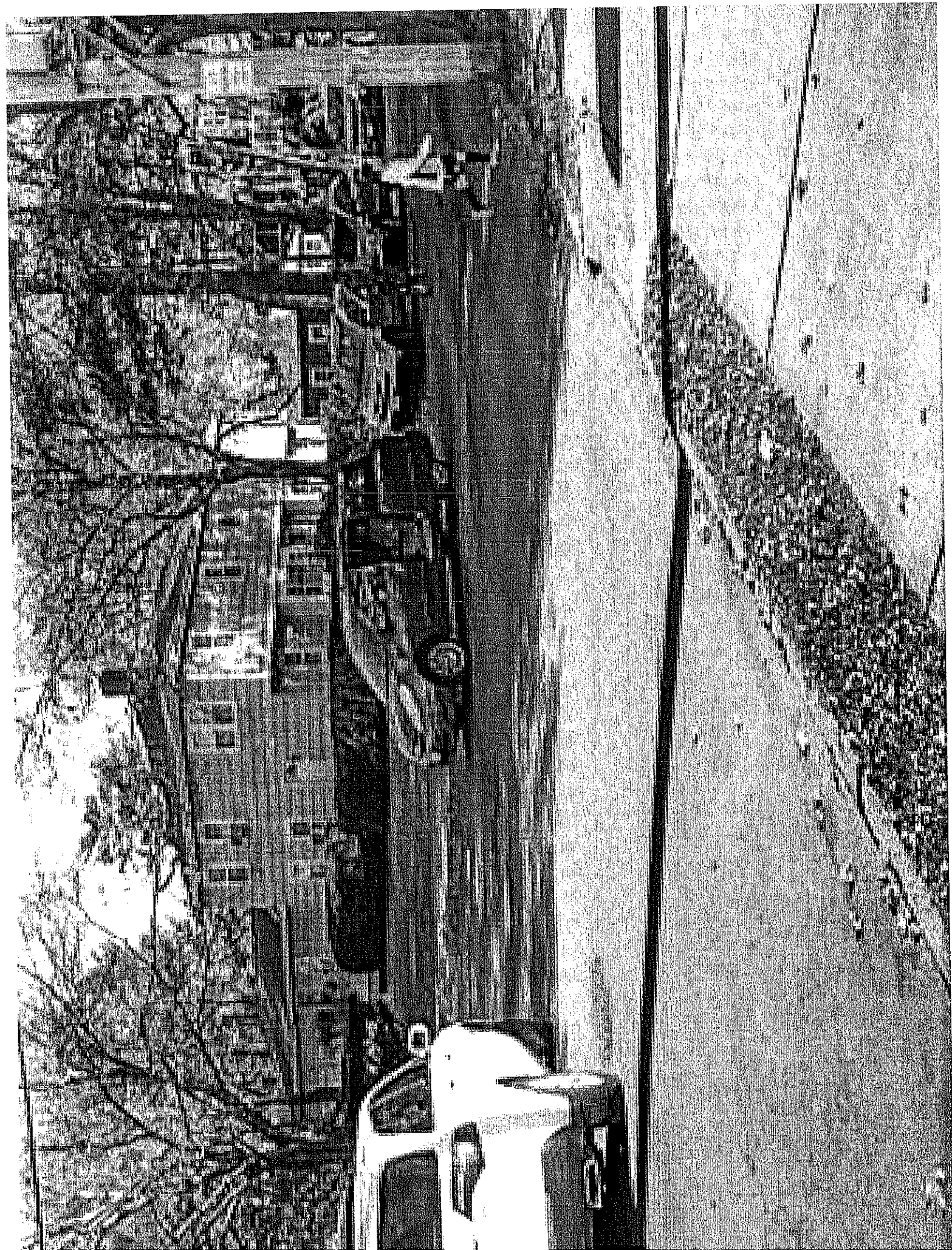
Respectfully,
Eve Bould
Photos Courtesy of Waban Resident Joel Grinberg cc'd here.

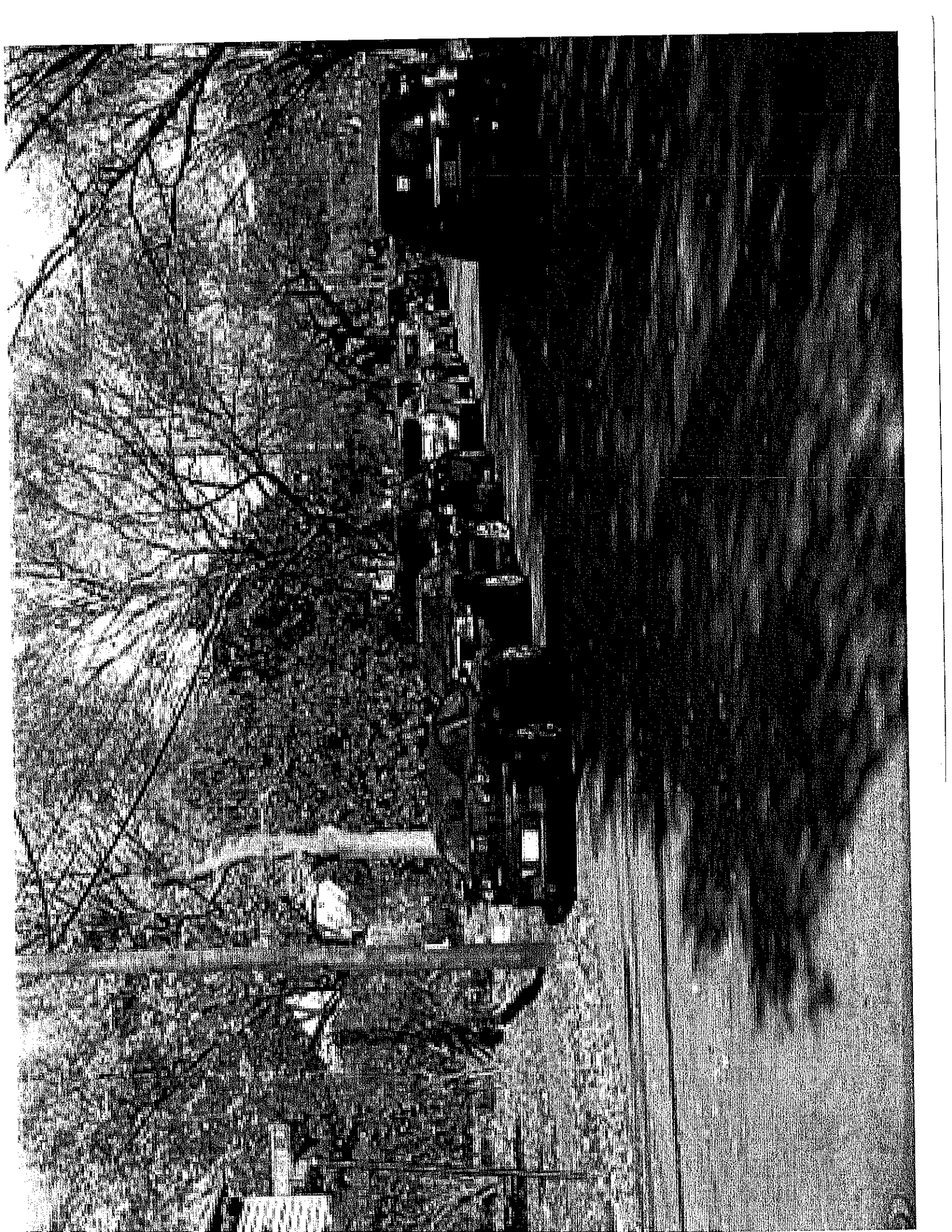
----- Forwarded message -----
From: Joel Grinberg <j_grinberg@hotmail.com>
Date: Sun, May 10, 2015 at 3:38 PM
Subject: FW: Lincoln park pictures #2 /2
To: Eve Bould <evebould@gmail.com>

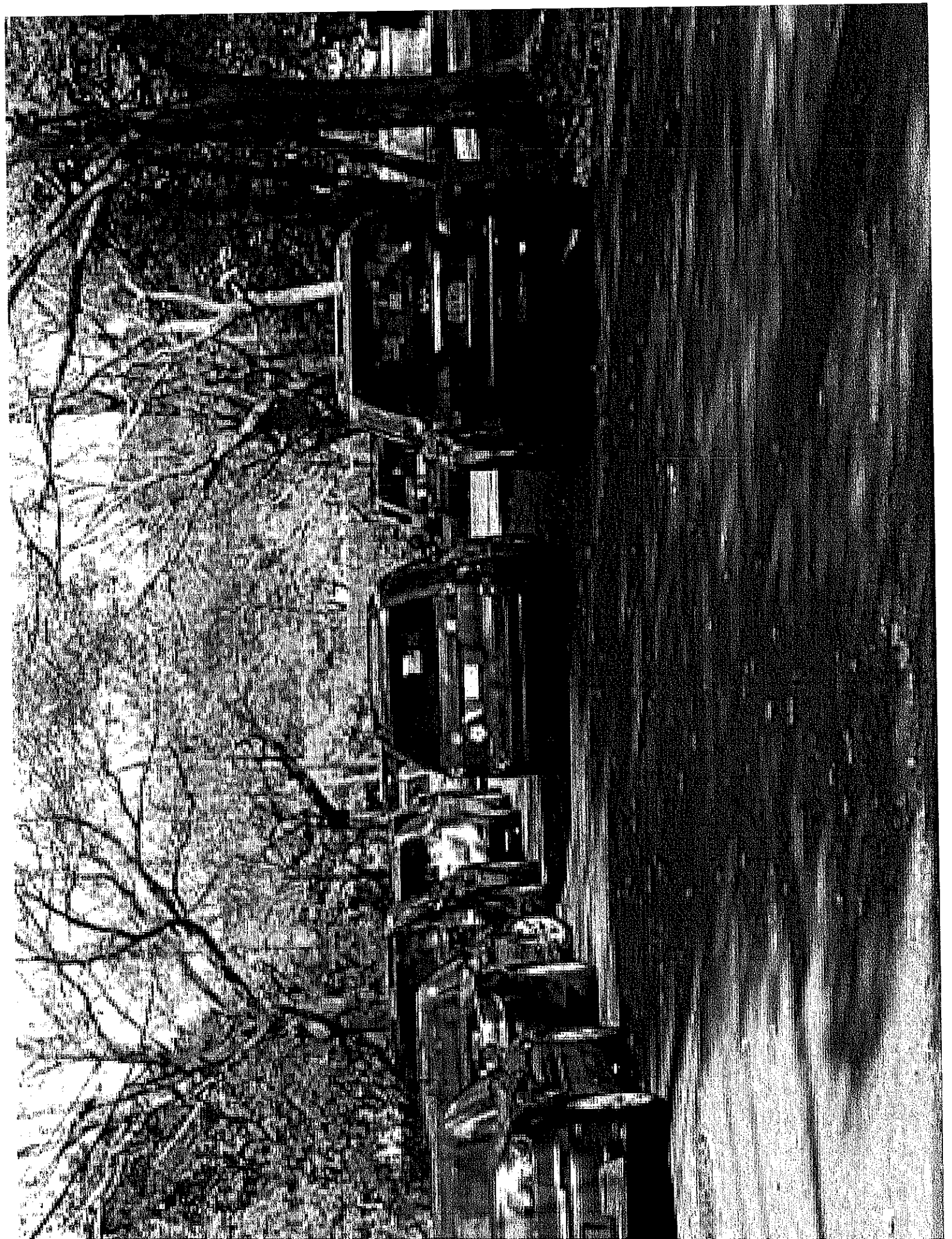


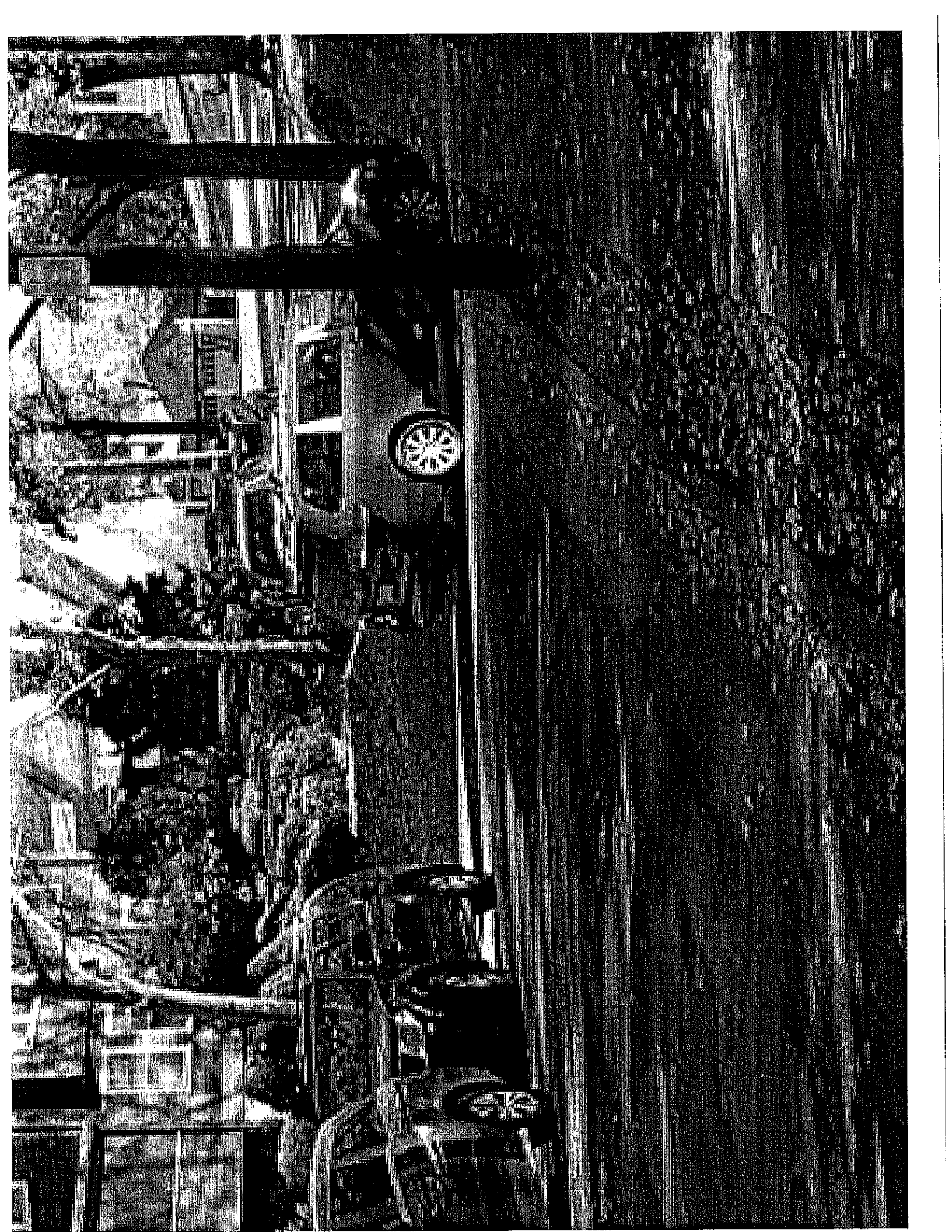


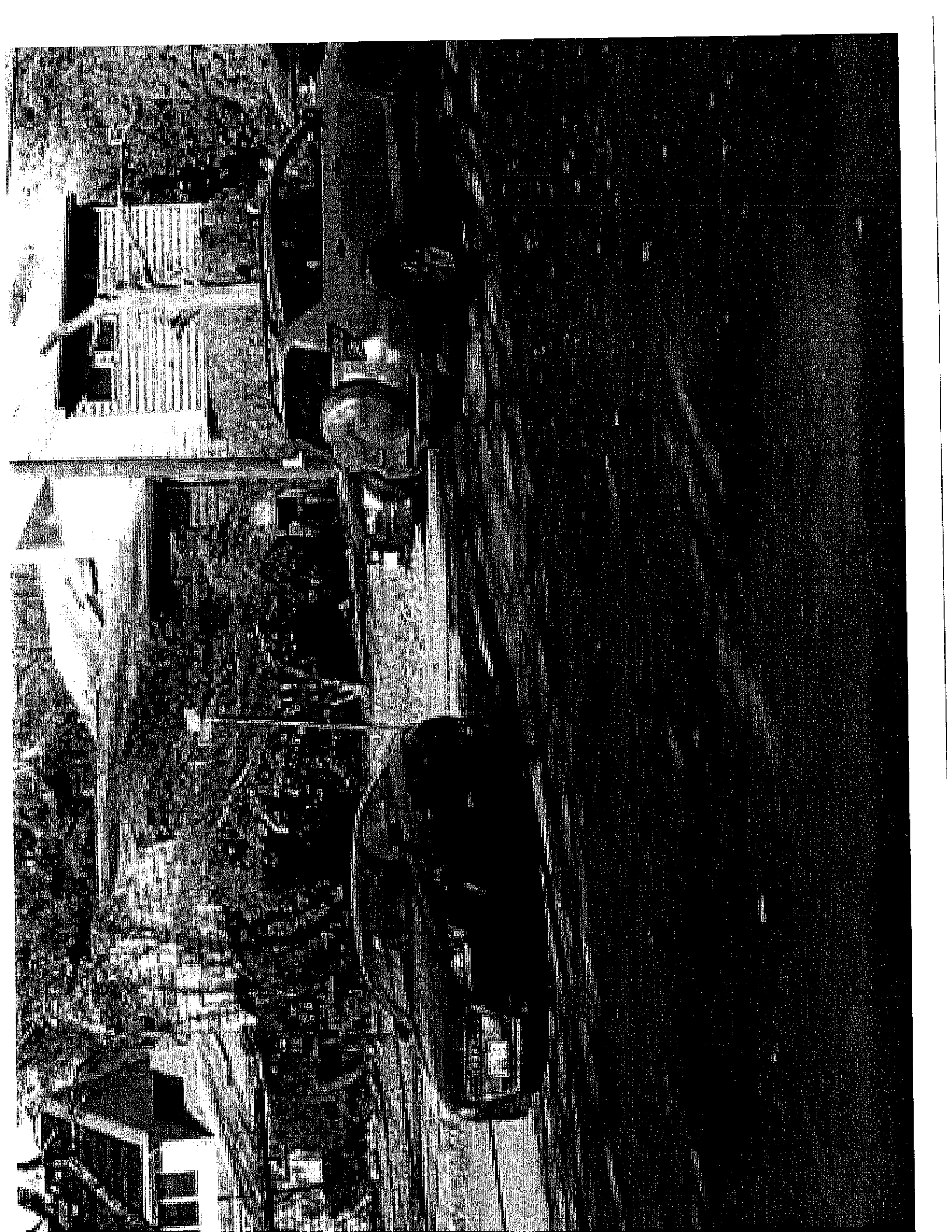


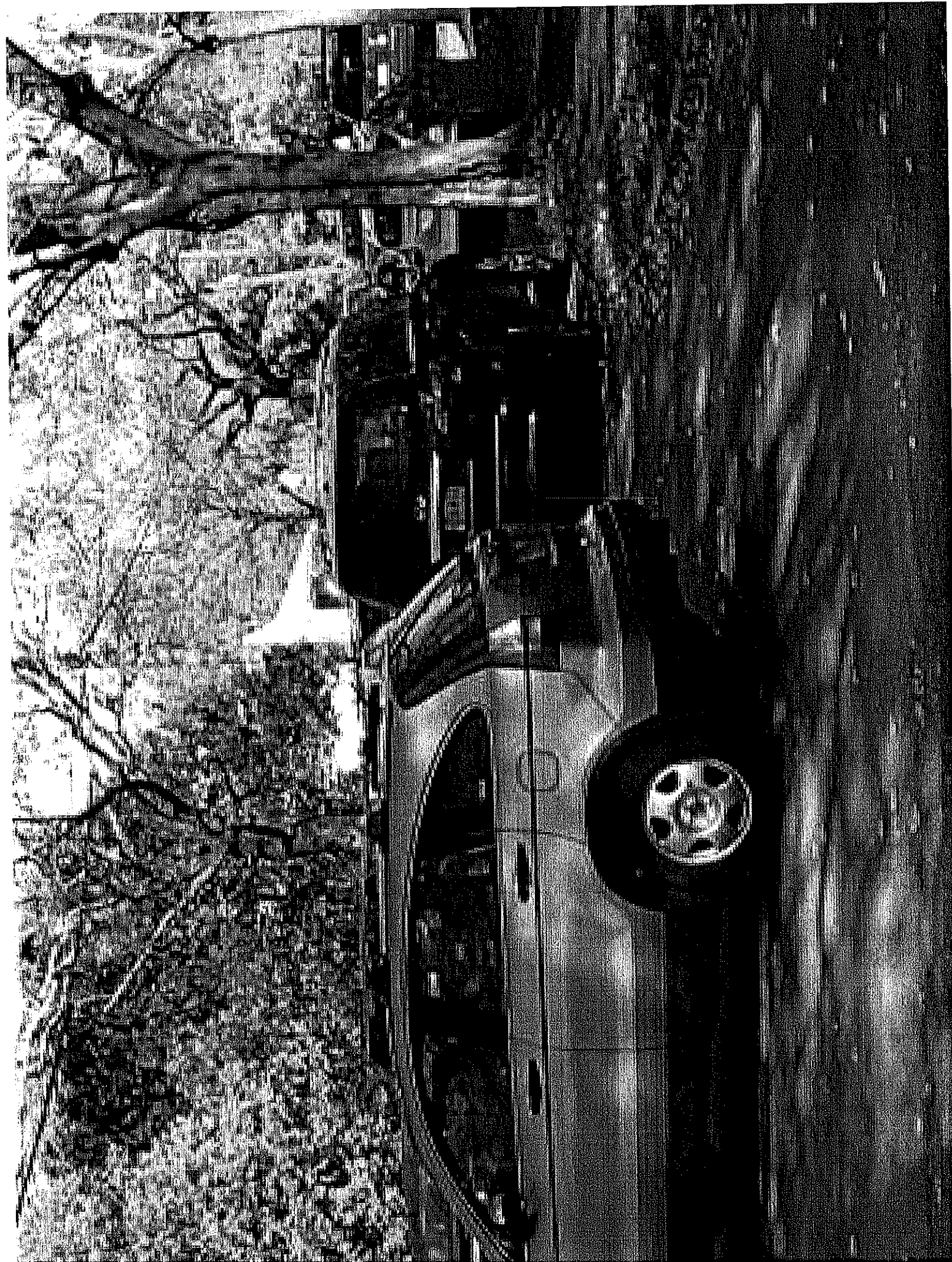


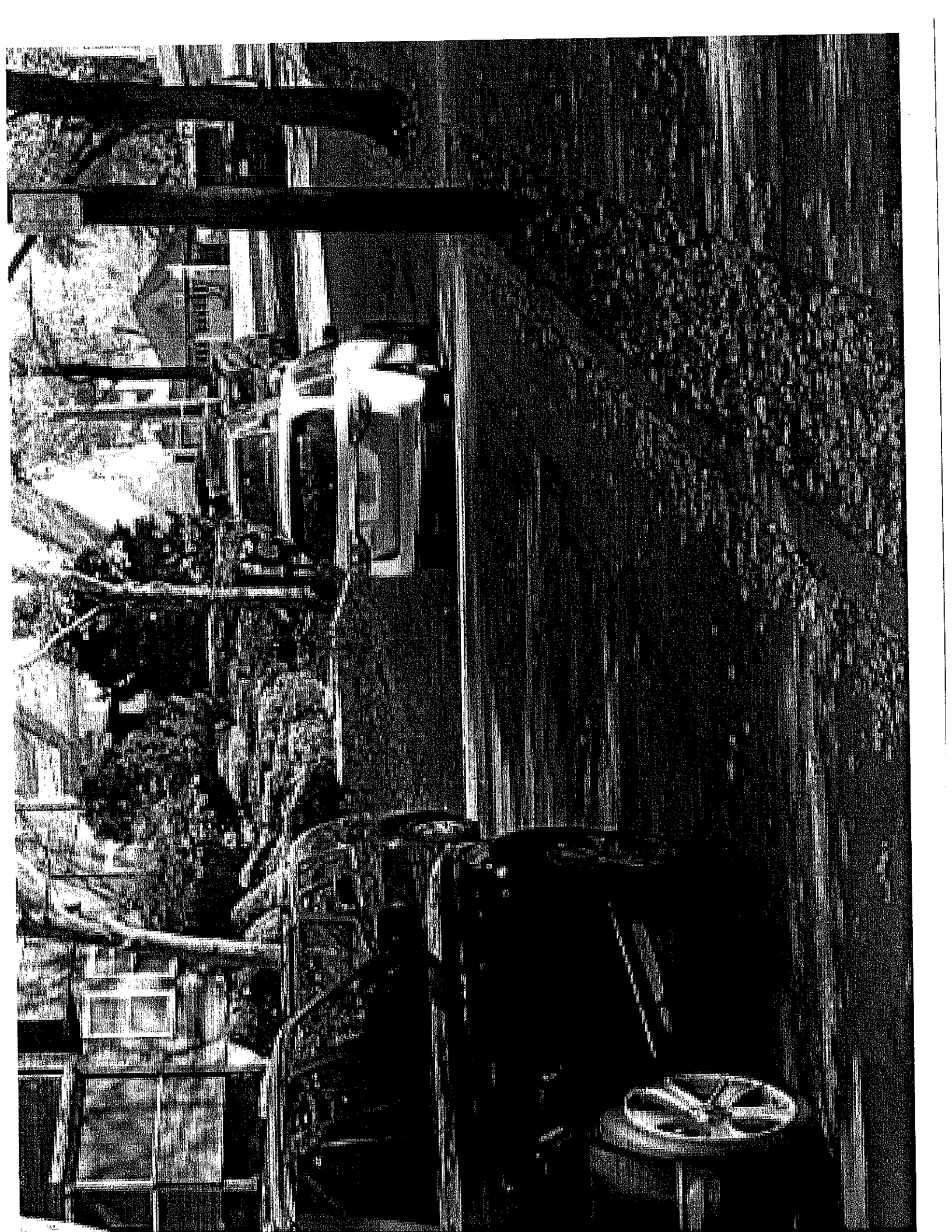


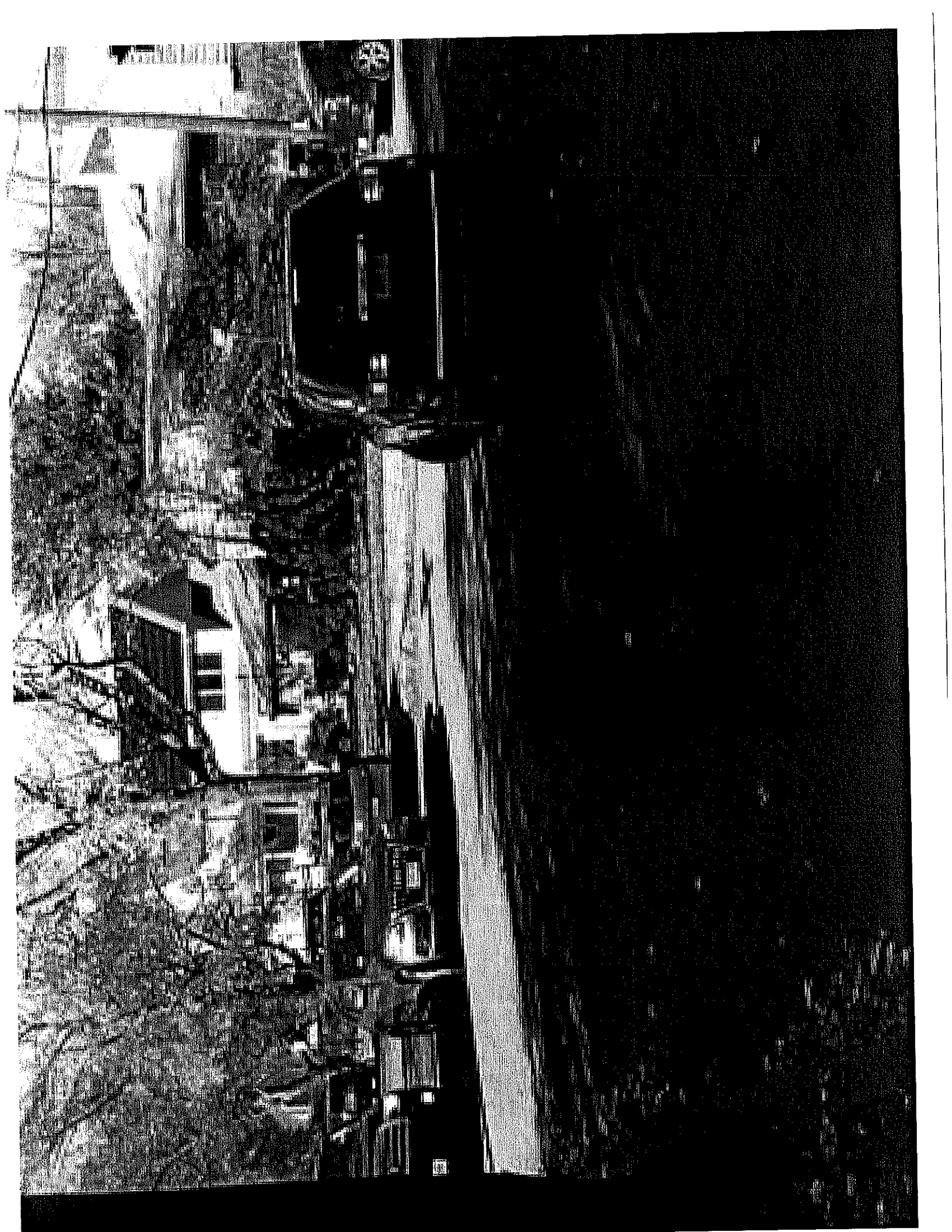


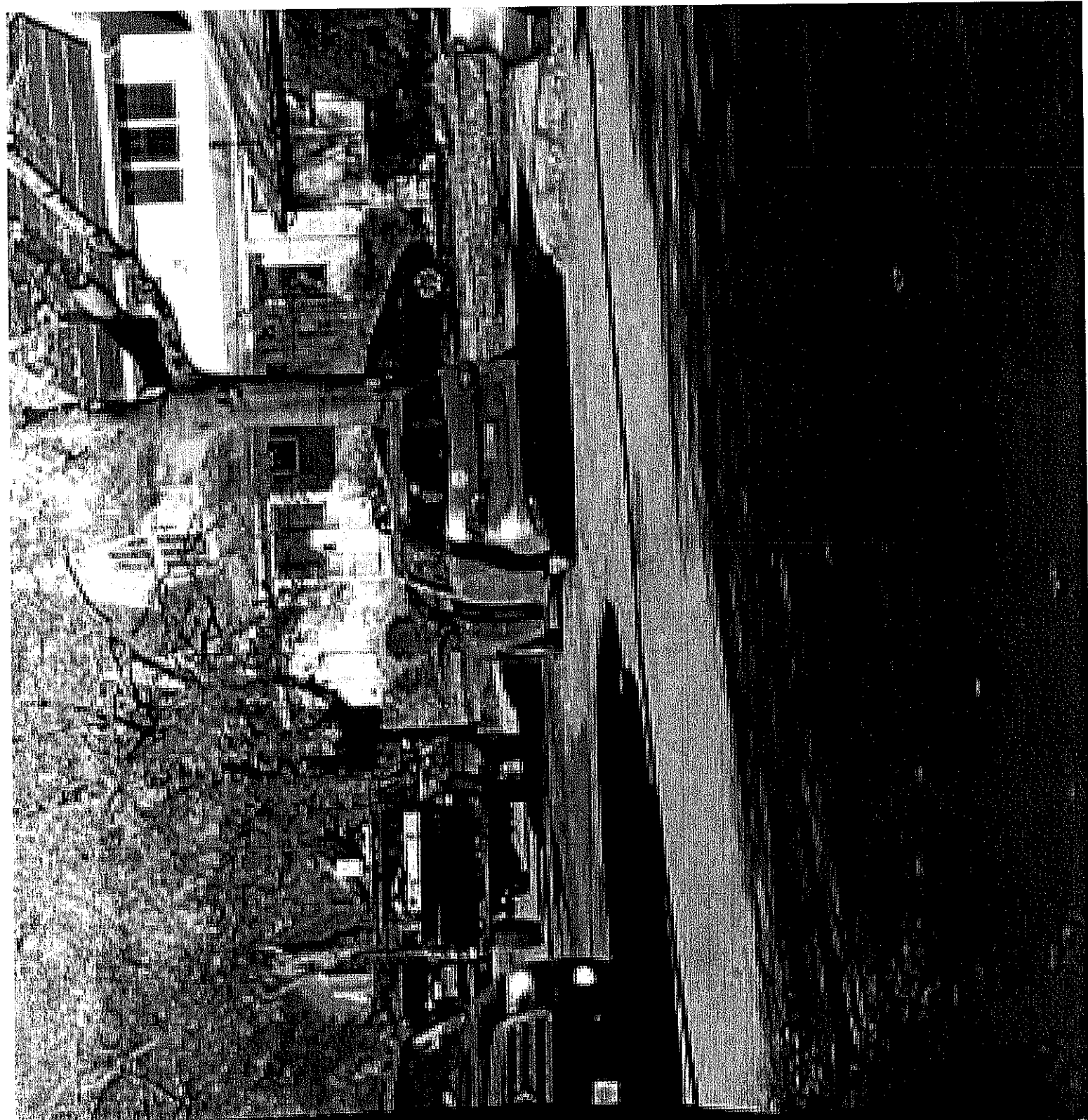












Norine Silton

From: Becka Yturregui <becka.yturregui@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2015 6:30 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Fwd: Stop Waban development

Sent from my "kid-entertainment device, time-waster, fabulousineveryway" iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Becka Yturregui <becka.yturregui@gmail.com>
Date: May 10, 2015 at 6:28:11 PM EDT
To: "1521beaconstreet@newtonmagov " <1521beaconstreet@newtonmagov>
Subject: Stop Waban development

I sent the email below to my aldermen and was told I should also send this to you:

I live on Chestnut and the traffic on Chestnut is already intolerable. It takes me minutes and minutes to get out of my driveway each morning and the speeding and congestion is horrific. Adding the number of cars suggested by the church development is a total nightmare. Do everything you can to stop this on behalf of me --- a resident and voter in this community.

Let me assure you this is not (for me) a NIMBY issue. I was a supporter of the fire station proposal. This for me is purely about number of cars speeding down my already congested street.

Please represent my perspective and stop this development. Or at least decrease significantly the number of units.

Rebecca Yturregui
907 Chestnut
617438145

Norine Silton

From: Carole Noveck <cegn@rcn.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2015 8:24 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: response to development plans

To Newton Planning Department and Community leaders:

I have lived on Karen Road in Waban, MA for 27 years. Other than the frustration of trying to leave my immediate neighborhood at 8:00 am to travel to my job because of the traffic on Beacon Street or Chestnut Street, or trying to negotiate moving on Montclair Road, by foot or car, when the many sports teams were playing on Lincoln Field, it has been an idyllic existence. Because of the intimacy of the "Waban Valley", as we called the area, we became associated with our neighbors and were able to chat as we walked our dogs or traveled to the village or the "T". In the past few months, most of the chatter has focused on our concerns about the development of the previous St. Philip Neri site.

In initial community meetings with the attorney and developer from AMA Realty Ventures, LLC we learned that an apartment complex was planned for the site. They explained that they were filing an application for 40B consideration, to allow citizens with reduced income, the possibility of joining the community. When he shared some preliminary plans for the development, there were several concerns expressed by the attendees. They told us that these would be rental units. The number, height, and density of the complex did not seem appropriate, and the fact that there was only one access/egress to the property from Karen Road was a cause of dissatisfaction. The attorney and builder thanked the community members for coming to the meetings and indicated that they would try to take our concerns into consideration.

As the neighbors learned more, and researched the realities of the 40B regulations, there was general agreement that it would not be who the renters would be that might cause concern, but the pure number of units, the density, the height, the potential environmental impact and the lack of green space that were the major impediments.

On May 6, when a presentation by AMA Realty Ventures, LLC confirmed all our concerns, a feeling of frustration was expressed by many neighbors. When Michael Agiros, the builder, admitted to the attendees that he intended to go forward with his plans, despite any objections from the community and would pursue the development even if his 40B application failed to win approval, we realized that the only people who could potentially gain from this plan would be, in Mr. Agiros' own words, his children and his legacy.

Even though Wabanites have an elitist reputation among some, I sincerely believe that many of us in professions that care for others tend to widen the breadth of our thoughts beyond our own family and our own wallets. We cannot let the safety, the value, the essence of our community be altered in such a dramatic fashion.

We need to work together with AMA Realty Ventures, LLC and the city of Newton to find a way to actualize our common goal to improve Waban and to open the property to new residents who will respect and appreciate our community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carole Noveck

Carole Noveck, MS

31 Karen Road, Waban, MA

Norine Silton

From: Peter Cox <peterbulkleycox@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2015 11:06 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Waban Resident Feedback: 1521 Beacon St - Proposed Re-Development

Dear Ms. Ananth and the Newton Planning Department:

I'm writing in response to your office's request for community input on the proposed re-development of the former St. Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon Street near the heart of Waban Village.

As context, my family and I are homeowners at 542 Chestnut Street in Waban, approximately 0.3 miles or ~5min walk from the proposed apartment complex. Our home is immediately across from the impacted intersection of Oakvale Road and Chestnut Street.

In short, my family and I are deeply concerned about the potential negative impacts that the proposed apartment complex would have on the charm and character of our neighborhood, the public safety, and the quality-of-life in Waban Village.

Our specific concerns include the following:

- **1) Building Too Big:** proposed apartment complex is massive and out of scale with the surrounding residential neighborhood (height, width, massing, etc.)
- **2) Dangerous Traffic:** the addition of 100+ vehicles would significantly increase traffic on surrounding roads that are already busy streets (Chestnut is already bumper-to-bumper during morning and evening commute). As the parent of a toddler, this would exacerbate a significant public safety hazard.
- **3) Neighborhood Character:** Waban is wonderful because of its unique character and true "village" and "neighborhood" community; the proposed apartment complex would be 100% renters who would be less invested (literally/figuratively) in our surrounding community.

If I can make one request, the Preliminary Architectural Plans that the developer has shared with the community do not provide enough information to appreciate the impact of the proposed buildings on the surrounding neighborhood. The developer's initial elevation drawings do not show the surrounding homes so do not enable us to actually see the relative scale of the proposed complex next to it's neighboring buildings.

I ask that the developer's architects immediately re-draw all the proposed exterior building elevations from a slightly more distant perspective to include all immediately adjacent homes and surrounding properties drawn to scale. This will allow the public and the Planning Department to fully appreciate the relative size of the proposed apartment complex within the context of the surrounding neighborhood.

These additional architectural drawings should be completed and shared with the public as soon as possible in order to better inform the ongoing discussion.

Thank you for considering the input of the Waban neighbors and surrounding community in evaluating the City's response to this proposed development. We care deeply about our neighborhood and the outcome of this proposed re-development.

best, Peter Cox

Norine Silton

From: Joe Robbins <joseph.robbins@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 8:33 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments on 1521 Beacon St. Development

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to provide comments on the proposed re-development of the St. Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban. Overall, the replacement of the existing structure and site with a more useful and valuable development is to be applauded. That said, the current version of the plan proposed by the new owner, while containing some worthwhile features, can be improved.

Specifically, the current plan should be amended in three areas.

First, the 48 proposed units (with 10 designated as SHI-eligible) represents too high a density for the site and its surrounding infrastructure to incorporate safely. The site has very limited road access to the main thoroughfares of Beacon and Chestnut. The developer is proposing a main entrance on to Karen Road, which is a low-density side street whose primary egress to Chestnut comes via an already dangerous, non-lighted intersection. Additional traffic through here will be very difficult to bear safely, and a traffic light on Chestnut is not viable given the density of traffic on that road in the morning. The remediation of the Montclair intersection, with the developer has proposed, is laudable and should be supported as a mitigant, but a smaller-scale development (say, 9 townhomes plus an apartment building with 15 units) with less car traffic would be much safer for what is a heavily pedestrianized area frequented by small children, dogwalkers, and recreational users of Lincoln Field.

Second, the 108 parking spaces, most of which are to be situated above-ground, lead to a site that is mostly used for pavement, in stark contrast to the surrounding neighborhood. There is no physical reason (only economic concerns) to place so many parking spaces above-ground as opposed to in a combination of below- and above-ground locations. This is already being done at several other Newton developments. Reducing the number of total units will alleviate this problem to an extent by reducing the total parking spaces required, but a below-ground structure with a well-placed entryway will allow for a substantially improved site plan.

Finally, while I the developer's team has made an effort to blend the proposed complex into the surrounding neighborhood, more can be done to integrate the development more seamlessly with its environs. The building as proposed would be the tallest structure within a good distance and its unique profile would immediately stand out in an area filled with more classic New England designs. The site plan— in which the building sits amidst

hundreds of square yards of pavement – would overly emphasize the distance of the building from the surrounding neighborhood and would separate residents from the pedestrian areas around them.

Some changes that would ameliorate this situation:

1. A lower-profile, longer building more closely and directly fronting Short Street (rather than a taller, more square building with more set-back)
2. Multiple, direct pedestrian access points on to a rebuilt Short Street sidewalk (more like a row house than a single building)
3. Limited above-ground parking behind the building
4. Tall trees on either side and amidst the site between the town homes and the apartment (in lieu of the now-reduced paved parking lot)

I would recommend looking at 457 Washington St. and 31 Highland Avenue in Newton for examples of more traditional designs that are well-integrated into their areas.

Overall, I believe that a reduction in above-ground parking allotment, the inclusion of more green space, and more immediate access to Beacon Street will enhance the quality of life for residents of the building and improve the overall integration of the development into the surrounding community, all without compromising the developer's ability to develop the site profitably or the goals of the 40b program. As a resident of the area, I hope you will use all possible efforts to ensure the best possible plan for the site, and I appreciate the chance to provide my comments.

Sincerely,

Joseph Robbins

Waban, MA

--

joseph.robbins@gmail.com
h 617.426.1776
m 617.510.9438

Norine Silton

From: Munsell, W Keith <munsell@bu.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 9:21 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Phiips

I am all for affordable housing but proposal too dense, too many shadows on Karen Road and too much traffic for this site 20-24 units might be more appropriate. Keith Munsell Waban Ave. .

Norine Silton

From: Qingli Jiang <qinglij@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 2:15 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: concern from residents

Hi,

The reason who we move to Waban is due to the environment it provides - the single family gathering together in the big green trees. But with more and more new construction going on in Waban by cutting down the big trees and building up the huge mansion too close to property border line, it started to lose its charm. And the huge 48-family residential complex on less than 2 acres land on Beacon St would be the heaviest and most damaging punch to the local residents' face.

In the area, less than 2 acres land usually support 5 single families, but now it is 48 families! Almost 10 times of the normal area capacity! Please have some mercy on our environment, traffic, overall neighborhood, public facilities, and we local people. Please don't let me know that someone who wants to build as many apartments as they wish because they want to make more money can deny the rights of the rest of us who live here and call Waban home! This is American nightmare, not American dream I admired when I came to U.S. And 40B is to provide more affordable house but it should not be misused by developers who want to disrespect people who call the place their home.

Sincerely,
Qingli Jiang

Norine Silton

From: Linda Pololi <lpololi@brandeis.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 5:28 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Philip Neri site in Waban

Dear Planning Officials for Newton,

I am writing to express my strong feelings about the proposed development of the Philip Neri site in Waban.

I would like to start by emphasizing that I would welcome a more diverse resident population in Waban and fully support increasing affordable housing in Waban and Newton generally.

It seems to me that it is quite apparent that the developer of the site has paid no attention to the surrounding community and the negative impact that such dense and extensive building plans will cause. Any development at 1521 Beacon Street should allow for driveways that enter and exit on Beacon Street, however the proposed building plans mandate that all cars will exit on Karen Road. These cars will then choose either to access the larger through roads in the area by using Oakvale, which is a private street, or Fredana and Moffat which are currently quiet residential streets. The additional traffic will greatly change the nature of these roads.

I live on the corner of Moffat and Fredana. I believe the new development would cause much noise and traffic outside my home and my neighbors' homes, and negatively affect the way we live, the safety of children walking to school and people walking to the T, and the value of our properties. It is logical that any development of the 1521 site should be planned so as to access and use Beacon St. appropriately and the scale of the buildings should reflect what Beacon St. can safely tolerate.

We believe that it is the role of our elected officials to be responsible for the well being of the residents of Waban and Newton, and be responsive to their perspectives. The current plan seems to blatantly disregard the needs and wishes of the current residents.

The scope and density of the proposed development is quite out of line with Waban, it is too high, and much too close to boundary lines. It does not contribute any green space to the community and is aesthetically inappropriate. It would appear that the developer has just maximized the opportunity for his profit at the expense of the neighbors and the community.

I earnestly hope that Mayor Warren, Alderman Rice and the planning officials of Newton will bar development of the site as proposed and mandate changes that accommodate the needs of the neighborhood and surrounding residents. We are happy to pay our very high taxes and contribute to the town, (even though we don't have children in the Newton schools) if we believe that the elected officials are mindful of their fiduciary and social responsibility to the town and current residents.

Thank you for your consideration,

Linda Pololi, MD

--

Linda Pololi
Senior Scientist, Brandeis University
Director, National Initiative on Gender, Culture and Leadership in Medicine: C - Change
Women's Studies Research Center
Mailstop 079
Waltham, MA 02454-9110
Tel: 781 736 8120
<http://cchange.brandeis.edu>

Published by Dartmouth College Press

Changing the Culture of Academic Medicine - Perspectives of Women Faculty by Linda Pololi
<http://www.upne.com/1-58465-567-4.html>

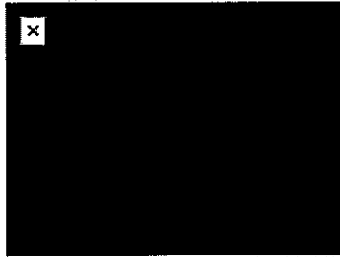
Norine Silton

From: Peter Cox <peterbulkleycox@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2015 9:15 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Re: Waban Resident Feedback: 1521 Beacon St - Proposed Re-Development

Dear Ms. Ananth and the Newton Planning Department,

On May 6th, the community saw Waban AMA Realty Trust's chosen traffic consultant VHB (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.) present the preliminary findings of their traffic study. Members of the Waban community question VHB's findings and if their study was conducted in an impartial and objective way.

To illustrate, please see the attached video filmed on May 11th at ~6:15pm at the impacted intersection of Chestnut Street and Oakvale Road: [Traffic Study: St. Philip Neri Proposed Redevelopment \(Chestnut & Oakvale, Waban\)](#)



[Traffic Study: St. Philip Neri Proposed Redevelopment \(C...](#)

[View on youtube.be](#)

Preview by Yahoo

These surrounding village roads already suffer from dangerous traffic congestion. This will only be made worse by the extended Rt 128 lane addition project at Rt 9 and the upcoming re-opening of Angier Elementary School in Waban. The addition of an additional 100+ vehicles at 1521 Beacon Street would be a disaster.

On Sunday, May 10, 2015 11:06 PM, Peter Cox <peterbulkleycox@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Ananth and the Newton Planning Department:

I'm writing in response to your office's request for community input on the proposed re-development of the former St. Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon Street near the heart of Waban Village.

As context, my family and I are homeowners at 542 Chestnut Street in Waban, approximately 0.3 miles or ~5min walk from the proposed apartment complex. Our home is immediately across from the impacted intersection of Oakvale Road and Chestnut Street.

In short, my family and I are deeply concerned about the potential negative impacts that the proposed apartment complex would have on the charm and character of our neighborhood, the public safety, and the quality-of-life in Waban Village.

Our specific concerns include the following:

- **1) Building Too Big:** proposed apartment complex is massive and out of scale with the surrounding residential neighborhood (height, width, massing, etc.)
- **2) Dangerous Traffic:** the addition of 100+ vehicles would significantly increase traffic on surrounding roads that are already busy streets (Chestnut is already bumper-to-bumper during morning and evening commute). As the parent of a toddler, this would exacerbate a significant public safety hazard.
- **3) Neighborhood Character:** Waban is wonderful because of its unique character and true "village" and "neighborhood" community; the proposed apartment complex would be 100% renters who would be less invested (literally/figuratively) in our surrounding community.

If I can make one request, the Preliminary Architectural Plans that the developer has shared with the community do not provide enough information to appreciate the impact of the proposed buildings on the surrounding neighborhood. The developer's initial elevation drawings do not show the surrounding homes so do not enable us to actually see the relative scale of the proposed complex next to it's neighboring buildings.

I ask that the developer's architects immediately re-draw all the proposed exterior building elevations from a slightly more distant perspective to include all immediately adjacent homes and surrounding properties drawn to scale. This will allow the public and the Planning Department to fully appreciate the relative size of the proposed apartment complex within the context of the surrounding neighborhood.

These additional architectural drawings should be completed and shared with the public as soon as possible in order to better inform the ongoing discussion.

Thank you for considering the input of the Waban neighbors and surrounding community in evaluating the City's response to this proposed development. We care deeply about our neighborhood and the outcome of this proposed re-development.

best, Peter Cox

Norine Silton

From: Bugbee, Scott <Scott.Bugbee@citizensbank.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 8:56 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: John Rice; Brian E. Yates; Deborah J. Crossley; 'Katie H. Bugbee'
Subject: 5/6 Meeting Follow Up

Good morning,

I recently attended the community meeting at the Windsor Club re: 1521 Beacon Street and wanted to share my thoughts. While I fully support the need for a greater diversity in housing options in the area (and greater access to this housing via affordable programs), I have come to the conclusion that the size and scope as currently planned for this site is simply too large. And while the main structure's size does sound daunting (higher than both the church that stands there today and the new Angier school under construction), the literal size is not my primary concern.

My primary concern is the increased number of cars and the increased traffic in / around the area. My home is on Chestnut Street and two doors down from Oakvale Road. The posted speed limit on Chestnut Street is 30 mph, but cars routinely exceed this limit. The corner of Oakvale & Chestnut is dangerous as the visibility is limited. The section of Oakvale leading up to Chestnut is a private way, is in poor condition, and has no sidewalks.

I have three children aged 6, 4 and 9 months. One of the primary reasons we moved to our home is its proximity to the park at Montclair & Moffat as well as its walk-ability to school, the T, and to town. I am extremely concerned that the additional traffic created by the 105 on-site parking spaces will materially increase the danger, particularly to families with small children, who regularly use Chestnut, Oakvale, Karen and Montclair Road to access the area's amenities.

I hope you will consider these concerns as you move forward in this process.

Best,
Scott & Katie Bugbee
551 Chestnut Street
Waban, MA 02468

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Citizens Bank, N.A. is an affiliate of Citizens Financial Group, Inc.

Norine Silton

From: Kate Infantino <kinfantino@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 4:04 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Concern and Opposition

Dear Madam/Sir,

My husband, Robert, and I reside at 48 Windsor Road in Waban, and we are deeply opposed to the VOLUME of apartments/townhouses being considered for the St. Philip Neri site.

Please allow me to stress that our opposition is NOT to the affordable housing that is planned, but to the sheer volume of residents that will be jammed into a residential area that is not zoned to accommodate it. We would prefer to see 10 affordable units go there than the 48 total currently planned.

In addition to the traffic and safety concerns, which are very real even today with the current number of residents, it will mean that Angier School, where we have 2 children in attendance, will be outdated.

Kindly consider our strong opposition to this project.

Very truly yours,

Catherine and Robert Infantino
48 Windsor Rd.
Waban MA 02468
617-332-5911

Norine Silton

From: David Miller <dsmiller@cevg.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 8:37 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Project at 1521 Beacon is not appropriate for site

To whom it may concern,

The conceptual project design for 1521 Beacon St. is **not** appropriate for the site on which it is located. The reasons include:

*The **scale** of the project is significantly outside of the character of the immediate neighborhood, which otherwise is composed of single family homes. The project will be taller than any other building in the area, as well as much more massive, and no matter how designed and constructed will significantly change the character of the neighborhood due to the nature of its scale.

*The **total square footage** of the buildings, over 63,000 sq ft, will be developed in an area that, at most, should have less than half of that square footage devoted to buildings.

*The corner at which the project is located already has **significant traffic and high potential for accidents**. And when the new Angier School opens (< 1/2 mile away), the traffic will significantly increase during school drop-off and pickup times. No matter how the roads and signals are upgraded (which is needed regardless of this project), adding a project that accommodates 106 cars will create massive traffic problems as well as significant safety concerns for children playing in the park across the street as well as those coming from and to the two elementary schools in the area.

***Many children walk and ride their bikes on the streets that cars must pass through to enter the project site** (Montclair and Karen Roads). There is significant danger that construction vehicles or cars from the project site will encounter children in the neighborhood that will be hard to see. The only solution if this project is built would be to prevent children from walking or biking on the streets of their neighborhood, which is clearly not appropriate.

*The **schools in the area are at close to capacity** already and will not be able to accommodate adding dozens of families to the neighborhood in a short period of time. The schooling needs of both existing and new residents would be extremely poorly served.

***There have been significant problems with water in the area**, with the foundation of 37 Montclair Rd (a very short distance away) having completely flooded shortly after having been excavated. It was significantly costly and difficult to mitigate this and to control runoff water as well, and the proposed project is massively larger in scope.

The developer of the project has stated that it will be "very high end" and that the rents will generally be quite high which is necessary for the project to be financially feasible. He also stated that he's building it to leave to his own children. It is quite evident that this project is not being built for the primary purpose of accommodating lower income residents, and neither potential new residents nor existing residents will be served well by the existence of a massive building in a neighborhood not meant to accommodate it, as well as the accompanying traffic problems and crowding of schools.

Sincerely,
David Miller,
37 Montclair Rd., Waban

Norine Silton

From: Joel Grinberg <j_grinberg2001@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 10:19 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Concerns with St Philip Neri

Dear Planning Board,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed development of the St Philip Neri site in Waban.

The existing church building is part of the city's heritage. It would be a great shame to see it disappear and a great loss.

The proposed project does not fit the neighborhood. It will detract from the character of the entire city.

The traffic generated by the complex cannot be accommodated in the neighboring streets. Games take place on most weekends and on weekdays at the neighboring Lincoln Park. These games cause traffic jams and unsafe situations already. I personally took pictures and videos of the existing difficult traffic situation on those days - they are posted here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ipp5dr649lc9kep/AAAGPbzyESOBFWmogfsWzvJ5a?dl=0>

The planned parking space will likely be quite insufficient to accommodate both the renters and guests. So parked cars will always spill onto the neighboring streets. I don't know if there will be space for snow removal.

If the existing church building were preserved and converted to residences, I believe that most of the issues above would be alleviated.

Thank you for your time,

Joel Grinberg
31 Fredana Rd, Newton
c: 781-540-9287

Norine Silton

From: Karen Day <karen@klday.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 7:18 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; David Rochon
Subject: I oppose the development project

To the planning committee:

On May 6 I attended the meeting at the Windsor Club and listened to the development plans for 1521 Beacon Street. I went in with an open mind. I left feeling extremely troubled. As a resident of 63 Windsor Road, I've enjoyed -- with my husband and three children -- a wonderful, quiet neighborhood. The development project, as is, would change that.

I, along with many of my neighbors, would like to see a thoughtful, well planned development on this property that echoes the flavor of the neighborhood. Rental apartments? Sure. Low income housing? Certainly. But 48 units? Ridiculous. The over-the-top proposal feels greedy, would increase traffic (the lame "traffic study" presented Wednesday night was insulting) and make our sleepy neighborhood much too busy. No way does the proposed, enormous structure, to replace the church, fit into the neighborhood.

I encourage you to look into a development project that keeps the integrity of the neighborhood.

Thank you,

Karen Day
63 Windsor Rd.
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: David Rochon <darochon@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 8:09 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Karen Day
Subject: I oppose the development project

To the planning committee:

On May 6 I attended the meeting at the Windsor Club and listened to the development plans for 1521 Beacon Street. I went in with an open mind. I left feeling extremely troubled. As a resident of 63 Windsor Road, I've enjoyed -- with my wife and three children -- a wonderful, quiet neighborhood. The density of this development project, would dramatically change that.

I, along with many of my neighbors, would like to see a thoughtful, well planned development on this property that is consistent with the character of the neighborhood. We are all for progressive change and as a community, there is clear flexibility for reasonableness. But the blatant use of 40B to circumvent zoning restrictions to maximize profits and ignore the objections of the vast majority of local residents is against the foundation of why we made Newton and the village of Waban our family home.

The developer is proposing to build 48 high end units with the only entrance/exit on lovely Karen Road. This massive, dense plan is way over-the-top, feels greedy, would increase traffic and make our sleepy neighborhood much too busy. This needs to be scaled way back, options should include rethinking Short Street and entrance/exit via Beacon vs Karen Road and the town /village/neighbors should not be held hostage by an approach that uses 40B to force inappropriate development for profit. No way does the proposed, enormous structure, to replace the church, fit into the neighborhood.

I encourage you to look into a development project that keeps the integrity of the neighborhood.

Thank you,

David Rochon
63 Windsor Rd.
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Henry Irwig <hirwig@earthlink.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 6:48 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments on 1521 Beacon Street Development
Attachments: 1521 Beacon Street - Comments to Newton Planning.pdf

Dear Ms. Ananth,

Many thanks for meeting with me this afternoon, especially at such short notice. As promised, here are my comments for your consideration.

Kind regards,

Henry Irwig

Henry G Irwig & Sania D Irwig

179 Moffat Road, Waban, MA 02468

Phone: 617.549.3163

E-mail: hirwig@earthlink.net

Newton Planning Department,
1000 Commonwealth Avenue,
Basement Level, Room B10
Newton MA, 02459

May 13, 2015

Att: Ms Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner
Re: 1521 Beacon Street Submission to MassHousing

I am writing to you in response to the request for community observations and comments that might be helpful in assisting the Planning Department formulate a response to MassHousing in connection with the abovementioned project.

1. APARTMENT BUILDING A POSITIVE -

We welcome the replacement of the once vibrant but now obsolete church and its large vacant parking lot with an apartment building. It is a fitting location for such a building which, if properly designed and operated, will contribute to the life of the community.

2. DENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT EXCESSIVE-

The FAR (ratio of built area to land area) of the 1512 Beacon Street project as currently conceived is approximately 1.0. Despite sensitive architectural treatment, this results in a complex of buildings that is too massive in scale, considering its context.

