



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

**Department of Planning and
Community Development**

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**Alison Steinfeld
Director**

June 30, 2014

Steve and Joanna Mark
237 Bonad Road
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Mark:

Thank you for your email concerning the process for the Hancock Village comprehensive permit application.

The site visit was scheduled in response to a request by the public at the ZBA's June 5th public hearing that the members meet on site prior to the end of the school year in order to witness first-hand school-related traffic. Further, since the prior site visit was in the depths of winter, the public suggested that this would provide the members an opportunity to see the site without snow cover.

Scheduling the date for an early June site visit required coordinating the challenging schedules of the ZBA members and the Applicant. We notified neighborhood representatives of the pending site visit within a few hours of when the date and time were finally confirmed. Although site visits are not subject to the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law, the ZBA invited the public to attend to observe the visit, and accordingly, the Applicant granted permission to the public to access its property. Neither public testimony nor ZBA deliberations were to be permitted. The June 19 site visit was cancelled in response to some complaints that insufficient advance notice was provided.

The originally scheduled June 19th site visit and the upcoming July 10th site visit were/are expressly not traffic studies. Actually, consistent with Chapter 40B procedures, the Applicant submitted both a traffic/circulation study and a stormwater/drainage study as part of its Application. Subsequently, the ZBA hired a professional traffic engineer and a stormwater engineer to provide what is referred to as "peer review" of the Applicant's studies. The traffic consultant hired by the ZBA, BETA Engineers, has already submitted preliminary and final reports to the ZBA at public hearings on March 26, 2014 and

May 8, 2014 relative to the plan set forth in the Application. However, since the original plan has been revised, BETA will need to conduct some further analysis and prepare a revised final report, anticipated to be submitted on August 13, 2014.

To clarify, a traffic peer review is not the same as a traffic study; the peer reviewer independently analyzes the Applicant's study data and determines if the methodologies employed were the correct ones to yield the appropriate data for analysis. If data supplied is not sufficient, the peer reviewer will request the Applicant to conduct further analysis or testing. Municipalities typically do not conduct their own studies because if the methodologies employed are correct, then the data collected will be the same regardless of how many studies are conducted. The ZBA depends on each peer reviewer to provide a technical assessment of the appropriateness of the study methodology and an independent analysis of the resulting data.

All reports relating to traffic impacts to be generated by The Residences of South Brookline are on the Town's website: www.brooklinma.gov > *Hancock Village Updates*. Future reports will be placed on the website upon receipt by the Town.

I hope this clarifies the purpose of the upcoming ZBA site visit and the process for assessing traffic impacts.

Sincerely,

Alison Steinfeld
Planning Director

VIA USPS and E-MAIL