

## **Kent/Station Street Affordable Senior Housing Committee – Public Information Meeting 10.29.18**

On Monday, October 29, 2018, the Kent/Station Street Senior Affordable Housing Committee held a public information meeting in the Select Board Hearing Room at Brookline Town Hall from 7:00PM to 9:00PM. The meeting was attended by members of the Committee, neighbors, business owners, other interested parties and Town Planning staff. The first part of the meeting included a presentation by Heather Hamilton, Chair of the Committee. The presentation included:

- A brief overview of the proposed site
- Reasons for why affordable senior housing is needed in Brookline
- Review of Town Meeting vote and Kent/Station Committee charge
- Work the Committee has done thus far
- Overview of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership's feasibility assessment of site development
- Review of Request for Information (RFI) responses received by the Town
- Discussion of Committee vision

After the presentation, Heather Hamilton opened the meeting for public comment so attendees could provide their comments and ask questions. She noted that public comment is a major component of the meeting and fulfills part of the Committee's charge. Public comments follow below:

Heather Hamilton introduced Ken Goldstein, former Select Board and Planning Board member and current member of the Kent/Station Street Affordable Senior Housing Committee. As a Warrant Article petitioner, Ken was asked to speak about the history of the Kent/Station Street project at Town Meeting, how the Committee was formed, and the goals of this particular meeting.

### **Ken Goldstein:**

- Mr. Goldstein stated that the committee is looking for input from the public for this meeting and to provide an opportunity for neighbors to be heard, ask questions, and to state concerns or support for the project.
- The Committee started three years ago and was the vision of Henry Winkelman. Mr. Winkelman realized that other forward-thinking communities, noting examples in California, were utilizing open-air parking lots for a more cost-effective and more efficient use by building senior affordable housing over these lots and felt that this type of development could also be done in Brookline.
- Mr. Winkelman attempted to build support for this idea from members of the Brookline community and Mr. Goldstein began to explore this, as well, with him. Frank Caro, Roger Blood and Nancy Daly also became interested in working on this project.
- Mr. Goldstein stated that aging population and housing affordability are important issues in Brookline. It has also long been the case that the Town's open-air parking lots present an opportunity to maximize use of town resources to fulfill community needs.

- Initially, the Committee met as an ad-hoc group and wanted to further study and research the possibility of senior housing. This resulted in a Warrant Article (#34) that Mr. Winkelman and Mr. Goldstein petitioned for fall 2016 Town Meeting.
- The petitioners were looking for a mandate from the Town to study the Kent/Station Street site for a possible senior affordable housing development. Once a mandate was issued, they approached the Select Board and requested that the Board charge a committee to explore feasibility for an affordable senior housing project. A Committee was appointed and given a charge which was approved by the Select Board.
- Since that time, the Committee has been meeting steadily for two years and meetings are well-attended by members, neighboring residents and businesses, and local organizations.
- Tonight is a chance to have a more formalized public meeting so more neighbors can be heard, can ask questions and can raise concerns and/or support for the project.

### **Public Comments**

Ali Mohajerani – Owner of Kookoo Café and Inner Space (see comments below as well):

- A neighboring business owner to the site stated that by adding 60 new residential units to the street, it will become much more congested than it is now, which is already full of traffic.
- The business owner stated that they've been in the neighborhood for twenty years and have owned two businesses, and people visiting this neighborhood cannot find available parking.

Frances Winter:

- This neighbor lives at 31-34 Station Street, which directly abuts the proposed property and has been attending some of the last Committee meetings.
- One concern is that the presentation that was given was much about the values of serving the senior population, but very little of what this project will bring to the current neighborhood residents. There was little discussion of what neighborhood residents will lose if this project is built.
- This neighbor stated that tonight, this proposed project is at the evaluation criteria stage which is "four steps down a seven step process". They would like to make sure that this meeting does not simply talk about how to make a senior affordable housing building on this site better, but that the conversation start in the beginning and about the project as a whole. Would like to invite people at this meeting to make comments on whether or not this project at this site should be built here at all.
- The Village residents feel that they've already sacrificed for the greater good of the Town and that neighbors have been supportive of projects (Children's, hotel) that are positive for all residents of the Town.
- The Village residents are more of the less wealthy, more crowded, more struggling members of the Brookline community and are continually being asked to bear the results of multiple laudable visions for the town.

