

05-25-22

Advisory Committee.

The spirit that Town Meeting voted on the Kent Station Street parking lot be subjected to development was SPECIFICALLY around preservation of Town-owned parking utilizing air rights.

It is my understanding that the committee I was on substituted the idea of mandatory on-site parking in the RFP in lieu of air rights at an early meeting, due to feasibility issues associated with the concept of air rights. Little did I know that due to this substitution, we would end up here.

As an abutting resident and business owner in Brookline Village, I worked within the committees to create what seemed to be a strong RFP with the spirit of what Town Meeting supported in 2016 and selected a developer who promised be a good neighbor.

What I didn't understand at the time was that this substitution allowed for the potential of Warrant Article 30, which aims to close budget gaps in 2022 by reducing or eliminating parking at the developer's discretion. The article in its original form cites misleading information (implied solutions such as the BVPBDAB, and new parking structures, neither of which are actively available). This makes WA 30 a risky proposition.

In service of both a healthy small business district AND affordable housing for the elderly, the business and associated community galvanized and negotiated a compromise on WA30 that allows oversight from the business community within the Town system as reviews and hearings are underway to evaluate how to replace lost spaces without negatively impacting business.

Although the Select Board approved new language for WA 30 is palatable to us, greater clarity is needed. This is a confusing vote in the 11th hour, so to be clear:

If you VOTE YES on the new language, it represents a compromise the business community is willing to make.

If the new language is not approved, we urge the Advisory Committee to recommend Town Meeting Members VOTE NO on the original petition, because of the inherent clash with original intent.

The brick-and-mortar merchants make Brookline Village a gem of neighborhood that we want to preserve for ALL populations who inhabit it.

Thank you.

Liz Linder, Owner, Liz Linder Photography; TMM P4