

Members of the Planning Board,

I regret that I cannot attend the meeting on January 5, 2017 when JCHE and Temple Kehillath Israel will present their plans for the demolition of Epstein Hall and the construction of 62 housing units in its place. While I support affordable housing, particularly projects that are more than 20% affordable, this project (and the KI expansion) put undue burden on neighbors and present considerable safety concerns.

I have attached a powerpoint, illustrating my points:

One cannot look at 384 Harvard in isolation. There are 700 units proposed for the immediate surrounding area (Coolidge Corner), as well as a greatly expanded Devotion School. The JCHE project is part of the expansion of the greater KI campus, to include retail space, a new event hall, more office and pre-school space. This development results in considerable loss of green space in the adjacent park. The addition of Congregation Mishkan Tefilah and various other programs promises a lot more activity in this small space (traffic and parking needs).

There is already an acute traffic and parking problem in the surrounding blocks, generated by KI/MT congregants and the healthcare and other workers who support residents of 100-112 Centre Street. The parking proposal for the new Devotion School also includes 65 designated parking spaces in the neighborhood. The additional traffic, deliveries, worker and visitor parking that accompanies a development of this size is exacerbated by the grossly insufficient number of parking spaces proposed on the KI/JCHE campus. The JCHE proposal has trucks delivering through the garage at 384 Harvard. This would involve large trucks making a sharp turn off a narrow one-way street. The curb cut for the garage is almost directly opposite a group home for mentally disabled adults, who often walk into Coolidge Corner unaccompanied. The residents of this group home are transported to work in a van that unloads opposite the proposed construction. Traffic, parking and deliveries would be a serious safety issue for them, Devotion students and elderly residents in the neighborhood.

The JCHE proposal also calls for Town garbage and recycling pick up using toters on Williams Street. This is not feasible for a 62 unit building. Toters would block sidewalks and garbage trucks completely block traffic on Williams. The ZBA has already required 40 Centre (with only 40 units) to have garbage compacted and collected by a private contractor at least twice per week and receptacles cannot be placed on the sidewalk.

The intersection of Harvard, Stedman & Williams Streets is particularly treacherous. It is extremely busy with automobile and pedestrian traffic (especially with 1,000 students at the new Devotion). Emergency vehicles servicing 384 Harvard would create an extremely dangerous situation, unless they could pull completely off the

street. Resident drop-off/pick-up and deliveries would block traffic on Harvard Street, creating safety and congestion issues.

In a recent development, the HAB has earmarked \$2.5 million of Town monies for this project. KI will receive \$2.2 million for the long term lease of the property. It must be noted that in its almost century of existence, KI has NEVER paid PILOT to the Town of Brookline. Now the Town of Brookline is contributing funds to their project. What a sweet deal!

Please consider what I have said/shown in your recommendations to the ZBA.

Respectfully,

Beth Kates
105 Centre Street