



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

To: Zoning Board of Appeals Members
From: Brenda Belsanti
Date: July 16, 2024
Subject: Materials for **July 16, 2024** Public Hearing

Packet 1

Hello,

Please see the following supplemental materials for the upcoming hearing on July 16, 2024 Public Hearing. The following board members are scheduled to sit: *Michael Rossi (Chair), Brooke Lipsitt, Stuart Snyder, Elizabeth Sweet, William McLaughlin, and Jennifer Pucci (alternate).*

1. Resident emails (13) dated June 10, 2024 to July 16, 2024

Thank you,

Brenda Belsanti

bbelsanti@newtonma.gov |

July 10, 2024
251 Adams Street
Nonantum, MA

Re: Crafts Street 40B Development

Dear ZBA Members:

I'm not sure why I'm bothering to write or speak at these meetings as I feel our community is being ignored by the ZBA committee. Our concerns are falling on deaf ears. I'm going to give it one last effort in the hope that someone on the ZBA committee decides to not just let us speak for 3 minutes, rather address the communities' concerns.

Our community is NOT against affordable housing. We would rather embrace it provided the ZBA addresses our concern about traffic, parking and density.

You have not addressed the issue of traffic. Crafts Street is failing to handle the current traffic now. It received an F report card, which was confirmed by your traffic peer reviewer and reaffirmed by City councilors Wright and Lucas. There is already an approved senior development that has been permitted for this street which will add more traffic. Adding 1,000 cars per day with the Boylston Properties development will only make matters tragically worse. The Nonantum community offered the suggestion of using Court Street for a third of the traffic as a means of egress to solve the issue. The ZBA has had no real consideration to using Court Street nor has it given an actual reason why Court Street can't be used. Worse, it has offered no alternative solution to address the traffic problem on Crafts Street.

This does not make sense. Why isn't Court Street being used as an access point? How do you plan to make Crafts Street have the capacity to handle the traffic and get its Grade/Rating to an acceptable level?

You are not listening to the communities concerns about parking. To its credit, at the last meeting Boylston Properties redesigned a few areas to add additional parking spots which was welcomed news to the community. Moments later the ZBA members suggested removing parking to add a community room. I have attended every meeting, NO ONE from the community has ever expressed concern over the need for a community room. We did not ask for this. The community wants more parking not less. Why are you inserting your personal preference over the needs of the community? WE WANT MORE PARKING!

Additionally concern over visitor parking has never been addressed. We have asked multiple times the question "where will people park when they come to visit?" but the concern has been ignored.

Worse ZBA members are pushing for community food trucks, farmers markets, and ice cream socials at the site. This development doesn't have the capacity to handle these type events and the community keeps expressing visitors parking concerns. Again, ZBA is ignoring the needs the community.

Page 2

We hear the development needs to have high density to enable the affordable units. The Nonantum community is being required to suffer the brunt of this high density, yet our community is not receiving mitigation in any form. Why can't Newton increase the local preference to these affordable units, so our children are able live in them and stay in Newton? What other direct Nonantum community mitigation is the ZBA suggested coming from this development? In other words, Nonantum will take the brunt of the issues, what will be done to benefit the Nonantum Community for handling the brunt of the issues?

Please don't ignore our concerns anymore. We feel disrespected. Please address our issues at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Janine Stewart

From: jim sbordone <jimmysbordonesr@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 11:52 PM
To: Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Subject: Court St

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Please OPEN COURT ST to and from this project!!!!

**Sincerely,
Jimmy**

From: Peter Bruce <pgbrb@rcn.com>
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 11:49 AM
To: Michela@boylprop.com
Cc: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Comments on the 78 Crafts Street Project

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi Michela,

This is just to follow up with Alyssa's message (immediately below) and to my June 26 email below (to which hers was a response).

I would appreciate it very much if you would respond to the query in my June 26 email, which was sent more than two weeks ago.

Since Alyssa was on vacation, or otherwise away from work in much of the intervening time, I did not know until July 9 that I should contact *you* about this.

Even though time is short, I hope you can reply before July 16th's ZBA meeting on 78 Crafts (which my email below mistakenly wrote would be July 3).

For your convenience, I have attached (SKM...) a scan of VHB's 7/15/2022 traffic generation memo for 34 Crafts St, mentioned in my email below.

