PROCEEDINGS - 04/17/2019

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8	HEARING OF BOARD OF APPEALS
9	445 HARVARD STREET
10	Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 7:35 p.m.
11	Brookline Town Hall
12	333 Washington Street
13	Sixth Floor
14	Brookline, Massachusetts 02445
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18	Reporter: Jennifer A. Doherty, CSR
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   APPEARANCES:
 2 Johanna W. Schneider, Chairwoman
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   Jesse Geller, Board Member
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   Lark Palermo, Board Member
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   Polly Selkoe, Assistant Director of Regulatory
 6
   Planning
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   Victor Sheen, AURA Properties, Development Manager
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   Dartagnan Brown, EMBARC Studio, Architect
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	CHAIR SCHNEIDER: We are going to
3	call to order this evening's public hearing on the
4	445 Harvard Street comprehensive permit application.
5	My name is Johanna Schneider. I'm
6	the chair of these proceedings. My fellow board
7	members on this project are Jesse Geller to my left
8	and Lark Palermo to my right. This is the third
9	hearing that we have held on this project. And just
10	to refresh everybody's recollection, the proposal is
11	to construct a five-story building with 25
12	residential units, 4,380 square feet of commercial
13	space and 20 parking spaces in a subgrade garage.
14	Our first hearing was held on January
15	16, and we did review a proposal and plans at that
16	time.
17	There was a second hearing that was
18	on March 6. That hearing was continued without any
19	testimony until tonight, and what we have as our
20	main agenda item for tonight is a presentation of
21	what I understand are revised plans.
22	The way that we're going to conduct
23	the hearing is that we will have the presentation
24	from the development team with particular focus on
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- 1 changes from the design that we saw in January, and
- 2 the board will ask the development team any
- 3 questions that we may have. After that we will have
- 4 a public comment period, and we will also provide
- 5 some comments on the plans.
- 6 Following that, we will provide some
- 7 guidance to the development team in terms of next
- 8 steps, and we will announce the next hearing date,
- 9 which I can tell everyone now is going to be
- 10 Wednesday, May 29th at 7 p.m. in this room.
- 11 So without further adieu -- oh, I
- 12 should note for people who don't recall our general
- 13 procedure is that these hearings are being
- 14 transcribed, so anyone, including the applicant and
- 15 his team who wish to speak should speak loudly,
- 16 clearly into the microphone and slowly so that all
- 17 of your testimony can be captured.
- 18 Mr. Sheen?
- 19 MR. SHEEN: On behalf the 445 Harvard
- 20 Street development team.
- 21 So just to recap, so we were charged
- 22 to re-examine the design of the building primarily
- 23 given some of the current challenges that we are
- 24 experiencing as part of the 420 Harvard Street

- 1 development, that to the extent that we can minimize
- 2 underground disturbance that would minimize --
- 3 again, disturbance to abutting properties so we
- 4 don't have it underpin the buildings that we did at
- 5 420.
- 6 So with that, what we have done is
- 7 to -- I'll just go to the first floor. What we've
- 8 done is eliminate the entire underground parking
- 9 level altogether and brought -- and with that, that
- 10 eliminated the needs of an elevator for the
- 11 automobile going down to the basement level parking.
- In its place will be -- what we have
- 13 done is to elevate all of the parking to the ground
- 14 floor with a mechanical parking system that is
- 15 similar to what was approved for 455 Harvard Street
- 16 and it will be a fully automated system. Dartagnan
- 17 can go into the system in more detail, but
- 18 effectively what it does is it has three levels of
- 19 parking. So it will be one level at grade, one
- 20 level elevated, and then one level -- it's sunken
- 21 down to essentially a car storage pit. So the
- 22 underground portions of the work is limited to the
- 23 extent of essentially those seven parking spaces
- 24 that you see over there.

- 1 Effectively the system would act as a
- 2 shuffling system that the tenants or the users would
- 3 essentially be able to pull into their space without
- 4 the need of having another person move their car
- 5 first, so respectively it becomes a non-tenant
- 6 parking situation. This system has been used in
- 7 other projects and has demonstrated success in the
- 8 northeast market.
- 9 Because the parking has been elevated
- 10 to the ground floor area, what it also does is it
- 11 reduces the amount of retail from what we had
- 12 previously. It was a little over --
- MR. BROWN: Little over 4,000.
- MR. SHEEN: -- 4,000 square feet and
- 15 now we're down to about eighteen thirty square feet.
- 16 For us it is still important to maintain that street
- 17 continuity of retail on Harvard Street, so the
- 18 portions of -- the reduction of the retail spaces is
- 19 primarily taken from the interior of the building
- 20 rather than from the exterior light.
- 21 MS. PALERMO: Can you show where that
- 22 is on this plan?
- MR. BROWN: It is the area in blue
- 24 with the idea that we have a display depth with some

- 1 sort of presence that would wrap around the corner
- 2 to the residential lobby.
- 3 Just to get high level coming off of
- 4 Thorndike Street there's about a thirty-foot curb
- 5 cut that we would be infilling so it continues to
- 6 the sidewalk here along Harvard Street; similar
- 7 thing, we would infill that and have a temporary
- 8 loading zone for the building. So coming around the
- 9 corner, that all gets infilled.
- We narrow up the entry into the
- 11 garage. As you pull into the garage, this -- and I
- 12 have drawings that I could give you but it's dashed
- 13 in blue, are just two isolated pits seven feet deep.
- 14 It's away -- fifteen feet away from -- sorry, ten
- 15 feet away from any of the properties in terms of the
- 16 pit that we have to go down into versus before kind
- 17 of a full basement.
- We have our handicapped accessible
- 19 spot, bike storage, direct access for utilities.
- 20 Trash and recycling would come down into the
- 21 building into a trash and recycle room and brought
- 22 up to the curb or picked up. I think we can talk
- 23 more about that. And then the second means of
- 24 egress comes out and again all in blue here is the

- 1 retail along here, corner entry.
- MS. PALERMO: I have another question
- 3 while you're on this topic. Eliminating the
- 4 below-grade parking, you apparently encountered an
- 5 issue with your project at 420 Harvard Street in
- 6 having to underpin the --
- 7 MR. SHEEN: So one of the challenges
- 8 that we face in an urban site such as this is that a
- 9 lot of the buildings are built to the property line.
- 10 For example, the retail, the one-story retail
- 11 building on Harvard Street, for example, and also
- 12 the property immediately behind that which is
- 13 currently a residential single family in a
- 14 commercial zone. So they took advantage of the zero
- 15 lot line abutting a commercial property, zoning
- 16 property so they are also on the property line.
- 17 So what it allowed us to do is to
- 18 minimize the excavation, therefore, the underpinning
- 19 of --
- MR. BROWN: To support.
- 21 MS. PALERMO: I understand from what
- 22 you told me that you've encountered an issue at 420
- 23 Harvard. Do you have any evidence that says that
- 24 your work in developing this property so that you