- a. For reference, the FAR of the other apartment buildings in Waban, which are located on Wyman Street, is 0.5. These buildings fit in very well to their surroundings, being located opposite each other and immediately adjacent to the 'T' and the Waban Village commercial area.
- b. The proposed project, while located at (but set back from) a busy street intersection, is surrounded by single family homes of varying sizes, unlike the Wyman Street apartment buildings. As some of the smaller homes on Karen Road might in time be replaced by larger ones, it would not be inappropriate for this project to be scaled similarly to the Wyman Street buildings (at an FAR of 0.5) despite the fact that its immediate surroundings are less commercially oriented.
- c. Acknowledging that the useful addition of affordable housing in the development requires a density bonus to make it feasible, it would seem that a liberal bonus of some 30% over an FAR of 0.5 could be realistic. This would result in an FAR of 0.65, producing a built area of approximately 45,000 square feet, compared to the roughly 70,000 square feet currently proposed.

From this perspective it would seem that a project comprising somewhere in the order of 30 apartments would result in a complex of buildings that, when employing the same design principles as the current scheme, would achieve the goal of optimizing potential use of the land and would be reasonably in scale with their surroundings.

3. VEHICULAR ACCESS & SAFETY PROBLEMATIC -

Access to a development of the scale proposed will adversely affect the safety of the neighborhood road system when the heavy use of adjoining public amenities and the awkwardness of the potentially affected street intersections are considered.

- a. Montclair and Karen Roads as well as the neighboring streets are very heavily used during the many adult and children's sports events that take place on the proximate Lincoln Field almost every day during the spring, summer and fall, often at times that coincide with peak weekday afternoon traffic. Parking is at a premium and already frequently creates quite dangerous situations particularly when parents drop off and pick up their children at the start and end of games. Attempts at policing have been singularly ineffective.
- b. The potential elimination of Short Street suggested by the developer has distinct disadvantages in that it will remove a necessary public highway that is required, for among other things, access to adjacent properties and the parking of visitors to homes along Chestnut Street where curb parking is either not permitted or dangerous. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely to render the intersection with Beacon Street significantly safer as there will still be an awkward grade change at the intersection.

Unless a creative plan can be developed to mitigate the traffic-induced issues outlined above, without more broadly impacting the surrounding neighborhood, it would seem that the scale of the project might need to be reduced even further from that suggested immediately above.

4. SERVICE AREAS & FACILITIES INADEQUATE -

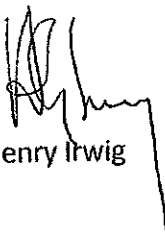
While recognizing the importance of the green space provided between the sidewalk and the buildings along Short Street and Karen Road (and elsewhere in the project) in integrating the development into its surroundings, this comes at the expense of the adequate provision of necessary service areas.

- a. The drawings do not seem to show anywhere near sufficient space or facilities for the proper storage of trash and recyclables and for their efficient management and collection.
- b. Similarly, there seems to be inadequate provision for the loading and unloading of larger trucks. For a 48 unit development, there could well be as many as 5 move-ins and 5 move-outs a month, very often clustered together in time. As the development is unlikely to be able to sustain an on-site manager/caretaker, this under-provision becomes all the more critical.

In order to properly integrate into its immediate surroundings and be respectful to its neighbors and also its occupants, the project should provide both adequate green space and generous, properly designed and concealed service areas.

Hopefully these comments will be helpful to the Planning Department and to MassHousing in evaluating the proposed development.

Yours sincerely,



Henry Irwig



Sonia Irwig

Henry G Irwig & Sonia D Irwig

179 Moffat Road, Waban, MA 02468

Phone: 617.549.3163

E-mail: hirwig@earthlink.net

Newton Planning Department,
1000 Commonwealth Avenue,
Basement Level, Room B10
Newton MA, 02459

May 13, 2015

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The FAR (ratio of built area to land area) of the 1512 Beacon Street project as currently conceived is approximately 1.0. Despite sensitive architectural treatment, this results in a complex of buildings that is too massive in scale, considering its context.

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From this perspective it would seem that a project comprising somewhere in the order of 30 apartments would result in a complex of buildings that, when employing the same design principles as the current scheme, would achieve the goal of optimizing potential use of the land and would be reasonably in scale with their surroundings.

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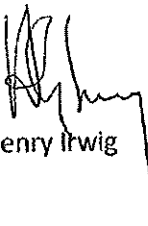
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- b. Similarly, there seems to be inadequate provision for the loading and unloading of larger trucks. For a 48 unit development, there could well be as many as 5 move-ins and 5 move-outs a month, very often clustered together in time. As the development is unlikely to be able to sustain an on-site manager/caretaker, this under-provision becomes all the more critical.

In order to properly integrate into its immediate surroundings and be respectful to its neighbors and also its occupants, the project should provide both adequate green space and generous, properly designed and concealed service areas.

Hopefully these comments will be helpful to the Planning Department and to MassHousing in evaluating the proposed development.

Yours sincerely,



Henry Irwig



Sonia Irwig

Norine Silton

From: Elizabeth Cary Blum <lizcaryblum@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 9:46 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street, Waban

While I have not attended the meetings due to scheduling conflicts, I feel reasonably well educated on this project to be able to form an opinion.

To create a large, apartment/townhome complex with over 40 rental units in our little village is going to change our community which we have all invested in - renters never have the same buy-in to the neighborhood as homeowners do, and renters tend to be transient. The project will be a traffic strain to the overcrowded intersection of Beacon and Chestnut Streets, and will put a strain on the new Angier School - this complex could put the new Angier in the same overcrowded position it was with the original school. All for what can only be assumed are temporary residents.

I have no objections to any 40-B housing in Waban - I have objections to adding potentially 100 or more residents and their cars to our already dense neighborhood. I am already concerned letting my children walk in the neighborhood by themselves because of all the large SUVs and cars speeding en route to Newton Wellesley Hospital and Route 128 - this is not going to help. There are soccer and baseball fields as well as a playground and the Windsor Club right near the proposed building that are constantly used by children - if this project happens, it will just make more and more residents uncomfortable about letting their younger children walk to this area by themselves - I trust my neighbors to watch out for my kids, but I can't imagine the temporary residents of this complex will.

Mr. Argiros seems unwilling to consider the opinions of the residents of Waban, which does not make me comfortable that he is in charge and benefitting financially from this project - clearly he does not wish to be a partner with the residents which is some insight as to how he will handle any issues if and when his project is built.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Cary Blum
24 Holly Road

Norine Silton

From: Black, Darren M. <DBlack@summitpartners.com>
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2015 4:39 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Concerned Waban Resident

To Whom it May Concern,

I have been a resident of Newton since 2000 with my wife (Michelle) and our four children (ages 13, 9, 9 and 7). In July of 2005 we moved into our current home in Waban at 46 Holly Road. We are active residents and engaged with the community. My wife was co-president of the Angier PTO several years ago. The ten years we have spent in Waban have been fantastic. We are members of the Windsor Club and our kids play in many of the town sports including soccer and baseball where we spend a lot of time on the fields around town.

I am DEEPLY concerned about everything I have read in the Newton Tab and from information being shared within the Waban neighborhood about the development at 1521 Beacon Street. The idea that housing is being built there is not my concern. I think it is wonderful that there will be housing which includes an ability for a broader array of socio-economic groups to access the many great things about Waban. My concern is simply the scale and size of the project. It is much too big for the site and for the neighborhood. The intersection at Beacon and Chestnut Street is already one that gets backed up on a regular basis and the homes in the area are already packed together. There is a wonderful field behind where the development is planned where I have watched many soccer games. I can't imagine how having such a large housing complex is good for anyone. It will tower over the homes in the area, provide a significant increase in the car traffic and the plans that have been shared are not at all in keeping with the community.

I am very disappointed that this project has made it this far with such an overwhelming scale for the neighborhood. I hope that the town and the wise people who govern it reconsider the scope and scale of the development being proposed. It simply is irresponsible to allow such a massive building to be developed. I would be happy to express my views in a public forum if helpful as I truly believe that the current scale of the development would have a materially negative implication on Waban specifically and Newton more generally. Thanks.

