

Drs. Kenneth and Shirie Leng
33 Florence Street
Newton, MA 02459

Newton City Hall
Office of Planning
Attn: Kathy Whewell
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

CC: Jane Santosuosso, Senator Cynthia Stone Creem, Representative Ruth Balsler, Mayor
Ruthanne Fuller, Councilor Crossley

6/22/2023

To the Newton Planning Board and the Zoning Board:

I am writing to express my deep opposition to the proposed Sunrise Facility. My property, 33 Florence Street, is next to the site and my backyard directly abuts the planned property. This is to be considered at the special permit hearing on June 27, which I cannot attend as I will be away.

Our little neighborhood on the west side of Florence Street comprises townhome-style duplexes that are owned by families with children. All the new housing construction in the area in the last year has been duplexes. It is zoned, as is the proposed building site, MR2. The drastic change from MR2 to BU4 defeats the whole purpose of zoning, part of which involves providing value to citizens that own property. I would argue that this proposed project does the opposite, discouraging prospective buyers from buying in an area without any sense of community or neighborhood cohesion. This has the potential to decrease the property values of everyone in the neighborhood. The site, if it must be developed at all, would be better used to add more duplex-style homes that promote the housing of families in a close-knit community with easy access to public transportation, shopping, elementary schools, and Newton Center.

The developers cite several large apartment complexes in the area to justify building their 5-story building, including The Farm at 99 Florence Street, Hampton Place at 77-79 Florence Street, and The Residences at Chestnut Hill on Boylston Street. These are all private, fully equipped apartments owned by the residents, not requiring big parking lots, staff coming and going, and multiple delivery trucks. I am saddened to hear that some sort of deal has been made with the residents of The Residences and that they have signed off on the project. No such discussion or accommodation has been made for the other abutters of the proposed building, including me or any of the other residences on Tanglewood Road whose backyards also back up to the proposed project.

The plans for the building, as rendered by Sunrise Incorporated, are alarming. The main entrance to the facility will be on Florence Street, a street that is mostly residential and already takes significant fast-moving traffic from Boylston Street. The position of the entrance virtually guarantees delays off Rt. 9. The traffic analysis suggests that traffic into the facility would be *less* than it currently is into Winston's Flowers, based on current traffic patterns. I suspect they will be proved wrong. Additionally, our experience with the Dana Farber Cancer Center across the street at Lifetime is that the presence of the health facilities in the building has significantly increased the presence of emergency vehicles and personnel. I have no reason to doubt that this will be true of the proposed facility as well. The entrance would be more appropriately positioned on Boylston Street, which is largely commercial, and the gardens positioned in the back, where it is quieter.

In addition to the location of the entrance, the Sunrise plans suggest that parking and delivery will be behind the building, essentially over the wall from my backyard. Trucking will be necessary since none of the apartments in the proposed building will have kitchens, thus the need for constant delivery of goods and services. This will be a consistent disruption and further erodes the community nature of the neighborhood.

In summary, I believe the building of a Sunrise nursing home facility would be detrimental to my family, the neighborhood, property values, and quality of living.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. and S. Leng', written in a cursive style.

Drs. Kenneth and Shirie Leng