



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

City Hall

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Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Brenda Belsanti, Zoning Board Clerk

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 28, 2024.

7:00 p.m.

Hybrid and remote via ZOOM

Board Members Present: Michael Rossi (Chair), Brooke Lipsitt, Elizabeth Sweet, Stuart Snyder, William McLaughlin, and Jennifer Pucci (alternate)

Staff Present: Brenda Belsanti, ZBA Clerk; Katie Whewell, Chief Planner; Alyssa Sandoval, Deputy Chief Planner; and Jennifer Wilson, Assistant City Solicitor (remote) and Barney Heath, Director of Planning & Development.

A public hearing of the Newton Zoning Board of Appeals was held as a hybrid meeting in person and virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. on the following petitions:

1. **#11-23** 78 Crafts Street Newton LLC, requesting a Comprehensive Permit, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 40B, to construct a 307-unit residential development on a 4.76 square acre lot located at 78-84 Crafts Street, 68-70 Crafts Street, 9 Maguire Court, 17-19 Maguire Court, 67R Court Street, 63 Court Street, 13-15 Maguire Court, 24 Maguire Court, 31 Maguire Court, and 31R Maguire Court within the Multi-Residence 1 (MR-1) and Manufacturing (M) zoning districts. The proposal includes 62 affordable units and 263 parking spaces.
2. Discuss and/or adopt changes to the City of Newton Rules of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Agenda Item 1: #11-23 78 Crafts Street, Newton LLC requesting a comprehensive permit. Sitting Members: Michael Rossi (Chair), Brooke Lipsitt, Elizabeth Sweet, William McLaughlin, Stuart Snyder and Jennifer Pucci (alternate).



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Documents Submitted:

1. Submissions from Applicant
 - a. Sustainability Plan dated February 12, 2024.
 - b. Activity in Use Limitation Termination Letter dated February 16, 2024.
 - c. Transportation Impact Assessment dated January 31, 2024.
2. Memorandum from the Planning Department with attachments dated February 21, 2024.
3. Peer Review Memo from NBBJ dated February 15, 2024.
4. Peer Review Memo from Horsley-Witten dated February 15, 2024.
5. I & I Memorandum for City Engineer
6. Resident (50+) Emails

Testimony:

Chair Rossi opened the meeting directing the public how to submit comments to the ZBA so they will be part of the public record. He also clarified why the Board members were not able to speak with the public at the site visit that had happened the day before.

Andrew Copelotti, Principal, Boylston Properties, presented the updates for the project including meetings with both the peer reviewers and community members. The presentation focused on building design and massing, stormwater engineering, landscape and site design, and transportation. Shadow studies have been completed. The 3D model is 90% done. Gave status on upcoming studies and work to be done.

Michael Bennet, Principal, Architectural Team, presented the shadow studies.

Daniel LaCivita, Traffic Engineer, Vanasse & Associates, presented the traffic study.

Ms. Sandoval presented a Planning overview of the project including departmental reviews for DPW sewer analysis and Urban Forestry landscape review and the peer reviews received and waiting for.



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Chair Rossi explained the purpose of the independent peer reviewers for the City and the Board for the public.

Alan Mountjoy, Architect & Urban Designer, NBBJ, Boston, presented his review of submissions by the applicant that were prior to February 15th and the current building and landscaping plans. He highlighted the areas of progress by the applicant and the areas of concern and gave suggestions to the applicant for resolution of these concerns.

Ms. Sandoval presented next steps from the applicant include the 3D model, renderings from the abutting properties, stormwater review, transportation review, and site design review.

Chair Rossi asked for comments from the Board.

Ms. Sweet stated that this presentations have been helpful. The amount of 50% affordable housing is very much appreciated and needed in the community. She stated she smelled a lot of chemicals on the site visit so what sort of remediation will need to be done to make it safe for people there. She has read all of the letters from everyone were issues on traffic and parking and would like to see if there is way to change the thinking to how a community can think about reducing driving overall including the neighbors and Newton at large. We need to all drive less.

Mr. Copelotti stated they did several borings on several parcels and feel comfortable is cleaner than they assumed it would be, but most importantly there is no contamination in the ground water. Some of the activity on the industrial businesses yesterday may have contributed some of the smells. Some of the soil will be removed. The proposed parking counts mimic Trio and AutHe hopes that the transit-oriented location will help reduce parking needs. Newtonville will be the first Commuter Rail enhancement and we hope residents will take advantage of that.

Mr. Snyder stated he wanted to focus on the peer reviewer comments from NBBJ and the issues related to that. This it's very good timing from his perspective simply because we were just there yesterday, physically on site, and it was rather staggering. He is going to be a little less gentle then Mr. Mountjoy and he agree with the suggestions that were made but says that it's a very large site



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and even though the building massing in general, might not equate to other projects we've looked at that really require paring down. What strikes him about this one is the extreme lack of green space and open space in the plan. Coupled with what he heard, which is based on the current planning where parking is on the first level of these buildings, and then obviously in a separate parking structure, the experience of being on that site is remarkably unappealing, unattractive, and not at all in keeping with what that neighborhood in terms of its residential aspects, calls to mind. He would like to see and would look much more favorably upon this project if there were an outright elimination of perhaps one of the buildings all together and a focus instead, on making the lived experience of the people who will be there even at the risk, and sad to say, of a reduction in the overall number of affordable units. There are 307 proposed units it's not up to him to revise this plan, but we also have to factor in what the overall impact and result is going to be, notwithstanding, the sheer numbers of units created and the idea that you could call this a meaningful pass through for either walking or biking or anything like that, referring to my colleague Miss Lipsett has previously said, about not this project but another one that the landscaping plan seems to be more of an excuse than it was an actual plan. It feels that way to him on this one too. He is not excited about what he has seen so far in terms of what's being presented.

