Volume I

Pages 1-84

Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing

134-138 Babcock Street

Comprehensive Permit Application

Babcock Place, LLC

May 10, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

Brookline Town Hall

333 Washington Street, 6th Floor

Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

Reporter: Kristen C. Krakofsky

APPEARANCES

Board Members:

Jesse Geller, Chairman

Christopher Hussey

Kate Poverman

Mark Zuroff

Town Staff:

Alison Steinfeld, Planning Director

Maria Morelli, Senior Planner

Applicant:

Robert Allen Jr., Esquire, Law Office of Robert L. Allen, Jr., LLP

Geoff Engler, Vice President, SEB, LLC

Peter W. Bartash, Associate Principal, CUBE 3 Studio

Shawn Kelly, Vanasse & Associates

Members of the Public:

Dan Hill, Esquire

PROCEEDINGS:

7:03 p.m.

MR. GELLER: Good evening, everyone. This is an application for a comprehensive permit under Chapter 40B Mass. General Laws. This is to construct 62 rental residential units and 31 at-grade parking spaces at 134-138 Babcock Street.

Tonight is our first hearing in what will be a number of hearings, and there will be a process to the hearings altogether. And by the end of the process, what we would hope is that it will give the board an opportunity to understand the project and deliberate and make a decision.

Tonight will be dedicated to administrative details. We will hear from staff, I assume about the PEL and other requirements for the application. We will skip what I think is a helpful component, which is an overview of what is and what is not permitted under 40B. Unfortunately, our consultant is under the weather this evening, and we're hopeful that by the next hearing, which will be scheduled for June 21st, that she will be available to review the finer points of 40B for all of us.

We, as part of typical 40B proceedings and

to assist us with technical details, typically engage the assistance of peer reviewers. Although we haven't heard anything about the project yet, I'm going to take a shot in the dark that transportation would be one peer reviewer that we likely would need.

Is there anything else that staff is recommending?

MS. MORELLI: Good evening, Chairman Geller. Maria Morelli, senior planner, planning department.

Staff is recommending that we have a transportation consultant, James Fitzgerald; and Art Stadig from Walker Consulting, who would be handling the parking; as well as Cliff Boehmer, who would handle the site and building design.

Now, there will be stormwater. We've talked to the director of engineering about technical assistance outside of his staff, and he feels that that can be handled in-house.

So those are -- the two peer reviews are basically parking/traffic and site and building design.

Typically, the applicant does pay for -- incur those costs, but you do need to ask the

applicant.

MR. GELLER: Applicant, you've heard what is being recommended? Will the applicant agree to pay for them?

MR. ALLEN: We will.

MR. GELLER: Thank you, Bob.

Okay. In terms of -- just briefly, for the record, my name is Jesse Geller. To my immediate left is Mark Zuroff. To Mr. Zuroff's left is Chris Hussey. To my right is Kate Poverman.

Tonight -- the hearings will be in the following order: We will first hear the applicant's presentation. That's going to occur tonight. At future hearings, we will give an opportunity to take testimony from the public, from town departments and boards. We'll hear from our peer reviewers. This is an iterative process. We will ask the applicant whether they will participate in a series of meetings with the planning department.

Applicant, will you participate in that process?

MR. ALLEN: We will.

MR. GELLER: And just so everyone understands, that process will not be attended by a

member of the ZBA. The planning department representative has no authority to make decisions. But rather, what will happen is they will come back to the ZBA at the next open hearing, and they will report back. And what will drive the discussion will be comments from the ZBA and testimony taken at the hearings. So I want to be clear about that component of the process.

Tonight's hearing and future hearings are all being preserved for a record. There's a stenographer.

Is it also being --

MS. MORELLI: It's being televised.

MR. GELLER: It's also being televised.

MS. STEINFELD: I don't know if the applicant has agreed to pay for the stenographer yet.

MR. GELLER: Will the applicant pay for the stenographer?

MR. ALLEN: We will, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GELLER: Thank you.

And the transcripts will be available -- two weeks?

MS. MORELLI: Two weeks after each hearing.

MR. GELLER: Two weeks after each hearing,

it will be available at the online site for the planning department. So anyone who is interested in this matter can either read it online, or you can print it off, but you have those transcripts available to you.

There will also be available the various exhibits and presentations that are part of this application. So you'll be able to find all of those materials online.

Anything else?

Anyone who wants to offer testimony --

MS. MORELLI: You can email the planning department. You can email me at mmorelli@brooklinema.gov, and that will be forwarded to the ZBA and posted online promptly.

MR. GELLER: Let me also urge people. We will be taking public testimony, but it is very helpful to the board if we receive testimony -- if we receive your comments in written fashion, and we get it in sufficient time before hearings that we really can take a look at it and consider the content. So Maria's given you an email address. You can certainly circulate things to that email address. But, again, there will be an opportunity for people

to offer testimony at a hearing. So again, written fashion is great, but you'll have an opportunity to speak as well.

Maria?

MS. MORELLI: Just a few details before the applicant presents. I do understand that Mr. Slater has invited residents to speak with him directly. The town does encourage interactions between developers and abutters. It's certainly encouraged throughout the public hearing process. I just wanted to state that.

One of the more administrative details that we do when we receive a ZBA application is, per the state regs at 760 CMR 56.05 2(a) through (h) and also the ZBA regulations under Section (h), there are a list of components that comprise a complete ZBA application, and staff has reviewed the application against those standard requirements. Again, these are just for the components. It's not a review of the content. Staff and our 40B consultant deems the application complete. We sent a letter to Mr. Slater outlining some areas where clarification is required, and we would ask for those required materials before the next hearing on June 21st.

We've also asked for additional materials in terms of a 3D model with the surrounding context, massing of the abutting properties represented. They can be represented simply as gray masses, but the proposal does need to be -- have some detail.

And also shadow studies are very helpful that compare existing and proposed conditions at different times -- for times through the year.

I also want to state that throughout this process, staff, boards, and commissions will be reviewing this proposal and giving the ZBA comments. And that can take place at the next hearing. We haven't exactly decided how that's going to play out. But normally, the second hearing is when staff, boards, and commissions provide testimony to the ZBA.

Several boards, actually, would like to see plans as they evolve, so they can comment multiple times during the public hearing process. And I wanted to assure the public that staff will be looking at things very closely.

You've discussed peer review. Throughout these reviews, there might be additional materials or visuals that would be helpful to the ZBA, and that can come out of those processes and will be made

available to the public promptly.

There is one other detail, and that has to do with a site visit. Normally, early in the process, a site visit is scheduled for the ZBA and it is announced to the public. It would be helpful if you are able to determine what morning would work for you, so we can just establish that date and time and announce it to the public. If you want to maybe --

MR. GELLER: Let me just add one thing. The site visit is actually an opportunity for the board to walk the site. We would ask that the parameters of the structure be marked so we have a sense of height and where the walls will be, the corners will be.

The applicant will do that; correct?

MR. ALLEN: Correct.

MR. GELLER: It is not -- people have trouble with this one. It is not an opportunity for us to take testimony. We're not taking testimony at that site visit. It is an opportunity for the ZBA to ask questions of the applicant. So I just wanted to be clear on the purpose of the site visit.

Do people know their calendars?

MR. ZUROFF: What we are looking at?

MR. GELLER: Maria?

MS. MORELLI: Well, it actually depends on -- it would be helpful to have the architect present at the site visit, so --

MR. GELLER: Peter needs to be there.

MS. MORELLI: Right.

MR. GELLER: Let me also suggest that it is helpful -- I'll take it back. What I was going to say was it would be helpful that we have a sense -- a real sense of what the improvements will be, and that may necessitate a secondary site visit.

MS. MORELLI: I understand what you mean by "improvements," but I think the public might be confused by it. Do you mean revisions to the plans?

MR. GELLER: Correct.

MS. MORELLI: Okay. I haven't addressed that. That's really up to the applicant.

MR. GELLER: That's not what I meant by "improvements." Improvements, I mean structure, what they're building on-site.

MS. MORELLI: So you want to see an outline of the footprint stakes on the site?

MR. GELLER: Yes. As I've mentioned, this is an iterative process. And to the extent that

there are changes forthcoming that are important to the board's thinking, we may need to see it again. That's my point.

MS. MORELLI: Understood.

Okay. So Mr. Bartash might want to suggest some dates for the ZBA.

