

**19 SHAILER STREET
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02446**

Board of Selectmen
Town of Brookline
Town Hall
333 Washington Street
Brookline, MA 02445

I wish to oppose the construction of the proponent's planned building at 455 Harvard Street, as I have previously opposed the buildings at 40 Centre Street and 384 Harvard Street.

Why is the Town rolling over and allowing these developers and their mediocre architects to foist a series of ugly, oversized buildings on our community? The Daneshes, the Robert Roths, et al., are being permitted to change the character and fabric of our community in a way that steamrolls all the zoning principles that the Town has chosen to regulate and maintain its essential nature and development. We do not want to become Queens, NY, but that is where we are headed. These developers are little more than sharks in a feeding frenzy, trying to get the last morsels before the Town has its 10% affordable units required under Chapter 40B. These developers are bullies, threatening the Town and disregarding the citizenry, just so that they can squeeze every last cent out of these parcels on which they overbuild and then walk away, leaving the Town and the citizens to deal with the adverse effects on our community.

The Town needs to stand up to these bullies. Their projects should not be looked at individually, but in conjunction with the others, which makes clear that the Coolidge Corner area is being assaulted by overbuilding and increased density that the community will regret. Our new school building is going to be too small before it's built. Each one of these projects claims there is no need for parking and that tenants of the new buildings can park 'elsewhere' or that, miraculously, they, unlike other residents, will forego having personal vehicles. Given all these current proposals for Chapter 40B projects, there is not going to be any 'elsewhere' for parking for the hundreds of new tenants of these buildings, their visitors, their childcare providers, their personal attendants, or the service people who make calls on their units. (It was noteworthy that the 40 Centre developer asked the ZBA for parking waivers for construction vehicles and construction workers; one wondered why the ZBA did not tell them to go rent space at the Marriott, which is developer's solution for tenants who do not get one of the few dedicated spaces in his building.) The developers *know* there is a parking shortage, but lobby to exacerbate it, with total indifference to the community. The obvious answer is underground parking, but that costs money, so they build their cheap, poorly-designed structures above a ground-level parking lot that does not contain enough spaces for even the residents' vehicles, let alone for visitors, service people, or delivery vehicles.

The design of the Harvard Street building is another mediocrity produced by Cube 3 Studio. Why should these second-rate architects be determining the fabric of our

townscape? Peter Bartash is a graduate of the Roger Williams School of Architecture, a third-rate institution. Is he to be the arbiter of taste for the citizens of Brookline?

I think the Board of Selectmen should be acting to protect Coolidge Corner and not rolling over as the ZBA does. It's time for Brookline, which is on the verge of solving the 10 percent affordable housing problem; to stand up and fight this wave of cheesy, and overly large projects of mediocre design. These projects are nothing but greed hiding behind the need for affordable housing. It is time the Town of Brookline listened to the reasoned objections of the residents of Coolidge Corner and calls out the developers and their architects. Creative approaches to these projects and to legal arguments against them are feasible. The Town should refuse to allow these projects to destroy the fabric and character of our community. A resounding "Yes" to affordable housing, but not at the cost of having poorly conceived projects like 455 Harvard Street destroying our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Ault".

Stephen Ault

11/29/16