

February 15, 2019

To: the Town of Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals.
From: Roslyn/Stuart Orkin, 36 Longwood Avenue, Brookline 02446
Re: Proposed development at 1299 Beacon Street, Brookline

We write in emphatic support of the January 26, 2019 letter written by Lisa and Ramesh Shivdasani, as well as the letter that followed from the 11 Longwood Avenue Condominium Association, with concerns regarding the proposed development at 1299 Beacon St.

Like the others, the focus of this letter is over safety concerns caused by current neighborhood traffic which has only worsened over the winter. Despite the very limited amount of snowfall, the little that has fallen has led to even worse traffic problems in the stretch of Longwood Avenue between Harvard and St. Paul Streets as well as on adjacent segments of Sewell Avenue. Of course the traffic congestion and visibility problems entering onto Longwood (from driveways) is exacerbated by the parked cars lining the westbound side of Longwood Avenue - cars largely belonging to postal workers (at least during the AM rush hour).

The traffic back ups have been especially problematic during morning and evening rush hours, when the traffic has been so bad that at times it has been extremely difficult to exit from our garage/driveway onto Longwood Avenue. Likewise it is not uncommon for traffic on Sewell Avenue to resemble a parking lot. Of course the overflow traffic from the Trader Joe's parking lot adds to the congestion. The visibility is especially bad during the evening rush hour when in addition to the heavy automobile traffic, it can be difficult to see in the dark not only the many pedestrians, but the large no. of bicycles. It's truly miraculous that a major accident has not already occurred, and of course there's the constant fear that emergency vehicles needing access during these times would be hindered.

Given the safety concerns of the current traffic patterns, it begs the imagination how the neighborhood can cope with the additional traffic resulting from the proposed commercial/residential building at 1299 Beacon. No one disputes the development of residences +/- commercial space at 1299 Beacon - but the scale of the development must be such that it does not add to the already significant safety concerns caused by the current congestion. This involves not only the nos. of cars owned by residents of the proposed building and potential support personnel (caregivers, other workers), but also traffic/parking needs associated with any commercial establishments including delivery trucks/vans.

These are not new issues, but over the course of these hearings, the neighborhood has yet to learn how these concerns will be addressed and mitigated.