MR. BARTASH: We'll probably need about two weeks to get everything staked out and marked out on-site, so that puts us in either the end of the last week in May or the first week in June.

MR. HUSSEY: I won't be available the last week in May, and I'll be back, I think, the 3rd, Thursday or Friday -- Friday or Saturday of June.

MR. BARTASH: So the week of the 5th?

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah, I think so. I think that would be all right.

MR. BARTASH: Monday or Tuesday morning, the 5th or the 6th?

MS. POVERMAN: Monday is good for me.

MR. ZUROFF: Monday is fine.

MR. GELLER: So can we make it 8:45?

MS. MORELLI: 8:45 on Monday June 5th. Okay. And that's at 134-138 Babcock.

Do you have questions?

MR. GELLER: Any questions at this point?

MS. POVERMAN: Oh, can we get a balloon to show how high it is? It never gets done. We've asked for it. But it would be nice to know how high the five stories are actually going to be, to put it in context.

MS. MORELLI: Mr. Hussey might have a comment.

MR. HUSSEY: I think what would be -- the site sections of the drawings are pretty descriptive of the height of the new building relative to the existing buildings around it.

Absent that, I think a massing model might be helpful, which we haven't had in the past. But it's a model of the site and of the buildings, of the new work and all the adjacent buildings and the sites around it. And not with fenestration and materials indicated, but the shape of the new building and the existing building, articulation of the roof and all that sort of thing. So it's not a detailed model, but it's a model that when you put it up here, you can see it in relation to the other buildings in the immediate area.

MS. POVERMAN: See, I would love that, but

we're always told that the 3D pictures are just as good.

MR. HUSSEY: They're not as good. They really are not, as a matter of fact.

MS. POVERMAN: I agree.

UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Topography?

MR. HUSSEY: Topography would be good, but there's only about an 8-foot difference between the lower end and the upper end.

MS. POVERMAN: If we could get that.

MR. HUSSEY: Topography would be good as well.

MS. POVERMAN: And I think especially in this particular case, because of how the building is fitting into the neighborhood and the trees and -- I would find it extremely helpful in this case.

MS. MORELLI: I'm just going to comment to say I think it would be, number 1, impractical to have a physical building model. It is customary on really all of our cases to have a 3D electronic model.

Also, if there are going to be revisions to the plans, we'll be able to see those input correctly. And it would just take more time to

actually reflect that in a wood-constructed model.

So just to be consistent with how we're treating all of our major impact projects and 40B cases, I'd like to ask you to see if we can work with the 3D model, the electronic version, and have as much detail, as much visual information that will help you understand the surrounding context. That has worked for our peer reviewers. That's also very accessible to the public because we're able to post it online. And I think that is also an important element for this process, the fact that it is accessible to everyone.

MR. HUSSEY: So far as changing the model is concerned, it doesn't need to be wood. It could be made out of a dense foam material, and that you can shape and change as the time goes by.

The 3D model, you know, you have to then think, okay, is this going to be from the north, east, south, west? Is it going to be from ground level? Halfway up the building level or higher? You really need about a dozen or two dozen 3D model generations to have an adequate sense of what's going on.

I know you haven't done this in the past,

and I haven't pushed it. But I think in this particular case, there are a lot of different structures around this property that are quite different from each other. And absent the developer and the architect having cogent reasons why they cannot produce or should not produce a model, my tendency is still to push for the massing model.

MS. POVERMAN: I would agree with Mr. Hussey. Despite the fact that there is nice -- a nice feeling of being -- doing the same thing in every case, we've asked for it in just about every case, and we get the same answer. But I've never been really happy with the result, because I'm much more visual in the 3D ability to see it. And I do think in this particular case it would be very helpful if the applicant would do it, give it to us in that base, as long as it is one that can be manipulated.

MR. GELLER: Would the applicant agree to do it?

You're saying no.

Maria, what do we do in 40A cases?

MS. MORELLI: I've not seen a massing model. I think it's -- I haven't seen one on any

major impact projects, as far as I can remember.

MR. GELLER: Okay. You know what I'm going to say.

MR. HUSSEY: Hang on. Let me push back a little. What exactly is the objection to having a physical massing model?

MS. POVERMAN: And also let me say, if we haven't done it in any 40As, it's not the same as to whether we can. The issue is whether we can do it, and I'd like that to be researched before we give that up and say we're not going to do it.

MR. GELLER: Mr. Engler, tell us who you are.

MR. ENGLER: For the record, Geoff Engler from SEB, affordable housing consultant representing Mr. Sam Slater and the applicant in this case, Babcock Place, LLC.

First of all, the model you're requesting hasn't been done, nor asked -- I mean, perhaps asked of, but not done on any other 40Bs that have been before this board in the recent past. And as Maria indicated, it's not asked of any of the other major mixed-use projects before the town.

I would also say it's -- the detail is --

compared to what can be done electronically in a 3D modeling basis is apples and oranges. It's difficult to manipulate. Every time something gets changed, it's not going to be -- I mean, unless you did it, like, expansively for a whole neighborhood, I just -- I mean, as you know, and I've said many times, I'm involved with lots of 40Bs in lots of towns, lots of projects taller than this. I haven't seen it done on any other 40B projects, a physical model.

And it's quite costly. I mean, I think the applicant will be more than generous in all the peer review that's asked of, the professionals, transportation, parking, engineering, architecture, more than generous, which is an effective process and has served this board very well on the other 40Bs.

A physical model is not an effective use of time and money in this context, nor will it provide any more detail. I would suggest it would misrepresent more than what we could do visually, so that's our position on that issue.

MS. MORELLI: It might be helpful -- I mean, our role here is to help people, the ZBA and the public, envision what will take place. We're very sensitive to that. We have a lot of experience

trying to ensure that the visuals are represented accurately and that they are represented with enough detail, with enough site section so that people do understand where the impacts are going to be.

I do want to remind you that on 40A cases you rely a great deal on the planning board, and we have excellent architects and experienced designers on the planning board who actually wish to review 40B cases a little more frequently as the plans evolve. The planning board has never requested a massing model, but they're able to give you effective comments that I think might help guide your discussions. So if we could just, you know, work with the system that we have and provide the visuals that you need --

MR. GELLER: Let me make sure I understand. The planning board has the right to offer testimony, just like any other town board or department.

MS. MORELLI: Correct.

MR. GELLER: You're not proposing that we introduce the planning board as some advisory body, which would, in fact, be very unusual for a 40B.

MS. MORELLI: Not at all. Keep that in mind that boards -- you take the place of all local

boards.

MR. GELLER: Right.

MS. MORELLI: They understand that.

However, if a board realizes that the plans have changed, they may wish to -- like the transportation board has requested to review plans as they get revised. The planning board has expressed that. It might be a second meeting. We do schedule a meeting with the planning board so they can review the proposal and submit comments to you. In the past, they have expressed an interest in reviewing plans. If they evolve, if they are revised in a substantial way, they would like the opportunity to give you comments again.

MR. GELLER: They have that opportunity, so --

MS. MORELLI: Right.

MR. GELLER: Okay.

Mark, do you have a thought on this?

MR. ZUROFF: In the spirit of moving things forward, I would suggest that while Chris's idea is good, and I defer to Chris for architectural advice, why don't we take a viewing of the computer-generated model and see if it's adequate and see if it can be

created in such a way as to give us more perspective on what we are intending to look at. So maybe we can have elevated views and make sure that we have a perspective on surrounding buildings a little bit more than what I've seen in the past.

MS. POVERMAN: Well, could we also have the issue reviewed as to whether or not it is something you can ask for in 40As? Because I think that might ultimately inform what we can ask for.

MR. GELLER: It's not whether you can ask. It's whether have we, as a matter of process, asked for it.

MS. POVERMAN: No. I think under the law -- that's not my understanding of the law. Maybe it's something we'll ask of Judi Barrett, who's not here today, so maybe next time.

MR. GELLER: Okay. So we will reserve rights with respect to that issue.

Okay. Other questions for Maria?

(No audible response.)

MR. GELLER: Thank you, Maria.

MR. HILL: Can I be heard on that, sir?

MR. GELLER: Can you be heard on that?

MR. HILL: Yeah.

MR. GELLER: Not at the moment.

MR. HILL: You're not going to let us speak tonight?

MR. GELLER: How far are we -- can you tell me -- I don't know that we're going to get to public testimony tonight.

MR. HILL: I want to make a comment actually on this issue, alone.