Mr. Copelotti stated that he would agree to disagree with some of Mr. Snyder's comments. We think we're making a tremendous improvement to that site. He's giving short shrift to the pedestrian connectivity and those things that we're creating. There's zero square footage of open space on that site now and we're creating 40,000 to 50,000 square feet of what we consider to be usable space. The site certainly is not without its challenges, from its shape and its layout and we recognize that we think that some of the ideas that Mr. Mountjoy has brought here tonight are certainly ideas we would love to investigate further with him through that sort of peer review process. There will be some things we can do and there will be lots of things we probably can't do. We will certainly litigate those issues here over the next several months.

Ms. Lipsitt stated it's been a very interesting evening. She thanked Mr. Mountjoy and is actually quite astonished at the level of redesign that you and your team have attempted and the really exciting ideas you've put forward. She is just going to start with where she was before then. She said at our opening hearing on this item that she was dismayed by the ground level parking under the buildings and she continues to be dismayed and she thinks that Mr. Copelotti said something



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earlier about they were studying landscape and decorative screening for that parking. That wasn't what she had in mind. What she had in mind was taking that ground level parking away. When we worked on this board worked on the 40B for Dunstan East further down Washington Street one of the things that we encouraged the proponent to do, and that they did quite successfully, was turn the streetscape into a vibrant place where there was interaction with the neighborhood. And that's what she had in mind by doing away with parking, and in particular, the building that faces Crafts Street. There is nothing appealing about walking by a built building that has no doors and no windows at ground level and we are trying to encourage people to walk and not to be in their cars. We definitely need to do that. She remembers she mentioned it to Mr. Copelotti when we were on our site visit yesterday that she would bring up at this hearing several of the letters that we have received, even referred to this as former wetlands, and we saw some illustration of that this evening. She was assured that it's not a problem. She does not know whether it's a problem or not. She would certainly like to know more about that and assumes that we will learn more about that as we get more engineering studies, but she thought maybe that was the excuse for why the parking had to be at ground level. If there's no wetlands problem she does not know why the parking can't be underground. That certainly is a concern. She agrees with comments that have been made by others that the buildings need to be stepped back as has been encouraged in the designs the in the design models that have been approved in the Village Center District for instance. She was struck yesterday when we were at the site, and we stood behind the Fraser Engineering Building and talked about the building letter that is that's supposed to be parallel to Court Street and a neighbor asked how high is this building going to be? Or it could have been one of her colleagues and the answer was 50 feet. Somebody said how big is 50 feet and she pointed to the top of the tree and said that's about 50 feet. She believes it was the landscape consultant who said yes, that's about 50 feet. That's a very high building to be to be in that location. So somehow these buildings at the edges of the property, in particular abutting Court Street and abutting Craft Street, feels much too tall. There was an earlier comment maybe by Mr. Mountjoy, maybe by someone else, that possibly making things lower at the edges and higher in the middle might be an approach and it certainly is something that we have looked at in other projects. She would like to hear that this issue about shadows on this DPW property. She really would like to hear from the Planning Department at some point about what the city's long-term vision for the utilization of that property is. She can't imagine ever taking down the stables building itself, but that represents only a tiny fraction of that very large parcel. She would love to know what you have got in mind for that. In the NBBJ report



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there was a quote that was talking about how this project related to the residences across Crafts Street and Mr. Mount Joy's report said and she quoted 'it was visual dwarfing of the neighboring residential properties' and that's really how she felt about the proximity of this very tall building to Crafts Street.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that he is in agreement with a lot of what his colleagues have said. His sense is that this site, on the one hand, is a spectacularly well located and positioned parcel for redevelopment, but on the other hand it faces a number of challenges as we've heard. It's very flat and very low. It has a really odd geometry or set of geometries as a result of the assemblage, which makes for some really obtuse angles and some interesting challenges. He thinks the bigger challenges are the fact that its perimeter is surrounded by relatively low density residential and there lies much of the challenge. He likes to think that it's not all that different from a lot of the 40Bs that we have seen, and many of which thanks to Mr. Mountjoy's presentation, we were able to see again tonight, examples where similar planning challenges and design challenges were faced and solved or at least mitigated through step backs, through setbacks, and through underground parking. We've identified all the issues. Hats off to Mr. Montoya for the amount of effort he put in to summarize it, but that's been those are the topics that will be raised by those of us on the Board, by our professional staff, by our consultants, and by the neighbors. It's not rocket science what this site needs in terms of the elbow grease to get it from where it is to where it can be. We're off to a reasonable start, but we have a long way to go. The initial plan with all the parking was somewhat uninspired especially given what else we've seen come through this Board in the last several years in terms of these older industrial sites that have been reused for relatively high-density housing and made to fit in the neighborhoods in which they sit. None of it's perfect, but I think this is exactly the kind of process we need and look forward to continuing in the dialogue.

