

Zoning Board of Appeal
Town of Brookline

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Appeal:

We are immediate abutters of the proposed Babcock Place project that will be discussed at the Zoning Board of Appeals hearing on Wednesday, May 10. We live on Stedman Street, and the building under consideration will have an extremely negative impact on our backyards and homes. We understand that the owner intends to propose revisions to his plans, but since we will not see these plans until a later date, we feel it is critical to convey our serious concerns about this project as it will be before you on May 10.

As we did at the meeting of the Board of Selectmen some weeks ago, we strenuously object to the size of the proposed building. As presently conceived, this proposal is massively out of scale with the surrounding homes. This plan includes no green space. It will, in fact, destroy 31 existing trees around its perimeter, including an old oak which acts as a buffer to Stedman St abutters. There are no meaningful setbacks on any side of the building, consequently no place with enough air and light for anything to grow. Morning light to Stedman St and afternoon light to Babcock St (including the small park at the intersection of Babcock and Freeman) will be blocked. (We commissioned shadow studies for the Selectmen's meeting that demonstrate this.) Its parking garage on the ground floor and 62 air conditioners on the roof would likely generate a good deal of noise, and the exhaust fumes from the naturally ventilated garage may permeate our homes.

It is our belief that the building must be substantially reduced in both mass and footprint before it can enter our neighborhood without adversely affecting us in a most serious way. In short, the present design of the Babcock Place project threatens to degrade our entire neighborhood. We urge the ZBA to fulfill its obligation to the citizens of Brookline, and to determine what local bylaws and regulations should be waived in order to scale down this massive project.

Thank you very much.

Gina Crandell & David Roochnik (117 Stedman Street)
John Anderson & Jodie Manasivet (119 Stedman Sreet)
Brian & Christine Goldman (121 Stedman Street)
Carrie & Guy Staff (123 Stedman Street)