Darren Black
46 Holly Road, Waban

~~~~~  
Darren M. Black  
Managing Director  
Summit Partners  
222 Berkeley Street, 18th Floor  
Boston, MA 02116

P: 617.824.1011  
C: 617.905.4005  
[dblack@summitpartners.com](mailto:dblack@summitpartners.com)  
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## Norine Silton

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**From:** Steven Goodfriend <steve.m.goodfriend@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 15, 2015 4:43 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: A Favor, In Return...  
**Attachments:** FINAL WAC-Planning ltr-1.docx

I am very concerned about development projects like this in Newton. The height of the proposed structure alone is objectionable, out of proportion to the surrounding neighborhood. The density too is out of proportion. It will contribute significantly to additional congestion at the intersection of Beacon Street and Chestnut Street, certainly elevating both noise and smog pollution. Please consider reducing the structure height and density, and increase requirements for additional green space.

Concerned Citizen,

Steve Goodfriend  
331 Upland Avenue  
Newton

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Steve Goodfriend <Steve.Goodfriend@lewtan.com>  
**Date:** Fri, May 15, 2015 at 4:28 PM  
**Subject:** FW: A Favor, In Return...  
**To:** "steve.m.goodfriend@gmail.com" <steve.m.goodfriend@gmail.com>

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**From:** Troy Bracher [mailto:Troy.Bracher@ifs.statestreet.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 15, 2015 4:12 PM  
**To:** 'Troy Bracher'; 'amyscottf@aol.com'; 'ben.gomez@gmail.com'; 'renicke@bc.edu'; 'agalper@aol.com'; 'darren.black@svlsa.com'; 'brad@orelowitz.com'; 'ilana@orelowitz.com'; 'leenod@gmail.com'; 'dambrosi@mit.edu'; 'mslevin7@gmail.com'; 'mblack008@gmail.com'; 'russell.mayer@merrimack.edu'; 'scottfman@aol.com'; 'syood@usa.net'; 'scable@comcast.net'; 'gslosberg@comcast.net'; 'tmirvis@aol.com'; 'tslosberg@yahoo.com'; 'vhsu@rics.bwh.harvard.edu'; 'adstrauss@yahoo.com'; 'bermontesdeoca@gmail.com'; 'elizabeth.bracher.1@bc.edu'; 'Darren.Black@svlsa.com'; 'davidbluestein@mac.com'; 'emfranklin@yahoo.com'; 'grundykate@gmail.com'; 'jay.wagner@cushwake.com'; 'wfeiner@gmail.com'; 'lainiewagner@comcast.net'; 'mikenelson2112@gmail.com'; 'marybeth.keiller@fsg.org'; 'mfeiner@gmail.com'; 'mblack008@gmail.com'; 'bostoncheryl@yahoo.com'; 'mmcfarland1999@gmail.com'; 'dblack@summitpartners.com'; 'tcb2112@verizon.net'; 'chadmaguire@yahoo.com'; 'daniel.lieman@gmail.com'; 'darryl@dventureslimited.com'; 'evandrawilliams@gmail.com'; 'gourdeaujo@yahoo.com'; 'lialisaowens@gmail.com'; 'lowens@partners.org'; 'kasyanovri@gmail.com'; 'robynnbrown1@gmail.com'; 'ross.toma@gmail.com'; 'pbs246@gmail.com'; 'ahallion@yahoo.com'; 'jennifer.hallion@fmr.com'; 'galinakorsunsky@yahoo.com'; 'tfoster1@comcast.net'; 'todd.foster@yahoo.com'; 'weissel05@comcast.net'; 'renicke@bc.edu'; 'j.stephans@comcast.net'; 'yyohannesj@aol.com'; 'jshore33@yahoo.com'; 'rwenning@cisco.com'; 'r.wenning@comcast.net'; 'lazareh@hotmail.com';

'davidrossmartin@gmail.com'; 'dblazeymartin@gmail.com'; 'onemiletogo@comcast.net'; 'mkdietrich@comcast.net';  
'attyajk@aol.com'; 'feldman@choate.com'; 'sqf1@verizon.net'; 'jack.cheng@gmail.com'; 'julie.crosson@gmail.com';  
'tabilel@yahoo.com'; 'waynefitz@hotmail.com'; 'davidstolow@citizenschools.org'; 'suki.tepperberg@codman.org';  
'mslevin7@gmail.com'; 'amymalick@yahoo.com'; 'malchek@rcn.com'; 'aweisber@foleyhoag.com';  
'rachelcohen@hotmail.com'; 'erikapond@hotmail.com'; 'kylepond4@hotmail.com'; 'jeffrey.warming@thermofisher.com';  
'warming@comcast.net'; 'ninaav@aol.com'; 'kmoibeirne@gmail.com'; 'salliedelaney@comcast.net';  
'davidandanne@rcn.com'; 'michelebmilller@verizon.net'; 'david@damlawpc.com'; 'bethgrandi@aol.com';  
'drew@dyncap.com'; 'pweitzel@nebh.org'; 'mpweitzel@verizon.net'; 'perna@hms.harvard.edu'; 'eringrabowski@rcn.com';  
'grabowski@med.harvard.edu'; 'anthony.lehv@americantower.com'; 'grosslehv@starpower.net'; 'kcklosek@aol.com';  
'jtklosek@aol.com'; 'melissamullen@comcast.net'; 'jtmullen@bidmc.harvard.edu'; 'mnwood6196@verizon.net';  
'vskireev@yahoo.com'; 'rjmorr@gmail.com'; 'jbarry8@its.inj.com'; 'bethabarry@comcast.net'; 'bdbower@rcn.com';  
'johncorcoran@rcn.com'; 'sfriedman@andover.edu'; 'amyscottf@aol.com'; 'harterjl@yahoo.com';  
'awaksler@shaevelkrems.com'; 'cwaksler@mcgivneyandkluger.com'; 'darylshepard1969@gmail.com';  
'klraye@hotmail.com'; 'brad.steiner@infor.com'; 'david b garrison@yahoo.com'; 'yi ping wang@yahoo.com'; Troy  
Bracher; Troy Bracher; Troy Bracher

**Subject:** A Favor, In Return...

All:

For some of you, it has only been a week since I last sent an email. For others, it might have been years. This message is going out to parents of children I've coached or "Commissioned" in baseball or hockey. I never thought I'd be asking for anything this late in return, but would like your help with a matter very serious to me.

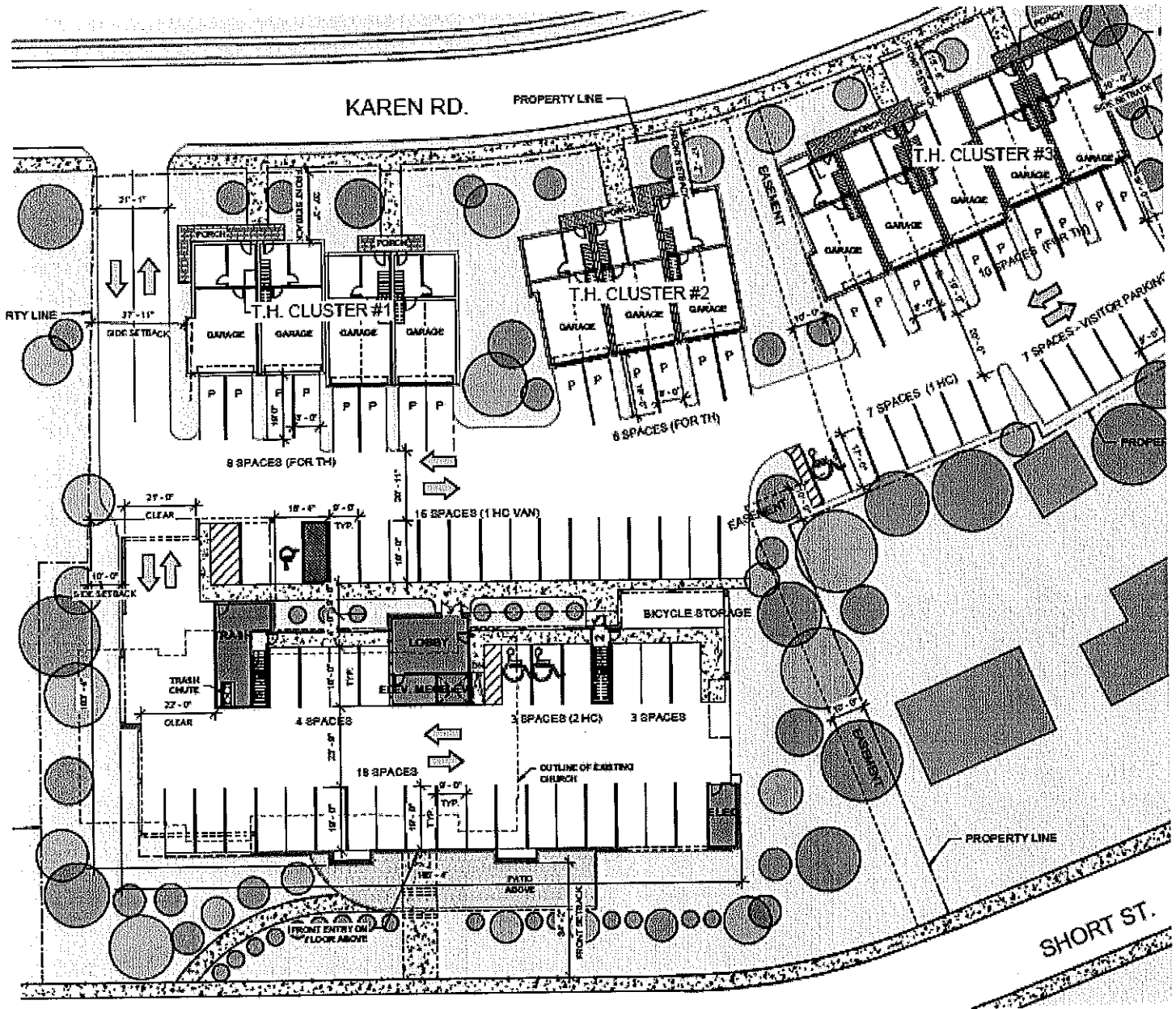
Some of you are aware I live two doors away from the former St Philip Neri site, referred to as "1521 Beacon Street". My back yard abuts their parking lot. The site was purchased from the Catholic diocese over a year ago. The developer has now made public his "Final" plan for the site – tear down the church & erect an apartment building that appears to be at least 1.75 times the size of the existing building (taller than the new Angier building) and build three 3-story rental townhomes facing Karen Road. If you have a soccer player, you've probably parked on Karen Road while attending games at Lincoln Field.

What I am asking is that you take an hour of your time over the next two weeks (equivalent to one sports practice), read the email below, and reach out to [1521beaconstreet@newtonma.gov](mailto:1521beaconstreet@newtonma.gov) and your Alder with your thoughts on the proposal. The Waban Area Council has done an excellent job summarizing what points will be listened to & what points will most likely be disregarded (again, see below). Some of you may think this development is a great idea. Others won't. (I'm in the latter camp.) At this point in the approval process, the City is taking concerns from the citizens. If you are able to chime in, the message becomes more clear. Yes, this is a "40B" project. My concern is NOT the merits of that law or to ask you to contribute your personal thoughts on the law. I simply think that the proposal as it stands is not "generally appropriate" for the site, per the below. I hope you agree and will offer constructive thoughts to our representatives.

I recently stated in a Little League board meeting that coaching is a privilege, not a burden. This task is a bit the same, however – at least I received payment by way of smiles, laughter and Dunkin Donuts gift cards. All I can give you is my thanks for exercising your privilege to speak to the City.

Very Best Regards,

Troy



The current church building is outlined by the red dotted line. The proposed building extends as closely as possible to my neighbor's yard.

It will be 35 feet from Beacon Street, about 55 feet from my neighbor's house, and taller (at its peak) than the new Angier building, for perspective.

The "TH Clusters" are four stories. The homes across Karen Road are 1-2 stories. As these proposed buildings are to the south and/or east of the immediate neighbors, "some amount" of natural light will be removed from our daily lives.

The only access into/out of the 48 units/100 parking spots will be onto Karen Road.

Satellite of current site:



Troy

617-662-9043

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, May 15, 2015 2:43 PM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Interested Waban Neighbors Update

Dear Neighbors,

We wanted to provide an update on the 1521 Beacon Street development.

Update:

The developer, Michael Argiros, has applied to Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MassHousing) for a determination of Project Eligibility. The review is ongoing and Mass Housing will have a site visit on Wednesday, May 20th at 9:00am and will issue a decision as quickly as 30 days after the City of Newton files their response.

The Waban Area Council (“WAC”) discussed the development at their meeting last night and unanimously voted to submit a letter calling into question the proposed projects eligibility under Mass Housings guidelines. A copy of the letter is attached but briefly the MassHousing guidelines require “that a project be generally appropriate for the site in which it is located taking into consideration factors that may include proposed use, conceptual site plan and building massing, topography, environmental resources and integration into existing development patterns...” The WAC is concerned that the project, as currently presented falls short of the generally appropriate requirement because of the mass and scale of the buildings relative to the surrounding structures, the lack of green or open space in the design, and the introduction of such a large number of cars into the neighborhood.

Points to Consider:

The main building on Short Street is extremely tall, and at 53 feet high will be 3 feet taller than the top of the new Angier School building being constructed.

Just under half of all the housing units in Waban Valley (116 in total) will be located on this 1.6 acre site.

The proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 47 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street .

Public Comment:

As part of that process the Newton Planning Department is compiling a letter addressing comments and concerns with the project to MassHousing. We encourage anyone with comments relevant to the proposed project to submit their comments by Friday, May 29th via e-mail to: [1521beaconstreet@newtonma.gov](mailto:1521beaconstreet@newtonma.gov). The comments must be submitted as soon as possible as they will be used to form the content of the Planning



Department's letter, as well as compiled and attached to it. Input on the design must be related to specific topics and a general guideline about comments which will be taken into consideration and those which will be ignored are as follows:

Comments which are considered

- Existing infrastructure
- Environmental concerns
- Thoughts on how proposed design could be modified to better fit the neighborhood.

Comments likely to be ignored

- Rental vs Ownership
- Increased municipal costs resulting from the project (i.e. school costs)
- Overall neighborhood opposition

A Mass Housing handbook on the process is available on line (<http://www.wabanareacouncil.com/sites/default/files/handbook-approachtoch40b-designreview.pdf>) for those who wish to have a more detailed level of knowledge into the process. Providing as much input as soon as possible is very important because once MassHousing makes a determination the scope of influence the community can have is reduced.

This process is at a stage at which community input is valuable and can potentially have an impact. We encourage interested parties to speak up!

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## Norine Silton

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**From:** mslobstah@aol.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2015 10:59 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Against this project

To whom it may concern :

As property owners in Waban we wish to express that we are against this project.

We purchased at home in Waban due to the sense of community and this project will add a transient group to a community.

The neighborhood also can not bear the excess traffic this project will bring.

Also the infrastructure of Waban does not support an apartment building. Schools? Roads? Parks? Open space? Parking ?

The property values of Waban will plummet if this is considered a rental community.

If there was a large apartment located near our home we would have purchased a home elsewhere.

We are 100 percent against this project. Sincerely, dave wolfe and Marsha gilmore

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Stefanie and Doug Cronin <djsgcronin@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2015 1:31 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Cronin, Douglas  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed Development at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban

We are writing to comment on the Project Eligibility application recently submitted by Waban AMA Realty Ventures LLC for a proposed development at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban. While we believe that a rental development with affordable housing may be an appropriate use of this site, we are concerned that the current design of the project falls short of the “generally appropriate” requirement because of the massing and scale of the buildings relative to surrounding structures, the lack of green or open space in the design, and the introduction of such a large number of cars into the neighborhood and the resulting traffic and safety issues.

Our understanding is that the main building on Short Street is extremely tall, and at 53 feet high will be 3 feet taller than the top of the new Angier School building being constructed and that just under half of all the housing units in Waban Valley (116 in total) will be located on this 1.6 acre site. It is also our understanding that the proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 47 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street.

We hope that the Planning Department will incorporate into their comment letter these concerns regarding massing and scale, the lack of green and open space, and the traffic challenges posed by the site. We think that the problems above are so serious as to require resolution prior to the grant of Project Eligibility.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stefanie and Doug Cronin

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Susan Nesson <susan.b.nesson@gmail.com> on behalf of Susan Nesson  
<susan@nesson.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2015 3:38 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Comments relevant to the findings required for a determination of project eligibility

To: Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner for Current Planning, Newton Planning and Development Department, [1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov](mailto:1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov)  
From: Susan Nesson, 47 Karen Road, direct abutter of 1521 Beacon Street  
Re: Comments relevant to the findings required for a determination of Project eligibility for 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Ms. Ananth,

This letter documents my comments and concerns regarding the proposed development of 1521 Beacon Street by Waban AMA Realty Ventures, LLC. My husband and I have lived on Karen Road for 20 years, and we are a direct abutter of the 1521 Beacon Street property. I hope that the city and Mass Housing will give serious consideration to our comments, and our strong reaction that the proposed development is MUCH too large for this site.

Below are my comments regarding the findings required to make a determination of Project Eligibility in 760 CMR 56.04(4):

(b) Regarding municipal actions previously taken to meet affordable housing needs:

The City invoked the 1.5% Land Area Standard for having already met the requirements of Chapter 40B on two other proposed developments in Newton – Rowe Street and Goddard Street. Rowe Street is being disputed and making it's way through the legal process. Goddard Street is on hold, pending the outcome of Rowe Street. A determination for Project Eligibility on the 1521 Beacon Street proposal should not be made while these properties are still in contention. If the city's assertion prevails, then this proposal will be denied. At best, this property will be on hold as well.

(c) Regarding appropriateness of the project design for the site:

The height of the buildings is not compatible with the surrounding structures. The proposed 4 floors on the townhouses facing Karen Road, and 5 floors from the rear of the building that faces Beacon Street are 2-4 times those of neighboring houses. Two of the abutting houses on Karen Road are single story ranches.

Traffic and safety are a major concern. Montclair Road abuts Lincoln Park, on which hundreds of youngsters play soccer and baseball all fall and spring. 20-30 cars park along Karen Road and Montclair Road on Saturdays in fall and spring, reducing both roads to a single lane and create a dangerous intersection at their junction. The additional traffic that will result from the proposed 105 parking spaces whose only access is a driveway on Karen Road will be completely unacceptable and dangerous.

My husband and I have lived here for 20 years and sent our three daughters to the Newton Public

Schools. In her Junior year, our oldest daughter was honored with the Phillip Liebovich Memorial Award for a student who exhibits the same fine personal qualities of the young man in whose memory the award was created. Phillip Liebovich attended Newton South High School and died as a result of injuries he sustained in a car crash soon after graduation. The crash occurred at the intersection of Montclair Road and Beacon Street, the very intersection that is one block from 1521 Beacon Street and is the main access from Beacon Street to the proposed entrance/exit for the property.

(d) and (e) Regarding financial feasibility and consistency with guidelines for limits on profits:

Based on the meeting Mr. Argiros and his lawyer held with near neighbors on September 22, 2014, which I attended, I do not believe that creating affordable housing is Mr. Argiros's goal. I believe that he is using the Chapter 40B law to bypass zoning restrictions so that he can build a large development in order to get a return on his sizable investment in the property. Only 10 of the proposed 48 units will be affordable. The remaining 38 units will have very high rents. I implore the City of Newton and Mass Housing not to allow developers reap large profits by building large developments that don't fit the neighborhood and create dangerous traffic situations.

Sincerely,  
Susan Nesson  
47 Karen Road

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Alan Crane <acrane@polarispartners.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2015 9:12 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Street

We live in Waban and are very concerned about the proposed project.

We are concerned about traffic around Chestnut and Beacon which is already challenging particularly during rush hour. Also the merge from Short Street onto Beacon with the three street intersection is one of the most challenging in Newton -- with increased traffic there will be more serious accidents. Finally, no foresight has been put into school planning. We are building a new school, but it was not built planning for dozens of additional students. This project is not consistent in keeping with the character of the architecture of the neighborhood either -- the structure is very high and not the classic style of the surrounding homes.

Regards,

Alan Crane  
25 Quidnic Road  
(Resident of Waban and Newton and taxpayer since 1994)

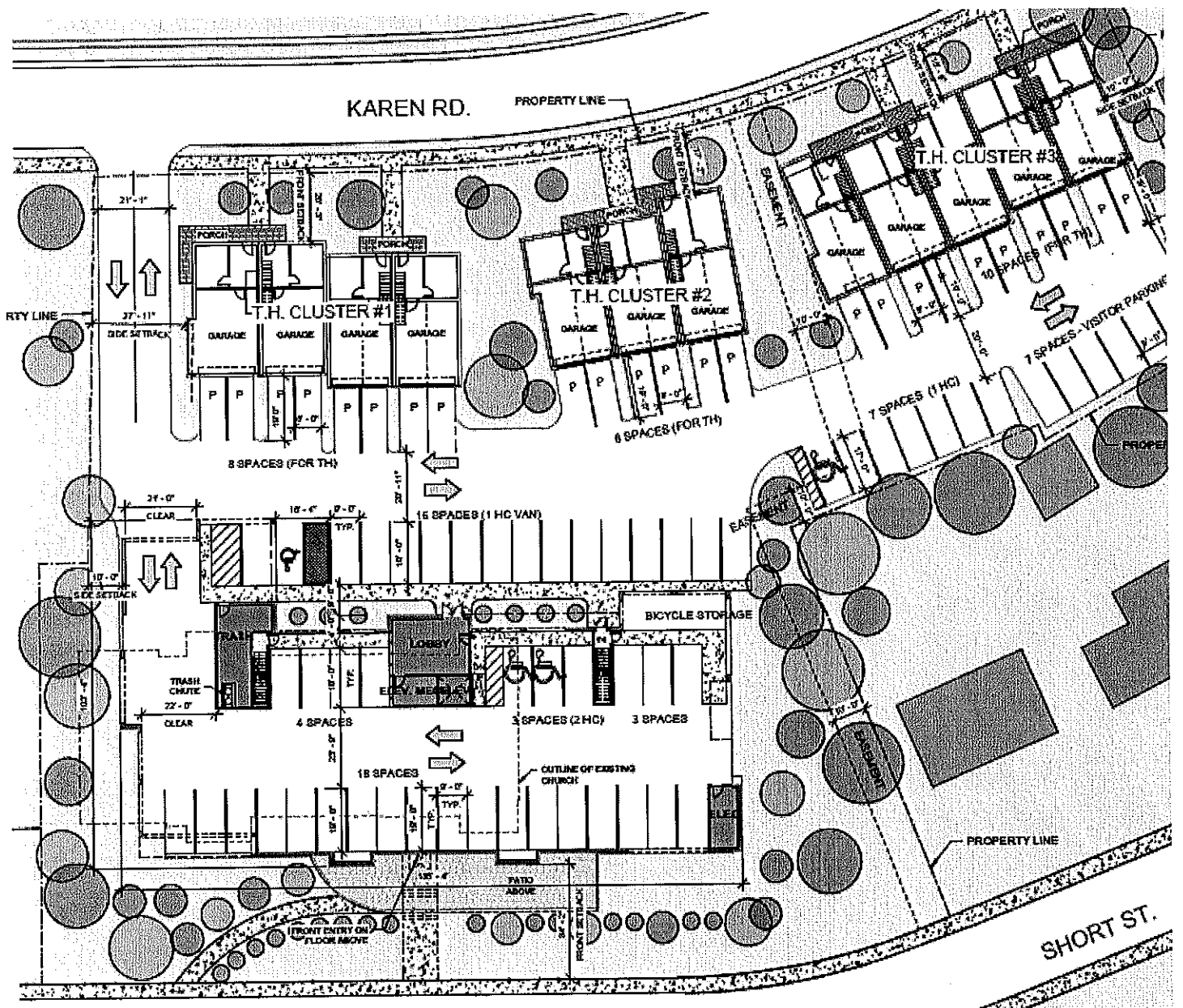
Sent from my iPhone

**Norine Silton**

**From:** Dave Murray <dave@northendassoc.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 9:15 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Makes No Sense

I'll just say it bluntly. This is the most retarded plan/proposal for an area located next to the busiest intersection in this part of the city.

Cut the plan in HALF at least. You need to THINK.



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Rona Ellenbogen <rellenbogen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 11:34 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** waban project

I live at 60 White Oak Rd and am extremely concerned about this new project. It is way too big and I have many concerns about safety and traffic and cars and changing the environment of our Waban neighborhood. Traffic around the Bank of America is already very congested. Please let me know if there will be another meeting regarding this project. Rona Ellenbogen



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Aaron Davis <apdavis@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 8:30 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** concerns about St. Philip Neri project

To Whom it May Concern:

My wife and I are residents of Waban, on Avalon Road, and I am writing to express our concerns about the current development proposal for the St. Philip Neri site. We certainly appreciate the developer's willingness to engage the community in a dialogue about the project, and we are not opposed to rezoning the area for rental units including a percentage for low income housing. **What concerns us most is the volume of units that are being proposed for a relatively small site.** The resulting impact on traffic patterns will be disastrous, specifically at the already congested corner of Beacon and Chestnut Streets. The additional volume of cars from residents and guests of residents of the proposed apartment complex cannot be absorbed by the neighborhood. It is already challenging to approach that intersection at morning and evening rush hours. The significant increase in vehicular traffic will not only increase travel time for all residents, but create dangerous conditions for drivers and pedestrians, as frustrated drivers will be more likely to jump the light or attempt to bypass the intersection by speeding down otherwise quiet residential side streets. I fear this scenario could jeopardize the safety of families such as mine who walk their children to school down these side streets, as well as the safety of adults who regularly walk down these streets to get to the Waban T station. Additionally, on nearby streets such as Avalon Road where it is already challenging to turn onto Chestnut Street, the additional traffic created by the apartment complex will make it nearly impossible to turn either way onto Chestnut Street.

We are asking for your assistance in raising these issues via the comment letter that the city will send in response to the developer's application. We are optimistic that a compromise can be reached that will both meet the developer's financial requirements and also maintain the safety and quality of life in our neighborhood. The compromise that was recently reached with the Austin Street project is an excellent example of this - where both the community's and the developer's needs were addressed in the final project plans. Notably, there too, in consideration of the community's concerns about safety and traffic, the number of rental units was reduced substantially from what was originally proposed by the developer.

Many of my neighbors share the concerns I listed above, and we greatly appreciate your assistance in voicing these concerns on our behalf.

Sincerely,  
Aaron and Jessica Davis

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Eileen <eileenfoto@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 8:51 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth  
**Subject:** I favor the 1521 Beacon St. proposal

To the Planning Department and Alexandra Ananth,

For the past 12 years I have been part of a team of Unitarians bringing food to the Women's Lunch Place where we cook, serve, then clean up. There I've met many women who were partially educated and could never catch a break, and others who had privileges but got caught in a web of addiction and hit their bottoms. I have also volunteered at the Boston Food Bank and delivered food from the Newton food pantry to local families. Like my neighbors and members of my church community I found in these hungry and sometimes homeless folks a cross section of all kinds of people - some smart, funny, sad, hard working, barely working, mentally and physically challenged individuals, but they have fewer resources than my neighbors. Most importantly, almost all of them are courageous, decent people trying to do the right thing for others. So I support giving a struggling individual or family a break, a chance to lift themselves from the pits... by offering affordable housing. Newton has a reputation as a diverse and interesting community and claims to want to be an inclusive one; I'd like to see this diversity with interesting people continue.

A few opportunities have come up to make a difference. One is St. Philip Neri. I understand that the developer for the housing has been willing to address the traffic and safety concerns some of the neighbors have voiced and has been listening carefully to other concerns and adapting plans. Change is not easy for people and can be very difficult to some but I think we adjust and often find we like the changes, especially if we had a voice in the process.

Please vote in favor of the 1521 Beacon St. proposal.

Respectfully,

Eileen Kurkoski  
Derby St, West Newton

**Norine Silton**

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**From:** Matzkin, Elizabeth G.,M.D. <EMATZKIN@PARTNERS.ORG>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 8:55 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** concerns

To whom it may concern:

As a resident on Waban, MA our family is extremely concerned regarding the current proposal for the development of 1521 Beacon Street.

The existing infrastructure is already quite large and the proposed infrastructure would really stand out amongst this quiet neighborhood.

The buildings are far too tall and the proposal leaves little to no space for anything but "building and parking".

The housing units would result in an eyesore to the neighborhood and would make this area much too crowded.

The current traffic flow around Beacon, Chestnut, Karen and Short Street is already backed up during commuting hours. More traffic poses even more problems for commuters and for the school buses and the school bus stops.

Traffic around Lincoln park is already abundant and parking is already crowded – more cars and this proposal would mean more concerns for the children walking to the park for sports practices and for families walking their little ones to the playground.

We hope that the Planning Department will consider these concerns regarding massing and scale, the lack of green and open space, and the traffic challenges posed by the site.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Elizabeth Matzkin

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## Norine Silton

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**From:** ERIC <armyortho@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 8:43 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed build on 1521 Beacon street

Dear Sirs, I oppose the construction in its current form proposed at 1521 Beacon street. I live at 1573 Beacon street and my concerns are centered around the proposed height of the building. There are no other similar structures in Waban except Angier School, and none along Beacon Street outside of Newton Center. The height of the building along with congestion and traffic will make noise pollution much greater. There are nesting hawks in and around Lincoln park and environmentally this will most likely displace them. In addition, I have concerns regarding ground water flooding in the area around Lincoln park, and am concerned that such a building proposal will displace more ground water. This will make basement flooding in the surrounding neighborhoods more common

Thank you, Eric Smith

Sent from Windows Mail

## Norine Silton

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**From:** David Garrison <david\_b\_garrison@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2015 9:42 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Comments on project proposed for 1521 Beacon Street

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing this note as a concerned citizen of Newton. I have heard about the project plans for 1621 Beacon Street. My understanding is that it will be a large construction on a relatively small plot of land. As the project will have a height larger than the planned height of the new Angier school building and much higher than the neighboring houses, it seems to be a bad fit for the neighborhood. I also have concerns about the traffic and environment impact of such a large project.

I am opposed to the project in its current form.

Thank you for your consideration,

David Garrison  
48 Concord Street  
Newton, MA

**Barbara and Richard Berenson**  
**39 Karen Rd.**  
**Waban MA 02468**  
**Barbara.f.berenson@gmail.com**  
**Rick@berenson.us**  
**617-969-0523**

RE: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, 1521 BEACON ST., WABAN

City of Newton  
Dept. of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton MA 02459

May 17, 2015

Dear Sir/Madam:

We are abutters to the property located at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban ("site"), and write to express our opposition to the project proposed by applicant Waban AMA Realty Ventures, LLC "(the developer)" at this site. At the outset, we note that Newton has satisfied the state's requirement to have affordable housing on at least 1.5 percent of its developable land. Additionally, Mass Housing should not issue a project eligibility letter because the developer's 40B proposal fails to satisfy the required criteria. Our primary concerns are as follows:

### **Environmental Concerns**

Despite frequent and well known instances of basement flooding in the area and water pooling on the site during heavy rains, the developer's Project Eligibility Application (PEA) does not include any environmental study nor any plan to mitigate water issues. Moreover, the developer's plan lacks adequate drainage as the lot would be almost entirely covered by dwellings and parking.

The developer's PEA also fails to provide any meaningful green space for its residents or the neighbors. There is no open space to be viewed from the street, and the height of the proposed buildings place nearby single-family residences in perpetual shade.

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfied these environmental concerns.

### **Traffic & Safety**

Despite well-known safety and traffic concerns, the developer's PEA also fails to include a traffic study nor any plan to mitigate safety and traffic issues. This project

would add 48 units and over 100 parking spaces to the neighborhood. The developer has proposed that all cars would enter and exit from Karen Road, a street with eleven houses.

Karen Road is perpendicular to Lincoln Field, which is used by neighborhood children, soccer leagues, and Newton high school baseball teams. The heaviest usage occurs weekday afternoons and early evenings and all day on weekends in the fall, spring and early/late summer. These frequent and high volume uses cause considerable traffic and crowded parking along Karen and Montclair Roads. (See attached photos taken on May 16, 2015). Children and their families are crossing the street (without traffic lights or crosswalks). An additional 100 cars would pose a tremendous danger to children.

The developer has also failed to address the extreme difficulty of accessing both Beacon and Chestnut streets from Karen Road. Access to either of these streets (necessary to leave Karen Road) requires a driver to use overburdened and dysfunctional intersections.

To access Beacon Street, cars use Montclair Road. However, from Montclair Road, cars seeking to turn onto Beacon Street must contend with traffic coming westbound on both Short and Beacon Streets as well as eastbound traffic on Beacon Street. There is heavy traffic, especially at rush hour, and no traffic lights to regulate traffic flow. There is one stop sign – at the end of Short Street, but unfortunately, many who drive on Short Street do not heed- or even notice -- the Stop sign because they are instead looking over their left shoulder to assess traffic on Beacon Street. If Beacon street traffic permits, these cars speed up to merge directly onto Beacon Street without stopping. This create extreme danger for cars on Montclair Road.

Exiting onto Chestnut Street is also very challenging. It is virtually impossible to make a left turn from Oakvale as, due to a curve on Chestnut Street, there is no ability to see cars coming from the left. Oak Vale is also an unmaintained road (it is not a public way). Moffat Road or Caroline Park provide better visibility to exit onto Chestnut Street, but left turns (necessary to access West Newton and the Mass. Turnpike) are very challenging as heavy traffic runs in both directions. During rush hour, it is common to wait several minutes for a break in traffic sufficient to permit a turn onto Chestnut Street from either of these streets. Even then, the turns are risky and must be completed with great efficiency.

A large development on the site would greatly exacerbate these already dangerous intersections, causing long and dangerous backups on Montclair, Moffat and Caroline Park.

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfied these traffic and safety concerns.

## Massing & Scale

The developer has also failed to include the required "locus map identifying the site within a plan of the neighborhood, accompanied by photographs of the surrounding buildings and features that provide an understanding of the physical context of the site." 760 CMR 56.04(2)(c). These required items would demonstrate that the developer's proposal is not "generally appropriate" for the site.

We are aware that any multi-family development will by its nature introduce buildings into the neighborhood that differ from surrounding buildings in terms of massing and scale. The developer's proposed townhouses and apartment building are, however, so large and tall that they are not "generally appropriate." The townhouses are 3½ stories or 47 feet tall while the apartment building on Short Street would be four to five stories. The developer's proposed buildings are all substantially taller than other nearby dwellings and, indeed, taller than any of the commercial buildings in Waban and the Angier School. Additionally, the developer's planned 48 units would result in construction that is so dense as to exceed the site's carrying capacity.

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfied these massing & scale concerns.

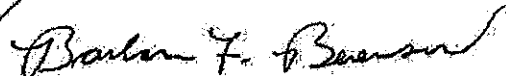
## Conclusion

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfactorily addressed these environmental, traffic & safety, and massing & scale concerns.

Sincerely,



Richard Berenson



Barbara Berenson



## Karen & Montclair on a Typical Saturday



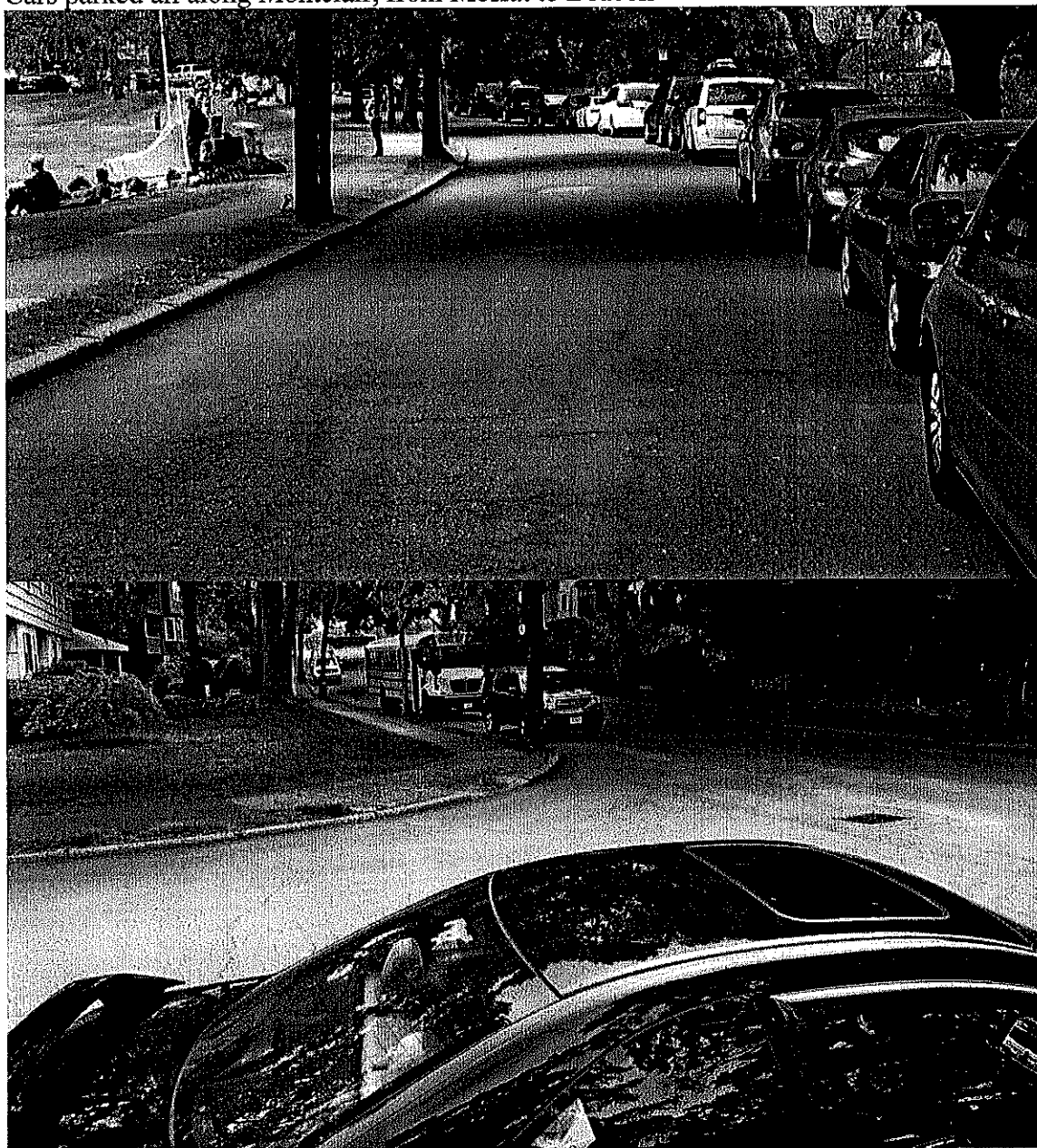
Cars parked on Karen, including in the Saint Philip Neri parking lot.  
When the Church lot was unavailable, people parked on both sides of Karen Road



A very busy playing field – three soccer games PLUS a baseball game.



Cars parked all along Montclair, from Moffat to Beacon



## Norine Siltan

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**From:** Charles Roberts <cwmroberts@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 4:14 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Not appropriate

I am a resident of Waban, although not an abutter of the proposed project. My concern is that the proposal is far off scale and not appropriate for the neighborhood. For example, the proposal is for four story buildings, dwarfing the adjacent two-story homes. It does not at all fit and is not appropriate. In addition, the large number of proposed units/tenants will exceed capabilities of existing infrastructure and likely have a negative environmental impact.

Sincerely,

Charles Roberts  
174 Oliver Rd  
Waban, MA 02468

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Jessica Savage <jessicahsavage@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 9:25 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Development

Hi,

I am a Waban resident concerned about how the proposed development will fit into the community. The proposed building on Short Street is extremely tall, and at 53 feet high will be 3 feet taller than the top of the new Angier School building being constructed (which is already a big change for the community). The proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 47 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street. The number of units proposed will almost double the number of the housing units in Waban Valley. This is going to change the appearance of the community, add to traffic and other resource demands, and undoubtedly lower property values.

Jessica

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Jessica Savage, MD, MHS

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Meg Holland <meglynnholland@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 9:52 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Alexandra Ananth  
**Subject:** I support 1521 Beacon Street.

When my husband and I moved to Newton almost 30 years ago, there were 4 houses that we could afford. We raised our 2 sons who attended the public schools and graduated from Newton North. We are deeply connected to our faith community and we would like to retire and live here for the rest of our lives. This community is my home. I am deeply concerned by the limited perspective voiced by many of my fellow citizens about "preserving the character of Newton". This is the 21st century, and I would like to expand the character of Newton to include lots of housing for people in ALL income brackets. This is why I am committed to affordable housing and smart development, and in particular, to the 1521 Beacon Street project.

Meg Holland  
223 Webster Street  
West Newton

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Larson, Elizabeth <ELarson@MFS.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 1:23 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** FW: St. Philip Neri Church in Waban

Hi

I sent the below note to John Rice.... Just making sure it gets to your dedicated email box...

Thanks

Liz Larson Dills

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**From:** Larson, Elizabeth (Boston)  
**Sent:** Friday, May 08, 2015 4:55 PM  
**To:** 'jrice@newtonma.gov'  
**Subject:** St. Philip Neri Church in Waban

Hi John

Not sure if you remember me....my son Alex Dills attended the wonderful after-school program HASP that you were a part of in the Highlands. (Do you remember how we adopted a greyhound after the Greyhound Friends visit to HASP? We still have her, "Betty"! ) Alex is now a senior at South and will attend Clarkson University in the Fall.

I'm writing to tell you how deeply upset I am about St Philip Neri Church being turned into 48 rental/townhouse units. My greatest concern is for the large number of units, the imposing size, and traffic issues. I live one street over on Lawmarissa Road. While I think there is opportunity to create something great in that space that will add to the vibrancy of Waban and Newton – I hate to see the collapse of the quiet residential area with so many cars and traffic. I understand the only driveway will be on Karen Road. The area residents are so familiar with the parking struggles and congested traffic that the church used to have during its religious services.... And parking issues for the adjacent Lincoln field during soccer practice, stop by and see during game play. The size of the building is planned to be so large and imposing. It makes me sad. The project is planning for 106 parking places..... just think of that in comparison to the traffic from only 10 homes on the street.

Please advise if there is any course of action we can take or you recommend to make this project more reasonable, and more fitting for the neighborhood. The traffic situation alone makes me worried for pedestrians, children, and drivers around the awkward intersections of Montclair and Beacon, and Oakvale and Chestnut.

Hope all is well with you.

Best regards,  
Liz Larson (Dills)



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Elizabeth Larson, VP Communications  
T: 617-954-6145 F: 617-350-2064 E: [elarson@mfs.com](mailto:elarson@mfs.com)  
MFS Investment Management  
111 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02199-7618 USA

MFS Mail Relay Service made the following annotation on Mon May 18 2015 13:23:08

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This email communication and any attachments may contain proprietary, confidential, or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this email in

## Norine Silton

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**From:** jim.knocke@compass-fci.com  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 3:53 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Input regarding proposed development at 1521 Beacon St, Waban, MA

Hello,

I have lived live at 14 Oakvale Rd in Waban for 18 years. I have been following the proposed development at 1521 Beacon St with mounting concern, and understand that the city is accepting public feedback until May 29, 2015. I have taken some time to list my concerns, below.

1. Developer's stated intent. The developer indicated contradictory objectives during a recent meeting at the Windsor Club. First, he said that he intended for the proposed project to serve a need within the community for older residents to downsize into smaller units. Here he cited the many large houses in West Newton. He then clarified that all units were to be rentals, so that he might set up his son with an on-going business to manage these rental units

On the surface, it would seem that Waban could certainly benefit from housing targeting older residents who wish to down-size. However, there is no one I know of in the immediate Waban and West Newton villages that would seek to sell their homes to move into a rental unit. None. And I have asked around. I think you would find overwhelming neighborhood support for a modest, graduated-service assisted living facility where residents could purchase into units that provided more modest and accessible layouts, with facilities to support their on-going health needs. But this is not what the developer is proposing. And he needs to be challenged on the assertion that the units he proposes represent a pent up demand from existing residents.

I would also like to point out that the developer has admitted to having no experience with similar size developments and their impact. His assertions minimizing negative impacts and extoling the virtues of his nepotistic venture are wholly unknown to him, and should be treated with great suspicion.

2. Density of the development. I am sure you have already heard plenty on this. My opposition to this project lies chiefly with the density of the development and the impact on neighborhood traffic and road safety. My opposition has nothing to do with affordable housing, besides the minimal allocation that is being used solely to justify the bypassing of city zoning and planning regulations. I would support the affordable housing allocation wholeheartedly in a configuration that was more in line with neighborhood buildings, traffic capacity, and pedestrian safety. I would point out to the review committee that Newton does not enforce existing rules regarding snow removal from public walkways. Consequently, children are forced to walk in Karen road to access Angier school and bus stops for both Brown and South. This is the case for better than half the school year, from December through April.

The responsibility for the safety of these children will rest with whomever approves the access of 105 additional cars to this small neighborhood.

As an aside, the developer has cited proposed improvements to be gained by upgrading traffic signals and lane flows at the corner of Beacon and Chestnut. These improvements are certainly warranted to manage the current traffic which routine backs up to Caroline Park to the north, Woodward to the South, and past Montclair to the West. The suggested changes might help the current patterns, but would be completely un-done by the added traffic from the new development. Add to this the traffic that comes each spring and fall evening and weekend at Lincoln field. Where would the traffic flow? The will inevitably lead to

frantic racing through local roads to bypass the bottlenecks, including use of the private (and significantly degraded) portion of Oakvale road, to be sure.

3. Neighborhood break-in's. There is already an increasing incidence of car break-ins in the Waban area. The addition of an open plan supporting 105 automobiles on a daily basis will certainly prove to be a magnet drawing criminal elements into the neighborhood for the easier pickings. One could argue that the church parking offered similar temptations. However, the services only lasted a few hours on Sundays, and the parking lot was never left unattended, since not all car passengers chose to attend services. The current plans would need to do much more than post signs that the management is not responsible for items left in vehicles (parked, incidentally, in the 105 spaces they created for just that purpose). At a minimum, they would provide closed, secure garage structures. Even if the developer provided additional security, that would just deflect these activities into the surrounding neighborhood.

There has been no mention of a crime study accompanying this application, and for good reason. It would only highlight the extreme detriment to the surrounding community.

4. Waban is not a village of high-rises. A development in scope with the current footprint of the church, plus condominiums of comparable height to surrounding homes would be a welcome alternative to the abandoned church. Better still, an assisted living facility also in line with surrounding construction would represent an enormous improvement to the neighborhood and Newton overall. A revolving-resident, massive rental complex, with the corresponding weekly moving vans and daily commuters, and traffic stagnation would represent a deeply unwelcome detriment to our community.

I hope you consider carefully the concerns I have raised, above.

Very sincerely,

Jim Knocke  
14 Oakvale Rd  
Waban  
(617) 332-1150



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Allison Pollock <allisonpollock21@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 4:03 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to express my concern over the proposed new housing on Karen Road, Waban. I am a long time resident on Lawmarissa Road, a neighboring street, and I have great concerns over the mass and enormity of this project. I am concerned over the height of the project, the idea of underground parking, the numbers of units, people and cars/ traffic in this neighborhood. We have many young families in the neighborhood with children playing out of doors and riding bikes on the street.

I fear this project visually will not blend with the houses in the area, being so tall. The traffic on Karen Road is already quite busy due to sports and activities at Montclair field. This additional traffic will be unwieldy.

Please consider the feelings and concerns of the neighbors here in this area of Waban. Many of us chose to live here in our homes due to the overall appearance and make up of the homes in this neighborhood. This project will undoubtedly change the appearance and safety of our neighborhood due to the enormity, mass, underground parking, and traffic.

Thank you,

Yours truly,

Allison Pollock  
Resident of Lawmarissa Road, Waban

## Norine Silton

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**From:** SueBerger@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 5:26 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** RE: Proposed development of 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Newton Planning Department,

As a neighbor and resident of Waban, I am writing to express my concern about the proposed development of 1521 Beacon Street by developer Michael Argiros.

I attended the recent meeting on 6 May organized by the developers, which was a farce as they had no interest in hearing what the residents of Waban had to say. When people asked if any objections would make a difference, the developer's lawyer just said "no". There were about 100 people at the meeting, and at the end the Waban Area Council representative asked how many people were in favor of the plans as presented, and three people raised their hands; when asked how many people were not in favor, 93 people raised their hands. I - and others - are not against development of the St Philip Neri site - we just request - as residents and homeowners, responsible and appropriate development of the site.

As proposed, the size and scale of the buildings - both the apartment complex and the townhouses - are completely out of proportion to the rest of the neighborhood. This is a residential neighborhood, with mostly older homes, and any new homes that have been built have been considerably designed to fit in with the neighborhood. The new structures as proposed dwarf the surrounding homes, and dominate both Beacon Street and Karen Road and adjoining side streets. The new structures are larger than the new Angier School which is being built further along Beacon Street, and which has a much larger lot, has adequate parking, and does not impinge on neighboring homes. It was significant that when the developer showed his plans, none of them were to scale showing their size relative to the neighboring houses.

Secondly, the density of the proposed development is also an issue: I believe that the lot is only 1.6 acres and the developer is proposing 48 units in this space, which brings in a very high density of people and high density of cars in what is not a large space. This density seems more appropriate for the inner cities or Manhattan than for the leafy suburb of Waban.

This density will also put much more of a strain on the traffic and parking situation in what is already a very busy corner at Beacon and Chestnut Streets. At rush hour the traffic backs up in every direction, and the neighboring streets become cut throughs, which is dangerous for families walking back from school with children, and for pedestrians trying to cross any street. This is a pedestrian friendly neighborhood - with runners and dog walkers and recreational walkers, and increased traffic not only makes life more difficult for motorists but also more difficult - and unhealthy and dangerous - for pedestrians.

Finally, in a neighborhood prized for its green space - after all, isn't Newton "the garden city" - the developer has planned for very little green space, trees, gardens, recreational space etc. He has crammed as many units into large buildings as he can which affects all our quality of life.

So, Newton Planning Department, please do take the residents of Newton's concerns to heart, and help us to keep our neighborhood the pleasant, safe, harmonious place that it is. I know that there are rules and regulations about new developments, so we trust you to uphold these on the behalf of all Newton residents. I would hope that our concerns will count in your decision to proceed as planned.

Thanks for your time.

With best wishes,

Sue Berger Ramin  
80 Pine Ridge Road  
Waban  
617 332 1664

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Frank Kuo <fkuo03498@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2015 5:59 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** 1521 beacon Street proposal

To: Newton Planning Department  
Re: 1521 Beacon Street Proposal

I live in 15 Montclair Road for 25 years and my property directly abuts the property at 1521 Beacon Street.

The plan to build a 48-unit rental complex with 100 parking spaces at that site is too big, too dense, does not fit into the neighborhood and will create serious traffic problem and safety concern for not only neighboring residents but also children and family who come to Lincoln Field to play soccer or baseball. I strongly urge you NOT to approve the plan.

Montclair road is a narrow street such that parking is only allowed on one side of the street to allow two-way traffic. The Montclair road-Beacon street intersection has near-misses frequently because the Short street also merges into Beacon at the same spot. When the soccer is in season with about 40 cars coming through the intersection for drop-off and pick-up sometimes already causes a back up. Adding 100 cars in and out of the proposed complex daily over-burden the Montclair road and significantly increase the risk of traffic incidents at the Montclair-Short-Beacon intersection. When the Korean church used to meet at the site, there were about 100 cars each weekend and we have all witnessed the over-crowding that caused.

The underground water situation in this area has always been an issue for all the houses along Montclair and Karen road. After large thunderstorms, water into basement is a common problem. Adding a 48-unit residential complex to this site will significantly increase the sewage flow and likely to exacerbate the situation and may cause damages to existing houses.

The proposed structures are so tall that they tower over all the existing houses in the neighborhood. Not even the new Angier school can compare to the height of the proposed building. It just does not fit into the neighborhood.

I suggest that the number of units to be reduced to at the most 24-units and parking spaces to be no more than 50. The building and townhouses should not exceed 2 stories. The most appropriate entry and exit into the complex is on the Short sheet side.

Sincerely,

Frank Kuo

## Norine Silton

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**From:** James Bardinelli <jab@adagecapital.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 10:07 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Brian E. Yates; Deborah J. Crossley; John Rice  
**Cc:** Setti D. Warren  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Aldermen,

As you enter Waban from the east or west along Beacon Street you approach Waban Square and are greeted first by iconic houses of worship from both sides. It is a welcoming feeling from such a warm and open community. Unfortunately, one of these landmarks was not sustainable and recently sold to a developer. Now the balance and harmony of the area is in jeopardy because of a project (1521 Beacon Street) that has many flaws. The most apparent being the physical size of the imposing structure and the added traffic issues that it will create.

First, the actual size and scale of the project are completely out of context for the area. There are not any buildings in the area that even approach the height and mass of the proposed project. This project should be limited to the same height requirements as the other structures in the area. Both multifamily and single family dwellings are present throughout Waban and there are none even close to this mass. The current site also has a vast amount of green space surrounding the Church. Once again, the sheer mass of this project eliminates virtually all of the green space. The only green space the developer proposes comes from "taking" Short Street and re drawing the traffic pattern around Beacon and Chestnut. Essentially, giving the developer additional property.

The traffic around Newton is at the point where, at times, it is almost impossible to move. There are many infrastructure issues that need to be resolved before projects like 1521 Beacon Street should be allowed to proceed. The project is billed as transportation based housing. We all know this is a farce. Adding over 100 vehicles overnight to the area is a horrible idea. The congestion along Beacon and Chestnut streets will be at a standstill and drivers will be forced to wind their way through the side streets. Everyone is always looking for the next "cut through". This added traffic will certainly increase traffic flow on side streets where children are playing and families are taking their dogs for walk. A very bad idea indeed.

In the end, we know we will lose once iconic and welcoming church at 1521 Beacon Street. We know it is more likely than not to be multifamily housing. However, the project of this scale and magnitude is not acceptable and out of character for the neighborhood. Please do not let this destroy the Waban community we know today.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss.

Sincerely,

James Bardinelli  
45 Mossfield Road

**James Bardinelli**  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
*Adage Capital Management, L.P.*  
200 Clarendon Street  
Boston, MA 02116  
[jab@adagecapital.com](mailto:jab@adagecapital.com)  
617-867-2815

## Norine Silton

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**From:** BG <ben.gomez@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 12:27 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed development

I want to weigh in with my thoughts on the proposed development for the Philip Neri Church site. I am a Waban resident.

I am opposed to this development, as currently conceived, due to the fact that it is not appropriate for this location. The proposed development is far too large and is completely out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood. The mass of the project is HUGE relative to the surroundings and it will have a disproportionately negative impact on the entire area.

I am not opposed to development on this site, merely the size, scope and positioning of this development. A thoughtfully planned townhouse development (or other ideas) could work here. Increased density is not the problem. Massively increased density with a huge, tall building - in a neighborhood of single family homes, is a problem.

Thanks,

Ben Gomez  
55 Alban Road  
Waban, MA 02468

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Ray Noveck <rnoveck@rcn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 12:52 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Carol Todreas  
**Subject:** Proposed Project at 1521 Beacon Street

### To the Newton Planning Department

We are writing to express our concern over the proposed residential development on the St Philip of Neri Church site.

We are concerned about the increase of daily traffic as well as the frequent traffic caused by deliveries , maintenance of the building and tenants as they come and go. This alone is great cause for pause as the the quality of life ,already threatened by the unparalleled growth in the built environment as homes become larger and green space becomes smaller. From a safety point of view, there has been more than one accident at the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon Streets. Fairly recently, an ambulance careening down Beacon Street crashed the light going to the hospital and caused severe damage, if not loss of life, to a passenger car on Chestnut Street.

We are concerned over the large scale and massing of the project which is far better suited typically next to a major urban square or commercial center,not placed in a quiet village. The Village of Waban is relatively small and, if anything, could benefit from a park , a place to sit, relax...a place to decrease,rather than increase the carbon footprint.

We in Newton are wasteful of land. Density could occur quite naturally upholding green planning values if single story buildings at Newton Center and at some of the other commercial centers were added on to with residential units. They would add to the tax base, stimulate business, and help update these underutilized neighborhoods to sustainable and vital places. Waban is a square mile village, still trying to maintain its harmony despite the strsses already caused by traffic, fumes, and congestion What that site should be is a lovely historic church, converted into some residential units beside a small green park with flowers , benches, and trees. Is this the dark side of capitalism that every inch of reasonable square footage has to max out for the almighty dollar? Hoping not.

Carol and Neil Todreas

Carol and Neil Todreas  
89 Windsor Road  
Waban, MA 02468

Forwarded at the request of Carol Todreas.

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Diane Levy <dfldesign@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 1:35 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Input about proposed development

Dear City Counsellors and Zoning Board Representatives,

I am writing to express my opposition to the development, as proposed, at 1521 Beacon Street.

I am a concerned, 15-year resident of Oakvale Road who has attended both of the Windsor Club meetings on this project. These meetings gave us a good handle on the plans and intentions of the developer and on the concerns of the Waban community.

There are a number of ways in which this proposed development is detrimental to Waban and will diminish the quality of life in this village:

1. The types of units proposed do not serve the needs of the community. There is no plan for assisted living in this project. Despite the assertions of the developer, no elderly residents of Waban (or anywhere else) will want to move from their own homes into tiny, extremely expensive apartments with no assistance built in. Families in a demographic looking to rent in Newton will not fit into the tiny apartments, nor be able to afford the larger ones.
2. 40B is not being invoked in an appropriate way. The small number of proposed 40B apartments in this complex are simply the developer's wedge to force the permitting of an outsized development. 40B should not be invoked simply to allow the violation of zoning laws to maximize profit. If the developer really believes in 40B, let him make a smaller development and make the affordable apartments a larger part of a smaller structure. 40B was meant to improve neighborhoods by making them more accessible to lower income families, not to ruin neighborhoods by allowing outsized structures to maximize developer profit.
2. The apartment building is too big. The apartment building, as planned, would be almost as tall as the Angier school under construction. This is completely out of proportion to everything else in the village. It would cast shadows over everything around it, would be a looming structure from the Beacon Street side, and a massive wall of brown-stone style construction from the Karen Road side. There would be very little green space, very little open space. It would be many times the size of anything else in our residential neighborhood, and completely inappropriate. It must be scaled down.
3. The development is too dense, which would cause massive traffic problems. 48 units of housing would bring in between 100 and 200 new residents to our village, plus 100 -125 resident cars, plus delivery trucks, moving trucks, service trucks, and guest's vehicles. The developer's claim of a minimal increase in traffic over that from the church is specious: the church had services once, or, at most, twice a week. The traffic from this development would be continuous, 24/7, 365.
  - There would be hundreds and hundreds of extra vehicular trips to be made through the narrow streets of the Waban Valley every day, making it unsafe to drive, ride bikes and push strollers on our roads, causing road deterioration and disturbing the quiet of the neighborhood.

- The extra traffic would cause (private, deteriorating) Oakvale Road to become even more of a speedway and cut-through than it is now. The developer's drawings include a traffic circuit that includes Oakvale and Karen, so this is not a hypothetical concern.
- The extra parked vehicles would make it impossible to park next to Lincoln-Eliot field, rendering that resource useless to the rest of the neighborhood.
- The intersection of Beacon and Chestnut would be sorely taxed. Unless right and left hand turn lanes are constructed, modernizing the traffic lights will have no positive effect.

The development should be scaled down to reduce traffic, and at a minimum the following traffic mitigation measures should be taken:

- Oakvale Road should be allowed to be made one way going East to "break the circuit" of traffic going into the Waban Valley to get to 1521 Beacon
- And/or the development should be required to put its driveway on Beacon Street rather than Karen Road to keep traffic out of the Waban Valley
- If the driveway must be on Karen Road, there should be a requirement to exit with a left turn only, onto Montclair to keep traffic out of the Waban Valley.
- The development should be required to contain visitor parking spaces, to minimize visitor parking on Karen Road

4. The developer's experience is inadequate and his motives are suspect.

- Experience: The developer admitted at the Windsor Club that he has no experience creating a development of this size and scope. How can we believe anything he asserts about the impact of his development if he has never done this before? My family watched an inexperienced and arrogant developer build a house next door to us and make all sorts of stupid mistakes with regard to drainage, waterproofing, building materials, roof venting, landscaping, you name it. This kind of arrogant inexperience could cause a disaster when applied to a much larger project that impacts the whole neighborhood.
- Motive: The developer's self-serving motives make him a poor steward for this property. Despite his protestations, he is clearly interested only in maximizing his profit (for the benefit of his son, or so he says) and not in improving Waban. Once he turns over the reins of this giant rental property to his son, we will never see him again. We will only suffer with the consequences of his actions. When asked if he would modify his development in any way in the face of community opposition to the details, his lawyer said "no." He said they will push forward until they hit a "brick wall." That should tell you everything you need to know when you are deciding whether to permit this property.

All developers are driven by financial incentive. But when a developer asks to set aside the City's zoning laws to create a structure that diminishes a neighborhood in almost every way, strict scrutiny should be applied before any variance from single-family zoning is granted. Our City government must compel modification of this inappropriate development plan before it ruins our neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Diane Levy



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Stuart Mathews <Stuart@metapoint.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 2:11 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Comment regarding the 1521 Beacon Street (St. Philip Neri) Development

To whom it may concern,

My name is Stuart Mathews and I live @ 77 Windsor Road. I am writing to express my concern regarding the scope of the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street.

To start off, I want to make clear that I am not opposed to developing that site. I believe that a multi unit development is appropriate for that location, and I am all for affordable housing. What concerns me is the scale of the proposed project. The 48 units that are proposed are simply more than the site or the surrounding infrastructure can support and will overwhelm the neighborhood. To me the issues are as follows:

- **Size of the proposed buildings & development:** That 1.6 acre site cannot support the development as proposed. To squeeze 48 units onto the site the size of the buildings will far surpass anything in the neighborhood and totally shade the existing homes on Karen Road. At the community meeting last week one Waban resident spoke in favor of the project and used the Wyman Street project as a justification for their support. I would agree with their view if this project was anything like Wyman Street which is lower in scale, much less dense in nature, and fits into the surrounding neighborhood. As I indicated above, I support the notion of multi-unit housing being built on the site and that a thoughtful multi-unit development will enhance the community. Because this design is way too large for the site the development will detract from the neighborhood and will not, as the Mass Housing guidelines make clear, be generally appropriate for the site.
- **Lack of Green Space:** To fit the buildings that are proposed onto the site virtually all the major trees are going to have to be removed. As a result while it is true that a substantial portion of the site is currently paved, a substantial portion of the site is green space. Removing all the green space for parking and buildings will totally leave that area of what has historically been known as "The Garden City" without any green whatsoever.
- **Traffic:** The current design has all the traffic exiting onto Karen Road. It seems to me to have all the traffic associated with a project which will consist of 35% of all the units in the adjacent area that is known as "Waban Valley" flowing onto one small street makes no sense. That much traffic flowing out Karen Road and then through neighboring streets to exit onto Chestnut & Beacon Streets will further overwhelm streets that are already crowded and intersections that are already problems. The traffic study that the developer presented is misleading. The traffic study that was presented was totally inadequate. Any resident of the area knows the challenges already faced in the intersections and streets surrounding the site. I know that the project envisions upgrading the street lights at Chestnut and Beacon and adding a turning lane from Chestnut onto Beacon, but those proposals miss the point. The issue is the flow of traffic onto and off of Beacon & Chestnut and then into the development.

Potential Alternatives:

- **Reduce the scope of the project:** I believe that the community would support a smaller project, one that would provide affordable, multi unit housing, and also be appropriate for the size of the site and the surrounding community as the Mass Housing guidelines call for. A smaller development would provide more green space, less traffic, and generally fit better on the site and neighborhood.

- Redesign the exit such that traffic exits from the development onto Short/Beacon Street. In addition, I believe that if the project were redesigned so that traffic flowed directly onto Beacon Street, a substantial portion of the neighborhood concerns would be addressed since that redesign direct the traffic onto what is already a main traffic route and avoid pushing all the traffic through narrow streets that cannot handle that volume.

I believe that development, including a 40(b) development on this site can enhance the nature and composition of the community. That said, a poorly planned and conceived development, such as what is contemplated here, will significantly adversely impact the community. The scale is too large and the roads in the area cannot handle the projected volume.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stuart

Stuart Mathews  
Metapoint Partners  
3 Centennial Drive  
Peabody, MA 01960  
978-531-1398 - Direct  
[stuart@metapoint.com](mailto:stuart@metapoint.com)

**Norine Siltan**

---

**From:** monicagrinerberg@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 4:00 PM  
**To:** Alexandra Ananth; 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Monica Grinberg  
**Subject:** Re: 1521beaconstreet@newtonma.gov  
**Attachments:** St. Philip Neri Church Site questions.pptx; Kindly Advise, Letter Draft for Planning 1521 Beacon Street.docx

Hello Ms. Ananth,


Attached, please find a power point presentation and letter regarding the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban.

It may take 1 minute for the power point presentation to download.

Kindly send this information to Mass Housing.

Thank you,

Monica Grinberg MPH

Monica Grinberg   
[monicagrinerberg@comcast.net](mailto:monicagrinerberg@comcast.net)



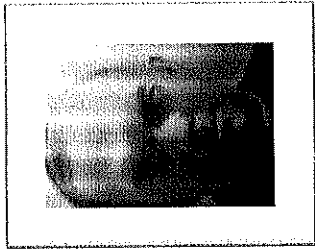
# SAINT PHILIP NERI CHURCH



Questions and concerns  
regarding the proposed  
construction project.

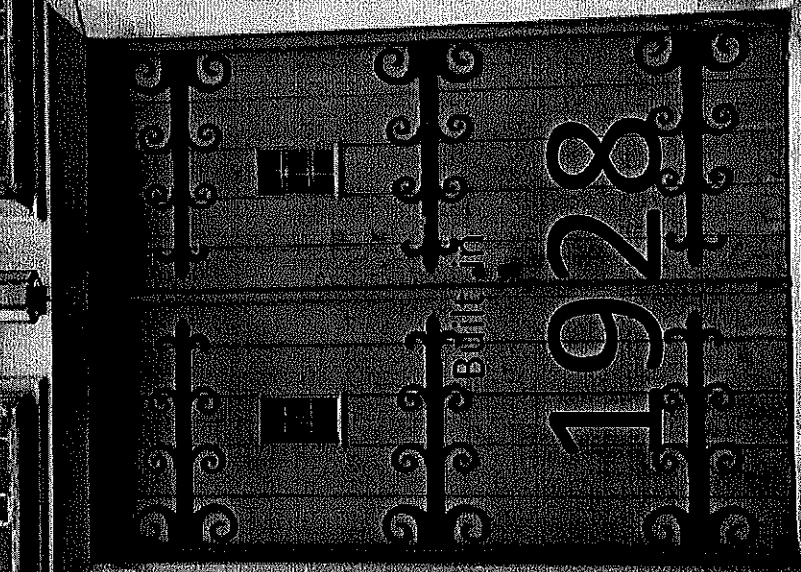
## HISTORY

Father Donovan built the St. Philip Neri Church in 1928.



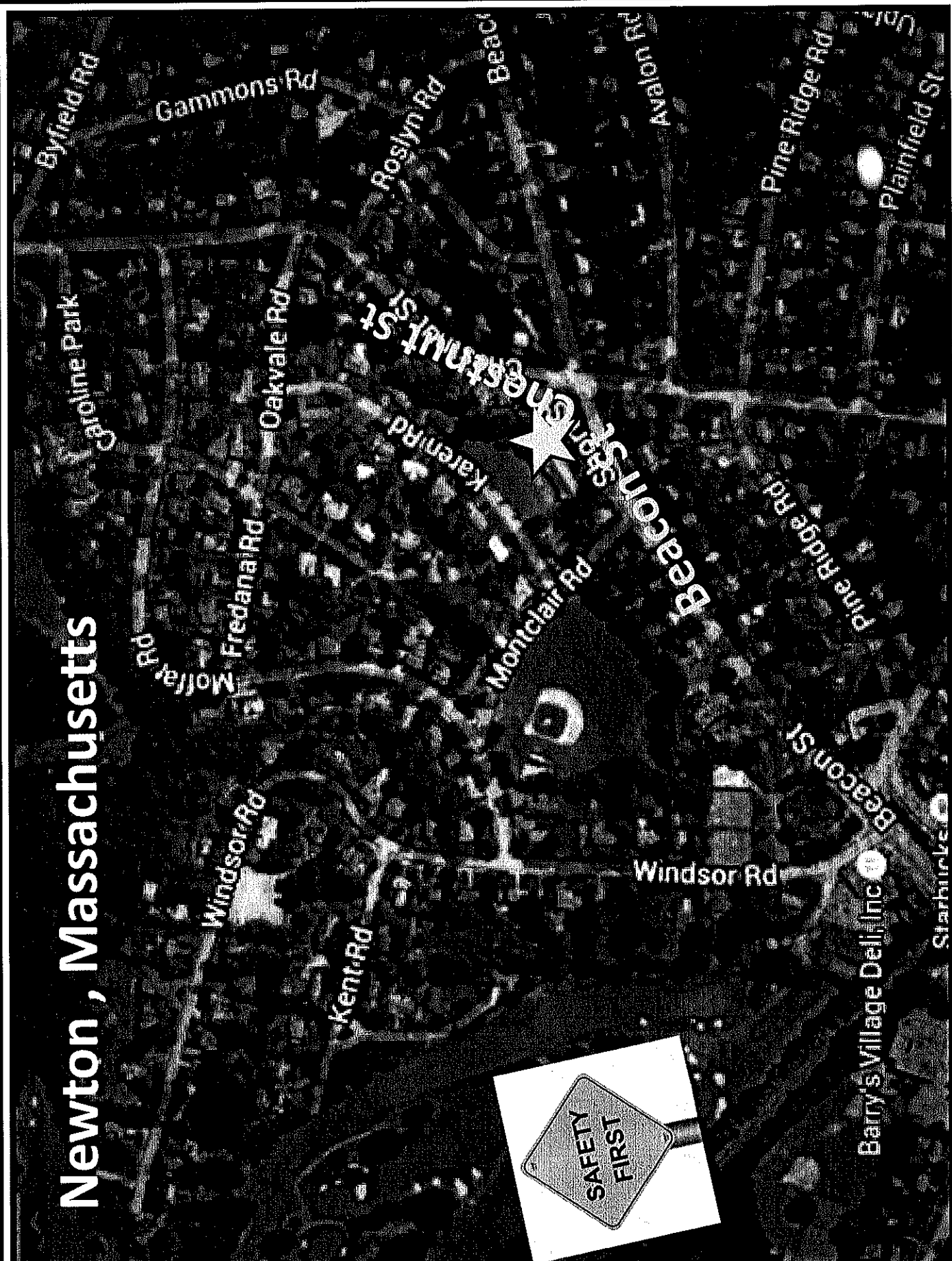
It broke away from its mother church in 1934, the same year that Father Donovan passed away.

# Historic Saint Philip Neri Church



1521 Beacon Street, Newton, MA

# Newton, Massachusetts

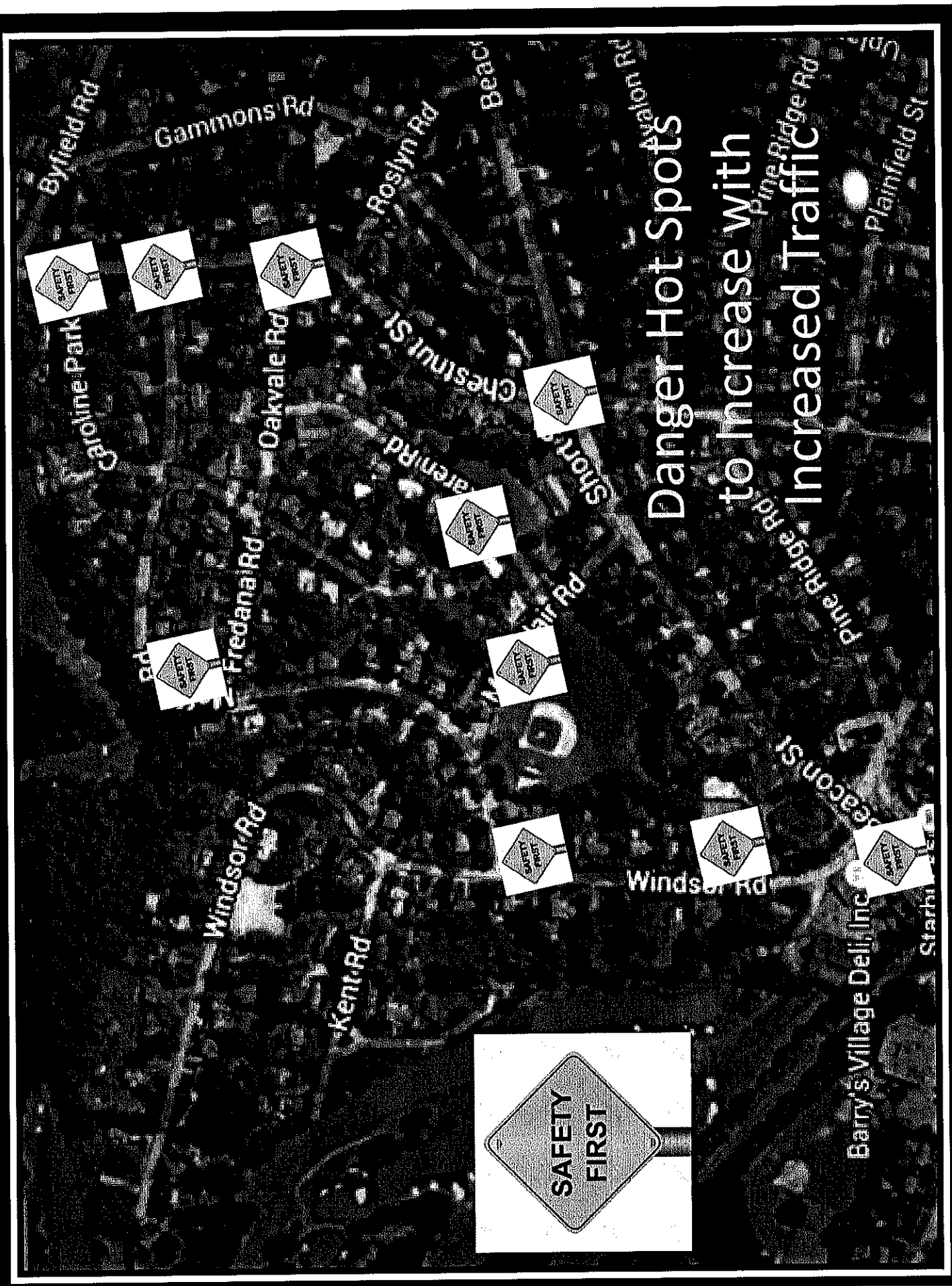


Barry's Village Deli, Inc.



# Safety-Traffic Concerns

- 48 units will create a significant increase in traffic in already troubled roads and intersections.
- School Bus Drop off and pick ups (5? locations a block or two from the proposed buildings project.) For both public and private schools and camps. (Kindly verify.)
  - Sports Teams Drop off and pick ups at the Warren Lincoln Field on Montclair.
  - Children walking/biking to and from Angier School.
  - Children in playground on Montclair.
  - Children crossing Beacon to get to Angier at Windsor.
  - Children crossing Windsor to and from markets and pool.



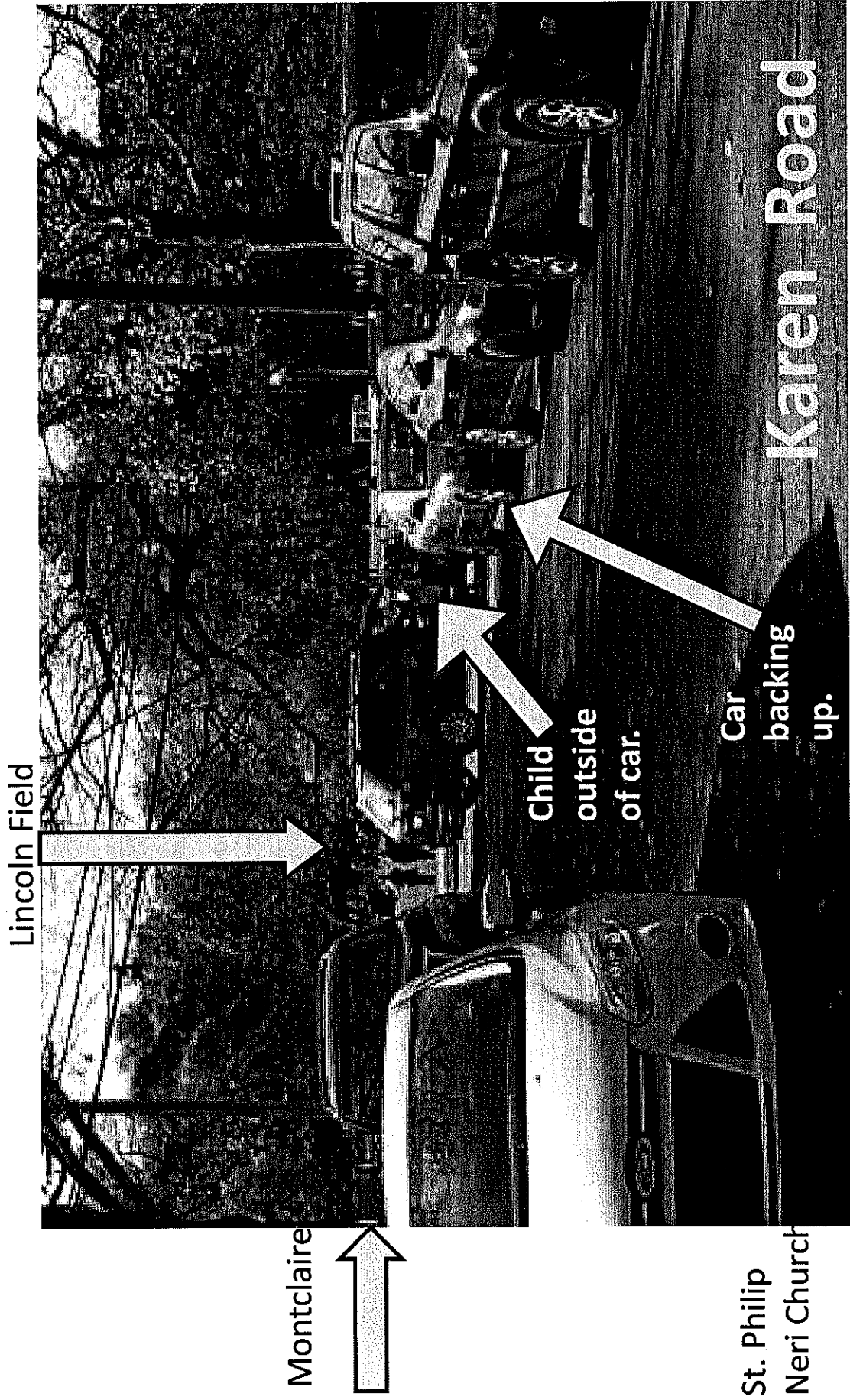
Danger Hot Spots

to Increase with

Increased Traffic



# Safety Concerns

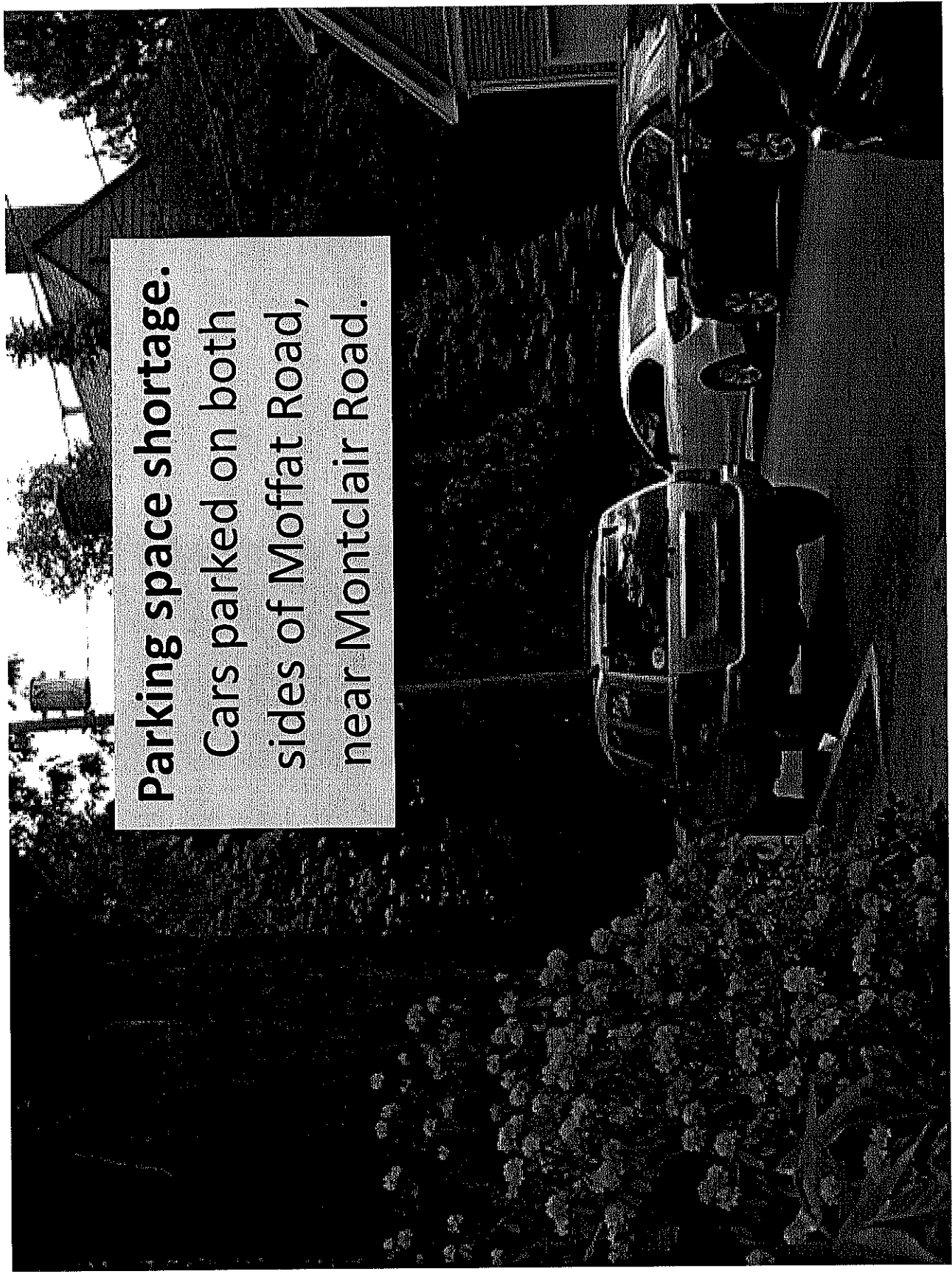


# Increase in Traffic

## Creating Unsafe Conditions

- 48 units (Will that mean about 96 more people? More? Kindly clarify.)
- Plus:
  - Moving Trucks
  - Deliveries, FedEx, UPS, Mail, Internet providers, etc.
  - Visitors (Only 7 visitor parking for apartment)
  - Garbage Collection Vehicles
  - Maintenance and Grounds Management
  - Snow Removal Equipment
- The Building Proposal on Wells Avenue in Newton was not approved because the traffic circle could not manage the traffic of the proposed construction. Our Waban Valley Traffic Circle (Chestnut Street, Beacon Street, Karen Road and Montclair Road have pressing traffic and safety challenges similar to Wells Avenue.)

**Parking space shortage.**  
Cars parked on both  
sides of Moffat Road,  
near Montclair Road.



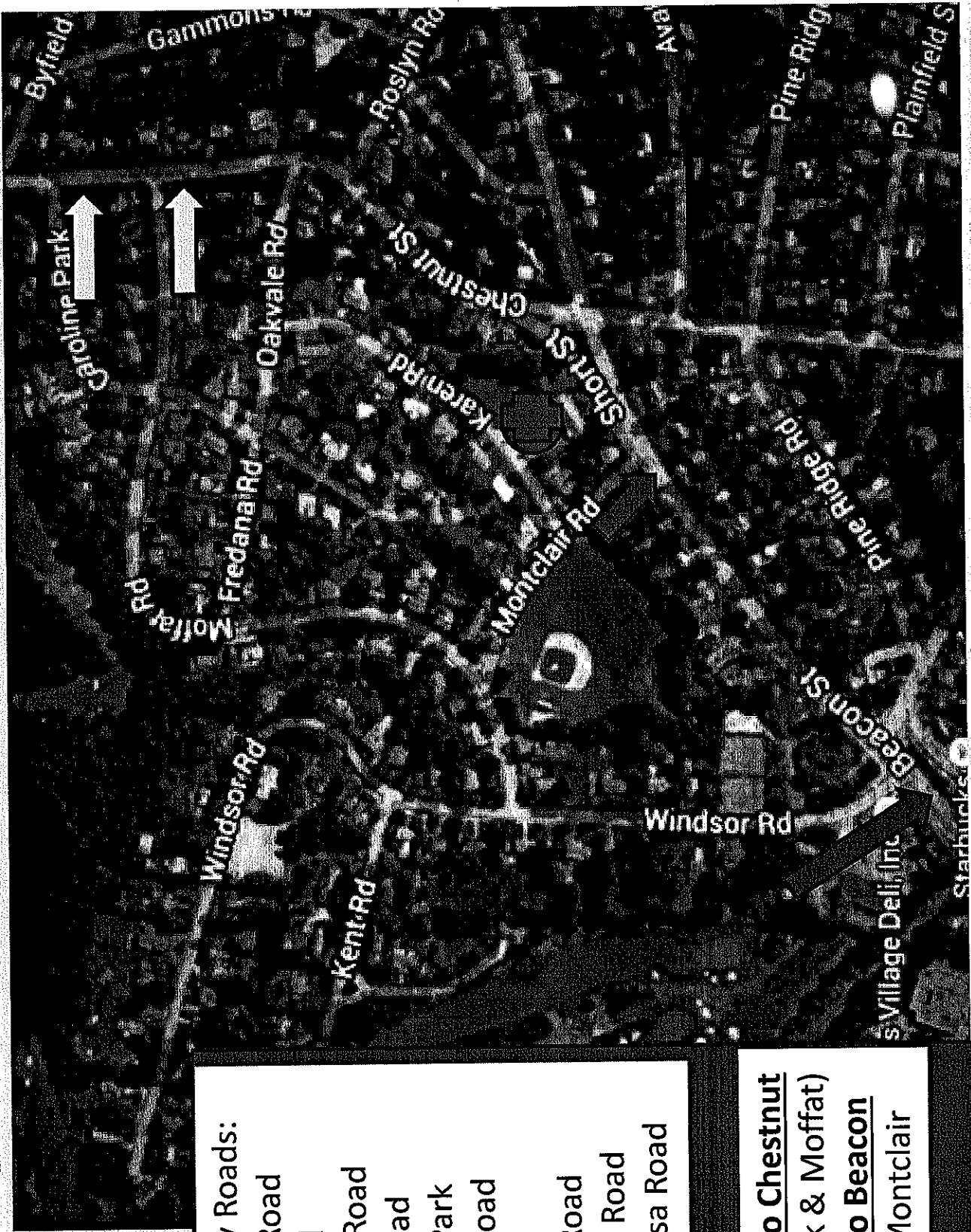
# Parking Space Shortage

Lincoln Field patrons, School Bus drop off and pick up, T commuters, Windsor Club patrons, and Waban store patrons park on:  
Moffat, Montclair, Karen and Windsor Roads.

Moffat Road

# Traffic Danger Hot Spots

- Safety of children on Montclair at Lincoln Field and the Children's Playground
- Increase traffic on Chestnut for the next 6 years because of Add-A-Lane on 128/Rt. 9.
- Already traffic jams backs up between Chestnut and sometimes all the way back to Commonwealth Avenue.
- Traffic Jams on Beacon at Angier
- Exiting from Waban Valley will probably need construction of a new road. Probably will need to build a new road from Hereford through the Golf Course, to Beacon or from Caroline Park to Fuller.
- School bus routes. Child broke his arm waiting for bus on corner of Chestnut and Beacon.
- School buses for Gann Academy, Angier students, Schechter, Brown?? (Please verify all buses.)
- Many bike riders and walkers to school and commuters every day.
- Existing roads can't handle the traffic increase. They cannot accommodate the buses, cars that park and then the owners walk from their cars to the T, games and activities at Lincoln Field, and lack of egress streets from the Waban Valley.
- The builders have mentioned possibly closing off traffic from Short Street. That would be a disaster, one out of every two cars which passed on Chestnut turned right into Short, so traffic is not backed up for miles, now it is backed up for blocks. This would cause even more congestion on one of Newton's busiest intersections.
- Cars make U-turns at the Waban Market area. Cars Make U-turns on Karen and Make U-turns on Montclair.
- Cars coming down Moffat at a blind corner, have been accidents there, to avoid Chestnut and Beacon Traffic.
- Exits from Waban Valley to Chestnut on Caroline Park are difficult, especially for left turns.
- Exits from Waban Valley to Chestnut street on Moffat is difficult, especially for left turns.
- Exits from Waban Valley to Chestnut Street on Oakvale is a private Road, and there is no visibility for left turns.
- Exits from Waban Valley to Beacon Street on Windsor is difficult, especially for making a left turn. The cross walk at the corner makes a right turn difficult too. Lot's of Angier School traffic.
- Exits from Waban Valley to Beacon Street on Montclair is difficult, especially for making left turn, with abundant traffic.



**Waban Valley Roads:**

- Windsor Road
- Kent Road
- Hereford Road
- Moffat Road
- Caroline Park
- Oakvale Road
- (private)
- Fredana Road
- Montclair Road
- Lawmarissa Road

**Only 2 exits to Chestnut**  
 (Caroline Park & Moffat)

**Only 2 exits to Beacon**  
 (Windsor & Montclair)

# Concerns about Mr. Argiros's Traffic Study

- **Is missing locations with children:** playground, park during games and activities (weekends), the crosswalks on Windsor and Beacon, swimming pool, and tennis courts to Waban Market (summer), the streets with snow and ice in the winter where 2 way streets become one way and some street become impassable.
- Done during **spring break** for many schools, many people were on vacation
- Study done from 7am-9am and then 4-6. School hours would be good too. Weekends and afterschool with games.
- Angier School is closed for now.
- Traffic study should include neighboring side streets with **buses** and parents picking up from buses from at least 5 different schools in the few neighboring streets (one child with broken arm).
- Looked at safety record for 5 years. Should go back 10 years, and show the **death** at Chestnut and Beacon from an EMT driving an ambulance.
- Mr. Argiros commented they might close off Short Street. That would make the problem worse by backing up traffic on Chestnut even more since about one third of cars turn right on Short. Water run-off on Short Street into drains.
- A study done in the winter months would have been of benefit.
- A study with flooding in the lot also changes the traffic patterns.

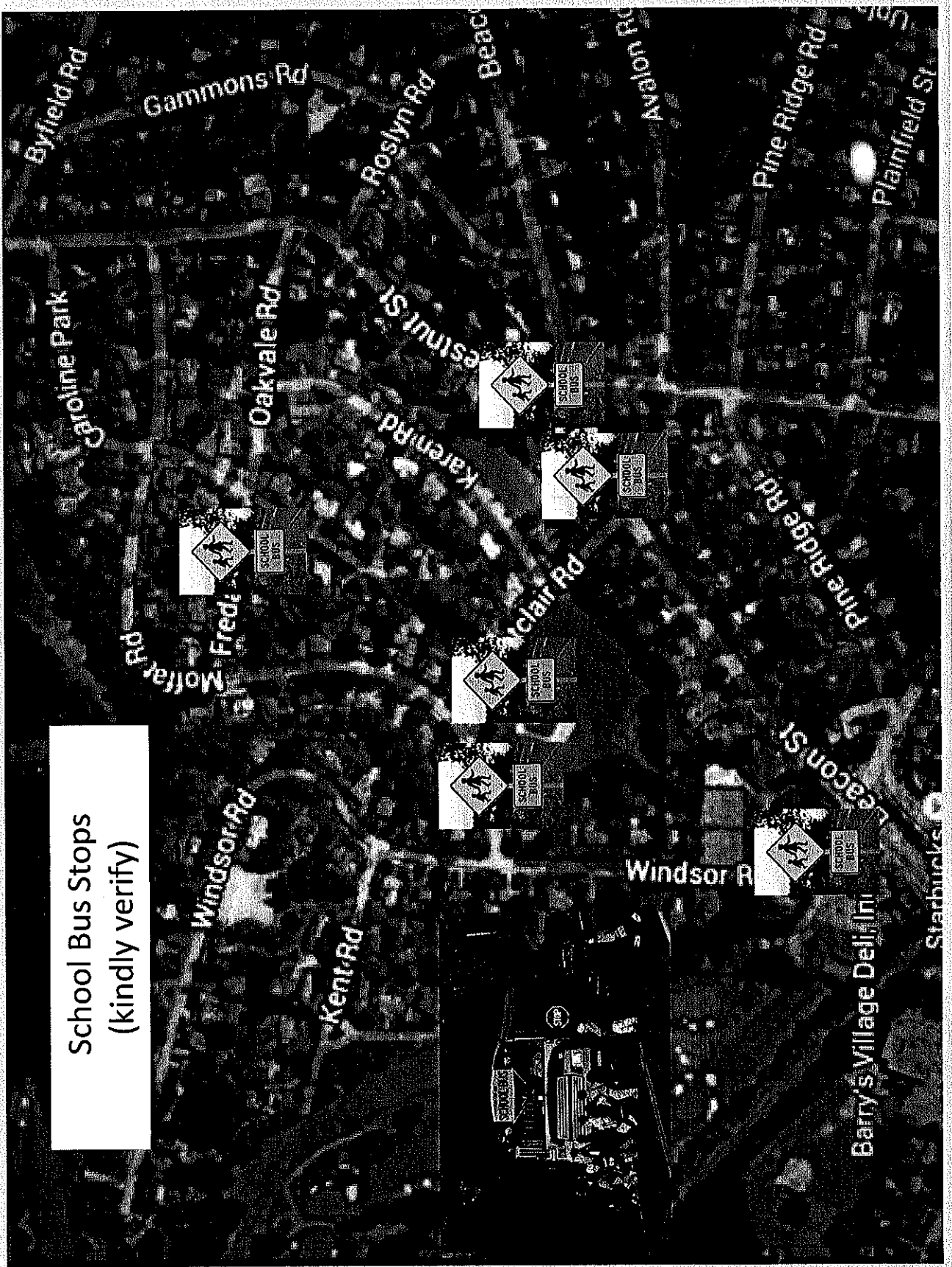
# School Bus Drop Off and Pick Ups

(Kindly verify these\*.)

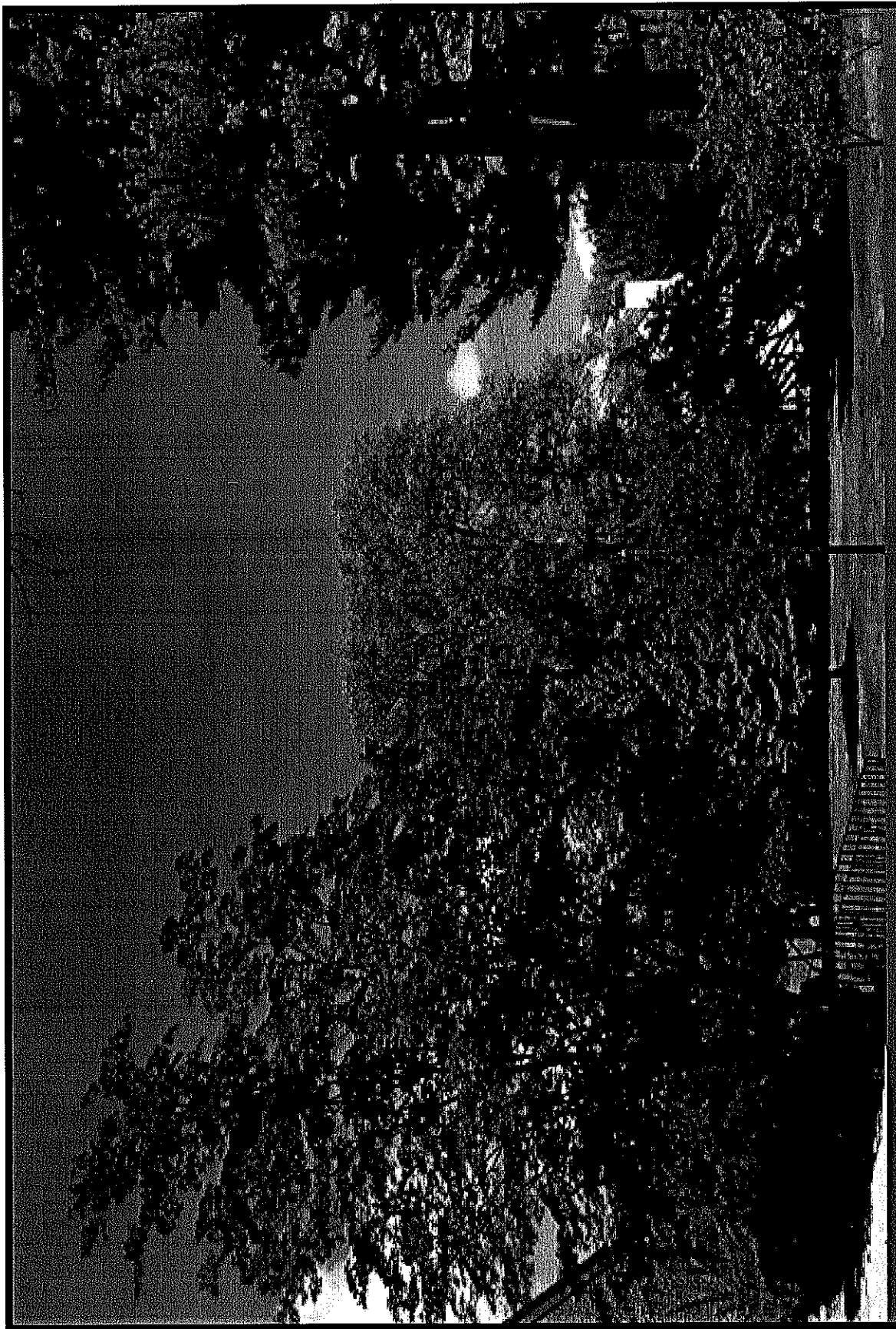
- Interim Angier School Bus
- Gann Academy Bus
- Schechter Bus
- Middle School Bus
- Other Private School Bus (?)
- High School Bus?
- Camps buses?



School Bus Stops  
(kindly verify)



Environmental Concerns: 100-foot-tall Mature Trees with nesting migratory birds at the Saint Philip Neer Church site.



## Environmental Concerns

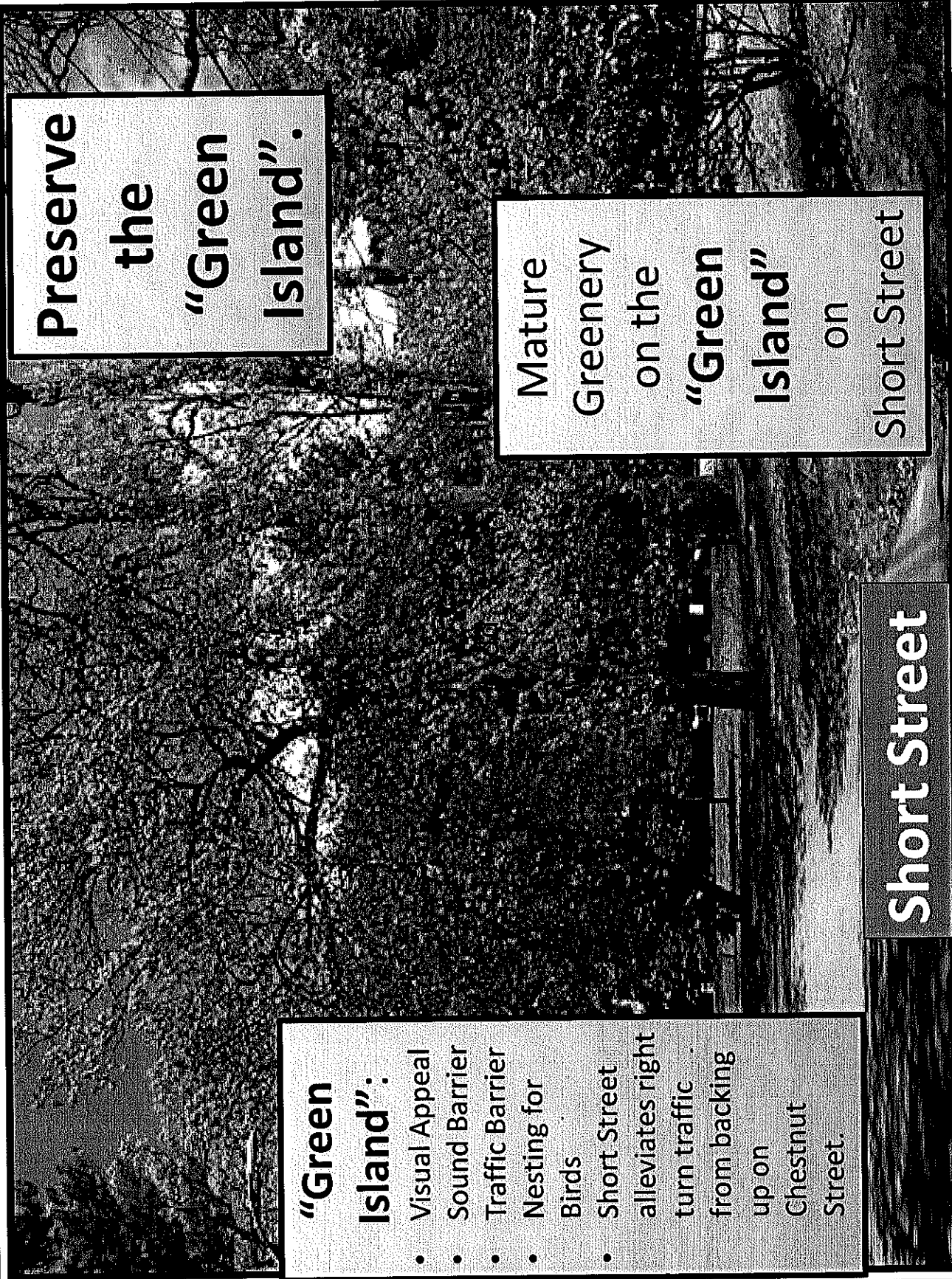
- **Not much greenspace.** Lot taken by buildings and parking.
- **Visibility** of neighboring trees and greenery and sky will be blocked by the massive size of the construction.
- Elderly neighbors on Karen say that the **sun will be blocked** by townhomes.
- 5 story (including ground level parking and dormers **47 feet to 53 feet**) building (3 feet taller than the new Angier School). There have been many complaints about the height of Angier School blocking sky and open feel. 50% wider than the Church.
- Will the **Short Street Green Island** with all it's beauty be removed?
- **10 foot setback**, very little lawn and greenery and very tall buildings.
- Current church, with South-east facing roof could lend itself to solar panels. No solar panels in current design.
- **Bird migration route**, they land on top of the trees and there are many mature tall pines and oaks on the site and Short street. They nest in these trees.
- **Easement** covered with mature 20 feet tall foliage.
- Water level on lot increases. **Flooding zone.** Water flows down Chestnut Street to drainage pipes on Short Street then into the Philip Neri Parking Lot.

## Easement

Between 599  
Beacon Street  
and SPN, there is  
about a 20 foot  
easement with a  
row of mature  
foliage.

Suggestion:  
preserve existing  
greenery.





**Short Street**

**“Green Island”:**

- Visual Appeal
- Sound Barrier
- Traffic Barrier
- Nesting for Birds
- Short Street alleviates right turn traffic from backing up on Chestnut Street.

**Preserve the “Green Island”.**

**Mature Greenery on the “Green Island” on**

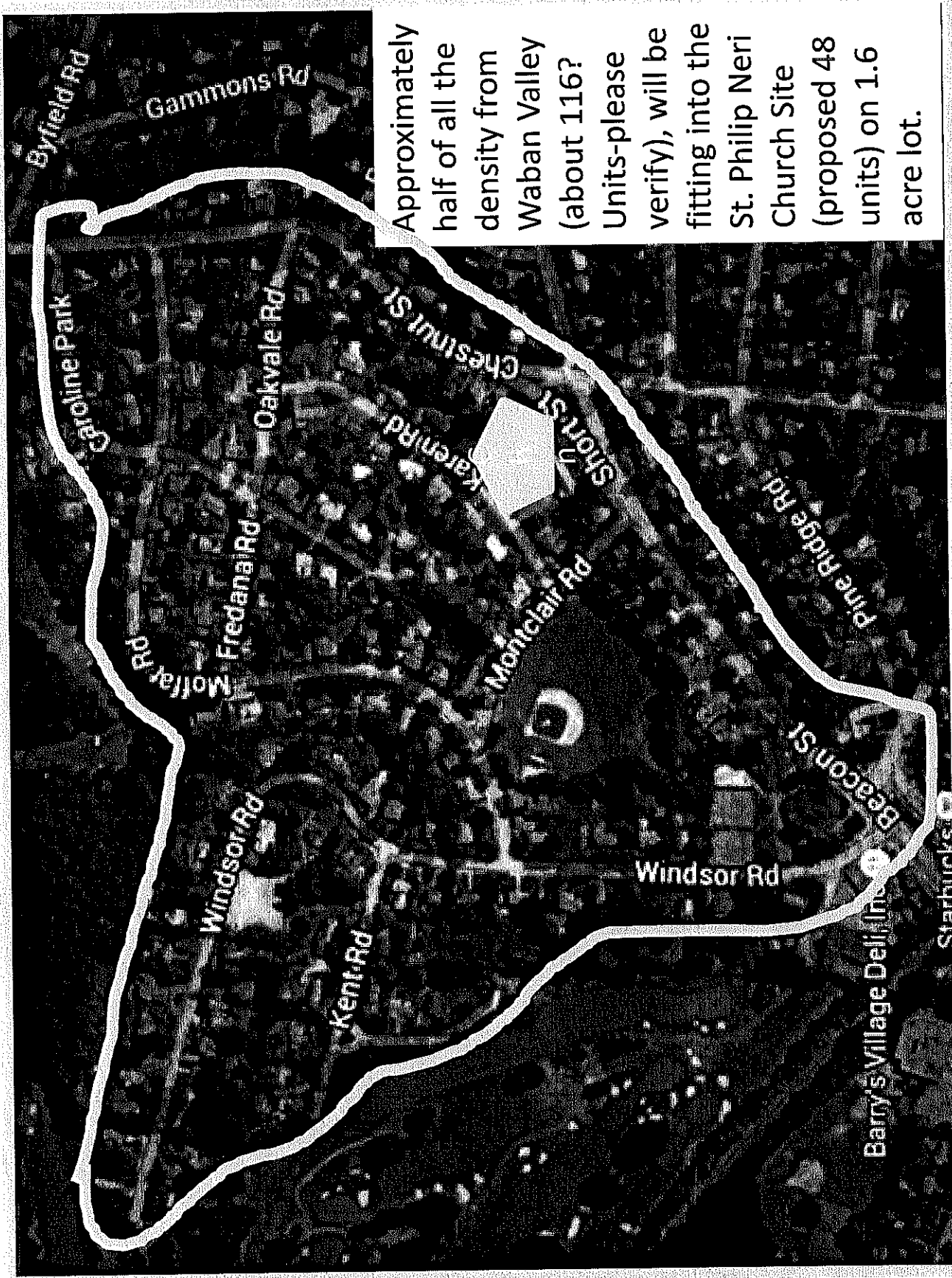
**Short Street**

# **Site Characteristics and Development Constraints**

- Potential Historic Landmark
- More than 10% slope
- Flood Hazard Area (Short Street into Parking Lot)
- Underground storage tank at corner of Karen and Oakvale Ave
- Easements with mature trees and greenery.

# Safety and Parking

- One architect said that for 48 units, there should be about 140 parking spaces, the builder only proposes 105.
- For 36 units, I believe there are only 7 proposed visitor parking spaces. The builder has not done a water table study, which may affect the proposed parking configuration.
- Cramped space for ice, water, and snow removal.
- Challenges for accessing dumpsters and garbage bins. Will there be 24 garbage bins aligned along Karen Road for the 12 townhomes?
- Challenges due to entrance and exit for cars and incoming garbage trucks and turn around.
- Fed X, UPS, Garbage, construction, snow removal adding to traffic.
- When the PhillipNeri Church was full on Sunday's traffic spilled out onto neighboring streets. The builders have proposed cutting the parking space area by at least half (judging by looking at diagrams). Where will the extra cars park? What about the winter when the streets narrow and there is no overnight parking for snow removal?
- Parking for T; Parking for Waban Market; Parking for the Windsor Club; Parking for Field and Playground spills into streets, parking and drop off for games and buses.



Approximately half of all the density from Waban Valley (about 116? Units-please verify), will be fitting into the St. Philip Neri Church Site (proposed 48 units) on 1.6 acre lot.

Barry's Village Devel. Inc.



# Scale and Density

- 48 proposed units on a 1.6 acre site.
- High density of 48 units: not enough parking and greenspace. Lot zoned for 4 residential units.
- Detrimental to the green, suburban character of the neighborhood.
- 47 foot tall, 3 feet taller than Angier's 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.
- Just the apartment (I think) without the townhomes, will be 1000 feet short of the old Angier school which was torn down.
- Obscures sun from houses on Karen. Many residents on Karen are elderly.
- Nearby rental units (about 2 blocks away) on Wyman Street are half the size of the proposed density and structure.
- Setbacks for other properties are 25 feet, not 10 feet or 17 feet for this property.

# Exploring Newton Housing Needs

- Nearby, the Ardmore Apartments (36 Units, 9 are low income) near Newton Wellesley border about 2 miles away, have many **vacancies for rent** for 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms. There is no shortage of apartments in the area.
- Realtors say there is a shortage of homes in Newton for less than **\$400,000**. Many moderate-income couples want to live in Newton and are looking for starter homes.
- People have expressed interest in wanting to **own** homes, and put their money into mortgages, and not use money for rent. They don't see renting as an investment for their future.

# Win-Win Approach

- Take into consideration density and appearance of neighborhood.
- Increase parking spaces and space for ice and snow removal.
- Adaptive re-use of the historic church subdivided into 15 units.
- Decrease density of building. Decrease height and width and number of units.
- Increase green space and lawn area.
- Utilize model and design of cape home next to property at 599 Beacon Street.



Next door neighbor (599 Beacon Street)  
to SPN Church. Possible model for  
a beautiful New York City

# Potential Worst Case Scenarios

- God forbid, accidents of children walking to school, or from Lincoln field.
- Neighbors are already thinking of selling their homes because the quality of their lives will decrease due to the new building that does not fit the character of the neighborhood. They are also concerned about traffic, congestion, lights and noise. Neighboring homeowners have moved into the area expecting quiet and beautiful suburbs. We might be getting massive, ugly construction.
- Homeowners will lose a huge portion of their life savings they have invested in their homes, which they thought might maintain them in retirement.
- Infrastructure (mainly roads) cannot support such a project and will decrease the appeal of Newton.
- Traffic will cut through neighborhood from Beacon and Chestnut, decreasing the quality of our life.
- There may be a loss of greenery which already exists on site, and Short Street Island.
- Builder continues to purchase neighboring properties to expand enterprise and further ruin the character of the neighborhood.
- Landlord is negligent in the maintenance of the property.
- Sun is blocked by tall buildings.

# Philosophy

- Let's keep Newton as the Garden City, with the preservation of greenspace, the environment and open space.
- Let's keep traffic manageable.
- Let's keep our children safe on our streets.
- Let's ensure that the infrastructure is able to support the new project.

Consider: Traffic, Parking; Environmental Concerns; Preservation of Historical sites; Police; Fire; Snow Removal; Garbage Removal.

May 19, 2015

Waban, a Village of Newton, MA

**Regarding: Development Proposal at 1521 Beacon Street, Waban, MA  
02468**

I am a happy resident of Waban Valley, (bounded by Windsor Rd., Caroline Park Rd., Chestnut St. and Beacon St.) Who wouldn't be? It has been compared to Mayberry or Mr. Roger's neighborhood.

I know the Waban Valley neighborhood well. I have lived here a dozen years. I walk in the neighborhood almost daily, and speak with many of my neighbors. I have lost 75 pounds over the last dozen years—my Waban Valley-walking-diet (along with Weight Watchers)!

Neighbors walk, jog, push strollers, and ride bikes. Children play basketball in the street and cars take side-streets so as not to disturb the game. Kids walk to school and bus stops and the park and playground. Neighbors volunteer to help other neighbors with snow removal. It is peacefully serene. Birds chirp, turkeys gobble-gobble. There are beautifully landscaped lawns, phlox climbing down rock walls, majestic trees and lilacs in bloom. You can touch and breath nature in this Shangrila.

We now have a wonderful opportunity to share this bliss with those who would not necessarily be able to afford homes in Waban Valley. I am speaking about the proposed development at the former St. Philip Neri Church at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban, on the corner of Beacon and Chestnut.

We also have a wonderful opportunity to do this project well. Very well. If done very well, it might become a template for all of the US since our own Mayor Warren serves on the advisory board of the US Conference of Mayors in DC, and is the chair of the Community Housing and Development Committee.

This is how I propose we do it well. First, we need to understand the motivations and goals of all those affected by this development. Understanding our motivations can help us provide an overall win-win template.

- **The builder**, Michael Argiros, has proposed building 48 residential rental units (36 units in an apartment building, and another 12 townhouses), on a 1.6-acre lot. At the beginning of the project, his lawyer Mr. Buchbinder reported that they were considering single residences; or a "friendly" 40B or a regular 40B. Mr. Buchbinder commented that they could make a profit with any one of these choices.

- Most **abutters and neighbors** would prefer a park, or public green space with parking for Lincoln Park (which lacks parking), or single non-rental family homes, similar to homes already in the neighborhood. Most neighbors and abutters are willing to compromise. At a recent meeting with over 100 neighbors, the vast majority raised their hands in agreement with a proposal which would preserve the church, and subdivide it into residences within the church. 10 and 20 residences inside the church is one such proposal, with the rest of the lot used for parking and greenspace. Sadly, the nearest abutters on Beacon Street, are more modest homes. One neighbor is affected with only a 10 foot setback from the property.

Almost 100% of the neighbors agree that the proposed building is too large for the site. Either the apartments or the townhouses fit, but not both.

Some Waban Valley Neighbors are concerned that the builder will buy surrounding properties to expand the project, and encroach further into the neighborhood. The lot was purchased at 69,050 feet and now is 70,335 feet.

Neighbors are most concerned with the scale and density of the project. Much of the lot will be building structure, parking lot, dumpsters and cars. The width of the apartment alone is 1 ½ times more than the current church.

The 12 additional townhomes leave little room for parking, maneuvering in the lot, and virtually no space for greenery. The proposed 47-53? foot heights exceeds local zoning laws. The building would be at least three feet taller than the new Angier School (which people are complaining is too tall).

To put this massive structure on one of Newton's busiest intersections and crossroads, has been described as a poor decision.

- According to **Chapter 40B**, the 'development's design will be appropriate for the site on which it is located.' Therefore, it is mandated that the design not detract from the neighborhood, and be similar in scope and design to existing structures.
- **Low income citizens** would like the opportunity for their children to attend Newton's stellar schools. I believe that the builder had mentioned wanting to cater to the elderly and young professionals. There are 2-3 townhomes (out of 12 units) which will be affordable for households of three making less than \$44,000/year (also kindly verify). The elderly are



looking for no stairs, and all the proposed townhomes are three stories and with only 2 units being handicap accessible. 80% will be non-affordable housing.

- Some in the **Federal Government** are advocating for the urbanization of suburbia. Will this affect our current Waban Valley Shangrila?
- **Folks moving to the suburbs**, often do so from cities. They want to be in less dense, quieter, calmer areas, with green spaces, bike lanes, safe streets, less congestion and less noise.
- I spoke with some realtors who claim that a majority of **people looking for housing** in Newton are looking for homes to buy, not rent. They would rather spend their income on a mortgage, rather than lose money on rent. Are we making the correct assumptions about people's housing needs? Realtors mentioned many house-hunters looking for properties under \$400,000 in Newton, of which there is little or no inventory.

For those needing to rent, there already are affordable, unoccupied apartments 2 miles away (the Ardmore Apartments), with one and two bedroom vacancies. I spoke with other developers who say their market analysis reveals that renters will not be willing to pay the \$4,000-\$5,000/month rental pricetag that Mr. Argiros' says he will be charging, with a one year lease for about 80% of the total units. Some have raised the question that this may leave the property abandoned and neglected once the project starts. It was mentioned at the Waban Area Council meeting that Mr. Argiros has filed for bankruptcy in the past, this has not been verified. If it did happen in the past, maybe we can work with him to help ensure that this does not happen again with this project.

- The Newton.Gov Website states, **Mayor (Warren)** focuses his efforts on making Newton a livable, sustainable, 21<sup>st</sup> century city, and uses data and demographics to improve public safety, infrastructure, education, and economic development, knowing that his administration is making decisions that will affect Newton for decades to come.'
- Our **Newton Historical Commission** preserves, promotes and develops the historical assets of the Newton. The Saint Philip Neri Church was built in 1928 by Father Donovan, and may be considered a historical landmark, and hopefully the commission can work to preserve it.
- The **Newton's Conservators** work to preserve open space in Newton. I assume they will want to ensure the preservation of green space with trees dividing Short Street from Beacon Street, although the developer had mentioned possible changes on Short Street and a rebuilt intersection at Beacon and Chestnut. All these proposals remove beautiful mature trees and greenspace, along with the accompanying

flora and fauna. The development should include as much greenspace as the surrounding neighborhood. One of the easements on the property has mature, beautiful bushes and trees.

- **Bike Newton** promotes bicycling as a viable, safe and convenient method of transportation and can work to build bike lanes in the neighborhood, and ensure that there will be enough parking spaces for the development.

When cars park on Karen Road and Montclair Road, the traffic flow is difficult, especially when parents are dropping off their children at the park and at the numerous bus stops.

- Newton's Division of Environmental Affairs **Department of Beautification** improves the appearance of Newton. I hope that they will be on board with this project so that the development will add, and not detract to the beauty of the area.

Maybe the Department of Beautification can submit design ideas that may solve the following problem: Several elderly neighbors facing the property on Karen are concerned that the townhomes will be cutting off the wonderful sun exposure that they now enjoy.

Also some of the department of beautification can help now. Some of St. Philip Neri Church has recently been vandalized. Glass from recently broken windows has not been removed. There is garbage littered around the property. Lawn and greenery had not been fully attended to during the course of this year by the owner. Leaves have not been removed. Storm drains have not been cleared.

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**Below are some ideas/concerns which might help create win-win situations for all the involved parties:**

**Public Safety and Traffic**

- It would benefit all to conduct a thorough traffic study which would include:
  - The 6 year building project on Route 9 and 128 which will back up traffic on Chestnut Street, significantly.

- The 6 year building project on Route 9 and 128 which will back up traffic on Beacon Street, significantly
- This traffic study should also show the death of an EMT driving an ambulance on the corner of Chestnut and Beacon.
- The traffic study will probably reveal occasional traffic backed up from Commonwealth Avenue all the way to Beacon Street.
- (Kindly verify if there are 4-7 bus pick ups and drop offs from around the corner of the development, to one or two blocks away for both public and private schools and camps.)
- Sports Teams Drop off and pick ups at the Warren Lincoln Field on Montclair with and without buses.
- Children walking/biking to and from Angier school
- Children in playground on Montclair
- Children crossing Beacon to get to Angier at Windsor.
- Children crossing Windsor to and from markets and pool (especially in the summer).
- Increased traffic, congestion, parking, safety issues:
  - Moving Trucks
  - Deliveries, FedEx, UPS, Mail, Internet providers, etc.
  - Visitors (Only 7 marked visitor parking for the apartment complex)
  - Garbage Collection (24 cans on Karen Rd. just for the townhomes?)
  - Maintenance and Grounds Management Staff
  - Snow Removal Equipment
- The current traffic study is **missing locations with children**: The playground, the park during games and activities (weekends), the crosswalks on Windsor and Beacon, kids walking from the swimming pool and tennis courts to Waban Market (summer), the streets with snow and ice in the winter where 2 way streets become one way and some street become impassable, Angier School traffic and parking.

- Done during spring break for some schools, and many people were on vacation.
- Study done from 7am-9am and then 4-6. School hours would be good too. Weekends with games is important too.
- Angier School is closed for now. We need to take into account Angier School.
- Did not do neighboring side streets with **buses** and parents picking up from buses from at least 5 different schools in the few neighboring streets (one broken arm).
- Looked at safety record for 5 years. Should go back 10 years, and show the **death** at Chestnut and Beacon from an EMT driving an ambulance.
- I know of one child who broke his arm while waiting for a bus because of a dangerous situation.
- Mr. Argiros commented they might close off Short Street. That would make the problem even worse by backing up traffic on Chestnut even more.

## **Newton's Infrastructure**

### **Environmental concerns**

There are water drainage and flooding concerns at Short Street and St. Philip Neri Church. The water flows north to south on Chestnut Street and makes a small river on Short Street and enters down into the St. Philip Neri parking lot, which often floods. Does the city know please if the developer has taken into account the flooding and water table of the property? If not, the proposal may end up being a six story building. This may also affect the parking and snow removal plans. A neighbor has currently been clearing the drains at the St. Philip Neri property.

There is more than a 10% slope on some of the property.

There is minimal proposed greenspace. Some existing trees are on the easement. Nesting migratory bird path.

### **Parking**

There already is a severe parking shortage at times in the neighborhood. People park in the neighborhood who take the T (there is not enough T parking). Parking shortage at Lincoln Park and playground on Montclair and Karen. Parking shortage at the Waban and Beacon retail spaces

(Waban Market, etc.) Windsor Road. Parking shortage for parents who come to pick up their children at the buses who drop off at this location.

The townhomes have garages in the plans, but it is not clear if tenants will use their garages for general storage or for their cars. One architect mentioned that those many residents would require 140 parking spaces instead of 105. Of those 105 provided, some are for double parking. Their needs to be more space for maneuvering since cars will be parked in back of each other.

For the apartment complex, there are only 7 proposed visitor parking spaces.

The proposed entrance and exit from the complex is 20 feet, with a sharp turn, meaning that the 100+ tenants), would be quite backed-up in the cramped parking area provided. I assume this will back up traffic on Karen and on Montclair. Although the T is close, we cannot mandate that the tenants not own cars, as some have proposed. Many low income tenants do own cars We need to provide in site parking amenities to all. The lack of parking spots will create spillage of parking into the streets. With snow, it might become a problem that a proper design will need to address.

### **Roads and Traffic**

The current road infrastructure is not meeting the current needs of Waban Valley residents, and Newton's citizens. An additional 100+ people will create a significant increase in the already very dangerous situations, especially for all the children and elderly in the neighborhood.

Possibly building housing for 15-20 individuals might fit more easily into the 1.6 acre lot, and be more easily incorporated into the existing Waban Valley infrastructure.

I am looking forward to working together to create this win-win situation for all.

Sincerely,

Monica Grinberg MPH

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Stephen Campbell <stephentcampbell@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 7:18 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Concerns With 1521 Beacon Street Development Proposal

May 18, 2015

Dear Newton Planning Department,

Having lived in Waban now for 8 years, I have grown to love many aspects of this neighborhood. As I have read about the proposed 1521 Beacon Street development I am getting extremely uncomfortable with the design. I understand that growth and change in a neighborhood is inevitable, but it should always be appropriate for its surroundings. I do not believe that the proposed development as currently defined is appropriate for the space and surrounding areas. Waban is known for many things, but some of the key elements are the reasonably proportional houses to land and the fact that our kids can safely play throughout the neighborhood. The proposed development negatively impacts both of these elements and would dramatically alter the fabric of the neighborhood.

Newton has been extremely rigid on its definition of what is an appropriate building vs. green space ratio. Cramming this many units and parking spaces into 1.6 acres would dramatically alter the look and feel of this neighborhood. It would be completely out of character of the surrounding homes. Any structure that is taller than the public elementary school would be an unreasonable addition to this neighborhood. Similarly, the townhouses that overshadow the single family homes on Karen Road would completely alter the feel of that street that is known for its light and openness. Lastly, green space is paramount to the fabric of our community. Newton, and specifically Waban, is known for its large mature trees that stand to symbolize the generations of families that have come before us. A developer building a complex as large as this will need to remove all of these old growth trees and any replacements would be dwarfed by these giant structures.

Introducing 100+ new cars to this corner of Waban seems impractical and unsafe. The proposed flow of traffic can't reasonably absorb this many cars on the side or main streets. It is extremely difficult to navigate these roads with the existing volume of traffic and Chestnut St. backs up extensively with the existing demand on these intersections. The flow of traffic is concerning, but the risk to our kids is terrifying. On any day you'll find countless kids learning to ride their bikes around Lincoln Playground or running around chasing baseballs and soccer balls. The increased traffic in this area would dramatically increase the risk to these kids. I would be extremely concerned about the increased traffic scaring off these kids from this neighborhood or even worse one of them getting hurt by a driver rushing down these side streets to avoid the built up traffic.

It is imperative that we keep the key building blocks of Waban whole. The beauty of our surroundings made up of the green space and the reasonably sized structures in conjunction with an environment where kids can play throughout the neighborhood cannot be lost. The 1521 Beacon Street complex as currently proposed is not reasonable or appropriate.

