



TOWN OF BROOKLINE

Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ALISON C. STEINFELD
Planning Director

Town Hall
333 Washington Street – Third Floor
Brookline, MA 02445
www.brooklinema.gov
617-730-2670

December 2, 2015

Mr. Robert W. Basile
Mr. J. Robert Basile
The Basile Group
40 Williams Street
Brookline, MA 02446

Re: 21 Crown 40B Residential Project

Messrs. Basile and Basile,

Thank you for your willingness to modify the proposed project to meet the concerns of the Crowninshield community. The Planning Board and Design Review Team is supportive of the proposed concept of eight-unit townhouses and the revised site configuration and recommends working with the project team to further refine the height, roof massing, and architectural details.

Below are initial recommendations from the Planning Board and Design Review Team conveyed at the December 1, 2015, public meeting to adjust the scale of the building and better separate pedestrian access from vehicular circulation on the site. The Board emphasizes that a 3D model of the revised proposal including the context of the surrounding single-family homes is critical for a more thorough analysis.

The Planning Department would be happy to schedule a staff meeting with the project team before the ZBA opens the public hearing on January 7, 2016, if that would be helpful.

Site Configuration

Create pedestrian pathways: Because the entrances to the units face the motor courtyard between the two buildings, pedestrian pathways should be created to separate pedestrian and vehicular access. Another option is to relocate the front entrances to the respective side yards of each building to create an even greater separation between pedestrian access and the motor court.

Architecture and Massing

Height and Roof Massing

The building still seems tall and top-heavy. Adjustments to the roof massing and loft-level should be considered to mitigate this effect.

- Eliminate unused space in the loft level to reduce height and roof massing.

- Adjust the shape of the dormers to de-emphasize the strong verticality of the building; consider designing shed dormers instead of steeply sloped gable dormers.
- Consider putting the paired dormers in the center of the row of dormers for better balance. Another option is design one large bay instead of paired dormers in the center to create more variety.
- Reduce the size of the lofts to reduce the massing of the upper floor.
- Consider lowering the eave line on the front façade by creating a hip roof with a dormer; this treatment will reduce the visual effect of the four-story structure.

Front entrance

- Adjust the proportions of the portico, which seems too wide and shallow.
- Consider designing front steps that lead up to the front entrance. Locating the front entrance at ground level emphasizes verticality of the building. (Because stairs are the means of access among the interior floors, there is no reason why the front entrance needs to be at ground level. In addition, many of the surrounding dwellings have steps that lead up to the front entrance.)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Polly Selkoe or me to discuss. Thank you again for your willingness to incorporate these changes.

Sincerely yours,



Maria Morelli
Planner