

To: Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Marion H. Freedman-Gurspan, TMM9

Re: 40 Centre Street application to reduce the number of parking spaces

I want to state my opposition to the applicant's request to reduce the number of parking spaces from 24 to 16. Cost is acknowledged as a major barrier to housing access, but this proposal magnifies another significant barrier, namely, the lack of parking for those needing a car on a regular basis. If this request is granted, instead of 60% of units having access to a parking space, the number will drop to 40%. This is not okay from the perspective of addressing housing need when we know that many people have mobility limitations and when we know that the T has limited routes and limited hours, and often cannot get people to their final destination, be it for work, health care, recreation, or visiting family and friends. Considering just work, among the many who need a car to do their jobs are those who go to multiple sites in a day, such as electricians and plumbers, visiting nurses, social workers.

The applicant's reference to spaces owned by Hamilton Realty and to ZipCar and the overnight spaces in the Centre St. lot is an admission that the tenant demand for parking is expected to exceed what the building will provide. I am particularly concerned because use of the Hamilton lot will take out of circulation some of the very few 24-7 spaces currently rented to neighborhood residents. This proposal will exacerbate the well-documented Coolidge Corner parking problem, particularly the lack of 24 hour parking. Realtors are already cruising the streets to ask if we know of any available spaces so that they can close a deal.

I live in a condo around the corner in a building without parking. I rent one parking space one street away. What this proposal would do is increase the number of days I cannot park in front

of my house, even to drop off packages because there would be no spaces. (That already happens) It may mean my guests have to park at the Babcock St lot, as on occasion they have already had to do. It is likely to mean that the monthly charge for my parking space will continue to increase as demand drives up the price. The number of cars circling the streets and Centre St. lot will increase thereby increasing safety risks.

This request is harmful to the existing residents of the neighborhood and to local businesses and should be denied. The Town has already made many allowances due to the fact that 40 Centre St is a 40B project. I have been a lifelong housing advocate, and I am all for increased housing and increased density, but only if the need for parking is responsibly addressed.