MS. MORELLI: Mr. Chairman, typically -- and I've actually submitted a letter to the -- some community members for which I have email addresses, and you saw a copy of that.

Typically, the first hearing is administrative in nature, and so we -- it's really a matter of introducing the ZBA and the public to the application and the proposal, going through some administrative details, and sharing an overview of how this public hearing will take place. And if Ms. Barrett were here, she would be giving us an overview of the 40B process. So it's purely technical. I think people's expectations were that there wasn't going to be public comments, per our usual -- how we typically handled the first hearing.

MR. GELLER: Right. And, frankly, I think

the board sort of needs to get its feet wet with the project, so that -- frankly, the testimony is more meaningful to the board when they have a better understanding of what the project is and what they feel the weaknesses are. And we may actually have questions for the members of the public. So there's a certain logic to it.

I think you have a technical question. I don't mind a technical question.

MR. HILL: This is a comment on the site sections. That's all.

MR. GELLER: Go ahead.

MR. HILL: My name is Dan Hill. I'm an attorney in Cambridge, and I represent the abutters on Stedman Street.

You asked about site sections. Site sections were actually provided. MassHousing asked for them during the PEL process. I don't know if you guys know that. And they attempted to provide site sections, but they were inaccurate.

So we would ask the board to ask for site sections, accurate site sections that include the Stedman Street abutters because there is a drop off. It's not 8 feet. It's actually more like 12 or 15

feet. And it's very important for you to see that differential as well as the vegetation that's on the property line. There's a bunch of trees on the property line.

MR. GELLER: Maria, have we asked for that?

MS. MORELLI: So remember that, as I stated, that application completeness refers to components. We're not looking at content when I report to you on application completeness. Obviously, there is going to be a rigorous review by staff, boards and commissions, and the peer reviewers. And one of the things that we will be looking at is the accuracy of the content and if we need additional visuals to understand this proposal in totality.

MR. GELLER: Good. Thank you.

Okay. Administrative details are done, unless somebody has something else.

No? Okay.

So Mr. Allen, who is -- no. Mr Engler.

MR. ENGLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've already introduced myself, and I'll keep my comments brief. I think I just want to provide a little bit of context to the board prior to the presentation

tonight.

Since the time that we filed our application with the board, even before that, and tonight, we've had two, what I would call, formal neighborhood meetings as well as many other communications: emails, phone calls, what have you, between my client and the neighborhood to understand concerns, issues, thoughts, suggestions so that we can begin to analyze and synthesize some of those issues and see how we can incorporate as many as possible in the eventual plan.

As this board knows, it's infrequent that the application as submitted looks exactly like it did coming out at the end of the public hearing process, and we expect this process to be no different.

But in consultation with town staff, we think it was important to present the project as submitted to this board this evening, but I think it's important to recognize that we've already started to think about the next iteration, if you will, based on what we've heard from the neighbors and my client's intention to, as I said, incorporate that.

And I would also suggest that, as this board well knows, there's been a lot of 40Bs in Brookline over the last, I don't know, about two years, give or take. So the two applications before -- the one tonight before the board has the benefit of a lot of kind of critique, criticism, pushback, peer review that's happened on the other applications. And moreover, the architect tonight that will be presenting has been the architect on some of those other 40Bs and has the opportunity to work with town staff and Mr. Boehmer and the board.

So we're optimistic and confident that we have the benefit of some of that history and precedent in the town relative to this application and the process moving forward, and we very much look forward to engaging in that.

And as Counsel Hill indicated, things like that about, you know, understanding topography and understanding relationship to abutters and context, that's important. We don't dispute that for one second. And doing it electronically and really reflecting accurately the topography, reflecting accurately differences between lots can be done that way, and certainly, things like that that really need

to be looked at very closely as we go through the process. And there's certain areas of sensitivity that require, frankly, more attention than others.

So with that said, we'll turn it over to Mr. Bartash, and he'll walk the board through the presentation. Thank you.

MR. GELLER: Thank you.

MR. BARTASH: Good evening, members of the board. Peter Bartash with CUBE 3 Studio. We are the architect on this project.

Tonight we are going to walk through the same presentation that was delivered to the board of selectmen -- our initial presentation to the public. We're going to be walking through an overview of the site and its immediate surrounding context; we'll be talking about the proposed site layout, including the building plans, a conceptual building section, some conceptual elevations; and then we'll be following up with some additional information and transitioning to a discussion about traffic.

So the site is located at 134 to 138 Babcock Street, which is located in the center of the screen identified by the yellow circle. It's roughly in the midpoint of Babcock Street in between

Commonwealth Ave. and Harvard Street. It sits right at the end of Freeman Street, so you come down Freeman Street and the site is right in front of you. Stedman Street sits to the rear of the site. Manchester Road is up to the north of the site. It serves as the connection between Babcock Street and Stedman Street circulating around the site in a counterclockwise direction.

Getting a little bit closer, here we do see the site. It is 12,486 square feet, which is .493 acres. In terms of this page, north is directly up on the page itself, just so we can understand the solar orientation.

Along the north, the combined length of the two northern property lines is 181.33 feet. The southern property line, which abuts an existing multifamily residential property is 191 feet. On the eastern edge along Babcock Street, we have roughly 100 feet of street frontage. And on the western edge, again this would be a rear yard to the homes on Stedman Street, we have 132 feet of frontage.

The existing site does slope from Babcock Street up as you do move west across the site to a high point where it then slopes sharply down to the

rear yards of the homes along Stedman Street. And that's something that we're going to talk about and will be a point of focus, I believe, throughout this entire process.

Here we're looking at a survey of the existing site. You'll note that there is an existing multifamily residential building that sits roughly in the right of center here, looking at the site. And there is an auxiliary structure that's also a multifamily building to the rear of the site at 138. For the purposes of this proposal and this application, both of these lots are considered one lot, and this is one project on one lot.

You'll note that there is an existing abutter here at 140 Babcock Street, and that home and this property will also come into the conversation as well quite frequently throughout the process.

MR. HUSSEY: Peter, before you go off of that plan, could you go back to it for a minute. Could you show us where the grade differential is from Babcock Street? And it goes up to 12 feet, somebody had said. Can you indicate where that 12-foot point is?

MR. BARTASH: Sure. So there are really

kind of two stages of slope. There's a relatively significant and short rise off of Babcock Street, which gets you up several feet to right around the front edge of the existing home. And then there's a gradual slope from that point all the way to the rear of the property until we meet the rear property line. That is the high point in between our property and then the lower elevation of the rear yards at Stedman Street.

And we'll start to see some of that in a section which I outlined how these properties relate to one another. And as was suggested earlier, as we gather more information about the site and the topography, we are working to refine those sections to continue to improve their accuracy.

It should also be noted that along the northern property line there is a several-foot drop in grade from our property to the abutting property at 140 Babcock Street. There's a retaining wall that runs along this edge of the property, and there's, again, a natural slope that does occur running northward off of the other edge of 138 Babcock Street, and that slopes down to the rear yard behind the homes that sit on Manchester Road.

MR. HUSSEY: Also, Peter, how much parking is on the existing properties, if I may?

MR. BARTASH: I don't have that number offhand, but we can bring it.

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. If you could bring that next time, please.

MR. BARTASH: Sure.

So looking at the height of the surrounding buildings, this exhibit just discusses the heights of the surrounding buildings in terms of floors. Because the construction types of the residential, both single-family and multifamily homes, are different than the construction type of the proposed project and also different than the construction type of some of the other buildings, such as the adjacent multifamily immediately to the south of the site, we've expressed the height in terms of numbers of stories. And on the right-hand side of the slide, what you see is a range that we are equating those stories to in terms of height for each of those buildings.

So, for example, a 2 1/2 story home or height, as indicated on the plan by the blue circles, would equate to roughly a 34-foot height measured

from grade to the highest point of that structure; 3 stories would be equivalent to 38 feet; 3.5 stories would be equivalent to 42 feet; and 4 stories would be equivalent to 45 feet.

We are proposing 55 feet 8 inches from the average grade around the site to the uppermost point of the parapet on the project, which does not include anything such as mechanical units that sit above the roof or an elevator overrun above the roof. But it is consistent with how the Brookline Zoning Board does measure height on a building, so we're giving you that number as a benchmark. And we'll see that as we look at the conceptual sections later on in the project.