- The resident has asked for numbers pertaining to seniors and that pertain to this proposed project that correspond only with Brookline, and not nationally, as places such as California are quite different than Brookline. Most other areas in the country are not as land-crunched.
- The resident discussed how the word “open –air” focuses on the positivity of having open space and access to air.
- The resident stated that this project should go beyond parking lots and that residents have other concerns with this project.
- Residents currently don’t have access to this parking lot and parking is a major concern in the neighborhood.
- This resident stated that one reason they enjoy living in this neighborhood is that they have easy access to “sky vision” and that currently, their 12-unit building is surrounded by mega-structures.
- The resident also noted that the stone wall of that parking lot along Station Street that many neighbors find attractive, will most likely be gone if this project is built.

Lucy Kolessin:

- Noted that her concerns are similar to Frances Winter’s concerns.
- This neighborhood resident was disappointed from the pictures that were shown in the presentation since they were from years ago before all the construction of neighboring buildings began.
- The current large construction projects in the vicinity of this neighborhood which are across the tracks from the T are impacting the neighborhood and bringing a lot of activity.
- Currently, the neighborhood is very crowded, especially with two day schools in the neighborhood and multiple day care establishments.
- When completed, the buildings currently being constructed in this neighborhood will bring approximately 10,000 people a day to the direct area which will include patients, workers, supply trucks and many others.
- The site may not lend itself to senior housing; noted concerns about parking and circulation.

Brian Coonley:

- The resident is speaking in support of this proposed project.
- The resident understands that neighbors have issues with parking and green space, but believes that the Committee can be innovative with providing green space, such as parks being built on top of new buildings, such as what’s been done in neighboring Cambridge. One other idea is to create green space by not utilizing all of the space in the parking lot.
- In 2018, we as a community need to find creative ways of getting cars off of Brookline streets without encouraging additional parking.
- This project could be essential in Town by preserving municipal parking, but also through promoting better use of public transportation.

- This resident is concerned that parking is a concern with this project and believes it shouldn't be a priority. The Town should become greener and focus on projects that get people out of their cars and create neighborhoods where seniors can easily walk to places and utilize public transit and bikes. The Town and Committee should be innovative and not limit this project because of parking.
- This project may also allow the opportunity to develop space for other uses, not just senior affordable housing, such as additional early education opportunities, or possibly multi-family housing since many families in the area have trouble finding affordable housing in Brookline.
- The location of this site, across the street from a T Station, is prime and lots such as this are difficult to find in Brookline. Location ensures that seniors can walk, bike and use public transit.
- Congestion is an issue in the neighborhood and states that if the project will cause increased congestion, possibly this is not the right type of project to pursue.

Judith Mabel:

- This resident resides at 55 Station Street and had two questions to begin with:
  - how many spaces are in the current parking lot? (The answer given is 39.)
  - who mostly parks in the parking lot? (Heather Hamilton stated that it is primarily commercial permit holders.)
- The resident furthered that approximately eight or nine months ago, there became 0% available parking 100% of the time on Station Street.
- Once in a while, Kent Street has parking, especially down near the Harvard Street end.
- Nobody that wants to visit their building can ever find a place to park. This issue should be looked at when planning for a new building in this location.
- The resident states that there is no reasoning behind the lack of parking on Station Street that is directly evident.
- If the project is looking to go beyond 40 feet in height, this may be an issue. Heather Hamilton stated that in order to construct a building for this many units, the project would either need to be a friendly 40B or would need to receive a zoning change. The resident stated that there will need to be a fix to the current parking situation before asking the neighborhood to support a change in zoning.

Colleen Reynolds:

- This person cited U.S. Census data.
- In 2017, the U.S. Census Bureau listed 10,000 residents in Brookline of being over the age of 65. In 2016, this number was 8,400 residents. In one year, there was a 20% increase in the over 65 population in Brookline and they now make up 17% of Brookline's population.
- While this population grows, the Town needs to explore how to meet the needs of this population and should be proactive about this right now.

Ali Mohajerani – Owner of Kookoo Café:

- A neighboring business owner to the site. Stated that by adding 60 new residential units to the street, it will become much more congested than it is now, which is already full of traffic.
- Stated that they've been in the neighborhood for twenty years and have owned two businesses, and people visiting this neighborhood cannot find available parking.
- Businesses are struggling with the construction in the neighborhood.
- The resident and business owner stated that 60 and 62 are no longer seen as senior citizens as people are living much longer today.
- The residents and business owners on Station Street are very emotionally invested in the street and the Brookline Village T Stop is a very romantic and sweet part of Brookline right before you enter into Boston.
- When the two large buildings under construction in the neighborhood are built, there will be thousands more people in the neighborhood every day.
- Some people that are pushing for this project to be completed are also following where the money is.
- Would like the committee to be more considerate of the people that currently live in the neighborhood.