Ms. Pucci stated that she appreciated the presentation tonight and all the input and engagement from the neighbors in the process. It's been helpful. Big picture she shares a lot of what's been said in terms of concerns, but to briefly summarize this to keep it moving. She sees a lot of opportunity with this site with the parcels, but it is an odd shape and she has concerns about the current massing and scale of the proposed project. It doesn't seem to fit within the neighborhood as proposed both in terms of the height and scale and the massing. There's work to be done there. She thinks that it does not achieve the stated goal of the applicant to create a village like atmosphere



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and it really is that first level parking. It's just, and Mr. Snyder said it well, it's fundamentally uninviting as a place to live to have 75% of that first story was kind of dead space. That's a key area to work on to make this actually inviting for the people who will live there and actually inviting and engaging for the neighbors around who are hopefully going to have meaningful green space to share in in a meaningful kind of well needed pathway from Crafts all the way through to Court Street. There there's a lot you could do with this, but believes there's quite a ways to go to make it meaningful given the current state of the proposal. She echoes the point about kind of more meaningful pedestrian and bicycle access. It was great point to highlight the number of conflict points around the current path and how inviting and usable and safe what the current proposal will be. Just to comment on the green space that it presents now as fringe around what are incredibly large buildings and there's a lot more you could do to make this an inviting neighborhood area. There's a lot more to come. I look forward to more dialogue and thank everyone for the participation

Chair Rossi stated that there was a couple of sentences from Mr. Mountjoy's report that really caught his attention. He wrote in summary, "we are having ongoing concerns about nearly all of the proposed waivers to current zoning sought by the proponent we understand the need for additional affordable housing and are sympathetic to the need to extend exceed certain zoning limits to achieve this goal, however, we have pointed out many issues that concern the health, safety and welfare of Newton residents, particularly those that will be most impacted by new development". He has sat on a number of many at this point 40B projects and he does not recall reading any comments from NBBJ or another peer reviewer that are as direct, and frankly as critical, or at least expressing such concern, about a project. These concerns, specifically the go to the health, safety and welfare of new residents. These go to the criteria that we are required to consider under 40B. These are not aesthetic issues. These are these are exactly the types of things that this Board is required to consider under 40B so that really caught my attention and he would like to sort of impart to the applicant the significance of this comment and this observation relative to many other projects that we've considered here that it is significant. A lot of the, as other of his colleagues have raised, problems here begin with the ground level parking. He would really ask the applicant to take seriously what has been reviewed tonight and dig deep, maybe literally, maybe figuratively to try to break up the massing and articulation of the buildings and do that by reconsidering ground level parking. Bottom line, as others have pointed out, he struggles to see the



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village like environment here. We've got building heights. They're all 50 feet plus. There's really no variation. There's no step volumes. There's lots of points of reference on this, from Village Center Zoning to the Washington Vision Plan. There's no shortage of resources for the applicant to rely upon and get some ideas from to make this project more consistent with those visions. His biggest takeaway from the site visit yesterday was how close and how large some of these buildings are relative to the surrounding residential parts of the project. The building, he thinks it's Building C, that runs parallel to Court Street, where as Miss Lipsett pointed out, they will be as tall as the existing trees and 20 feet from the setback, was really jarring to me. It's one thing that he hopes that the applicant is able to address in further meetings. Crafts Street is another problem. We've got a bizarre contrast between the building it's proposed to be on Crafts Street, which is 64 feet as far as he understands it, with buildings across the street that are about half that. It would be great to have more balanced height and certainly more setback. NBBJ raised some concerns even practically with power lines that may interfere with a building that is set so close to the street. Renderings was something the Planning Department mentioned is something that the applicant may provide and he would like to underscore that and really encouraged the applicant to provide clear and detailed renderings of what this project is going to look like from Prescott Street, from Turner Terrace, Court Street, Crafts Street. That type of thing has been very helpful to him in evaluating prior projects and he hopes that we have that here. He noted that the applicant is asking for a waiver of the stormwater requirements that in my view is a big ask for any project 40B or not and is curious and eager to learn more about what the basis and the justification for that is. Ms. Lipsitt pointed out we have what appears to us to be a very low lying and bowl sight. Then finally on traffic and this hits him on all of these projects that we see. We've statistics or data that shows we're going to have 1000 added vehicle trips per day and at the same time we hear this really isn't going to have that much of an impact. It's really hard for him as a layperson when it comes to this and members of the public to understand that. Asked the applicant to, in layman's terms, to really dig into that and try to explain to us why adding 1000 vehicle trips to an area that's already congested is not going to have a detrimental impact on the traffic conditions in the area. He hopes that we've provided some direction to the applicant, Mr. Copelotti we are going to ask members of the public to weigh in, but I'd like to give you the chance to respond.

Mr. Copelotti stated that they certainly heard lots of different thoughts tonight. We look forward to really doing some more working sessions with NBBJ and Alan Mountjoy and taking a look at a lot



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of the different things that he thinks everyone here mentioned earlier this evening. He has nothing more to add and we will certainly we will be back with some different thoughts and ideas.

Chair Rossi asked for public comments.

Public Comments:

Councilor Susan Albright stated her first question for the proponent - what assumptions have you made visa vie the senior housing project and because part of that project were improvements to the Crafts Street-Washington Street intersection, about those corrections and how do your corrections fit in with those corrections? She thinks there's a lot of work to be done with figuring out how these two projects work together and making sure that the corrections you're going to make to that intersection comply with what they're going to do and does it all work together. That's a piece of work that absolutely needs to be straightened out. The shadow studies she is interested in looking more closely at the shadow studies for the late afternoon in both spring and fall and its effect on the Crafts Street side of the project. It seems like you guys were saying there's no problems there, but she's not sure that there's no problems there. She would like to have another look at that. She really appreciated the peer reviewers references to the Washington Street Vision Plan and to the VCOD work that we've been doing and the step down to the neighborhood and all of those issues that were raised were just fabulous and she hopes you will definitely take that into account. She is not one of the people that is against height, but if you can put more height in the in the center of the project and make it lower on the edges it would be better for everybody in the neighborhood. The parking issue is a tough one and this project asked for 50% AMI and that's something that we need in this city. If underground parking is going to wipe out the 50% and make it all 80% that's a hard tradeoff for her to think about. Any improvement of the parking is good, but she does not want to lose the 50% housing either. She loves the idea of activating the ground floor and with some retail and a few shops for the 307 people and plus the other neighbors in the surrounding area would be a fabulous idea. She appreciated all of the comments tonight. They were really right on target. That along with the peer reviewer should really help this project.