The site, again, is outlined in yellow here. And what you do see with these two dashed white lines that run along the site and through the site, these are representative of the longitudinal and cross sections that we have cut as we've begun to explore the grades and relationship between the proposed building and the grades. And you'll note that we've taken the longitudinal section through Babcock Street all the way through to Stedman Street, and we'll be looking at the cross section from the

existing building next door to the site all the way through to the lower elevation of the homes that sit further down Babcock and along Manchester Road here.

These are the conceptual sections I was speaking of. So when MassHousing asked us for this information, they were attempting to understand where we planned to set the level of the parking garage, and they were also trying to understand the relationship of the existing grade to the proposed condition. So those are a little difficult to see in this format here. There is an orange line that does run along and above the proposed grade, and that represents the existing grade today.

The section on the upper portion of your screen is the longitudinal section where Babcock Street is on your right-hand side and Stedman Street is on your left-hand side. And the section at the bottom of the page is a cross section which shows the existing multifamily building to the left-hand side of the project and the existing home at 140 Babcock to the right side of the proposed project.

Again, we're looking at four floors of wood-framed construction over a noncombustible parking podium, and the overall height, as I

mentioned before, is 55 feet 8 inches. The parking podium will be 14 feet 1 inch from the parking slab to the top of the podium, which forms the first residential floor, and every residential floor from the second floor of the building up to the fifth floor of the building is 10 feet 8 inches floor to floor, which are common for this type of construction.

The elevation of the parking garage is driven primarily by the location and elevation of Babcock Street. We're restricted in terms of the ability to set the elevation of the garage too high or too low relative to the street based on ramping requirements to get from the street into the garage. And here what we've chosen to do is to take the parking garage elevation and set it as close to the Babcock Street elevation as we could comfortably fit, so that by the time you get to the rear of the site, the rear edge of the parking garage is buried beneath the existing grade. And it is what we would call a reverse retaining condition, meaning that from within the garage, we are looking at walls that are retaining the earth behind the garage and that are outside the footprint of the building.

Again, I mentioned the slope at the rear of the property, and that specifically is a slope that occurs through a circling in the longitudinal section to the left-hand side of our proposed building. At this location, there is between a 10- to 12-foot grade change between our property and the homes -- the rear yards of the homes along Stedman Street.

The area in question that was referenced by Attorney Hill and mentioned several other times in the presentation is specifically the slope of this area, as well as the separation distance between the existing homes and the proposed building. At the time we prepared this section, we had very little information, and we were starting to formulate an understanding of what's happening in this location, and we're working to refine that understanding and improve the accuracy of these sections.

As we look at the section on the bottom of the page, the cross section, you'll note that we are right up against the edge of the existing multifamily building to the southern side of our site, and that is a three-and-a-half-story, flat-roofed building. What we've done is we've created a setback at the upper floor of our building to start to draw a

relationship to the height of the existing building to the left of our project here. And you'll note that the existing home at 140 Babcock Street is at an elevation that is set lower than the proposed elevation of our parking garage here.

Site context: So the three-and-a-half-story, multifamily building I just referred to is the building that you see on the right-hand side of this image here. Here on Babcock Street we're traveling -- this is looking northwest on Babcock Street. We're just going to keep going down the street here so you can see a range of some of the other homes -- the character of the street itself in this general area.

Here we're standing almost directly in front of the southeastern corner of the site and we're looking -- the site, in this image, would be to the right of the screen. This is the home -- the existing multifamily or multiple-occupancy building that sits at the corner of Freeman Street and Babcock Street.

This is the existing building on-site. So here we are looking at the southeastern corner of the proposed project site. These are the existing

parking spaces that Mr. Hussey was referring to earlier. This is the existing curb that accesses both those parking spaces as well as parking to the rear of the existing home and parking that's adjacent to the auxiliary structure that's out on 138 Babcock Street, so this is that point of access.

Here you can see the existing grade that is in the front portion of the site, and again, it does continue to rise as you go back to the rear of the site. There are existing street trees out in front of the site as well as the sidewalk network that does connect all the way up and down Babcock Street.

Here the project -- proposed project site is to the left-hand side of this image behind these trees. This is the retaining wall -- I'm dragging my cursor over the retaining wall that separates the proposed project site and the existing building at 140 Babcock Street. You can see, based on how this driveway is cut into the grade at a similar condition, where the lower parking level is recessed into grade and the residential floors exist above that parking level. And the difference being that we are not proposing any outward-facing retaining walls that would face towards the abutters or residents

around the project.

This is the multifamily complex that is directly across the street from the proposed project at the corners of Freeman Street and Babcock Street. So the site would be -- our proposed site is behind us in this image, and we're looking directly across the street at three and a half stories of flat-roofed construction, masonry, language of brick, punched residential openings.

Here we're actually moving a little bit more north on Babcock Street, and the project site is to the left of this image by one other additional home. So 140 Babcock Street is immediately to the left of this image, and these are the homes that sit further down Babcock Street. You can see Victorian-style, pitched-roof architecture.

This is the home that is directly across the street from the two that we were just looking at. So, again, our project site is on the right-hand side of the image here in kind of the background of the image as we're further up Babcock Street getting close to Manchester Road here.

And now we're finally starting to turn the corner onto Manchester Road. So the reason this

image is important is because really this project isn't just going to have a presence on Babcock Street. It is going to have a presence from the surrounding community on all sides based on the relationship of grades from the proposed site to the existing grades around the project, but also because of the relationship of existing homes and trees in that entire neighborhood.

So here what you can see in the distance of this image at the very -- almost the very center through these trees, that's one of the existing structures on 134 to 138 Babcock Street. And you'll note that there is that change in grade as we get to the yards of the homes that sit on Manchester Road. So we're also going to be considering these angles and views and try to understand the impacts as well.

I think to the comment about the model and the question of what we can represent here, we're already in the process of updating our digital model to reflect this information and are happy to provide views such as these or other views as the board needs to see throughout the process to help clarify some of the intent that we're trying to describe.

MR. HUSSEY: I think it would be useful if

you could give the board colored prints of all of these photographs that you've got and the site plan with the point-of-view key on the numbered drawing of the existing conditions.

MR. BARTASH: Okay. Absolutely.

MR. HUSSEY: Thank you.

MR. BARTASH: Here we're moving onto Stedman Street. And so what we're looking at in the background of this image is the existing multifamily residential building that we looked at earlier in the presentation that sits to the south of the proposed project site.

What we're going to do is we're going to continue to move north along Stedman Street until we're directly behind where the proposed project sits. You can see that the slope and grade that sits behind these homes is heavily vegetated. There are a ton of existing trees that run in kind of a corridor down the backyards of these homes and kind of weave up through as you get toward Manchester Road. And the existing homes are set down, again, below the elevation of the proposed project site here on Stedman Street.

So now the proposed project site is almost

directly behind us in this image here, and you're looking at some existing trees that are along that edge as well as the character of Stedman Street behind the project.

MS. POVERMAN: Peter, whose property are the trees on?

MR. BARTASH: So they're -- it varies. There are almost, I believe, 30 trees, if not 31, on our particular property. We're in the process of understanding more closely what their locations are, their sizes are, and how they're all relating to the proposed project. But we also -- there are a significant number of trees that are off of our property as well that sit along that slope in both directions and also behind the project as well.

MR. HUSSEY: Do you have those trees indicated on a site plan that we could get?

MR. BARTASH: We don't have one here as a function of this presentation, but it's something we can absolutely provide.

MR. HUSSEY: All right. Thank you.

MR. BARTASH: So in terms of the proposed design -- so we're proposing 62 units on four floors of wood-framed construction over one floor of

parking. The floor of parking provides 31 spaces, all of which are set at the level of the slab. There's no semiautomated parking units in this proposed project. It's all flat parking.

We're looking at a mix of studios, ones, twos, and threes. There would be 28 studio units; 24 one-bed units with 4 of those units being one-bed, one-bath den units; 2 two-bed, two-bath units; and a total of 8 three-bed, two-bath units.

Again, all of this information is, I believe, publicly available, as this presentation was delivered to the board of selectmen and should be available up on the website, so all of this information does live there for anyone who's wishing to take notes or try to understand more about the metrics of the project.

This is the conceptual elevation or perspective of the project taken from the intersection of Freeman Street and Babcock Street. What's important to note is that to the right of this image there is an existing park at the end of Freeman Street, and the end of Freeman Street does split into two halves that are both one way turning down Freeman Street or toward Babcock Street.

