

To: Board of Selectman and Planning Board

I am writing about the proposed 40B on 455 Harvard Street in Brookline.

The developer's proposal states that the site is on Harvard Avenue in a densely development mixed-use area. This is not accurate. The location is now a 1 story restaurant, previously a gas station. The rest of the building is on Thorndike St, which consists of one and two family houses. At 46'11" feet plus rooftop utilities, this building looms over the 2 family house next door. There is only a 5 foot setback between the building and the Campbells' house. The Campbells are elderly and ill, and bought the house in 1975. Ms. Campbell uses a walker, and this building will take away all of the sun from the house. The upper story has balconies that look down at her house and extends beyond her house in all directions. It is huge.

The parking proposal of stackers ignores the problem of numerous electrical blackouts on Harvard and Thorndike Street. National Grid is frequently working to repair power lines. When the power is out, where will the 17 cars go? I have gotten 3 parking tickets in the last few months, for leaving the car on Thorndike street beyond 2 hours. The neighborhood has 2 hour parking, no overnight parking, and many sections say no parking before 10AM. There is no space for cars in this size development.

The stacking system that was proposed for 420 Harvard does not operate below 14 degrees Fahrenheit. It slows down at 50 degrees. The developers are not concerned with how the people living in the buildings will deal with this problem, they are simply rushing through unresolved problems, and pretending that the stacker system is functional. The concern here is push through a maximum size building, and pretend that there is a parking system in place. The consultants and architects are the same as the 420 Harvard building and are well aware of the problems with parking stackers.

The developer's proposal has checked that it provides jobs. This is not accurate. When asked about jobs, they stated maintenance jobs for the building. But currently there are more jobs for the restaurant employees, and at higher incomes.

In the application, it states that this 40B "supports the revitalization of neighborhoods that protects historic resources and integrates uses." This is inaccurate. This proposal cuts off pedestrian friendly use of the site. It is a huge block building, with no relation to Thorndike St or the neighborhood. With two curb cuts proposed for Thorndike Street, it endangers the elderly, and children. There are currently 1,000 students enrolled in nearby Devotion School, and many children and pedestrians walk on Thorndike and Harvard Streets daily. Attached is the original proposal for the site made in 2007 by the same developer. It is a more representational depiction of the neighborhood.

The current restaurant does not want to leave, nor does it want to break it's lease, and has hired a lawyer to keep it's lease. The site is unsecured.

This is the latest of 6 different 40B's in the JFK crossing area. Harvard Street consists of 1 story retail buildings from Allston to Rt 9 except for Coolidge Corner.

For all of these reasons, this 40B is an unreasonable development on this site.

Thank-you, Sloat Shaw