I hope you take into account these views as you are assessing the proposed designs for 1521 Beacon Street.

Thank you,  
Stephen T. Campbell  
25 Ridge Rd.  
Waban, MA 02468

## Norine Silton

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**From:** charles.rich@alum.mit.edu  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 7:31 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Setti D. Warren  
**Subject:** Concerns about Development of St. Philip Neri Church Site

Dear Alexandra Ananth,

I am a neighbor one block away and attended the neighborhood meeting recently where the developer presented his plans in detail.

I want to communicate to you my strong concerns and objection to the development in the form currently proposed. The scale and density of the project is out of place in the surrounding area. The main building will loom over Short Street with three stories of height and a tiny setback. I am also worried that the additional traffic caused by almost a hundred new cars will lead to unsafe conditions for children in the area, including the large number of children running across the road to the park at the end of the street for baseball and soccer games. The morning traffic on Chestnut Street already often backs up from the Beacon Street light almost all the way to Comm Ave. This will only get worse----the developer claims that upgrading the intersection will help, but did not say that \*he\* was going to pay for it.

Finally, I want to say that I am not opposed in principle to a rental and/or multi-family development on this site, but it needs to be of a reasonable size, which the current proposal is not (and would not be allowed without the questionable 40B exemption). I hope the city will fight this on my behalf with all available legal means.

Thank you,

Charles Rich  
49 Lawmarissa Rd  
Newton, MA 02468



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Suzanne <sqf1@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2015 8:40 PM  
**To:** lfeldman@choate.com; Setti D. Warren; 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** SPN Project

May 19, 2015

Waban, MA

**RE: Development Proposal at 1521 Beacon Street, Waban, MA**

To whom it may concern:

We have lived in Waban in the neighborhood in question (i.e., on 24 Fredana Road) for eleven and a half years and have three children, ages 16, 12 and 5. We urge you to consider the following safety and other issues that will arise from the proposed development.

### **HIGHLY DANGEROUS TRAFFIC PROBLEM/PUBLIC SAFETY**

Newton has had a series of traffic and bike accidents over the last several years, including a number of accidental deaths. The proposed project involves the addition of 48 apartment units and over a hundred parking spaces. Since one of the streets (Oakvale) that would provide drivers access to the apartment building is a private way owned by its residents, all of the traffic and drivers will need to gain access to the building through one other street (making a right on Beacon and Montclair to enter Karen Road). The addition of all the cars and traffic entering and exiting through one street will lead to a highly dangerous and congested traffic problem.

As it is now the intersection between Oakvale and Chestnut is extremely precarious -- drivers on Chestnut speed by at a speed that makes it risky just to turn from Oakvale onto Chestnut. I will advise my high schooler to avoid that street entirely as he's learning to drive. Certainly adding additional traffic through that spot is asking for trouble. Many years ago, a traffic accident at the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon resulted in the death of an individual involved in that accident. Anyone involved in reviewing this project on behalf of the City of Newton or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should think carefully about the traffic safety issues that will result from this project.

### **BACKGROUND OF DEVELOPER**

Since this project would be the largest construction project in the history of Waban, and have wide ranging implications for the community, we assume that the City of Newton and all housing agencies or governmental entities involved in reviewing this proposal will do a very thorough independent background check on the developer to confirm that he is a suitable developer for this important project. How could any agency review/approve this project without a comprehensive review of the developer's background, experience, skills, financing sources, other comparable projects he has been involved with and his overall personal and business history? Any effective background review should not rely upon information presented by the party being reviewed; an independent investigation should be conducted with the results revealed to the community.

### **PROJECT WILL INTERFERE WITH WABAN'S CURRENT SERVICES FOR DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE**

Angier school has a very large population of METCO and integrated students coming from other communities in the Boston area (Dorchester, Roxbury). These students commute to and from Waban through the public bus system every morning and afternoon. This is a fabulous thing that our community does and my children have all benefited from sharing their school experience with kids from all walks of life. We are very proud of the "open arms" culture and history of Waban and Angier School. The great irony here is that by trying to introduce a 40B project in an effort to provide affordable housing to Waban, the scale of the project and related traffic issues will make it harder for Waban and Angier to continue to service the METCO and integrated populations it currently serves. Indeed the METCO students' ride to Angier tends to run over an hour long. This project will worsen their difficult commute.

### **PROJECT DESIGN NOT APPROPRIATE FOR SITE**

How can the developer satisfy Chapter 40B's mandate that the "development's design will be appropriate for the site on which it is located" if his project involves a building taller than any Waban has ever seen before, with no room for greenery and an addition of over a hundred cars to an already dense area? We hope you will consider the following serious concerns this proposal presents:

Our boys ride the middle school and high school bus each morning from Lincoln Field, to Brown Middle School and Newton South High School. The buses will hit additional traffic due to the proposed development and possibly dozens of middle school and high school students will need to be added to the bus stop list, further crowding a tense bus situation. (There have been numerous complaints of bullying on the school buses - another issue the City simply can not ignore).

By sending dozens if not hundreds of cars through our neighborhood each day, the developer will be **shutting down** the biking and basketball playing, street hockey and jump rope enjoyed by so many children in this neighborhood. How could that possibly comport with 40B's mandate?

The new Angier school has not even opened yet. An "appropriateness" assessment simply cannot be conducted until the new school is up and running. It is the largest project in Waban's history. We all need to help ensure a smooth transition for the approximately 400 children who will be attending the new school.

#### **THANK YOU**

Finally, we very much appreciate your public service and the time you re devoting to consider this important project. Thank you,

Suzanne and Lee Feldman  
24 Fredana Rd  
Waban, MA 02468

**Barbara and Richard Berenson**  
**39 Karen Rd.**  
**Waban MA 02468**  
**Barbara.f.berenson@gmail.com**  
**Rick@berenson.us**  
**617-969-0523**

RE: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, 1521 BEACON ST., WABAN

City of Newton  
Dept. of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton MA 02459

May 17, 2015

Dear Sir/Madam:

We are abutters to the property located at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban ("site"), and write to express our opposition to the project proposed by applicant Waban AMA Realty Ventures, LLC "(the developer)" at this site. At the outset, we note that Newton has satisfied the state's requirement to have affordable housing on at least 1.5 percent of its developable land. Additionally, Mass Housing should not issue a project eligibility letter because the developer's 40B proposal fails to satisfy the required criteria. Our primary concerns are as follows:

#### **Environmental Concerns**

Despite frequent and well known instances of basement flooding in the area and water pooling on the site during heavy rains, the developer's Project Eligibility Application (PEA) does not include any environmental study nor any plan to mitigate water issues. Moreover, the developer's plan lacks adequate drainage as the lot would be almost entirely covered by dwellings and parking.

The developer's PEA also fails to provide any meaningful green space for its residents or the neighbors. There is no open space to be viewed from the street, and the height of the proposed buildings place nearby single-family residences in perpetual shade.

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfied these environmental concerns.

#### **Traffic & Safety**

Despite well-known safety and traffic concerns, the developer's PEA also fails to include a traffic study nor any plan to mitigate safety and traffic issues. This project

would add 48 units and over 100 parking spaces to the neighborhood. The developer has proposed that all cars would enter and exit from Karen Road, a street with eleven houses.

Karen Road is perpendicular to Lincoln Field, which is used by neighborhood children, soccer leagues, and Newton high school baseball teams. The heaviest usage occurs weekday afternoons and early evenings and all day on weekends in the fall, spring and early/late summer. These frequent and high volume uses cause considerable traffic and crowded parking along Karen and Montclair Roads. (See attached photos taken on May 16, 2015). Children and their families are crossing the street (without traffic lights or crosswalks). An additional 100 cars would pose a tremendous danger to children.

The developer has also failed to address the extreme difficulty of accessing both Beacon and Chestnut streets from Karen Road. Access to either of these streets (necessary to leave Karen Road) requires a driver to use overburdened and dysfunctional intersections.

To access Beacon Street, cars use Montclair Road. However, from Montclair Road, cars seeking to turn onto Beacon Street must contend with traffic coming westbound on both Short and Beacon Streets as well as eastbound traffic on Beacon Street. There is heavy traffic, especially at rush hour, and no traffic lights to regulate traffic flow. There is one stop sign -- at the end of Short Street, but unfortunately, many who drive on Short Street do not heed- or even notice -- the Stop sign because they are instead looking over their left shoulder to assess traffic on Beacon Street. If Beacon street traffic permits, these cars speed up to merge directly onto Beacon Street without stopping. This create extreme danger for cars on Montclair Road.

Exiting onto Chestnut Street is also very challenging. It is virtually impossible to make a left turn from Oakvale as, due to a curve on Chestnut Street, there is no ability to see cars coming from the left. Oak Vale is also an unmaintained road (it is not a public way). Moffat Road or Caroline Park provide better visibility to exit onto Chestnut Street, but left turns (necessary to access West Newton and the Mass. Turnpike) are very challenging as heavy traffic runs in both directions. During rush hour, it is common to wait several minutes for a break in traffic sufficient to permit a turn onto Chestnut Street from either of these streets. Even then, the turns are risky and must be completed with great efficiency.

A large development on the site would greatly exacerbate these already dangerous intersections, causing long and dangerous backups on Montclair, Moffat and Caroline Park.

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfied these traffic and safety concerns.

## Massing & Scale

The developer has also failed to include the required "locus map identifying the site within a plan of the neighborhood, accompanied by photographs of the surrounding buildings and features that provide an understanding of the physical context of the site." 760 CMR 56.04(2)(c). These required items would demonstrate that the developer's proposal is not "generally appropriate" for the site.

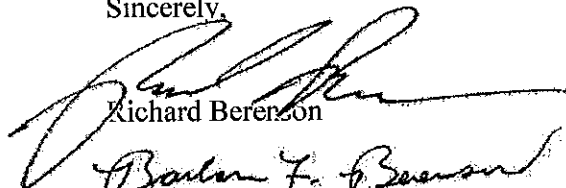
We are aware that any multi-family development will by its nature introduce buildings into the neighborhood that differ from surrounding buildings in terms of massing and scale. The developer's proposed townhouses and apartment building are, however, so large and tall that they are not "generally appropriate." The townhouses are 3½ stories or 47 feet tall while the apartment building on Short Street would be four to five stories. The developer's proposed buildings are all substantially taller than other nearby dwellings and, indeed, taller than any of the commercial buildings in Waban and the Angier School. Additionally, the developer's planned 48 units would result in construction that is so dense as to exceed the site's carrying capacity.

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfied these massing & scale concerns.

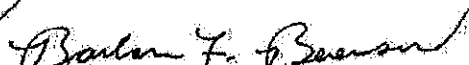
## Conclusion

A Project Eligibility determination should not issue unless and until the developer has satisfactorily addressed these environmental, traffic & safety, and massing & scale concerns.

Sincerely,



Richard Berenson

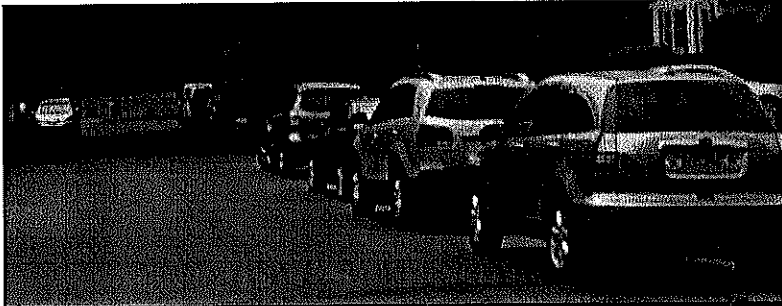


Barbara Berenson

## Karen & Montclair on a Typical Saturday



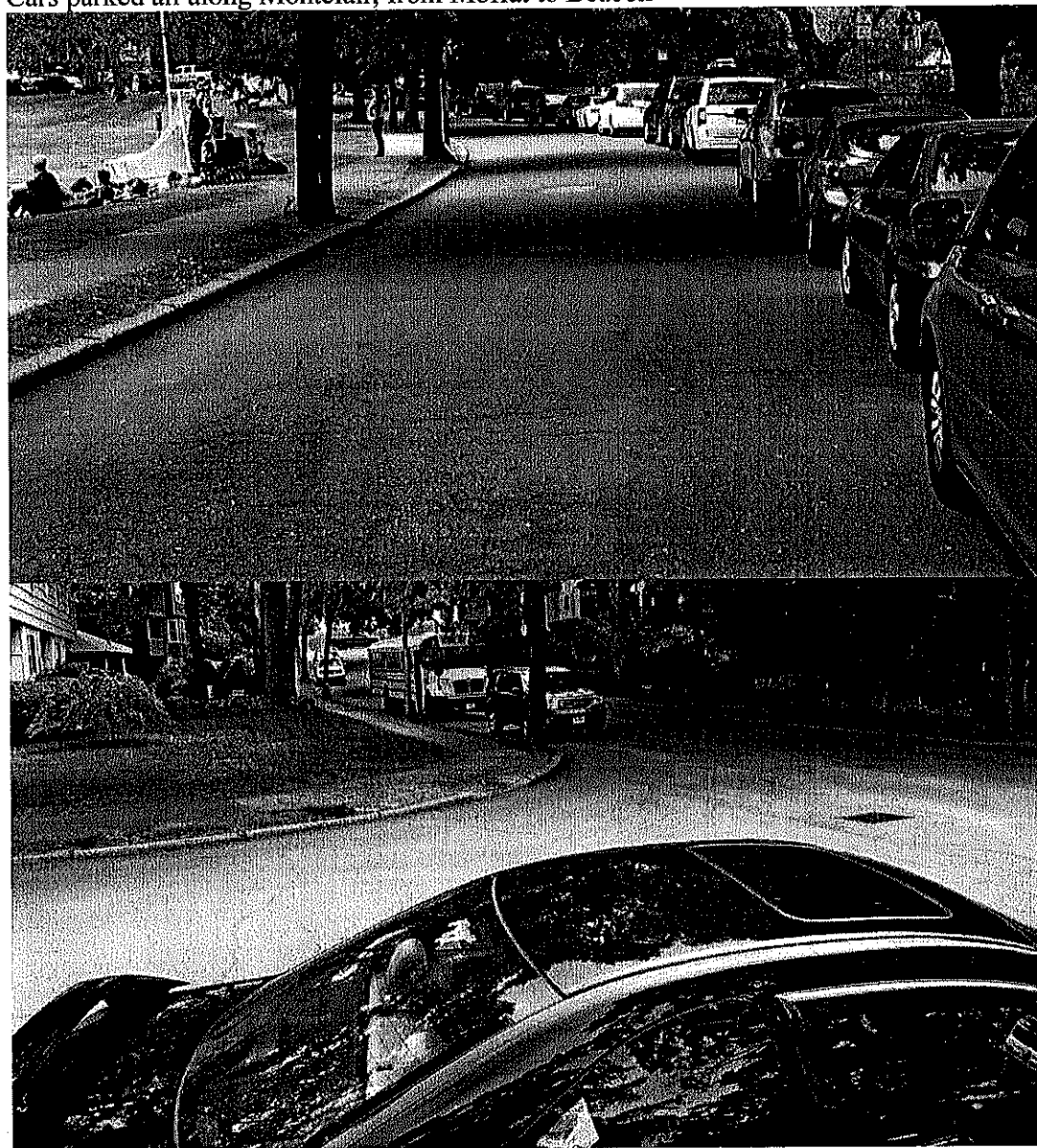
Cars parked on Karen, including in the Saint Philip Neri parking lot.  
When the Church lot was unavailable, people parked on both sides of Karen Road



A very busy playing field – three soccer games PLUS a baseball game.



Cars parked all along Montclair, from Moffat to Beacon



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Henry Lerner <hmlerner@henrylerner.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 8:51 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Attention: Alexandra Ananth

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to discuss the proposed new housing development at the Saint Philip Neri site. As a resident of Moffet Road in Waban for the past 24 years I have major concerns about this project.

1. As is discernible from the plans that have been disseminated, the project is much too massive for the site on which it would be built. It would be too high, it is too dense, and it is more fitted for a downtown project than for suburban housing.
2. The road entrances and exits and the number of allocated parking spaces in the plans are not nearly enough for the proposed population of the development.
3. The increase in traffic activity from the proposed project would overwhelm the already overcrowded intersection at the corners of Chestnut and Beacon streets. It would back up traffic through Waban Square and interfere with school bus pickups in this area.

A housing development on this site may be appropriate. However it should be of the scale that is compatible with the neighborhood into which it is going to be built and its demands on the community infrastructure-- roads, schools-- must be reasonable and proportionate to the size of the partial it occupies.

Sincerely,  
Henry Lerner M.D.  
Phyllis Scherr M.D.  
196 Windsor Rd.  
Wildman, Massachusetts 02468  
617-894-1397



**Norine Silton**

---

**From:** rnezafat@bidmc.harvard.edu  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 9:02 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

Hi,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the new development on 1521 Beacon St. Our house is located @ 1558 Beacon.

I attended the meeting held by developer and I was quite disappointed how this developer is using Chapter 40B process to build a gigantic building which does not fit in here. Just building a few tiny condos to qualify 40B while building many townhouses and larger condos to gain \$\$\$ does not make much sense and is disgraceful. City should fight this construction and the builder has absolutely no qualification to do this project. This lot is TOO SMALL for such a big building. The traffic study was not appropriately done. Angier is closed!! THE building height is too big- there is no green space, traffic will be a major issue.

Thank you  
Reza

**Reza Nezafat, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Harvard Medical School  
Division of Cardiology, Department of Medicine  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
330 Brookline Avenue, E/SH-455  
Boston, MA 02215  
Office: 617-667-1747  
Fax: 617-975-5480

This document may contain information that is privileged, CONFIDENTIAL and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify me immediately, as the use of this information is strictly prohibited.

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Deborah Charness <dcflutemagic@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 1:25 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** St. Philip Neri Site

I would like to add my voice to the list of other Waban residents who are deeply concerned and opposed to a multi-family housing project being built at the St Philip Neri site. Not only is the proposed project destined to be unsightly and out of character in a single family home zone, but ANY increased traffic at that intersection and around it poses a significant danger to all. In the 26 years our family has lived in Waban we have seen more than a handful of terrible and fatal traffic accidents at the corner of Beacon and Chestnut Streets. I urge the Planning Board to take these issues seriously. NO to multi family units at that intersection, please!

Sincerely yours,

Deborah Charness

Deborah Charness, Flutist  
33 Collins Rd.  
Waban. MA 02468  
[dcflutemagic@gmail.com](mailto:dcflutemagic@gmail.com)  
617-515-1763  
<http://sites.google.com/site/charnessfamilyquintet/>

## Norine Silton

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**From:** DEBORAH CROSSLEY <djcrossley26@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 2:18 PM  
**To:** Alexandra Ananth  
**Subject:** Fwd: The City of Somerville files a Criminal Complaint against Mr. Michael Argiros, May 2015.

FYI  
Not a good story.

Deborah J. Crossley  
ALDERMAN  
dcrossley@newtonma.gov  
617/775-1294 cell phone

When responding, please be advised that the Secretary of the Commonwealth has determined that email may be considered a public record.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "David A. Olson" <dolson@newtonma.gov>  
**Date:** May 20, 2015 1:05:15 PM EDT  
**To:** aldermen <aldermen@newtonma.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: The City of Somerville files a Criminal Complaint against Mr. Michael Argiros, May 2015.

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**From:** monicagrinerberg@comcast.net [mailto:monicagrinerberg@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 12:05 PM  
**To:** David A. Olson  
**Subject:** FYI: The City of Somerville files a Criminal Complaint against Mr. Michael Argiros, May 2015.

Hello Mr. Olson,  
Kindly forward to the aldermen. I think this will be of great interest to them.  
Thank you,  
Monica

Mr. Michael Argiros is the owner/developer/builder at the former St. Philip Neri Church.

Below is an article about Mr. Argiros By Danielle McLean  
dmclean@wickedlocal.com

The City of Somerville files a Criminal complaint against Mr. Michael Argiros, May 2015.

- **Somerville cracks down on Social Security building scaffolding**

#### SOMERVILLE

After city officials filed a complaint against the owner of the decrepit Social Security building in Davis Square last week, he is working to repair the building and remove the scaffolding that has surrounded the building's façade since December 2013.

"With this landlord, our patience has been exhausted," city economic development director Ed O'Donnell told aldermen at a May 5 meeting. "The landlord has not acted in a manner that would advance the appearance and the hope for investment in Davis Square."

O'Donnell said city officials decided to file the criminal complaint for "unsatisfactory maintenance: failure to make necessary repairs of deteriorating parapet and remove scaffolding after completion" on April 28 after building owner Michael Argiros of Charles River Realty ignored repeated requests by the city to comply with the city.

O'Donnell said while the city filed the criminal complaint on April 28, they will only execute it if Argiros continues to not comply with the city's request to move forward with the project quickly. Since the complaint, Argiros and his hired architects/engineers have been working with ISD on an almost daily basis to rectify the violation, according to mayoral spokesman Dann DeMaina. O'Donnell said the scaffolding should be down by June 1.

The scaffolding has been in place since a portion of the parapet on the building collapsed due to deteriorating concrete in November 2013. The scaffold around the building on Elm and Chester Streets was erected to protect pedestrians and for Argiros to make repairs, but DeMaina said the city was never received notification of the work and a building permit was never pulled.

Last fall, the Wellesley-based Roche Bros. Supermarkets, Inc. were given the okay to move its popular grocery store Brothers Marketplace, into the first floor of the long-vacant building. O'Donnell said Crunch Gym has backed out of plans to move its fitness center into the second floor space of the building. He said Argiros plans to turn that space into offices instead.

Last month, aldermen blasted the owner of the building and ordered the city to take steps in getting the scaffold removed from the public way. DeMaina said the city sent three letters to Argiros over the course of a year, warning him of the violations. But he still never complied.

"Thank you to the department. This is a good avenue to hold their feet to the fire," Ward 3 Alderman Bob McWatters said during the May 5 meeting.

Follow Danielle McLean on Twitter @DMcLeanWL or email her [atdmclean@wickedlocal.com](mailto:atdmclean@wickedlocal.com).

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Larry Ramin <larryramin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2015 3:31 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Street/St. Phillip Neri

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to object to the proposal by Michael Argiros to build his project at the site of the former St. Phillip Neri church.

While you take your site visit, walk a little further down Beacon Street and take a look at the new Angier school. Mr. Argiros' main building will be three feet higher and wildly out of scale with the rest of the neighborhood. My friends and I who are in the neighborhood recognize that development will happen -- but the massiveness of the project and the overcrowding of a relatively small site -- is so inappropriate we wonder if the developer's submission is a joke. More likely he's angling for a smaller project and figures that by "compromising" and scaling down, once the city has voiced its objections, he will get what he actually intended. There's no other way to understand what he has proposed.

I attended a meeting two weeks ago in which the developers and their attorney were supposed to "listen" to the comments of the neighbors. Every time a neighbor asked politely, "would they consider scaling down" or some other suggestions -- the answer was "no". They wouldn't consider it. Of course we didn't expect them to suddenly "see the light" and completely revise their plans. However, we expected them to take their obligation to listen to the neighborhood seriously. They were not there to listen in any real sense other than to fulfill their legal obligation by actually being in the same room as members of the community spoke. It was a charade -- not a real process at all.

Further, their traffic consultant offered a ludicrously small estimate for the number of new cars that will be introduced to our roads at rush hour from their project. It was not until a neighbor pointed out that their "study" was performed while the Angier school was closed that they admitted, that well, yes, they had not included Angier in their study. Angier will open, I believe in the winter of 2016 -- and then what happens? Again, the process they followed was a charade of the real process.

Anybody who spends any time in this neighborhood knows that Chestnut to Woodward is bumper to bumper 7-9 am and in the evening rush hour. Same thing heading the other way towards Commonwealth. And now we're going to have all the new traffic added in? They can pay for all the studies they want that will support their disingenuous position -- but you don't need a consultant -- all you need is common sense to know that they will substantially worsen the traffic conditions and worsen the environmental conditions in our neighborhood.

Respectfully,

Larry Ramin  
80 Pine Ridge Rd.  
Waban

## Norine Silton

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**From:** J Traxler <jhtraxler@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 12:34 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Regina Wu  
**Subject:** Concerns for 1521 Beacon Street Project

Dear City of Newton Department of Housing,

We are writing to voice our concerns and overall objection of the current proposed plans to build a large scale apartment and multiple town-homes at 1521 Beacon.

1

### **Scale is an issue and out of proportion**

The overall scale of the project does not fit the neighborhood. The structures are not in proportion to any of the homes in the area and will even rival the new Angier school. While the architect has made some attempts to "match the fabric" of the area (his words) the scale of all of the buildings (both height and footprint) still makes this project inappropriate in its overall massive size. It's unreasonable to skew the housing density at this magnitude for any neighborhood.

2

### **Traffic challenges have not been properly considered**

- The studies have not taken into account the fact that Angier is not in session
- The study dramatically over estimated the traffic of the current church which on week days was nearly if not always zero (I think it estimated 6-8 cars per hour which is simply wrong).
- Newton needs to do an independent study. The intersection of Beacon and Chestnut is already one of the most congested in Newton and without question the worst in Waban

3

### **Green space is not existent**

There is NO green space. The developer has taken up nearly every square inch of the property to build on or pave over. We will withhold comment on his motivation, but will express disappointment that with the exception of funding changes to the intersection (this assumes he fully funds the work he is proposing) he is in NO way providing any value to the neighborhood he is building in (by his own admission).

This should be a harmonious project with the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Justin H. Traxler  
Regina A. Wu  
36 Metacomet RD, Waban

## Norine Silton

---

**From:** Sumukh M Tendulkar <sumukht@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 12:47 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Shalini Tendulkar  
**Subject:** Concerns for 1521 Beacon Street Project

We are writing to voice our concerns and overall objection of the current proposed plans to build a large scale apartment and multiple town-homes at 1521 Beacon.

1

### **Scale is an issue and our of proportion**

The overall scale of the project does not fit the neighborhood. The structures are not in proportion to any of the homes in the area and will even rival the new Angier school. While the architect has made some attempts to "match the fabric" of the area (his words) the scale of all of the buildings (both height and footprint) still makes this project inappropriate in its overall massive size. It's unreasonable to skew the housing density at this magnitude for any neighborhood.

2

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There is NO green space. The developer has taken up nearly every square inch of the property to build on or pave over. We will withhold comment on his motivation, but will express disappointment that with the exception of funding changes to the intersection (this assumes he fully funds the work he is proposing) he is in NO way providing any value to the neighborhood he is building in (by his own admission).

This should be a harmonious project with the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sumukh Tendulkar  
Shalini Tendulkar  
137 Annawan Rd

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Douglas L. Jones, Esquire <dlj@dljesq.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 12:56 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; swarren@newtonmass.gov  
**Cc:** vdrachman@comcast.net  
**Subject:** Proposed 40B project on Beacon Street in Waban

My wife, Virginia Drachman, and I live at 81 Waban Avenue, Waban, MA. We would like to register with you our objections and suggested modifications to the proposed 40B project at 1521 Beacon Street as currently proposed. We have no objection in principal to a 40B project at the proposed site but we have serious concerns about the project as currently designed as follows:

1. The heights of the main apartment building, taking the front and the rear heights together, are much too tall for the site. This particular site and the neighborhood it is in should respect the more residential heights in this area of Waban. While the new Angier School is a large building, it replaces a school that had been on the site since the early part of the twentieth century, sits in a large field, and is designed to meet the needs of the City of Newton. The proposed 40B project does not need to be as tall and as large as it is to be successful.
2. The height of the proposed town houses are substantially taller than those of nearby houses, diminishing the sense of a residential neighborhood in that area of Waban.
3. We have concerns about the proposed flow of traffic onto Beacon Street from the densely-designed buildings. While some increased traffic certainly could be handled, we are also concerned about the heavy flow of traffic on Chestnut Street in the morning and evening rush hours and being able to travel easily through the light at Beacon and Chestnut Streets.
4. The parking lot of the existing church seems to be an opportunity to maintain more open space rather than to fill it up with townhouses and parking. The preservation of this open space does not appear to be evident in the plans to date.

We see improvements to the plan as follows:

1. Reducing the height of both the main building and the townhouses to lower levels to blend into the existing housing structure. In addition, moving the main building further away from Beacon Street would help to minimize the scale of the building as it appears on the site.
2. Reducing the number of units across the board to minimize density. This change will permit more open space and lighten the load on traffic coming into and out of the project onto Beacon Street.
3. Modifications of the size and density of the proposed project will make the main building and town homes fit more appropriately in the site.

Thank you,

Douglas Jones and Virginia Drachman

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Douglas L. Jones, Esquire  
29 Crafts Street, Suite 360  
Newton, MA 02458  
857-255-0088  
857-255-0092 (fax)



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Alison Husid <ahusid@AEW.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 5:21 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Street

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed 1521 Beacon Street development. I have several concerns, including the impact on traffic and the density of the proposed development.

I am a resident of Waban and I commute to Boston daily. The traffic on Chestnut Street and Beacon Street in Waban is currently very heavy, especially during peak commuting hours. The closing of the Angier school has provided some temporary relief from the traffic congestion, but that relief is short-lived. I question the integrity and accuracy of the traffic studies the developer conducted because I believe the true impact of the reopening of the Angier elementary school has not been fully incorporated. The addition of 106 parking spots to a very small area will only exacerbate an already challenging traffic situation. Moreover, I am concerned about the safety of the many children that walk to school in the area, especially during the winter months when snow mounds and inaccessible sidewalks force pedestrians into the streets.

I also question whether the proposed development is appropriate for the site, given its density and height. It will stick out like a sore thumb and permanently alter the landscape and the neighborhood. I support 40(b) housing, but not at any cost. I think the cost to Waban residents is simply too high and do not believe we should permit a development of this scale simply to "make the numbers work" for the developer.

I have only outlined two concerns in this email, but I know the community has raised other issues that also need to be addressed. This project is simply not appropriate in its current form and needs to be revised before it can be permitted to move forward. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Alison Strausberg  
62 Edgefield Rd  
Waban, MA 02468

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## Norine Silton

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**From:** candysidner@gmail.com on behalf of Candy Sidner <candy.sidner@alum.mit.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 7:31 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Setti D. Warren  
**Subject:** Review of the project at 1521 Beacon St

Dear Newton government reviewers,

I am one of the neighbors who live one block away from the proposed site; my husband Charles Rich has already emailed you regarding concerns about the site plan. I want to add my voice to what he has written. In particular, I believe that the scale of this project is unwise for the surrounding area, both in terms of the plan not being in keeping with the surrounding area in terms of size of the project, heights that are higher than anything else in the area including the new Angier school and lack of any setbacks. It is also dangerous in terms of the traffic that it will cause on the neighborhood streets (due to the large number of cars that will be part of this site) and on Beacon and Chestnut streets. Because of the large park just across from the planned site and due to the children who walk to school along Karen Road where the only access from the site is planned, the traffic problems will be intense and dangerous for children, and any pedestrians, in the area.

I am not opposed to a rental and/or multi-family development on this site, but it needs to be of a reasonable size, which the current proposal is not (and would not be allowed without the questionable 40B exemption). I trust that the city will fight this on our behalf with all available legal means.

Sincerely,

Candace L Sidner  
49 Lawmarissa Rd  
Waban 02468

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Candy Sidner, Ph.D.  
<http://candysidner.com>  
[candy.sidner@alum.mit.edu](mailto:candy.sidner@alum.mit.edu)

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Elinor Nelson <nelsonelinor@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 8:40 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** St. Philip Neri Development

To Whom it May Concern,

We have been residents of 137 Pine Ridge Rd in Waban for 23 years and we are writing to you to express our concerns about the development of the Saint Philip Neri church site.

We are concerned that the development as planned is overly dense and will overwhelm the neighborhood. As you know, the streets and intersections around Waban Square and Beacon Street and Chestnut Street are highly trafficked. Adding 48 residential units on that piece of land is a mistake. It can only exacerbate the traffic, flow, and parking issues that already exist in the neighborhood.

We are also alarmed by the height of the proposed structures. They will quite literally tower over Beacon Street and Karen Road. As structures that are surrounded by residences of typical heights, these structures will look absurd. The apartment building will loom over Beacon Street, while the appearance from Karen Road will be even worse. The townhouses will be four times the height of the homes across the street from them and the apartment building will be quite a bit taller than even the new Angier School. The Angier School, though, is surrounded by open space, so the height of the school will not be overly jarring. That will not be the case with these proposed structures!

We object to the fact that the development leaves very little green space. Green space is a priority for any community.

We do not trust the builder and his associates. We attended the community meeting that he conducted a couple of weeks ago and we were very concerned about his lack of transparency. Many questions asked by people of the Waban community were left unanswered or were answered with evasion. For example, the builder and his associates provided some information on the height of the proposed structures and now we have found out that those numbers were not accurate. If they were being accurate, they would have provided precise measurements of the height both from Beacon Street and Karen Road. Additionally, they refused to comment on the relative height of their structures with respect to the residences surrounding their development.

We cherish our neighborhood and community. We are well aware that change is inevitable and we are most definitely not opposed to affordable housing. But in its current incarnation, we do not think that this development is the answer. We hope that this property can be developed in a way that will provide attractive and affordable housing while at the same time being an asset to the community. This plan, however, would create an eyesore that will only result in additional traffic and environmental problems.

Sincerely,

Elinor Nelson and Robert Bargar

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Susan Waldman <shwaldman27@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 8:48 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; rmoveck@rcn.com  
**Subject:** The St. Philip Neri project

I am Susan Hinman Waldman, homeowner at 62 Windsor Road in Waban for 28 years. My husband and I have happily raised three children in this beautiful, safe, desirable neighborhood. We are committed to preserving the safety and historic character of this village.

### Did you know:

- The main building on Short Street is extremely tall, and at 62 feet high above Karen Road will be 18 feet taller than the top of the new Angier School building being constructed.

This neighborhood of predominately single family homes, a historic village, will be forever changed in character and historic architectural value.

- The proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 45 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street.

The neighboring home owners who have opted for solar panels may be confounded in their efforts towards clean, sustainable energy.

- Just under half of all the housing units in Waban Valley (116 in total) will be located on this 1.6 acre site.

The neighboring soccer and baseball field and preschool playground will be less safe for the children who use it with a gross increase in traffic on Karen Road which runs perpendicular to the fields.

### Existing infrastructure

The intersection of Beacon and Chestnut Streets is quite busy with traffic as a thoroughfare connecting the village of Waban with the Highlands, Upper Falls, and West Newton. The proposed number of additional housing units in that very area will snarl traffic dangerously, especially with regard to direct and easy access to Newton Wellesley Hospital from the villages.

### \*\*Environmental concerns

Noise, water use, power use, refuse removal will all increase

There are blind spots and corners on the surrounding roads unsuited to traffic increase, endangering the foot traffic and children waiting at the several area bus stops.

\*\*Thoughts on how proposed design could be modified to better fit the neighborhood.

Lower the roof line, decrease the number of units, deny entrance and exit from Beacon, Chestnut, or Short Streets. Preserve what mature trees are present. Conform to LEED green standards.

Sent from my iPad

## Norine Silton

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**From:** John Lewis <jlewis@athenahealth.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2015 11:54 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** sheirrs@gmail.com  
**Subject:** 1521 beacon st project

Hello,

My wife and I have lived at 56 Lawmarissa Road in Waban for about 6 years with our 3 children. We love the neighborhood and the broader Newton Community. I am writing to express my serious concern at the scale of the proposed development project at 1521 Beacon St. The dense population of young families (with children) makes the idea of 48 families in a building on 16 acres a daunting prospect. The consequent increase in car traffic will make the area less safe for biking and walking to school for young children. Additionally it will make the already challenging traffic in and around Beacon/Chestnut/Commonwealth worse than it already is.

We appreciate the intent to develop the land, but the design needs to blend its structures to the existing size and scale of the neighboring community. We also appreciate the community benefit of a mix of affordable housing to qualified residents. We simply need the scale to be in line with the surrounding neighborhood, one that preserves green space that is currently an important component of the neighborhood; and a design that does not exacerbate the already difficult traffic safety, flow and parking issues.

My request is that we significantly reduce the number of units to a more reasonable 10-20 units.

Regards,  
John

**John Lewis**  
SVP Enterprise Client Development  
311 Arsenal Street | Watertown, MA 02472  
c: 781.254.7151 | o: 617.402.1170



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Cloud-based services for medical groups and health systems.

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Karen Miller <karenmiller@me.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2015 1:13 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** What keeps me up at night

To Whom It May Concern regarding 1521 Beacon St proposal:

I am concerned, really concerned about this proposal for a massive structure that has numerous negative implications for me and my family, our neighborhood and our community. These are the things that keep me up at night:

1 - MASSIVE - Every time I walk by the proposed area, I envision these two massive buildings (the town homes and apartment building) so completely out of place in our sweet neighborhood. Shame to the developer who told us he is doing this for his own children to benefit financially and not for the benefit of the people living in the community nor the people who will live in the development itself.

2 - SAFETY/TRAFFIC- We moved out to the burbs so that our children could ride their bikes and not have to worry about cars and traffic. Unfortunately, there is already a lot of traffic on Montclair Rd (which we live on). On the weekends, the street is clogged and parking is so limited that people have to park on both sides of Montclair Rd and around onto Karen Rd. Many times my heart has stopped in shock of a child running after a ball, not looking and coming in between cars parked on Montclair Road. My concern is how parking will be even tighter and many more cars trying to filter thru all the parked cars.

3 - ENVIRONMENTAL - We had to redesign our home because of the high water level in the ground. The proposal states that they will be building underground parking.. that will have implications for the neighboring homes pushing underground water. In addition, if the developer does not build properly, there may be water/mold damage in the garages. When adding over 100 cars to the neighborhood, in addition to the increase in traffic from the cut thru that will happen from redirecting Boylston, there will so many more cars standing still in traffic that the exhaust fumes will make the air unhealthy.

Thank you for reading and taking my concerns into consideration,  
- Karen Miller  
37 Montclair Rd.  
Waban

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Carol Todreas <todreas@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2015 4:10 PM  
**To:** Ray Noveck  
**Cc:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed Project at 1521 Beacon Street

Thanks again. Carol

Todreas Hanley Associates  
2000 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02140  
[todreashanley.com](http://todreashanley.com)

e mail: [carolt@todreashanley.com](mailto:carolt@todreashanley.com)  
cell: 617-413-1534  
phone: 617-482-7008, 617-498-0011  
fax: 617-498-0044

On May 19, 2015, at 12:51 PM, Ray Noveck <[rnoveck@rcn.com](mailto:rnoveck@rcn.com)> wrote: .

### **To the Newton Planning Department**

We are writing to express our concern over the proposed residential development on the St Philip of Neri Church site.

We are concerned about the increase of daily traffic as well as the frequent traffic caused by deliveries , maintenance of the building and tenants as they come and go. This alone is great cause for pause as the the quality of life ,already threatened by the unparalleled growth in the built environment as homes become larger and green space becomes smaller. From a safety point of view, there has been more than one accident at the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon Streets. Fairly recently, an ambulance careening down Beacon Street crashed the light going to the hospital and caused severe damage, if not loss of life, to a passenger car on Chestnut Street.

We are concerned over the large scale and massing of the project which is far better suited typically next to a major urban square or commercial center,not placed in a quiet village. The Village of Waban is relatively small and, if anything, could benefit from a park , a place to sit, relax...a place to decrease,rather than increase the carbon footprint.



We in Newton are wasteful of land. Density could occur quite naturally upholding green planning values if single story buildings at Newton Center and at some of the other commercial centers were added on to with residential units. They would add to the tax base, stimulate business, and help update these underutilized neighborhoods to sustainable and vital places. Waban is a square mile village, still trying to maintain its harmony despite the stresses already caused by traffic, fumes, and congestion. What that site should be is a lovely historic church, converted into some residential units beside a small green park with flowers, benches, and trees. Is this the dark side of capitalism that every inch of reasonable square footage has to max out for the almighty dollar? Hoping not.

Carol and Neil Todreas

Carol and Neil Todreas  
89 Windsor Road  
Waban, MA 02468

Forwarded at the request of Carol Todreas.

## Norine Silton

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**From:** william zhu <williamzhua@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2015 7:44 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Street (St. Philip Neri) project

Hi,

We are residents at 63 Moffat Road, Waban, MA 02468. This email is about our concerns over 1521 Beacon Street (St. Philip Neri) project.

In the small community surrounded by Beacon St, Chestnut St, and Brae Burn Country Club, there are slightly over 100 households. A new development of 48 units, or a 40% increase in households, would be a serious challenge to the local infrastructure. During my 6 year stay here, I have already seen a few nearly missed traffic accidents at Montclair Rd / Short St junction. During rush hour, dozens of cars wait on both Beacon St and Chestnut St for the traffic lights at the junction, and it is quite difficult to get onto these two major roads from this small area. With the addition of 48 households, how would the residents and the city tackle with the worsened traffic conjection?

Also, the proposed building is taller than the new Angier School. It would be a high constrast to surrounding buildings in Waban square, which is unpleasant aesthetically.

We believe that the scale of this development need to be significantly downscaled, to maybe 12 or 24 units. Your consideration will be greatly appreciated.

With best regards,  
Jennifer He & William Zhu

**Norine Silton**

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**From:** mmcfarland1999@gmail.com on behalf of Michael McFarland <mmcfarland1999@kellogg.northwestern.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2015 10:06 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Strong concerns with current project

Hi,

I would like to express strong concern about the 1521 Beacon St project. As I understand it, this building will be too large for the existing infrastructure in that area. Parking will be a major issue, traffic at the Beacon and Chestnut intersection already has major congestion during commuting hours in all directions, and even the amount of space for trash collection and removal for 116 units needs to be considered.

Environmentally, Newton is supposed to be the "green" city, but in this case the ratio of green space to building mass and population is inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

Best regards,  
Mike McFarland  
61 Homestead St  
Newton, MA

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Michelle Black <mblack008@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 22, 2015 10:40 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Opposition to proposed townhouses (and design) on Karen Road

My name is Michelle Black. I have lived in Waban for just over 10 years. I am so proud of our neighborhood and the warm and welcoming feel that goes along the Windsor Club, Starbucks, a tight-knit community and much more.

I am writing to express my deep concern for the proposed design of the building being proposed for Karen Road. With a height almost 4x taller than its neighboring buildings, this will dwarf the residential neighborhood and really be an eyesore, not to mention a traffic hub, at a very major intersection. Even with the best design, this will stand out as a negative in the neighborhood.

Perhaps you would consider making a larger footprint, with less height and visibility. Most neighbors in Waban are not interested in "big", but beautiful and/or appropriate.

I hope that there is an opportunity to reconsider this building. I will be very disappointed to see a towering building go up in such a historically, beautiful community.

Thanks your consideration.

Michelle

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Shannon McGill <shannon.e.mcgill@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 23, 2015 11:24 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Fwd: St. Philip Niri development

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Shannon McGill <shannon.e.mcgill@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Saturday, May 23, 2015  
**Subject:** St. Philip Niri development  
**To:** [1521beaconst@newtonma.gov](mailto:1521beaconst@newtonma.gov)

To whom it may concern:

My name is Shannon McGill and I live at 1875 Beacon Street in Waban. I have three young girls, two who attend Angier (now at Carr) and a third who will be following in her sisters' footsteps starting nursery school at Second Church in West Newton Hill in the fall. I'm writing to you to express my serious concerns about the proposed development at the former St. Philip Neri site on the corner of Beacon and Chestnut.

While I appreciate the need for rental units and affordable housing in Newton, the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut can by no means support the traffic flow that would go along with the proposed 48 units and 106 parking spots!! Even now, while the entire Angier school population is taking the bus to Carr school (significantly reducing the traffic during morning commute times), it can take me over 20 minutes to drive the 2 miles from my home on Beacon St. to Second Church Nursery School. The bulk of this time is spent attempting to turn left onto Chestnut street and then between Beacon and Comm Ave on Chestnut.

Please do what you can to represent the best interests of the Waban community by working with the developer to significantly scale back the number of residences (and cars) on this property.  
Thanks in advance for your consideration of this important issue!

Kind Regards,  
Shannon McGill  
1875 Beacon Street  
617.794.0050

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Brigham, Kathryn S.,M.D. <KBRIGHAM@PARTNERS.ORG>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 24, 2015 8:14 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

Hello-

I live in Waban and wanted to take a moment to comment on the proposed development at 1521 Beacon St. I think that having rental units and affordable housing in Waban Center is a great idea. However, I am concerned about the large scale of the project, both in terms of traffic concerns and over stressing the local schools. Plus I would hope any development would preserve some of the green space currently there.

Sincerely,

Katie Brigham  
407 Waban Ave

Sent from my iPhone

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## Norine Silton

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**From:** Wolf, Anki <Anki\_Wolf@hms.harvard.edu>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 24, 2015 10:23 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Development of former St. Phillip Neri Property

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my views on the proposed development of the former St. Phillip Neri Church property. Having lived in Waban for the past 35 years, and raised my family here, I believe that the proposed housing project is an overdevelopment for this site and specifically for Waban. The proposed height of the main building is taller than the next highest building in Waban, the new Angier School. As I understand the proposal, the townhouses on Karen Road are also taller than any of the houses, including the new ones. The width of the building is wider/longer than the original Angier School which had been the largest building in Waban. The density of the proposed number of housing units (the combined apartment building and the townhouses) far exceeds anything close to what fits within the scope of the neighborhood. In addition, the lack of green space should most certainly be of concern to the City of Newton, and specifically to the residents of Waban, as we become more aware of carbon emissions and the benefit of green space. Finally, the dangerous traffic pattern onto Karen Road to Montclair Road and then onto Beacon Street is definitely a concern for both the residents of Karen and Montclair Roads, but also for those traveling on Beacon Street, including those emergency vehicles heading to Newton Wellesley Hospital. Even if Short Street is closed off at a half way point and the traffic pattern requires turning from Chestnut St. to Beacon St., the intersection of Montclair and Beacon Streets remains dangerous due to the increased number of cars from the proposed development.

Lastly, the size of the apartment units themselves seem to increase the density of the building. Should the units be increased in size, causing the density of the overall project to be more appropriate/less dense, and the size of the buildings (in terms of height and width), both the main building as well as the townhouses, be reduced, the project may fit better with the neighborhood.

Thanks for considering my comments as well as those of other Waban neighbors when making the decision regarding the appropriateness and viability of this project for the Waban neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Anki

Anki Wolf, Ph.D.

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Mark Amster <mark\_amster@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2015 7:10 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

The proposed structure at 1521 Beacon St. in Newton is outrageous. Traffic at the corner of Chestnut Street and Beacon Street is already very heavy and congested especially during the rush hour. This will worsen the situation. Also, the structure does not fit in with the neighborhood. It is 4 times the height of houses directly across the street. The plan needs to be modified to be more in line with the neighborhood. In a town where builders and homeowners are not even allowed to build a third floor, I am not sure why this builder is even allowed to have a project like this seriously considered.

Concerned Neighbor



**Norine Silton**

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**From:** Neal Farber <nealfarber@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2015 11:15 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed 1521 Beacon st project

We request that the City of Newton deny the current plans to develop the above referenced property.

The current property and beautiful church building are located at the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon Streets in Newton. This lot is visible from these two main thoroughfares in Newton, and provides a lovely view to the many who ride, bike and walk by daily. The building style, architectural features and materials of the church are consistent with many buildings and houses in the neighborhood. It would be a visible blight on a main thoroughfare of Newton to develop the proposed apartment complex on this site. In addition, the proposed style, size, height and parking spaces are all inconsistent with the neighborhood.

The developer has proposed a massive 48 unit project and, given the history of such inconsistent proposals, would likely be satisfied with a permit to develop half this number of units and with a two story height limit.

This development along Beacon and Chestnut Streets should be developed in a manner to preserve the historical and architectural heritage of our beautiful city, while assuring road and traffic safety.

Respectfully submitted,

Neal M. Farber

1860 Beacon Street  
Waban, MA

**Norine Silton**

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**From:** Varda Farber <vfarber1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2015 3:41 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed 1521 Beacon st project

Subject: Proposed 1521 Beacon st project  
To: [1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov](mailto:1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov)

I request that the City of Newton deny the current plans to develop the above referenced property.

The current property and beautiful church building are located at the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon Streets in Newton. This lot is visible from

these

two main thoroughfares in Newton, and provides a lovely view to the many who ride, bike and walk by daily. The building style, architectural features and materials of the church are consistent with many buildings and houses in the neighborhood.

The new apartment development as proposed would be a visible blight on a main thoroughfare of Newton

The proposed style, size, height and parking spaces are all inconsistent with the neighborhood.

The developer has proposed a massive 48 unit project and, given the history of such inconsistent proposals, would likely be satisfied with a permit to develop half this number of units and with a two story height limit.

This development along Beacon and Chestnut Streets should be developed in a manner to preserve the historical and architectural heritage of our beautiful city, while assuring road and traffic safety.

Respectfully submitted,

Varda E.  
Farber

1860 Beacon Street  
Waban, MA

## Norine Silton

---

**From:** Wenhui Zhu <wnhzhu@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2015 3:54 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Neighbors' Concern  
**Attachments:** IMG\_1310.JPG

To whom it may concern,

Our names are Julie He and Hope Zhu. We are friends and we have a new, young puppy named Snowy (see attached file). We both live very close to the church (38 Karen Road and 63 Moffat Road) and we have heard that the church will be replaced by a huge apartment. We do not want the church to be taken down and replaced.

The church has been here for a long time and kids and dogs like to play in the big parking lot when it is empty. If the church were to be knocked down, Snowy and us wouldn't have that place to play in.

We want a safe and peaceful environment to raise Snowy in and to live our lives. Snowy is very little and still hasn't learned to stay away from passing cars. Snowy also does not like a lot of noise and we want him to stay safe.

We need our peace and quiet. We are students in 4th and 8th grade and in order to successfully study and do our best, we need a peaceful setting. We also have other friends in this community who would appreciate serenity while doing homework. If apartments were to be built, there would be hundreds of people driving back and forth and talking and yelling. Apart from the occasional car or construction worker, our neighborhood is very quiet and we would like to keep it that way.

Thank you for your time and for understanding our concerns.

Julie, Hope, and Snowy

--  
wendy zhu

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Ted Nesson <ted@nesson.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 25, 2015 9:34 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** 'Ted Nesson'  
**Subject:** Comments relevant to the findings required for a determination of project eligibility for 1521 Beacon Street

**Importance:** High

Dear Ms. Ananth,

I am very concerned about the proposed development plans for 1521 Beacon Street, the site of the former St. Philip Neri Church. My wife and I have lived on Karen Road for over 20 years, and we are a direct abutter of the property.

My goal is to try to ensure that the property will be developed in a way that is appropriate for the location in which it will be situated, regardless of whether it is used for single family homes or higher density housing.

My first concern is safety. The small neighborhood defined by Montclair Road, Moffat Road, Chestnut Street, and Beacon Street is already has significant traffic safety challenges. This project will add 105 parking spaces, accessible only from Karen road, which will further exacerbate the safety problem. When you add to that the many Spring and Fall youth sports teams who play on Lincoln Field, where Karen and Montclair Roads meet, the risk of a serious crash – vehicle/vehicle, or worse, vehicle/pedestrian – becomes significant.

My understanding is that there have been a disproportionate number of crashes at the entry/exit points of our neighborhood. There have also been at least two fatalities: Joshua Hanson, an EMT, killed in a crash at the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut Streets in 2001, and Phillip Liebovich, a Newton South High School student, critically injured in a crash at the intersection of Beacon Street and Montclair Road in 1987, who remained in a coma for over 5 years before passing.

My second concern is the appropriateness of this development for the area. The townhouses on Karen Road will be 47 feet high. This is approximately 2 to 3 times the height of homes they will face across the street. The larger 36-unit building's height will range from 45 to 62 feet high. At 62 feet, this is 18 feet higher than the new Angier School.

Finally, I am deeply concerned about the goals of Mr. Argiros. My wife and I support affordable housing, but I do not believe that is Mr. Argiros' goal at all. I arrived at the May 6<sup>th</sup> meeting hoping to learn about how Mr. Argiros' had incorporated months of neighborhood feedback into his plans. I came away with a strong feeling that Mr. Argiros' sole reason for applying for a 40B is to bypass zoning restrictions so he can build high density housing and maximize his profit. Under Chapter 40B, only 10 of the proposed units would be designated "affordable" and the others would have very high rents.

A few additional observations from my meetings with Mr. Argiros:

- At one of the first fall meetings, Mr. Argiros stated he was open to the idea of a 24 unit project. Mr. Argiros subsequently denied saying this. On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Argiros stated that his original plan was for 60 or more units.
- During the May 6<sup>th</sup> traffic study presentation, Mr. Argiros' expert claimed that the project would have no major impact on the area but also indicated that the traffic would be double the current amount of traffic. This seems contradictory.
- Also on May 6<sup>th</sup>, when asked about drainage, Mr. Argiros' site expert said he was unaware of any underground water issues. Underground water is a well-known issue in this neighborhood.
- At the May 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, after multiple questions during the Q&A session, it became clear that Mr. Argiros has never built a comparable housing project or managed a similar rental property.

As a citizen of Newton and the Commonwealth, I urge the City of Newton and Mass Housing to consider the safety issues, the inappropriateness of the proposed project, and the inconsistent information that has been shared with the community. Please do not allow this developer to pursue a plan which could endanger the community and otherwise adversely affect the neighborhood.

Sincerely,  
Ted Nesson  
47 Karen Road  
[ted@nesson.net](mailto:ted@nesson.net)

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Ken Shuler <ken\_shuler@tjx.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 12:29 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

Our names our Kathryn Klassman and Ken Shuler and we own our home at 658 Chestnut St in Waban. We are both steadfastly opposed to the proposed development at 1521 Beacon. The reason we bought and have renovated our home in Waban was that we liked the feel of the neighborhood. A neighborhood that has no large multi family complexes and has mostly single family residences. The proposed housing at 1521 Beacon has no place in our neighborhood.

We have lived all over the country and in many places in Boston. Large multi family complexes have their place but they do not belong here. We have invested a large amount of money and effort in our home and this proposed space will degrade our living standards and green space by creating more car traffic and pollution and creating a higher people density in Waban. If passed this housing will diminish our property values and erode Newton's tax base, as the city will be forced to devalue the property of Waban home owners.

Keep the integrity of Waban intact. Build a green space on this lot and do something good for our city and the environment. Please do not approve this project.

Thank you,

Kathryn Klassman  
Ken Shuler

Sent from my iPhone  
Ken Shuler

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Dianne Denk <rdenk@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 9:03 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed project at Philip Neri church site

We would like to add our concerns about the Philip Neri proposal. To begin, we feel the size of the project is much too dense, too massive and too high for the property. Forty-eight units not only brings a large population to this small track of land, but also at least fifty to one hundred cars, and will, no doubt, bring a large population of school-aged children. The traffic in this area is terrible twice a day for a couple hours each commute. The impact on the commute will be dramatic and, no doubt, commuters will find "short-cuts" through surrounding neighborhood streets. Angier School is being rebuilt to handle future growth, but we doubt city planners had planned for this type of enrollment surge. We must also state our disapproval of developers that have "muscled" their way into Newton, tearing down fine small homes and building huge houses that don't fit the neighborhood or site. This proposed project is an extreme example of this trend. It is a total disregard of the Waban community by a developer who wishes to "leave a legacy" to his family.  
Dianne and Robert Denk

Sent from my iPad



## Norine Silton

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**From:** Renata Selig <rselig@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 9:46 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Comments re proposed development

As a resident of the neighborhood with my home close to this site, I would like to submit the following comments which reflect upon the recent presentation by the developer, his lawyer and architect at the Windsor Club

The massive size of this development is far out of scale with the neighborhood. The height, larger than any existing structure in the area overshadows the neighboring single family houses.

The lack of setback from Short and Beacon Streets results inadequate green space and adds to the aggressive posture of this structure.

Traffic congestion and safety are issues here. There is already excessive traffic on Chestnut Street making it difficult to enter from my side street. It will only increase with the construction of an expanded Route 9/128 interchange due to start shortly and continue for several years. Access to Karen Rd. site of the proposed development from Chestnut St. is via Oak Vale Rd then to Karen Road. Oak Vale meets Chestnut St. at a dangerous curve with many cars speeding so this will surely be a site for accidents. As for the proposed additional entry and exit from Montclair Rd. I must note that there was a fatality of a Newton teenager in a car at the intersection of Montclair Rd and Beacon St. years ago due to poor visibility from three merging roads (Montclair, Short and Beacon streets)at that intersection.

I support a smaller development of rental housing, including moderate price units but in buildings of far lower height, with deep set backs from Beacon, Short and Karen Streets presenting more green space and no entry or exit from Oak Vale Street to Karen Road.

Renata Selig  
7 Ashmont Rd.  
Waban, MA 02468  
617 969-2981  
[rselig1@comcast.net](mailto:rselig1@comcast.net)

**Norine Silton**

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**From:** Ty Cushing <bostoncushing@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 10:11 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** This approval process should be held up until the surrounding neighbors have legal representation and more time to consider all the positive/negative implications of a permanent change in the Waban environment, Tyrone Cushing, M.D. c.p. 617 794-1906

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Carol Todreas <todreas@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 10:12 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** St Philip of Neri

Although we have sent in our thoughts in a previous email, we just wanted to re iterate that whatever structures go up on the site, the mass and scale should be in keeping with the mass and scale of what was already there to maintain the harmony in the neighborhood .

Carol and Neil Todreas  
89 Windsor Rd  
Waban, MA 02468

## Norine Silton

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**From:** BLESSINGTON@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 10:35 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Cc:** Annie, blessington  
**Subject:** Concerns about the proposed 1521 Beacon Street Development

Dear City Counselors and Zoning Board Representatives,

I am writing to you regarding the proposed 1521 Beacon Street.

I live at 543 Chestnut Street, on the corner of Oakvale Road. Our family has lived here for almost 13 years. I have been able to attend both meetings held at the Windsor Club regarding this proposed development. Having said that, I have many concerns with such a development of grand stature.

First and foremost, the apartment building, as planned, is much too big for the neighborhood. The height alone would be much larger than any other building in this area. According to the developers, it would almost be as large as the new Angier School currently being built. It would tower over all the existing homes as well as block out light and reduce the green space that makes Karen Road and Montclair a nice neighborhood to live in. Many of us are in agreement that it must be scaled down.

I am also concerned with the types of units being proposed. I am concerned about rental properties, most importantly, the possible turnover of residents. For those who own in the neighborhood, we take pride in our properties, as well as respect others around us. With new people coming and going we may lose this sense of community.

Lastly, I am very concerned of the possible (and probable) traffic problems that will arise. As mentioned so perfectly by another resident on Oakvale Road:

8 units of housing would bring in between 100 and 200 new residents to our village, plus 100 -125 resident cars, plus delivery trucks, moving trucks, service trucks, and guest's vehicles. The developer's claim of a minimal increase in traffic over that from the church is specious: the church had services once, or, at most, twice a week. The traffic from this development would be continuous, 24/7, 365.

- There would be hundreds and hundreds of extra vehicular trips to be made through the narrow streets of the Waban Valley every day, making it unsafe to drive, ride bikes and push strollers on our roads, causing road deterioration and disturbing the quiet of the neighborhood.
- The extra traffic would cause (private, deteriorating) Oakvale Road to become even more of a speedway and cut-through than it is now. The developer's drawings include a traffic circuit that includes Oakvale and Karen, so this is not a hypothetical concern.
- The extra-parked vehicles would make it impossible to park next to Lincoln-Eliot field, rendering that resource useless to the rest of the neighborhood.
- The intersection of Beacon and Chestnut would be sorely taxed. Unless right and left hand turn lanes are constructed, modernizing the traffic lights will have no positive effect.

All developers are driven by financial incentive. But when a developer asks to set aside the City's zoning laws to create a structure that diminishes a neighborhood in almost every way, strict scrutiny should be applied before any variance from single-family zoning is granted. Our City government must compel modification of this inappropriate development plan before it ruins our neighborhood.

Having said all this, I respectfully request that you review the developer's proposal very closely as well as take into consideration the current residents comments and concerns. Ultimately, we will be the ones affected but such a large, intrusive development.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anne Blessington  
543 Chestnut Street

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Richard Egan <RichardEgan42@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 10:42 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Saint Phillip's

Please do not allow this to happen to Waban.

Richard Egan  
1535 Beacon Street  
Waban, MA 02468

Richard M. Egan  
Vice President  
Coldwell Banker Itzkan and Marchiel  
160 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite U2  
Boston, MA 02116

(617) 247-2909 Business  
(617) 247-3943 Business Fax  
(617) 216-0996 Cellular  
[richardegan42@aol.com](mailto:richardegan42@aol.com)

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Ssyspts33@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 11:16 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** St Phillip Neri Church

My name is Sande Young. I live at 18 Karen Road. I am very concerned about the height and density of the project proposed at the site of St Phillip Neri Church. I live 3 houses away from the project. I definitely does not fit in with the neighborhood.

I am also very concerned about the traffic, I believe the traffic study that was performed was flawed. Angier School was not opened at the time. Right now, I have a hard time getting out on to Chestnut Street from Oakvale and getting out on to Beacon Street from Montclair is also very difficult at almost any time a day. With 106 new cars plus their guests parked on Karen Road, it will add significantly to the traffic. I think it is a very bad idea to have only one way in and one way out to the development on Karen Road. It could potentially be a hazard for emergency vehicles trying to get in and out of there quickly, especially fire engines.

Thank-you,

Sande Young  
[ssyspts33@aol.com](mailto:ssyspts33@aol.com)  
617-527-1726

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Bill Apostolica <wpa@apostolica.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 11:41 AM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** st neri project

I own properties at 39 Caroline Park and 8 Fredana road.

As you can appreciate, as a significant tax payer and parent, I am strongly opposed to the size of the project, the reputation and attitude of the developer and his traffic "consultant".

Oakvale Road is a private way and can NOT be used for any traffic other than the abutters and any emergency vehicle.

Montclair road is a tight downhill access that primarily services a few neighbors and mostly Lincoln Field activities.

With all the kids, parents, cars and busses around the field, someone will get hurt.

The only access to this site should be from Beacon Street.

From a common sense standpoint and for the safety of everyone, Montclair should not be the access point for a project of this size.

I would appreciate your listening to your residents.

Thank you.

William P. Apostolica, Esq.  
Apostolica, Donovan & Donovan, LLP  
172 Newbury Street, 5th Floor  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-424-6500 (ph)  
617-236-0736 (f)  
[wpa@apostolica.com](mailto:wpa@apostolica.com)



584 Chestnut St.  
Waban, MA 02468  
May 25, 2015

VIA EMAIL

Ms. Alexandra Ananth  
Chief Planner for Current Planning  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

***Re: Proposed Development at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban***

Dear Ms. Ananth:

I am writing to comment on the Project Eligibility application recently submitted by Waban AMA Realty Ventures LLC (the "Applicant") for a proposed development at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban (the "Project"), currently the location of the former St. Philip Neri Church ("SPN").

I have been a resident of Waban for nearly forty years and am familiar with the surrounding area, nature of the housing and traffic patterns. I also attended the information meeting at the Waban Windsor Club on May 6, 2015 and heard the presentation of the Project by the Applicant and his attorney as well as comments and questions by other attendees.

I support affordable housing in Waban and was a supporter of the Engine 6 project as indicated by my letter to *the Tab* at the time. Waban has had apartments for many years on Wyman St. and these units fulfill a need for rental housing within buildings of comparable size and profile to the surrounding Community. The proposed Project as presented by the developer is too large a building relative to the Project acreage to be suitable for the surrounding community for several reasons.

First as I understand it, the Project apartment building with a height of 62 feet would be the tallest building in Waban Village and as such completely inconsistent with the surrounding architecture including commercial buildings and existing Waban apartment buildings. As such it would interfere with natural lighting and aesthetic views for existing, surrounding properties.

Second with 106 parking spaces, the Project would introduce significant additional traffic to Beacon and Chestnut St. which already are saturated with traffic at peak traffic hours. In addition the Montclair and Karen road areas are heavily used on weeknights and weekends by participants in community athletic events at

Lincoln Park. When asked at the community information meeting, the developer's traffic engineer admitted that his traffic counts did not include periods during which such events were taking place. These roads would be the most likely entry and exit routes for traffic to and from the Project introducing traffic flow problems and additional safety issues during times when children and adults are parking and crossing the streets to Lincoln Park.

Third, the developer also seeks to close Short St. which would eliminate a traffic route that currently allows cars to bypass the Chestnut/Beacon St. intersection thus easing the already large southbound traffic backup on Chestnut St. during the evening commute. The elimination of Short St. also would take away a backup on-street parking area used by residents of Chestnut, Beacon and Short St. for many years. When asked at the community information meeting, the developer's traffic engineer admitted that he was not even aware of this need for parking nor had he considered this in the Project design. The closing of Short St. would be a real hardship for residents of two busy streets with no other practical alternative for spillover parking for guests at their homes! This proposed closing of Short Street supposedly to provide more green space is simply another byproduct of a project that is too dense for the site!

The SPN proposed project could be attractive to Waban as a source of smaller scale and affordable housing both for existing Waban residents and new residents. It is very unfortunate the developer proposed a Project that is simply too large and dense for the site and surrounding neighborhood. If the Project could be scaled back to construct apartments within a building size roughly comparable to the existing SPN building with townhouses attractively placed on green space around the Project site, it would be much more acceptable with sufficient capacity for the planned affordable units.

Another alternative would be construction of apartment buildings with size dimensions and green spaces similar to those on Wyman St. Through traffic on Short St. also should be preserved to continue offering a traffic bypass for Chestnut St. and parking for residents of busy surrounding streets.

I hope that you will consider my comments and others that you receive to enable a redefinition of this Project to make it a success in Waban.

Very Truly Yours,

*Alan M. Cody*

Alan M. Cody

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Greg Peterson <gpeterson@ballentinepartners.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 1:23 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed development at St. Philip Neri church

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have been living at 21 Oak Vale Rd. Waban since 1998.

As a resident of Waban Valley I am utterly appalled by the proposed development.

Let me be clear, I am not against affordable housing.

I am against this project for following reasons:

1. The hugely negative impact on local traffic patterns
2. The dangers posed to local children by the increased traffic during school commutes
3. The potential loss of Lincoln Field as a viable recreational resource for the community as a whole
4. The sheer mass of the proposed structures

1) The addition of over 100 cars to the daily traffic pattern will have an dramatically negative impact on Waban Valley. There are very few exit points out of the valley. Given human nature, the commuters will try to find the exit paths with the highest probability of speedy egress. Given that the proposed development will only have one exit from its parking lot on to Karen Street one should expect that the residents' stress levels will already be high before they even get out of their parking lot. It is highly unlikely that they will follow the proposed left turn only signage on Karen Street to Montclair. The result will be a mad scramble to exit Waban Valley via Windsor, Montclair, Oak Vale, Moffat, or Caroline Park. Each one of these exits is highly congested during rush hour since they exit onto either Beacon Street (via Windsor and Montclair) a major roadway where there is already a significant bottleneck due to Angier School drop offs, or onto Chestnut Street (via Oak Vale, Moffat or Caroline Park) which is not a major roadway and is frequently backed up both ways with traffic between Beacon and Commonwealth. It needs to be noted that during the winter months most of the roads in Waban Valley become one lane streets as well which are difficult to navigate with the existing traffic. It is not possible for the narrow roads of Waban Valley to absorb the additional traffic resulting from the proposed development.

2) These same roads are traversed daily by the neighborhood children on their way to the school. During inclement weather and the winter months the traffic on the roads of Waban Valley increases due to parents driving their children to the school bus stops and waiting for the arrival of the school bus. Weather permitting, the children are walking these same streets (sidewalks are often not cleared in the winter). They then congregate in large groups at the school bus stops. Lastly, the large school buses themselves traverse Waban Valley on a daily basis during the school year causing yet another bottleneck. The increased traffic will pose significant risks to the local children.

3) Lincoln Field is a real asset to Newton as a whole. When the soccer and baseball teams play on it the parked cars line Karen and Montclair Road on both sides, making travel virtually impossible since the passageway is reduced to barely one lane. This intersection is exactly where the proposed exit from the development's parking lot has been placed. There is a high chance that Lincoln Field will not remain a viable resource for Newton and at the very least it will certainly become much more dangerous than it already is, primarily for the children.

4) The proposed buildings are not in any way appropriately sized. The apartment complex is larger than the new Angier school which is already enormous. Its sheer size will dwarf the surrounding houses on Beacon Street. The four story townhouses on Karen Street will completely dominate the small one story houses directly opposite them. This project is sized as an urban apartment complex rather than discrete town houses which can blend into the surrounding neighborhood. There are many examples of the latter in Newton which could be used as models for a viable project on the St. Philip Neri church site and which could include affordable housing.

In conclusion, I strongly object to the proposed development, not from an affordable housing perspective but from the perspective of the negative impact this would have on the local traffic, the negative impact on the local children's safety, the negative impact on an important resource for the whole town of Newton, and from its sheer inappropriateness in size.

Sincerely,

Greg Peterson

*Greg Peterson, Ph.D., MBA, CFA*  
*Ballentine Partners, LLC*  
*230 3rd Avenue, 6th Floor*  
*Waltham, MA 02451*  
*Direct: (781) 314 - 1314*  
*Fax: (781) 259 - 8412*  
[gpeterson@ballentinepartners.com](mailto:gpeterson@ballentinepartners.com)  
[www.ballentinepartners.com](http://www.ballentinepartners.com)

May 26, 2015

**Re: 1521 Beacon Street Proposal**

Dear Mayor Warren:

My family and I reside at 627 Chestnut Street in Waban, where we have lived since 2006 after moving from New Jersey. In moving to the Boston area, we evaluated a number of communities and ultimately decided on Waban. The proximity to Boston/Cambridge, quality of schools, cultural and ethnic diversity, good balance of urban and green space, many beautiful and historic properties, and most importantly, a strong sense of community, were the primary determinants in our decision to reside here. We live in a house built in the 1890s by a local architect. In fact, we are only the third owner of our house, something we are quite proud of, and we are committed to preserve the look and feel of our house.

We really value living in Waban and have established deep roots in the community and developed many good friends in both Waban and the rest of Newton. Moreover, we are very satisfied with the quality of the education and opportunities that our children are receiving in the Newton public school system. However, there are number of things that have worsened over the past 9 years:

- The local infrastructure is stressed, in particular, the roads throughout Newton. I grew up in New Hampshire, so I am well versed regarding the adverse effects of harsh winters on roads; however, I never experienced anything like the potholes and poor condition of the roads in Newton.
- The elementary school that my children attended, Angier, was both over-crowded and in a state of disrepair. Fortunately, a new school is being constructed, but this was at least 5 years overdue.
- Traffic congestion in Waban and the rest of Newton has been getting worse. For example, if I want to see one of son's little league baseball games during the week, I have to allot between 30 to 45 minutes to travel 3 to 4 miles from our house to a local Newton field.

There has also been meaningful constructive changes and progress in Waban over the past 9 years. Many old houses have been torn down in our neighborhood, with larger houses built in their place. I understand this; older homes are challenging to maintain (speaking from personal experience) and lack many important essentials and amenities of newly constructed houses. What is critical is that these new constructions are subject to the necessary oversight by the Town of Newton, both in accordance with the appropriate zoning regulations and to ensure that the spirit and character of the various villages is preserved. A recent example of this is the construction of 2 new homes several years ago in a wooded section at the end Pine Ridge Road, abutting the Waban Library. While unconfirmed, my understanding is that this land was not zoned for 2 homes, but the Town of Newton felt that this was in the best interest of the community. I was initially bothered by this construction, in particular, the resultant reduction of green space and removal of trees, but I understand the benefits and from an aesthetics and characters perspective these 2 homes complement the surrounding neighborhood.

However, in hearing about the proposal to build a 4-story building with 48 units at 1521 Beacon Street, I am deeply disturbed and distressed. There are a number of reasons why this proposed construction is a terrible idea and my concerns are outlined below:

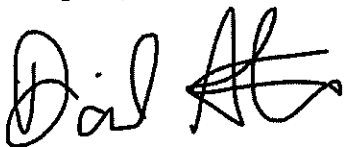
- Stress on the infrastructure, i.e., roads, sewers, storm drains. Currently Newton has challenges in sufficiently maintaining the local roads; this proposed development would just exacerbate the situation.

- Additional traffic congestion. The proposed development, with 48 units, could result in approximately 100 additional cars in the area. All one needs to do is drive on Beacon Street between Walnut and Chestnut Streets or on Chestnut Street between Rt. 9 and Commonwealth Avenue between 4 pm and 7 pm on any weekday to get a full appreciation of the current congestion challenges. Adding up to 100 more cars in a relatively densely populated area will make this much worse.
- Reduction in green space. This proposed development will utilize the overwhelming majority of the existing plot for the building. Therefore, most of the existing green space will be eliminated and trees will be cut down. I find this unacceptable; this area is already densely populated, so a meaningful reduction in the green space changes the overall aesthetics of the neighborhood and harms the environment by both generating additional carbon emissions from 48 additional housing units and their occupants and cutting down trees that importantly absorb carbon.
- The height of 1521 Beacon Street and impact to surrounding homes. The front of the proposed building (facing Short Street/Beacon Street) will be 45 feet high, while the back of the building (facing Karen Road) will be 62 feet high. There are no structures that I know of, within a one mile radius, which are this tall; in fact, the new Angier School is not even this tall. As a result, the proposed building will unfairly impact daylight for many surrounding homes.
- Harm to the neighborhood aesthetics and character. The aesthetics and the character of the neighborhood are critical to the cultivation and maintenance of the local community. The Town of Newton understands this and has previously taken actions to support this. When we first moved to Waban we were informed by the Town of Newton that there were a number of regulations that we needed to adhere to in order to preserve the aesthetics and feel of the neighborhood. For example, we installed a fence around our property and had to abide by certain conditions relating to the height and setback, given that Chestnut Street is considered a "Scenic Road." One of our neighbors was forced by the Town of Newton to modify his fence while it was being installed because of these rules. The hypocrisy of having these regulations in place and enforcing them (and I support these regulations and others that preserve the neighborhood), while the Town of Newton is considering the construction of a 62 foot tall, 4-story building with 48 units just feet away from Chestnut Street is both ludicrous and extremely disappointing.

In summary, I believe that the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street would have a dramatic and deleterious impact on the neighborhood. Quite frankly, I don't understand why this proposal has even advanced to this stage and I feel that the Town of Newton government has let down local residents. Nevertheless, I am open to and supportive of an alternative, more modest development at 1521 Beacon Street, one that is consistent with the surrounding area, such as 4 to 8 new homes or townhomes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,



David Arkowitz  
627 Chestnut Street  
Waban, MA 02468

cc: Alexandra Ananth  
John Rice

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Britt Bardinelli <bardinelli@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 2:06 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; John Rice; Brian E. Yates; Deborah J. Crossley  
**Cc:** Aaron M. Goldman; Setti D. Warren  
**Subject:** 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Aldermen,

We have lived in Waban for almost 13 years. It is a wonderful and welcoming community, full of respectful citizens who care deeply for their neighbors and the greater community. It is a place where people of various ages and backgrounds can peacefully co-exist and prosper. It is a community where parents feel comfortable letting their kids ride bikes and walk to school. We are concerned that this amazing community may be forced into a decision from which we cannot recover; the acceptance of the 1521 Beacon Street project as it has been proposed.

The actual size and scale of the project are completely out of context for the area. There are not any buildings in the area that even approach the height and mass of the proposed project. This project should be limited to the same height requirements as the other structures in the area. Both multifamily and single family dwellings are present throughout Waban and there are none even close to this mass. The current site also has a vast amount of green space surrounding the Church. Once again, the sheer mass of this project eliminates virtually all of the green space. The only green space the developer proposes comes from "taking" Short Street and re drawing the traffic pattern around Beacon and Chestnut. Essentially, giving the developer additional property.

The number of units proposed will also stress the already fragile infrastructure of the area. The traffic around Newton is at the point where, at times, it is almost impossible to move. Residents are frustrated and at times angry. Trying to navigate through town to get home from work or school or to run a simple errand at a local business can oftentimes feel impossible. The project is billed as transportation based housing. How it is possible to assume that most of the new residents will have jobs that allow them to commute efficiently via the T? How can we assume that the T will continue to function during inclement weather? How can we assume that these residents will not be running errands on the weekends adding more crowds on our already crowded roads? The congestion along Beacon and Chestnut streets will be at a standstill and drivers will be forced to wind their way through the side streets. Everyone is always looking for the next "cut through". This added traffic will certainly increase traffic flow on side streets where children are playing and families are taking their dogs for walk. Why does every square foot need to be built on. Is there no room for green space in our town? In addition, how will our schools be able to handle the increase in enrollment caused by the project? Why would families not want to take advantage of the excellent school system? Has past experience from other large multi-family projects not taught us that there will indeed be an impact? These questions need to be addressed before you go forward with a project of this magnitude.

In the end, we know we will lose once iconic and welcoming church at 1521 Beacon Street. We know it is more likely than not to be multifamily housing. However, the project of this scale and magnitude is not acceptable and out of character for the neighborhood. Please do not let this destroy the Waban community we know today.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss.

Sincerely,

Britt Bardinelli

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Shyam Kamadolli <skamadolli@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 2:13 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Community comments

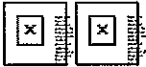
Hello there:

I am a neighbor that lives in the immediate vicinity of the proposed 1521 Beacon St project.  
I have several concerns about the project as proposed:

- 1) Traffic - 109 cars moving out across Karen and Montclair to Beacon St will create a disruption and make the beacon st / chestnut st intersection more dangerous. Road rage already runs high at peak hours and it will get a lot worse.
- 2) Environment impact: Size of the proposed buildings: at their proposed sizes both the main building and the townhouses are significantly higher than surrounding buildings
- 3) Environmental impact: Previous construction projects have altered the water table locally leading to reported flooding (as recounted by my neighbors). I am afraid a project that destroys the current structure will create more of an upheaval in the substrate.

--

**Shyam Kamadolli** / +16174449906 / [skamadolli@gmail.com](mailto:skamadolli@gmail.com)





## Norine Silton

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**From:** Diane Silverman <dianeksilverman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 3:53 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** concerns regarding project at 1521 Beacon St. Waban

To whom it may concern,

I am extremely concerned about the proposed development project for the 1521 Beacon St. site in Waban. The height of the proposed structures is completely out of line with the rest of the neighborhood. It would dwarf the nearby homes, and tower over the rest of the neighborhood. The amount of traffic coming up the small roads would be unmanageable. I hope this project will be reconsidered and redesigned to better fit the surrounding area.

Sincerely,  
Diane Silverman

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Lori Gilman <lori.gilman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2015 8:57 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** comments on proposed development

As a resident of the neighborhood with my home less than a block from this site, I would like to submit the following comments which reflect upon the recent presentation by the developer, his lawyer and architect at the Windsor Club.

The massive size of this development is far out of scale with the neighborhood. The height, larger than any existing structure in the area overshadows the neighboring single family houses.

The lack of setback from Short and Beacon Streets results inadequate green space and adds to the aggressive posture of this structure.

Traffic congestion and safety are issues here. There is already excessive traffic on Chestnut Street making it difficult to enter from Roslyn Road. It will only increase with the construction of an expanded Route 9/128 interchange due to start shortly and continue for several years. Access to Karen Rd. site of the proposed development from Chestnut St. is via Oakvale Rd then to Karen Road. Oakvale meets Chestnut St. at a dangerous curve with many cars speeding so this will surely be a site for accidents. The visibility at that corner is extremely limited.

The whole project would be a disaster in so many ways.

Thank you for your attention to this and I hope the project does not proceed as now planned.

Sincerely,

Lori Gilman  
550 Chestnut Street  
Waban, MA 02468

## Norine Silton

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**From:** Friend, Gretchen <GFriend@Lasell.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 27, 2015 1:30 PM  
**To:** 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov  
**Subject:** Proposed Development: 1521 Beacon Street - St. Philip Neri Property  
**Attachments:** Letter to Newton City Planners.docx

To: City of Newton Planning Department  
From: Gretchen Friend, 51 Dorset Road, Waban  
Re: 1521 Beacon Street Project - St. Philip Neri Property in Waban  
~~~~~

