

September 30, 2017

Dear Members of the Zoning Board of Appeal,

Little has changed in the Oct 2 plans for Babcock Place and much is needed to make this project fit into Babcock Street.

#### TRAFFIC CONSEQUENCES OF NO LOADING ZONE AND NO DRIVEWAY

The Vanasse Traffic report states that the former 62-unit, 31-car proposal would generate 500 vehicle trips on an average weekday plus additional ones during peak hours. We can assume that the proposed increase from 31 to 41 vehicles would create about 25% greater numbers of trips, or 625+ vehicle trips per weekday. But this does not account for the number of vehicles that will be double-parked on Babcock Street to service ten times the number of units than are there now (where they now have a driveway to pull into).

The revised plan also removed the loading zone from the project. What are the consequences to the Town of having no loading zone and no driveway? In addition to the 625+ daily trips, there will be hundreds of vehicles per day other than private cars that will double park to service the 52 units such as RCN/Xfinity trucks, garbage and recycling trucks, moving trucks, and food deliveries. We see more than one mail delivery truck a day for a single residence. Where will Fed Ex, Amazon, USPS, and UPS double park? How many of the 52 units will be calling Uber or Lyft at any one time and where will they wait?

Babcock is a two-way street with "No Parking Any Time" on the western side. Therefore any vehicle that needs to pick-up or take away people, packages or waste, will block the single lane of traffic. Cars will back up waiting to pass the double parkers. Bicyclists' safety will be threatened by having to ride into the street around standing vehicles. Neither the Traffic nor the Parking consultants have addressed these issues. The Town of Brookline should demand answers. New studies need to be conducted that address the Amazon and Uber world we live in today.

#### SETBACKS

From its inception, the footprint of the proposed building at 134-138 Babcock Street has been grossly out of line with the neighborhood. The revised plans for Oct 2 do nothing to alleviate this problem. Against the recommendations of the Planning Board, the revised front, side, and rear setbacks have not been increased. The front setback has actually been reduced. The Planning Board recommended increasing the rear yard setback to about 20 feet. Nevertheless, the rear wall of the building seems to be setback 10'-8.5" rather than formerly 10'-10" (though it is hard to tell because the dimensions are not properly labeled). The ZBA should vote against Waiver D.3 for such irresponsible and excessive noncompliance with setbacks.

Such a minimal rear setback will not "accommodate vegetative screening between the site and the two-family zoning district" as recommended by the Planning Board. On the contrary it will

degrade and likely destroy the root systems of 21 large trees growing near the rear property line that provide this screening, as well as providing soil stability, habitat, the sequestering of carbon dioxide and release of oxygen. (See Appendices)

Maria Morelli asked the architects to use better software modeling for increased 3D accuracy and readability. She and others have asked repeatedly for accurate topography. Instead this building has been designed independently of the site. In the renderings, the site is little more than wavering green, with non-existent trees and canopies in which the floating building sits. From Babcock Street, the building spreads its enormous footprint, flattening the ground for 130' to the back and more than 100' to the sides. The result of such a massive excavation will be retaining walls on three sides containing the massive cut because there is not enough of a setback to return to the existing grade. These retaining walls are evidence that the building is oversized and wasn't designed for the site. There is no grading plan so we have no idea how high the retaining walls will be or how steeply the soil will be sloped up outside them. We know there's little room to grow plants to stabilize them. We don't know how it will look because the renderings depict bright green hills. Don't be fooled. Ask the architects to build a model illustrating the exact conditions outside the building or deny the waivers.

