

From: ksmith1450@aol.com [mailto:ksmith1450@aol.com]

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 8:19 PM

To: Maria Morelli

Subject: 111 Cypress Street

Dear Ms. Morelli,

For more than 14 years, we have owned and resided at 22 Brington Road in a two-family-house that is diagonally across from the proposed residential development at 111 Cypress Street in Brookline. We support affordable housing in Brookline and agree with the constructive points stated in the May 18, 2016 response of the Brookline Board of Selectmen regarding the development as proposed. We feel that the current proposal has a number of issues that need to be addressed, which we describe below.

Vehicle Traffic

The proposed development, which replaces an office building with 75 parking spaces with a 99-unit residential building with 105 parking spaces, including 89 garage spaces accessible from Cypress Street, will exacerbate an already congested traffic situation. The property is at the juncture of bottleneck intersections at Brington and Cypress and at Cypress and Route 9. The “box” at the intersection of Cypress and Brington is seldom heeded and often blocked, making it exceedingly difficult to enter and exit our street, a situation that has deteriorated markedly over time. There is also considerable backing up of cars on Cypress Street, as well as difficulty getting across Route 9. Our neighbors have reported being involved in several automobile accidents in this area. Many years ago, one of us mentioned the problem to a nearby police officer, who responded that “there shouldn’t be a street here.” We cannot change the location of the street, but we can try to prevent it from getting even worse. We contend that the situation warrants an independent, unbiased traffic study to be undertaken by the town.

Pedestrian Safety

We have particular concerns about the proposed garage, which exits onto Cypress Street. In addition to the vehicular traffic noted above, the area also experiences considerable pedestrian traffic to and from the Brookline Hills MBTA station, Brookline High School (BHS), the Cypress Street playground, and elsewhere. BHS student athletes regularly run across the area to get to the field across Route 9. We are concerned about pedestrian safety risks posed by cars exiting unexpectedly from the garage.

Number of Parking Spaces

We consider the amount of parking per unit to be highly excessive, given the proximity of the development to the Brookline Village MBTA station, as well as to a number of bus routes. We suggest reducing the number of spaces allowed and perhaps designating space for alternatives to individual car ownership, such as Zipcar and Hubway.

Impact of Excessive Height

The proposed seven-story building, which replaces the current two-story structure, is out of scale with the other multi-unit residential buildings on Cypress Street. The property also adjoins a residential neighborhood on Brington Road consisting of single and two-family houses. Such a massive structure will overwhelm and alter the character of the neighborhood. We request that there be an independent shadow study to gauge the impact of any proposed structure on the surroundings.

Community Benefit

We also request that the town consider alternative uses for development of this site that are more attuned to the needs of the community and offer more benefit. This property has been suggested as a logical location for the expansion of BHS to accommodate the continued enrollment growth expected as the burgeoning elementary school population progresses to high school. It could also be used to consolidate town and school administrative offices and programs that are in rented space from private landlords.

Thank you for hearing our concerns. Please feel free to contact us for further information.

Kim Smith & Daniel Weiner
22 Brington Road
Brookline, MA 02445