- 1 would have underground parking would cause the same
- 2 sorts of structural problems for the bordering
- 3 property? Is this one of those questions,
- 4 circumstances where it's once burn, twice shy, I
- 5 don't want to look, but I don't want to deal with
- 6 that again?
- 7 We need concrete evidence. You're
- 8 making -- this is a substantial change to what you
- 9 originally proposed, and I need to be convinced that
- 10 you've got enough evidence to support the notion
- 11 that this isn't going to happen again.
- 12 MR. SHEEN: Partly is also a sort of
- 13 methods-and-means issue for us that we are
- 14 relocating the 20 parking spaces from below-grade to
- 15 essentially at-grade with pits. There is no -- what
- 16 is important to understand is there is no loss of
- 17 parking in this situation. It's a substitution of
- 18 the location of the parking space itself.
- 19 The reason that we elected to amend
- 20 our design to this is because our experience dealing
- 21 at 420 just look -- it just took too much -- much,
- 22 much longer for the construction.
- 23 MR. BROWN: So what Victor is
- 24 alluding to is beyond the kind of structural

- impacts, a very similar condition to what we have on 1
- Fuller and Harvard with the adjacent building and 2
- 3 the Butcherie.
- 4 We're in that similar situation here,
- 5 but by being able to maintain the parking lifted out
- 6 of grade, we're also dramatically minimizing the
- 7 excavation work on the site which does impact the
- 8 direct abutters while this is in construction.
- 9 MS. PALERMO: During construction,
- 10 but not necessarily to the extent you need to do
- 11 repair to the adjoining properties' foundation.
- 12 MR. BROWN: That's correct.
- 13 MS. PALERMO: And I recognize why you
- want to avoid that, but correct me if I'm wrong, and 14
- 15 I easily could be because I sit on so many cases,
- 16 did you have mechanical lifts for parking in your
- 17 original design when you had --
- 18 MR. BROWN: No.
- 19 MS. PALERMO: That is a huge
- 20 change.
- 21 MR. BROWN: Yes.
- 22 That is a major change MS. PALERMO:
- 23 and I need to personally be convinced that you have
- 24 the evidence, and this is objective evidence from

- 1 engineers.
- 2 MR. GELLER: Let me ask the question
- 3 in a different way, because it seems to me -- well,
- 4 let me take it two different ways.
- 5 Do you have an objection to ground
- 6 floor parking per se?
- 7 MS. PALERMO: Not unless it includes
- 8 the mechanical parking.
- 9 MR. GELLER: That's a separate issue.
- 10 Do you object to a reduction in retail space?
- MS. PALERMO: No.
- MR. GELLER: Okay. So then the
- 13 question becomes: Is there a change of methodology
- 14 of parking vehicles, does it present issues? So the
- 15 question is: Does the mechanical system present an
- 16 issue from the perspective of noise and vibration or
- 17 safety?
- 18 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Or visual
- 19 screening. Why don't we let them move on. I think
- 20 we all know what the issues are.
- 21 MS. PALERMO: I wanted to make a
- 22 point. I don't want to assume that you can sort of
- 23 gloss over the fact that you have made -- again, I'm
- 24 talking as a construction professional in my own

- 1 regard.
- 2 You've made a major change to this
- 3 project by eliminating subsurface parking -- major.
- 4 I need to be convinced that you need --
- 5 MR. BROWN: We're definitely going to
- 6 follow up. If I can understand what Jesse was
- 7 asking a question on mechanical parking in its use
- 8 or in its visibility in connection with the context,
- 9 because one thing we are from an architectural
- 10 perspective -- this is fully enclosed. You never
- 11 see it from the outside. So coming in here -- and I
- 12 have some info. We can bring on the parking
- 13 consultant. It's a 33-second retrieval time. It's
- 14 extremely quiet. It is fully enclosed so you'll
- 15 never perceive it from the outside. The building
- 16 looks the same, essentially, from the outside.
- We just thought that the overall pros
- 18 of getting away from a massive basement excavation
- 19 underpinning both in terms of dealing with the other
- 20 buildings, the abutters. The system itself is
- 21 definitely a more costly system to put in in terms
- 22 of parking.
- MS. PALERMO: It's not more costly
- 24 than doing subsurface parking. You'd have to

- convince me of that. 1
- 2 MR. SHEEN: Part of it is financial,
- 3 you're right.
- 4 MS. PALERMO: I understand.
- 5 MR. SHEEN: So from the
- 6 constructability standpoint and also from the
- 7 delivery of the project to be able to predict the
- 8 delivery of a project given the construction time
- 9 frame.
- 10 I think the questions regarding the
- 11 mechanical system itself in terms of safety, in
- 12 terms of noise, sort of the impact comparing to the
- 13 underground parking system, I think that's a fair --
- 14 we'll dig into that in more detail as we go, but I
- 15 think in our mind this is actually -- it minimizes
- 16 potential construction impacts and it allows us to
- 17 improve the overall sort of design of the building
- 18 in our mind because the underground parking, it
- 19 wasn't a very efficient layout and it required a
- 20 lift. So I think for 420 we were able to do it with
- 21 the ramps.
- 22 In this case we just don't have the
- 23 length to achieve the type of efficiency that we
- 24 were looking for in an underground structure.

- 1 expensive.
- 2 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: So what I would
- 3 like to do, if you don't mind, Lark, is let's put a
- 4 pin in this issue. It is clearly something we need
- 5 to have vetted out by our transportation consultant.
- 6 I think the underpinning geotech issue probably also
- 7 needs to be peer-reviewed, and I think in the
- 8 context of the discussion about transportation and
- 9 parking for the site, we will be looking to you, the
- 10 development team, to provide sufficient information
- 11 to our peer reviewers so they can advise this board
- 12 as to whether or not there are significant impacts
- 13 that have resulted from the change from below-grade
- 14 parking with a lift to the system that you're
- 15 proposing now.
- 16 The more information that you can
- 17 provide and submit with respect to the functionality
- 18 of the stackers, with respect to buffering for
- 19 noise, with respect to safety, I think all of those
- 20 things will be of great interest to this board, and
- 21 I think for now maybe just --
- MS. PALERMO: That's fine.
- MR. GELLER: Let me add one piece to
- 24 that which is also: Where have you placed

- 1 supporting uses that existed before now that you
 2 don't have that additional space?
- 3 MR. SHEEN: Supporting uses?
- 4 MR. GELLER: Bike racks --
- 5 MR. SHEEN: Part of reduction --
- 6 MR. GELLER: I see trash.
- 7 MR. BROWN: I think we actually
- 8 picked up a little bit of back-of-house space
- 9 because we have this entire length here for 20
- 10 bikes, utilities, trash recycle, and I can pull up
- 11 the old plans or we can do this in the next hearing,
- 12 the differences, but I think the overall
- 13 back-of-house function got a little better because
- 14 we're not taking trash down to the basement and then
- 15 back up.
- 16 MR. SHEEN: I think it's important to
- 17 recognize that it is an existing gas station. It
- 18 has three wide curb cuts on Harvard Street and two
- 19 on Thorndike Street, and we are proposing to enclose
- 20 two of the curb cuts to close them. So from a
- 21 pedestrian standpoint, I think one wouldn't -- as
- 22 one walks down Harvard Street, you wouldn't have to
- 23 walk across multiple curb cuts and entering and
- 24 exiting vehicles.