It has the advantage of including only net peak hour and net average daily trips, though it needs to be adjusted for mode of transportation (private vehicle, walk, transit, etc).

Thanks for your consideration,
Peter Bruce
Newtonville

From: "Alyssa Sandoval" <asandoval@newtonma.gov>
To: "Peter Bruce" <pgbrb@rcn.com>
Cc: "City Council" <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>, "Brenda Belsanti" <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 11:45:47 AM
Subject: RE: Comments on the 78 Crafts Street Project

Hi Peter,

I think the best source of the additional information/data is Bolyston Properties/VAI since they input the raw data for the traffic assessment. I am going to forward your data request directly to Boylston Properties but please feel free to also follow up with the project manager contact there: Michela DeSantis at Michela@boylprop.com.

Thanks,
Alyssa

Alyssa Sandoval, AICP

Deputy Chief Planner
Pronouns: she/her/hers
City of Newton Planning & Development Department
1000 Commonwealth Ave | Newton, MA 02459
Desk: 617.796.1141
asandoval@newtonma.gov

Memorandum

To: Katie Whewell
City of Newton

Date: June 15, 2022

Project #: 15548.00

From: Randall C. Hart, Principal
Gabi Choi, EIT

Re: Crafts Street Elderly Housing with Services
Program Modification Traffic Generation
Newton, Massachusetts

VHB, on behalf of Mark Development (the "Proponent") has prepared this memorandum to reflect the changes in traffic generation that is expected with the change in program to the proposed elderly housing with services development on Crafts Street in Newton (the "Project"). The proposed project will include an approximately 2.7-acre site redevelopment of two commercial buildings and a school bus parking lot on Crafts Street and two residential properties on Court Street (the "Site").

Since the submittal of the traffic impact and access study in April 2022, some minor adjustments have been made to the development. The proposed changes in the building program are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Crafts Street Elderly Housing Changes in Building Program

Land Use	Previous Building Program (April 2022) ^a	June 2022 Updated Building Program	Change in Building Program
Independent living units	129 units	105 units	- 24 units
Assisted living units	52 units	52 units	No change
Memory care units	28 units	28 units	No change
Total units	209 units	185 units	- 24 units

^a Building Program as outlined in the Transportation Impact and Access Study submitted by VHB in April 2022.

As shown in Table 1, the revised building program results in approximately 24 fewer proposed independent living units. No other program changes are proposed to the Project.

Trip Generation Summary

To assess the changes that would be expected as a result of the program modifications, traffic generation projections have been prepared for the revised program.

The rate at which any development generates traffic is dependent upon the size, location, and concentration of surrounding developments. As mentioned previously, the revised Project will be the same land use with fewer independent living units. The ITE *Trip Generation Manual*¹ categorizes these land uses and provides weekday daily, weekday morning peak hour, and weekday evening peak hour unadjusted vehicle trip generation estimates for each use. The trip generation estimates for the proposed uses were projected using the same Land Use Code (LUC) 255 (Continuing Care Retirement Community). As the Project will include a mix of independent living units, assisted living units, and a memory care center, LUC 255 was determined to be the most applicable land use code as it represents a

¹ Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition, Institute of Transportation Engineers, Washington, D.C., 2017.

Table 3 Net New Site-Generated Vehicle Trips

	Existing Site Trips ^a	Proposed Trips ^b	Net New Trips
Weekday Daily ^c			
Enter	n/a	307	n/a
<u>Exit</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<u>307</u>	<u>n/a</u>
Total	n/a	614	n/a
Weekday Morning			
Enter	19	30	+11
<u>Exit</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>+7</u>
Total	28	46	+18
Weekday Evening			
Enter	6	31	+25
<u>Exit</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>+34</u>
Total	20	79	+59

a Based-on traffic counts conducted by VHB in February 2022, as presented in Table 3 of the April 2022 TIA.

b Trip Generation estimate based ITE LUC 255 (Continuing Care Retirement Community) based on regression equations for 185 units.

c Existing site-generated trips only counted during the weekday morning and evening peak hours.

As shown in Table 2, the updated building program is expected to result in approximately 18 new vehicle trips (30 entering/16 exiting) during the weekday morning peak hour and approximately 59 new vehicle trips (31 entering/48 exiting) during the weekday evening peak hour. It should be noted that to provide a highly conservative analysis, no mode share credits have been applied to the trip generation estimates and the Project-generated trips assume that 100-percent of the Site traffic will access the Site via private vehicles.