Councilor Tarik Lucus stated that the size and the massing of the buildings in his opinion are still too big. He was hoping after the first meeting in January we would see changes to the site and we



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don't see them. The size and massing are too big. This can be accomplished with increasing setbacks and reducing building height that was recommended by NBBJ. The shadow study that he saw there are some shadows on the homes on Crafts Street. Perhaps stepping back and stepping down the buildings to limit shadows would help. That goes with the Washington Street Vision Plan about trying to have a gentle transition into residential neighborhoods. With respect to NBBJ he disagrees with them on the setbacks to the homes on Court Street where they say they are acceptable. They aren't. They are too close to the homes on Court Street. At the meeting in January he stated they should be half the maximum building height. That's what we do in the business use four zone. He disagrees that there should be retail on the site. Retail on the site will attract more cars to the site. That is a traffic issue. Whole Foods is a stone's throw away from the site and that is the closest retail establishment. There is not enough green space for pedestrians. The sidewalks are narrow and small and as presented it will be dangerous for Newton residents to walk from Court Street through the site and onto Crafts Street. The Crafts Street senior housing development has better pedestrian access and it has wider sidewalks. He tried to look at the TDM for the project, but the link on NewGOV doesn't seem to work. He hopes someone can look into that please. NBBJ and Planning are trying to compare this with the VCOD standards. He disagrees with that. The city chose not to include this site in the VCOD and he believes the Boylston Properties also chose not to be part of VCOD so he doesn't know why we're making comparisons to them at all. He wants to point out one thing that NBBJ said in, possibly, the last paragraph in their memo about the Crafts Street City Stable. They point that they point out that however "we have pointed out many issues that concern the health, safety, and welfare of Newton residents, particularly those who will be most impacted by new developments require reasonable standards in lieu of existing zoning. Furthermore, we point out the importance of historic resources, such as the Craft Street Stables near the site that should not be forgotten in this process as stewards of the future. Newton might consider the future flexibility of public resources such as the DPW site that could be diminished by thoughtless actions taken now".

Councilor Malakie stated that she has not been able to make the previous meeting or the site visit, but will give a few comments based on what she heard tonight. She is shocked that anyone would propose asking to be exempt from stormwater requirements because she sees flooding and impacts of the more intense storms were getting all over her ward and other parts of the City and it's only going to get worse. So that should just be a non-starter. She is puzzled by the recommendation to



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lower the parking which obviously would be a much better plan aesthetically, but was under the impression that that was not possible for reasons of what's underneath the ground. Maybe in future meetings that will be clarified. Maybe there's some parts of the site where it is possible in other parts where it is not. She agrees with the need for usable green space and it should be actual grass and trees green space and not, thanks to members Lipsitt and Sweet for raising the issue of artificial turf at another ZBA hearing, artificial turf. That should be a non-starter as well. Just for example, the sort of minimal strip of green space for the dog park it doesn't even look like an attractive place to be except maybe in the heat of the summer when the deep shade of the building would be welcomed but the rest of the year it's just not. It doesn't look like a fun place to be and there is no apparent recreational playground type facilities for kids. The parking situation, and she has made this comment that other not so much 40B but special permits, if you're going to build something that you're saying is transit oriented and you're planning to attract people with fewer cars by having fewer parking spaces. There's got to be some kind of enforcement for that. It's has to be in the lease or in the purchase agreements if they end up being condos that people are not going to have more cars than they have parking spaces for because otherwise it's just an empty promise to the neighborhood that you're going to attract people without the cars that are going to be overflowing into already crowded streets.

Councilor Greenberg stated that she found all the comments insightful. She really appreciated all the ZBA comments. She strongly agrees with the peer reviewer that there is an overabundance of accurate parking. She wonders if it would be possible to get rid of that one parking building and incorporate the remaining parking underground and the other four buildings that would allow for more usable green space on the site. She also agrees with the peer reviewer recommendation to step back the building, the height and the setbacks, especially on Crafts Street to better fit the neighborhood. She suggested that the petitioner reevaluate an additional egress for automobiles in and out of the site to provide relief to the Crafts Street entrance if you can look at Court Street again to see if that would be another possible egress. Finally, she would like the developer to include the side streets of Ashmont, Lincoln, and Clinton all the way to Adams Street in their traffic study to evaluate the impact on the adjacent neighborhood.

Lynn Weisberg, 5 Alden Street, Newton. State she wanted to use her time to try to reorient the discussion tonight. She is not going to talk about shadows or traffic or the design of the building.



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What I'm going to talk about and what I think all of you should have as your top priority is preserving the 62 units of housing that this proposal will create at 50% of AMI. As Ms. Sweet said that is a feature that should be retained. Any tweaks made to the design made because of concerns about shadows or parking her view, and she would hope the view of the Board, is that they can be made so long as they don't put the 62 units at 50% at risk. Think about 62 units at 50% of AMI. There is not another project either 40B or through the special permit process that has created such a large number of homes that really could be affordable by low-income people. Think about what the point of 40B is. This is a project, again she knows you like to do a back and forth with the developer and you want to massage it and all of that, massager or you want so long as the end result has 60 to at 50%. One final comment about the senior housing project also on Crafts Street. Not only did they recently get an extension of one year on getting a building permit, but based on what she has read in the press, the partners of that development have some disputes, and they're litigating them. It's not at all clear that that project will ever be built. She thinks you have a project before you buy Boylston properties, they're ready to go and that should be your primary focus.