- 1 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Are you going to
- 2 have one lane in and one lane out from that one
- 3 remaining curb cut?
- 4 MR. SHEEN: That's right. So
- 5 currently it's a very wide curb cut currently, so we
- 6 are looking to narrow that into two lanes versus --
- 7 I think currently it can park I think three cars
- 8 wide, and that's what the service station currently
- 9 uses for its station, if you will, for service
- 10 vehicles.
- 11 So the primary change with our
- 12 current proposal to the previous one had to do with
- 13 really the underground level as well as the first
- 14 floor level, the circulation patterns, elevator
- 15 vertical stacks, they remain in the same or similar
- 16 locations. We did reduce the residential lobby area
- 17 as well. It used to go much further beyond the
- 18 current sort of large square that we see over there.
- 19 The unit mix did not change. The
- 20 unit mix and average size did not change. We have,
- 21 I believe, a design review section that sets up with
- 22 the town design reviewer, Cliff Boehmer, next
- 23 Wednesday, so we anticipate that we will be talking
- 24 about the building design in more greater detail at

- 1 that session.
- 2 MR. BROWN: I think we also added
- 3 some additional information in terms of setbacks
- 4 from our condenser units to the abutter at 164
- 5 Coolidge. So we're a little bit over forty feet on
- 6 that. And in terms of the building itself, so the
- 7 upper floor, sixteen-foot-seven, so we added more
- 8 information just in terms of overall distances that
- 9 was asked by the abutter.
- In terms of -- just jump to this. In
- 11 terms of aesthetics, we're starting to build a
- 12 pallet. We meet with Cliff next week. So a similar
- 13 sister building approach to 420. That was kind of a
- 14 lighter body with darker bays in more of a gray
- 15 scale tone. We're looking at this as more of earth
- 16 natural colors so kind of a mid-tone being the mass
- 17 of the building with lighter bay elements.
- The ground floor retail. This will
- 19 be the two entries into that retail corner, coming
- 20 down the residential entry, and that single garage
- 21 door at the end. Those are really the high level
- 22 updates since last time.
- We have included the shadow studies
- 24 for summer, fall, spring, and winter done at -- and

- 1 this is in the packet, 9, 12 p.m. 3 p.m. 6 p.m. So
- 2 the gray is the existing shadows and then the blue
- 3 is the added shadows as a result of our building.
- 4 So you can see at 9 a.m. in the summertime it's
- 5 falling onto Harvard and Thorndike, and midday when
- 6 the sun is the highest it has very minimal impact to
- 7 the left of us on Thorndike. As we move to the
- 8 afternoon, we can see as the sun is starting to set
- 9 down, it's casting in the back. And then at 6 p.m.
- 10 towards the end of the day where there's a lot of
- 11 existing gray, the added is very minimal, relative
- 12 to the existing conditions.
- 13 Similar to the fall and spring, so
- 14 again the blues added at 9 a.m., 12 p.m., 3 p.m. and
- 15 then by 6 p.m. virtually all dark.
- 16 And then lastly the winter when the
- 17 sun is the lowest, this is the most impact in terms
- 18 of coming across the street to 455. Again the blue
- 19 is the added shadow here. Three p.m. and at 6 p.m.
- 20 at the latest just a sliver through here that's
- 21 already casting across.
- This, I think, was at the last time,
- 23 just high sections along Harvard Street here. So
- 24 445, our building, and 445, and the adjacent

- 1 structure further down.
- 2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: You show 445
- 3 abutting Coolidge Street, but it doesn't.
- 4 MR. BROWN: Maybe that's a typo.
- 5 Sorry about that. We'll fix that. This is the city
- 6 lift information. So this is the system we're
- 7 looking at right now. We will definitely get more
- 8 into engineering on this, but they're all sized for
- 9 the largest platform. So there is no limit on the
- 10 car size. They do have different sizes.
- 11 What's shown on the drawing is all
- 12 based on what's called the extra large. It doesn't
- 13 limit what you can put in, and in terms of the
- 14 system itself, this is the -- there is always one
- 15 spot that's vacant, so if you were to pull up to the
- 16 building, call your car, if it was up there, this
- 17 car would slide across. This car will come down.
- 18 So this spot right here is empty. If you came home,
- 19 that's your spot. These two slide across. Yours
- 20 comes down and the gate goes up.
- 21 This is all the specs in terms of the
- 22 30-second retrieval time and some other information
- 23 there which, again, we'll go into more detail.
- So what we're showing here, this line

- 1 where it turns up right here, where the red is, that
- 2 would be essentially the garage slab, so that's the
- 3 first floor. This one car is an isolated pit just
- 4 at the locale. So imagine here this was at three
- 5 would be just your drop-down so you can receive the
- 6 car and then the two are tucked up above it. Same
- 7 thing, shuffle system. If you came in and your car
- 8 was here, it would -- this one would come down, move
- 9 across and come up.
- 10 Landscape plans, which we had before
- 11 but again showing the closed-in curb cuts, so post
- 12 and fill along Harvard and Thorndike, narrow up the
- 13 entry into the garage. Then some of the bikes. So
- 14 in addition to the indoor bike racks we're putting
- 15 in the corner here, front retail, residential entry
- 16 and the street tree plantings.
- 17 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Can I ask you to go
- 18 back two slides to the overall landscape plan for
- 19 the property? That sort of grayish area up at the
- 20 top, is that a paved surface? Is that some sort of
- 21 open space?
- MR. BROWN: Correct.
- 23 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: That space is
- 24 between the edge of the building and the edge of the

- 1 adjacent structure.
- MR. BROWN: Correct.
- 3 MS. SELKOE: Could he also maybe go
- 4 over what the setbacks are?
- 5 MR. BROWN: We have five feet
- 6 typically. Along here it switches to ten feet. At
- 7 this corner it's ten feet and then this goes down,
- 8 the minimum five feet here. I'll go back to the
- 9 architectural plan. One second. So at ten feet it
- 10 doesn't get any less than five feet here, and five
- 11 feet along here. Along the front carrying along
- 12 Harvard Street and there's some setback here. We
- 13 can add additions but this steps back roughly four
- 14 feet at each of the corners. The property line kind
- 15 of bows out here and curves along maintaining a
- 16 straight line along Thorndike.
- 17 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: So a comment we
- 18 received from a member of the public that has to do
- 19 with the mural that's on the side of the next-door
- 20 building. It's the next building down Harvard. And
- 21 I'm curious. I see there is a setback between the
- 22 proposed edge of the project.
- MR. SHEEN: I think the mural you're
- 24 talking about is along this edge.