#### ARCHITECTURE

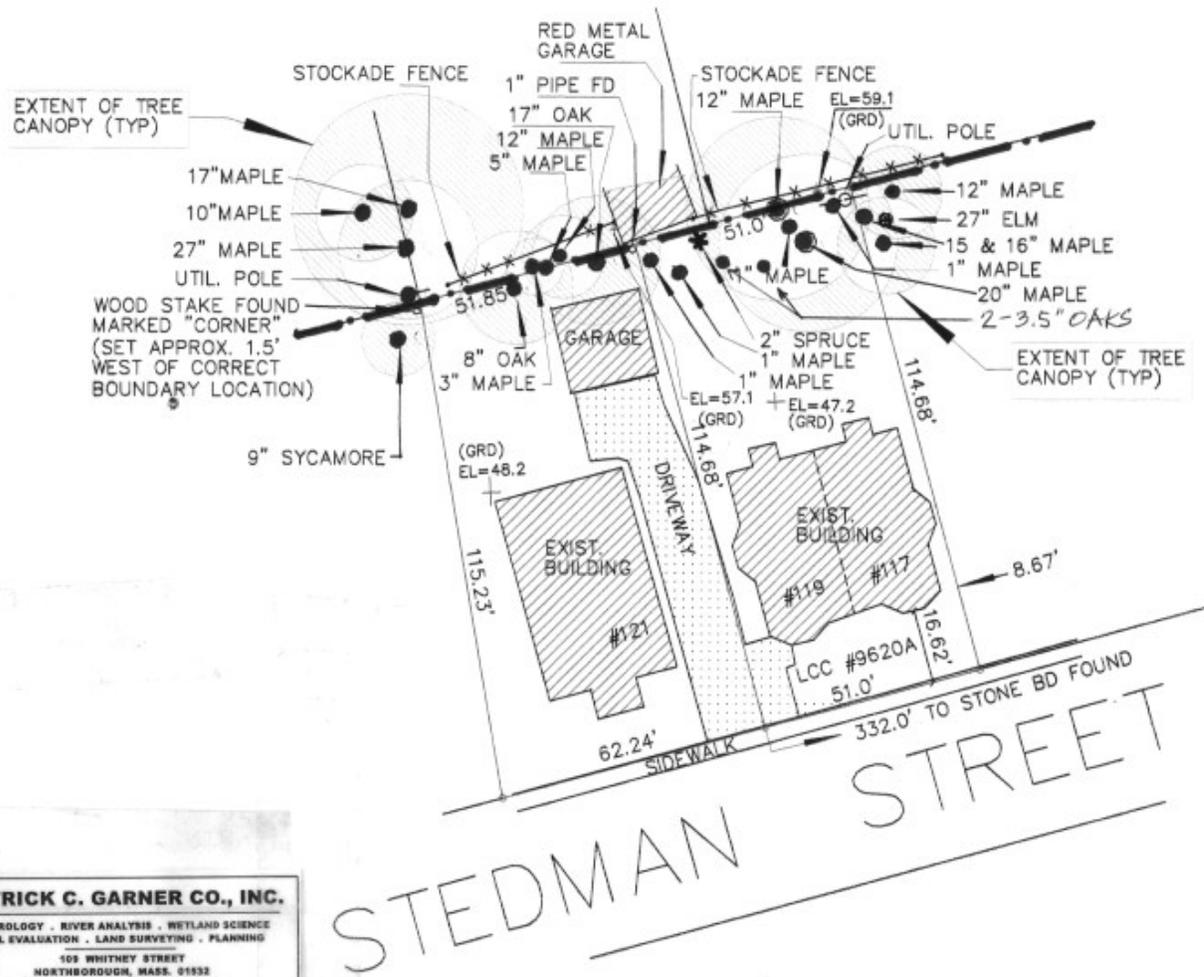
Yes, even a front door that leads to a parking garage is an improvement over the central garage doors (except to the future residents). The former commercial-looking building has taken on the costume of a single-family home with double-hung windows and an eyebrow of a roof more than 55' above the sidewalk. But the costume has been so massively inflated, large enough to fill half a football stadium, that it has lost its reference. It doesn't belong on Babcock Street.

Your charge is to determine *whether* and to what extent local bylaws and regulations should be waived. Because the Town has made significant progress to achieving the 10% "housing unit minimum," the ZBA's role in this project is different than with other projects that have come before you. You have more authority to deny waivers because the Town's "local concerns" can be afforded more weight than in the past. I hope you will exercise your authority, express our serious local concerns and deny or restrict many of the project waivers.

Thank you for the work you are doing for the Town,  
Gina Crandell, TMM8  
117 Stedman Street

APPENDIX 1

**21 TREES LOCATED WITHIN 14' OF THE PROPERTY LINE OF  
134-138 BABCOCK STREET, WHOSE ROOT SYSTEMS WILL BE  
DESTROYED OR SEVERELY DAMAGED BY CONSTRUCTION.  
(BASED ON A SURVEY FROM 9/5/2017.)**



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APPENDIX 2  
**AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE EXTENSIVE ROOT SYSTEM OF A  
LARGE TREE**