Marcela Burke, 255 Adams Street, Newton, stated she lives at the corner of Adams Street and Lincoln Road. This project is too big. It doesn't fit our dense neighborhood and the impact of the proposed 307 units, along with another 105 senior units the Board has already approved for the site will make the traffic in and around the street much worse. Our neighborhood, the least affluent in Newton, already suffer from more automobile pollution and a traffic safety issues than any anywhere else in Newton. For the ones they are pushing for this project should be approved in in the most crowded part in the least affluent part of Newton. Why are we leaving the more affluent areas untouched? How many of them live in a neighborhood with 500 units of new house? Her question for the Board members is how can we fit all these cars entering exiting from only a single driveway or Crafts Street? Have any of you lately driven Crafts Street? Have you any of you experienced the congestion on Crafts Street? When she moved to her house 16 years ago, her two kids used to play on the streets and now it is too dangerous even for them to drive their bikes. The developers traffic study last January shows what they want us to believe, which is everything fine and this product is wonderful. They're steady claims that adding hundreds of cars on this site in another 140 to the site next door will have only a minor impact on the traffic. This is not believable. Our streets are narrow in already crowded. Why didn't their study to look at Crafts traffic volume and the crash data only grows. Clinton, Ashmont, and Adams Street which many



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cars use to avoid the traffic at Crafts Street. Their steady claims the only couple cars from the project will use those side streets to cut through at peak hours. An improbable finding that's inconsistent with what drivers already do. Do you believe their numbers? We need a serious traffic and parking study that looks at the entire neighborhood that will be impacted by the project not just Crafts Street. Regarding the parking ratio. Right now in Nonantum we have a parking crisis. The streets cannot handle any more cars. Some people park on the sidewalk. Do people in other parts of Newton where all you live do they do that? She guesses not. 307 units and only 263 parking space in an area that doesn't have a decent public transportation. If they assume that low-income families don't have cars then they should take a look at the public housing parking lots in nearby Brighton. They're filled with cars. The market rate tenants who can pay \$3500 for one bedroom and \$5800 for three bedrooms most likely we'll have one or two cars. Board members the last study Newton shows 6% residents commuting cars only 2% Newton households don't own your car and the vast majority have at least two cars.

Suzanne Sancar, 11 Phillips Lane, Newtonville, stated she is here to express my support for the approval of the 40B Development at 78 Crafts. Her support is based on two significant features. Its true affordability and its positive environmental impact. In terms of affordability the developer has opted to include 62 affordable units geared towards families and individuals making 50% of the area median income. This is really a rare opportunity for Newton to add to its limited stock of affordable rental units. Why is this important? Increasingly, Newton is becoming a city available only to the wealthy. She is truly worried about this. 78 Crafts Street can help us keep the City off the path to becoming a city of exclusivity. In terms of the environmental impact Crafts Street is uniquely situated for its residents use of mass transit. It's within walking distance of the Washington Street buses. It's also within walking distance of the Harvard Street entrance to the Commuter Rail. She sees this as a huge plus. She commuted to Boston for over 25 years and can tell you that Crafts Street location is really great for public use of public transit. Additionally, the development will be built using passive housing standards. It will use no fossil fuel hookups. It will be fully electric. These features ensure the building's energy efficiency. Simply put, the environmental benefits are substantial for this project. She is aware that there's opposition to the project and that some who want a significantly scaled down development. She encourages the Board to approve the current plan with 307 units. It's the only way with this number of units that we can achieve the level of affordability that's necessary in Newton.



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David Rockwell, 13 Floral Place, Newton Highlands, stated he is in support of the project. He has heard the comments tonight. He wants the Board to keep in mind the trade-off when you impose various costs whether it's parking or other things you threatened the one of the main benefits of this. This City so badly needs these 50% units. One quick statistic one-third of residents make less than \$50,000 per year. That means they can afford about \$1,200 in rent. The average rent in Newton is \$2200 We can't just keep letting this go. We will think of what our City is going to look like 10-20 years from now when we can't even have our own kids who have grown up in this town can't afford to stay. So please keep the trade-off in mind when you look at these design changes. If you go too far, we're going to lose what we really need out of this proposal from a qualified developer. The environmental benefits are there it's passive house standards. It's the highest standards you can get for energy efficiency. Low parking ratio is good for the environment and it will encourage more pedestrian and bicycle use. The utilities all electric no fossil fuels and we're cleaning up some hazardous waste and getting better systems for stormwater and sewage management. This is a great chance for us. We should not pass this by. We keep telling ourselves we believe in more affordable housing for Newton. This is our chance.

Sheila Decter, 13 Ransom Road, Newton, stated she has lived in Newton for 52 years. From the first week in which she moved to Newton she kept hearing about how Newton was going to build an add more affordable housing. Yet what she has seen is clearly insignificant additions to the City to meet the needs of those people who are not part of the wealthiest 1% or 10%. We've listened tonight to some wonderful ideas for the Boylston Properties to consider in terms of this property and to their design. Whether or not they can do it and some of these ideas, follow them up, and still make this viable is something they're going to have to tell us, but she would hate to see the sacrifice as well. She is here in support of this project as it is. She would hate to see that we lose this 50% AMI. It would provide rentals in a good size project like no other project has had before. She watches and see seniors who might be considering selling their properties, they don't, because they're not sure there's affordable places they could move to. What's the point of selling if they're not going to be able to stay in Newton where they're familiar. She knows and she looks at her kids who are out in various communities in Jamaica Plain and others, it's because there was no way they could afford to live in Newton. She strongly supports this proposed project for 40B and hopes that we do not make such demands that we lose some of the best features of the proposal.