Alice Chin:

- This resident an owner of a property at 48 Kent Street and is also a trustee.
- Traffic is bad from 4PM to 6PM on Kent Street going toward Harvard Street.
- This resident is concerned of how this project will affect and further burden traffic on Kent Street once built.
- The resident is also 59 years old and will be a senior soon. The Boston Children's Hospital construction has been a burden in the neighborhood and currently, units on 4<sup>th</sup> floor of 48 Kent have a crack, which could possibly be from the construction of the underground parking at Children's Hospital.
- In searching for remedies to this issue, hiring a lawyer has proven to be expensive residents in the building cannot afford one.
- The resident is asking for empathy from the Town and Committee for protection of nearby buildings if this project is constructed so that there is no damage.
- The possibility of underground parking at the site raises concerns that the surrounding buildings may have additional damage.
- Noted that as a Trustee she is speaking on behalf of the building.

Lynn Osborn:

- This resident is an architect who lives on Station Street and is a member of Feet of Clay on Station Street and very much enjoys living in this neighborhood.

- This is an incredible site for redevelopment, with a great south facing orientation, and is hopeful that the project undergoes very serious design review.
- The owner of the building could work in partnership with others to help activate the proposed pedestrian walkway such as allowing for a pop-up coffee shop.
- The addition of seniors in the proposed development would add life to the neighborhood.
- If a senior development, possibly ask them to give up their car keys if they moved in. The neighborhood is walkable and pedestrian-friendly, which would not add to traffic problems.
- If the Town owned the building, they could have some open spaces that are partnered with social services or give breaks on rents to local small businesses (mom and pop stores). Heather Hamilton noted that she envisions a developer entering into a long-term lease for the land.
- If there is underground parking, it could be recommended site criterion to keep the stone wall and incorporate it into site design.
- Heather Hamilton stated one resident in the past recommended the stones to be reused on the proposed pedestrian path.

Melissa Tapper-Goldman:

- A business owner from Village Works spoke and stated that they were very committed to the well-being and vibrancy of the Village. Station Street is very important to the economic vitality of the neighborhood.
- Important aspects of urban living include affordability and density.
- Multimodal transit is important to Brookline Village, though some members of Village Works do come by car.
- Removing 39 spots would greatly affect their business. They're part of this sharing economy and committed to sustainability and are part of the solution, but need parking. Their business also has members that live in neighboring neighborhoods with little to no public transit access.
- The business owner asked how this project fits into a larger strategy for the Village and how has it been determined that this is the right location?
- When this development is built, who are the people who will be negatively affected by it?
- The Kent and Webster Parking Lot is larger and more suitable for this type of development.
- What is the rationale for replacing the parking at this location versus exploring a larger Brookline Village parking strategy that may be cheaper and more cost-effective and better at reaching the results of a better parking situation in the neighborhood?
- It is essential to replace parking but the committee should also be looking at a better Village strategy.

Mikael Rinne:

- This is an abutting neighbor at 21 Kent Street who lives directly next door to the Kent/Station Parking Lot on the first floor.
- The neighbor stated that he is not opposed to the project in principle, but is concerned about light and air.
- The neighbor is fearful that this could be a 4, 5 or 6 story building.
- The building behind the Rinne residence is mostly vacant – has the committee adequately explored resources for additional senior housing in currently vacant spaces?
- Currently, there are huge potholes in the privately-owned Andem Place behind the residence due to the storage company and large trucks and cars are normally jammed in this area due to the increased activity in the neighborhood. The residence has seven parking spots behind the building but cannot ask the Town to control the alley since it is not a public way.
- Residents can't utilize parking spots in the Kent/Station Street lot for a full 24 hours.
- The proposed density of the building is a concern and asks the Committee to be aware how this development and its construction will impact abutting neighbors and neighborhood character.

Wendy MacMillan:

- This resident noted that she lives at Village Way.
- She is very much in favor of affordable housing and enjoys living in Brookline because it offers affordable housing options. She could not live here without affordable housing and believes the Town should build more of it.
- There are concerns with the current construction happening in the neighborhood at the moment, which will continue for quite a while.
- Currently, traffic is very bad and the medical marijuana facility in the neighborhood causes much of the traffic.
- The current proposed lot for development at Kent/Station Streets is not a good for this development since in order to keep the parking, the building may need to lose some affordable units. Propose utilizing another parking lot to avoid losing affordable units.