Conclusion

Overall, the reduction in the number of independent living units proposed on-Site is expected to have a negligible impact on the Project trip-generation. With the revised building program, the Project is expected to generate approximately 18 new vehicle trips during the weekday morning peak hour and 59 new vehicle trips during the weekday evening peak hour.

Attachments

Trip Generation Worksheets

ITE TRIP GENERATION WORKSHEET

(11th Edition, Updated 2021)

LANDUSE: Continuing Care Retirement Community
 LANDUSE CODE: 255 Independent Variable --- Units
 SETTING/LOCATION: General Urban/Suburban
 JOB NAME: 15548.00 UNITS (#): 185
 JOB NUMBER: Proposed Crafts Street Senior Housing

WEEKDAY

RATES:	# Studies	R ²	Total Trip Ends			Independent Variable Range			Directional Distribution	
			Average	Low	High	Average	Low	High	Enter	Exit
DAILY	9	0.98	2.47	1.98	4.71	998	242	2,238	50%	50%
AM PEAK (ADJACENT ST)	15	0.95	0.15	0.10	0.32	871	242	2,238	65%	35%
PM PEAK (ADJACENT ST)	15	0.94	0.19	0.14	0.45	871	242	2,238	39%	61%

TRIPS:		BY AVERAGE			BY REGRESSION		
		Total	Enter	Exit	Total	Enter	Exit
DAILY		458	229	229	614	307	307
AM PEAK (ADJACENT ST)		28	18	10	46	30	16
PM PEAK (ADJACENT ST)		35	14	21	79	31	48

SATURDAY

RATES:	# Studies	R ²	Total Trip Ends			Independent Variable Range			Directional Distribution	
			Average	Low	High	Average	Low	High	Enter	Exit
DAILY	5	1.00	2.06	1.96	3.00	1,523	242	2,238	50%	50%
PEAK OF GENERATOR	5	0.99	0.23	0.21	0.39	1,523	242	2,238	52%	48%

TRIPS:		BY AVERAGE			BY REGRESSION		
		Total	Enter	Exit	Total	Enter	Exit
DAILY		382	191	191	578	289	289
PEAK OF GENERATOR		43	22	20	80	42	38

SUNDAY

RATES:	# Studies	R ²	Total Trip Ends			Independent Variable Range			Directional Distribution	
			Average	Low	High	Average	Low	High	Enter	Exit
DAILY	5	1.00	1.98	1.81	2.79	1,523	242	2,238	50%	50%
PEAK OF GENERATOR	5	0.98	0.22	0.18	0.32	1,523	242	2,238	52%	48%

TRIPS:		BY AVERAGE			BY REGRESSION		
		Total	Enter	Exit	Total	Enter	Exit
DAILY		368	184	184	530	265	265
PEAK OF GENERATOR		41	21	20	61	32	29

From: Louise Dube <louisedubeed@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 11:47 AM
To: Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Cc: dmicley@newtonmma.gov; Tarik Lucas <tluucas@newtonma.gov>
Subject: 78 Crafts Street support

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear Zoning Appeals Board:

I am writing to strongly support the 78 Crafts St. project. It is absolutely evident that we are in very short supply of housing as a state and that it is hurting our economy. Newton must do its part to generate additional units. 78 Crafts street meets these goals in an area that needs an update and upgrade. The fact that the project is designed to generate affordable housing is a bonus. We need more housing full stop.

Most Chapter 40B projects have 25% of the units affordable at 80% of area median income (AMI). But this project will have 20% of the units (59 units) reserved for households earning 50% of area median income (AMI), making them affordable to people who would otherwise be priced out of the Newton housing market.

Without new affordable housing like this, Newton is a city affordable only to the wealthy, preventing not only families of limited means, but also young people seeking to raise families, and seniors seeking to downsize the opportunity to live here. This Crafts St. project will help our city move along a path of greater economic diversity.

This project will transform an area with a long history of industrial and automotive uses, which continue to create environmental impacts of hazardous waste and inadequate stormwater management, to residential housing which is compatible with the areas surrounding the site. Because 78 Crafts will meet the Passive House standards, the project will also help the environment while helping us create a more vibrant and inclusive community.