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Jackie O'Toole, 17 Turner Terrace, Newtonville, stated at some point just for people who are coming in new to all this, the word AMI gets bandied about all the time, but she knows what 40B is now. She still have to learn the AMI and my guess is there's a lot of our residents around who don't understand some of these terms. She really appreciates when you do stop and say for those of you new to this, because that's been her all along and she appreciates the way you've incorporated a bit about that. One thing, and she's said this before, and she thinks she will try and say it in a different way. People are being displaced by this. Basically, less financially privileged people who live in Newton often seem to be the people who are not considered in this. She knows that in the project it's not assigned to anybody to worry about, but she will tell you, she worries about a little a little bit about living in a town that doesn't worry about them. One of the conversations she had with a friend who recently that said "well there's so few of them". She realized exactly, that's her point. How hard could it be to take care of them if there's that few of them? There was a few of them when they built the other 40B on Court Street, the one that abuts this property. There were a few of them and they let the apartments go fallow or whatever you want to call that. Then the last people were in some of the other buildings had to leave. Those were actually people who were not at all high income, who managed to find a way to live in Newton and loved it and they were our neighbors and she misses them. Please take care of these people and she would even extend if it affects some of the small businesses or businesses back there. It's hard to relocate places like that. You guys should please help. This his account. I know it's not the developers idea or problem. Maybe they have some creative ideas too. She's Turner Terrace which happens to be west and speaking with another neighbor he said something she hadn't really thought about. When you talk about the heights we have to remember that some of the streets are lower. So sort of to the West we're lower than the people that are to the south, etc, etc. So that's just something to just remember. Her own personal and direct impact is this business about stormwater. She was very badly impacted by something that was built near her. There's probably a really good reason they're looking for some kind of reason not to fulfill those stormwater standards. It's an issue there. If somebody wants to ask me about it later is at some point.

Chair Rossi defined AMI for everyone.

Al Cecchinelli, 224 Chapel Street, Newton, stated he is shocked and disappointed that this project is still on the table is planned. This project does not fit the character, the scope of the



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neighborhood, and it will be invariably change the character of the neighborhood. Let's start with the misconception that this property is underutilized. He went to the site to tour on Tuesday morning, found that every foot of this property is being utilized. There was not an underutilization. There may be an under profit for the developer, but that's all that this is about is the profit for the developer. Next, let's look at the two obvious flaws in this plan. Other than it being too large. The first is the insufficient parking. There are not enough parking spots for the residents, let alone any visitors. This was evident on the site visit when the 30 people there had to find on street parking. The second is the entrance in and out of this project onto Crafts Street. Traffic there is already tough and adding 1000 trips, it's going to be almost impossible. A much better plan would it be to put small eight small houses and make two of them affordable for first time homebuyers. We know that's not going to happen because that doesn't provide enough profit. We know that's all this is about. The 62 submarket units, no they're not low income units, they are only being offered because that's the cost of doing business. These are the 30 pieces of silver that we require to allow developers to strip-mine our community. In closing, be aware that each unit will be taxed under the tax of existing housing units in the area. The \$1.2 million in additional taxes will be eaten up if 67 students attend our public schools at the \$18,000 per student. That means 21% of these properties, having children will put us at a loss for taxes to service ratio. That means we will be subsidizing the profits of this developer.

Sam Davis, Newton, stated he has lived in Newton all his life. He walks the City. You probably see him walking around. Public Safety for the kids in the community. Traffic around here is chaos. Washington Street, Crafts Street, Adams Street, Murphy Court, Jones Court, with cars coming this way and coming that way. By the time you get to the fire station there is the red light. Then there is another red light on Crafts Street/Washington Street. Traffic is crazy. You people got to do what you got to do more public safety for our kids and our children in the future is what it's all about. Keeping the city safe. Where he walks everywhere there's traffic everywhere and he probably walks more than everybody in this room. That's why he sees it because he does traffic is crazy. You have nowhere to go. People are cutting side streets. People are cutting through a fire stations to beat the light on Crafts Street and everywhere. He sees it they're cutting through the fire station just to beat the light on Craft Street that cutting through the go down to Adams Street through to go to Watertown Street. If they cut through first responders buildings, that's a problem.



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Sean Roche, 42 Daniel Street, Newton, state he does not live in the neighborhood. Like my fellow housing and environmental advocates he recognizes the amazing opportunity that 62 units creates at 50% of AMI. The other important part of that calculation is that the housing price will be set at 30% of those people's income and so that's what makes it affordable is that it 50% AMI. If he's only paying 30% of his income and so my housing becomes affordable. The environmental impacts others have spoken to eloquently, but those are kind of vague and abstract. He's here to speak for the people who don't know that they'll live here one day because we don't know who they are and they can't be here. So we housing advocates are here to say we want people to live in our community. We want to help ease the housing shortage and we want to speak for the people who will be our neighbors one day. 40B is specifically designed because communities like Newton have created neighborhoods that don't have sufficient affordable housing. It is a contradiction in 40B to talk about whether or not this changes the character of the neighborhood. Of course it changes the character of the neighborhood. That's the point. Now, he found that the peer review listening to the peer review more along the lines of a hatchet job you know from an from an aesthetic perspective. Yes, there are lots of interesting ideas, but that's not the point. The point and the scope and the ambit of your brief is to ensure that there is not detriment to the neighborhood. Not that this is perfect, not that it executes a village community perfectly, but that we build the housing that we don't build because our zoning is too restrictive. He fully supports this and is dismayed by the comments of the peer reviewer and some of the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals and the kinds of concerns that they have about this which amounts to aesthetic concerns for the most part.