- 1 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Is that still going
- 2 to be visible from Harvard Street or is this project
- 3 effectively going to cover that up?
- 4 MR. SHEEN: The property is -- the
- 5 building is set back I think by five feet along that
- 6 edge.
- 7 MR. BROWN: It's going to change. It
- 8 will.
- 9 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I think while we
- 10 are -- it's just a convenient plan to ask you
- 11 questions on, and I didn't mean to interrupt your
- 12 flow.
- 13 There is a residential structure that
- 14 has a roof deck that abuts the property. Is that
- 15 roof deck still there? What is your step back from
- 16 that roof deck?
- 17 MR. SHEEN: I think we added a
- 18 dimension so --
- 19 MR. BROWN: The main building jogs
- 20 from -- the roof deck is literally on top of the
- 21 full edge, so it will be anywhere from ten feet at
- 22 the high level because the building, again, the mass
- 23 of the building steps back ten feet. It's only the
- 24 ground floor that's at the five feet. You can see,

- 1 this is all at ten feet with two bays that pop out,
- 2 but it's anywhere from ten, to the upper level it's
- 3 sixteen.
- 4 MR. SHEEN: Sixteen feet seven
- 5 inches, and the mechanical screening is further.
- 6 MR. BROWN: 40 foot, one and a half
- 7 MR. SHEEN: I think it's important to
- 8 recognize that 64 Coolidge is in -- even though it's
- 9 a residential building, it's in a commercial zone.
- 10 So based on the existing zoning bylaws in Brookline,
- 11 if you were to do a commercial building, we are
- 12 going to have a zero lot line against that property
- 13 line.
- 14 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I think this board
- 15 can still ask questions about mitigating impact on
- 16 that property.
- 17 MS. SELKOE: Actually, though, in our
- 18 bylaw, there is a setback if you have a commercial
- 19 building next to a residential building. It's a
- 20 greater setback.
- 21 MR. SHEEN: Even though it's in a
- 22 commercial zone?
- MS. SELKOE: Yes.
- 24 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Do you have

- 1 anything else? Do we have any more questions for
- 2 the development team right now?
- 3 MR. GELLER: I don't at the moment.
- 4 MS. PALERMO: Not right now.
- 5 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Okay. Thank you.
- 6 Polly, did you have something to add? You look like
- 7 you had something to add.
- 8 MS. SELKOE: No.
- 9 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Not to put you on
- 10 the spot. Thank you. We will next hear from
- 11 members of the public. If there is anybody here who
- 12 wishes to speak, I'll ask you to come up and start
- 13 by giving your name and your address.
- MS. VANDERKAY: Hello, is this
- 15 working? Okay. Judith Vanderkay, town meeting
- 16 member, precinct 9 and library trustee, and I live
- 17 at 16 Columbia Street and I can see the 455 building
- 18 going up from my kitchen and other places in the
- 19 back of my house, and this one is going to take an
- 20 even bigger patch of sky away from me. I will try
- 21 not to go into the anger and resentment that I and
- 22 most of my neighbors feel about the encroachments
- 23 upon our neighborhood and the diminishment of our
- 24 quality of life.

- 1 So going to specifics, I was out of
- 2 town so I didn't make the last two hearings. Has
- 3 the development team told us how they're going to
- 4 mitigate the contamination on the site?
- 5 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: This is actually
- 6 only the second hearing that we have had -- I'm
- 7 sorry, the second hearing with any testimony, and so
- 8 we will have at a subsequent hearing hear about
- 9 environmental management at the site.
- MS. VANDERKAY: Okay, good. That's a
- 11 concern. The parking is an issue. The traffic is
- 12 an issue. I want to ask -- I didn't see it on the
- 13 plans. Is the opening for cars now -- how does it
- 14 relate to the opening for cars on 455 Harvard? Are
- 15 people going to be crashing into each other on poor
- 16 little Thorndike Street?
- 17 MR. BROWN: We can certainly do a
- 18 diagram to show the juxtaposition of the two.
- 19 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Are they directly
- 20 across from one another?
- MR. SHEEN: We don't believe so.
- MR. BROWN: Because the
- 23 proportions -- if we go back to where it's coming
- 24 off of here, it's I think further back. Go back to

- 1 the area here. So we're exiting here. I believe
- 2 they're back down here.
- 3 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: If this something
- 4 you can pin down for a future hearing, that will be
- 5 helpful.
- 6 MS. VANDERKAY: I have one more area
- 7 I wanted to ask about, which is, my understanding is
- 8 that the operator of the gas station has quite a few
- 9 years to go on his lease. How is that going to be
- 10 handled? He didn't want to stop his operation.
- 11 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I think that
- 12 unfortunately -- I think, you know, at the first
- 13 hearing we discussed how sad many members of the
- 14 community are going to be to losing that operation,
- 15 but I think that whatever lease arrangement or
- 16 operating agreement the developer has with the
- 17 current occupant is beyond the scope of what we're
- 18 here to review.
- I know that you mentioned and I don't
- 20 mean to put you on the spot, but I know you
- 21 mentioned you have concerns about parking and
- 22 traffic, and I'm wondering if you have anything more
- 23 specific on either of those things? It will help us
- 24 asking the right question about this.

- 1 MS. VANDERKAY: No, other than in
- 2 general contributing to more traffic in the area and
- with -- I know it's a gas station down there. 3
- 4 There's lots of traffic going in and out, but that's
- 5 limited in times of the day, whereas an apartment
- 6 building will have people coming and going all the
- 7 time and deliveries and Amazon and whatever, so
- 8 we're concerned that adding 25 more apartments, even
- 9 if people ride bicycles, they're going to get things
- 10 delivered.
- 11 Adding that many new housing units is
- 12 going to add an unbearable amount of traffic along
- 13 with what's going to happen at 455.
- 14 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.
- 15 MS. RUDNICK: Leslie Rudnick.
- 16 at 39 Thorndike Street with my husband. So we have
- 17 not attended the previous meetings. I didn't.
- 18 was not able to attend them.
- 19 So I'm just hearing a little bit and
- now I have some questions. You mentioned -- the 20
- 21 developer mentioned there are systems being used
- 22 currently, parking systems. Can you please tell us
- some addresses, because I would really like to go 23
- 24 and observe those places? I'm told they get

- 1 dysfunctional, that they're not 30 seconds to
- 2 retrieve a car. You know, I would like to know
- 3 about noise level and this sort of thing.
- 4 MR. GELLER: Victor, would you please
- 5 forward a list to Polly and Polly can circulate
- 6 that?
- 7 MR. SHEEN: We'll do that.
- 8 MS. RUDNICK: We live very close to
- 9 the intersection of Thorndike and Harvard. And I
- 10 can say when we just want to cross our car over,
- 11 it's a juggling game. It's easing in. It's a
- 12 problem. There's going to be a lot of traffic
- 13 impact there. There already is. It's challenging.
- I know that when I've been taking my
- 15 car to the site for work on my car or buy gasoline
- 16 and coming out, you almost need the entire Thorndike
- 17 Street just to drive off the driveway. So it's a
- 18 narrow street. And with that other big development
- 19 I would be curious to know how that's going to be
- 20 managed because it's very, very small. It's narrow.
- 21 I mean, if you got cars -- any cars parked along
- 22 there, one car can pass. I mean, you know, you're
- 23 juggling that. That's another concern.
- Also, in terms of moving vans,

- 1 delivery trucks, we see what happens on our own
- 2 street. It's a two-way street right now and really
- 3 it's only enough for one car. So people are
- 4 constantly juggling, moving into driveway areas to
- 5 allow cars to pass.
- Those are some of my concerns that
- 7 came up today. I'm getting familiar. I find it
- 8 like horrifying that this building is going to be
- 9 even higher than the one that's currently being
- 10 developed right across the street.
- I'm concerned about the aesthetics of
- 12 the building, not just -- you know, it's kind of a
- 13 box, and you know, we've lived in Coolidge Corner
- 14 because of the beauty of it and it's -- I don't see
- 15 anything in the pictures that really shows anything
- 16 especially aesthetically pleasing. That's all I can
- 17 think of right now, but maybe if other people have
- 18 questions.
- 19 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. And I
- 20 do want to assure you we're still early on in this
- 21 process. We will have a subsequent meeting where we
- 22 will be having the town's own peer reviewer talk
- 23 about design issues. We will have another meeting
- 24 where transportation issues, transportation safety,