I have serious concerns about the St. Philip Neri project.

The height and the heft of this proposed development do not seem to be appropriately scaled to this residential neighborhood. This and the traffic issue are the concerns for the majority of the people who attended the meeting at the Windsor Club on Wednesday, May 6, 2015. They are not against affordable housing, just the out-of-proportion proposed method of delivery.

- Although many people expressed appreciation and approval for the visual design, their main concern was about the volume/density.
 - When one person commented that he had compared the specs on the height and found that it would be taller than the new Angier School, the developer didn't deny it.
 - And when asked if he would consider scaling it down a bit, the developer/Mr. Michael Argiros' reply was that he wouldn't because he wanted this to be a financial "legacy for his children."
 - He doesn't care a fig about 40B or the people it would help, and he certainly doesn't care about the neighbors. This is the kind of developer whose arrogance gives 40B a bad rap.
 - I have real concerns about the developer, Mr. Argiros. His reputation as well as his past business practices appear questionable. (Google him, and his company, Charles River Realty.)
- The developers' comments regarding traffic don't make sense. There is no way one can deny the effect of additional traffic to the neighborhood streets as well as to the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut.
 - Further comments that they may propose that Short Street be closed is short-sighted. They only want to do that so they can turn it into green space in order to enhance their building's facade, not to improve traffic.
 - Closing Short Street would only increase traffic at the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut (from the people presently using Short Street to avoid that intersection) and force more cars down Caroline Park, Moffat and Oak Vale.
 - The developers should consider having an "exit only" onto Short Street which might help mitigate the traffic generated on Oak Vale and Karen Road - perhaps reducing it by 30 - 50%. If cars enter the complex by one street and exit by another (Short Street), this could be a reasonable possibility.
- The St. Philip Neri project is being foisted upon a neighborhood with two neighbors across the street living in one-story ranch houses. Those neighbors are possibly facing something as tall and

imposing as the new Angier School in their faces, which would change the character of that residential area.

I believe that people might go along with an "appropriately scaled" rental development (possibly capping things at 3 stories rather than 4), which would include affordable units, if it were proposed by someone reputable and trustworthy.

Norine Silton

From: natalie greene <ntullgreene@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 2:26 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Barry Greene; natalie greene
Subject: Input about proposed development

Dear City Counsellors and Zoning Board Representatives,

I am writing to express my opposition to the development, *as proposed*, at 1521 Beacon Street. Having lived in this amazing neighborhood since 2001, I am war of the building project *as proposed*. As you know there have been two community meetings where both builder intentions and community resident concerns were raised, shared, and outlined.

There are a number of ways in which this proposed development is detrimental to Waban and will diminish the quality of life in this village:

1. The types of units proposed do not serve the needs of the community. There is no plan for assisted living in this project. Despite the assertions of the developer, no elderly residents of Waban (or anywhere else) will want to move from their own homes into tiny, extremely expensive apartments with no assistance built in. Families in a demographic looking to rent in Newton will not fit into the tiny apartments, nor be able to afford the larger ones.
2. 40B is not being invoked in an appropriate way. The small number of proposed 40B apartments in this complex are simply the developer's wedge to force the permitting of an outsized development. 40B should not be invoked simply to allow the violation of zoning laws to maximize profit. If the developer really believes in 40B, let him make a smaller development and make the affordable apartments a larger part of a smaller structure. 40B was meant to improve neighborhoods by making them more accessible to lower income families, not to ruin neighborhoods by allowing outsized structures to maximize developer profit.
2. The apartment building is too big. The apartment building, as planned, would be almost as tall as the Angier school under construction. This is completely out of proportion to everything else in the village. It would cast shadows over everything around it, would be a looming structure from the Beacon Street side, and a massive wall of brown-stone style construction from the Karen Road side. There would be very little green space, very little open space. It would be many times the size of anything else in our residential neighborhood, and completely inappropriate. It must be scaled down.
3. The development is too dense, which would cause massive traffic problems. 48 units of housing would bring in between 100 and 200 new residents to our village, plus 100 -125 resident cars, plus delivery trucks, moving trucks, service trucks, and guest's vehicles. The developer's claim of a minimal increase in traffic over that from the church is specious: the church had services once, or, at most, twice a week. The traffic from this development would be continuous, 24/7, 365.
 - There would be hundreds and hundreds of extra vehicular trips to be made through the narrow streets of the Waban Valley every day, making it unsafe to drive, ride bikes and push strollers on our roads, causing road deterioration and disturbing the quiet of the neighborhood.
 - The extra traffic would cause (private, deteriorating) Oakvale Road to become even more of a speedway and cut-through than it is now. The developer's drawings include a traffic circuit that includes Oakvale and Karen, so this is not a hypothetical concern.

- The extra parked vehicles would make it impossible to park next to Lincoln-Eliot field, rendering that resource useless to the rest of the neighborhood.
- The intersection of Beacon and Chestnut would be sorely taxed. Unless right and left hand turn lanes are constructed, modernizing the traffic lights will have no positive effect.

The development should be scaled down to reduce traffic, and at a minimum the following traffic mitigation measures should be taken:

- Oakvale Road should be allowed to be made one way going East to “break the circuit” of traffic going into the Waban Valley to get to 1521 Beacon
- And/or the development should be required to put its driveway on Beacon Street rather than Karen Road to keep traffic out of the Waban Valley
- If the driveway must be on Karen Road, there should be a requirement to exit with a left turn only, onto Montclair to keep traffic out of the Waban Valley.
- The development should be required to contain visitor parking spaces, to minimize visitor parking on Karen Road

4. The developer’s experience is inadequate and his motives are suspect.

- Experience: The developer admitted at the Windsor Club that he has no experience creating a development of this size and scope. How can we believe anything he asserts about the impact of his development if he has never done this before? My family watched an inexperienced and arrogant developer build a house next door to us and make all sorts of stupid mistakes with regard to drainage, waterproofing, building materials, roof venting, landscaping, you name it. This kind of arrogant inexperience could cause a disaster when applied to a much larger project that impacts the whole neighborhood.
- Motive: The developer’s self-serving motives make him a poor steward for this property. Despite his protestations, he is clearly interested only in maximizing his profit (for the benefit of his son, or so he says) and not in improving Waban. Once he turns over the reins of this giant rental property to his son, we will never see him again. We will only suffer with the consequences of his actions. When asked if he would modify his development in any way in the face of community opposition to the details, his lawyer said “no.” He said they will push forward until they hit a “brick wall.” That should tell you everything you need to know when you are deciding whether to permit this property.

Developers are driven by financial incentive. But when a developer asks to set aside the City’s zoning laws to create a structure that diminishes a neighborhood in almost every way, strict scrutiny should be applied before any variance from single-family zoning is granted. Our City government must compel modification of this inappropriate development plan before it ruins our neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Natalie Tull Greene

natalie tull greene, esq.
 primacea, inc.
ntullgreene@me.com
 mobile 617-899-2943

Norine Silton

From: Ty Cushing <bostoncushing@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 6:53 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: A few comments on the above proposed project. The expansive nature of this project is not compatible with the general characteristics of the surrounding homes (mostly single family) 2. The traffic to be created with the proposed >100 parking spaces, o...

Norine Silton

From: David Arkowitz <darkowitz@VISTERRAINC.COM>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 8:29 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: dpbrophy@verizon.net
Subject: RE: 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Town of Newton,

Yesterday I sent a letter regarding the 1521 Beacon Street proposal. The concerns that I outlined in my letter are not related to the purpose of the proposed building nor the developer. However, today in the May 27, 2015 edition of the Newton Tab I read an article entitled "Somerville Files Complaint Against Local Developer." This article states that a criminal complaint has been filed in Somerville against the developer of the 1521 Beacon Street proposal. Below is a quote from the article:

"With this landlord our patience has been exhausted," Somerville Economic Development Director Ed O'Donnell told that city's alderman at a May 5 meeting. "The landlord has not acted in a manner that would advance the appearance and the hope for investment in Davis Square."

The 1521 Beacon Street proposal is a terrible proposal and bad for Newton. In addition, now it appears that the person driving this project is a bad actor.

I am again requesting that the Town of Newton put an immediate stop to this proposal and explore more reasonable, appropriate development for the site.

Regards,

David Arkowitz
627 Chestnut St.
Waban

From: David Arkowitz
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2015 1:26 PM
To: '1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov'
Cc: dpbrophy@verizon.net
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

Please see letter attached

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Norine Silton

From: Renata Selig <rselig@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 8:38 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: rnoveck@rcn.com
Subject: Legal action against M. Argiros, developer of St. Philip Neri site

I have just read in the Newton Tab that a criminal complaint has been filed in Somerville against Michael Argiros, the purchaser and would be developer of the St. Philip Neri property. The complaint alleges persistent failure to maintain satisfactory maintenance and to make necessary repairs to the Somerville property he owns. What confidence can we have that this developer will voluntarily maintain whatever he may have permission to build here in Waban?

The City of Somerville sent three letters to Mr. Argiros over the course of a year, warning him of the violations but he still never complied. His credibility is so impaired by the Somerville experience that he should be denied permission to build anything here in Newton.

Renata Selig
7 Ashmont Rd.
Waban, MA 02468
617 969-2981
rselig@comcast.net

Norine Silton

From: Susan E Farris <susanefarris@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 9:42 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St Philip Neri project in Waban

I am writing with respect to the St Philip Neri project in Waban. There are many reasons why this project should be opposed as it stands, scaled back and environmental and historical considerations included in the design.

The scale of the proposed apartment building would overwhelm the community by adding a lot of additional traffic to an already busy intersection and worsening pollution. Look at the soot on the yellow home at 1530 Beacon from the traffic today. Traffic is very congested and this project is for 48 separate apartments--with parking. It would make for a nightmare traffic jam with noise pollution to boot.

There is no plan for green space -- where does the run off drain? Will it all run into the street now that every square inch of the plot is being built up? Will that impact neighbors' yards and the Lincoln field areas? There is a lot of wildlife in the area that will lose safe shelter in trees and underground. What will the impact be of 48 apartments straining the sewers in Waban? There are no plans for trees or landscaping to help abate the environmental impact of this high density building. No thought was given to energy efficiency or environmental standards. The project only contributes to worsening pollution, congestion, noise, waste, and will blight an historic neighborhood.

This is a tremendously overscale building in the middle of a residential neighborhood--many of these homes are historical homes. It detracts from the historic character of one of Newton's charming villages. It is also extremely high density and congested for this community.

The St Philip Neri building itself is a beautiful historic building which fits in nicely with its surroundings. There are beautiful old trees on the property. It is a waste to tear a historic landmark like that down to build a modern oversized structure that does not respect the environment or the character of the neighborhood. Can't the developer create something tasteful within the scale of the existing building? It's a shame to destroy the past.

Finally, Michael Argiros, the developer, does not have a respectable track record with projects like these--witness a few of his past projects like the project in West Roxbury that went bankrupt and the recent criminal complaint in Somerville for not removing scaffolding or doing work for almost 2 years on a building he purchased there. An unethical developer should not be given priority over the community--honest people who work to make Waban a beautiful community. The law-abiding Newton residents, neighbors and taxpayers who deserve to have a say in this project.

I strongly oppose the project as it stands and would not be in favor until I saw the issues described above addresses.

Sincerely,
Susan Farris
84 Moffat Rd
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Ssyspts33@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 10:22 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Michael Argeros

I just read The Tab from yesterday. I have no confidence in this developer. He seems to have a blatant disregard for rules that he must follow when building and renovating. I don't trust him. I don't want someone building this enormous project three houses away from me in this quiet, peaceful neighborhood by someone who has a criminal complaint filed against him. That makes a big difference.

Please reply that you have received this email.

Thank-you,

Sande Young
Ssyspts33@aol.com
617-527-1726

Norine Silton

From: John Barry <jbbos8@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 11:42 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St Philip Development Feedback

Let's be honest here – this project as currently planned is WAY out of place for this setting. As you are well aware, this proposal essentially doubles the number of units in this small neighborhood and abuts an intersection that is already very congested already. But perhaps more substantially, this just doesn't fit. This is an extra-large adult sweater on a 5 year old. I was shocked to see the balloon photo's that depicts the height of this building. Why would we ever allow a urban building of this magnitude right in the middle of suburban neighborhood setting? Would we ever allow a 20 story building in Newton Center? It's simply hard to see this current proposal making any sense except for the profit potential this developer stands to gain here.

I would say that if the height and units were to reduce by half, then maybe you could envision a way for this to blend in harmoniously with the setting, but as currently proposed, this simply does not work. Let's make sure we remain sensitive to our community on this one, do the right thing, and ask the developer to go back to the drawing board and come up with a more suitable project that scales this back substantially. At the end of the day, there is a better path that can work for everyone here. We can do better than this.

John Barry
78 Neshobe Road
Waban, MA

May 27, 2015

City of Newton
Planning Department/Zoning Board of Appeals
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton MA, 02459

RE: Comments on Proposed Development, 1521 Beacon Street/St. Phillip Neri Site

Dear Sir/Madam:


I am writing to convey my concerns regarding the proposed 48 unit residential development project proposed at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban. First, I want to be clear that I am not opposed to the development of affordable housing. To this end, I think the entire project should be affordable housing; I just think that the site should be developed sustainably with fewer units and smaller buildings. The following are my comments:

- The existing roadway infrastructure surrounding the site is inadequate to handle 150 to 250 additional car trips per day onto Karen Road, Oakdale Road and Montclair Road and onto Chestnut Street. The intersections at Oakdale Road and Chestnut Street; and Montclair Road and Beacon/Short Street; both pose serious traffic safety issues due to limited sightlines for traffic turning onto Chestnut and Beacon. Although traffic studies might only show a few additional cars each hour, as a practical matter, the overwhelming majority of the residents of this development will leave and return to their homes each day during rush hours and they will, like so many of us, go out in the evening to run errands, etc. Since there are some 100 parking spots planned for the development, if each car parked in those spaces makes 2.5 trips per day, this would result in 250 additional trips through the local streets. That additional traffic represents a significant impact on the neighborhood infrastructure.
- The traffic on Chestnut Street is significant during each day – particularly during rush hours. It's reaching a point where it's reasonable to ask: can more cars be put onto this street? The back-ups going northbound on Chestnut Street in the morning start at Commonwealth Avenue and back up to or through the Beacon Street and Woodward Street intersections all the way back to my street, Larchmont Avenue and beyond to the south. The reverse occurs to the south in the afternoon and evening. On May 22, 2015, I counted a back-up of 52 cars waiting in-line on Chestnut Street at 5:20PM. The developer has mentioned that the city is proposing to put a left turn signal/lane on Chestnut Street at the Beacon Street intersection. While this is intended to be helpful, the issue is through-traffic on Chestnut Street; not turns onto Beacon Street - the volumes are simply too high. Chestnut Street has never recovered from the traffic increases which occurred after the Mass Turnpike removed the West Newton toll plaza encouraging travelers on Route 128 northbound to use Chestnut Street as a cut-through to the MassPike thereby avoiding have to pay a toll. The street also serves as a shortcut for these same travelers (whether avoiding the toll or not), because it reduces travel time into Boston. The street is also a major access point between Routes 128 and 9 into the city and east to Brighton/Boston. Newton may have limited ability to do anything about this cut-through traffic, but it seems it should have an obligation to not allow large-scale development to make the traffic situation worse.

The city needs to determine: what is carrying capacity of Chestnut Street? Are we already at that point? How can hundreds of additional trips from this proposed development be accommodated on this already congested street during rush hours? Finally, with respect to traffic, it's important to note that the intersection of Oakdale and Chestnut is often blocked by cars stopped on Chestnut Street during rush hours, making any turns difficult and time-consuming. This will back up traffic onto Montclair, Oakdale and other streets near the development.

- The development also poses environmental concerns. The proposed site plan virtually eliminates the open and green space and sightlines that presently exist on the church site. The buildings and parking areas associated with the proposed development cover the overwhelming majority of the site – resulting in the development extending close to the property boundaries. The large building proposed with frontage on Short Street apparently will be an average of 53 feet in height and the buildings along Karen Road will be approximately 47 feet in height. [Note: The architect for the developer has stated that the 53 foot height being used to describe the large building on Short Street represents an average height. The front of the building (on Short Street/Beacon Street) will be 45 feet high while the back of the building (the side facing Karen Road) will be 62 feet high]. These are very tall buildings for Waban – with the large building on Short Street being apparently taller than the new Angier school building. Additionally, the density of this project is very high – apparently the highest density in Waban with 100 or more residents living on 1.6 acres. This large development creates negative environmental impacts in the neighborhood due to the large footprint/height of the buildings and the overall density of the project. The property owners along Short Street and Karen Road presently have views and some open green space that they can enjoy. This large scale development would change this by constructing tall buildings very close to the property boundaries – significantly reducing open space and green space, blocking views and potentially creating shadows blocking sunlight.
- Finally, my suggestion is that the proposed development be redesigned with fewer units overall, with buildings that have significantly lower rooflines and smaller footprints. I recommend that the percentage of affordable units be increased. A smaller project would reduce the load on the local infrastructure, reduce the traffic impacts and provide a project that was scaled to the neighborhood, with lower overall impact to the residents near the site.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. I hope the City of Newton will support a smaller development.

Sincerely,

Christopher Carleo
89 Larchmont Avenue
Waban, Massachusetts 02468

Norine Silton

From: Rhodes, Dion <dion.rhodes@fmr.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 2:35 PM
To: Setti D. Warren
Cc: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri Church - Concerns

Hi,

I am a Waban resident of over 10 years and am concerned about how the proposed development will lower the safety of our community. Most importantly, I am concerned that safety and traffic issues have not been worked out. Specifically, an enhanced infrastructure plan should be laid out first prior to moving ahead with adding new residents of such size to the neighborhood. The traffic on Chestnut Street requires the city of Newton to take action; whether it be wider roads, better signage and traffic lights. I have not seen any plans addressing this issue. I am personally concerned because on May 17th, I was nearly struck by a car running the red light at the corner of Beacon/Chestnut. The car preceding the mentioned car stopped for the red light yet this car, in rage I assume, decided to swerve around the stopped car and go through the red light, nearly sticking me as I was crossing in the crosswalk. This was due to Sunday traffic.

During weekdays, traffic along Chestnut Street is horrendous. I commute north on Chestnut St. in the morning and there have been days where the traffic is backed up from Commonwealth to Beacon! No one wants to allow cars from the side streets onto Chestnut at this time. The afternoons, around 5:30pm are just as bad. Heading south it took me 20 minutes to move from Beacon St. to Route 9 just this week. A well laid out plan needs to be put in place to address this traffic before a project of this magnitude should be considered. To approve this without any major infrastructure change nor concern for the safety of residents in place is unacceptable.

Regards, Dion

Dion M. Rhodes, CFA
Principal Fund Research Analyst
Fidelity Investments
Office: 245 Summer Street - V7D, Boston, MA 02210
Mailing Address: 82 Devonshire Street - V7D, Boston, MA 02109

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May 27, 2015

City of Newton
Planning Department/Zoning Board of Appeals
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton MA, 02459

RE: Comments on Proposed Development, 1521 Beacon Street/St. Phillip Neri Site

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to express several concerns regarding the proposed 48 unit residential development project proposed at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban. The surrounding infrastructure cannot handle the increased volume without significant adverse impact to all involved (pedestrians, car commuters, and residents), and the size of the building is simply out of scale with the surrounding area. My specific comments are as follows:

- The traffic on Chestnut Street is out of control during each day – particularly during rush hours – and it poses a serious risk to pedestrians, both children on their way to school and commuters going to the green line. The vehicles back up for blocks leading into the Chestnut / Beacon intersection, and they completely block the visibility of people looking to cross Chestnut. Last spring, my 6 year-old daughter was almost killed walking to Angier as we tried to cross Chestnut at Larchmont because we couldn't see cars coming from the north on Chestnut Street. We couldn't see the cars coming from the north because of all the cars backed up bumper-to-bumper coming from the south on Chestnut, due to the congested intersection at Beacon and Chestnut. Again, my daughter was almost struck by a car travelling approximately 45 miles an hour because of the back-ups from an intersection that this development project will only make worse.
- The congestion at this intersection also affects the residents and Newton resident car commuters because of all the idling cars waiting for the light. When driving and trying to go through that intersection, it already takes 5-10 minutes in the morning and the evening to idle in line. So, the congestion is already putting pedestrians at risk and adding to local pollution as hundreds of cars over a typical rush hour idle for an extended period, waiting for the light right where this development is proposed. We should not add to this problem for current Newton resident car commuters and to the risk to residents of the neighborhood. I imagine these same risks and concerns are experienced by residents in other approaches to this intersection.
- The proposed development, while attractive from an architectural detail perspective, is simply too massive and completely out of scale with the neighborhood. It eliminates the open and green space and sightlines that presently exist on the church site or what other development configurations could yield. The buildings and parking areas associated with the proposed development cover the overwhelming majority of the site – resulting in the development extending close to the property boundaries. These are also excessively tall buildings for Waban – with the large building on Short Street being apparently taller than the new Angier school building. Additionally, the density of this project is very high – apparently the highest density in Waban with 100 or more residents living on 1.6 acres. This large development creates negative

environmental impacts in the neighborhood due to the large footprint/height of the buildings and the overall density of the project.

