To: Katie Whewell
Planner
Department of Planning & Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Date: May 24, 2023

Project #: 73153.00

From: Randy Hart, Principal

Re: Sunrise of Newton Senior Living Facility
Transportation Peer Review; BETA November 10, 2021

This memorandum has been prepared to respond to the November 10, 2021 transportation peer review conducted by the BETA Group. Each comment or questions is followed by a specific response.

TRAFFIC IMPACT AND ACCESS STUDY

The proposed development project proposes an 120-bed senior living facility in a new building to be constructed on the Winston Flowers site. Included within the building is a proposed underground parking garage to serve all users of the facility, residents, visitors, and staff. Access to the site will be provided by two driveways along Florence Street, one on the north side of the proposed building and one on the south side. The north driveway will be for short term parking and drop-off/pick-up operations, and the south driveway will be the primary access to the underground parking garage.

The study area includes the following five intersections.

- Route 9 at Employee Parking Lot Driveway (unsignalized)
- Route 9 at Florence Street (unsignalized)
- Florence Street at North Site Driveway (unsignalized)
- Florence Street at South Site Driveway (unsignalized)
- Florence Street at Tanglewood Road (unsignalized)

Comment 1: *The study area was found to be adequate.*

Response 1: No response necessary

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Existing daily traffic volumes were collected using an automatic traffic recorder on Florence Street north of Tanglewood Road for 48 hours on Wednesday, June 9, 2021, and Thursday, June 10, 2021. Turning Movement Counts (TMC) were also collected at the study intersections on Wednesday June 9, 2021 from 7:00AM to 9:00AM and 4:00PM to 6:00PM. The TIAS states that nearby traffic volume counts conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic were utilized to determine a 19% adjustment factor to the existing count data.

Comment 2: *Provide the location of the pre-pandemic counts, as well as the data and calculations used to determine the 19% volume adjustment.*

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Response 2: The nearest pre-pandemic count data available is at the intersection of Route 9 (Boylston Street) at The Shops at Chestnut Hill and the eastern site driveway of the proposed MedMen facility. Traffic volume data at this location was collected in June 2019, and adjusted to October 2020 conditions, as part of the October 2020 update to the Traffic Impact and Access Memorandum for the proposed recreational marijuana dispensary "MedMen". Utilizing the October 2020 Existing Conditions weekday evening traffic volume network, VHB was able to compare pre-pandemic eastbound and westbound traffic volumes on Route 9 (Boylston Street) with those collected in June 2021 at Route 9 (Boylston Street) at Florence Street as part of the Project. The result of the comparison is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Traffic Volume Comparison

Weekday Evening

Direction (Route 9)	Oct 2020 [a]	June 2021 [b]	Percent Difference
Eastbound	2235	1808	-19%
Westbound	1930	1943	1%

a Traffic volume data from MedMen October 2020 Traffic Impact and Access Memorandum at Route 9 at The Shops at Chestnut Hill & eastern MedMen site driveway. Counts collected in June 2019 and adjusted to October 2020.

b Traffic volume data collected in June 2021 at Route 9 at Florence Street.

As shown in Table 1, due to the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a decrease in traffic volumes of approximately 19% in the eastbound direction and an increase in traffic volumes of approximately 1% in the westbound direction along Route 9 (Boylston Street). Based on these findings, and to remain conservative, VHB adjusted all June 2021 traffic volume data by 19%. As noted, this adjustment is likely overly conservative and should be considered in the existing and future conditions traffic analyses. All traffic count data is included in the Attachments.

CRASH HISTORY

Crash data were obtained from the MassDOT database for the most recent five-year period available from 2014 to 2018. The highest crash rate, quantified as crashes per million entering vehicles, occurred at the intersection of Route 9 at Florence Street, and was found to be 0.12 MEV which is lower than the 0.52 MEV district average crash rates for unsignalized intersections.

Comment 3: *Based on the data, there does not appear to be any safety deficiencies at the study area intersections.*

Response 3: We agree.

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PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public Transportation options within the project area include the MBTA bus route 60 and the D branch of the MBTA's Green Line.

No credit was taken as part of this study for any trips arriving or departing via transit.