- 1 traffic, all of that will be studied. It will be
- 2 presented in more detail by the applicant but also
- 3 from the town's peer reviewer.
- 4 MS. RUDNICK: I appreciate that.
- 5 Thank you.
- 6 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.
- 7 MR. LEPSON: Hi, my name is Bob
- 8 Lepson. I live at 36 Thorndike Street and also a
- 9 town meeting member in Precinct 9. I'm also -- I
- 10 noticed this is a 40(b). I'm also on the fair
- 11 housing committee, and affordable housing is
- 12 extremely important to me. In fact that's one of
- 13 the reasons I started to become -- ran for town
- 14 meetings, so please understand that my perspective
- 15 is also factoring in the importance and incredible
- 16 need in this town for additional affordable housing.
- 17 I want to put that out there.
- 18 So can I toggle this, if you don't
- 19 mind? I think one of the things I want to just
- 20 point out is -- wasn't there a larger version of
- 21 that photo?
- MR. BROWN: If you keep going the
- 23 other way, a couple more.
- MR. LEPSON: There we go. So when I

- 1 look at this and then I look at the reality, the two
- 2 are very, very different. If Thorndike Street
- 3 looked like this in terms of how wide it was -- it
- 4 is and how much space and how airy and everything
- 5 else, it's one thing.
- 6 This is an incredibly misleading
- 7 drawing no matter how elegant it happens to be. The
- 8 perspective is just so far from what the reality of
- 9 the situation is, and that's very, very important
- 10 because it looks like there is lots of space. There
- 11 is one -- it's great, fabulous, but the reality is
- 12 very, very different. So that's one thing I wanted
- 13 to point out.
- 14 The second thing that I wanted to
- 15 point out having to do with the lack of space, and
- 16 it was mentioned -- I want to get the overhead. So
- 17 when looking sort of -- when a person is trying to
- 18 come out of Thorndike Street, you see that line
- 19 right there, that's where the car is supposed to
- 20 stop. Cars have to pull out past the crosswalk at
- 21 this point in order to be able to determine if there
- 22 are cars coming from the direction of Allston up
- 23 Harvard Street, because the visual sight line that
- 24 used to exist doesn't exist anymore because of the

- 1 new building that's going up.
- 2 And now here when you're looking to
- 3 the left as you're pulling out, you can see because
- 4 the gas station is open, right, you have a lot of
- 5 open space and you can see what is coming down from
- 6 the Coolidge Corner area, right? When both of these
- 7 buildings are up, I mean there's just no way. You
- 8 literally will have to be out in the middle of
- 9 Harvard Street in order to determine whether or not
- 10 it is safe to make a right turn, a left turn, cross,
- 11 continuing on Thorndike Street.
- I also -- so I live over here, and I
- 13 come up and I try to cross this street here, but
- 14 forget about it. It's so incredibly dangerous now.
- 15 Cars are flying and this is just going to exacerbate
- 16 the whole traffic problem.
- So when this building is being
- 18 constructed, the first floor went up, you can see.
- 19 The second floor went up, okay, not too bad. Third
- 20 floor went up, okay, maybe a little bit high, but
- 21 still tolerable relative to the other buildings that
- 22 were around. The fourth floor went up, it's like
- 23 there's this giant thing that is so out of place.
- 24 You folks are proposing a fifth floor on top of

- 1 that, which is unconscionable in my opinion. It's
- 2 just -- we're just like two large buildings are
- 3 going right in that spot where it was open before,
- 4 where was -- and now it's just -- I'm not quite sure
- 5 what to say about it, but the scope and the scale of
- 6 those buildings pushing to the edges of the lot
- 7 lines is ridiculous in my view. So yeah, so it's
- 8 traffic, it's scope and scale, it's the misleading
- 9 drawings that make it look like it's so airy. All
- 10 these items here, and the environmental impact which
- 11 I guess we'll hear from in the future.
- 12 You mentioned with the parking
- 13 things, the lifts. Apparently, I think you said
- 14 they're quiet. From my understanding is that
- 15 they're far from quiet, but I would like to hear. I
- 16 would love to get that address. I would like to
- 17 hear them in action to see what they actually do
- 18 sound like.
- So yeah, it's -- I know 40(b) exists.
- 20 I know our town has to deal with it and it's a
- 21 statute and we need affordable housing. To me, this
- 22 feels like a luxury apartment building with a few
- 23 affordable units being put in because that's the way
- 24 around the zoning regs. That's what going on and

- 1 it's really unfortunate. That's all I can say.
- 2 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Anyone
- 3 else?
- 4 MS. KATES: Hi, my name is Beth
- 5 Kates. I'm a town meeting member, Precinct 9, and I
- 6 concur with what Bob has said. I have to say I
- 7 was -- we talk about the Route 9 gateway and all
- 8 that planning that went into creating an entrance to
- 9 Brookline to signal you're coming to Brookline.
- 10 Well, from Allston you're coming into Brookline
- 11 because of these massive buildings. Now there are
- 12 going to be three massive buildings.
- 13 And when I look towards Allston, I
- 14 see, you know, lots of three-story buildings,
- 15 two-story buildings. There's a continuity to
- 16 Allston that is now lost. And it's like welcome to
- 17 Brookline. Here's the massive concentration of, you
- 18 know, building and concentration of
- 19 commercialization of Brookline.
- 20 And to also speak about the danger of
- 21 traffic in this area, I've called -- I've asked Todd
- 22 Crane for a meeting because all of these streets are
- 23 narrow and now we have 420 on Fuller Street.
- 24 They're way too narrow, and you can't get by other

- 1 cars, so we're going to have to look into changing
- 2 the entire traffic pattern of this neighborhood to
- 3 accommodate these four 40(b)s basically at Williams
- 4 and at Thorndike and at Fuller because it's so
- 5 unsafe now for cars, for pedestrians, for our lovely
- 6 scooters now. So this is a huge issue.
- 7 And I know that Marty Rosenthal had
- 8 talked about site control. I don't know whether
- 9 this has been resolved or not, and it does have to
- 10 do with the lease of the gas station property beyond
- 11 the term in which they would have to build their
- 12 40(b) in order for them to still be eligible. And I
- 13 think that he's talking to the state about, you
- 14 know, they had said yes, that they did have site
- 15 control, but I think there's some questions about
- 16 them still.
- 17 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: We did run that by
- 18 the state subsidizing agency and they confirmed that
- 19 there is site control for purposes of 40(b), so I
- 20 don't think that's an open issue anymore.
- 21 MS. KATES: Well, these are my
- 22 concerns.
- 23 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I want you to know
- 24 that concern had been vetted. We looked into it

