

Roberta G. Sydney
on behalf of KS Company Trust
1309 Beacon Street (Trader Joe's and others)
And
On behalf of Harvard & Beacon LLC
1319 Beacon Street (Bank of America and others)
Brookline, MA 02446

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

December 15, 2016

RE: Continued Grave concerns about the 1299 Beacon Street Proposed 40B Project

Dear Sirs:

We have reviewed the revised November 4th submittal for Raj Dhandra's proposed 40B mixed use development at 1299 Beacon Street. In short, despite his reduction of apartment units and parking, his resubmittal is poorly designed and unsuitable for the size and shape of 1299 Beacon Street. As the longstanding owner of two adjacent properties at 1309 Beacon Street and 1319 Beacon Street, this letter is to express our continued concerns about the size, scope, and design of his revised proposal. We have stated many of these concerns in our prior letter, which still apply since the site circulation and access issues have not been addressed. However, since you have that letter already, we will not reiterate the many areas that need improvement. In brief, we remain greatly concerned that the revised program is unworkable with respect to site access, vehicular traffic, and circulation, and that despite the reduction, it still does not fit the neighborhood.

In the spirit of productive, positive collaboration, and to encourage the development of more affordable housing in Coolidge Corner, we offer the following approaches for consideration, either of which could make for a workable solution to many of the problems that his design raises. Either approach described below would greatly alleviate some of the larger concerns raised by the proponent's revised program.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACH 1---- ALL RESIDENTIAL AND NO GARAGE PARKING

We propose that the Town consider approving a residential project with as many floors that the Town feels is appropriate with ZERO square feet of first floor (or second floor) retail use, and ZERO garage parking spaces for residents. In this way, the developer will minimize public safety traffic congestion impacts. He would also deliver more affordable units to the Town of Brookline's Housing stock with the addition of apartment dwelling units on the first and second floors instead of using those floor areas for retail. In addition, it has considerable cost advantages to the developer since he would enjoy reduced construction expenses with no underground garage to construct.

As stated above, traffic congestion to and from the site would be greatly reduced with no garage parking and no retail uses on site. The only vehicles entering or exiting the site will be for trash pickup, deliveries, moving vans, taxi-cabs, shared lift cars, The Ride, and emergency vehicles, the sum of which could more readily be accommodated on narrow one-way Sewall Avenue. By eliminating all parking for the 55+ senior housing, the developer could pave the way for the mass transit, heavy walking resident group that he favors in his write-up. This zero-retail program, as mentioned above, would also serve to increase the number of affordable units created, which would be an admirable feat for him to accomplish, and good for the town's affordable housing stock.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACH 2---NO GARAGE AND LIMITED RETAIL WITH CONCOMITANT SURFACE LOT PARKING

We propose that if there is any retail square footage permitted in the proposed project, that the number of square feet be limited to the extent that sufficient surface parking spaces are built as per the Town parking requirements. In other words, if no surface retail parking is provided, then no retail use is permitted and constructed. If some surface parking is provided, then a concomitant amount of retail square foot use associated with that parking allotment could be permitted and constructed. The proponent, if allowed to demolish an existing active surface parking lot used by his current retail establishment, should be required to replace those surface parking spaces for retail uses if he wishes to maintain retail uses on the site.

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SURFACE PARKING FOR RETAIL TENANTS CUSTOMERS

While the proponent currently operates a retail store at the site and uses the 30+ parking spaces for employees and customers, remarkably, his revised program states that the new development with 12,000 square feet of retail will need NO PARKING SPACES for any of the retail users and their customers. His program specifically states that no parking spaces will be provided for retail tenants employees or customers, and that all the employees and customers will use public transportation, or walk to and from the site.

Despite the proponent's statement that people walk and use public transit to come to retail stores, this statement belies the fact that he operates a retail store on the site now, and his parking lot is currently fully used. We have similar experience over the decades owning 1319 Beacon Street, and 1309 Beacon Street. Retail customers and tenant's employees drive to retail locations, even in dense Coolidge Corner. Despite the high density of this neighborhood and the availability of bus and Green Line MBTA lines, many employees need parking, and many customers do as well, which is why the developer should build adequate surface parking for retail customers and employees if there is to be any retail use on the site.

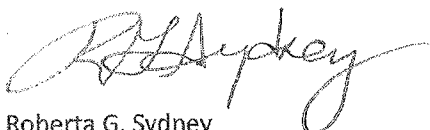
PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES

Adequate turning conditions and access for emergency vehicles, like ambulances and fire trucks to the proposed site has not been considered either. A development of this scope at 1299 Beacon Street with the magnitude of cars programmed would complicate and impede swift ambulance trips to and from the site and also impact the Longwood Medical Area access.

We prefer Approach 1, since it would increase the number of affordable units for the town. However, if Approach 2 is preferable, we respectfully request that surface parking to accommodate the retail use is a requirement. If the proponent incorporates any retail used on the site, we request that he be required to build sufficient surface spaces to accommodate the square footage parking ratio for those retail customers. And, we also respectfully request that he provides employee parking spaces in adequate numbers so that his employees who are unable to use public transportation or walk to the site can park at the 1299 site as well.

We suggest that the developer redesign his program using one of our alternatives to solve site access, public safety, circulation issues, and address the neighbors and the associated traffic.

Very truly yours,



Roberta G. Sydney
Trustee, KS Company Trust
and Manager, Harvard & Beacon LLC