Comment 4: *This is appropriate given the proposed project use and proximity to transit.*

Response 4: We agree.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

The TIAS evaluated impacts over a seven-year period to 2028 from the initial traffic data collection in 2021, for both the No-Build and Build conditions.

An annual growth rate of 0.5% was applied to the raw volumes at study intersections based on the growth rate used in other studies within the city.

Comment 5: *BETA finds this growth rate to be reasonable.*

Response 5: No response necessary.

BUILD CONDITIONS

Trip Generation for the project was estimated using the Institute of Transportation Engineers, Trip Generation, 11th Edition Land Use Cod 254 (Assisted Living).

Comment 6: *The Land Use is appropriate*

Response 6: We agree

Comment 7: *BETA agrees with this assessment given the low demand currently being generated by the nursery, as shown in the existing traffic volume data.*

Response 7: No response necessary.

Comment 8: *The trip distributions are acceptable.*

Response 8: No response necessary.

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SIGHT DISTANCE

Sight distance analyses were performed at the existing site driveways along Florence Street. Both Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) and Intersection Sight Distance (ISD) were evaluated for both driveways. The posted speed limit of 30 mph was used for this assessment.

Comment 9: *Both proposed access driveways for the new site will be at the same location as the existing driveways. Performing the measurements at these driveways and the use of a 30-mph speed is appropriate.*

Response 9: No response necessary.

Comment 10: *BETA agrees with the assessment performed and the measurements recorded. However, the ISD measurement provided for the south site driveway looking right has a footnote that indicates the distance is visible to Route 9. Please clarify, as Route 9 is to the left of driveway. Also, please identify what measures could be taken to provide the desired ISD to the right.*

Response 10: VHB agrees with BETA that Table 2 in the TIA has an incorrect footnote and clarifies that the intersection site distance for the south site driveway looking *left* provides visibility to Route 9. As presented in Table 2 in the TIA, intersection site distance is not met looking right out of either driveway. To mitigate this, VHB recommends trimming vegetation within the vicinity of both intersections to improve sight lines. Additionally, to improve/maintain sight distance at both Site driveways, on-street parking between the driveways and just south of the south driveway should be eliminated.

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

Capacity analyses were performed for the study intersections using the Synchro software, based on the 2010 Highway Capacity Manual methodologies for the 2021 Existing, 2028 No-Build, and 2028 Build traffic volumes, during the weekday AM and weekday PM peak periods. The intersection of Route 9 at Florence Street currently operates at LOS F and is expected to continue to do so under both future scenarios. The Route 9 at Parking Lot intersection currently operates at LOS E and is expected to continue to do so under both future scenarios. All other study area intersections are expected to operate with LOS B or better.

Comment 11: *The proposed project traffic is not expected to have significant impacts on operations at any of the study intersections, when compared to the existing conditions.*

Response 11: We agree.

MITIGATION

The Proponent proposes to implement several Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures on site in an effort to minimize the project's impact on the surrounding roadways. The measures include:

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- Displaying transit maps on site in a central location;
- Post maps that show the location of MBTA train and bus stop locations;
- Providing secure bicycle storage on-site within the parking garage; and
- Implementing a car-pool rideshare program.

Comment 12: *BETA agrees that these measures should be implemented. Applicants shall also coordinate with the City regarding additional measures that shall be incorporated based on City's TDM standards and requirements.*

Response 12: A separate and distinct update of the TDM plan has been prepared under separate heading. A copy of that is included in the attachments of this document.

SITE PLANS

The applicant proposes to construct 46 parking stalls on-site, with 31 in the proposed underground garage, and 15 surface stalls; 5 in the short-term parking area accessed from the north site driveway, and 10 in the adjacent parking lot. Bike racks are proposed in the garage along the south wall near the garage entrance.

Comment 13: *The 46 parking stalls proposed is more than what is required for the 120 beds with 25 employees. The zoning regulations only required 38 spaces.*

Response 13: The Proponent operates 270 similar facilities nation-wide and has vast experience regarding the parking and operational needs of the project. They feel that the 46 spaces are required to adequately meet the parking needs of the project.