For these reasons, I urge you to grant the Comprehensive Permit.

Thank you,

**Louise Dube, Christopher Gunning, Daniel Harris and Sophie Harris
14 Phillips Lane
Newtonville, MA 02460**

From: jim sbordone <jimmysbordonesr@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 10:48 PM

To: Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>; City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Mayor Ruthanne Fuller <rfuller@newtonma.gov>

Subject: Court St

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Who on Court St is in the Developers pocket not allowing it to be open for traffic for this project!!!

Sincerely,

Jimmy

From: Teresa Sauro <stat766@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, July 13, 2024 10:20 AM
To: Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Cc: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Mayor Ruthanne Fuller <rfuller@newtonma.gov>
Subject: FW: ZBA Letter

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Dear ZBA

Members

As President of the Nonantum Neighborhood Association I am writing to share that there is growing concern within the Nonantum Community that the ZBA board is simply ignoring our concerns.

Our community is NOT against Affordable Housing rather we embrace it.

Nonantum is the #1 most affordable village, and we are the gateway to Newton. Our concerns are valid such as traffic, parking, density and need to be addressed by the ZBA instead of ignoring them.

. Traffic. Craft St is failing to handle the existing current traffic. Craft Street received an F on a traffic report which was confirmed by your traffic peer reviewer. We have presented video evidence supporting the communities concerns and the roads failure has been reaffirmed by many city councilors including Councilors Wright and Lucas. There is already an approved senior development that has been permitted for this street which will cause even more traffic. Adding 1000 cars per day with the Boylston Development will only make things tragically worse. The Nonantum Community offered the suggestion of using Court Street as a means of egress to elevate congestion in our community. The ZBA has had no real exploration of this potential solution worse it has offered no alternative solution to address the traffic problem on Craft St.

The community wants answers- why isn't Court St being used as a point of egress to take the burden off of Craft St?

How do you plan to make Craft St have the capacity to handle the traffic and get its Grade/rating to an acceptable level?

. Parking. There is simply not enough regardless of what developers say! The US Census determined that we citizens have 2 cars per household. This development proposes less than one. To its credit at the last meeting, Boylston properties redesigned a few areas to add additional parking spots which was welcomed news to the community but still not nearly

enough spaces. After presented by Boylston moments later the ZBA members suggested removing parking to add a community room.

NO ONE from the community has ever expressed concern over the need for an additional Community Room.

We did not ask for this community room what we want is more parking not less parking. We have expressed this message loud and clear and you are ignoring us. You are inserting your own personal preference over the needs of the actual community.

WE DON'T WANT ANOTHER COMMUNITY ROOM- WE WANT MORE PARKING!

Additionally concern over visitor parking has never been addressed, we have asked multiple times the question "where will people park when they come to visit?" but the concern has been ignored.

ZBA members are pushing for community food trucks, farmers markets and ice cream socials at the site which was the suggestions of Boylston Properties. This development proposal development doesn't have the capacity to handle these type of events and the community keeps expressing these visitors parking concerns . Again ZBA is ignoring the needs the community.

. Density we hear that the development needs to have such high density to enable the affordable units. Density brings traffic, congestion and parking issues. How about the ZBA solve these problems or lower the numbers of units to 200.

Baring fixing the issues, then at a minimum, acknowledge that the Nonantum community is being required to suffer the brunt of this high density. Yet Nonantum is not receiving mitigation in any form. Why can't Newton increase the local preference to these affordable units so children from Nonantum can be able live in them and stay in our community? What other direct Nonantum community Mitigation is the ZBA suggesting come from this development? In other words, since Nonantum will take the brunt of this high-density development, what will be done to benefit the Nonantum Community for suffering the brunt of the issues and having a diminished quality of life?

Please don't turn a blind eye to our valid concerns anymore. Act upon our concerns and stop disrespecting Nonantum.

