

May 18, 2018

To: Town of Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Roslyn and Stuart Orkin/36 Longwood Avenue/Brookline 02446

Re: Proposed application to construct a 12 story building under the auspices of 40B housing

We write as followup to our letter of May 5 and after one of us attended the ZBA hearing on May 9 where members of the 'applicant's team' presented information re architectural plans and a traffic study re the 1299 Beacon project.

We reiterate, we have no issue with the construction of a building with affordable housing units at this site. But the reports, which described the current scale of the proposed building (12 stories) as well as the number of proposed units and cars (99 parking spots) only served to confirm the neighborhood's serious concerns about the impact of the current plans on health and safety issues in this area.

The gentleman who reported on the traffic study asserted that relatively little traffic existed on Sewall. Additionally he suggested that the building occupants (an over 55 - community) would not likely use cars to any great extent but instead would walk, use bicycles, or take public transportation. The reality of these assertions is questionable.

The congested traffic conditions in the immediate area already present a major hazard which we address below. The statement about the proposed residents not depending too much on cars is of course dependent upon the ages and health of the proposed residents. Being in that age group myself, I would assert that given the high volume of traffic, not to mention the fatal accident several yrs ago that occurred right at the intersection of Longwood and Sewall, that riding bicycles in this neighborhood is down right dangerous and not likely to be used by an older age group. Yes, there is a fair amount of bicycle traffic here by usually young and if I might say, often aggressive riders. The latter is yet another reason for seniors not to attempt to bike here!

Of course as residents age and health issues begin to 'intervene', folks may first turn to cars for transportation, but then they may well begin to depend on daily visits from a variety of health care-related providers (VNAs, nurses aides, housekeepers) who likely will drive, and not only bring more traffic to an already crowded area, but where will they park? What about access by emergency vehicles? - ambulances/fire trucks.

All one has to do is observe the lack of available street parking coupled with the traffic back up that routinely occurs along the pertinent stretch of Longwood and Sewell Avenues and one immediately gets a sense of the already ridiculously crowded street conditions in the immediate vicinity. Add to this 'regular traffic' the impact of the Post Office (both in terms of postal service trucks and post office workers who routinely park their cars all day along Longwood Avenue plus the ever overflowing traffic from Trader Joe's parking lots (one of which will cease to exist). Now throw into the mix 99 parking spots in a building where virtually all of the traffic associated with the building will pour out onto Sewell. It's truly hard to imagine the resultant traffic

nightmare. But there is more - consider the additional reality of the synagogue located right next to the Post Office and the number of children who attend its religious school and all that goes with that: parent's dropping off kids/the possibility of kids not being careful/running into a small street further congested with traffic...

As suggested at the outset of this letter, few if any would object to a reasonably scaled building project that would have minimal impact on an already congested neighborhood. The current proposal surely does not meet that requirement.