- 1 after you had raised it the last time and we have it
- 2 addressed.
- 3 MS. KATES: This whole neighborhood,
- 4 the town is now having to deal with safety issues in
- 5 this neighborhood because of development of these
- 6 buildings. Thank you.
- 7 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. I'm
- 8 sorry, can you provide us your address.
- 9 MS. KATES: 105 Center Street.
- 10 MR. FELDMAN: I'm David Feldman, the
- 11 owner of 64 Coolidge Street which is the abutting
- 12 building behind this. Issues I would like to see
- 13 the town engage with the developer on, first of all,
- 14 I think the shadow studies aren't done at the
- 15 relevant times of day given that critical things
- 16 what happens at the beginning and end of the
- 17 daylight section of the day in different seasons, so
- 18 the time selected by the developer don't reflect
- 19 that this will probably take the first sixty or
- 20 ninety minutes of light or the last sixty or ninety
- 21 minutes of light in different seasons away from the
- 22 neighbors.
- I would like to know why the rooftop
- 24 equipment isn't included in any of the plans. My

- 1 understanding is there's another layer above the
- 2 fifth floor with compressors, right? Is the height
- 3 shown? Okay. Why isn't the height of that
- 4 included -- is it included in the shadow studies?
- 5 MR. BROWN: It's included in the
- 6 shadow --
- 7 MR. FELDMAN: Great. Can we get the
- 8 height of that?
- 9 MR. BROWN: It's a four foot. We can
- 10 add -- that's a four-foot acoustical screening.
- 11 MR. FELDMAN: I'm concerned about the
- 12 noise that comes from those two compressors. It's a
- 13 pretty big building. I notice there is no
- 14 information about that on there.
- 15 Also, on the information in the
- 16 parking section there is absolutely no information
- 17 given about the amount of noise that the parking
- 18 machinery makes. Does it make any loud clicking or
- 19 banging noises when it starts and stops? What is
- 20 the general noise level? I think that needs to be
- 21 studied in detail.
- The average noise over 30 seconds
- 23 isn't relevant if you live next door and the thing
- 24 starts with a big clunk. My kitchen already shakes

- 1 every morning when the truck delivers to the
- 2 Butcherie, but big engines can have an impact. I
- 3 would like to know about how that's going to work.
- 4 Trash, where is this building's trash
- 5 going to be stored? Are there going to be issues
- 6 based on the direction the wind is blowing. I
- 7 didn't see anything on here. So that's inside the
- 8 building?
- 9 MR. BROWN: Right.
- MR. FELDMAN: Where does it get put
- 11 out for pickup?
- 12 MR. SHEEN: It's going to be private
- 13 pickup, so we can arrange to have it picked up where
- 14 the loading zone is going to be.
- MR. FELDMAN: So the loading zone out
- 16 on Harvard Street? Okay. Cool. I'm concerned
- 17 about the privacy of my backyard and my deck. Kids
- 18 play back there. I think we will have three or four
- 19 stories of apartments all staring down into that.
- 20 So those are some issues I would like to see
- 21 addressed. Thank you.
- 22 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.
- MS. KATES: Beth Kates again from 105
- 24 Center Street. I have one more thing I would like

- 1 to add. Are there any restrictions on the retail of
- 2 this building?
- 3 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I'm sorry, when you
- 4 say restrictions, what are you specifically talking
- 5 about?
- 6 MS. KATES: I'm saying this because
- 7 at 420 Harvard Street there were restrictions put on
- 8 mainly to deal with food deliveries and the trucks
- 9 that would bring them, and originally when that
- 10 building was permitted, it was said there couldn't
- 11 be food establishments because the delivery trucks
- 12 would have caused too much disruption, and then
- 13 surreptitiously in the summer there was an
- 14 additional ZBA meeting in which those restrictions
- 15 were lifted, and I was not aware that that was going
- 16 to be the subject of that meeting.
- 17 And I think that maybe neighbors
- 18 considering this was an issue enough to put a
- 19 restriction on it, you know, neighbors were not
- 20 aware that this was going to be the subject of the
- 21 ZBA meeting, and since we're dealing with the same
- 22 people here, I want to know if there is going to be
- 23 restrictions and if they're going to be, you know,
- 24 lifted after the fact, like a bait and switch.

- PROCEEDINGS 04/17/2019 1 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I quess I want to 2 clarify a couple of things. First, with respect to 3 the 420 project, I think all three of us sat on that 4 and it is my understanding the limitations on food 5 preparation and restaurants had not to do with 6 delivery trucks but had to do with venting and 7 machinery that would be exhausting into the 8 neighborhood, so that was something that was a noise 9 and an air mitigation, not a delivery truck issue.
- 10 And as far as the modification by
- 11 which the restrictions were changed, that was a duly
- 12 noticed public hearing. It was not done
- 13 surreptitiously. It was done in accordance with our
- normal, legal procedures. 14
- 15 MS. KATES: Excuse me, but when you
- 16 sent out the notices, you did not indicate what
- 17 changes they were requesting. So it could be, Well,
- 18 we like to make, you know, change the unit mix or
- 19 something very minor, or something very major like
- 20 this, and you don't know what the subject is.
- 21 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: We often end up
- 22 having people call the planning department when they
- 23 see a notice of a hearing of a modification of a
- 24 project in their neighborhood that they're concerned

- 1 about, they often call the planning staff and the
- 2 planning staff is more than happy to provide
- 3 detailed information about the project changes.
- 4 As far as restrictions on the ground
- 5 floor use, because this is only the second hearing
- 6 that we've had on this project, we have not yet
- 7 gotten into a discussion of proposed retail uses.
- 8 At some point we are drafting a decision, assuming
- 9 we even get to a point when we're approving this
- 10 project, if there are conditions that we need to put
- 11 on with respect to limitations on the nature or
- 12 operations of the retail. We'll do that at that
- 13 time and we'd appreciate hearing feedback from the
- 14 community we get to vetting the retail space.
- MS. KATES: Maybe put that in the
- 16 notice what the subject matter is --
- 17 MS. SELKOE: I think we will make
- 18 more of an effort to do that if we didn't in the
- 19 past.
- 20 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Is there anyone
- 21 else here who would like to provide us with comments
- 22 this evening? And just as a reminder, we will be
- 23 having plenty more opportunity for public comment,
- 24 so as the project either changes or you have other

- 1 thoughts, you are always welcome to submit to us
- 2 comments by e-mail and writing through the planning
- 3 department, but there will be plenty of other
- 4 opportunities to speak. Ma'am, hello.
- 5 MS. ROSENBAUM: Maryln Rosenbaum, 73
- 6 Coolidge Street. In addition to everything that has
- 7 been said that I agree with, I think our other
- 8 concern is in terms of how this new transportation
- 9 or new parking system is going to work, what it will
- 10 be like when cars want to enter, say, in the evening
- 11 when lots of people are coming in and how quickly
- 12 they can actually access that, because I could
- 13 envision cars lining up and really blocking that.
- 14 And if you have this on both sides, it's just going
- 15 to be a nightmare.
- 16 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: That's a very good
- 17 question, and it's definitely one of the issues that
- 18 we will be having our parking and traffic consultant
- 19 taking a close look at.
- MS. ROSENBAUM: Thank you.
- 21 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Anyone else for
- 22 tonight? Not your last chance to comment but your
- 23 last chance to comment tonight. Okay. I think with
- 24 that, I think -- does the board have any additional