Bill Cavanaugh, 69 Court Street, Newton, stated he is a direct abutter to 78 Crafts Street to the north and also a direct abutter to another 40B to our west. To the best of my knowledge his wife Carol and he are the only home or homeowners in the Commonwealth who can claim this dubious distinction. Now what benefits accrue to Nonantum and Court Street from having 307 units and untold vehicles added to their neighborhoods? When Andrew Copelotti of BP was asked this question at the January 31 at the community meeting Nonantum. Nothing. Okay, fair enough. If one reads the Planning Department and NBBJ's reports, the best they come up with for us is a pathway from Crafts Street to Court Street. I hate to tell them the senior housing is doing the same thing. So their big benefit is redundant. Now throughout the reports from the Planning Department and NBBJ, they note that there's a lack of green space in parks in our neighborhood. Only the dog park is actually mentioned, three times actually, the word the word child appears nowhere. Dog



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park three times. Excuse me, that upsets me, but the cavalier attitude displayed in the memos is extremely disconcerting. Given they acknowledge the dearth of open space in this area. What do we get? 307 units in a two-story parking garage in an area that's a heat island and lacks green space. That's all we get. NBBJ notes on page 16 of their peer review that it's required. That useful open space be at least 40%. Since softscape is only 26% NBBJs comment that the project comes close to the goals. It's unbelievable, given they acknowledge the lack of green space. It appears that good enough is going to have to be good enough for Nonantum and Court Street. By the way, DEP states that this area is an environmental justice zone, but they still ignore the neighborhood lack of green space. Finally, why am I wearing a Yankee sweatshirt here in this area? Well, very simply, his wife and he met in the Bronx. We went to college in the Bronx. We got married in the Bronx and we spent the first four years of our marriage in the Bronx. We have fond memories of our time living in a fourth story walk up at 325 East 194th. If you're all familiar with the Bronx sits right off the concourse by Poe Park. We moved up here in 1975. We did not expect to have the Bronx follow us and yet here we are almost 50 years later with a five-story structure on the west and soon a four-story structure to our north. It was not what we expected.

Maria Camilli, 70 Albemarle Road, Newton, she stated attended the walkthrough yesterday. She observed the traffic. The traffic is her biggest worry. She lives near the Waltham-Newton line. A lot of people from Waltham cut through High Street and down into Crafts Street to go take the Mass Pike to drive into work and this creates a lot of traffic. I go up and down Crafts Street four or five times a day sometimes with my car because she has to use my car and there's a lot of traffic. As she stood there yesterday at the walkthrough, she watched the red light in front of the Whole Foods store and the traffic was backed up to Maguire Court. That was just regular traffic at 8:05 in the morning. So rush hour morning and afternoon is really bad. Central Street you can't make a left turn onto Crafts Street near the fire station because nobody will let you by. So sometimes when she would going home from work she actually took a right to go all the way around Ashmont and it is bad. The traffic is very bad. This is going to add a huge problem to the traffic. They need to put an exit onto Court Street somehow. If they can't do that then don't do the project. Regarding the people who ask us in the community to stop driving and to think about public transportation. Let me tell you something, Newton does not have good public transportation. Back in the 60s you could wait 10 minutes for a bus and you'll be able to go where you wanted to go. We don't have that today. The world has changed. Don't ask us not to drive. We have to drive. So many of us do.



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Put the project here because Whole Foods is right there and they can walk to get their groceries. Well they have to drive to go get something else. That's the way life is today. One final thing the people who are in favor of this do not live near Crafts Street. Alden Street, Floral Street, Phillips Lane, and Galen Street they're nowhere near Crafts Street and of course they are for it because it doesn't affect them that much.

Annie Raines, 50 Court Street, Newton, stated Court Street stated she is definitely affected by some of the comments in support of the project. We in Newton are all very passionate about helping our neighbors and we're all in favor of affordable housing there isn't anyone here who says they are against affordable housing. She thinks it should be pointed out that in Newtonville and the neighborhood's around this project in Newtonville are already at 80% AMI and the neighborhood's around Nonantum are already at 50% AMI. She feels that these neighborhoods are already paying the debt for the city of Newton and she thinks that needs to be factored into the discussion at some point. She learned to drive in Newton at Newton North and watched those videos of the car accidents and how gory it was and it was very effective. One of the things she learned about driving was don't assume anything because you may follow all the rules and you may not be technically at fault in an accident. If you're involved in an accident at all and someone gets hurt or killed, was it enough that you just followed the rules? You had the right of way, you're not at fault, but you might be haunted forever by the thought that you could have been looking out for the distracted driver or the illegal left turner, instead of assuming the law that protects you from liability would protect them as well. She learned a new word the other day it was riparian. Anybody know what that means? Well, I didn't either and I grew up in Newton. It means pertaining to wetlands, rivers, wetlands, and so on. She read through all of the soil tests performed for the petitioner's stormwater report. She thinks they could have gone further. It's pretty clear from the results that these lowlands are indeed wetlands covered wetlands, former wetlands, abused wetlands but, definitely wetlands underneath the fill and asphalt. There are large deposits of peat and glacial sands. Not really the best place to build large buildings. It is also the gathering point at the city is drained sector 77-1, which is a broad area extending west to the Trio building, north to Watertown Street at Linwood receives stormwater from all these areas. The petitioner didn't design underground parking -- wetlands. So these adjacent neighborhoods have traditionally housed many low income residents, including myself, were more intimately connected by this waterway, not just the culvert, but the underground water than we even realize. She believes this



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entire waterway from Central Ave. to Jackson Road should be investigated very carefully before any construction is allowed to proceed on any of the parcels on it. If you if you follow the rules and if you do your due diligence, is it really enough to do your due diligence.

Jimmy Sbordone, 260 Linwood Ave., Newton, asked whose idea was it to build 260 spaces for 307 units? How come nobody's ever brought up Court Street being exit or an entrance? He has two dogs himself instead of a dog park. Why don't we think about kids in the neighborhood? Wouldn't like maybe a splash park or something like that and for the kids.