- Finally, my suggestion is that the proposed development be redesigned with fewer units overall, with buildings that have significantly lower rooflines and smaller footprints. A smaller project would reduce the load on the local infrastructure, reduce the traffic impacts and provide a project that was scaled to the neighborhood, with lower overall impact to the residents near the site. It would be good if the percentage of affordable units in any redesign can be increased to keep that total number of such units constant, to help address that challenge of the Commonwealth.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. I hope the City of Newton will support a smaller development.

Sincerely,

John Ryan
21 Larchmont Avenue
Waban, Massachusetts 02468

Norine Silton

From: Mike Hill <mhill11@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 3:33 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth
Cc: Bear, Susan
Subject: Comments on 1521 Beacon Street

May 28, 2015

Dear Planning Committee:

I am writing to voice my concerns about the proposed 48-unit rental development on 1521 Beacon St., formerly known as the St. Philip Neri Catholic Church. I believe that affordable rental housing that meshes with the surrounding community enhances the long-term viability and sustainability of any community and its natural evolution. To do this properly requires care and thoughtful planning. Done right, a development can certainly preserve and enhance the fabric of any community. However, poorly conceived and implemented projects such as this can cause undesirable outcomes that negatively affect a small community such as Waban – a quaint residential neighborhood with secondary streets lined with one and two story family homes. My comments are set out below in three general areas – environmental and infrastructure concerns and design modifications to the proposed project.

Infrastructure Concerns

1) At the Windsor Club briefing on the project, I heard that this project as currently envisioned will account for 35% of the housing units in the “Waban Valley” when complete. Although the existing site does have a large parking lot, it was infrequently used and when it was used it was generally during off-peak hours and the parking lot was never close to capacity. The planned project calls for 105 parking spots that will be used at capacity. Karen Road and the adjoining secondary residential streets are narrow and difficult enough to navigate prior to this project. With the influx of cars flowing onto these streets, especially at peak times, the sheer volume of traffic will overwhelm the area and simply will not be compatible with surrounding use. Moreover, even if the traffic were directed to Beacon and Chestnut Streets (a major connecting thoroughfare in Newton), the existing traffic volume exceeds the capacity of these roads, especially at peak times. The anticipated increase in volume of cars would cause not only a significant increase in traffic and long delays on these roads, but on all of the secondary roads that flow onto these streets. Anyone who lives in the area is well aware of the traffic issues on Chestnut and Beacon Streets. The traffic flow associated with the current plan, even if it is redirected to Beacon and Chestnut Streets, is not compatible with the surrounding area and certainly not integrated into the existing development patterns of the area.

2) The mass and scale of the project on the proposed 1.6 acre site is daunting. As I understand it, the proposed buildings will be 53 feet tall facing Short Street and 47 feet high on Karen Road. To put it in perspective the surrounding houses are one and two stories high. The proposed buildings will be taller than the Angier School. The Angier School does not have residential homes in close proximity to its main structure. The proposed buildings will tower over existing lots and housing in some cases by 20 and even 30 feet. The proposed plan fails to mitigate the sheer size and bulk of its buildings by not providing sufficient space between buildings and adjacent residential lots and housing. In addition, there is inadequate landscaping and setbacks from the surrounding streets and houses. Furthermore, the massive scaling and height of the buildings and development falls way short of its relationship to the surrounding neighborhood by not maintaining a human scale and the residential pattern of development that is anything close to being appropriate for the neighborhood; it is the equivalent of a "residential Walmart."

3) The sheer size of the proposed buildings will shade adjoining residential lots from the sun.

Environmental Concerns

4) The majority of the 1.6 acre will be covered with impervious surfaces in a residential area that prides itself on maintaining green space. The development should have a good portion of the site dedicated to green space that not only affords appropriate buffering capacity to help in mitigating the structures transition to the street and surrounding residential properties, but green space and ample playgrounds for the children associated with the development to play and exercise. (The trees indicated in the architectural renderings are completely misleading. The renderings lead you to believe that the trees are scaled appropriately. The trees indicated in the rendering would have to be well over 300 feet tall. These types of trees do not even approach this size in real life; not even in Sequoia National Forest – home to some of the tallest trees in the world.)

5) The buildings must be scaled in a manner to eliminate the shading from the sun that will occur on adjoining properties.

6) The stormwater runoff associated with the impervious surfaces must be mitigated and contained in such manner as to not affect the surrounding properties and city infrastructure.

7) The impact in the increase in volume of traffic associated with the project to the neighborhood and surrounding areas is significant and will not only be detrimental to the tranquil quality of the surrounding area, but pose safety issues to cars and pedestrians as the roads are simply not wide enough and cannot withstand this additional traffic load.

Design Modifications

8) The size, scale, massing, layout, overall design and relationship of the proposed development to the surrounding neighborhood and beyond need to be reduced

significantly. The project as proposed is completely out of character with every aspect of the neighborhood.

A) Reducing the scope of the project and number of units and housing size by 60% or more will address the majority of the points identified above. In summary, a smaller development could be scaled and integrated into the community in a manner that is appropriate for the 1.6 acre location and fits with the guidelines set out in the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Development Handbook: Approach to Chapter 40B Design Reviews.

B) Although reducing the scope of the project by 60% will help to address the concerns of the appropriateness of the buildings on the site, the number of cars resulting from even a 60% reduction will adversely affect traffic flow, safety and the environmental aesthetic qualities of our secondary streets. A new proposed plan needs to redesign the traffic exits onto Beacon Street and Short Road in a manner that will not make the existing poor traffic situation any worse and make it safe for our residents and those that pass through it.

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my concerns and for you to consider my comments. Let's strive to maintain the integrity and character of the village of Waban in Newton and have smart development that fits into the neighborhood and preserves the area that the people of Waban chose to live in. Not only to the current and future residents deserve this, but so do any future residents of 1521 Beacon Street.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Hill

55 Windsor Rd.
Newton, MA 02468

Dorothy Parsons Roberts.

1564 Beacon Street
Waban, MA 02468-1508

May 28, 2015

T 617-244-9210

F 617-244-9210

Ms. Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner
Newton City Hall
Newton, Massachusetts

Re: Development of The St. Philip Neri Site

Dear Mayor Warren,

My parents purchased the house "on the hill" at 1564 Beacon Street in 1937 - 7 years before I was born. I live in our home as the 2d generation along with our three children (3d generation) and our twin grandchildren (4th generation). There is only one neighbor on this part of Beacon Street (Waban Square to Chestnut Street) who has lived here (in her parents home as well) longer than I have. My older sister and that neighbor were friends, grew up together and even went to college together on the train (long before there was the Riverside Green Line).

My husband and I both grew up in the Union Church in Waban and went to Angier Elementary School where he knew my older brother. After finishing college, our marriage and my husband's service in VietNam we returned to live at 1564 Beacon Street which we purchased from my parents in 1973.

During our first 3-decades living together in Waban not much changed: the people got older, stores in Waban Square came and went, but some of them are still there today. We have fond memories of the three churches in Waban getting together on "Tri-Church Day" for joint activities and preparing bandages for the Red Cross.

In the last 15 years our part of Beacon Street has experienced significant changes: in 2004, two Mc-Mansions were built next to the Windsor Club on the former site of the Newton/Wellesley Visiting Nurse Association. Because the lots are narrow and deep, both houses with Victorian features (dormers -shingles - colors), with older trees and green lawns seem to blend in despite their size. In 2006, the house at 1573 Beacon Street was demolished and replaced with another Mc-Mansion - it also seems to blend in because of the green lawn, the landscaping

Ms. Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner
May 28, 2015
Page 2.

and large old trees at the back of the lot. Since then the McMansion trend moved to Fredana Road, Karen Road, Montclair Road, Windsor Road, Pine Ridge Road and then to Moffat Road.

In 2013, the old 1538 Beacon Street was torn down and replaced by a large home by a developer who did her best to design and build a home that blended with the surrounding neighborhood by incorporating Victorian details such as dormers, columns and a front porch. By that time, the rules had changed and a full third floor was no longer allowed.

Now SPN has been sold to a developer who wants to use chapter 40 B to cram into 1.6 acres 48 rental units. By right that lot would support four McMansions. When we became aware of this, my husband compiled a list of the affordable housing units in each of Newton's villages and printed that information on the back of a U.S. Postal Service map showing the villages by ZIP Code.

Waban - a small village with no other large land parcels available - has six affordable housing units on Coyne Road as well as 10 affordable housing units in the large apartment/Condo buildings on Wyman Street which have been there for years. Across the street also on Wyman there are three buildings with one and two bedroom apartments for rent plus a single brick building with either apartments or condos.

The 10 affordable housing units are located on a long street of mixed uses: businesses, apartments, condos, many Single family residences. They are accessible from Beacon Street, Woodward Street and Chestnut Street. They are not located in a congested area and no traffic light is needed at either end of Wyman Street.

Understanding this contrast between the existing units in a non-congested area and what is proposed for SPN is crucial: the intersection of Beacon Street and Chestnut Street is already a congested. There are many times during the day when both streets are backed up with traffic. There has been a traffic light there for as long as I can remember. Even now with increased traffic caused by construction on Karen Road and the Angier bus stop at the corner of Karen and Montclair, it is dangerous for children, the elderly, and those with handicaps to cross Montclair at Short Street and especially to cross Beacon Street at Montclair. If Short Street was closed, it would eliminate cars coming from FIVE directions down to FOUR directions. Karen Road is a small winding road with only 11 houses on it: it cannot be straightened, widened or lengthened. It cannot accommodate the traffic

Ms. Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner

May 28, 2015

Page 3.

generated by the 105 automobiles which could be using the proposed 105 parking spaces. Beacon - Chestnut - Windsor - Moffat - Montclair would all become a daily traffic nightmare!

My other concern is the Density - Height - Length and the extremely large number of proposed rental units. If this development were proposed for a larger area, without small streets that are already congested it might work well. If one considers other successful Newton projects such as Avalon, Woodland T, Riverside and even the proposed development at Austin Street there is one common denominator: they are all located in a business or mixed-use area. They are not located in a congested Single family residential area.

It was my assumption that due to the recent influx of larger homes that the SPN property would have the four large homes which the City of Newton would allow - and maybe the city would allow the developer to squeeze in a fifth large home.

How sad that this is not happening: That the magnitude of this project will take away the American Dream of home ownership. - what most Americans aspire to have - a home of their own in a neighborhood of small to large homes with a large playground with a baseball diamond, soccer field, swings and wonderful tot lot equipment. A place where neighbors get to know each other and take pride in their maintaining their property.

The Developer has made it clear that these 48 rental units will be a legacy for his family and if he is able to rent many of the apartments for \$ 5,000. per month maybe his dream will come true. But for the families who now live in this neighborhood, this project will be a detriment which will forever change the appearance of the homes and the streets. Look at the picture of the balloons in the TAB - it is a visual realization that on the height issue alone the proposed buildings are too massive for this small spot.

Newton has remained a desirable city in which to live not only because of its schools, libraries, programs for Seniors, for Veterans and for those with Special Needs (like my Son), etc. But also because of its 13 small Villages where residents can experience the feeling that they are part of a small community and get to know their neighbors and the families of their children's friends better than they would if they lived in a much larger city. If the City's goal is to change Newton's character from family homes in residential areas with no regard for how many people are

Ms. Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner
May 28, 2015
Page 4.

squeezed in - won't Newton just become another Boston? I would not want that as my Legacy.

Are we wasting our time? Is this already a "Done Deal" as inferred by the Developer's Attorney at the meeting at the Windsor Club that Newton is backing this project?

In his TAB commentary, the Mayor has indicated he favors all the 40B projects and wants more apartments in homes.

Is the group of attorneys working on the SPN and Austin Street projects motivated to turn Newton into a rental community so that they can leave a legacy of monthly rental income forever for their families?

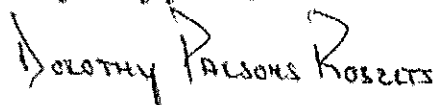
In October, Newton had already reached 7.5 % of the 10 % goal/requirement for Affordable Housing Units. Is Newton changing in an attempt to go beyond the 10 % threshold? If that is true, there should be a Ballot Question proposed to allow the Voters of Newton to be heard after all the facts are revealed.

Under the current system which seems at best to be very misleading, Newton would get credit for 48 units of "affordable housing" when in FACT 38 of those units will be anything but Affordable!

Wouldn't it be better for all of us if a compromise could be reached? Proposing a realistic number of duplexes or condos for this site OR proposing a smaller number of rental units in buildings which truly blend with the surrounding neighborhood, would alleviate some of the traffic safety and street congestion issues.

We love Newton and the Village of Waban Now; and we want to be able to say that after this project is completed. Don't you?

Very truly yours,



Dorothy Parsons Roberts

Norine Silton

From: Neil <2neil2day@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 5:14 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; gwatson@masshousing.com
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street Apartment Housing Development
Attachments: 1521 Beacon Street, Newton ZBA.docx

City of Newton

Zoning Board of Appeals

City Hall, Newton, MA

28 May 2015

**Proposed 1521 Beacon Street Apartment Development:
Comments and Suggestions Encouraging a Less Massive,
More “Neighborhood-Scale Appropriate” Development**

This comment is being delivered via email to 1521BeaconStreet@NewtonMA.gov via email as directed at http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/current/devrev/hip/beacon_street.asp

and hand-delivered to City Hall. As I am not familiar with procedural aspects, I am also sending a copy to MassHousing via Gregory Watson at gwatson@masshousing.com, and will send a copy to the project proponent.

The 1521 Beacon Street apartment housing development project includes three “townhouse” rental buildings (12 units) along Karen Road and 36 units in an apartment building on Short Street. A total of 10 of the 48 units are proposed as affordable to households earning up to 50% of the area median income.

I applaud the proponent's effort to provide lower income rental housing. I applaud the project's architectural design.

However, I propose that the architectural drawings submitted do not allow or provide for a fair and sufficient agency or public review.

I believe project review should (1) consider the scale of the project relative to the scale of the surrounding neighborhood structures, (2) compare the currently proposed location and scale relative to the "non-residential" location attributes of other similarly scaled housing/apartment projects in Newton, and (3) require the proponent to prepare and resubmit drawings and visual materials described below to reasonably and fairly illustrate the scale of the project relative the scale of the general residential neighborhood structures in the immediate vicinity.

Finally, as discussed below, I submit that the reviewing agencies either deny project approval or require the project scale be reduced to fit with the village and neighborhood scale as follows:

1. Splitting the apartment building on Short Street, currently presenting 180 feet of frontage, into 3 additional "town house" buildings better scaled to the neighborhood,
2. Reducing the height and mass of each townhouse building by one story by moving the small top floor "attic" apartments to other floors, and
3. Reducing the overall height and mass of the project by putting all parking underground.

These comments offer visual evidence/examples of other Newton housing projects currently in place, relatively new, and of a similar scale to that now proposed – but approved recognizing a developer's insightful use of space to create a beautiful project without grossly oversizing the project relative to a much smaller, dominantly two-story residential neighborhood.

As currently presented in proponent's drawings, it is impossible for the public to realistically picture or imagine the future visual impact that this project imposes on the neighborhood.

Why do the current drawings not work? Why are they inadequate? Misleading?

Because there is no neighborhood visual perspective.

You do not see the project relative to its neighborhood setting.

In the proponent's drawings, <http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/66082>, the proposed main apartment building on Short Street is 185' in length. The full mass and size does not sink in viewing the architect's drawing. Try instead, to think in "football field" distances and, suddenly, that 185' is a long 62 yards. As drawn, however, it is impossible to imagine the building you see in the picture is truly that long, or presents that great a mass.

Similarly, when people think of the height of an office or apartment building, they experientially mentally equate each story of building height in an architect's drawing to 10 feet. For the great part, this perception is correctly based on history. For instance, a 10-story building anywhere in the United States is typically 100 feet in height. In the project drawings (see, page 8, top left rooftop line demarcation), a delineation of height for the three townhouses is given as 47 feet -- which makes them more visually equivalent to a 5-story, flat-roofed office building – not a mentally pictured "four story" townhouse. The public and agency viewer of the architectural drawing incorrectly visualizes the height of a remembered 4-story apartment building, i.e. a 40-foot tall building, and not the proposed reality of a 50-foot tall, 5-story building.

I find no identification of the height for the main building – which, with an additional story in height is presumably 10 feet taller than the townhouses and, at 57 feet, roughly the height of a conventional, 6-story, flat roofed building.

The site topology presents apparently has a 7-10 rise at the area of the main building fronting Short Street. So, from Short Street the buildings appear 7-10 feet "shorter" than it would from Karen Street. Note the entry is raised 4-6 feet above ground level. This described "four story" building is not true for anyone viewing the complex from a northeast through the northwest vantage point. From that vantage, the townhouses are equivalent to 5 stories (~50' high) and the main building is 6 stories (~60 feet in height) and 60+ yards wide - a significantly massive structure, but not apparent in the presented drawings.

As currently designed, the building dimensions do not fit with the surrounding neighborhood. The building architecture itself is aesthetically pleasing, yet the mass of the buildings is of a scale found in Newton only in areas with significant office buildings and large apartment complexes. Even Newton's village center areas do not have buildings above 3 stories and such three-story buildings are in the minority, with most buildings in village centers being 1 or 2 stories.

Also, the scale of the proposed 1521 Beacon project apartments is 2½ and 3 times larger than the nearby Copley neighborhood apartments now within the residential neighborhood on Wayland Street at the Waban T Station.

Projects of the size now proposed near Waban Village have been successfully developed nearby. But in highly different settings. Those successful developers took unusual settings and provided high value residences for Newton residents. None of those projects so overwhelms the setting as the proposed 1521 Beacon Street project would overwhelm its neighborhood.

Below, I offer some non-professional pictures visually displaying the “location appropriateness” of three large-scale housing developments now in Newton. The “mass” of the 1521 Beacon proposed project is similar to these identified housing developments found elsewhere in Newton. Each fits into its neighborhood and creates strong visual appeal. I request the interested agencies and SBA Members visit four nearby developments:

- Visit the Avalon Apartments just west of Needham Street, set behind the retail shopping stores on Needham Street. When you drive in, you find yourself in a beautiful, balanced, high-density residential development setting. It is bordered on three sides by retail and commercial facilities. The fourth side has, as its neighbor to the east, the large DPW Eliot Street parcel for equipment and materials storage.

*** photo image not accepted, attached ***

- Drive by the Village Falls Condominiums on the corner of Oak and Needham Streets. Here is a beautiful setting with only one side abutting a residential neighborhood. The three other sides are commercial properties, and include the beautiful Charles River. (no picture)

*** photo image not accepted, attached ***

- Finally, the Arborpoint Apartments across from the Woodland T Station have a similar character and mass to the housing development currently proposed at 1521 Beacon. Again, you find a beautiful, striking complex with its neighbors being the Woodland T Station to its south, the Golda Maier Housing to the north and golf courses both east and west, and Newton-Wellesley Hospital as a nearby neighbor.

*** photo image not accepted, attached ***

- Then, visit The Copley Group apartments now offered in Waban on Woodland Street, at the Waban T Station - in a residential setting 2 blocks from the proposed development.

*** photo image not accepted, attached ***

Not one of the existing “equivalent apartment developments” lies within a Newton village and its neighborhood.

But each of the three carries the same visual scale and mass as that proposed for 1521 Beacon Apartment Project.

As to the existing apartment complex in Waban Village, the proposed 1521 Beacon Apartment Project brings a scale and mass more than 2½ (for the townhouses) and 3½ (for the Short Street building) larger.

We request the City of Newton require the developer find a more appropriate project location or modify the scale as described herein.

I offer a few non-professional pictures, taken earlier today on a cell phone. The purpose is to provide a “familiar” picture of the mass of the proposed development. One is the Avalon apartment complex and the other is the apartment complex next to the Woodland T stop. I enclose two pictures taken this morning with a cell phone. The effort is to depict the mass of the proposed development with reference to nearby “similar” apartment/townhouse housing developments.

(picture not incorporated, see separate attachment for full document)

In the Avalon Apartments picture, above, the distance from the right hand edge of the picture to the third set of steps (at the back of fourth car on the right) is approximately 180 feet in length, or (i.e., 60 of my normal walking paces). This is the width of the proposed Short Street Building for 1521 Beacon. Full size parking spaces are typically 20 feet in length; so, 180 feet is about 9 parking spaces.

(picture not incorporated, see separate attachment for full document)

This picture above shows the Arborpoint Apartments at the Woodland T Station. The distance from the left edge of the tall, beige building to the windows above the far right red newspaper box in the foreground is approximately 180 feet (60 paces). The portion shown is five stories high; the right hand slightly darker building area is six stories in height.

Compare and contrast the scale proposed, and seen above, with the scale of The Copley Group apartments now offered in Waban on Woodland Street, at the Waban T Station.

(picture not incorporated, see separate attachment for full document)

2025/07/11

Conclusion:

The plans, as proposed, should be rejected. To this end, for the Board and public to gain a more realistic view of the project "mass", versus that of neighborhood structures, I request of the Newton Zoning Board and MassHousing -

- In order to overcome the inability of the public and the Board to realistically visualize a comparative "before and after" impact of the currently proposed project, please require that the developer present "ground view" perspective drawings superimposing the proposed project on photographs taken (1) from the far side of Short Street or from the middle of the "parkland" triangle between Short and Beacon streets, (2) from the far side of Karen Road, and (3) from home plate in the baseball playing field within Montclair and Moffet roads. The field-of-view should equal 3x the width of the current buildings (i.e., 3x the length of the outer edge of the row of the three townhouses, taken as a whole, and approximately 185-200' on both sides of the main Short Street building) in order to be able to see the "neighborhood impact".

I also suggest three changes that might make the proposed project compatible with the surrounding Waban Village neighborhood, and request the board provide the same comparative project drawings, as requested above, but include a new set of drawings wherein the project proponents -

1. Reduce the visual mass of the 185' long "Short Street" building by replacing it with 3 or 4 townhouses;

2. Reduce one "floor" of building height for each townhouse building ("now" totaling 6 or 7 townhouse buildings) by moving the two small top floor units (a one bedroom and a studio unit) to the other floors, and
3. Put all parking underground.

Such general building design modification may be seen to better fit with the Waban Village and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Neil and Barbara Collins,

30-year Waban residents

14 Hillcrest Circle

Waban, MA 02468

cc Waban Area Council

City of Newton
Zoning Board of Appeals
City Hall, Newton, MA

28 May 2015

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Comments and Suggestions Encouraging a Less Massive,
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through the northwest vantage point. From that vantage, the townhouses are equivalent to 5 stories (~50' high) and the main building is 6 stories (~60 feet in height) and 60+ yards wide - a significantly massive structure, but not apparent in the presented drawings.

As currently designed, the building dimensions do not fit with the surrounding neighborhood. The building architecture itself is aesthetically pleasing, yet the mass of the buildings is of a scale found in Newton only in areas with significant office buildings and large apartment complexes. Even Newton's village center areas do not have buildings above 3 stories and such three-story buildings are in the minority, with most buildings in village centers being 1 or 2 stories.

Also, the scale of the proposed 1521 Beacon project apartments is 2½ and 3 times larger than the nearby Copley neighborhood apartments now within the residential neighborhood on Wayland Street at the Waban T Station.

Projects of the size now proposed near Waban Village have been successfully developed nearby. But in highly different settings. Those successful developers took unusual settings and provided high value residences for Newton residents. None of those projects so overwhelms the setting as the proposed 1521 Beacon Street project would overwhelm its neighborhood.

Below, I offer some non-professional pictures visually displaying the "location appropriateness" of three large-scale housing developments now in Newton. The "mass" of the 1521 Beacon proposed project is similar to these identified housing developments found elsewhere in Newton. Each fits into its neighborhood and creates strong visual appeal. I request the interested agencies and SBA Members visit four nearby developments:

- Visit the Avalon Apartments just west of Needham Street, set behind the retail shopping stores on Needham Street. When you drive in, you find yourself in a beautiful, balanced, high-density residential development setting. It is bordered on three sides by retail and commercial facilities. The fourth side has, as its neighbor to the east, the large DPW Eliot Street parcel for equipment and materials storage.
- Drive by the Village Falls Condominiums on the corner of Oak and Needham Streets. Here is a beautiful setting with only one side abutting a residential neighborhood. The three other sides are commercial properties, and include the beautiful Charles River. (no picture)
- Finally, the Arborpoint Apartments across from the Woodland T Station have a similar character and mass to the housing development currently proposed at 1521 Beacon. Again, you find a beautiful, striking complex with its neighbors being the Woodland T Station to its south, the Golda Maier Housing to the north and golf courses both east and west, and Newton-Wellesley Hospital as a nearby neighbor.

- Then, visit The Copley Group apartments now offered in Waban on Woodland Street, at the Waban T Station - in a residential setting 2 blocks from the proposed development.

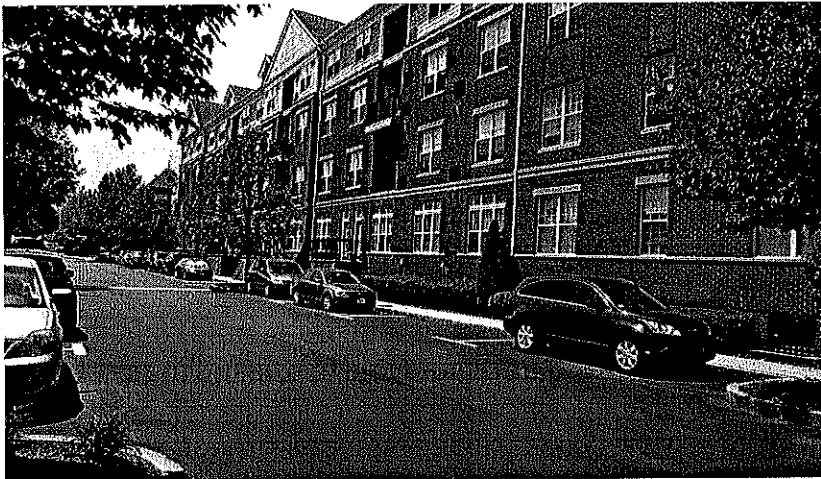
★ **Not one of the existing “equivalent apartment developments” lies within a Newton village and its neighborhood.**

★ **But each of the three carries the same visual scale and mass as that proposed for 1521 Beacon Apartment Project.**

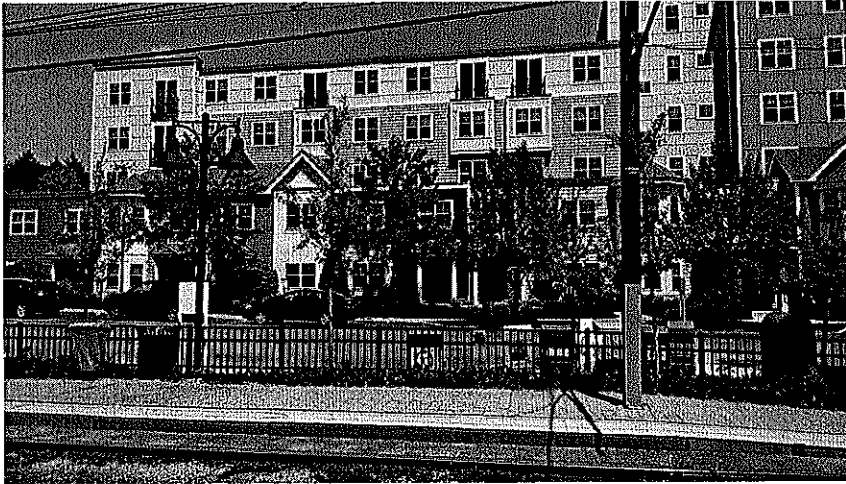
★ **As to the existing apartment complex in Waban Village, the proposed 1521 Beacon Apartment Project brings a scale and mass more than 2½ (for the townhouses) and 3½ (for the Short Street building) larger.**

★ **We request the City of Newton require the developer find a more appropriate project location or modify the scale as described herein.**

I offer a few non-professional pictures, taken earlier today on a cell phone. The purpose is to provide a “familiar” picture of the mass of the proposed development. One is the Avalon apartment complex and the other is the apartment complex next to the Woodland T stop. I enclose two pictures taken this morning with a cell phone. The effort is to depict the mass of the proposed development with reference to nearby “similar” apartment/townhouse housing developments.

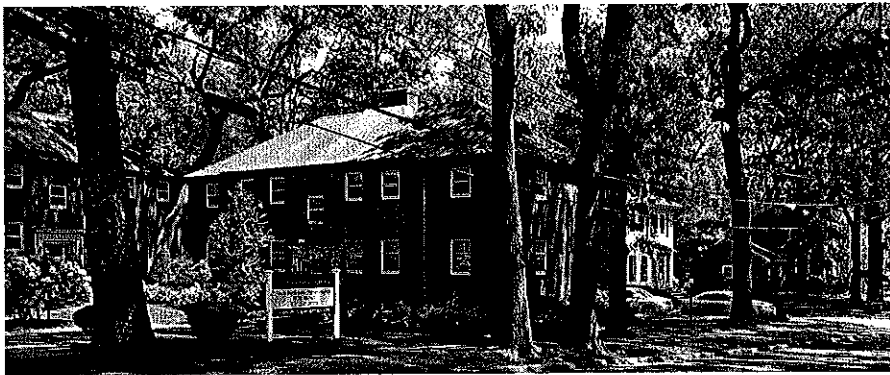


In the Avalon Apartments picture, above, the distance from the right hand edge of the picture to the third set of steps (at the back of fourth car on the right) is approximately 180 feet in length, or (i.e., 60 of my normal walking paces). This is the width of the proposed Short Street Building for 1521 Beacon. Full size parking spaces are typically 20 feet in length; so, 180 feet is about 9 parking spaces.



This picture above shows the Arborpoint Apartments at the Woodland T Station. The distance from the left edge of the tall, beige building to the windows above the far right red newspaper box in the foreground is approximately 180 feet (60 paces). The portion shown is five stories high; the right hand slightly darker building area is six stories in height.

Compare and contrast the scale proposed, and seen above, with the scale of The Copley Group apartments now offered in Waban on Woodland Street, at the Waban T Station.



Conclusion:

The plans, as proposed, should be rejected. To this end, for the Board and public to gain a more realistic view of the project "mass", versus that of neighborhood structures, I request of the Newton Zoning Board and MassHousing -

- In order to overcome the inability of the public and the Board to realistically visualize a comparative "before and after" impact of the currently proposed project, please require that the developer present "ground view" perspective drawings superimposing the proposed project on photographs taken (1) from the far side of Short Street or from the middle of the "parkland" triangle between Short and

Beacon streets, (2) from the far side of Karen Road, and (3) from home plate in the baseball playing field within Montclair and Moffet roads. The field-of-view should equal 3x the width of the current buildings (i.e., 3x the length of the outer edge of the row of the three townhouses, taken as a whole, and approximately 185-200' on both sides of the main Short Street building) in order to be able to see the "neighborhood impact".

I also suggest three changes that might make the proposed project compatible with the surrounding Waban Village neighborhood, and request the board provide the same comparative project drawings, as requested above, but include a new set of drawings wherein the project proponents –

1. Reduce the visual mass of the 185' long "Short Street" building by replacing it with 3 or 4 townhouses;
2. Reduce one "floor" of building height for each townhouse building ("now" totaling 6 or 7 townhouse buildings) by moving the two small top floor units (a one bedroom and a studio unit) to the other floors, and
3. Put all parking underground.

Such general building design modification may be seen to better fit with the Waban Village and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Neil and Barbara Collins,
30-year Waban residents
14 Hillcrest Circle
Waban, MA 02468

cc Waban Area Council

Norine Silton

From: Stefano Efstratoudakis <stefano@stefcobuilders.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 6:13 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth
Cc: Stefanos; <linda@stefcobuilders.com>
Subject: 1521 beacon Street

Hello,

My name is Stefanos Efstratoudakis and I am the builder of 23 Karen Road in Waban.

The project that is being proposed at 1521 Beacon Street by Mr. Argyros is unfit for this neighborhood for many reasons that go well beyond likes, dislikes and housing.

The number of units is dangerous to be next to the fields that have no parking. The fields are extremely active on weekends and they don't have their own parking. These units will cause a clear danger to the children and all the visitors of the fields, as well to the occupants of the units.

There is no traffic study done. The developer proposed to close Short Street without proposing the new traffic plan. There is not even a count of the traffic load of a "closed" Short Street. IF this happens all these cars will go thru Karen Road. Karen Road is not designed nor built to handle such traffic load.

The shear mass of the proposed building is huge. It will be some 63 ft high from the Karen Road side. I am sure that 40B rules allow for some relief, but there must be some limits to such reliefs. This is not a road nor a neighborhood that could allow such "GREAT RELIEFS". It is way too high for the surrounding structures and landscape.

There is no Landscape Plan and not enough open space. Again, I am sure there are reliefs but in such a great scale ?

No water or soil tests have been done. This is a low area and once excavated for foundations the volume of earth that will be removed will cause flooding situations to the surrounding houses. This will take time to show but it will happen. The entire area is a "dry lake". This can be seen in old city maps on how low this area really is. It is the lowest spot of the entire surrounding area. The developer has not done any studies on this. No consideration has been taken for the volume of the new buildings and the volume of the foundations and the basements.

These technical and safety issues that I mentioned go beyond taste and housing issues. This project is technically enormous and dangerous from many different Architectural, Engineering and Traffic angles.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Truly yours,

Stefanos Efstratoudakis

Norine Silton

From: Peter Kalil <peterkalil55@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 7:39 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Proposed Development of 1521 Beacon St.

To the Newton Planning Department:

We would like to express our opposition to the development of the St. Philip Neri Church site as proposed by developer Michael Argiros.

The development, as presented, is much too large and dense for the site, and would be strikingly out of place with the surrounding neighborhood of single family homes. The proposed complex of 48 units encroaches upon the adjacent properties as setbacks are lessened and the height is greatly increased as compared to the current structure. Planned green space within the submitted design consists solely of narrow sections between buildings rather than combined to create a usable communal space.

At a recent forum led by lawyers for Mr. Argiros, answers to questions and legitimate concerns raised by local residents were woefully inadequate and riddled with vague statements like "We can look into that" and specific ones like "What you say won't make any real difference." Estimates for increased traffic were dubious (for example, one additional car entering the area per hour during morning rush hour). The choice of site plans and renderings presented were misleading to try to make the proposed buildings appear smaller and less obtrusive than they really would be.

The project's mass and size are suitable for a commercial area, not a residential one. This development is clearly out of place and of an inappropriate scale for the site. It would have an irreversibly negative impact on our neighborhood and we urge you to reject it - or at the very least require a major reduction in the scale of the buildings and number of units proposed. This project as currently proposed is inappropriate and irresponsible.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter and Suzanne Kalil
62 Pine Ridge Rd.
Waban
617-332-1999

Norine Silton

From: brospaul@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 9:49 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Lisa Menelly; profleff@aol.com; democratjasonpaul@gmail.com
Subject: Proposed Project on Church Property at 1521 Beacon

Dear City of Newton,

I live at 1548 Beacon Street and write to express my concern about the proposed 40B project now being considered for the site across the street from my home. As a long time law professor and current dean of Northeastern University School of Law, I have taught Property Law for more than 30 years and fully appreciate the importance of affordable housing. I would not dream of opposing a project simply because it includes adding multifamily units to a neighborhood dominated by single family homes.

The planned project here, however, strikes me as using affordable housing as a pretext for building a project way out of scale for the neighborhood solely for the purpose of adding every last penny to the developer's coffers. The planned height of the project, 62 feet is far above the other structures in the area. The number of units far exceeds the road capacity adding traffic to roads already heavily congested to the point of significant slow downs each morning. And the amount of available land is insufficient to house the number of planned units without taking away a reasonable chance for green space.

I think road congestion alone would be reason to scale back the project, and certainly a design that doesn't include a structure that dwarfs the neighborhood would be preferable. I would be happy to speak with anyone about this. Thanks you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Jeremy Paul

617-558-0351

Norine Silton

From: Tammy Boulerice <tammy.boulerice@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 10:55 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon St

Dear Planning Group/ Mayor Setti Warren,

I live directly across from the 1521 Beacon Street project at 1530 Beacon Street. My overall concerns are for the existing infrastructure and safety on our roads.

As a mother of 3 children, I am concerned with the increase in traffic. Beacon Street and Chestnut Street are already jammed and to add a potential 100+ cars is absurd not only for safety but also for the environment.

Newton is a community who takes pride in maintaining both properties and environments. We shared our opposition to the project in the last meeting and asked if the developers would consider our voices and they said no they will continue to push on for this project.

The 1521 Beacon land was originally zoned for four houses and now we have a potential 36 unit apartments and a stream of townhouses. The proposed buildings do not fit with the existing community and the height of the proposed buildings are taller than the new Angier school. These buildings would tower over the homes that have been here for over 100 years.

We need your help to bring not only a short term living space but a long term vision for Newton. We need a plan that works with an already difficult traffic area and flow and maintains our green space and environment.

We need your help.

Regards,

Tammy Boulerice

1530 Beacon St.

Waban

617-467-4061

-- Comments which are
considered

Existing infrastructure

Environmental concerns

Thoughts on how proposed design could be modified to better fit the neighborhood.

Comments likely to be ignored

Rental vs Ownership

Increased municipal costs resulting from the project (i.e. school costs)

Overall neighborhood opposition

--

Best regards,

Tammy

Tammy Boulerice

p: 617.849.4052

e: tammy.boulerice@gmail.com

Norine Silton

From: Bonnie Rudner <bonnie.rudner@bc.edu>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 5:21 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: proposed development

HI there-

I live on 57 Moffat Rd, and have been here since 1975
obviously this is a neighborhood that I value, having raised two kids here

I am not opposed to change- a brief walk around the neighborhood shows that that ship has sailed
but there is change- and there is distortion

the proposed scale of the project would alter the nature of our neighborhood in ways that feel impossibly
damaging
and this damage is related to the proposed scale of the project

we are a residential area- not an urban area
the height is more extreme than the new Angier building
we neighbors respect the following ideas:

- a design which blends its structures to the existing size and scale of the neighboring community;
- a mix of affordable housing to qualified residents;
- a design which preserves green space that is currently an important component of the neighborhood; and
- a design that does not exacerbate the already difficult traffic safety, flow and parking issues.

But what is proposed does not fit any of these criteria- in fact, it is all about the developer making money for the future of his kids

we care about the safety of our own kids- Lincoln field activities already endanger walking on those steets

Thank you for listening

Bonnie Rudner

57 Moffat RD

617-527-6241

Norine Silton

From: Barry Greene <bgreene@alnylam.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:00 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street, Waban, MA 02468

To whom it may concern:

My wife and I are happy residents of Waban Valley, (bounded by Windsor Rd., Caroline Park Rd., Chestnut St. and Beacon St.) We know the Waban Valley neighborhood well having lived here since 2001. We walk in the neighborhood almost daily, and speak with many of our neighbors.

Neighbors walk, jog, push strollers, and ride bikes. Children play basketball in the street and cars take side-streets so as not to disturb the game. Kids walk to school and bus stops and the park and playground. Neighbors volunteer to help other neighbors with snow removal. It is peacefully serene. There are beautifully landscaped lawns, phlox climbing down rock walls, majestic trees and lilacs in bloom. You can touch and breathe nature in this target neighborhood. We now have a wonderful opportunity to share this bliss with those who would not necessarily be able to afford homes in Waban Valley. I am speaking about the proposed development at the former St. Philip Neri Church at 1521 Beacon St. in Waban, on the corner of Beacon and Chestnut.

We also have a wonderful opportunity to do this project well. If done very well, it might become a template for all of the US since our own Mayor Warren serves on the advisory board of the US Conference of Mayors in DC, and is the chair of the Community Housing and Development Committee.

This is how I propose we do it well. First, we need to understand the motivations and goals of all those affected by this development. Understanding our motivations can help us provide an overall win-win template.

- **The builder**, Michael Argiros, has proposed building 48 residential rental units (36 units in an apartment building, and another 12 townhouses), on a 1.6-acre lot. At the beginning of the project, his lawyer Mr. Buchbinder reported that they were considering single residences; or a "friendly" 40B or a regular 40B. Mr. Buchbinder commented that they could make a profit with any one of these choices.
- Most **abutters and neighbors** would prefer a park, or public green space with parking for Lincoln Park (which lacks parking), or single non-rental family homes, similar to homes already in the neighborhood. Most neighbors and abutters are willing to compromise. At a recent meeting with over 100 neighbors, the vast majority raised their hands in agreement with a proposal which would preserve the church, and subdivide it into residences within the church. 10 and 20 residences inside the church is one such proposal, with the rest of the lot used for parking and greenspace. Sadly, the nearest abutters on Beacon Street, are more modest homes. One neighbor is affected with only a 10 foot setback from the property.

Almost 100% of the neighbors agree that the proposed building is too large for the site. Either the apartments or the townhouses fit, but not both.

Some Waban Valley Neighbors are concerned that the builder will buy surrounding properties to expand the project, and encroach further into the neighborhood. The lot was purchased at 69,050 feet and now is 70,335 feet.

Neighbors are most concerned with the scale and density of the project. Much of the lot will be building structure, parking lot, dumpsters and cars. The width of the apartment alone is 1 ½ times more than the current church.

The 12 additional townhomes leave little room for parking, maneuvering in the lot, and virtually no space for greenery. The proposed 47-53 foot heights exceeds local zoning laws. The building would be at least three feet taller than the new Angier School (which people are complaining is too tall).

To put this massive structure on one of Newton's busiest intersections and crossroads has been described as a poor decision.

- According to **Chapter 40B**, the 'development's design will be appropriate for the site on which it is located.' Therefore, it is mandated that the design not detract from the neighborhood, and be similar in scope and design to existing structures.
- **Low income citizens** would like the opportunity for their children to attend Newton's stellar schools. I believe that the builder had mentioned wanting to cater to the elderly and young professionals. There are 2-3 townhomes (out of 12 units) which will be affordable for households of three making less than \$44,000/year (also kindly verify). The elderly are looking for no stairs, and all the proposed townhomes are three stories and with only 2 units being handicap accessible. 80% will be non-affordable housing.
- Some in the **Federal Government** are advocating for the urbanization of suburbia. Will this affect our current Waban Valley?
- **Folks moving to the suburbs**, often do so from cities. They want to be in less dense, quieter, calmer areas, with green spaces, bike lanes, and safe streets, less congestion and less noise.
- I spoke with some realtors who claim that a majority of **people looking for housing** in Newton are looking for homes to buy, not rent. They would rather spend their income on a mortgage, rather than lose money on rent. Are we making the correct assumptions about people's housing needs? Realtors mentioned many house-hunters looking for properties under \$400,000 in Newton, of which there is little or no inventory.

For those needing to rent, there already are affordable, unoccupied apartments 2 miles away (the Ardmore Apartments), with one and two bedroom vacancies. I spoke with other developers who say their market analysis reveals that renters will not be willing to pay the \$4,000-\$5,000/month rental pricetag that Mr. Argiros' says he will be charging, with a one year lease for about 80% of the total units. Some have raised the question that this may leave the property abandoned and neglected once the project starts. It was mentioned at the Waban Area Council meeting that Mr. Argiros has filed for bankruptcy in the past, this has not been verified. If it did happen in the past, maybe we can work with him to help ensure that this does not happen again with this project.

- The Newton.Gov Website states, '**Mayor (Warren)** focuses his efforts on making Newton a livable, sustainable, 21st century city, and uses data and demographics to improve public safety, infrastructure, education, and economic development, knowing that his administration is making decisions that will affect Newton for decades to come.'
- Our **Newton Historical Commission** preserves, promotes and develops the historical assets of the Newton. The Saint Philip Neri Church was built in 1928 by Father Donovan, and may be considered a historical landmark, and hopefully the commission can work to preserve it.
- The **Newton's Conservators** work to preserve open space in Newton. I assume they will want to ensure the preservation of green space with trees dividing Short Street from Beacon Street, although the developer had mentioned possible changes on Short Street and a rebuilt intersection at Beacon and Chestnut. All these proposals remove beautiful mature trees and greenspace, along with the accompanying flora and fauna. The

development should include as much greenspace as the surrounding neighborhood. One of the easements on the property has mature, beautiful bushes and trees.

- **Bike Newton** promotes bicycling as a viable, safe and convenient method of transportation and can work to build bike lanes in the neighborhood, and ensure that there will be enough parking spaces for the development.

When cars park on Karen Road and Montclair Road, the traffic flow is difficult, especially when parents are dropping off their children at the park and at the numerous bus stops.

- Newton's Division of Environmental Affairs **Department of Beautification** improves the appearance of Newton. I hope that they will be on board with this project so that the development will add, and not detract to the beauty of the area.

Maybe the Department of Beautification can submit design ideas that may solve the following problem: Several elderly neighbors facing the property on Karen are concerned that the townhomes will be cutting off the wonderful sun exposure they now enjoy.

Also some of the department of beautification can help now. Some of St. Philip Neri Church has recently been vandalized. Glass from recently broken windows has not been removed. There is garbage littered around the property. Lawn and greenery had not been fully attended to during the course of this year by the owner. Leaves have not been removed. Storm drains have not been cleared.

Below are some ideas/concerns which might help create win-win situations for all the involved parties:

Public Safety and Traffic

- It would benefit all to conduct a thorough traffic study which would include:
 - The 6 year building project on Route 9 and 128 which will back up traffic on Chestnut Street, significantly.
 - The 6 year building project on Route 9 and 128 which will back up traffic on Beacon Street, significantly
 - This traffic study should also show the death of an EMT driving an ambulance on the corner of Chestnut and Beacon.
 - The traffic study will probably reveal occasional traffic backed up from Commonwealth Avenue all the way to Beacon Street.
 - (Kindly verify if there are 4-7 bus pick-ups and drop offs from around the corner of the development, to one or two blocks away for both public and private schools and camps.)
 - Sports Teams Drop off and pick-ups at the Warren Lincoln Field on Montclair with and without buses.
 - Children walking/biking to and from Angier school
 - Children in playground on Montclair
 - Children crossing Beacon to get to Angier at Windsor.
 - Children crossing Windsor to and from markets and pool (especially in the summer).
 - Increased traffic, congestion, parking, safety issues:

- Moving Trucks
 - Deliveries, FedEx, UPS, Mail, Internet providers, etc.
 - Visitors (Only 7 marked visitor parking for the apartment complex)
 - Garbage Collection (24 cans on Karen Rd. just for the townhomes?)
 - Maintenance and Grounds Management Staff
 - Snow Removal Equipment
- The current traffic study is **missing locations with children**: The playground, the park during games and activities (weekends), the crosswalks on Windsor and Beacon, kids walking from the swimming pool and tennis courts to Waban Market (summer), the streets with snow and ice in the winter where 2 way streets become one way and some street become impassable, Angier School traffic and parking.
 - Done during spring break for some schools and many people were on vacation.
 - Study done from 7am-9am and then 4-6. School hours would be good too. Weekends with games are important too.
 - Angier School is closed for now. We need to take into account Angier School.
 - Did not do neighboring side streets with **buses** and parents picking up from buses from at least 5 different schools in the few neighboring streets (one broken arm).
 - Looked at safety record for 5 years. Should go back 10 years, and show the **death** at Chestnut and Beacon from an EMT driving an ambulance.
 - Mr. Argiros commented they might close off Short Street. That would make the problem even worse by backing up traffic on Chestnut even more.

Newton's Infrastructure

Environmental concerns

There are water drainage and flooding concerns at Short Street and St. Philip Neri Church. The water flows north to south on Chestnut Street and makes a small river on Short Street and enters down into the St. Philip Neri parking lot, which often floods. Does the city know please if the developer has taken into account the flooding and water table of the property? If not, the proposal may end up being a six story building. This may also affect the parking and snow removal plans. A neighbor has currently been clearing the drains at the St. Philip Neri property.

There is more than a 10% slope on some of the property.

There is minimal proposed greenspace. Some existing trees are on the easement are part of the nesting migratory bird path.

Parking

There already is a severe parking shortage at times in the neighborhood. People park in the neighborhood who take the T (there is not enough T parking). Parking shortage at Lincoln Park and playground on Montclair and Karen. Parking shortage at the Waban and Beacon retail spaces (Waban Market, etc.) Windsor Road. Parking shortage for parents who come to pick up their children at the buses who drop off at this location.

The townhomes have garages in the plans, but it is not clear if tenants will use their garages for general storage or for their cars. One architect mentioned that those many residents would require 140 parking spaces instead

of 105. Of those 105 provided, some are for double parking. Their needs to be more space for maneuvering since cars will be parked in back of each other.

For the apartment complex, there are only 7 proposed visitor parking spaces.

The proposed entrance and exit from the complex is 20 feet, with a sharp turn, meaning that the 100+ tenants), would be quite backed-up in the cramped parking area provided. I assume this will back up traffic on Karen and on Montclair. Although the T is close, we cannot mandate that the tenants not own cars, as some have proposed. Many low income tenants do own cars, we need to provide on-site parking amenities to all. The lack of parking spots will create spillage of parking into the streets. With snow, it might become a problem that a proper design will need to address.

Roads and Traffic

The current road infrastructure is not meeting the current needs of Waban Valley residents, and Newton's citizens. An additional 100+ people will create a significant increase in the already very dangerous situations, especially for all the children and elderly in the neighborhood.

Possibly building housing for 15-20 individuals might fit more easily into the 1.6 acre lot, and be more easily incorporated into the existing Waban Valley infrastructure.

I am looking forward to working together to create this win-win situation for all.

Sincerely,

Barry Greene
54 OakVale Rd
Waban, MA 02468

Barry Greene
President & Chief Operating Officer
Alynham Pharmaceuticals
300 Third Street
Cambridge, MA 02142
t: 617.551.8348 • f: 617.551.8101
bgreene@alynham.com

Norine Silton

From: Judi MacKenzie <jandbmackenzie@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:36 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Proposed project

To Whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed building project on the St. Philip Neri grounds. As a resident on Oak Vale Road, which intersects with Karen Road, traffic is already significant and tearing up our "private" road. This project, if developed as planned, would increase the traffic to an unimaginable degree. However, my main concern is that of safety for children, particularly in the winter, when walking to the bus stop. Often, they are not able to walk on sidewalks, and have no choice but to walk in the street. If the development is built as proposed, Karen Road will no doubt become even more unsafe for our children of the community.

We are not opposed to housing being built on the property, but the size and scope is completely inappropriate for this location!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Judi MacKenzie

Norine Silton

From: Betty Blume <bettyblume1@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:37 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban

As a home owner in Waban, living one block from the development site referenced above, I concur with my fellow Wabanites in expressing concern regarding the scale of the proposed residences. This project violates the principle that the design for this site must be 'generally appropriate' to the nature of the community. I agree that affordable, rental housing could be appropriate for this site but feel strongly that the proposed development would prove to be a detriment, not a positive addition, to our community.

Traffic along Montclair Road and Karen Road is already seriously congested regularly due to school busses and to sporting events at the local playing field. Adding cars for the number of residents occupying the proposed development would create continuous major tie-ups.

I join my neighbors in urging that you request representatives from Mass Housing to review traffic issues and the appropriateness of this design for this quiet, green, residential neighborhood. We all would welcome a plans that provides affordable, pleasant housing for new neighbors but does not create such a major change to the nature of this area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Betty B. Blume
57 Lawmarissa Road
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Melanie Henriques <henriquesm@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 8:52 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; gwatson@masshousing.com; John Rice; Brian E. Yates; Deborah J. Crossley
Subject: Philip Neri - 1521 Beacon Street project

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing in regard to the proposed development of the Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon Street, Waban. I understand and support the need for more 40B housing in Newton and in that location. However, the size of the proposed development is out of scale for the neighborhood and that location. This is a neighborhood of primarily single residence buildings and a few small apartment buildings south of Waban square.

The proposed new buildings would be towering over the neighboring homes, more than double the height of most of the homes. Definitely not in keeping with the look and feel of Waban as a residential village. In addition to being a shock to the eyes because of the size, the cluster of buildings would adversely affect sunlight reaching the homes nearby.

Having the sole entrance be on Karen Road would result in an extraordinary increase in cars on those quiet streets. I'm not an abutter but I can imagine they must be dreading the sound of the snow plow clearing a parking lot for one hundred cars in the wee hours of the morning in time for the residents of the new complex to get out in time for work. Or the sounds of potentially dozens of extra cars coming in and out of the complex at all hours, as opposed to the cars of just a couple of neighbors.

The Philip Neri building is attractive from the outside and is a unique piece of architecture in the city. (I have never been inside so can't speak to that.) Ideally, it would be great if the developer could renovate the building (as was done to the churches on Newtonville Ave in Newtonville and Centre Street near Newton Corner) keeping the outside intact. Perhaps that could be made into a set of mixed 40B and other units and use part of the parking lot to build some smaller townhouse units. In addition, create a second entrance to the parking lot coming on to Short Street to reduce the impact of the number of cars driving on Karen Road. Parking spots could be added to the front and side of the building, keeping some landscaping of course.

I agree that Newton needs more housing, and especially more affordable housing, but let's try to keep the character of our neighborhoods.

That's part of what makes this city such a wonderful place to live!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melanie Henriques
83 Devonshire Road, Waban

Norine Silton

From: Ron Mauri <ronmauri43@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 10:26 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Oppose Large Development on This Site

I am a nearby resident that lives on the Waban-Newton-Highlands border. I often shop in Waban center and use Chestnut St both to access the Mass Turnpike to commute into Boston and for shopping trips to Needham Street. Chestnut St. is a two lane residential street, but one of the few options for north-south trips in Newton. It is already heavily used and badly congested much of the day. Late afternoons are particularly bad as it usually is a southbound rolling parking lot all the way from Commonwealth Ave to Route 9. It is pure folly and patently ridiculous to pretend that adding 48 housing units in the middle of this horribly congested Chestnut St. corridor is not going to exacerbate the situation. It is a well-known statistical fact that the average household generates 5 trips per day (that means 5 going and 5 returning) and almost all by auto. This is the wrong place for a large development notwithstanding the argument that a few new residents will walk to Waban center a few times a week. It's what most people do every day (use cars for various errands) that need to be the prime consideration. It is simply wrong and unfair to Newton residents to allow a large development on this site and thereby add to the time they spend in their cars tending to the essential tasks of living. It uses time and gas and adds to air pollution and is bad policy.

I also believe it is unfair and wrong to impose this degree of change on abutting resident property owners. This area is zoned for single residents and that's what it has always been. This is what abutters knew and presumed would endure when they chose to make the decision to buy in this neighborhood. This is the type of neighborhood they wanted to live in when they made a sizable investment. Building what is essentially a large apartment house and some dense multi-unit housing is a major change in neighborhood character and will have negative effect on their property values. This is not a buyer beware, due diligence issue. It is completely unforeseen and unexpected. If abutters find the change troubling, in theory they could sell and move to a neighborhood more to their liking, but we all know housing is not like a pair of uncomfortable shoes that you can discard and replace. It is not surprising that many of the abutters are troubled by this proposal and are voicing their concerns to decision-makers. Simple fairness dictates that, absent a compelling reason (and I've not learned of any), it is wrong for a "outsiders" to impose this degree of change on a stable neighborhood.

I ask that for these reasons, the type of sizable development proposed for this property be rejected.

Thank you for considering these comments,

Ronald Mauri
35 Bradford Rd.
Newton, MA 02461.

Norine Silton

From: steffiakarp <shula@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 11:03 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comment on St. Philip Neri construction

To whom it may concern:

Please add these comments to the St. Philip Neri construction site at 1521 Beacon Street, Waban.

48 units in that area does not show respect for the neighborhood or for our community:

1. The Angier renovations will already be inadequate for such a large influx of new Newton students. Even if the units are small like studios, or 1 bedrooms, just look at the overcrowding that happened to the Countryside School (where we used to live; where my children attended elementary school) with the addition of each development.
2. 48—and more--cars on Karen and Montclair Roads is a ridiculous amount to add to that intersection—especially once the Angier renovation is complete.
3. The proposed height is out of proportion to other neighborhood structures. This plan does not show respect for the residents of our neighborhood.
4. The open garage structure under the buildings is unattractive, again without regard to the 'style' of the community. Like the rest of the neighborhood, parking should be enclosed, no matter the final design.
5. The developer was just sued by another community. Why would Newton permit such a company to do work in this area?

*Steffi Aronson Karp
458 Woodward Street
Waban, MA 02468*

*Please sponsor me in the 2015 NAMI walk (it's not too late!): <http://namiwalks.nami.org/steffi>
See my quilts at the Quilters' Connection Show, May 30-31, Arsenal Center for the Arts:
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/magazine/2015/05/23/things-boston-may/eB4h0IQzQPpyHmcg5cnk8zK/story.html>*

One is not a star by how brightly one shines, but how brightly one makes others shine. - Anon

Norine Silton

From: Deb Karl <deborah.karl@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 11:05 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments regarding 1521 Beacon Street proposed project

May 28, 2015

Dear City of Newton Planning and Development Department,

My name is Deborah Karl. I have lived at 599 Chestnut Street in Waban for 37 years. My home is the white Cape with blue shutters on Short Street, facing the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon. My property abuts the 1521 Beacon St. property on two sides: the church building is my side neighbor, the parking lot is my rear neighbor.

I oppose the project currently proposed for 1521 Beacon Street by reason of scale and density. My comments will include the impact on the neighborhood and also, as a double-abutter, on a personal level.

Scale

The proposed structures are too tall and large for the neighborhood.

The proposed structures are taller than the new Angier School, which is massive. There is no buffer between the proposed development and the neighboring houses – no park, no parking lot, no commercial structures. In fact, one of the 47-ft-tall townhouse buildings is set just ten feet from the property line – ironic given that the homeowners across Karen Road from that building were not granted a waiver to expand their two-story home to eleven feet from their property line.

Personally, I will be adversely affected by these proposed tall structures. Now, I can look out my rear windows and see many trees beyond the homes on Karen Road. With four-story townhouses I will maybe see the tips of two or three trees. My side view will be similarly affected: the tall hedge & trees which separates my yard from the church will be likely removed as part of the project, leaving a clear view to the 62-ft-tall apartment building. I will be surrounded on two sides by cliffs -this will not be the leafy suburbia I enjoy.