Dave Lapidus:

- This resident has lived in the community for 25 years. And first asked to know how many spots are at the Webster Parking lot. Heather Hamilton stated that staff will collect this information. But predicts it is possibly twice the size of Kent/Station Street.
- Also, what is the waiting list for businesses requesting commercial parking permits in the Village?
- Information such as this should be factored into the discussion on whether or not this is the correct parking lot to build above.

- Also, what is the proposed ratio for parking for the project and how many spots would be available for the residential units?
- Heather Hamilton stated that a developer additional parking for seniors could add to what is already a significant expense for keeping the current parking. It is assumed that seniors would not require additional parking, but that on site services could require parking.
- Speaker in favor of the aging in place concept for seniors and noted the project is a noble cause. It needs to be woven into the fabric of the community and needs to be balanced with local businesses and current residents.

Hernan Santana:

- Is a neighborhood resident and states that residents do not want a building that is 8 floors.
- This project may involve tradeoffs between parking and building height.
- Parking is an issue in the neighborhood, but traffic is currently really bad. And chances are that traffic will become worse with this project. It currently takes five minutes to cross the street at Kent and Harvard Street.
- Children's Hospital development will have 10,000 patients a day when it's complete.
- On weekends, residents need to be able to park on the street for groceries, etc.
- The warrant only looked at this location and not others. Yes, there is a need for affordable housing, but is there a better place that would allow for greater than 60 units and better meet the need?
- If traffic and activity is going to get worse with this project or if it compromises any aspects of the neighborhood, the project should not be completed. The proposed project should also not affect the current vibe of the neighborhood.
- Very concerned that the neighbor's voices are not being heard and that there hasn't appeared to be due diligence in exploring other locations other than this one.
- Neighbors do not want another tall building in the neighborhood.
- There has been much energy by the Committee to move this process forward, but the project should not be simply completed because of the energy and time put forth. It should be completed if it is an asset to the neighborhood.
- Heather Hamilton stated that other parcels were looked at before the warrant and this site was part of the strategic asset plan. Some audience members disagreed that there was a formal process done to decide that this lot was the best choice. Heather Hamilton stated that Henry Winkelman looked at other parcels as part of this process before the warrant article was submitted.

Lorita Ba:

- This resident resides at 32 Kent Street.
- In earlier meetings, there was discussion about utilizing the adjacent Webster Street lot for this project. Many abutters in the neighborhood feel there would be less issues with Webster St. site. Would like to have a better understanding on why this space was chosen and not others.

- The proposed space has a limited footprint. Would it not make sense to delay the project before understanding how it will affect traffic?
- Heather Hamilton stated that the Committee is years away from breaking ground with this project and possibly even longer with the need to address zoning at Town Meeting. Also, affordable housing developers would need to apply for public subsidy and many times they do not receive funding in the first funding round. Traffic studies are done as a part of the design review for the building.
- The neighborhood has a lot of emotional investment in this parking lot and questions whether it is the right site for development.

Paul Saner:

- Is co-chair of the Town's Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) and is a Town Meeting member from Precinct 13.
- Worked for years on the Fisher Hill project and wants to compliment the Committee for their work thus far and also for the current Draft Request for Proposal (RFP), especially the three tiers of the selection criteria.
- It is essential that the current parking on site be replaced and would also like to see ground floor retail on Station Street, which will help activate the street.
- By the time this project is ready to be built, Gateway East, Children's Hospital and the Hotel should be long completed.
- Had questions about the number that 10,000 people would come to Children's Hospital a day. Where are those numbers from?
- In regards to other parking lots in the area other than Kent/Station Street, such as the Webster Street parking lot, EDAB would most likely not advocate for this type of development at that property at this time. There are other parcels surrounding it that are privately-owned which could make future redevelopment of the site difficult.
- There was a major parcel study done that informs the use for all municipally-owned parcels in the Town.
- The Kent/Station site is ideal. Many have questioned why this project couldn't be built elsewhere, but the Town actually needs projects such as this in multiple locations throughout the Town.
- Currently, the Committee is partway through a deliberate process and the eventual project would require design review. It is a very visible site and would need to be done in the highest quality – considering neighborhood context.
- EDAB hasn't taken a formal position yet, but will support this project going to the issuance of an RFP.

Steve Quayle:

- The resident lives at 21 Kent Street and stated that he doesn't own a car and utilizes Zipcar, walking, and T to get around.