Sincerely,

Terry Sauro, President

Nonantum Neighborhood Association

From: Teresa Sauro <stat766@comcast.net>

Sent: Saturday, July 13, 2024 9:20 AM

To: Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>

Cc: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Mayor Ruthanne Fuller <rfuller@newtonma.gov>; berardiam@aol.com; berardi@pl@aol.com; marcelachauk@hotmail.com; 'Jason Gee' <jason@arsenalperformance.com>; chuck22p@gmail.com; Fatty Pellegrine <fatspj@hotmai.com>; john devito <devitojohn1@gmail.com>; Mairead devlin <maireadt@comcast.net>; Anita Ulloa <aniulloa@gmail.com>; pjferololito@gmail.com; rlp1212@comcast.net; 'antoinette gentile' <plumis8@yahoo.com>; 'Jeffrey Di luglio' <jedeugdi@yahoo.com>; jimmysbordonesr@gmail.com; 'dianne.proia' <dianne.proia@verizon.net>; Ann Smith <amsmith7@verizon.net>; archanaszpak@gmail.com; archanaszpak@gmail.com; Danitalo80@yahoo.com; DAVID SMITH <eastbrook@verizon.net>; Deb Toyias <debtoyias@gmail.com>; Melissa Decina <Pmdallas013@yahoo.com>; Jordan Wagner <sales@trupod.com>; rina leone <rinaleone@hotmail.com>; louise luchetti <lluch52@yahoo.com>; Maria Meaney <marialmeaney@yahoo.com>; maria proia <maria.proia22@gmail.com>; Nancy Patriacca <nancypatriacca@yahoo.com>; 'Janet Sterman' <jjsterman@gmail.com>; 'Robert Earle Coppola' <robert@earlecoppola.com>; 'Teri' <teri_deodato@yahoo.com>; didi_614 <didi_614@yahoo.com>; 'HauckBurke, Marcela' <Marcela.Hauck-Burke@steward.org>; Bernie Goulding <bg@novainv.com>; 'Kay Khan' <kaykhan7@gmail.com>; louise luchetti <lluch52@yahoo.com>; lindaa1227@yahoo.com; 'alison leary' <alisonlearymooradian@gmail.com>; andrea mazzola <andreamazzola4622@gmail.com>; Barbara Wong <WongJBT@gmail.com>; 'benny arpino' <BarpinoJr@gmail.com>; 'daniella' <marzilli03@gmail.com>; janinestewart510@yahoo.com; Jimmy Pellegrine <jimpell538@gmail.com>; 'john oliver' <john@jayareo.com>; johnkathymac@yahoo.com; linda de Valpine <linda@greentailtable.com>; 'lisa difelice' <lisa.difelice@arbelli.com>; 'lois Dominique' <loismargaret@gmail.com>; 'maria greenberg' <echomaria1@gmail.com>; leofm294 <leofm294@gmail.com>; 'rajeev parlikar' <rajeevparlikar@gmail.com>; 'rich sauro' <abtechrich@verizon.net>; 'stacey horsik' <horsiks@rcn.com>

Subject: FW: ZBA Letter

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Dear ZBA Members

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Baring fixing the issues, then at a minimum, acknowledge that the Nonantum community is being required to suffer the brunt of this high density. Yet Nonantum is not receiving mitigation in any form. Why can't Newton increase the local preference to these affordable units so children from Nonantum can be able live in them and stay in our community? What other direct Nonantum

community Mitigation is the ZBA suggesting come from this development? In other words, since Nonantum will take the brunt of this high-density development, what will be done to benefit the Nonantum Community for suffering the brunt of the issues and having a diminished quality of life?

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Sincerely,

Terry Sauro, President

Nonantum Neighborhood Association

From: Jonathan Bassett <jabassett@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 8:47 AM

To: Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>; David Micley <dmicley@newtonma.gov>; Tarik Lucas <tlucas@newtonma.gov>

Subject: 78 Crafts Street

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hello, Zoning Board Folks:

I am writing to let you know of my very strong support for the 78 Crafts Street project. This project is unusual, in that it makes real progress towards goals that most Newtonites share: making our city affordable for regular folks and also more green.

Affordability. This project is designed in both its mix of unit sizes and the rent commitment by the developer to have an exceptional number of affordable units of varying sizes. We have an opportunity here to welcome families of nurses, teachers, tradespeople, and others who are generally priced out of Newton into our city. We should take that opportunity.

Green Building. This project is exceptionally "green" in its construction, and is located close to public transit. This is precisely the sort of construction we need to support if we are to do anything positive about climate change. Have you noticed the hot weather these last two weeks? Me too. Let's do something about it.

