

Maria Morelli

From: jacques weissgerber <jweissgerber@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 20, 2016 2:49 PM
To: Maria Morelli
Cc: Kathleen M. McKenna; [REDACTED]
Subject: Regarding the 420 Harvard street development project

To the Zoning Board of Appeals, Brookline
c/o Maria Morelli, AICP

In the context of the development that has been taking place in North Brookline for the past few years, I went to the June 27 public hearing deeply suspicious of the projected development of 420 Harvard street. As I learned more about it, I was stunned by the arrogance of its developers.

Not only is this project completely out of scale (in character as well as in size) with its surroundings, but the developers' estimates of its impact on the neighborhood are unrealistic and misleading. Here are some of our concerns:

- Anyone living (especially **walking**, as I do a lot) in the neighborhood will agree that the estimates of current traffic and projected traffic increase from the project are overly optimistic. 1) The traffic study in Section 10 of the application does not seem to take into account, for example, the important quantity of service traffic (delivery trucks etc..) resulting from existing commercial outfits. 2) Why is the green light on Fuller Street @ Harvard so short? Obviously it's to accommodate the almost constant traffic flow on Harvard Street. Traffic increase resulting from the addition of 36 apartments and retail space is being underestimated and will inevitably create/augment congestion on Harvard Street.

- Contrary to what is asserted in the application (Section 10, p. 5), parking provided for 29 vehicles will, first of all, be insufficient for 36 new units. Every household has **at least** one car and it is foolish to expect that some people will forgo ownership of a car and use public transportation instead. Everybody I know in this neighborhood drives, even if they occasionally take the T. The majority of people riding the 66 bus are not Brookline residents, but commuters between Allston, Cambridge and Boston.

- The mechanized parking proposed by the developers, while an appealing storage solution in a new urban environment, does not make sense in this particular location: there is not enough room for getting in and out of the parking garage; this will create a safety issue for pedestrians, not to mention added congestion to a narrow Fuller Street, and noise. Furthermore, how will this work when snow obstructs part of the street, as we repeatedly experienced in the winter of 2015?

- Such a massive building and the shadow it will create will be overwhelming.

Finally, we were very disturbed to learn of a connection between the recent purchase of 49 Coolidge and the 420 Harvard street developers. This indicates on their part a mafia-like determination to reach their goals at any cost. What will prevent such people from acquiring more property in this same neighborhood for more similar outlandish developments?

As you know, Brookline is a special place. And we all agree that more opportunities to live here should be given to anyone thanks to affordable housing. But this goal can be achieved through means other than the purely profit-driven development project that is 420 Harvard Street. We urge you to make sure that our concerns as neighbors are being addressed.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Jacques Weissgerber and Kathleen McKenna
43 Columbia street