So right now we're standing in the one-way curb cut that sets you on a path down Freeman Street. What we're looking at here to the left, and it's kind of ghosted into this image, is the existing multifamily building to the south of the site. To the right we have the existing home at 140 Babcock Street.

And you'll see that we're using a mix of lap siding, punched openings, a wood type of material, as well as brick masonry down at the base of the building.

You'll notice in the center of the building, we do have our entries to the parking garage that are set off the street.

There is a club and leasing space at the lower corner of the building here set out against Babcock Street. We have maintained the same setback from the street edge as the existing building to the south of our site.

And in the right-hand corner, what we do have is a bike parking area that's dedicated for bike storage.

You'll note that we do -- we are planning to combine natural ventilation for the garage with

supplemental mechanical ventilation. Because the garage is partially recessed into grade, we do need to provide another means of moving air through and exhausting out of the garage, and that's something we can get into in more detail later in the process. But I just wanted to represent the basic parameters here.

This dark mass that runs up the length of the building is masonry, and that is the location of the elevator within the plan, and we'll take a look at that in a moment. But when I mentioned before that the elevator overrun does step up above the building, it is in this location that that occurs. That overrun is between 6 and 7 feet above the 55-foot-8-inch elevation that we quoted earlier, which is taken to the top of this dark red parapet that you see here.

So we're going to look at a couple more perspectives, we'll look at some plans and elevations, and then we'll start to talk about traffic.

Here we're further on down Babcock Street looking southwest at the site. Ghosted into this image in front of you is the exiting home at

140 Babcock Street. You will note that these conceptual images have not been adjusted or updated to take into account the existing topography or the proposed topography. That is something we are working on and something that we will be bringing to future presentations.

You'll note, again, as we looked at in the section, that we are stepping back the upper floor. We are changing the materials of the upper floor. This is really intended to be designed as a base, middle, top configuration where we do have a strongly defined base, a clear body of the building, and then the top of the building itself.

The proposed project does wrap around the rear of the home at 140 Babcock Street, and you'll note that in the plan as we get a little further along.

Here we're standing on Stedman Street looking at the project. And as I did mention, this model has not been updated to reflect the grade differential between the proposed project site and the homes along Stedman Street and their properties, and that is something that we are going to bring to future presentations.

Ghosted in front of you are the massing -- the general massing of the homes that do sit along Stedman Street, and we will be looking in detail about the relationship between our building, the homes along this edge, as well as how our building relates to the existing multifamily residential building to the south of the project, which is, again, up in the right-hand corner of this image, back behind all of these homes.

Looking at the building plans -- so for the purposes of orienting everyone, to the right-hand side of the page we do have Babcock Street running north and south. North is, again, just directly up on the page; to the west, or the left-hand side, are the existing homes along Stedman Street; and to the south we have the existing multifamily building.

So the standard width of our building, that is in the form of an L, is 63 feet, so there's a 63-foot end of the building that is exposed up on Babcock Street. It's set a little over 9 feet from the front property line. The front property line is set at the back edge of the sidewalk. The end of the building that faces toward Manchester Road is also 63 feet wide. The longest elevation of the building is

the elevation that faces south toward the existing multifamily building on the south-hand side, and that elevation is roughly 170 feet long. The elevation facing the homes on Stedman Street is roughly 113 feet long, and then there is a 107-foot elevation that faces the existing home at 140 Stedman Street.

You'll note in the plan that we do have our entry to the garage centered on the ground floor of the building. It is set back a little over 30 feet from the edge of the street itself. We are proposing to relocate the existing curb cut and widen the existing curb cut slightly to accommodate the new driveway entry. It would be a 24-foot curb cut.

Directly to the south is the garage entry. We do have the lobby and leasing space that we looked at earlier. That connects directly to the elevator and a stair core that run up through the length of the building.

To the north of the garage entry, we have a bike parking room. We also have our main service room and our accessible parking.

And to the north of that and outside of the building footprint, we have an off-street loading zone that does connect back into the garage, as well

as our site transformer and our stormwater management system proposed in the open space to the north of the building.

Here you'll note that we have our drive aisle with parking on either side, a utility room in the lower left-hand corner of the plan, our main trash room in the middle of the rear of the plan that does connect to a trash chute that extends all the way up through the building. It's designed so that there can be access from the chute out to the loading area for off-street pickup and loading of trash. And then we have our other stair core, which does run up through the building, that sits in the upper corner of the plan where I'm circling with the mouse right now.

Looking at our typical residential floor plan, you'll see that the cores we just talked about do stack up through the building, and we have a typical double-loaded corridor configuration with units on either side of the corridor that connect both of those stairs, the trash room, and the elevator.

Here we're looking at the typical floor plan on floors 2 through 5. You'll note that the

number 62 is not easily divisible by four. At the second floor, we do have two studio units that are set over and above the leasing and amenity space on the plan's southeast corner of the building. As we get to the upper floors, those units are combined into a single unit, a two-bedroom that sits at the corner of the building all the way up.

Here we're looking at the roof plan. We're proposing rooftop mechanical units that are each dedicated to an individual unit in the project. So there are 62 of them, plus between 3 and 4 to serve the common spaces within the building itself. All of those units are centered over the corridor. You'll note that we're calling out the elevator overrun, which we looked at in the first perspective. We have the roof hatches that allow access up onto the roof itself, so there's no stair tower that pops up above the surface of the roof. And then we do have our vent for our trash chute indicated in this plan as well.

Looking at the building section, this is just an enlarged view of the building itself that we looked at in context with the site earlier in the presentation, so I've already described what we're

seeing here.

Looking at elevations, so the street elevation from Babcock Street. In an attempt to describe what is closest to the street, but also to show what is, again, considered part of this eastern-facing elevation, you'll note that there are two levels or two tones to the elevation.

The left-hand side of the elevation is that 63-foot wide space that does sit up against Babcock Street. To the right-hand side of the image where we have the elevation ghosted into the back, that is the portion of the building that sits behind the abutter at 140 Babcock. So the clearer or darker of the two elevations is the elevation here that's closest to the front property line, and the secondary elevation is the one that's back here after we turn the corner of the building.

Again, we're looking at a mix of wood-like materials, we're looking at fiber cement lap siding, we're looking at masonry, and also fiber cement panel as our mixture of materials. We're looking at punched openings for residential here, and we have some various elements of storefront windows that allow for more glazing area and more natural light

into the units.

Here we're looking at the southern elevation. There are two stacks of balconies currently proposed on the building. The first is on the southern elevation, and it's located in -- roughly left of center for the elevation. So on the right-hand side you have Babcock Street, and as we move to the left toward Stedman Street, again, these elevations and the grade that's shown in these elevations have not yet been coordinated with the existing topography and will be in future presentations.

Here we're looking at the elevation that faces Stedman Street. This imagines that we were able to see the entire height of that first floor. As you had seen in the section, the actual proposed grade did run along the upper third here of the actual garage that faces the rear of the building, and we'll be working, again, to update this to reflect that more accurately in future presentations.

You'll note that we have our second stack of balconies that we discussed a moment ago that sits in the middle of the project.

And then we have the side elevation or the

end elevation that faces Manchester Road, which is what you would see in that long-distance view from Manchester Road where we pointed to the building you can see in the distance that's existing on-site today. And this is that 63-foot-wide end of the building. And the elevation that's grade out here is the elevation that faces the existing abutter at 140 Babcock Street. So both of these elevations together comprise what would effectively count as the northern elevation of the building.

And now we're ready to talk about traffic.

Would you prefer to ask questions about architecture now, or wait until we're --

MR. HUSSEY: Yes, I would like to ask one question.

Kate, what do you think about those so-called 3D renderings that have the shadow of the existing buildings?

MS. POVERMAN: They're meaningless to me.

MR. HUSSEY: Exactly. I'd rather see the real existing buildings overlaid over those, because that's what you're going to see.

MS. POVERMAN: Yes. I mean, it's meaningless. So I don't know if the other ones

we're going to get are going to be different and easier to interpret, but those are meaningless to me.

MR. BARTASH: If I may, Chris?

MR. HUSSEY: Sure. Go ahead.

MR. BARTASH: So at the time that we created these images, at the beginning of the project, we were trying to understand and evaluate the relative relationship of the project to the community. We were trying to represent the project and help everyone understand what the building is. And we don't want to go to the extent of making all of those buildings look real so that you can't even see what it is we're trying to talk about.