- 1 questions of the development team for tonight?
- MS. PALERMO: I actually have one. I
- 3 want to go back to the slide that showed -- it was
- 4 the view from above of both -- yes, that's the
- 5 slide.
- 6 Now, I happen to have an advantage or
- 7 disadvantage of having sat on 445 Harvard Street, so
- 8 I've been through both of them or are in the middle
- 9 of them, and I actually think that the public has
- 10 made an extremely legitimate point that there is now
- 11 a confluence of 40(b) proposals within a stone's
- 12 throw of each other, and we can't ignore that. We
- 13 spent a lot of time working on 420 to make it more
- 14 palatable and more reasonable as much as possible.
- 15 And frankly, I'm committed to doing the same thing
- 16 with this project.
- 17 But looking at this particular slide,
- 18 as you can see, there is -- I'm not going to
- 19 estimate the number of feet, but there is a
- 20 substantial amount of sidewalk around 420. Now, the
- 21 developer didn't start there, but we insisted that
- 22 there would be that much setback with the sidewalk
- 23 around that building precisely because of one of the
- 24 points that was made by -- 455. I'm sorry. And it

- 1 was precisely because of the point made by one of
- 2 the residents in this area which is the visibility
- 3 issue.
- Now, it looks to me, and you can
- 5 clarify this, you brought your building right out to
- 6 the street; is that correct?
- 7 MR. SHEEN: That's correct. So I
- 8 think the question of sight line is a very valid
- 9 concern. I want to make sure that everybody
- 10 understands, we're not here to create a hazard for
- 11 the intersection. So we are working with the town's
- 12 peer review consultant on the traffic side to ensure
- 13 that there are safe sight line distances coming
- 14 out -- in and out of that particular part of
- 15 Thorndike Street, and that's going to get sort of in
- 16 more detail in peer review. I think the question of
- 17 sight line probably has less to do with the setback
- 18 on Harvard Street and a setback on Thorndike Street,
- 19 but rather is healthy that that particular corner is
- 20 treated.
- 21 And initially we have made the -- at
- 22 least the first attempt to address that particular
- 23 issue by indenting and offsetting the corner
- 24 conditions to better address the sight line, but I'm

- 1 fully aware the issue that you're raising and we're
- 2 committed to working with the town's peer reviewer
- 3 to make sure.
- 4 MS. PALERMO: Beyond the peer review,
- 5 this is -- it ultimately ends up with us. And
- 6 again, having gone through all of the analysis and
- 7 the peer review on 445, the same thing applies --
- 8 455, whichever, you know what I mean. And so we had
- 9 really a number of concerns, and my memory -- and
- 10 Polly perhaps was --
- MS. SELKOE: Yes, I was.
- MS. PALERMO: You may recall, we also
- 13 had an agreement with the developer that the
- 14 developer would pay for some of the modifications to
- 15 the sidewalk.
- MS. SELKOE: Yes.
- 17 MS. PALERMO: So it would improve not
- 18 just where Thorndike Street intersects with Harvard
- 19 Street on this side but the other side, and the town
- 20 stepped up to the plate and took on some of the
- 21 obligations to do a little bit of the improvement
- 22 as --
- MS. SELKOE: I would have to go back
- 24 and check on that.

- 1 MS. PALERMO: But we basically had
- 2 four corners and we talked about all four corners,
- 3 and the town -- my memory is that the town agreed to
- 4 take on some of the work, but the developer agreed
- 5 to take on a lot of it. And I'm just going to say
- 6 having had that experience, I would hope to see your
- 7 building set back at least as much as 455, and at
- 8 least the same equal contribution to the sidewalk
- 9 and reconfiguring the curb in that area from you as
- 10 we are getting from the developer for 455.
- 11 So I want to be really up front and
- 12 clear with that. I also would say I think you need
- 13 to give really serious consideration as to the
- 14 height of this building and adding that additional
- 15 floor. We spend a lot of time talking about the
- 16 height. And I mean, this neighborhood is
- 17 legitimately concerned with the fact they are being
- 18 overburdened by -- you happen to have the
- 19 disadvantage of being third in line, and that's a
- 20 reality that I think you need to be able to deal
- 21 with to make this project feasible. So anyway, it's
- 22 my piece. Said it.
- MR. GELLER: Sort of a seque for me
- 24 to talk about without the advantage of peer review

- 1 direction.
- 2 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: I'm sorry, could we
- 3 have the -- if you need to have a conversation, if
- 4 you could take it outside. Thank you very much.
- I think we've heard a lot of very
- 6 valid concerns from the community tonight. And I
- 7 want to, for the development team's benefit,
- 8 highlight those, as Lark has just done, that I'm
- 9 going to be looking for more attention to and more
- 10 information on in the hearings that come.
- I'm going take up sort of the height
- 12 and size issue first, and Polly, this may be
- 13 something to pass on to Cliff Boehmer as well. When
- 14 we end up with these larger 40(b) projects because
- 15 they don't have to comply with base zoning, it does
- 16 to some extent set a precedent for sort of the
- 17 character of the area. It sets a baseline for
- 18 height. It sets a baseline for bulk.
- 19 I would like Cliff in particular and
- 20 to the extent the development team is addressing
- 21 this for future presentation, I would like to hear
- 22 not just about how this building relates to the new
- 23 40(b) around this corner, but I would like to hear
- 24 about its relationship to the older buildings, the

- 1 older residences and commercial structures in the
- 2 area. I don't think it's right to be kind of keying
- 3 off the new wave of development. I think that we
- 4 need to look at it in the broader context of what
- 5 was there before the last two years where we've been
- 6 under siege with larger buildings with 40(b).
- 7 I think -- and I've said this before,
- 8 I will say it again -- there is clearly a lot of
- 9 interest and concern about the parking, the
- 10 stackers, screening, noise. I don't know if it is
- 11 possible to get a video from the manufacturer that
- 12 you can play for us that will indicate how this
- 13 thing works and what kind of sound it makes and if
- 14 it makes any sound, what kind of noise buffering you
- 15 can put into that ground floor of the building.
- 16 You're going to want to do it for your retail tenant
- 17 and you're certainly going to want to do it for the
- 18 neighborhood. I think looking into that and giving
- 19 us the information we need to evaluate that will be
- 20 important.
- 21 The sight line issue of everything
- 22 that I have heard tonight is the more recent thing,
- 23 and I understand it's early days. I understand
- 24 you've made an effort on the corner.