- Many people cannot get on a Green Line train at 8AM because it is too crowded. Seniors would have a difficult time boarding the trains on weekday morning.
- Children’s Hospital construction has been going on for years and there has been much neighborhood discussion about air and light and its importance.
- The speaker questions how to get 60 units in this space when other buildings don’t have that level of density. What does 60 units look like? To fit this many units, the building will need to be high.

Liz Linder:

- This resident and local business owner is also on the Committee. They acknowledge the importance of affordable housing, but would like to see a great project in this space if it is developed, though it is not clear if this is right space for this project.
- There’s a vulnerable population in this neighborhood who needs protection from the proposed project on this site. There is concern over the protection of surrounding buildings so people are not caught in law suits that they can’t afford due to construction issues. Many people’s equity is tied up in their current residences.
- The idea that this project would have the budget for community enhancement – seems naïve to think that we would be able to put parks on tops of buildings, though it would be a good thing.
- Concerned over the size of the lot - fitting a building that meets many of the proposed development criteria but still respects the integrity of the neighborhood would be difficult. Is curious to see plans that can do this.
- Wants to make sure that there is a long, deliberate process for this project. It appears that there are many interests trying to make this happen quickly.
- Brookline Village is becoming an attractive place and more people are coming here and many businesses are thriving.
- The proposed project raises safety concerns and if an ambulance or fire truck can’t make it down the street the Committee should question whether or not this is the right location.
- The views when walking down Station Street and from surrounding buildings are really beautiful in this space with the trees and stones.
- Speaker notes that the current space is ripe for development - but also understands that light and views for neighbors are important and there are pros of having open space.
- The word “trying” to maintain parking is troublesome since the original warrant stated that the parking must be maintained as a mandate.
- When you add all these new units to the neighborhood, there will need to be more than the current parking available now in the neighborhood and in the current space.
- The Committee should acknowledge the needs of the neighbors, both residents and businesses.

David Triestch:

- Speaker noted he spent many years as a Commissioner for the Brookline Housing Authority - which made him sensitive to the tremendous need for affordable housing in Town. When an affordable unit became available at the BHA, there would be thousands of applicants.
- Currently, the resident is on the Board for 2Life Senior Communities.
- He lives in the Village and walks by this site every day.
- For many that are recommending other sites for this development, easy sites for development in this Town are no longer available.
- Is pleased that the Committee is not making promises since there is not yet an understanding of the development process that will take place.
- This is a terrific site that is challenging but also needs to be looked at. A developer who has built on similar challenging sites would be recommended – relevant experience is key.
- Many developers that have done projects locally know the process is difficult and will listen to neighbors and have a proper public process.
- The current Committee is terrific.
- After the development of this site, management of the finished project is important and the Committee should focus on that, as well.
- Neighbors should continue to be involved with this project.
- Recommends looking for a developer who has done similar successful jobs in the past.
- This is the beginning of a great project and this is the right site for this proposed project.

Amy Graubard:

- This is a large open space that matters to residents of the village.
- The open space is a real asset but it is difficult to envision that 60 units can go into this space with trees and pedestrian access.
- Not sure all that is needed as part of development can fit .
- Acknowledges that there may possibly be a “brilliant idea” out there.

Emma Payne:

- Resident of 34 Station Street and works at 17 Station Street and parking is a big issue. From 8AM to 3PM, it is impossible to find a parking space on the street.
- There's concern that the Committee is not listening to the neighbors' needs.
- If fire trucks and ambulances need to come down the street when this development is completed, it may prove to be difficult.
- There is also an issue of where the seniors at this project will buy their groceries. Will they be able to walk to a grocery store or will they have a company, such as PeaPod deliver their groceries.

Roger Blood:

- Is a member of the Kent/Station Committee and is also the Chair of the Housing Advisory Board (HAB)
- For HAB, even though Board advocates for affordable housing in the Town, the Board does not just push for affordable housing projects with the greatest possible number of units. HAB works hard to advocate for projects that are appropriately sized and design relative to their immediate neighborhood.
- A senior affordable housing development at this site would provide the lowest impact in regards to traffic generation as well as parking onsite and in the neighborhood since many seniors are not car owners.
- While 60 units is on the high-end, the range from 40-65 units was well-thought out by the Committee and if the project were 60+ units, those individual units would be smaller sized than a project proposed to have fewer units.
- Visually, this project would need to be in keeping with surrounding buildings and the Committee is well aware of and focused on this.
- If built, this development would have local preference - meaning the majority of people who live in the building would be selected from a pool of current Town residents.
- The word compromise --which is the idea of trade-offs -- is important to follow in regards to this project. Compromise is not negative – maybe smaller and better result from compromises.
- The Committee welcomes creativity at this site. Financial assistance from the Affordable Housing Trust that's administered by the Housing Advisory Board would probably be needed to make this project work.
- The Committee will be seeking out and monitoring what works, while also being watchful for what doesn't work.