In future presentations, when we look at renderings of the building, we will be developing them to a higher level that will be more representative and accurate to the existing context, that will have that context shown in full so that it's not just see-through and transparent. And that would enable you to get a better sense of how this building does relate to its context. So these are just a very early snapshot from the process.

MR. HUSSEY: Let's go back to one of those views that's got the shadow, the volume in the front.

Like that, for instance. So this is the existing adjacent house.

MR. BARTASH: Yup. That's correct.

MR. HUSSEY: And so I agree with Kate. I'm not sure that it tells us much. It does tell us what these elevations are going to look like, but you, in fact, are not going to see them because of this house being in the way and also the trees.

MR. BARTASH: That's correct.

MR. HUSSEY: I don't want to put the trees in, but I guess the question for the board is would it help to make this into a real rendering of the real house with materials, fenestrations.

MR. GELLER: I think he's telling you he's going to do that.

MR. BARTASH: That's correct.

MS. POVERMAN: Well, the problem I have is you're always picking the angle. So, you know, I'm like, well, do I want to see it from down there? What if I want to see it from flat? How do I get to choose the angle at which I see it?

MR. BARTASH: So what we have done on recent projects, and we would continue to do in this case, is we've provided -- we've been asked to

provide a specific series of views within the model and also to provide the actual model file to the peer review consultant, so if there were views that you wanted to see, you could submit those as a request to us. We could set those views for you within the model, and they would be provided to the peer review consultant and be available for any member of the board to look at if they wanted to.

That being said, if there is a view that comes up that you haven't seen or something that you're interested in seeing, by asking us, we can provide that information or set that for you so you can understand what those views are.

MR. GELLER: Why don't you start by stating what the viewpoint is on this, for instance.

MR. BARTASH: In terms of your elevation above grade?

MR. GELLER: Where is someone standing? What is their height?

MR. BARTASH: Sure. So in this case, the individual would be standing on the sidewalk across Babcock Street. The eye height of this elevation is set between 5 foot 8 inches and 5 foot 10 inches.

And I think what you're asking,

Ms. Poverman, is why do things look the way that they look in these images.

So typically, when -- in real life, you have a three-point perspective where your eye is seeing lines that are moving to a vanishing point that's both above but also to your horizon line. And in the case of these images, we've taken these and put these into what's called a "two-point perspective," so it's artificially straightened the lines of the building to be vertical.

So in the future, as we're looking at these elevations and looking at these images, we can reintroduce that third perspective to help this feel a little bit more representational based on what you would actually see.

But in this case, you're looking straight across the street at that 5 foot 8 inch level with a roughly 35-foot-wide field of vision, which is generally what you perceive on a primary basis before your vision transfers to kind of what's in the periphery.

MS. POVERMAN: So, Maria, on the Crowninshield case, they were able to do something where you could basically fly around and get the

perspective you want at any time. So that was helpful because we could do that exactly. Is that something that we're going to be talking about here? Because that was helpful.

MS. MORELLI: I just want to clarify. One of the reasons why we like a digital model is because we're able to better assess a pedestrian scale. When we're looking at, say, a wood model or a constructed model that's physical, to get more of the surrounding context, the individual structures have to become smaller and smaller, and then you get this unrealistic perspective, which can be really misleading.

So what's really important to us is not only the abutters' experience and what they experience when they're in their bedroom or their kitchen or walking on their property; what happens at that street level, that's important.

Now, what you saw with the Crowninshield case, and what I'm assuming Mr. Bartash will be -- how he'll be producing this model, that was -- on the Crowninshield case, I believe it was done in SketchUp. And because the software is free, anyone can download SketchUp, look at that model, and they

can play with it. You don't have to be an architect with very expensive software to look at the model and really look at any angle that you want, whether it's a little bit higher or it's street level and different perspectives. So it does give members of the public and the ZBA a little more flexibility in looking at the views that they want.

I just want to ask Mr. Bartash what software he would be using.

MR. BARTASH: We would be using SketchUp and be providing a SketchUp file to the town, per its request.

MS. POVERMAN: I mean, because, you know, for me, I was able to look exactly from my house to see what it would be like. And I know for the Yees and other people in their house at 140, it would be important for them and for us to see what exactly they would be experiencing.

MS. MORELLI: That is correct. I mean, we would want -- and certainly, we would want to specify maybe some refinements too, so that the Yees were able to see. I mean, one advantage of, I think, the ghosting -- and I know it's not ideal, but that can be just one image in addition to others that you see.

But the Yees will have that perspective. Even if you're across from the Yee's house and you see that their structure is blocking out some of that massing, they're not going to have the benefit of that buffering.

So I just want you to keep in mind that as we go through this, we do want to make available 3D models, and also, as we evaluate it, give feedback to the architect to zone in and provide a little more detail and other viewsheds.

Is that helpful?

MS. POVERMAN: I'd like to see what Mr. Hussey says.

MR. HUSSEY: Well, I'd like to see the SketchUp when you get to that, and we'll see.

MS. POVERMAN: Thanks.

MR. ENGLER: Another opportunity to provide an additional perspective that I'm sure that we can -- I mean, what we're talking about here are all renderings and rendered images. What we have the capability of doing as well is taking a real photograph and putting the building into that photograph as opposed to rendered images of the neighbors and whatnot. And that's, we've found,

illustrative.

I think that was done on one of the previous applications. I can't remember which one, but I certainly used it on other -- my own projects and other zoning boards, and it's helpful to the boards and to the neighbors to see real photographs. We take the building as designed, and we put it on the site and we see how it relates to its surroundings.

MR. ZUROFF: Will we be able to see where the trees are in those renderings as well?

MR. BARTASH: Yes. I mean, we will do our best to represent the trees that are there on-site to the degree that we can accurately do so. We'll also have plans that represent where they exist in just their plan location and how that relates to the proposed project, so we can look at all of this comprehensively as a group.

MR. ZUROFF: What I didn't get from your explanation is what we have for setbacks. And I know they're on the plan, but if you could just detail how far from the Stedman Street homes this building will be, and not only from the lot line, but to the other structures, and the same on both other side abutters.

MR. BARTASH: So what I can do for you tonight is I can describe to you the setback from our proposed building to the property line. And I would like to, in future presentations, speak more specifically to the setback of the proposed buildings, if that's okay.

MR. ZUROFF: Yes, please.

MR. BARTASH: So looking at the property here, there are two eastern-facing property lines. There's the property line up against Babcock Street, which is that front property line, and that property line does curve along with the road. But our building face is a straight 90 degrees. So the setback ranges from 9 foot 1 1/2 inches at the northernmost corner to 10 foot 3 inches at the southernmost corner.

Along the southern property line, we do have an 11-foot setback that is consistent along the length of the project. That property line is parallel to the face of the proposed building.

In the rear of the project, the property line that abuts the Stedman Street homes is, again, slightly askew from the geometry of the proposed building. So at the southern corner we have 10 feet

10 inches of setback, which reduces to 9 feet 8 1/2 inches of setback at the northernmost corner.

Along the northern edge of the property, you can see that the property lines of the building face are not parallel, so that the western corner of the building faces the northern edge. We have 9 foot 1 inches of setback, and that does increase to a little over 11 feet as we get closer to the right-hand side here on the eastern edge of the building.

We have the secondary eastern-facing property line, which sits behind the rear of 140 Babcock Street, Mr. Yee's home, and we have 9 feet off of that property line to the face of our building.

The northern setback along the property line that does separate our project from Mr. Yee's is, again, not parallel to the face of the building. At its greatest, the setback is 25 feet 6 inches, and that does taper to about 12 feet at the westernmost end of that elevation, and that's this location here.

MR. ZUROFF: Thank you.

MR. GELLER: The balconies are inset?

MR. BARTASH: Yes. They're actually a combination of inset and slightly over hung. What

we've done is we pushed them into the building footprint, and we've left overhangs of about 2 feet for the balconies that extend past the facade of the building.

MR. GELLER: And where are those?

MR. BARTASH: So they're not shown in this plan. Again, we're working on consolidating the plans and the elevations as well, starting to bring this all into fruition.

But if you looked at the -- if you were to look at the -- you can see on the right-hand side of these balconies -- actually, it's probably hard to see on the projector, but there's a slight shadow and overlap as the fronts of these balconies sit past the face of the -- main face of the building. But the rear face of these balconies is set back into the building footprint itself.