Density

The proposed development will contain 48 units, doubling the number of units on Karen/Oakvale/Fredana/Montclair and Moffat between Montclair and Fredana. These roads are not designed for high-volume two-way traffic. They are wide enough for two-way traffic only if cars are parked on just one side of the street. In winter the streets were basically one-way, not ploughed wide enough for two cars to pass.

On Saturdays the streets around Lincoln Field are filled (often both sides) with cars due to the soccer games played on the field, with kids often darting across the street. An increase in traffic related to this development to/from Karen Road will increase the risk of accidents and injury.

As a double-abutter to the property I am concerned about the impact on me of 48 new neighbors in terms of lights, noise, and smoke. That's a lot of neighbors to ask to please not make noise after 10 pm (I go to bed even earlier than that), to not smoke near the fence line (I'm quite sensitive tobacco smoke, which does drift into my windows when someone is smoking nearby), and to not shine lights in my windows (likely the easiest concern, to be addressed by asking the developer to point lights down, not out).

Short Street

The developer has proposed closing Short Street. This is a major concern to me! Any proposed closure needs to clearly address the following:

Drainage: Short Street functions as a catch basin for several blocks of Chestnut Street. The two storm drains (in front of the hedge & on the island side) need to be kept clear; the shortened Short Street needs to long enough that the catch basin can fully function.

Parking: Short Street serves an important purpose as safe guest parking for Short Street & Chestnut Street homes. This function should not be lost.

Access: Safe entry & egress must be maintained, for my home and anyone parking on Short Street. The current configuration of entry to Short Street does not provide safe egress, nor would it be safe as a two-way street.

Thank you for considering my comments. I have additional comments to make regarding property drainage, landscaping, etc which are likely more appropriate to make at a later stage of design and review. I'm very happy to "walk the grounds" with any Newton or state official to discuss the property, plans, and Short Street configuration.

Sincerely,

Deborah Karl

599 Chestnut Street, Waban

Deborah.karl@gmail.com

Norine Silton

From: Lauren Yeaton <laurenyeaton@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 11:42 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: William J. Hunt
Subject: Waban residents concerned with proposed development at St. Philip Neri site

To whom it May Concern:

We are residents of Waban, we live at 181 Pine Ridge Rd, and are very concerned with the congestion that will be caused by increased traffic volume as a result of the number of proposed units. We already experience delays and congestion during busy times - especially at the intersection of Chestnut and Beacon - and believe 48 more units, as proposed, with the accompanying volume of additional cars in the area, again, particularly at that Chestnut street intersection, would cause unmanagable congestion.

We are also concerned about what this influx of such a large number of residents would do to the capacity - now and future - at the new Angier school.

We are very much opposed to the development as currently proposed.

Thank you and feel free to reach us for questions or clarification at the number below or at this e-mail address.

Lauren Hunt
William Hunt
181 Pine Ridge Rd.
Waban, MA 02468

Lauren Yeaton Hunt

M: 617.372.2275

Norine Silton

From: HIRAMSWART@aol.com
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 1:59 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: (no subject)

TALL

TOO

Norine Silton

From: Judy Kohn <judyk10@rcn.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 3:24 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Phillip Neri Site

To Who It May Condemn:

The project proposed for the St. Phillip location seems totally out of proportion to the site. The density of the proposal would dwarf the neighborhood.

Not only would the buildings be ungainly, but the already existing traffic problem will be exacerbated. Cars will begin using now quiet neighborhood streets as a means of avoiding the traffic buildup. This could mean problems not only for the home owner but for the athletic field as well.

Please reconsider the use of this location for a more agreeable neighborhood-friendly use.

Judy Kohn
518 Quinobequin Rd

Norine Silton

From: Stuart Green <coolingsolutions@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 3:54 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Re: 1521 Beacon St, Waban Development

To Whom It May Concern:

My family lives at 155 Moffat Road, Waban, MA 02468.

We are against the development of 1521 Beacon Street, Waban as it is currently presented by the developer.

1. We believe that the height and size of the structure is inappropriate (out of scale) for the neighborhood of two level homes and would have a detrimental effect on property values.
2. We find the architecture/design is cheap looking and offensive and not aligned with the surrounding homes.
3. We think that the new development is likely to create additional traffic problems for the neighborhood, particularly upon Karen Road and surrounding streets, and pose a danger to the children who play on the surrounding streets (Karen, Montclair, etc). Additionally, it is not clear to us whether sufficient parking spaces are allotted to the proposed development, based on typical use of such a structure, with the possible result that there will be a lot of on-street parking (except in Winter months when it is not allowed) from occupants and their guests. We are also concerned that some of the additional parkers will seek to use the spaces allotted to the Waban Market and other commercial sites during the Winter months when parking is not permitted on streets in Waban.
4. We are disturbed by the reputation of the developer, as recently highlighted in an article in the Tab newspaper. Without enforceable guidelines on maintenance and penalties for failure to adhere to them, we feel that he could very well ignore City of Newton requests, as he plainly did with respect to the City of Somerville.
5. Has anyone studied the effects this proposed development will have on trash and mail services?

Stuart Green

Norine Silton

From: I-Cheng Ho <newtonho@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 6:34 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

The junction among Montclair, Beacon, and Short streets is potentially a very dangerous spot. There are so many blind angles. A new development with more than 100 housing units will bring more motor traffic through the dangerous triangle, particularly during rush hours when many kids are also going to or coming from the nearby schools. Those safety issues have to be addressed before the development can go forward.

Sent from my iPad

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Jantbruce <jantbruce@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 7:26 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: ralanbruce@aol.com
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

We are writing to express our concern about the scale of the proposed development of the site where the St. Philip Neri Church now stands.

We have lived for 15 years on Moffat Road near one end of Montclair Road. Almost every day we drive along Montclair to Beacon Street. during the Spring, the Summer and the Fall, the fields in Montclair Road are used almost every day for baseball, for soccer, or for both. The cars driven to the practices and games are parked on the full length of Montclair Road as well Karen Road and Moffat Road. We fear that a development as large as the one proposed would add a great deal of traffic to Montclair Road to the already difficult intersection where Montclair Road, Beacon Street and Short Road meet.

In addition to the traffic the developments would bring, the proposed execution of the development will not be in keeping with the neighborhood in terms of scale, size and proportion. The enormous footprint of the development would cover much of what is today open space. There would be no other building in sight as tall as the ones proposed. The footprint and the height will together create a structure massively disproportionate to the neighborhood.

If you have not already done so, we encourage you to visit the Lincoln Field on a late afternoon when games are being held. Cars are frequently double parked on Montclair as people are dropping off and picking up children, or as new cars arrive as games begin. Neighbors along Montclair and Moffat Roads are accustomed to the added traffic and congestion that the Park and playing fields bring to our neighborhood, but the increase in traffic that would come from the development would be impacting an already congested and at times hazardous area.

We are not opposed to new development in our neighborhood and support the creation of affordable housing. That is not the part of the development that we find objectionable, only that it is too large for the location and existing infrastructure.

Richard and Jan Bruce
173 Moffat Road
Waban, MA 02468

Sent from my iPad

Jan Bruce / CEO and Co-Founder / meQuilibrium jan@mequilibrium.com / O: 617-916-1262 / M:617-833-7448

www.mequilibrium.com

Norine Silton

From: Barbara Brustowicz <brustowicz@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 31, 2015 2:08 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Resident Comment re: proposed development at 1521 Baecon St., Waban

To whom it may concern:

As a resident of Waban I am writing to comment on the Project Eligibility application filed by the developer, Michael Argiros, of AMA Realty Ventures for a proposed development at 1521 Beacon St. The Waban Area Council recently submitted written comments directed at the findings that Mass Housing must make in order to grant the Project Eligibility Letter, specifically as it relates to the requirement that the conceptual project is generally appropriate for the site on which it is located. I share the Waban Area Council's keen concerns that the current design falls short of the "generally appropriate" requirement because of Massing and Scale, lack of Green and Open Space, and significant Traffic and Safety issues. I hope that the City Planning Dept. will incorporate these serious concerns into its Comment Letter to Mass Housing, and furthermore request that the developer be required to provide contextual streetscape and/or aerial renderings to illustrate the scale of the proposed structures relative to the neighboring homes.

As a separate issue, it is extremely disturbing to learn of recent revelations concerning the developer, Michael Argiros, as they relate to a criminal complaint that has been filed against him by the City of Somerville for his failure to comply with repeated warnings concerning safety violations relating to a dilapidated building owned by him in that City. Only after the criminal complaint was issued did Mr. Argiros take steps to begin rectifying the violations. Mr. Argiros' flagrant disregard for complying with safety regulations and repeated letters of warning issued by officials in Somerville bespeaks not only a simple lack of concern for legal requirements and safety regulations but also offers a glimpse into his moral character which is sure to affect his standing in the eyes of Waban residents who already view him and his proposed development with skepticism. This revelation about Mr. Argiros comes at a crucial time as it relates to his Project Eligibility application and what now appear to be valid residents' concerns in dealing with this developer on the 1521 Beacon St. project.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Brustowicz
12 Radcliff Rd., Waban

Norine Silton

From: eve curtis <evecurtis@mac.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 31, 2015 2:46 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 BEACON ST development

Janice Eve Curtis
27 Amherst Rd
Waban, MA 02468

I am writing to inform you that although you received a letter from the Waban Area Council objecting to the development at the former St. Philip Neri church, no one that I know was asked whether they objected to the plans.

After reading the letter sent by the Waban Area Council, I agree with their objections concerning the proposed height of the development and lack of green space. However, the current site does not have any significant green space and I do not find the current St Philip Neri building to be architecturally pleasing and do not see any need to maintain this type of structure.

My main concern is that there is a serious lack of affordable housing in Newton and it is my hope that the board of planning and the developer will find a way to create a building that does not overwhelm the immediate neighborhood, has green space available and is a true source of affordable housing for our community.

Yours Sincerely,

Janice Eve Curtis

Norine Silton

From: Kahn Richard <RJK527US@RCN.com>
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2015 10:41 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Concerns about St. Phillip Neri housing project

While we don't object to construction of multi-rental apartment on the proposed site, we are extremely concerned about the density of the proposed buildings.

In the context of the expected enlargement of two nearby public schools (Angier and Zervas), it will add to the current traffic overload on the narrow streets in the area, Beacon and Chestnut in particular, especially during rush hours.

From: Harriet and Richard Kahn
45 Pine Ridge Rd.
Waban, MA, 02468

email: rjk527us@rcn.com

Norine Silton

From: Diane Becker <dibeck2ster@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2015 6:22 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Response to St. Phillip Neri development

The following are my responses to the proposed development at the site of Saint Phillip Neri Church:

As an almost fifty year resident of Plainfield Street, one house in from Chestnut Street, I have experienced the enormous increase in traffic on Chestnut Street which sometimes makes it almost impossible for me to exit my street. With the current proposal an even greater increase in traffic would be unavoidable.

In addition, the size and scope of the project is totally out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood homes. Also, the proposed plan leaves very little frontage for green space, which is a dominant feature of our city and highly valued.

An additional objection is that I have recently learned of the criminal complaint that has been filed in Somerville against Michael Argiros, the purchaser and would be developer of the St. Philip Neri property. The complaint alleges persistent failure to maintain satisfactory maintenance and to make necessary repairs to the Somerville property he owns. Mr. Argiros has not responded to several letters from the City of Somerville over the course of a year, warning him of the violations. How can we allow someone with such a poor record of maintenance and responsibility to build in our city? I would support a smaller rental development with much more setback and increased green space. I would also support affordable units if it is determined that Newton has not fulfilled the required number.

Diane Becker
24 Plainfield Street
Waban

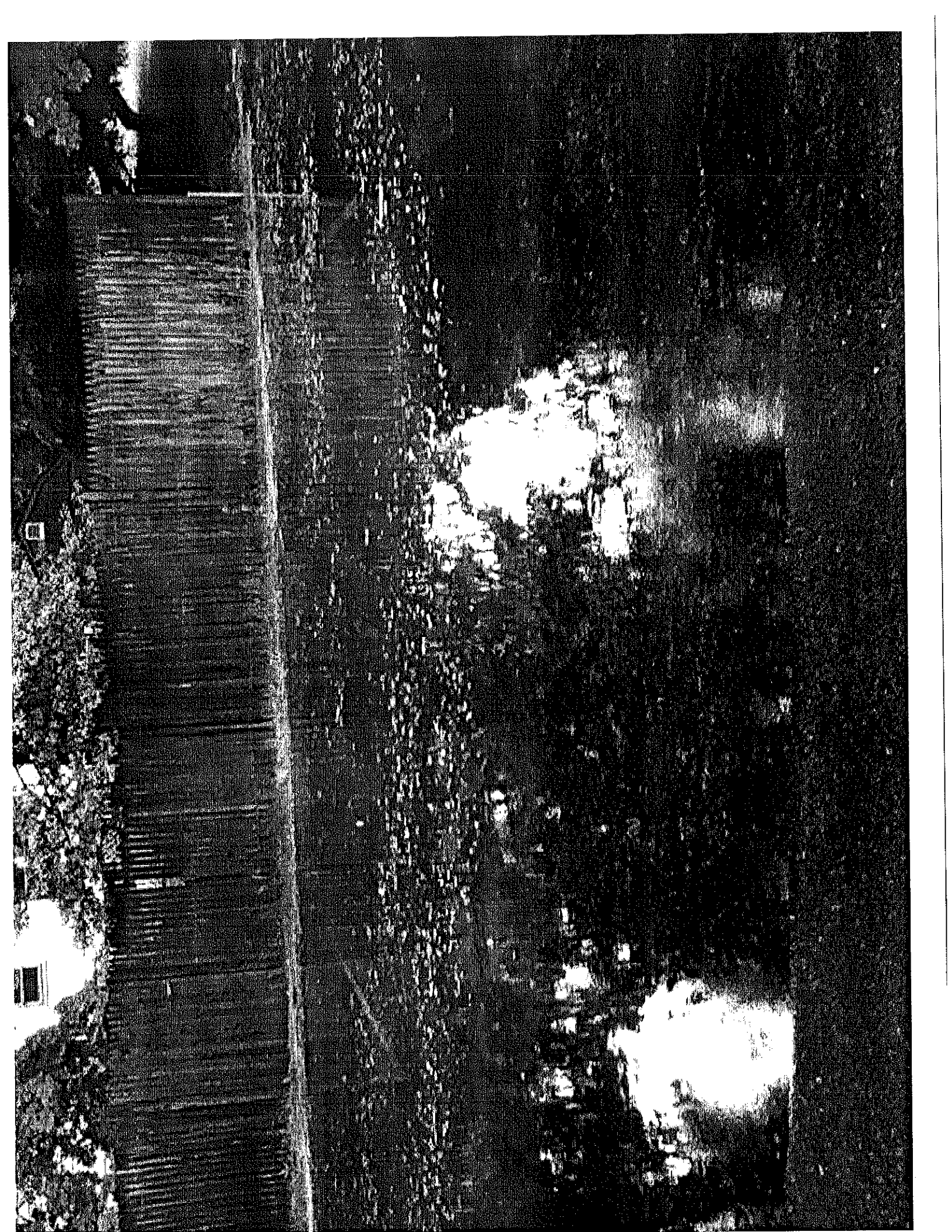
Norine Silton

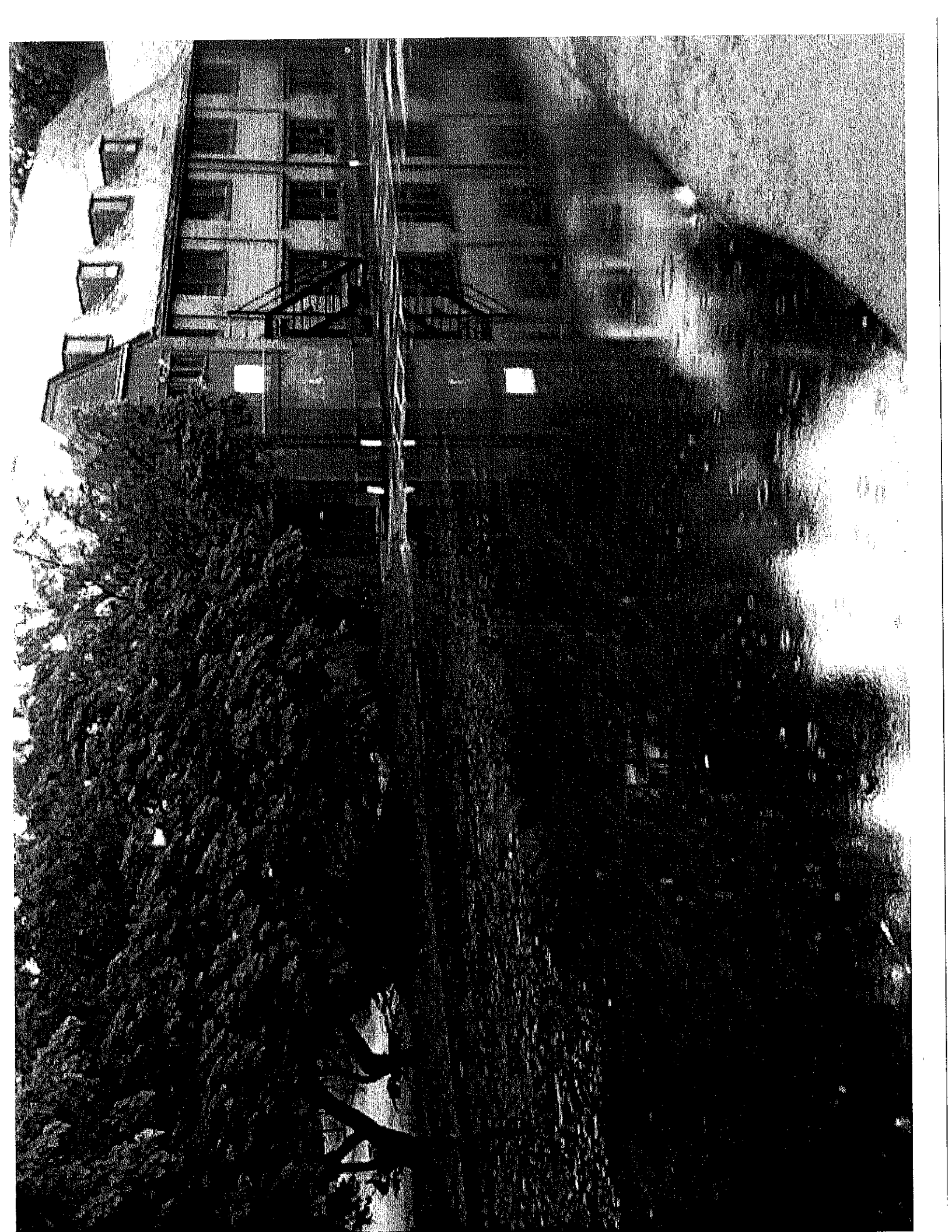
From: Deb Karl <deborah.karl@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 02, 2015 9:17 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: what happens when the parking lot drain isn't kept cleared
Attachments: 1521ParkingLot-060215a.JPG; 1521ParkingLot-060215b.JPG;
1521ParkingLot-060215c.JPG

a big lake in the parking lot of 1521 Beacon St this morning, extending into the neighbor's back yard.

Much more rain and it could flood into the current building. This lake might already flood the proposed apartment building.

The drain is straight out from the corner fence post.







Norine Silton

From: Bill Jenks <billjenks@blueshiftideas.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2015 5:31 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Bill Jenks
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street (St. Philip Neri) project

Dear Folks- I just learned of the proposed building on the St. Philip Neri site. Once again I'm amazed at how poorly the public sector represents the existing people of the neighborhood. It is incredulous to me that the scope of this project is even being discussed. The footprint is way too large and it is completely out of character for the neighborhood. The additional traffic, resource misallocation and density increases will be mind blowing.

This serves as another perfect example of the incompetency of the public sector. I will be voting against any public figure who supports this monstrosity while I live in Waban. The lack of leadership in this local government hastens my desire to leave this mismanaged community as soon as feasible.

Respectfully,
Bill Jenks
227 Windsor
Waban

Norine Silton

From: Marilyn Harris <mharris.travel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 05, 2015 8:45 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

I see this plan as being far too dense, far too tall, and taking up far too much open land space.

A smaller structure that would fit into Waban rather than sticking out like a sore thumb would be a more reasonable choice.

I would like to see affordable housing units but within a smaller number of town houses.

Please retain the character of our village.

Marilyn Harris
336 Woodward St.
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Ray Noveck <rnoveck@rcn.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 07, 2015 9:24 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: My Comments on the Proposed Development at 1521 Beacon Street
Attachments: SPN 1521 Beacon Street Mass Housing Letter.docx; SPN Google Search on Michael Argiros v3-2.docx

Dear Alexandra,

Attached please find a letter from me to the Newton Planning Department about my thoughts on the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street. In addition, I have also attached the results of a Google search on the properties of Mr. Michael Argiros.

Thanks for your efforts. If you want any further information, please call me at 617-962-1114.

Cordially,

Ray Noveck

Alexandra Ananth
Chief Planner for Current Planning
Newton Planning and Development Department
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Alexandra,

My wife and I have lived at 31 Karen Road in Waban for twenty seven years across the street from the St. Philip Neri parking lot and have totally enjoyed our experiences here. During the last five years or so we have endured the transformation of our little ten house street. We have gotten to know the developers who have spearheaded this change and are impressed with the quality of their work, their attention to making their projects fit in with the surroundings and feel of old Waban, their attention to green space, trees and shrubbery.

We became very involved in the community when the Archdiocese of Boston sold St. Philip Neri Church in a very private process. Many of the abutters and members of the Waban Valley neighborhood looked forward to and fully support thoughtful development to replace a decaying old building and unmaintained parking lot. Many of us believe that the creation of more affordable housing, as a component of new development, can play an important part in our community's continued development, long term viability and sustainability. Whether it's for downsizing seniors like my wife and me and several other families on the block, or young people, who want to stay in Newton to raise their family, it makes a lot of sense.

Unfortunately, the Comprehensive Permit Site Approval Application/Rental (Permit

Application) for the potential development of the former St. Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon Street submitted by Michael Argiros, (WabanAMA Realty Ventures, LLC), (the Developer) to MassHousing and the City of Newton falls woefully short of those expectations.

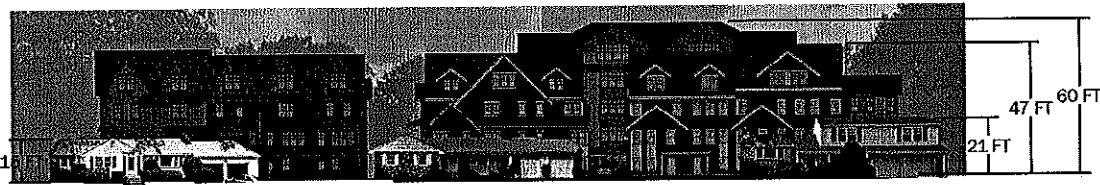
I quote from a letter recently sent out by the Waban Area Council to the Newton Planning Department that stated: "We are familiar with the findings that Mass Housing must make in order to grant the Project Eligibility Letter, and our comments here are directed at the following requirement:

*that the conceptual project design is generally appropriate for the site on which it is located, taking into consideration factors that may include proposed use, conceptual site plan and building massing, topography, environmental resources, and integration into existing development patterns (such finding, **with supporting reasoning, to be set forth in reasonable detail**); 760 CMR 56.04(4)(c). . . .*

Massing: Notably absent among the drawings we have seen are any street-scape or aerial renderings that illustrate the size of the proposed buildings relative to surrounding homes. In addition, the 40B regulations require that the Project Eligibility application include "a locus map identifying the site within a plan of the neighborhood." And finally, paragraph 3.4 of the application requires that the heights of the building for which you are requesting a waiver from the ZBA are compared in tabular form to the existing zoning requirements. None of the above required information was included in the Permit Application submitted, making it difficult to "visualize" massing or calculate it, as we have below. (Please go to www.wabanareacouncil.com to view WAC's entire letter.)

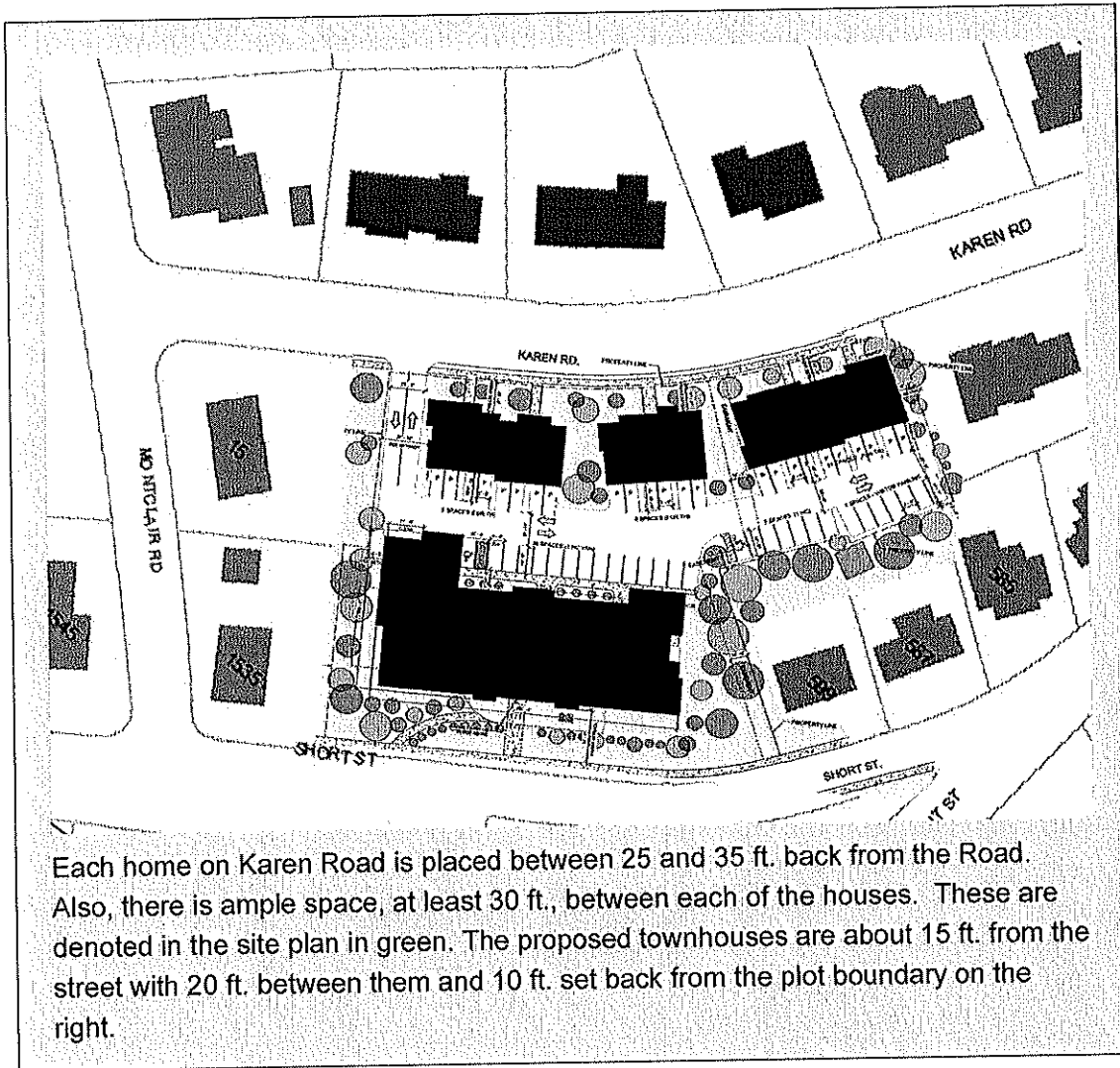
We have prepared accurate scale elevation drawings of how the proposed project would look to the owners of homes on Karen Road directly opposite the former church parking lot. We have also prepared a locus map identifying site within the

Newton Assessor's Map of the adjacent neighborhood. These new visuals are critical to assess whether the mass of this design is appropriate for the site and relates properly to the neighboring homes. To me, the rendering below looks like somebody is trying to cram a city block into a suburban community! It would be hard to say this could be easily integrated into existing development patterns as we set forth below in reasonable detail.



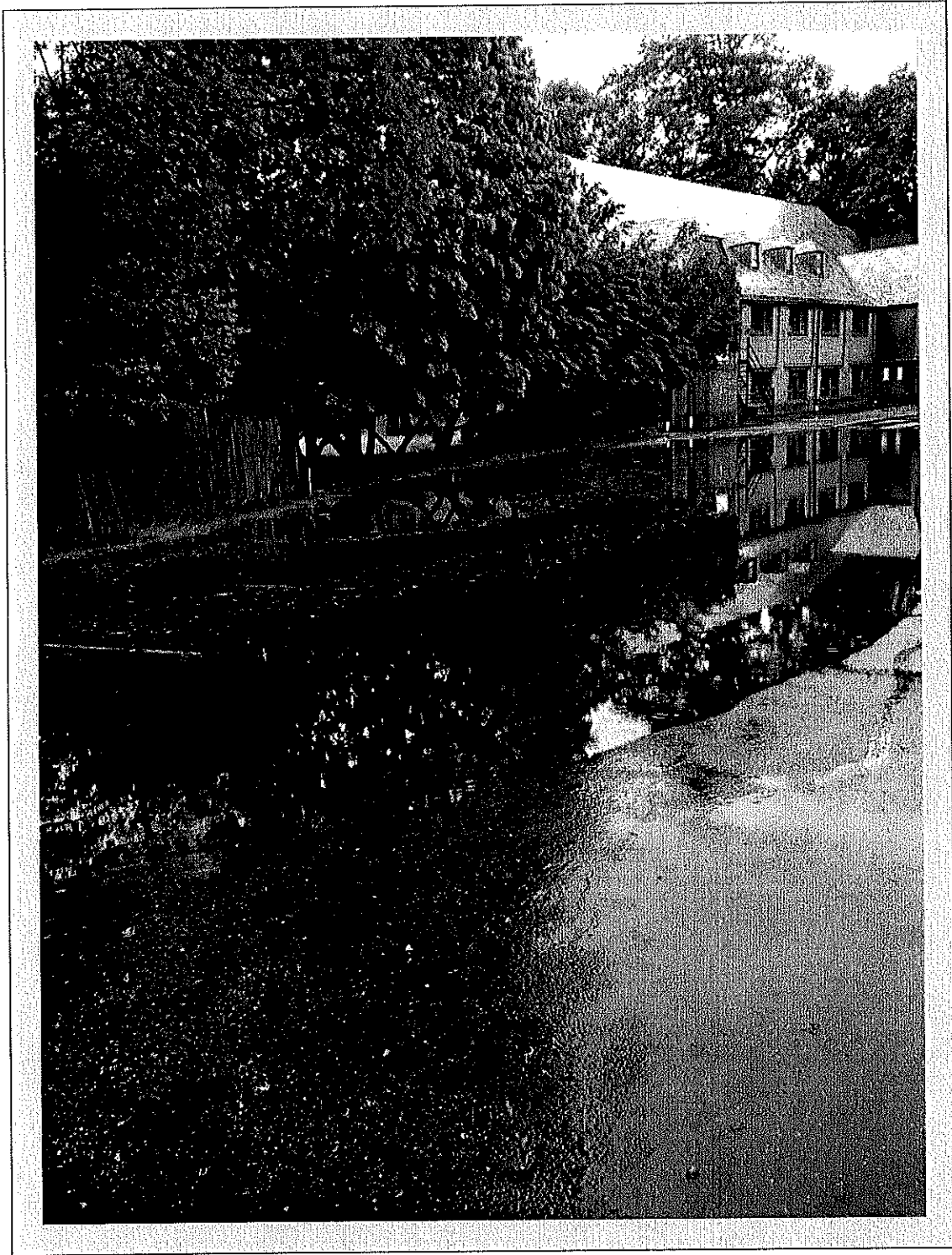
The elevation rendering above is taken from Karen Road. It shows in scale, the increased mass of the development compared to the existing homes abutting it on Karen Road. The large masses in the background are the proposed 48 rental units (or is it 46 as is mentioned in the Permit Application?), divided into one 36 unit, 60 ft. tall apartment building positioned in the back of the lot, and three 47 ft. tall townhouses placed 15 ft. from Karen Road. These proposed units are denoted in black in the site plan below.

The photographs rendered to scale of the three single family structures in the foreground of the elevation drawing are the existing homes directly across the street from the proposed development. The two single story homes are 15 ft. tall, and the split level home is 21 ft. tall.



Each home on Karen Road is placed between 25 and 35 ft. back from the Road. Also, there is ample space, at least 30 ft., between each of the houses. These are denoted in the site plan in green. The proposed townhouses are about 15 ft. from the street with 20 ft. between them and 10 ft. set back from the plot boundary on the right.

Environmental Resources: In many of the small meetings arranged by the developer, abutters and longtime residents raised the issue of drainage problems on the St. Philip Neri site.



Nowhere in the Permit Application is any information included about due diligence or

testing done by the Developer to learn about these issues and what is under the surface of the land. Other developers on Karen Road have encountered ledge, underground streams, etc. Karen Road now has ten houses on it. Nowhere in the plan is it mentioned if the sewer system is adequate for 48 new residences with 87 new bathrooms, 48 new kitchens, 48 new washing machines. With the majority of the surface area of the land for the proposed development covered by buildings and paved parking lots, what information, if any, has been gathered about keeping all of the surface water created by the property on the property? Great measures at great expense were required by Newton to be taken by the current developers on Karen Road to mitigate these potential issues.

Now that our elevation visuals show how huge the proposed buildings will be compared to the adjacent community, what about information on the environmental impact of the shade created over Karen Road and the environmental impact on the circulation of air?

Qualifications and Experience of the Developer: Nowhere in the Permit Application is any information included about the qualifications of the developer such as, a list of other rental projects of this proposed scale that they have created and managed elsewhere, audited financial statements for the past three years, other examples of the body and quality of their work and reputation in the communities that they have worked.

Financial Information: Again as in many other sections of the Permit Application, important required information has not been included by the developer. Paragraph 5.1 requires a **New England Fund Lender Letter of Interest** which would help fill in some of the blanks noted in Qualifications and Experience of the Developer above, and, paragraph 5.2 **Market Rental Comparisons** which requests that a listing of market rents being achieved in properties comparable to the proposed project be provided. With the very high price paid for the land by the developer, it is imperative to get some actual amounts paid for comparable rental apartments to see whether revenue projections from rentals are realistic. Without this validation, the numbers shown on page 19, Initial Rental Operating Pro-Forma (for year one of operations) isn't a plan, it's a dream!

My Conclusion and Recommendation: As you can see from my comments above and the extra "due diligence" efforts that I and some of my friends have invested, the Permit Application submitted by the Developer was an incomplete effort based on the elements required to complete the application. Very little money and time was invested by the Developer in doing his due diligence on the key issues: massing, environmental resources and new environmental issues created, integration into existing development patterns, a list of market rentals being achieved in comparable apartments to be set forth in reasonable detail. If he had, he would have seen that because of its huge physical size,

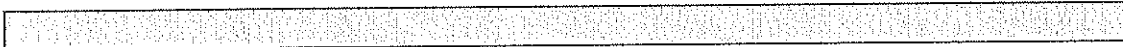
what he is proposing cannot possibly integrate into the surrounding community. I didn't even include the myriad of safety and parking issues in my letter because I'm sure many of my neighbors covered those. The traffic and parking situation is bad now, before the start of a new major project is initiated. We've been living through the chaos caused by the development of just three new homes to replace three old homes. To his credit, the Developer had meetings with small groups of abutters and neighbors that gladly provided their information to him and his staff. Unfortunately, either he didn't listen to what we said or didn't want to, because we saw no meaningful changes in his "plans" from day one until he made his Permit Application more than a year later.

I recommend that MassHousing ask the Developer to address the issues I've raised, do the due diligence required to understand the potential environmental issues on the site and the ones his proposed design will cause before MassHousing will even consider issuing him a grant of Project Eligibility.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Ray Noveck
31 Karen Road
Waban, MA 02468



Internet Research on Michael Argiros

May 30, 2015

Disclaimer

The following is the result of Internet searches into the properties of Michael Argiros. Links are provided for all of the information. Note that this is a one-sided account. There has been no attempt to validate these sources or to try to get the other side of the story.

1. **Alexander Argiros (Michael Argiros's father) is Trustee for several real estate investment LLCs that have properties in the Boston area. They include:**
 - Charles River Realty Group, 1461 VFW PW West Roxbury. Michael Argiros is a Principal. Their website is not live: <http://charlesriverrealty.com/>. Note: Charles River Realty Group is not to be confused with Charles River Realty Investors.
 - Four 23 LaGrange Realty LLC, 1461 VFW PW West Roxbury (associated with Charles River Realty Group)
 - Hemenway Realty Ventures LLC, a MA corporation organized in Jan 24-31, 2011, Alexander A. Argiros, trustee C/o Charles River Realty @ 1461 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury MA 02132 – believed to be created to purchase 1 or more youth hostels in Boston, one of which is 12 Hemenway Street, Boston.
 - Davis Square Realty Ventures LLC, a MA corporation organized in Jan 24-31, 2011, Alexander A. Argiros, trustee C/o Charles River Realty @ 1461 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury MA 02132
 - Waban AMA Realty Ventures, VFW Parkway, W Roxbury – Alexander Argiros, trustee, Michael is the agent.
 - Waltham AMA Realty Ventures, Alexander Argiros, Owner.

There's also Parkway Holdings, in which Michael Argiros is a partner. Parkway Holdings was the owner of the now closed Vintage restaurant at 1430 VFW Highway, West Roxbury (more on Vintage below).

2. **415-425 LaGrange, West Roxbury, old chemical manufacturing building.**
 - a. 4/8/14: West Roxbury developer agrees to shrink size of proposed residential project at Centre and LaGrange, <http://www.universalhub.com/2014/west-roxbury-developer-agrees-shrink-size-proposed>

"That was welcome news to City Councilor Matt O'Malley, who said he could not support the project as initially proposed: 62 apartments and 52 parking spaces in new buildings on the site. " ... "Residents booed and cried in outrage when Argiros admitted he lived in Westwood; some loudly asked him if he'd like 62 apartments built on his street."

- b. 9/11/14: Cause of five-alarm fire that gutted an abandoned pharmaceutical factory in West Roxbury still unknown,
http://www.masslive.com/news/boston/index.ssf/2014/09/abandon_pharmaceutical_factory.html

"The former factory was purchased by developer Michael Argiros in August for \$2.2 million as a candidate for redevelopment into condominiums. Universal Hub reported in April that the project came under heavy criticism from local residents for its size and scope."

- c. 10/17/14 post: [Boxed In: Modular Apartments Pitched for West Roxbury](http://boston.curbed.com/tags/charles-river-realty),
<http://boston.curbed.com/tags/charles-river-realty>

- d. 11/19/14: Developer shrinks size of proposed West Roxbury project, but neighbors still object, <http://www.universalhub.com/2014/developer-shrinks-size-proposed-west-roxbury>

"Developer Michael Argiros today showed revised plans for the old Armstrong plant on Lagrange Street near Centre that would include 48 apartments and 81 parking spaces - compared to the 62 apartments and 52 parking spaces he first proposed in what he now admits was a debacle of a neighborhood meeting several months ago.

Residents of Lagrange and nearby side streets, gathered at the Elks hall, however, said the project was still too large and said it would depress their rising property values and hurt the fabric of the single-family-house neighborhood they moved to to escape the very sort of rental units Argiros is proposing." ...

Argiros, who noted he could simply repair and reopen the old industrial complex on the site, said 42 or 24 units would be too small to be economically viable - and the small number of single-family homes he could put on the land even less so.

Argiros said he decided to rent the units, rather than sell them as condos, to provide "a legacy" to his twin sons and because he wanted to help West Roxbury residents not fortunate enough to be able to buy in the neighborhood stay there."

- e. 11/30/14: In Wicked Local Roslindale,
<http://roslindale.wickedlocal.com/article/20141130/NEWS/141126410>

"Ian Gillespie is part of the team developing the 425 Lagrange St. site, once an Armstrong Labs pharmaceutical factory. Gillespie, president of Gillespie and Company, has been working with Charles River Realty Investors on building an apartment building at that address. In response to strong negative views expressed in April, the plan has been reworked to include more parking and setbacks between the new building and surrounding properties. Many of the details remained the same from when Gillespie's partner, Charles River Realty Investor's Michael Argiros spoke to the association at the October meeting. ...

Gillespie compared 425 Lagrange to Belgrade Place, a similar luxury apartment building near Roche Brothers on Belgrade Avenue. He said they were using the same architect, the same modular construction and probably the same contractor as that project. Of the 48 units he said seven would be affordable."

- f. I don't know the outcome, but the property is still owned by Four 23 LaGrange Realty LLC, Alexander Argiros Trustee, 1461 VFW PW West Roxbury,
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing/search/?pid=2008810000>

3. Renovation of property at 1047 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, near BU

5/14/13: Developer eyes adding 220 housing units near BU in Allston after nixing plan for Sassoon beauty school,
<http://www.boston.com/yourtown/news/allston_brighton/2013/05/developer_eyes_adding_220_hous.html>

"A developer is seeking city approval to expand a two-story building on Commonwealth Avenue in Allston by adding four new floors with 220 residential units and to renovate an existing ground-level retail space. ...

Michael Argiros, principal of the developer, Charles River Realty Investors, LLC." (I believe this is a misprint – it should be Charles River Realty Group)

4. Vintage Restaurant, 1430 VFW Highway, West Roxbury

- a. 3/20/08: West Roxbury's Vintage restaurant closes without explanation
<<http://milwaukee.bizjournals.com/boston/stories/2008/03/17/daily31.html>>, Boston Business Journal

- b. 3/26/08: Vintage gift cards now worthless, <http://www.universalhub.com/node/13655>

"ParkwayBoston.com reports on the suddenly defunct Vintage
<<http://www.universalhub.com/node/13511>> and its now worthless gift cards, highlighting a group of local hockey parents who bought \$300 worth of them for their kids' coaches a week before the steak place shut down and who now can't get their phone calls returned by the owners ...

Vintage restaurant at 1430 VFW Highway, West Roxbury, closed abruptly Monday before it opened for service.

Parkway Holdings LLC, the owners and operators of Vintage, said in a statement the decision to close was a "painful, but necessary choice."

Parkway Holdings LLC partners include *Brian Anderson, Chris Anderson, Michael Argiros, Kurt Stenhouse and John McGrail, president of The Mayo Group, a full-service real estate company.*"

5. The housing complexes at 4965 Washington St., 1459 VFW Parkway and 8-9 Carol Circle are among a slew of Anglo Irish-backed commercial and multifamily properties to have run into financial difficulties in recent years.

- a. 8/15/11: West Roxbury Auctions lead back to Anglo Irish (bank)
<http://www.re-auctions.com/NewsPress/tabid/76/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/12/West-Roxbury-auctions-lead-back-to-Anglo-Irish-loans.aspx>

"A portfolio of apartment communities in West Roxbury that received \$12 million in mortgage financing from Anglo Irish Bank is being prepped for a foreclosure auction slated for next week."

- b. 9/1/11: West Roxbury auctions delayed as lender, Anglo Irish, strikes deal, http://www.bizjournals.com/boston/real_estate/2011/09/west-roxbury-auction-delayed-as-anglo.html

"The owner of a local portfolio of apartment properties has temporarily dodged the foreclosure bullet amid news that his lender, Anglo Irish Bank, has struck a deal to sell its U.S. holdings for as much as \$8 billion.

Calls and email to Michael Argiros, a Newton-based landlord and owner of the properties in question, were not returned. As first reported by The Round Up last month, the properties at 4965 Washington St., 1459 VFW Parkway and 8-9 Carol Circle in West Roxbury were scheduled to be sold through foreclosure auctions Aug. 25.

According to Daniel McLaughlin Auctioneers, the firm overseeing the auction sale, the event has been postponed to Sept. 28.

According to public filings, the portfolio of apartment communities in West Roxbury received \$12 million in mortgage financing from Anglo Irish Bank in 2004. An entity run by Argiros used the loans to purchase the four buildings and their 150 apartment units. "

- c. 12/25/14 Review from a resident of one of their buildings on Carol Circle in West Roxbury posted in yellowpages: <http://www.yellowpages.com/west-roxbury-ma/mip/charles-river-realty-group-455913217>:

Sharon M. 12/25/2014

"Lived in one of their buildings on Carol Circle in West Roxbury, it was the WORST place I ever lived with the worst property manager, who rents to drug dealers, heroin addicts, perverts and freaks. Owner is an absentee slumlord who may or may not be aware of the issues. Filthy building, nasty old laundry room with broken down machines. Every month there was at least one major incident which was either not handled at all or handled very poorly, but never satisfactory. For example, a tenant has to get a restraining order against a stalking tenant who was arrested for being outside her door, without his clothes and handling himself, and the property manager allows him to stay in spite of having sent 3 copies and letters of the court order and he does it again. She and her receptionist are like power happy bullies. Then there are the smaller issues, like no lights at all for a whole winter in the parking lot or back entrance. Meanwhile there are drug deals, and prostitutes entertaining in the parking lot which was littered with trash, used condoms and dirty needles. If you want to pay good money to live on skid row in a ghetto, like blaring music at all hours, the smell of garbage in your unit, absolutely no security, bad plumbing, and watch the ambulance take out the overdose victims this is the place for you. The only reason they got a star is because it was required. They deserve MINUS 1000 stars."

6. 78 Boston Post Road, Wayland

- a. 8/3/06: Developer removes underground tanks,
<http://waylandenews.com/OldRoot/ArchivedPDFs/2006August/Crier20060803UndergroundTanks.pdf>, Wayland Town Crier, 8/3/06, By Katie Liesener/ Staff Writer
Thursday, August 3, 2006 - Updated: 01:43 PM EST
"After months of warnings from Fire Chief Robert Loomer that he was in violation of state fire codes, developer Michael Argiros of Charles River Realty recently removed underground gas tanks from the property at 78 Boston Post Road, which he plans to develop into a Mini-Mobil Mart and donut shop. Argiros removed the tanks, which had laid unused and un-inspected in the ground for five years, on Wednesday, July 19. The tanks were part of a Shell Oil gas station that formerly operated at the site."

7. Charles River Realty Group charged with housing discrimination (May 2010)

- a. 5/23/10: Fox News - Housing Discrimination in MA 5/23/10,
<http://www.myfoxboston.com/story/17778059/housing-discrimination-in-massachusetts>
- b. WickedLocal Roslindale: West Roxbury firm pays \$15K in housing discrimination settlement,
https://www.suffolk.edu/documents/Law%20Documents/HousingDscrim_WickedLocal.pdf

8. Criminal Complaint filed against Michael Argiros by City of Somerville (May 2015)

- a. <http://somerville.wickedlocal.com/article/20150506/NEWS/150507672>
... O'Donnell said city officials decided to file the criminal complaint for "unsatisfactory maintenance: failure to make necessary repairs of deteriorating parapet and remove scaffolding after completion" on April 28 after building owner Michael Argiros of Charles River Realty ignored repeated requests by the city to comply with the city...
- b. Page 3 of the Newton Tab on 5/27/15:
A criminal complaint has been filed in Somerville against the developer seeking a letter of eligibility for a 40B project at the site of the former Saint Philip Neri Parish in Waban...

9. 865 and 875 Providence Highway, Dedham, MA

- a. 9/8/14: Washington Trust Finances Charles River Realty's Acquisition of Two Commercial Parcels in Dedham, MA
<http://globenewswire.com/news-release/2014/09/08/664406/10097599/en/Washington-Trust-Finances-Charles-River-Realty-s-Acquisition-of-Two-Commercial-Parcels-in-Dedham-MA.html>
"Washington Trust's Commercial Real Estate Group recently financed the acquisition of two parcels of land, located at 865 and 875 Providence Highway in Dedham, MA, directly across from Legacy Place, an open-air shopping, dining, and entertainment venue. The borrowing entity is an affiliate of Charles River Realty Group, a West Roxbury, MA-based real estate investment company.
"The parcels offer a prime location for new retailers looking to expand into Dedham," stated Joseph J. MarcAurele, Washington Trust Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

"They provide excellent visibility off of Providence Highway; are located across from the popular Legacy Place; and are just 25 minutes from downtown Boston." "

- b. 4/16/15: Town of Dedham Planning Board agenda item
Michael Argiros, 865-875 Providence Highway, SITE-04-15-1957: Scoping Session for Retail Development
<http://www.dedham-ma.gov/index.cfm?cdid=27835&pid=12452>

10. Other properties owned by the Argiros family:

- a. Alexander Argiros, Owner of Dunkin Donuts, 265 Boylston Street, Brookline, and 1955 Beacon, Brookline
- b. 1/28/11: BUYER: Alexander A. Argiros SELLER: American Youth Hostels Inc. and Eastern Council of Hostelling International – American Youth Hostels Inc. PRICE/ADDRESS: \$4,750,000; 15 Haviland St. and 12 Hemenway St., Boston MORTGAGE: \$4,750,000 from Northern Bank & Trust Co. NOTES: Fifteen Haviland St. a four-story property, constructed 1899; building size is 9,000 sf, lot size is 3,600 sf; 12 Hemenway St a fourstory property, constructed 1899; building size is 13,775 sf, lot size is 3,525 sf; seller's
- c. From Newton Assessors DB:
 - i. 1521 BEACON STARGIROS ALEXANDER A TR53034 0004 \$3,822,800
 - ii. 374 HAMMOND STARGIROS ALEXANDER A TR63027 0005 \$1,188,500
 - iii. 1156-1160 WALNUT STARGIROS ALEXANDER A TR52021 0005 \$1,578,900

Norine Silton

From: Susan Waldman <shwaldman27@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, June 08, 2015 9:23 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

I am Susan Hinman Waldman, homeowner at 62 Windsor Road in Waban for 28 years. My husband and I have happily raised three children in this beautiful, safe, desirable neighborhood. We are committed to preserving the safety and historic character of this village.

Did you know:

- The main building on Short Street is extremely tall, and at 62 feet high above Karen Road will be 18 feet taller than the top of the new Angier School building being constructed.

This neighborhood of predominately single family homes, a historic village, will be forever changed in character and historic architectural value.

- The proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 45 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street.

The neighboring home owners who have opted for solar panels may be confounded in their efforts towards clean, sustainable energy.

- Just under half of all the housing units in Waban Valley (116 in total) will be located on this 1.6 acre site.

The neighboring soccer and baseball field and preschool playground will be less safe for the children who use it with a gross increase in traffic on Karen Road which runs perpendicular to the fields.

Existing infrastructure

The intersection of Beacon and Chestnut Streets is quite busy with traffic as a thoroughfare connecting the village of Waban with the Highlands, Upper Falls, and West Newton. The proposed number of additional housing units in that very area will snarl traffic dangerously, especially with regard to direct and easy access to Newton Wellesley Hospital from the villages.

**Environmental concerns

Noise, water use, power use, refuse removal will all increase

There are blind spots and corners on the surrounding roads unsuited to traffic increase, endangering the foot traffic and children waiting at the several area bus stops.

**Thoughts on how proposed design could be modified to better fit the neighborhood.

Lower the roof line, decrease the number of units, deny entrance and exit from Beacon, Chestnut, or Short Streets. Preserve what mature trees are present. Conform to LEED green standards.

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Jack Goldberg <j.jacobgoldberg@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 08, 2015 7:47 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: At Philip of Neri

I am writing to express my disapproval of the proposed project at the st Philip of Neri site in waban I have lived a few blocks away for almost 40 years It is a wonderful neighborhood The prospect of 48 units is overwhelming on such a small amount of land, in a residential area I recognize that something will be developed on the site and I like the idea of market and affordable housing, especially for Newton residents who are older and can't remain in Newton without help I hope that Newton can exert some kind of control over the project to limit the size and scope to what fits into that site

Sent from my iPad Jack Goldberg

Norine Silton

From: Helengoldberg <helengoldberg@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, June 08, 2015 8:16 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St Philip of neri

I have lived a few blocks from st Philip of neri for almost 40 years I love waban and I love my neighborhood I had even hoped that a project would be built on the old church site that would be appropriate for our next move as we downsize and would include a mix of affordable housing, especially for those Newton old timers who otherwise would find it hard to remain in Newton

But I am really upset at the large project that is being considered, both the number of units and the height It just seems way too much for a residential neighborhood

And I am also concerned about the traffic implications especially on oakvale and Karen road

I think the project needs to be cut way back

Helen goldberg
115 Windsor road
Waban ma

Sent from my iPad
helengoldberg@comcast.net

Norine Silton

From: Merry <talial121@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 3:17 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 beacon street

What a catastrophe this developer has a horrible track record! Have you checked out his Somerville disaster. We bought homes in Newton because we wanted to live in a suburb. The height of 1521 beacon st will make that corner unsightly. What is up with deb crossly and her gang are there people on the take here and why does setti warren feel our neighborhood is too nice and should be ruined does he feel cheated in life somehow. Why don't you people leave the hard working and high paying tax residents of Newton alone. If you want to be do good ears I suggest you move to the inner city run for an office there and really help the poor. You are our voice why don't you start echoing our desires.

Sincerley pissed,
Merry smith
344 Woodward st
Waban, ma
02468

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Paula Ito <paulagito@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 4:32 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Opposition to St Philip Neri Site Development as planned

Hello,

As a resident of Waban I am opposed to the proposed building on the St Philip Neri site. Per the many discussions that are happening in the community, I remain very concerned about the scope and magnitude of the project. Of major concern is the flow of traffic through the area. Beacon and Chestnut are already a major traffic hang up and adding 48 units on that site is going to further exacerbate this issue. Further, people will be forced to travel on backroads not created for this purpose - not to mention the danger in having people unfamiliar with the residential roads driving hastily through the area.

As a resident of Waban I am also concerned about the impact on our schools. While the construction of Angier is going to help at the elementary school level - where in the Brown and Newton South plans are they ready to accommodate this increase in potential students.

Finally, I would like to voice my concerns about the drainage/sewerage issues as well at the site and request further investigation take place regarding this.

Thank you.

Regards,

Paula Ito

21 Dwhinda Road

Waban MA 02468

617-969-0766

Norine Silton

From: Lori Silver <silver11@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2015 8:31 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St.. Philip Neri development

To the Newton Planning Department:

We live in Waban and are writing to voice our opposition to the current plans for development of the St Philip Neri site. We want to be clear that our opposition has nothing to do with affordable housing, which is critical, and needed in Waban and throughout Newton. We oppose this project because its mass, density and scale are totally inappropriate for the neighborhood. The intersection of Chestnut and Beacon is already highly congested, especially during commuting hours.

We urge the Planning Department to take whatever action is necessary to oppose this project in its current form, and represent the views of Newton residents.

Thank you,
Lori Silver & Peter Lefkowitz
84 Carlton Road
Waban

Norine Silton

From: Gail Tomlak <gailtomlak@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2015 12:57 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Fwd:

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Gail Tomlak <gailtomlak@icloud.com>
Date: June 6, 2015 at 2:19:03 PM EDT
To: "1521Beacon@Newtonma.gov" <1521Beacon@Newtonma.gov>

Dear Sir or Madame ,

I am a 65 year old life long resident to Waban and I am completely oppose to the proposed development of 1521 Beacon St for the following reasons:

The zoning for the proposed sight restricts housing heights to 36 feet. The apartment complex will be 60ft high and the town houses will be 47ft high. The Angier school is 45ft high in comparison

The footprint of the building is double the size of the church. This means that the front side will be at least 10 ft closer to the street and the backside will be larger than 15ft.

The town houses will be 15ft off the sidewalk where the minimum front set back for a single home is 25ft

The traffic increase will be tremendous even if some residence make take the T

The value of every nearby home will decrease in value

A criminal complaint has be issued for the developer Argiros in Sommerville due to failure to complete a project in a timely and competent manner.

The people of Newton do not want this project to go forward. It is a project that will in no way enhance the lives of Newtonites

Gail Tomlak
126 Annawan rd.

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Gail Tomlak <gailtomlak@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2015 12:57 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Fwd:

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Gail Tomlak <gailtomlak@icloud.com>
Date: June 9, 2015 at 5:02:41 PM EDT
To: 1521Beacon@Newtonma.gov

To who it may concern,

I strongly object to the project that is proposed for 1521 beacon st for the following reasons:

The mass and the density of the project are not proportionate to the surrounding neighborhood

The traffic will increase greatly

It will diminish the property values of the homes in the area

The developer has a criminal complaint filed against by the city of Somerville for not completing the remodeling of the social security building in a timely or professional manner

Avram Tomlak
30 year resident of the city of Newton
126 annawan rd

Sent from my iPad

Norine Silton

From: Bev Bernson <bev7bob@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2015 5:34 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: proposal

we cannot think of a less appropriate construction plan.
the site is not conducive to the buildings planned.
beside all the technical problems involved, the aesthetic are a disaster.
what are they thinking? I think we know. a lot of money in their pockets
and no regard for placement or physical needs(sewers, etc.)
living on the river in waban, we are well aware of sewer and water issues.
such a large proposal is ridiculous.
thanks for listening.
beverly and bob bernson
28 york rd. waban

Norine Silton

From: isabelle <ialbeck@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 8:19 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Objections

Dear Newton Planning/ HAC: 1521 Beacon St/ St Phillip Neri

The developer M. Argiros is planning 48 units: 36 in one building and 12 units in four groups of townhouses.

What is troubling is the mass of the project and its density.

The building has five floors on the Beacon St side (with cars occupying the first floor), four on the Karen Rd side for a height of 60 ft; the attached townhouses have four floors (cars on first floor also) for a height of 47 ft. The zoning for that lot is Single Residence 2, which means the maximum allowed height is 36ft. These new structures will tower over the surrounding residences, completely out of character with the neighborhood. By comparison, the new Angier school is 45 ft high!

The footprint of the new building will be double the footprint of the existing church, expanding on three sides; the eastern side where there is now open space with grass and trees will cover most of the open space; the front (southern) side will be at least 10 ft closer to the sidewalk; the back (northern) side will be bigger by an average of 15 ft.

The townhouses, lining up Karen Rd, will be set at 15 ft of the sidewalk, where the minimum front setback for Single Residences is 25 ft.

Regarding the density: statistically, 48 households generate 480 car rides per day (5 round-trips rides x 48), even if one person per household would walk to the T. The intersection of Chestnut St and Beacon St is part of very congested and heavily used corridors. Karen Rd has no other exit. The Montclair- Beacon intersection is already dangerous and many neighbors already avoid it. It makes no sense to increase traffic in those areas at all.

What all of this means is a loss of open space and setbacks as well as massive structures in a neighborhood with smaller structures and trees. It means the property values of nearby homes will more than likely diminish, which violates the property rights of the immediate abutters. It also means additional traffic problems for an already very problematic area.