Frank Caro:

- Wants to reiterate the points David Trietsch and Paul Saner made. We need senior housing, and all kinds of housing, in multiple places.
- Is a member of the Committee, but is speaking on behalf of the Brookline Council on Aging.
- Over the next ten years, the Town needs to add 2,000 additional affordable senior units.
- Was very impressed at how 2Life Communities approached the Harvard Street project as they went through an extensive public process that engaged the neighborhood.
- The vision is to create affordable housing for people who will be active in the neighborhood, be assets, and be customers of local businesses.
- Aging in community is very important to seniors.
- If the process for this project is done correctly, this project will benefit the neighborhood.

Elie Dunford:

- Is the other owner of KooKoo Café and Inner space, along with Ali. Lives at 34 Station Street. They have been in the Village for over 16 years.
- In their opinion, Station Street is a piece of Greenwich Village in Brookline. The resident wrote a poem years ago about the neighborhood that was inspired by the romanticism, beauty, the trees and the current stone wall along the parking lot.
- Would enjoy having the elders come into their coffee shop and utilize the local yoga studio.
- Parking is a major issue in the neighborhood.
- Hopes to be part of the process.

Rebecca Payne:

- This resident has lived on Station Street their whole life and agrees that Brookline needs affordable senior housing but wants to honestly ask the Committee if they'd like affordable housing next to their residence? Speaker stated that a sewerage plant is not on Fisher Hill because people spoke up (NIMBYs - not in my backyard) and this is comparable to this proposed project, as well.
- The parking is a concern in the neighborhood and it is needed.
- Does not believe that the Committee will work to preserve parking with this project.

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**From:** Benjamin Kelley [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 29, 2018 5:31 AM  
**To:** Heather A. Hamilton; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Kent Street Redevelopment and Parking

Heather,

I hope this email finds you well! I'm out of town right now but I wanted to send you a short statement about the Kent/Station Street development, as I know the meeting is tonight. I hope you will be able to share this with the committee and read it out loud to everyone there tonight.

Thanks!  
Ben Kelley

Dear Select Board Member Hamilton and the Kent/Station Street Affordable Senior Housing Committee,

As a member of the Brookline Village business community for over fourteen years, I am writing to implore you to, at a minimum, maintain the current number of public parking spaces in the final design and construction of the Kent and Station Streets project.

As the owner of two businesses in the Village, as one of the founding organizers of the Village Fair, and as a Brookline resident who just loves the Village, I am very glad to see this project happening. I strongly believe that our town needs more affordable housing, for seniors and non-seniors alike: It will help the Village and it will help our town, full stop.

But small business is struggling everywhere. Rents are high. Too high, as we can see in the loss of one of our treasured local institutions. Yet one of the things that has always made the Village such an amazing place is the diversity and quantity of local business. From a renowned puppet theater to the tiniest flower shop, from some of Boston's best

upholstery to a children's bookstore, from a beautiful co-working space to a number of great restaurants... We've even recently gained a cheesemonger *and* a record store! All of these and so much more continue to make the Village an incredible place.

Our customers come from Brookline, but they also come from JP, Cambridge, Newton, Dedham, and beyond. They stop by on their way home to the suburbs from Longwood and downtown. And while it would be amazing if everyone could take the T or ride a bike to us, that just isn't feasible for all of our customers, and for all of the people who work here as well. Parking in the Village is already constrained. Constraining it any further would be yet another blow to the businesses that survive on customers from all around the area, businesses that bring people to Brookline, people who stay here to shop and eat. If those customers cannot park, they will not take two buses or ride their bike in the winter to get here. They simply won't come, and the wonderful neighborhood in which we are building this new affordable housing will become decidedly less wonderful.

If done well, this project will make the Village *even more* wonderful. As you continue working on this development, please be sure to maintain or expand the public parking. Our vibrant businesses, and thus our community as a whole, will thank you.

Sincerely,  
Ben Kelley

*Owner, The Boston School of Boabom and The Village Wellness Center*  
*Co-Founder and Organizer, The Village Fair*