MR. GELLER: And do those appear on both sides of the building?

MR. BARTASH: Those balconies appear all through the plan, and I'll point out where they are. So they appear on two sides. They appear on the southern elevation, they appear on the western elevation, and we have, actually, called out to be

putting balconies in the corner of the building as well here, but we're not entirely sold on how that works yet, so we're still looking into that.

MR. GELLER: And how much do they protrude into the side yard and rear yard?

MR. BARTASH: So they would protrude -- the face of the balcony is 2 feet into whatever the setback is that we've called out here. So on the southern end of the building from the property line to the face of the balcony would be 2 feet. And on the western edge of the building, the face of the property line to the face of the balcony would be between 7 1/2 and 8 feet, again, as the property line is not fully parallel with the face of the building.

MS. POVERMAN: Have we asked for a trash narrative, or received one?

MS. MORELLI: So Mr. Maloney will need to be reviewing a trash narrative early on. That's part of the testimony that will be provided.

MS. POVERMAN: So I am concerned about the small size of the trash room that you have, based on the size of the building and based on previous cases we've worked on with you. I don't want it to come up at the last minute where there are possible problems

with the size of the trash room, so I just want to raise that as an issue.

MR. BARTASH: Understood. Thank you.

MR. GELLER: Other questions at this point?

(No audible response.)

MR. BARTASH: We'll bring Shawn Kelly here to talk about traffic.

MR. KELLY: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the board. For the record, my name is Shawn Kelly. I'm a traffic engineer with Vanasse & Associates. On behalf of our team, thank you for having us before you tonight.

What I'd like to do tonight is take a few minutes to walk through our traffic study, how it was conducted, what our findings were, what our recommendations are. And I'd be happy to answer any questions that members of the board may have.

I think Peter did a great job describing the site location, but again, just to orient ourselves, we're located on the west side of Babcock Street directly across from Freeman, Commonwealth Avenue to the north, and Harvard to the south.

The study we conducted was done in accordance with all state and industry guidelines.

The first stage, we did what we call "an assessment of existing traffic conditions." We went out and did some traffic counts. The locations that we did count are depicted on this image here. The red, yellow, and green note signalized intersections at Commonwealth Ave. and Harvard, and the blue dots represent the unsignalized intersections at Freeman directly across the street.

We also did a daily count on Babcock Street, immediately in front of the site. The counts that we did were done during your typical hours for residential projects. We looked at the weekday morning peak hours, 7:00 to 9:00, looked at the weekday evening peak hours from 4:00 to 6:00. And the reason that we looked at these time periods is these are the time periods when the residential traffic is at its highest.

What the data showed us is that the morning peak hour generally occurs from about 7:45 to 8:45, the evening peak hour generally occurs from about 4:45 to 5:45.

On a daily basis, Babcock Street carries approximately 6,200 vehicles per day. During peak hours, that number varies from about 550 to 600 cars.

Traffic is actually split fairly evenly from morning and evening. That is about 55 percent and 45 percent traveling in either direction, so there isn't a real high distributional split during either peak period.

In addition to collecting traffic data, we also went out and looked at some safety characteristics. We went out and looked at the motor vehicle crash history for each of these locations. And the reason we did this is we compared that data to the state average to see if any of these locations were what we would call an above average crash rate. None of these locations were, and all were well below the crash rate. That is to say that the number of collisions they have experienced are below what you would expect for an intersection with this type of volume that travels through it.

MS. POVERMAN: Which intersection are you talking about?

MR. KELLY: All of them.

MS. POVERMAN: Including Comm. Ave. and Babcock?

MR. KELLY: Correct. So what it is is you look at the number of collisions and then you look at the volume that goes through on a typical day. You

break it out into an annual number, and it tells you how many crashes you have per million entering vehicles. Per the state guidelines, all of the intersections in this area are actually below the state average for crashes per million entering vehicles.

We also did what we call a speed study where we did the daily traffic count (indecipherable) --

(Interruption by the court reporter.)

MR. KELLY: We put a road tube out to get the speed of traffic. The speed limit out there is 25 miles an hour. What we found was the 85th percentile speeds, which are what we use for design purposes, were slightly higher, on the order of 26 to 28 miles an hour. We utilize those speeds to ensure that the sight distance of the driver location is adequate. And what we found is that for the topography that's out there, with the vehicle speeds that exist today, the sight lines are adequate for the driveway. They do provide the required sight distance in both directions to meet the federal guidelines.

We also did an inventory of the public

transportation that serves the site. The site is well-served in public transportation. We have the Green Line both to the north and to the south. There are also buses that are operated by the MBTA that I'll get into later. We certainly expect that a significant percentage of the project's traffic will be public transit in nature.

The next step is we take the traffic that we collected and we project that out seven years. It's the state requirement. That's called the "no build horizon." So we look at traffic as we expect would exist in the year 2024.

Really, there are two components to this. The first is simply general background growth, not attributable to any specific development. So we take the volumes that we collected, we apply a compounded growth rate, and we grow traffic every year over those seven years.

The second component is traffic associated with specific developments that are either in the pipeline, under construction, or have been approved. We did contact the planning staff, and they identified six projects to be included in our study. And just to walk through them quickly, we included

traffic associated with 420 Harvard Street, 384 Harvard Street, 455 Harvard Street, 21 Crowninshield Road, 1299 Beacon Street, and then the 8 to 10 Waldo Street.

So when we look at traffic in the future, 2024, we've increased everything we've counted to account for just general growth, and then we've also added the traffic specifically associated with those projects. So when we talk about the future traffic, it includes everything that's going on in the state that's expected to influence traffic in this area.

As far as the project itself, we rely on data that's published by what's known as the Institute of Transportation Engineers. This is the state and federal guideline in terms of how much traffic a project will generate. And what the ITE does is they publish rates -- trip generation rates. And these rates tell you that for a specific development -- and there are many types: office, residential, commercial -- based on the size of the project, how much traffic you can expect.

We ran the numbers for a typical 62-unit apartment building, and this is what the ITE numbers equate to. It is the number that we used, and

I'll -- in a minute, I'll get to why these are conservative.

MS. POVERMAN: Does this take into account that there are 30 parking spaces, or not?

MR. KELLY: I'm going to get into that in a second.

So basically, if you had 62 apartment complexes in the middle of a suburban area with no public transit, no walking opportunities, things of that nature, you would expect that you would have 500 daily trips. That's 250 cars coming and 250 cars going. And then in the morning you would have 34 trips, 27 leaving, predominantly people going to work, and 7 arriving, and then in the evening you would have 52 trips, mostly inbound, people coming home from work, 34, and people leaving, 18.

These are the numbers that we used for our analysis, and we did it purposely to be extremely conservative. And the reason -- there really are two reasons to be conservative.

The first is that we took no reduction for the number of trips at the site today. As Peter pointed out, we have multifamily residential there today, so there are residential trips. We haven't

netted those out of the equation, if you will, so we haven't taken any reduction for the trips that exist today that will be eliminated.

Secondly, we've taken no reduction for transit trips or walking trips. That is, our analysis, in order to be extremely conservative, assumes that every person arriving as part of this project will do so via automobile. And when you look at it, you can see why the analysis is conservative. We have, you know, 34 vehicles entering. Obviously, that's more than what we're going to have in a 31-space parking garage.

We looked at the impacts of the project and the distribution. Based on existing traffic patterns, we expect that about 2/3 of the traffic will be heading northbound towards Comm. Ave., and about 1/3 southbound towards Harvard.

When you look at the percentage increase versus what the no-build condition is in terms of the overall volumes, it's a very small increase. It's on the order of 0.4 to 0.7 percent. And just to put that into perspective, as far as that background growth rate I mentioned a minute ago, we've assumed a 1 percent growth per year just in terms of background

traffic. So this project essentially would generate on the order of 1/2 of what we would assume for background growth for only one of the seven years we evaluated.

We looked at the impact of traffic operations at the intersections that we evaluated, and this is essentially what we call levels of service, how they operate, and delays. And really, the impacts are minimal. Even using this very conservative approach, you know, the morning 27 existing is your predominant move, in the evening, 34 entering is the predominant move. We're talking about one car every other minute, you know, coming from two directions.

And, again, this really is about -- based on census data, it's probably double what you're going to see. The census data indicates that really almost half the trips in Brookline are either public transit, bicycle, or walking, so we're confident that these assessments, even with minimum impact, is highly conservative.