I hope that you will vote to grant the comprehensive permit. Blocking projects like this one simply makes our city more exclusive, more expensive, and less climate friendly.

Thank you,

**Jonathan Bassett
30 Phillips Lane, Newtonville**

From: Peter Bruce <pgbrb@rcn.com>
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 12:27 PM
To: Alyssa Sandoval <asandoval@newtonma.gov>
Cc: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Subject: Re: Comments on the 78 Crafts Street Project

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hi Alyssa and Brenda,
Thanks Alyssa, for your recent email!

The pages that a Boylston Properties representative refers to as a source for the numbers I seek confirms my hypothesis that the trips predicted to be generated from 34 Crafts (the approved SRG/Mark Development senior living project) have not been included transparently, or perhaps at all, in the capacity analysis worksheets and level of service calculations that VAI presented in its *Transportation Impact Analysis* (henceforth *TIA*) for 78 Crafts Street.

Most obviously, the index (cited below in italics, from p. 278 of *TIA*) has no entry for the anticipated intersection with Crafts Street and the driveway for the prospective senior living center.

CAPACITY ANALYSIS WORKSHEETS

Watertown Street (Route 16) at Crafts Street

Crafts Street at Maguire Court and Clinton Street

Crafts Street at Lincoln Road

Washington Street at Harvard Street

Washington Street at Crafts Street

Washington Street at Adams Street and Lewis Terrace

Washington Street at Jackson Road

(The index includes no page numbers.)

Nor does it include the intersection of the Whole Foods driveway with Crafts Street, also likely to be a prodigious trip generator in 2031. On the other hand, the VHB report, from which *TIA* excerpted several pages, has trip vectors and counts for both intersections. (It lists the 34 Crafts street intersection with the senior living project's driveway as "29 Crafts Street," the address immediately across the street from 34 and 36 Crafts) in "Figure 10." (See *TIA*, p. 268.)

Failing to provide a worksheet for this projected intersection is symptomatic of VAI's general disregard for illuminating the likely trips generated by a future 34 Crafts Street project. As I've noted earlier, it also fails to do this in its Executive Summary and various diagrams, as well as these worksheets. If VAI is relying on VHB's trip counts for the 29/34 Crafts and for Whole Foods' intersections for its capacity and level of service analyses, it should say so.

Please forward these comments to the appropriate person(s) at VAI as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Peter Bruce

P.S. Alyssa, it was a good idea to include a link to the VAI's traffic study, but unfortunately it does not work (at least on my system). I hope you can fix it.
P.P.S. Brenda, please incorporate this thread in the ZBA's collection of public comments for 78 Crafts, if you haven't already done so.

From: "Alyssa Sandoval" <asandoval@newtonma.gov>
To: "Peter Bruce" <pgbrb@rcn.com>
Cc: "City Council" <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>, "Brenda Belsanti" <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 2:42:06 PM
Subject: RE: Comments on the 78 Crafts Street Project

Hi Peter,

Apologies for the multiple emails today. We just heard back from the contact for Boylston Properties after directing your request to them. They indicated that the data that you requested was located in the TIA Appendix. I am sending you a link to the traffic analysis [here](#). The appendix is quite long but it would appear the section "Capacity Analysis Worksheets" starting approximately at page 278 of the pdf, is relevant to your request.

Thanks,
Alyssa

Alyssa Sandoval, AICP
Deputy Chief Planner
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From: Alyssa Sandoval
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 1:45 PM
To: Peter Bruce <pgbrb@rcn.com>
Cc: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Subject: RE: Comments on the 78 Crafts Street Project

Hi Peter,

We recommend that you submit your request for the additional information on the traffic assessment so that it can be part of the public record and be submitted to the ZBA. Could you send it to Brenda Belsanti (also copied) at bbelsanti@newtonma.gov?

Thank you,
Alyssa

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From: Alyssa Sandoval
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 11:46 AM
To: Peter Bruce <pgbrb@rcn.com>
Cc: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>; Brenda Belsanti <bbelsanti@newtonma.gov>
Subject: RE: Comments on the 78 Crafts Street Project

Hi Peter,

I think the best source of the additional information/data is Bolyston Properties/VAI since they input the raw data for the traffic assessment. I am going to forward your data request directly to Boylston Properties but please feel free to also follow up with the project manager contact there: Michela DeSantis at Michela@boylprop.com.