1 As Lark said, regardless of whether a 2 traffic peer reviewer says, Hey, this is okay, I 3 think we do have lingering concerns regardless about 4 whether or not people who live in this neighborhood 5 feel safe pulling out into an intersection, and so I 6 think we're going to need to see some sort of effort 7 to ensure that maybe not just the minimum required 8 sight lines are met, but there is accommodation for 9 people's -- regular people's ability to navigate 10 their way through their neighborhood. 11 I am also somewhat concerned about 12 the relationship of this building to its nearest 13 residential abutter who does have a yard and does 14 have a deck. I know there is setbacks. 15 concerned that it may not be enough. I understand 16 the zoning argument that zero lot line is for 17 commercial zoning and all of that. I get it. 18 we're talking about a big building right up next to 19 somebody's outdoor space, and I think whether it's a 20 40(b) project or a special permit for someone's roof 21 deck or mud room, we ask these questions and we ask 22 that the proponent of these projects exercise as 23 much sensitivity as possible to those residential

neighbors who will be mostly impacted by the

24

- 1 project.
- 2 And I think in due time we will be
- 3 looking to you for a trash plan and a little bit
- 4 more information about site circulation,
- 5 back-of-house type of thing. I do have some
- 6 concerns about the location of the proposed loading
- 7 area on Harvard Street. This is already pretty
- 8 congested. I know there is loading on Harvard
- 9 Street roughly in this area already. I'm not
- 10 suggesting that it be on Thorndike, but I don't know
- 11 if there is capacity within the garage so that there
- 12 can be -- you know, for Amazon or Peapod deliveries,
- 13 for example, if those things could be taken off the
- 14 street and housed within the building as opposed to
- 15 creating additional congestion on Harvard.
- So those are the things that I think
- 17 I would appreciate more information on and that I
- 18 would urge the development team to pay particular
- 19 attention to as the project is being further
- 20 refined.
- 21 MR. GELLER: I think the question
- 22 about the mechanical system is -- are they easily
- 23 operable by fairly unsophisticated people? Because
- 24 you're not proposing valet. You're not proposing

- 1 somebody is going do it for the residents?
- 2 MR. SHEEN: That's correct.
- 3 MR. GELLER: People rolling in who
- 4 live in these apartments will have to operate these,
- 5 will have to operate them correctly, and they're
- 6 going to have to operate them within a certain
- 7 specified period of time.
- 8 MR. SHEEN: I understand. So I think
- 9 what might be helpful as we go through the further
- 10 hearing process, we actually are going to bring the
- 11 manufacturer here who can answer more technical
- 12 questions as part of the peer review. My
- 13 understanding is if you can operate a remote control
- 14 for your TV, you can operate one of these. That's
- 15 my understanding. I've not actually used one
- 16 myself, but I have a hard time operating my remote.
- 17 MR. GELLER: I assume they will
- 18 include -- what I generally found is that of the
- 19 evils, noise is just part of the equation.
- 20 Vibration can be worse. It carries through the
- 21 foundation.
- MR. SHEEN: So we will address a lot
- 23 of these sound issues as part of the peer review,
- 24 and we will get additional information from the

- 1 manufacturer and get a list of the properties so we
- 2 can actually tour. It is important to recognize
- 3 that this is not an open air system. This is an
- 4 entirely enclosed within the confines of the four
- 5 walls, if you will.
- 6 MR. GELLER: And in any scenario
- 7 you're going to have to comply. This also pertains
- 8 to the condensers on the roof. They do have to
- 9 comply with the town's noise ordinance. So all of
- 10 these need to be compliant and will be tested.
- 11 MR. SHEEN: In terms of -- so I think
- 12 from the board we've heard a lot of important issues
- 13 that we will be addressing.
- MR. GELLER: Let me just finish
- 15 before you go into your final wrap-up. I have a
- 16 significant concern about conflicts between 455 and
- 17 445. They'll take a look at that. The conflict
- 18 extends not simply about whether the entry and exit
- 19 for the respective parking garages is a conflict but
- 20 also in the parking analysis where they're putting a
- 21 number of cars that will be placed out on Thorndike
- 22 to move out right to Harvard burdens what is a
- 23 narrow street. So I think that their reviewer as
- 24 well as our peer reviewer needs to really take that

- 1 into account, not simply the conflict.
- MS. PALERMO: Cueing in particular
- 3 because we don't know how long it's going to take
- 4 for people to use these mechanical systems to park
- 5 their cars. I'd rather doubt it would be as quick
- 6 than changing the channel from a remote control.
- 7 MR. GELLER: My next issue would be
- 8 the question about sight line safety. I think
- 9 obviously that's a pretty critical issue, and
- 10 it's -- let's say it is exacerbated certainly by the
- 11 desire to push the building to the edge. It somehow
- 12 needs to be addressed.
- 13 Let me say my last issue is frankly
- 14 one that I don't generally focus on, and made a
- 15 comment a couple of times that this is sort of the
- 16 twin building to 420. I don't think this is the
- 17 twin building to 420. It's a different location. I
- 18 don't see it that way at all, and I think that
- 19 uncoupling it would be important to me. When I say
- 20 uncoupling it, I mean height, and generally I don't
- 21 look at height as a metric. I think that the height
- 22 is an issue with this building. So I'll just lay it
- 23 out there. I'll be curious -- peer review will help
- 24 me form my opinion about it. I will tell you that.

- 1 But just as a first look or maybe a second look, I
- 2 was concerned at the first hearing. I'm concerned
- 3 still. I simply think the building is too tall. I
- 4 would also note that at 420 in particular after a
- 5 number of hearings there was a stepped back approach
- 6 where it came close to the residential neighbors. I
- 7 would be curious whether you thought about it. If
- 8 you haven't, I would suggest that you might want to
- 9 consider something like that.
- 10 The other thing that I'll say about
- 11 sort of linking this to 420. I'm not sure that
- 12 Brookline needs two buildings that look the same.
- 13 So I apologize to whomever raised the aesthetic
- 14 comment, one that's not usually raised. I happen to
- 15 agree with you. So it would be nice to have
- 16 interesting buildings in Brookline. I don't know
- 17 that we need them all to look the same. Those are
- 18 my comments.
- 19 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Now you can do the
- 20 wrap up.
- MR. GELLER: Go ahead.
- MR. SHEEN: So I think we heard a lot
- 23 of good comments and other concerns that obviously
- 24 our team will go back and take a closer look at

- 1 along with our first meeting with Cliff. I do think
- 2 that it is important to start with the peer review
- 3 and work through that process. We're very familiar
- 4 with that process, and I believe the previous 40(b)
- 5 was benefited tremendously from this interaction
- 6 with the peer reviewers and with the board as well
- 7 as the neighborhood. So we hope that we will follow
- 8 the similar process as we go through the hearing for
- 9 this particular 445 project.
- 10 So I think on behalf of the
- 11 development team we do hear the comments and we're
- 12 not ignoring them. It is a work in progress, and we
- 13 do expect to be able to collectively make this
- 14 project a better project by the end of this process,
- 15 at least that's our hope.
- 16 CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Thank
- 17 you very much. As I announced at the beginning of
- 18 this hearing, the next hearing on this will be on
- 19 Wednesday, May 29 at 7 p.m. in this room. Thank
- 20 you, everyone.
- 21 (Whereupon, the hearing adjourned at
- 22 8:20 p.m.)
- 23
- 24

```
1
                    CERTIFICATE
 2
    COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
 3
    Worcester, ss.
 4
                  I, Jennifer A. Doherty, Certified
 5
    Shorthand Reporter and Notary in and for the
 6
    Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify
 7
    that the foregoing Pages 1 to 56 to be a true,
 8
    complete and accurate transcript of the testimony of
 9
    the aforementioned hearing held at the time and
10
    place hereinbefore set forth, to the best of my
   knowledge, skill and ability.
11
12
13
14
15
             IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SET MY
    HAND AND SEAL THIS 28TH DAY OF APRIL, 2019.
16
17
                   Jennefe A. Dohen
18
19
             Certified Shorthand Reporter
20
             CSR No. 1398F95
21
22
   My Commission Expires:
23
   October 19, 2023
24
```

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