Our recommendations, you know, are really focused primarily on access. We're recommending the access drive be a minimum of 24 feet in width for the

parking area. We're recommending that the access drive be placed under a stop sign control, the appropriate signage in accordance with minimum vehicle and traffic control device criteria, pavement stop bars on the approach to Babcock Street.

We are recommending that any landscaping or signage that's proposed in the vicinity of the access drive be placed in such a way that does not impair the sights line to the north and south. As I mentioned, we did evaluate the sight lines based on the vehicle speeds along the corridor, and the sight lines out there well exceed what's needed, so there's no safety issues.

We're recommending that bicycle racks within the building are placed in a secure location, both for the residents as well as guests of the project.

And lastly, we're recommending that in a conspicuous area, public transportation maps and schedules are placed so that residents are aware and that we're promoting the use of public transit by residents of the project.

And we're confident that with these measures in place, this project can be constructed

with minimal impact on the surrounding transportation system.

That's all I have tonight. I'll be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

MS. POVERMAN: So the transportation board has been working for a ridiculously long time on changes to the traffic pattern on Babcock Street, trying to work out how cars and bikes can live on that street and other streets. An analysis was done on traffic on Babcock as a result. Did you have access to that when doing your --

MR. KELLY: We have not reviewed that document, no.

MS. POVERMAN: In any future analysis that's done, could you review that?

MR. KELLY: Absolutely.

MS. POVERMAN: Their findings sound, among other things, that the busiest part of Babcock Street is in between Freeman Street and Manchester, which is -- well, you know where it is, the first road off of Babcock. So that might be an area that's especially impacted by this particular building, since it obviously empties out right into Freeman Street.

In addition, as you probably know, the building would be just a block away from the fire department.

Has there been any analysis of how traffic analyses are changed when the fire department is a block or so away? I just don't know.

MR. KELLY: I'm not sure I understand your question, specifically.

MS. POVERMAN: If a fire department is a block or so away, does that affect any analysis that is done by a traffic analyzer in determining safety, speeds, things that should be taken into account?

MR. KELLY: I mean, to the extent we would make sure we have no conflicts with the fire department. But as far as their operations, this project isn't going to have a detrimental impact on the fire department being able to access that building at all.

MS. POVERMAN: In using your analysis of safety and accidents, did you also look at the Brookline Police Department's records for crashes?

MR. KELLY: We utilize the MassDOT database. And the reason that we do this is that the crash rates that I mentioned earlier are based on the

DOT data. So if you utilize police data, the crash rates aren't necessarily applicable. It's apples to oranges. So when you're doing an analysis of the DOT crash rate or whether or not you're above or below that average, you should be utilizing the data that was published by the DOT.

MS. POVERMAN: My understanding, though, is that there are sometimes -- or often increases of crashes if you include the two, so it would be great in any further analysis if you could do that.

MR. KELLY: Sure.

MS. POVERMAN: What's the basis of your assumption that a lot of the traffic -- or a lot of the people will be using public transportation?

MR. KELLY: We looked at the US Census data for the town. And based on that data, ballpark, rough numbers here is around 30 percent of public transportation and around 17 percent was walking and bicycle trips.

So in this project you're in walking distance to both Green Lines and bus service. It only makes sense that we're going to have the same patterns here. Not to mention the fact that we've constrained parking. It's clearly an intent to

promote the use of other means of transportation. That's why we don't overpark on the site. The majority of residents, quite frankly, won't have a parking space, so public transportation likely will be their only means of transportation to work.

MS. POVERMAN: That's a separate issue.

That's all I have for now.

MR. KELLY: Thank you.

MR. GELLER: My only comment is that we, at a future hearing, will have a more dedicated analysis of the parking, so I'm going to reserve comments until we focus on it at that time.

MR. HUSSEY: I've got one question for Peter, actually, I meant to ask. You don't have to get up.

You've got on the floor plan here, the main floor, you've got the lobby and leasing. What's the leasing all about?

MR. BARTASH: So during the initial phases when the building is being occupied on Day 1, there is a component of the rental process that involves leasing. So there are people who are on-site or working off-site to drive people to the project and get them to rent units that are there.

Once the lease-up process is complete, there is an on-going leasing effort as residents move out at the end of their leases or their turnover within the life cycle of this building.

But primarily the same kind of desk and infrastructure space in that lobby is then used by building management or people who are manning the property on a day-to-day basis for an operational consideration.

MR. ALLEN: It's a desk.

MR. HUSSEY: Thanks.

MR. GELLER: Anything else?

MR. HILL: Can I just ask a question?

MR. GELLER: What's your question?

MR. HILL: Will we have an opportunity to ask questions of the developer's traffic engineer at a later date, or --

MR. GELLER: Yeah. When we go through the process of an actual transit and parking review -- so as I mentioned there will be peer review on both of those -- we'll have a future hearing in which there will be public testimony -- an opportunity for public testimony and we'll also have an opportunity for questions.

Anything else for transportation?

MS. POVERMAN: No.

MR. GELLER: Okay. Thank you.

Is that the end of the applicant's presentation?

MR. ALLEN: That's it.

MR. GELLER: Okay. I want to thank the applicant for their presentation. Needless to say, the board will have lots of future questions for you. As noted, it's an iterative process.

MS. POVERMAN: Can we be told what sorts of discussions have been going on? They said they've talked with neighbors. Wouldn't that be helpful for us to know what's been going on there?

MR. GELLER: I'll ask him, but I'm going to assume they're so preliminary that they're not going to assist us in any fashion. And, frankly, I think that we're going to lead the process rather than utilize that.

MS. POVERMAN: Well, the reason I say it is one of the things in this new guide we got -- it says that it's a good idea to point out issues as soon as possible so that they can be worked on. And I'd love to know if some of the issues I have with the project

are ones that are already being addressed.

MR. GELLER: I'm not sure they know yet.

Peter?

MR. BARTASH: I will say that the conversations we've had to date are extremely preliminary and have not driven much outcome I can talk about here now, but that the comments that we've heard in those meetings are consistent with the comments that were submitted in writing to the planning department and to the ZBA. So those comments are available for your review, I believe, and they are consistent with what we've been hearing firsthand.

MS. POVERMAN: So they relate to size, mass, design?

MR. BARTASH: Correct. All of the above.

MR. GELLER: Maria, do we have anything else for the agenda for this evening?

MS. MORELLI: No.

MR. GELLER: Okay. Then I'll remind people that our next hearing is June 21st, same time, 7:00 p.m. Did we have a sense of topics?

MS. MORELLI: At this time, it would be testimony from staff, boards, and commissions.

MR. GELLER: Okay. So just for people who have not attended one of these hearings before, the agenda is a little bit in flux. We try to be right when we tell you something so that you can plan in the future, but sometimes we're wrong.

The intent now is that at the June 21st hearing we will hear from town boards and departments. Hopefully that actually turns out to be the case. If it's not, we'll hear from those that have responded and we will reserve another date to hear from the rest.

We also have coming up, I'll remind people, on June 5th at 8:45 on-site a site visit. Members of the public, again, are welcome to join us. We're not taking testimony, but you're certainly welcome to join us.

And we hope to have our peer review consultant -- our 40B consultant with us at the next hearing, who will then give us an overview of the 40B process.

I see Mr. Allen is going to the podium.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you. Just for the record, Robert Allen.

Maybe Cliff could actually come to that

June 5th site visit, if he's available.

MS. MORELLI: Sometimes we schedule him separately, so we'll discuss his availability. But it's preferable that we have him separate.

MR. GELLER: Mr. Allen, other --

MR. ALLEN: That's it. Thank you.

MR. GELLER: Okay. I want to thank everyone for joining us this evening, and we will see you again June 21st or the 5th. Thank you.

(Proceedings adjourned at 8:34 p.m.)

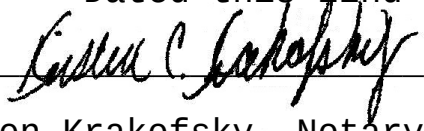
I, Kristen C. Krakofsky, court reporter and notary public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, certify:

That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place herein set forth and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of my shorthand notes so taken.

I further certify that I am not a relative or employee of any of the parties, nor am I financially interested in the action.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated this 22nd day of May, 2017.



Kristen Krakofsky, Notary Public
My commission expires November 3, 2017.

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