Thanks,
Alyssa

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To the ZBA via Brenda Belsanti and City Council

We wanted to voice our concerns on the Crafts Street 40B development.

We have previously emailed you with our concerns and are once again reaching out because we feel that ZBA and City Council are not looking out for this community.

We feel you are overcrowding and creating more chaos in an already very busy area and it's becoming impossible to be able to travel the roads without increasing our travel time x3 of what it is normally.

All points mentioned in the attached communication you received via email from Janine Stewart are fully supported by us and several others in the neighborhood.

We understand from the attached agenda that this will be discussed at the next ZBA meeting which is scheduled for next Tuesday, July 16th at 7:00 p.m.

Please hear our concerns and accept our feedback and recommendations.

Best regards,

Anna Berardi 157 Chapel St

Paula Berardi 161 Chapel St

Brenda

The abutters have engaged a water engineer. He wanted to know if the issue of the 2 inch requirement has recently been addressed by the developer because the developer said they were going to try to achieve that target. Also will that question be addressed by the developer tomorrow night at the hearing? If not, when would it be taken up?

Finally, would someone be able to distribute a highlighted hard copy of the report by the engineer before he speaks at the public hearing and/or could he share his screen for 3 or 4 slides to illustrate points that he would make during his remarks?

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MORE FLAWS IN VAI'S TRAFFIC STUDY

Traffic studies are notoriously bad at predicting future traffic. And we see such weaknesses in VAI's attempt to forecast local traffic around 34 and 78 Crafts Streets.

A major flaw is that VAI uses pre-pandemic data to predict such growth in 2031.

Specifically, it found average daily trip levels grew about 1% between 2018-2019 at 17 major intersections in and around Newton and then extrapolated this to 2031.

But using data from before the pandemic is inconsistent with VAI's own logic. That's because in response to peer reviewer criticism it replaced its use of 2015-2019 census data with post-pandemic census data to revise its trip generation figures from 78 Crafts. It rejected its earlier numbers asserting, **"This is out of date, especially with pandemic era mode shifts."**

VAI needs to follow the same logic in projecting local traffic growth, especially since **traffic has grown unexpectedly since the pandemic** in Massachusetts. Data from the Federal Highway Administration and GPS and WAZE data all point to traffic growth in the state, and especially in Newton, **growing at least twice as fast as the 1% rate posited by VAI.**¹ WAZE and other apps directing drivers to Washington and Watertown Streets as alternatives to the Pike likely also account for some of this increase.

Fortunately, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, in 2014, performed a high-

quality study of the Washington Street Corridor, examining the same intersections on Washington Street as VAI.² Its 2014 study allows apples-to-apples comparisons with VAI's data, so we can see how much traffic grew at these intersections over the past nine years.

This comparison shows that overall, peak hour trips at the Washington Street intersections with Jackson Road, Adams Street and Lewis Terrace, and the Crafts Street intersections grew at a rate of about 2%/year. And the trip increases at Adams and Crafts intersections grew especially rapidly. If they continued to grow at that rate, by 2031 we would have, compared to VAI's predictions, **roughly 450 more evening peak hour vehicle trips at the Adams/Lewis Terrace/Washington and 140 more such trips at Craft's and Washington.**³ This compares with only about 100 total evening peak hour trips to be generated by the new developments at 34 and 78 Crafts, adding even more stress to intersections that are already expected to be near, at, or overcapacity in 2031 (LOS D, E, and F).

Given the major increase in traffic, post-pandemic, **we should not be relying only on pre-pandemic data for forecasting.**

Another useful metric could be created if the same 17 key intersections VAI analyzed before the pandemic to derive its 1% annual growth rate were updated with recent trip numbers.

¹ For a more detailed discussion and sources, see page 8 of "Response to Boylston Properties LLC Application for a Comprehensive Permit at 78 Crafts Street," by Peter Harrington, Robert Kavanagh, and myself, submitted as part of public testimony for this project, March 20, 2024.

² from Chen-Yuan Wang. "Technical Memorandum: Washington Street Sub-Regional Priority Roadway Study in Newton." Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. 1/22/15. See Figure 3, p. 34 for the 2014 figures cited below.

³ Calculations available upon request.