Please reject this proposal,
Isabelle Albeck
240 Windsor Rd,
Waban, 02468

Norine Silton

From: Darren Abrahamson <darren_abrahamson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 9:28 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon St/ St Phillip Neri

The developer M. Argiros is planning 48 units: 36 in one building and 12 units in four groups of townhouses.

What is troubling is the mass of the project and its density.

The building has five floors on the Beacon St side (with cars occupying the first floor), four on the Karen Rd side for a height of 60 ft; the attached townhouses have four floors (cars on first floor also) for a height of 47 ft. The zoning for that lot is Single Residence 2, which means the maximum allowed height is 36ft. These new structures will tower over the surrounding residences, completely out of character with the neighborhood. By comparison, the new Angier school is 45 ft high!

The footprint of the new building will be double the footprint of the existing church, expanding on three sides; the eastern side where there is now open space with grass and trees will cover most of the open space; the front (southern) side will be at least 10 ft closer to the sidewalk; the back (northern) side will be bigger by an average of 15 ft.

The townhouses, lining up Karen Rd, will be set at 15 ft of the sidewalk, where the minimum front setback for Single Residences is 25 ft.

Regarding the density: statistically, 48 households generate 480 car rides per day (5 round-trips rides x 48), even if one person per household would walk to the T. The intersection of Chestnut St and Beacon St is part of very congested and heavily used corridors. Karen Rd has no other exit. The Montclair- Beacon intersection is already dangerous and many neighbors already avoid it. It makes no sense to increase traffic in those areas at all.

What all of this means is a loss of open space and setbacks as well as massive structures in a neighborhood with smaller structures and trees. It means the property values of nearby homes will more than likely diminish, which violates the property rights of the immediate abutters. It also means additional traffic problems for an already very problematic area.

I strongly urge you to reject this proposal,

Regards,

Darren Abrahamson
50 Gordon Road,
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Rebecca Miller <rebecca@optiknerve.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 9:38 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St Phillip Neri project
Attachments: PastedGraphic-1.tiff

Why is Newton so interested in increasing the density of a place like Waban? Why is a developer leading this effort--where is the leadership of the city? Setti Warren only seems to want to increase density. Why? The people of Waban DO NOT WANT THIS PROJECT.

We understand the need for rental space and affordable housing, but this is:

TOO BIG, TOO DENSE, TOO MANY CARS, TOO MANY PEOPLE, TOO MANY CHILDREN TO ADD TO THE SCHOOLS. CAN WE CUT THIS PROJECT IN HALF?

Let's keep our neighborhoods beautiful. What's wrong with single family housing anyway?

Rebecca

The logo for OptikNerve, featuring the word "Optik" in a standard sans-serif font and "Nerve" in a larger, bold sans-serif font, with a thin, curved line arching over the "Nerve" portion.

Optik Nerve
47-A River Street
Wellesley, MA 02481 USA
781-489-5070-studio
617-823-4570-mobile
www.optiknerve.net
rebecca@optiknerve.net

Norine Silton

From: Robert Quandt <robert.quandt@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 9:56 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov; Ann Quandt
Subject: Proposed 40B

Hello,

My wife Ann and I live at 1585 Beacon St in Waban. We are writing to voice our strong opposition to the proposed development at the St. Neri Church site at 1521 Beacon. We would strongly encourage that the city reject this proposal outright.

We believe the recent referendum made our and our neighbors positions on the City's role such developments very clear. We would be disappointed in the functioning of our local government in reflecting the views of its citizens, if the City does anything other than reject and strongly oppose this development to the fullest extent of its abilities.

1. Our understanding is that Newton is over the 1.5% of land area threshold and thus the 40B statute which the developer is relying on to eviscerate local zoning laws does not apply. We believe the developer in question should comply with local zoning laws, like the rest of us.
2. The development does not fit the neighborhood. The density is far too great. What is already a very busy (traffic jam every morning) and potentially dangerous intersection at Chesnut and Beacon, would only become more so. We believe that the current zoning on the property is a far more appropriate density.
3. While we have never met Michael Argiros. We have concerns with his business practices by reputation. A brief search on the internet reveals that he is currently being sued by other municipalities in the Commonwealth for gross neglect of his properties and also is being sued by Anglo bank in a foreclosure process on a former 40B development in West Roxbury.

We kindly request your consideration of our and our neighbor's views, in upholding your important roles as elected officials and as leaders in our community.

The Quandt's

1585 Beacon St

Waban MA, 02468

Norine Silton

From: totheyees@gmail.com on behalf of Sam <sam@yee.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 12:35 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street proposed apartment buildings

1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov.

We are writing to voice our objection to the developer's proposal to build 48 units of apartments at 1521 Beacon Street. The project, as proposed, is simply much too massive, both in height and in footprint, for the Saint Phillip Neri site.

Samuel Yee

Nancy Yee

82 Collins Road

Norine Silton

From: jack maypole <jackmaypole@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 2:16 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 beacon st

As a member of the neighborhood, I am writing to protest the excessive density and size of the project by developer M. Argiros offering a total 48 units: 36 in one building and 12 units in four groups of townhouses on the lot between Karen Road and Short Street.

In a neighborhood of 2 and 3 story single family homes, this project presents more than an incongruous eyesore--it becomes a burden on other members of the neighborhood--particularly in the abutting lots.

As noted: The building has five floors on the Beacon St side (with cars occupying the first floor), four on the Karen Rd side for a height of 60 ft; the attached townhouses have four floors (cars on first floor also) for a height of 47 ft.

As you know, the zoning for that lot is Single Residence 2, which means the maximum allowed height is 36ft. These new structures will tower over the surrounding residences, completely out of character with the neighborhood. By comparison, the new Angier school is 45 ft high! Additionally, The footprint of the new building will be double the footprint of the existing church. This intrudes greatly on the space and openness of the current environment. I find it particularly troubling in terms of the layout and setup of the townhouses. These, lining up Karen Rd, will be set at 15 ft of the sidewalk, where the minimum front setback for Single Residences is 25 ft.

As a pediatrician, I am concerned with the safety and well being of the children and families in the neighborhood as well as my household. I find the impact of this oversized project to be inappropriate for a parcel that sits in one of the most heavily used intersections in our part of the city. The infrastructure is already overtaxed and will be unable to safely nor reasonably absorb this influx of volume of car traffic. The congestion and risk to pedestrians and cyclists--already a problem at times of school pickup and dropoff and rush hour--present a disaster in the making. Regarding the density: statistically, 48 households generate 480 car rides per day (5 round-trips rides x 48), even if one person per household would walk to the T. Karen Rd has no other exit. The Montclair- Beacon intersection is already dangerous and many neighbors already avoid it. It makes no sense to increase traffic in those areas at all.

Placing an oversized, moneygrabbing facility that intrudes structurally and physically on the neighborhood, diminishing the environment and property values of nearby homes, and injecting an unnecessary and unsustainable amount of traffic require that this proposal be redone, rescaled, rethought and reduced. It means the property values of nearby homes will more than likely diminish, which violates the property rights of the immediate abutters. It also means additional traffic problems for an already very problematic area.

In the strongest terms, I request that you please reject this proposal,

Jack Maypole, MD
101 Windsor Rd
Waban.

Jack Maypole, MD
Director, Comprehensive Care Program (CCP) @ Boston Medical Center
phone: 617 414 4773, fax 414 4547
Medical Director, SPARK program
<http://www.bmc.org/pediatricscomprehensivecare/team.htm>
<http://www.bmc.org/pediatrics-sparkcenter/services.htm>

Norine Silton

From: Mary-Sheila Leese <marysheila.leese@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 2:38 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: comments on 1521 Beacon Street proposed development

Thank you for giving residents the opportunity to comment on the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street. My comments are below:

- Appropriateness of the Conceptual Project Design for the Site:
 - The size and scale of this proposed development is NOT in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. This would be the largest and tallest structure in Waban at 62 feet high, obstructing views of tall trees, and adding 102 parking spaces. 40B legislation requires “that the conceptual project design is generally appropriate for the site on which it is located”. The size and scale of this proposed development make it inappropriate for the site.
 - When my husband and I committed the majority of our life savings to buying our home in 2007, we intentionally decided on Waban because we liked the quiet residential neighborhood lacking large buildings, a lot of traffic, noise or congestion. This proposed development would drastically change the character of our neighborhood and its density. It is unreasonable to expect the homeowners in the area to adapt to such a drastic change to their neighborhood after having made significant investment both financially, and in their local community, when choosing where to live.
- Existing Infrastructure and Environmental Concerns:
 - My understanding is that another affordable housing development (on the Newton/Wellesley border) within a few miles of this proposed development has several vacancies. I do not know the answer to this, but I’m wondering if there has been an analysis to determine if additional affordable housing is indeed needed in this immediate area. It seems that if existing infrastructure is meeting the need, then it doesn’t make sense to build this given the negative impact such construction would have on the environment (traffic, congestion, crowding, noise, removal of trees, and all the waste disposal that results from tearing down an existing building and construction something of this magnitude).
 - As of the meeting 5/6/15, the developer had not done any kind of market analysis to determine if there was indeed a market for these units. I am skeptical if Mr. Agiros would be able to rent these units for the prices he quoted. If a large development is constructed that has a significant vacancy rate, everyone suffers (the developer, the City, the local residents, etc.). If Mr. Agiros is bringing in less revenue, he might possibly be less inclined to maintain the development.
 - **Traffic:** The proposed closing of Short Street significantly affects the local residents. Everyone is aware that the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut Streets is already somewhat challenging at times. The developer has proposed closing Short Street. Not only is that used by local residents as a safer walking route when with children, but it’s also used by drivers to bypass the intersection if appropriate, and as a place for guests of Chestnut Street residents to park.
 - Traffic study was done when Angier School was a Carr which is a flaw that must be addressed..
 - Traffic study also did not look at Saturdays when the fields on Lincoln playground (baseball, soccer, etc.) are in use.

- Other factors that should be considered: pending construction at 128 & Rt. 9 that will already be backing up traffic on Chestnut Street for several years.

- Concerns/Questions about the Developer:

- Clearly Mr. Agiros has been disregarding city officials' requests in Somerville. I think the City should consider his track record before permitting him to work in Newton.
- Mr. Agiros acknowledged in the 5/6/15 meeting that he had never built anything of this scale before.
- Finally, this proposal does "feel like" a sham because local zoning would be overridden in order to build only TEN UNITS of affordable housing, of the total 48 units proposed.

- Suggested modifications to proposed design to better fit in the neighborhood:

- Reduce the scale and size by ~50-75% (especially the height), or perhaps just make it a 10 unit affordable housing complex and eliminate the other units.
- Reduce the # of parking spaces (there is a T stop nearby)
- Add/preserve more green space to enable this development to look and feel consistent with the rest of the neighborhood.
- Do not eliminate Short Street. That is a well-used alternate route for people passing through the Beacon/Chestnut intersection, as well as for pedestrians, especially small children. Additionally, this is currently where nearby Chestnut Street residents ask their guests to park since they cannot park on Chestnut Street.

Thank you for considering the input of the local community on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Mary-Sheila Myers

28 Byfield Road, Waban

Norine Silton

From: Marilyn Harris <mharris.travel@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 3:17 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Please No.

I am concerned about the number of units the developer is planning for the apartment complex on the former ST. Philips Neri church.

Also concerned about the setback request as well as proposed height of 60 feet.

If the City of Newton has set up restrictions for setback and height, why would the developer even be allowed to request that this be changed?

I trust the City of Newton will also take into consideration the character of Waban and the homes that surround the proposed complex.

I do look forward to seeing some affordable rental units as the city certainly needs to keep a cross section of incomes to help offset the incomes of those in the enormous houses that continue to be built in place of smaller homes the lots once occupied.

Marilyn Harris
336 Woodward Street
Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Xinhua Li <gene.xli@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 4:51 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: My Concern Regarding the Proposed Development of St. Philip Neri

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed development of St. Philip Neri, at the corner of Beacon St and Chestnut St in Waban, MA.

My understanding is that the proposal calls for 48 units and 106 parking spots. This proposal will create enormous safety and environmental issues in the neighborhood.

Safety issues:

The current heavy traffic around the intersection of Beacon Street and Chestnut St has been an ongoing concern in the neighborhood. It is difficult to get on to Chestnut Street from Oakvale Rd and Moffat Rd. The added traffic of over 100 cars will make the traffic much worse and especially make these busy intersections dangerous. Many young children walk to Angier School during school days. The safety of the young children is another strong concern to me. The negative impact on safety needs to be carefully analyzed and considered in the design of the development project.

Environmental issue:

The main building on Short Street is extremely tall, and at 62 feet high above Karen Road will be 18 feet taller than the top of the new Angier School building being constructed. The proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 47 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street. The construction of these tall building will negatively affect the quality of life of the neighboring residents who live in single story houses.

The proposed tall buildings will completely change the style and environment of the neighborhood. The increased traffic will significantly increase noise level to the neighborhood.

The significantly increased number of people in the neighborhood will have impact on water pipes, internet communication and sew systems. All these factors need to be considered in the proposal of the development. Does the existing infrastructure in the neighborhood support the proposed development?

I would strongly request the developer to work with city and the neighborhood to take these issues into consideration to modify the design to better fit the neighborhood and reduce the impact on both safety and the environment of the

neighborhood. For example, regular town houses would fit the neighborhood better and the reduced number of cars would reduce the impact on safety.

Best, regards,

Xinhua Li

23 Fredana Road, Waban, MA 02468

Norine Silton

From: Andrew Epstein <andyepstein185@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 5:12 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Andrew Epstein; Karen Epstein
Subject: Opposition to the St. Philip Neri site development proposal

As Waban homeowners since 1977, we have seen improvements in the Village as well as the city, many of which have improved our quality of life and the value of our home. As a result, we are in favor of development that is sensitive to the neighborhood, compliant with the law, and improves quality of life, safety, and value.

To that end, we are writing today to OPPOSE the development proposed for the St. Philip Neri site, because it meets none of these criteria. As recently presented to the neighbors at the Windsor Club meeting, it presents a huge mass and intimidating height when compared with the homes in the neighborhood, it adds much traffic to an already dangerous and congested intersection, and appears not to be compliant with the law or zoning. And that doesn't begin to describe the environmental issues of water table, underground rivers, and other known issues about the Lincoln Field area.

Further, I was struck by the fact the the Developer wasn't allowed to speak in the opening presentation, thereby preventing the neighbors from understanding his credentials and qualifications. Since that meeting, new questions about him have emerged, which raise further concern.

While my neighbors may strongly disagree, I would be in favor of a similar type development, for example, on the lot of the Waban T, if granted enough underground parking and street level retail. Wyman Street is part of the commercial center and already has apartment buildings in the neighborhood.

In conclusion, we want to go on record as OPPOSING the proposed development of the SPN site.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Andrew and Mrs. Karen Epstein
185 Collins Road
Waban

June 11, 2015

City of Newton
Planning Department/Zoning Board of Appeals
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton MA, 02459

RE: Comments on Proposed Development, 1521 Beacon Street/St. Phillip Neri Site

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to convey my concerns regarding the proposed 48 unit residential development project proposed at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban. First, I want to be clear that I support the development of affordable housing. I would be very pleased to see the entire project developed as affordable housing; but it should be developed sustainably with fewer units and smaller buildings. The following are my comments:

- The traffic on Chestnut Street is already quite significant during each day – particularly during rush hours. As I leave in the morning it is often exceedingly difficult to make a left turn out of Larchmont Avenue onto Chestnut because the traffic is backed up so heavily. If I need to drive North toward the Pike in the morning I end up using a phone navigation system to cut through small neighborhood roads rather than sitting still on Chestnut Street. And similarly I try to avoid the intersection of Beacon and Chestnut whenever possible if it is during rush hour windows because it is just congested. It feels unreasonable to plan a development that would bring so many additional cars and residents to an already busy traffic area during busy traffic times.
- The development also poses environmental concerns. The proposed site plan virtually eliminates the open and green space and sightlines that presently exist on the church site. The buildings and parking areas associated with the proposed development cover the overwhelming majority of the site – resulting in the development extending close to the property boundaries. The buildings proposed are large and tall. Driving past the Angier construction people often comment on how huge and out of proportion it appears. The proposed development would be bigger and taller.
- Additionally, the density of this project is very high – apparently the highest density in Waban with 100 or more residents living on 1.6 acres – more than three times what is typical in the neighborhood. This large development creates negative environmental impacts in the neighborhood due to the large footprint/height of the buildings and the overall density of the project.
- It will be a shame to lose a community building at all, but if the site must be developed, it should be a significantly smaller project with building heights, population density, car density, and green space in line with the neighborhood. It would be fantastic if this could be done with affordable housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. I hope the City of Newton will support a smaller development.

Sincerely,

Roy Edelstein
33 Larchmont Avenue
Waban, Massachusetts 02468

Norine Silton

From: Sharon Li <sharon.zli@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2015 9:39 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Concerns Regarding the Proposed Development of St. Philip Neri/1521 Beacon St. Waban

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed development of St. Philip Neri/1521 Beacon St, in Waban, at the corner of Beacon St and Chestnut St in Waban, MA.

My understanding is that the proposal calls for 48 units and 106 parking spots. Should the proposal becomes a reality, I am extremely concerned about safety and environmental issues directly caused by this matter.

Safety issues and traffic issue:

- The current heavy traffic around the intersection of Beacon Street and Chestnut St has been an ongoing concern in the neighborhood. It is very difficult to get on to Chestnut Street from Oakvale Rd and Moffat Rd.
- With the proposal, the added traffic of over 100 cars will make the traffic much worse and especially make these busy intersections dangerous to walk or drive. Many young children walk to Angier School during school days. The safety of the young children is another strong concern to me.
- **The negative impact on safety needs to be carefully analyzed and considered in the design of the development project. Specific action on ensuring the safety is necessary before implementation.**

Environmental issues:

- The main building on Short Street would extremely taller than it's surrounding houses/buildings.
- At 62 feet high above Karen Road, it would be 18 feet taller than the top of the new **tall** Angier School building currently being constructed.
- The proposed town houses on Karen Road will be 47 feet high or as much as four times as high as the homes directly across the street.
- The construction of these tall building will negatively affect the quality of life of the neighboring residents who live in single story houses.
- The proposed tall buildings will completely change the style and environment of the neighborhood. The increased traffic will significantly increase noise level to the neighborhood.
- The significantly increased number of people in the neighborhood will have impact on water pipes, internet communication and sewer systems.
- **All these factors need to be considered in the proposal of the development. Does the existing infrastructure in the neighborhood support the proposed development?**

I strongly request the developer to work with the city and the neighborhood in taking these issues into consideration to modify the current design to better fit the neighborhood, to reduce the impact on both safety and the environment of the neighborhood. Some option like, regular town houses, which would fit the neighborhood better and the reduced number of cars would reduce the impact on safety.

Thank you.

Best regards,
-- Sharon Li
23 Fredana Rd
sharon.zli@gmail.com
617-797-8131

June 11, 2015

City of Newton
Planning Department/Zoning Board of Appeals
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459

RE: Comments on Proposed Development, 1521 Beacon Street/St. Phillip Neri Site

Dear Sir/Madam:

We are writing to convey our concerns regarding the 48 unit residential development project proposed at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban.

- **Roadway infrastructure and traffic concerns:**
 - Like many families in the area, we are both working parents and commute to work in the mornings and return in the evenings at the two “rush hours.” The current roadway infrastructure on Chestnut Street, particularly at the Beacon Street and Chestnut Street intersection, is already severely inadequate and results in significant traffic, particularly during the rush hour periods. There are significant back-ups daily going northbound on Chestnut Street in the morning, which start at Commonwealth Avenue and can back up through both the Beacon Street/Chestnut Street and Woodward Street/Chestnut Street intersections, even extending past our street. Often times in the morning, we are unable to turn right from Larchmont Avenue (our street) onto Chestnut Street without a significant wait, and the same is true (in reverse) in the evenings as well. Like many streets that feed onto Chestnut Street, Larchmont Avenue does not connect to any other street, and we are completely dependent on access to Chestnut Street to exit our neighborhood and go anywhere by car.
 - We understand the developer has mentioned that the city is proposing to put a left turn signal/lane on Chestnut Street at the Beacon Street intersection. While we understand this is intended to be helpful, the issue would not resolve the **current** heavy volume of through-traffic on Chestnut Street, much less the significant increase in traffic the proposed development would incur.
 - The roads surrounding the proposed development do not appear adequate to handle the significant number of additional car trips per day onto Karen Road, Oakdale Road and Montclair Road and then onto Chestnut Street/Beacon Street. We understand that the developer has proposed 100 parking spots for the proposed development- even a conservative estimate of 2 trips/day/car would result in a significant increase in traffic congestion on already overwhelmed roads. Any changes to the signals at the Beacon/Chestnut intersection would not come close to being able to handle such an increase in volume, particularly during rush hours.
 - We also wish to point out that any traffic study conducted now would not give an accurate picture of the traffic in the area, as Angier Elementary (also on Beacon Street and very close to the proposed development) remains closed. In view of proposed changes to the zoning of Newton Public Schools, we further note that any traffic counts made prior to the closing of Angier, would also not be reflective, as some of the proposed redistricting plans transform some neighborhoods (like ours) from walking

neighborhoods to driving neighborhoods, further increasing the volume of traffic on Chestnut Street and the surrounding streets.

- **Character of neighborhood and environmental concerns:**

- The proposed development completely changes the character of the neighborhood and eliminates the open and green space and sightlines that presently exist on the church site. The proposed development is neither reconciled with the immediate neighborhood in Waban, nor with Newton's motto of "The Garden City."
- We understand that the proposed development ranges from 45 feet in height to 62 feet in height, with an average range of 47-53 feet, which at points is taller than even the new Angier Elementary buildings. Such a height range is extremely high for the Waban area (and even for Newton in general) and would completely change the historical character and appearance of the neighborhood, and not at all integrate with the surrounding neighborhoods.
- We further note that the proposed density of residents resulting from this project is very high – apparently the highest density in Waban, with 100 or more residents living on 1.6 acres.
- In comparison, we note that the multi-unit developments that currently exist on Wyman Street near the Waban T-stop, completely integrate with the fabric of the neighborhood, in part, because they do not tower over and are appropriately dimensioned relative to the surrounding homes.

Our suggestion is that any proposed multi-unit development for the site be redesigned with significantly fewer units overall, with buildings that have smaller footprints and integrate with the character of the neighborhood, and with Newton overall. Rather than tear down and demolish the historical church, one option would be to reuse and refurbish the existing church structure, which would inherently achieve those goals, while allowing the development of a multi-unit structure in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments and your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Rahul R. Patel and Srividya Subramanian, Ph.D.
96 Larchmont Avenue
Waban, Massachusetts 02468

Norine Silton

From: Joe Corkery <jcorkery@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 12:34 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comment on Proposed Project at 1521 Beacon St

June 15, 2015

City of Newton
Planning Department/Zoning Board of Appeals
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton MA, 02459

RE: Comments on Proposed Development, 1521 Beacon Street/St. Phillip Neri Site

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to convey my concerns regarding the proposed 48 unit residential development project proposed at 1521 Beacon Street in Waban. First, I want to be clear that I am not opposed to the development of affordable housing. I just think that the site should be developed sustainably with fewer units and smaller buildings. The following are my comments:

The existing roadway infrastructure surrounding the site is inadequate to handle 150 to 250 additional car trips per day onto Karen Road, Oakdale Road and Montclair Road and onto Chestnut Street. The intersections at Oakdale Road and Chestnut Street; and Montclair Road and Beacon/Short Street; both pose serious traffic safety issues due to limited sightlines for traffic turning onto Chestnut and Beacon. Although traffic studies might only show a few additional cars each hour, as a practical matter, the overwhelming majority of the residents of this development will leave and return to their homes each day during rush hours and they will, like so many of us, go out in the evening to run errands, etc. Since there are some 100 parking spots planned for the development, if each car parked in those spaces makes 2.5 trips per day, this would result in 250 additional trips through the local streets. That additional traffic represents a significant impact on the neighborhood infrastructure.

The traffic on Chestnut Street is significant during each day – particularly during rush hours. It's reaching a point where it's reasonable to ask: can more cars be put onto this street? The back-ups going northbound on Chestnut Street in the morning start at Commonwealth Avenue and back up to or through the Beacon Street and Woodward Street intersections all the way back to my street, Larchmont Avenue and beyond to the south. The reverse occurs to the south in the afternoon and evening. On May 22, 2015, my neighbor Chris Carleo counted a back-up of 52 cars waiting in-line on Chestnut Street at 5:20PM. The developer has mentioned that the city is proposing to put a left turn signal/lane on Chestnut Street at the Beacon Street intersection. While this is intended to be helpful, the issue is through-traffic on Chestnut Street; not turns onto Beacon Street - the volumes are simply too high. Chestnut Street has never recovered from the traffic increases which occurred after the Mass Turnpike removed the West Newton toll plaza encouraging travelers on Route 128 northbound to use Chestnut Street as a cut-through to the MassPike thereby avoiding have to pay a toll. The street also serves as a shortcut for these same travelers (whether avoiding the toll or not), because it reduces travel time into Boston. The street is also a major access point between Routes 128 and 9 into the city and east to Brighton/Boston. Newton may have limited ability to do anything about this cut-through traffic, but it seems it should have an obligation to not allow large-scale development to make the traffic situation worse. The city

needs to determine: what is carrying capacity of Chestnut Street? Are we already at that point? How can hundreds of additional trips from this proposed development be accommodated on this already congested street during rush hours? Finally, with respect to traffic, it's important to note that the intersection of Oakdale and Chestnut is often blocked by cars stopped on Chestnut Street during rush hours, making any turns difficult and time-consuming. This will back up traffic onto Montclair, Oakdale and other streets near the development.

The development also poses environmental concerns. The proposed site plan virtually eliminates the open and green space and sightlines that presently exist on the church site. The buildings and parking areas associated with the proposed development cover the overwhelming majority of the site – resulting in the development extending close to the property boundaries. The large building proposed with frontage on Short Street apparently will be an average of 53 feet in height and the buildings along Karen Road will be approximately 47 feet in height. [Note: The architect for the developer has stated that the 53 foot height being used to describe the large building on Short Street represents an average height. The front of the building (on Short Street/Beacon Street) will be 45 feet high while the back of the building (the side facing Karen Road) will be 62 feet high]. These are very tall buildings for Waban – with the large building on Short Street being apparently taller than the new Angier school building. Additionally, the density of this project is very high – apparently the highest density in Waban with 100 or more residents living on 1.6 acres. This large development creates negative environmental impacts in the neighborhood due to the large footprint/height of the buildings and the overall density of the project. The property owners along Short Street and Karen Road presently have views and some open green space that they can enjoy. This large scale development would change this by constructing tall buildings very close to the property boundaries – significantly reducing open space and green space, blocking views and potentially creating shadows blocking sunlight.

Finally, my suggestion is that the proposed development be redesigned with fewer units overall, with buildings that have significantly lower rooflines and smaller footprints. A smaller project would reduce the load on the local infrastructure, reduce the traffic impacts and provide a project that was scaled to the neighborhood, with lower overall impact to the residents near the site.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. I hope the City of Newton will support a smaller development.

Sincerely,

Joseph Corkery
68 Larchmont Avenue
Waban, Massachusetts 02468

*Sallee H. Lipschutz
24 Radcliff Road
Waban, MA 02468*

June 12, 2015

Ms. Alexandra Ananth
Planning Department
City of Newton

Dear Ms. Ananth:

Although I have written to you and to Mass Housing as part of the letter sent by the Waban Area Council, I am sending on my thoughts since the site inspection at St. Philip Neri attended by Katie Lacy from Mass Housing. The height and massing of the buildings being proposed by developer Michael Argiros for the Waban site are clearly out of scale and inappropriate for the neighborhood. At this point a diagram has been made available that shows the enormity of the project as it looms out of context with the neighboring homes. The townhouses are so high that they overshadow the houses across from them on Karen Road. The main building also rises uncomfortably high in the background. There is little space between the townhouses. Members of the community are also trying to capture an honest image of the main building from the Short Street perspective. Mass Housing's own mandates include vetting the property proposal with a design review that takes these kinds of issues into account. Vetting the financial portion of the proposal is also clearly important, but absent a sense of whether a smaller proposal would work for the developer and his intended community, it leaves the City with few options. We have been told by the Chairman of the ZBA in Newton, that, if we want the community to have meaningful input, the time to speak is BEFORE the site eligibility is determined by the subsidizing agency. She pointed out that if the ZBA reduces the size of a proposal to accommodate reasonable neighborhood arguments, the developer argues that it is "un-economical", appeals to the State and the decision is invariably lost on appeal.

That information puts our community's voice uncomfortably in the middle of City and State.

We understand that Mass Housing is underfunded and understaffed, but we also understand that it is Mass Housing's responsibility to review the design of the proposal as well as its financial soundness. We expect Mass Housing to do the due diligence necessary in both the design and financial areas before they can issue a site eligibility letter. If they do, it is clear to me, that they will deny this proposal and send the developer a message that his design proposal must be compatible within the context of our Waban neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Sallee H. Lipschutz
President, Waban Area Council

Norine Silton

From: Mitch Roberts <MRoberts@prrestaurants.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 7:50 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments

Dear Sir or Madam,

The proposed development on Karen Road at the site of the old church is massively inappropriate for a quiet neighborhood of single family modest homes. I do not oppose affordable housing in Newton, but it must be built in areas (such as Austin Street) where the architectural realities support the buildings necessary for the number of residents.

Thank you.

Mitchell Roberts

Nelson R. Lipshutz
24 Radcliff Road
Waban, MA 02468

June 11, 2015

The Newton Planning Department
City Hall
Newton, MA 02459

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a Waban resident to express my concerns about the proposal before Mass Housing for the development of the former St. Philip Neri site at 1521 Beacon Street.

The proposal for 48 units is enormous and does not fit within the context of the surrounding neighborhood. Mass Housing should not grant a site eligibility letter without studying the catastrophic design flaws in this proposal. The townhouses will be so high that they will overshadow the existing modest homes across on Karen Road. The traffic and parking situation will go from worse to worst. Karen Road, Montclair and Short Streets are impassable during sports seasons when teams practice at Lincoln Playground. Adding 100 or so more cars to the mix will be intolerable and unsafe. There is not enough guest parking for 48 apartment/townhouses and guests will park in the neighborhood, a situation that will be unsafe, especially in the winter.

There have also been problems with drainage as new houses have been constructed on Karen Road. To my knowledge the developer has not carried out studies to show that his proposal can be built without drainage problems that will be unable to be fixed and that will then impact the neighbors.

This developer has been in the newspapers in cities where he has attempted to build. The articles are informative and speak to his character. Mass Housing should definitely Google Mr. Michael Argiros and read about him before issuing their letter.

I strongly recommend that Newton's Planning Department ask Mass Housing to deny the request for the site eligibility letter that has been submitted.

Thank you for your consideration.



Nelson R. Lipshutz

Norine Silton

From: Janice Campisi <janice.campisi@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 9:02 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri Development

Having lived on Moffat Road for 30 years, and in the city of Newton for over 60 years, we are concerned about the proposed development of the St. Philip Neri parcel that has been presented to the neighborhood. The size and scale of this proposal is staggering and completely dwarfs the surrounding homes. The aesthetics of the architecture do not relate to the character of the neighborhood.

We feel this will have a profoundly negative impact on the neighborhood and the city.

Janice and Ronn Campisi

Norine Silton

From: Janice Campisi <janice.campisi@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 9:02 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St. Philip Neri Development

Having lived on Moffat Road for 30 years, and in the city of Newton for over 60 years, we are concerned about the proposed development of the St. Philip Neri parcel that has been presented to the neighborhood. The size and scale of this proposal is staggering and completely dwarfs the surrounding homes. The aesthetics of the architecture do not relate to the character of the neighborhood.

We feel this will have a profoundly negative impact on the neighborhood and the city.

Janice and Ronn Campisi

Norine Silton

From: Zanni, Eleni <EZANNI@massbay.edu>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 11:19 AM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

1521 Beacon St/ St Phillip Neri

I have been a Newton resident for 32 years! It is the first time that I feel compelled to write to you. What troubles me about the plans for the 1521 Beacon Street project is the mass and density of the proposed housing complexes. Building structures of this size do not fit with the neighborhood (height of adjacent homes, frontage) and it will likely cause major traffic problems in an area/intersection through which children pass en route to the local elementary school.

PLEASE REJECT THIS PROPOSAL,

Eleni E. Zanni

150 Hartman Rd

Newton, Ma 02459

Norine Silton

From: Troy Bracher <Troy.Bracher@ifs.statestreet.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 1:11 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: 'Elizabeth Bracher (elizabeth.bracher@bc.edu)'
Subject: 1521 Beacon Concerns

Dear Representatives:

We are writing to express our family's grave concern over the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street. We have been homeowners at 587 Chestnut Street, directly abutting the (former) St. Philip Neri property since 2005. Our concerns are multiple & varied – and really have absolutely nothing to do with the individuals who may end up residing next to us.

First, we have a concern with the overall size of the project and how it will interfere with access to natural light/sightlines. The buildings will be some of the largest & tallest in Waban. Maybe something of this size would be appropriate for the Square, but when placed next to the 2 very modest homes (one of which is ours) on Short Street and across from the modest homes on Karen, the differential is striking. Residents will be faced with intimidating facades upon walking out their front/back doors, due to the developer's "maximum build" strategy.

The developer has made it a point to show his proposed structures as stand-alones, never in proportion to the neighbors. The community had to take it upon ourselves to do so & the results are striking, to say the least (the homes are those on Karen, juxtaposed to one of the townhomes and the larger structure):



In addition to this environmental concern, there is another. We have often faced drainage/flooding problems on our property. At no point has the developer presented any material evidence that his project will not make this worse. There is an underground waterway through that property. Any diversion of it will end up in our (and our neighbor's) backyard or basement. Other tear-downs/remodels along Montclair Road have encountered these problems in recent years.

Second, we are VERY concerned with infrastructure problems. We recently had our own sewage problem – as a city line in front of our house became clogged (not because of a tree root, per our understanding) and backed up into our laundry room/washing machine. Karen Road has 10 homes and I would estimate 30 residents/25 bathrooms. The community has seen no evidence, reassurance or even a glint of consideration that the sewage/water lines are capable of handling an additional 100 residents/87 bathrooms. Dating back to the Romans, communities have struggled with how to handle their waste. We fight the same battle, here.

In addition to the water/sewage concerns, we all have traffic & safety issues. The developer had a traffic study done that appeared to have holes large enough to drive a truck through. Now, we are not experts in traffic studies, but we also have not seen evidence that the assumptions/explanations provided truly hold water. What of a return to "normal" traffic, when Angier re-opens? What of the impact on Saturday mornings/afternoons, when cars line Karen & Montclair for soccer games? What of the impact to the already congested Beacon/Chestnut intersection? The developer had ideas on closing Short Street, expanding lanes on Chestnut, and upgrading the semaphore at the intersection. Only crude drawings and vague assurances were available. Before any next steps are taken, all parties need to make sure the safety of all residents & visitors is ensured. As abutters to the public way that is Short Street, are any of our concerns worth as much as the developer's?

Third, the developer has shown very little sign of being qualified to tackle this kind of project. When asked directly at a community meeting, he talked about the number of properties he's owned, but also made it clear this was his first venture of this kind/magnitude in a community such as ours, or anywhere else. The Commonwealth and the City need to look at this in detail, especially as he has run afoul with the community of Somerville with regard to how he acts as a property owner. Personally, we have had to make repeated appeals to the City in order to pressure him to follow up on the basic needs of snow removal and lawn maintenance. (He still has yet to mow his property in 2015. Whether he has fixed the broken window that has annoyed the neighbors for months is unknown, as I write.) Actions speak louder than words. From every piece of hard evidence we've seen, Mr. Argiros is highly suspect when it comes to being able to stay on top of his myriad responsibilities as a responsible, respectful property owner.

So, there you have it. From our perspective as a neighbor, we see edifices being erected that will permanently, negatively alter our "Garden City" vistas. We see the potential for water running into our property, with no way to fight it. We can envision over 3x as many toilets flushing, wondering where the contents of those flushes will go, along with increased garbage & recycling, with the concomitant vehicles to haul it away. We see increased traffic, with suspect statistics, crude drawings, and assurances. (If a new semaphore would help, does the City need this project to install it?) We can see and hear the heavy machinery, recreating our backyard AND our front yard, as Chestnut is redesigned. And, when the dust settles, we have an untrustworthy neighbor with a background of aggravating his neighbors in and around greater Boston.

The project is too big and the plans/reassurances are too flimsy. Please do what you can to scale it back.

Respectfully,

The Brachers
587 Chestnut Street
Waban, MA 02468
troy.bracher@ifs.statestreet.com

Information Classification: Limited Access

Alexandra Ananth

From: Steve Leese <Steve.Leese@quabbincapital.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 2:13 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments on Proposed Development at 1521 Beacon Street

Ladies/Gentlemen:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed development at 1521 Beacon Street.

Before going into the reasons for my opposition to this project, let me start by saying two things. First, I am not opposed to the affordable housing component of this project. I feel that every community should do its part to address the needs of low and moderate income residents and families. Second, I am not opposed to this being rental housing. I feel that rental housing is an important aspect of any community, although this need will differ for various communities. As someone who didn't buy his first house until I was in my 40's, I certainly understand that rental housing fills an important demand in all aspects of society.

My opposition to this project is a result of the project simply being too massive, dense and out of character with the surrounding neighborhood. I realize there are important documents, drawings, studies, reports and other information that need to be considered in deciding whether to approve or reject a development project. However, in this case, simply stepping back and taking a common sense perspective quickly leads to the conclusion that this project is not appropriate for this location.

Although this is a housing project, its scale and design would clearly create a feeling of a large commercial structure looming over the surrounding homes and streets. A building with heights ranging up to 62 feet would be dropped right in the heart of a heavily residential neighborhood predominantly made up of traditional single family homes.

Also, this project would have an enormous, and inappropriate, effect on the density of this neighborhood. This area is generally referred to as "Waban Valley". My understanding is this area currently has 68 housing units. Adding this project would increase this number to 116, a 70% increase. This project alone would nearly double the housing units in Waban Valley. From a density perspective alone, one single project, on a relatively concentrated site, should not be allowed to have such an adverse effect on the density of a neighborhood.

In addition to population density, this project will cause serious traffic and pedestrian issues as well. Anyone who is evaluating this project needs to understand that it is impossible to leave Waban Valley, in a vehicle or on foot (setting aside trespassing), without utilizing and/or crossing over Beacon Street and/or Chestnut Street. Adding this many housing units in this particular location can only greatly exacerbate an already extremely challenging situation for motorists and pedestrians in this area. I realize traffic studies can or must be done to formally calculate and quantify this, but as I said above, a common sense approach will readily lead to the same conclusion. Anyone who spends time in this area on a typical day will see that traffic and pedestrian patterns are already challenging. Adding 48 more housing units within the boundaries of Waban Valley can only make this much worse.

Lastly, as a rental project, this building will continue to be owned, managed and maintained by the developer. He has openly stated he wants this project to be a legacy for his children. Because of this, I think it is important to consider the developer's track record and experience with other projects. As disclosed in recent public media, this developer's behavior with at least one other project very much calls into question his ability, and even his willingness, to manage and maintain this project in a suitable way, particularly if rental demand in this market is insufficient to provide him with an occupancy rate that generates a positive financial return. As noted above, I am not opposed to this project because it

is rental housing; however, as a resident of Waban and someone with prior real estate experience, I do seriously wonder if there is sufficient demand in this market for 48 rental units.

In closing, I am strongly (more accurately vehemently) opposed to this project as currently proposed. If this project were to come to fruition, I think the detrimental effects on this neighborhood and Waban in general would be extensive and permanent. However, I am not opposed to any development here. I would be supportive of a development in this location that is a more sensible size and density and is more in keeping with the character neighborhood. A 10-unit project (the number of affordable units in the current proposal), with all the units designated for affordable housing, would seem to make more sense for all parties involved and for the entire community.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Steve Leese
28 Byfield Road
Waban

Steven A. Leese | Managing Director | **Quabbin Capital, Inc.** | (617) 330-9055 | www.quabbincapital.com



Alexandra Ananth

From: David Salstein <salstein@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 3:50 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments on proposed project at 152 Beacon Street

Hello,

As a resident of Waban, I live several blocks from the proposed St. Philip Neri project at 152 Beacon Street. I would like to offer comments to reflect my significant concerns with the project as it is currently envisioned. I understand that the proposed development is 4 to 5 stories, and this height would dwarf the nearby single family homes. This scale is completely out of character with the neighborhood and should be considerably lower instead. Moreover, the proposed numbers of individual dwellings for project is large, and will contribute to increases of traffic onto Beacon and Chestnut Streets, which are already very crowded at many times of the day, and would lead to even more travel delays and congestion. Furthermore the ingress and egress into the immediate neighborhood already leads to a difficult traffic pattern and adding many trips to and from this area can only exacerbate the congestion. I have seen very awkward and unsafe maneuvering from the nearby side streets onto the main streets (for example, turns from Montclair Road onto Beacon Street) and think it would only get worse and potentially dangerous with more vehicles coming from and going to that property if such a large project were constructed.

I hope you will consider my comments and undertake to scale back the proposed St. Philip Neri development. Such a reduction would decrease the potential congestion, lead to a safer traffic pattern, and overall, be more appropriate to the site and the neighborhood.

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,
David Salstein
11 Allen Ave.
Waban, MA 02468

Alexandra Ananth

From: Al Stancampiano <astancam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 4:32 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: 1521 Beacon Street

Dear Newton City Planning Department,

As a nearby resident of 1521 Beacon Street I would like the entire Newton City Planning Department and Executive Branch to know my opposition to the proposed development of this site. The proposal's sheer size (height & footprint) and density does not fit within the community. I truly object to this proposal, and want my city government to know I am against the development as it currently stands. A proposal of this nature only lends itself to further congestion to an area that has prided itself on reasonable density and sized developments. I chose to move to Newton 8 years ago because of its charm and character, if the current policies of 'over development' continue the 'look and feel' of this neighborhood will be lost forever and current/future residents will reconsider if Newton is the best place for them to purchase a single family dwelling.

I look forward to finding a better solution for all residents of Newton.

Best Regards,
Al Stancampiano
1451 Beacon Street
Waban, MA 02468
781-648-0768

DETAILS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The developer Michael Argiros is planning 48 units: 36 in one building and 12 units in four groups of townhouses. What is troubling is the mass of the project and its density. The building has five floors on the Beacon Street side (with cars occupying the first floor), and four on the Karen Road side for a height of 60 feet. The attached townhouses have four floors (cars on first floor also) for a height of 47 feet. The zoning for that lot is Single Residence 2, which means the maximum allowed height is 36 feet. These new structures will tower over the surrounding residences, completely out of character with the neighborhood. By comparison, the new Angier school is 45 feet high.

The footprint of the new building will be double the footprint of the existing church, expanding on three sides; the eastern side of the structure, where there is now open space with grass and trees, will cover most of the open space ; the front (southern) facade will be at least 10 feet closer to the sidewalk; the back (northern) elevation will be bigger by an average of 15 feet. The townhouses, lining up along Karen Road, will be set at 15 feet of the sidewalk, where the minimum front setback for Single Residences is 25 feet.

Regarding the density: statistically, 48 households generate 480 car rides per day (5 round-trips rides x 48), even if one person per household would walk to the T. The intersection of Chestnut Street and Beacon Street is part of very congested and heavily used corridor. Karen Road has no other exit. The Montclair- Beacon intersection is already dangerous, and many neighbors already avoid it. It makes

no sense to increase traffic in those areas at all.

What all of this means is a loss of open space and setbacks as well as massive structures in a neighborhood with smaller structures and trees. The likely impacts on the property values of adjacent homes violate the property rights of the immediate abutters.

Alexandra Ananth

From: Carole Grossman <carole@krmsg.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 4:41 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: Comments on Proposed Development

Dear Ms. Ananth and the Newton Planning Department,

I have been a Waban resident since 1966 – 49 years - and recognize the need for affordable apartments as family housing costs escalate and more seniors seek to downsize within Waban. However, I strongly object to the design of the Project Eligibility application submitted by Waban AMA Realty Ventures LLC for the former St. Philip Neri church lot.

Massing and Scale:

The height of the buildings is out of keeping with surrounding residences. The proposed buildings are 47 to 60 feet tall, higher than the new Angier School. I understand there are no drawings or photographs of streetscapes or renderings that illustrate the size of the buildings relative to surrounding homes; these would provide Mass Housing with information needed to assess whether the design is appropriate for the site.

Lack of Open Space and Green Space:

The project density does not fit in with the "Garden City" concept. There is a lack of adequate setbacks, open space, and meaningful greenery. The majority of the land is covered with buildings and parking spaces for 106 cars.

Traffic Problems:

The project will exacerbate traffic problems on the heavily trafficked corner of Chestnut and Beacon Streets. The single entrance/exit will cause problems on the surrounding small Waban streets.

The Developer:

A Newton Tab article stated that the developer was UNRESPONSIVE TO PROBLEMS AT HIS BUILDING SITE IN SOMERVILLE. Is there more information on the qualifications and management skills of Michael Argiros?

I hope the Planning Department will incorporate these concerns into the comment letter so resolution can occur prior to the grant of Project Eligibility.

Sincerely,

Carole Grossman
556 Quinobequin Road
Waban MA 02468

Alexandra Ananth

From: Barbara Bower <bdbower123@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 5:58 PM
To: 1521 Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Subject: St Philip Neri

Like many of my neighbors, I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed development for the St. Philip Neri site.

The proposed structures are just way too big for the site and will dwarf the surrounding houses. I think that the traffic on Karen Road and the nearby streets will be overwhelming, and I do not believe that the builder has the experience, qualifications or the moral character to make this project a success.

Please do not grant a Project Eligibility Letter until some significant modifications to his plan have been made.

Sincerely,

Barbara Bower
412 Waban Avenue
Member of the Waban Area Council

Alexandra Ananth

From: Brenda Kostyk <bkostyk@rcn.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 10:42 PM
To: 1521. Beacon Street@newtonma.gov
Cc: Daniel Kostyk
Subject: Proposed Development of St. Philip Neri Church site

Dear Mayor Warren,

I am writing to share my grave concerns with you regarding the proposed development of the St. Philip Neri Church site in Waban. You knocked at my door when you were first running for Mayor. I was so very impressed with your drive to personally connect with your constituents. At the time, my daughter was a toddler and we had a wonderful conversation about raising children in Newton. Having grown up in Maine, I shared how much I treasured the village makeup of Newton. Waban is a treasure with its mature trees, hidden paths, open spaces, the Charles River, and winding streets, as well as the ability to walk to the grocery store, train, play grounds, dry cleaners, cobbler, and our vibrant volunteer-run library. Having a walkable, "small community" feel was so important in our decision to come and raise our children in Waban.

This neighborhood can not sustain a 48 unit development with over 100 parking spaces on the corner of Chestnut and Beacon. Traffic in this neighborhood, particularly on these two main streets, is already unmanageable. There is no way our streets can safely accommodate the increased traffic this extraordinarily dense development will add. We live on small street, Kewadin Road, a couple of turns off of Chestnut Street. We already have many cars "cutting through" at inappropriate speed levels to escape the traffic jams on Chestnut. Many of our side streets don't have sidewalks and it's become very dangerous for my children and dog to walk, bike and scooter. If you were campaigning door to door on our streets today, we would be having a different conversation about how family friendly this neighborhood is. And, you would have to be very diligent about navigating our streets on foot.

My toddler is now 10, an age where I want her to be able to bike and scooter and walk with friends. I can't allow this with the traffic around here. As a pedestrian a couple of months ago, I was nearly hit crossing Beacon, after a car stopped and waved me across only to be hit by a truck, pushing two cars into the crosswalk. And we want to add 48 units onto this street with presumably 1-2 cars per unit? The infrastructure of our streets are not designed to handle this volume of traffic.

I understand that this parcel of land will be developed, and I applaud and support the spirit of adding affordable housing options to the neighborhood. It just needs to be done on a smaller scale so as not to change exacerbate already dangerous traffic levels.

This massive development does not integrate well at all into the neighborhoods existing development patterns, which are comprised of single family homes, some of a very modest size. Proposed heights are not in keeping with surrounding residences. The proposed development's size and scale are not appropriate for this lot. It can absolutely accommodate new residences, and hopefully affordable residences, but not of this scale and mass.

Please protect this special place. Please protect our children. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Brenda and Dan Kostyk
29 Kewadin Road

Sent from my iPad

Alexandra Ananth

From: Leslie Corris <ljcorris@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2015 10:43 PM
To: 1521. Beacon Street@newtonma.gov

I have lived on the corner of Montclair Road and Karen for 40 years. Across the street is a park that was given to the city with deed restrictions requiring it stay as a park. It is used continually and should have a right to co-exist with whatever is built on the 1521 property. Over the years there have been many times when the resolution to the gridlock of cars was resolved by using Karen Rd. for parking (and sometimes the church lot). The other day 23 cars were parked on Karen Road. In the course of 30 minutes a handicapped van arrived for 7 minutes. I have video that clearly documents this that you can have.

However, at the end of the soccer games, it is troubling to see so many youngsters (mainly boys) dribbling soccer balls as they crossed the intersection into the street. Again I have video unedited of this minute by minute. At the same time there were baby sitters crossing with very small children and baby carriages (there is a baby playground in the park) and the children got separated crossing the intersection. The size of the project should consider the situation at this intersection because once built it may not be correctable. The existing traffic study did not cover the appropriate periods.

Ed Corris
ljcorris@gmail.com

Loren Howard
33 Oakvale Road
Waban, MA 02468
617.877.0879
lorenhoward@gmail.com

Comment Letter:
1521 Beacon Street – Waban AMA Realty Ventures Proposal

I am a resident of 33 Oakvale Road, located at the top of the T-intersection between Karen Road and Oakvale Road. I am an architect and a builder. I have slowly watched, over the last 10 years, developers demolish the original, modest single-family ranch homes on the street and build much larger single-family homes in their place. This has occurred in large parts of Newton due to the highly perceived valuation of living in Newton. This slowly prices out potential residents and narrows the breath of the community. I am a strong proponent of widening this breadth in a thoughtful manner.

There should be well-designed, site-specific affordable housing added to the community where it makes sense. The St. Philip Neri site is a unique condition. I grew up going to this church; I was baptized, confirmed, and engaged my neighbors on this site. It was a locus for the community. Yet, its function as a church has expired and it's ready for a new life. There are not many 70,000 square foot lots open to development in the city, and this is an opportunity.

Every home in the surrounding area is a single-family structure. Given the precedent of the surrounding area, the 1521 Beacon St lot would fit 5 to 6 single-family homes. This does not limit the density of a proposed housing project, but it should inform one. The Waban AMA Realty Ventures proposal is starkly out of scale with the fabric of the community in which it is set. **The proposed plan calls for 48 dwelling units, when the site context calls for 5-6 dwellings.** That is a density increase of 8 to 10 times. The homes across Karen Road from the building site vary in height from 15 to 21 ft, and sit 25 ft from the front lot line. The proposed townhomes will stand 47 ft tall and sit only 12-15 ft from the front lot line. That's 3 times higher, and half as close.

The proposed development is almost a solid rectilinear mass that fills more than the volume of the buildable space. It fills more because no other lot is allowed to build higher than 35 ft. The proposed 36 unit complex behind the townhouses is 60 ft tall. Karen Road runs SW/NE. The development sits on the south east side of the street. Given the minimal setback from the street and the intense height of the buildings, a lot of morning sunlight will be blocked from both the road and the opposite neighbor's homes. From September until

March, the maximum solar elevation is 46 degrees. That means a 47 ft tall building will block the sunlight roughly 47 ft from its edge. If the townhouse is 15 ft from the street, and the street is 20 ft wide, for 6 months of the year half of the opposing neighbor's front yard will be in constant shade. In December (when solar elevation is 25 degrees), the entire house will be in shadow. Their environmental conditions will be drastically altered by this project. In a downtown city center you expect circumstances such as this, not in a low density, single-family residential zone.

If this project followed the existing Newton zoning rules governing setbacks and maximum height, it would fit the context of the neighborhood. It would not negatively impact the quality of life of the existing residents, who have lived here, in some cases, for 50 years. It would mean less volume, less square ft, and less dwelling units. It would also mean happier, more welcoming neighbors, who would look to their new community members with smiles and open arms instead of a hostility that is mistakenly applied to them in place of the developer that has profited from their injury.

This project calls for 10 affordable units and 38 luxury, full rent units. Keep the affordable units, please. Everyone will benefit from the increase in perspective that economic diversity brings. I expect the project would still turn a significant profit with 10 full rent units subsidizing the other half. This is beside the point however. **The point is – this proposal does not fit the context of the site and the physical ramifications of the proposal will significantly degrade the quality of life of the existing neighbors.**

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of my concerns as well as all those that have submitted their thoughts.

Sincerely yours,

Loren Howard

1521BeaconStreet@newtonma.gov

I live in Waban basically around the corner from the (former) St. Philip Neri site. I would just like to say something about the proposal by Mr. Argiros.

I feel that the proposed project is way too large for the parcel of land. I believe that it is zoned for single families and had pictured that there might be 3 or possibly 4 large houses there - or maybe 6 or 7 smaller houses.

I think that 48 units in that space is going to make more traffic on Chestnut and Beacon and the traffic is bad enough there as it is. The front building which will contain apartments is very high for the area - towering over the other homes on either side of it.

With all of the units and the parking there is going to be very little open/green space left which is really a shame.

I know that a number of people in this neighborhood are thinking about selling their large houses and would love to move into an apartment or condo and stay in this area - but because of the number of units he wants to put in the apartments really would not be large enough to appeal to most of the people in this area.

Please give serious consideration to scaling down the size of this project.

Peggy Pober
85 Pine Ridge Road
Waban MA 02468

June 12, 2015

Re: 1521 Beacon Street proposed building

Dear Mayor Warren,

I am writing to you, as many of our neighbors are, regarding the proposed development of the site of the St. Philip Neri Church at 1521 Beacon St. I have attended the informational meetings regarding the developer's plans, and I have been following the progression of this as it has been reported in the newspapers (however I hesitate to use the word "progression" as it infers that progress is being made – which it is not). I am vehemently opposed to the proposal by the developer, for the reasons I will describe below. I strongly hope that you as our elected official, and all the other decision-makers involved will not allow this proposal to become an ultimately permanent scar on this part of the City.

Let's be clear – the proposed structure is a monstrosity – a densely populated monstrosity. The drawings are extremely misleading, but then again if I were the developer, I would really want to hide a lot of this plan and "window dress" it to avoid scrutiny. But first, let's review what we were told at the last open meeting was the developer's "original concept" – that is to say, he was envisioning "a big box". This I find to be extremely revealing about what could be in store for us as neighbors, and as to how this developer thinks (or in this case, doesn't think). Who among us, who of us who actually live here, and are part of this community would EVER think that a "big box" would be a good idea? That's right – NONE of us. And the reason is that we actually *care* about where we live, we actually *care* about what it looks like, and we actually *care* about how it would impact our neighbors. Their admission of what his original concept was embarrassingly inappropriate, shows severe insensitivity, and it just foretells of other bad decisions he is likely to make – at others' expense, including the City of Newton.

Furthermore, regarding the size of this proposed building, I am not at all fooled by the much-used term "soften" when the building was being described at the last open meeting. The designs and drawings for the proposed buildings were "softened" by the use of this, that or the other architectural feature to make it "blend in" with the community. Look at the size of this, the height in particular, and there is no denying that "softening" this is merely putting LIPSTICK on a PIG. It is egregious.

I find the front-relief drawings to be especially misleading in that they depict the building with no other existing buildings featured for comparison. Since when is this helpful? Let's see drawings of this proposed monstrosity dwarfing the existing houses in the area and only then can we have a meaningful discussion.

The fact that the developer admitted, when asked, that he has never attempted a project of this size before, is, to say the least, concerning. The opportunity for a poor outcome is high.

Many people have commented on the traffic congestion that this is likely to cause. Many people have also questioned the validity of the traffic studies that were done, primarily because of the circumstances in which they were done. Do they really mimic what is or what would be? I am certain that fancy software modeling exists that would aid in these various scenarios of traffic patterns and congestion, however it begs the adage "garbage in, garbage out". Perhaps the traffic study done at the proper and various times (e.g. while Angier School was in operation) may not have been possible due to the time course of this proposal, in which case greater caution is required on the part of the City in relying on any information in this traffic report. With the density of this proposed project being what it is, it would be an oversight to think that it is just the proposed number of estimated residents who would be impacting these intersections; they would have visitors, they would require plumbers, electricians, cleaners, there would be moving vans (quite frequently, as I understand), and landscapers, and maintenance trucks, etc., etc. I think my point is clear – it is not just the **density** and the number of residents – it's all that goes with this kind of proposal that needs serious consideration of the problems it can cause.

The 1521 Beacon Street site will be developed. While there is a time and place for everything, this is neither the time nor the place for this monstrosity.

Sincerely,

Dennis McNicholl

1563 Beacon St., Waban

Alexandra Ananth

From: Ray Noveck <rnoveck@rcn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 2:00 PM
To: Setti D. Warren; jfreas@netonma.gov; Alexandra Ananth
Subject: Thank You for "Housing Strategy Open House"
Attachments: 1521 ELEVATION TAB-2 (2).jpg

Hi Setti, James and Alexandra,

Thank you all very much for inviting us to participate in Sunday's "Housing Strategy Open House." The moderators and the Mayor stimulated, in the broadest sense, an interesting, open and wide breadth of discussion on this most important topic. What can we do to get more of the people of Newton involved in the process, especially in the rapidly growing senior demographic like my wife and I, many of whom may already be priced out of staying in Newton as they try to downsize? The thought that Sallee Lipschutz mentioned about communicating to the population via email is a good one. Instead of having them go to the Newton website, how about Newton reaching out to them? As a starter, how about having the discussion leaders, synthesize the flip charts filled during the sessions to accompany a letter from the Mayor to show the people who didn't attend what they missed? I, for one, think the scope of the discussions would be an eye opener, to those who weren't there.

I also thank James for coining a phrase about building design that can become a motto: **Right Building for the Right Place**

If more people could agree that one size doesn't fit all, the dialogue would open up and constructive compromises could be achieved for goals that are very complicated.

Please find the attached as an example of what the proposed development at St. Philip Neri will look like to the neighbors across from it on Karen Road. Clearly not the right buildings in the right place!

Congratulations. It was a great opener for the nine month planning process ahead.

Cordially,

Ray Noveck
31 Karen Road