



# Town of Brookline

## Massachusetts

### Department of Public Works

#### Engineering & Transportation Division

TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
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January 18, 2017

Jesse Geller, Chair  
Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals  
333 Washington Street  
Brookline, MA 02445

Re: 370-384 Harvard Street

Dear Chairman Geller,

Per Chapter 317 of the Acts of 1974 the Transportation Board for the Town of Brookline is the local governing body which has authority to enact rules and regulations regarding the movement of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians on the public way. However, as you are aware, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B Sections 20 – 23 and 760 CMR 56.02 supersedes our enabling legislation for not only permitting but also for creating and altering the Traffic Rules and Regulations for the Town's public ways. Therefore we are writing this letter to provide comments and recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals relative to the proposed 384 Harvard Street Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Application, proposed by Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly (JCHE).

At the January 17, 2017 meeting of the Transportation Board we reviewed the plans for the proposed 40B development at 370-384 Harvard Street with representatives from the proponent including Zoe Weinrobe of JCHE, Joseph Geller and Sasha Wood of Stantec, and Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert of Law Offices of Robert Allen. It is the Board's understanding that the project will entail the removal of the existing Epstein Auditorium within the Temple Kehillath Israel complex and construct in its place a new building with:

- 62 100% affordable units,
- first floor retail space,
- 14 surface parking spaces consisting of 1 HP space, 6 spaces for JCHE staff, 3 spaces for Temple Kehillath Israel staff, 2 spaces for retail space staff, and 2 spaces for car sharing company,
- Tenants will not be allowed to own motor vehicles, per their lease agreements, and a Transportation Demand Management plan will include incentives to mode shift, and
- A 71 foot curbside loading zone for both passenger and commercial uses is planned for the public way.

We offer the following comments and recommendations on this project which were unanimously adopted by the Transportation Board:

1. Support for the creation of the proposed loading zone provided that
  - a. The design shall not include pavers or bricks within the public way because of the potential problems they pose with disabled pedestrians as well as their maintenance cost for the Town
  - b. The area be posted **LOADING ZONE/15 MINUTES LIMIT/TOW AWAY ZONE** and all signs and poles initially installed are paid for by the developer and meet Town of Brookline specifications
  - c. The developer be responsible for the full cost of materials and labor needed to accommodate the construction of the loading zone
  - d. Any changes in design must be approved by the Director of the Engineering & Transportation Division
  - e. The use of the loading zone is available to any vehicle authorized by the Traffic Rules and regulations for the Town of Brookline and not the exclusive use of the tenants of 370-384 Harvard Street
  
2. The Board requests that the ZBA hire a peer review consultant with expertise in transportation and parking to work with Town staff and
  - a. Conduct a site visit and reconnaissance assessment of parking availability surrounding residential and commercial areas within a four block radius
  - b. Review and comment on:
    - Proposed parking, loading and drop-off accommodations proposed by Applicant
    - Impact to surrounding area particularly given that no resident or visitor parking is provided on-site, many residents will have visiting care givers and the proposed loading area necessitates the elimination of six metered parking spaces
    - Proposed pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
    - Adequacy of on-site parking related to both the number and allocation of spaces between various types of users
    - Implications of vehicular access and egress on pedestrians
    - Opportunities to expand access to public transportation for residents, employees, care givers and visitors and provide additional modes of transportation through a P&TDM Plan
    - Comment on adequacy and completeness of performance goals and monitoring in the TDMP, especially impact to off-site parking in the surrounding area and make suggestions for improvements to promote mode shift
  
3. Given the Transportation Board's previous statements in favor of a reduced parking ratio of at least 1 space per dwelling unit and given the expected number of requests for temporary 6 month daytime and overnight temporary permits for in-home health care aides (given the expected tenants of the building), the Transportation Board expresses its concern about providing no on-site parking for use by resident's in-home health care aides or visitors and would like the peer review consultant to utilize existing temporary permit issuance numbers at nearby senior focused housing as a guide and require the developer to accommodate this potential parking demand onsite.

4. Require that a condition of the rental lease that residents cannot own a motor vehicle.
5. The driveway entrance should not be depressed, but should be at the elevation of the sidewalk to minimize impacts by pedestrians. If either staff or the peer review consultant believes that the design of the driveway poses a safety concern the developer pay for the purchase and installation of both an audible and visual warning of vehicles exiting to ensure pedestrian safety on the sidewalk
6. Transit screens should be available in the building lobby for use by residents, visitors, staff and retail employees to know the on-time arrival of nearby MBTA buses and Greenline Trolleys.
7. Covered bicycle racks should be provided on site for use by residents, visitors, staff, and retail employees. The Board recommends that the developer be required to utilize the City of Cambridge Bicycle Parking Guide as a best practice for siting, dimensions, rack styles, etc but not necessarily for the minimum ratios of required bicycle racks.
8. Require that the building owner be responsible for snow removal on the sidewalk immediately abutting the loading zone to ensure access.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed 384 Harvard Street Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Application, proposed by Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly (JCHE). Because the proposal may change throughout this process the Transportation Board does reserve the right to provide comments further in the process when this information is made available for review by the public.

Sincerely,



Joshua Safer, Chairman  
Brookline Transportation Board

Cc: Alison Steinfeld, Director – Planning & Community Development  
Peter M. Ditto, Director – Engineering & Transportation Division  
Daniel Bennett, Building Commissioner