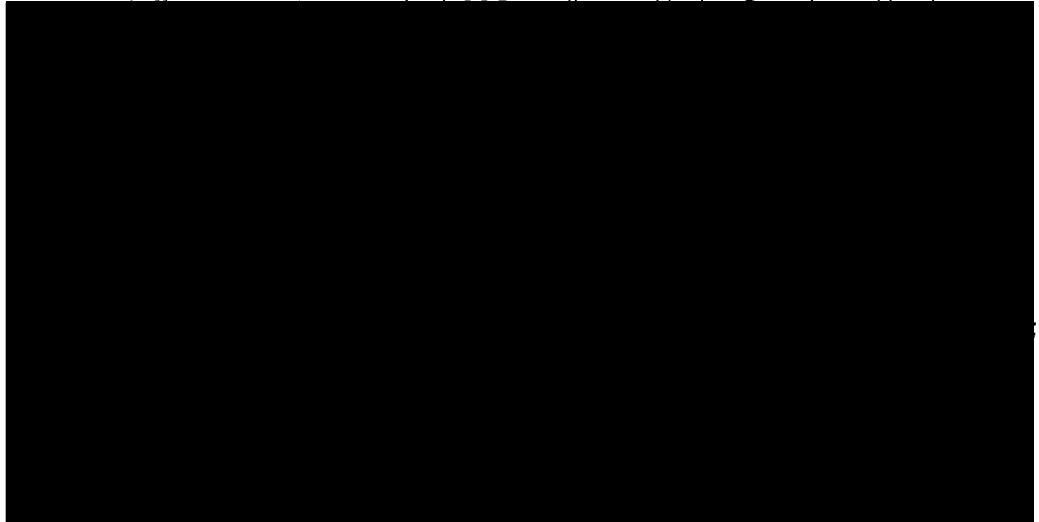


Maria Morelli

From: Nancy Bennett <bennettn32@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 21, 2016 2:27 PM
To: Maria Morelli
Cc: Mary Nickerson; Colm McMahon; Caroline Buckley; Michael Jacobs; Nancy Bennett;



Subject: 420 Harvard Street Project

July 21, 2016

Dear Ms. Morelli

We have lived on our block on Coolidge St. for 26 years. During that time neighbors have worked hard to create a wonderful community and to support the town. At this point we need help. We are very concerned by the overwhelming size and scope of the project at 420 Harvard St that will significantly and adversely impact our neighborhood.

We have a number of concerns.

1. Children walking to Devotion, children from neighboring daycare and preschools as well as senior citizens will have to dodge construction for a lengthy time, not only at 420 Harvard but also at the Devotion School and Kehillath Israel. They will have to contend with increased traffic on the very narrow Fuller Street. There is already concern given the frequently frantic pace for bagels and groceries on the block. Parking is tight, double parking is common, and rush hours currently result in back-ups. Trash pick-up and building deliveries translate to large trucks creating additional safety concerns.

2. The current plan for 420 Harvard calls for a unique mechanical parking structure. Parking will create significant noise and problems for cars that are waiting to enter or leave. Given the space constraints, it will only take about 3 cars to tie up the intersection. The parking structure noise will be loud and not end when stores close, but will start early in the morning and end late at night.
3. Large mechanical units on the roof will add to that noise level. The noise will be unremitting and make it difficult to open windows or use outdoor space.
4. Green space helps our neighborhood in many ways. It is lovely to look at, cleans air, dampens noise, and creates ways to enjoy the outdoors. The plan at 420 does not include green space that matches any of the aspirations of the town.
5. The scale of 420 creates shadows that will change the character of our streets. It will negatively impact greenery, change available light, shift snow melting and create large permanent gray areas.
6. Our neighborhood, including the businesses, has a style that reflects the time it was created. Even our 1922 Brooks & Skinner tin garage was a source of comment and rules by the Preservation Board. 420 does not reflect the style or design of the neighborhood. It is out of scale with all of the buildings in the neighborhood. Its facade is almost flat and includes no architectural detail that is consistent with surrounding buildings or suggestions in the master plan for the town such as one story buildings on Harvard Street. It does not complement the buildings around it, but conflicts with them by size and style.
7. The recent fire at the Butcherie highlights the difficulty of maintaining a safe neighborhood when fire trucks cannot access a building on all sides. Because of the small setbacks of 420, it will be impossible to reach any fire on the back of the building without having to go through the yards of abutting homes. Even then, the trucks cannot get through.

Brookline appeals to developers. At the same time, there is a clear lack of respect for neighbors by having every project ask for relief with 'variances and/or special permits', including 'any additional relief the board may find necessary'. And the town most often concurs. Just this week we have received 3 notices for plans in our neighborhood that require special attention by the town planning and zoning boards. We have been to several planning board meetings in the past month that decided in favor of the developers with permission to avoid town requirements. And that does not begin to include 420 '...with no further notice to abutters or in the TAB.' The huge amount of development in JFK Crossing is fundamentally and adversely impacting our quality of life, with 420 leading that parade.

We are not opposed to development. We support development that makes sense in its surroundings, acknowledges the style and type of buildings nearby, and fits with the neighborhood. For the same reasons that our neighborhood appeals to developers, it would seem in the best interests of the town to ensure that those in the neighborhood are protected from overgrowth, addresses safety concerns, manages inappropriate planning and hit-and-run development. We need support from the town as part of the community. We ask for your help in changing the 420 project to make sense as part of the neighborhood.

Fred and Nancy Bennett

30 Coolidge St

Brookline MA 02446