Comment 14: *The proponent should consider providing only the number of parking spaces needed to meet the City's requirements do not exceed them. Provide information on the expected parking demand needs for employees, residents, and visitors.*

Response 14 The parking spaces proposed meet the parking needs of the facility and also comply with the minimum zoning requirements for the proposed use. There is no parking code specifying a maximum allowed parking count and 31, more than two thirds of the spaces are provided in an underground parking garage below the building to meet the parking needs of the facility.

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Comment 15: *Clarify the intended use of each parking area, and who is expected to utilize each one; residents, employees, visitors.*

Response 15: The 5 parking spaces near the front door will be used primarily for short term parking and for the van that Sunrise will use for normal operations. The parking lot that is accesses from Route 9 (10 parking spaces) will be use as employee parking. The parking garage will be used for all other parking activity onsite.

Comment 16: *Indicate how many bicycle stalls will be provided in the proposed racks within the garage. Also please clarify how bicyclist will access the garage. Will the access be secure, and do you need a card key to gain entrance into the garage.*

Response 16 A Park-it bike rack with 11 bike stalls is proposed within the garage. Access will be provided through either the garage roll up doorway or the side door adjacent to the garage with security anticipated to be provided via a call box.

Comment 17: *Clarify whether vehicle access to the garage will be secure. If so, what is the proposed method to provide access, card, keypad?*

Response 17 The garage will be secured with a roll up door with access anticipated to be provided by a call box.

Comment 18: *Provide vehicle turning diagrams to illustrate how both garage trucks, food delivery vehicles will maneuver onto the site, to the dumpster and loading area, and then exit the site.*

Response 18 Delivery vehicles will utilize the driveway along the south side of the building to access the service area. These vehicles will conduct the same turning maneuver documented for fire truck access on sheet C9.00, Fire Truck Access and Snow Storage Plan.

Comment 19 *Is the Proponent proposing any changes to the parking regulations on Florence Street associated with on-street parking as part of the project?*

Response 19: To improve/maintain sight distance at both Site driveways, on-street parking between the driveways and just south of the south driveway should be eliminated. No other changes are proposed.

A pedestrian connection is proposed between the adjacent parking lot on Boylston Street and the site.

Comment 20: *Recommend providing an accessible route for this connection.*

Response 20 The accessible route for pedestrians from the Boylston Street parking area is provided using the sidewalk within the Boylston Street and Florence Street right-of-way.

Comment 21: *Coordinate with the Newton Fire Department regarding access and circulation of firetrucks at this site*

Response 21 VHB met with the Newton Fire Department on June 28, 2022 and reviewed access and circulation for fire trucks at this site. The turning analysis, documented on sheet C9.00, Fire Access and Snow Storage Plan,

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was presented and reviewed with the Fire Department. This analysis was prepared using vehicle dimensions provided by the Newton Fire Department. Based on the analysis, the fire truck vehicle has access to the back of the building with turn around provided beyond the entrance to the garage.

Comment 22: *Confirm that the plan for package delivery vehicles, such as UPS trucks, will be to utilize the north site driveway.*

Response 22 Package delivery vehicles, such as USPS, UPS, and Fedex will be able to utilize the north site driveway. Larger deliveries including food, supplies, and waste removal will utilize the south driveway to access the service area beyond the garage entry.

Comment 23: Plans should include additional detail regarding proposed traffic signage and pavement markings within the site. For example, the north driveway shall be clearly marked as one-way at both the entrance and exit.

Response 23 See site plan sheet C4.00, Site Layout and Materials Plan, for proposed pavement markings and signage.

Comment 24: *The site driveway in front of the building is 24 feet wide, which may be excessive. Evaluate whether the width of the driveway can be reduced. The Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum of 20 feet for two-way use, and 12 feet wide for on way use. The driveway in front of the building is indicated as one-way use.*

Response 24: The driveway in front of the building is intended to accommodate pick-up and drop-off with sufficient space to include a by-pass around stopped vehicles. A reduction below 24-feet would constrain operation of the pick-up/drop-off area. A 20-foot-wide driveway is proposed for the driveway to the garage and service area per Newton Regulations.

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