Terry Sauro, 44 Cook Street, Newton, made a suggestion maybe when we have another meeting the public could speak first because it's 10 o'clock and everybody's exhausted and she doesn't even know if anybody is really hearing us. She grew up on Lincoln Road, married and moved to Cook Street. She knows this area probably better than any of you on that committee. You may consider this Newtonville but it's Nonantum. When we were growing up, and we still to this day, we consider Newtonville where Trio is and that center is in. Sorry, she gets nervous after hearing some of the comments tonight. We can share our wealth. No one is saying anything about affordable housing. We need affordable housing. What we're saying is the concerns with this big project. Yesterday she attended the site visit for Court Street. At the start of the meeting Mr. Rossi, you set the ground rules and we were told that concern residents could not speak. She finds your ground rules offensive. If this is our neighborhood, which will be impacted by this development after it's erected this won't impact your committee, but it will impact that neighborhood. You then proceeded to say that there is a ZBA meeting tomorrow night etc etc. If we were allowed to speak yesterday you would have heard the following. Did you acknowledge the heavy traffic at yesterday's morning at 8:00? So much the neighbors attending trying to cross over had a hard time crossing with that heavy traffic. She saw that there was no consideration as far as having a flashing light or any type of a traffic light for Murphy Court going on to Crafts Street. Since you checked off the site visit with no neighborhood input. These issues need to be listened to and considered by ZBA. 307 units need to be decreased especially with only one way access to Crafts Street. If there is no other access, decrease the units 200 units. Additional parking spaces needs to be added if the 307 units remain. We can agree to disagree, but residents who will be rented the three-bedroom units will definitely have two cars. If there are extra parking spaces offer parking during the winter overnight ban to the neighborhood. Proven fact that past developments and Nonantum that have



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limited parking and a year later they are looking for additional parking spaces. There needs to be another access road other than the one-way access coming on to Crafts Street. The proposed senior independent living two doors up will be additional 1000 people as well as 600 to 800 additional cars. She hopes there is some type of, we have an infestation of rats, rat plan that the developer will have to incorporate. Also, it's called Maguire Court. Will that name change?

Jay Walter, 83 Pembroke Street, Newton, stated he'd like to address the calls for underground parking both from the peer review memo and from others on the Board and in the audience. He thinks it's unrealistic to expect the developer to provide underground parking for a number of reasons. First and foremost is it would be extremely expensive, and the additional cost would jeopardize the viability of the proposed affordable units especially at 50% AMI, which is unique in the city and which we really need. Second, the drainage issues have been mentioned by the locals and in the report and he thinks that's a real concern which would make underground parking problematic and even more expensive. The review expresses concern about number of driveway crossings and how they're unsafe. If there was underground parking, those crossings would become ramps and become even more cumbersome and unworkable. The builder has already put parking under the buildings to mitigate their impact on the site and that could be improved by improving the screening that they have around the facade. He agrees with those who say that on Crafts Street we should have, instead of parked cars, occupied space either with the residential units or some small commercial retail on Crafts Street to enliven it. So in conclusion, he thinks that the affordable housing is a priority. He urges the ZBA not to recommend anything that jeopardizes that.

Janine Stewart, 251 Adams Street, Newton, stated she has many relatives on Lincoln Road. She's concerned about the amount of traffic and doesn't understand why Nonantum must take the brunt of it all spilling out onto Crafts Street. She doesn't understand the developers saying it's not going to make much of an impact. She has appointments early in the morning at Chatham Center Building and when she tries to take a left from Lincoln Road she has lot of difficulty. People will say why not walk, but it's usually because she is going somewhere after. The woman who made the comment that the senior housing will probably not happen. The developer will sell it like Dunston and make a profit. She is not against affordable housing. She is against the size of the development and the additional traffic. She is disappointed that the community input from the last meeting with



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residents on Lincoln and Clinton were not addressed. It was not even listed as what they heard. They never studied the impact on cut through traffic onto Clinton and Lincoln Road. They assume that only 2% of the cars will go straight onto Lincoln and Clinton. That's an outrageous assumption. They should perform a study not assumptions. For the size of the development there was not enough parking. They're banking on everyone taking buses and commuter rail. If you look at what happened to Trio they offered subsidized MBTA costs and hardly anyone took advantage of it. She asked at the last community meeting about the number of visitor parking spots, but did not get a direct answer other than we are going to have visitor parking. With 307 units it's going to need adequate visitor parking and disability parking. The people that have spoken in support of this project do not live in this area and do not have an additional 500 units dumped on them on an already densely populated area.

Margaret Ward, 957 Washington Street, Newtonville, stated she wanted to speak to the diminished transportation that we now see servicing our area by the MBTA. Like someone commented earlier, they've been commuting for 20 years or so. She has been commuting for 30 years exactly from Newtonville. She has taken the commuter rail in the beginning from the Newtonville stop and then ended up changing to the bus and she says over the years that MBTA has absolutely cut the service to Newtonville full stop. We used to be able to have a bus service that the 553,554,556 that some originated from West Newton some originated from Walnut Street, the five basics originated from Walnut Street, that all went directly downtown and you were able to get them during the weekday and also on the weekends, but they cut that. Now the furthest those buses go on a weekday is to Newton Corner. Now on a weekday you have to go to Newton Corner, switch up, and get the 504 which is the only bus that takes you downtown now. Now let's talk about the weekends. We live in a transit-oriented development so to speak that we want to claim. Try to go into the city for dinner and a movie guess when the last bus is out from the city. She raised this issue in 2018 during the meetings that we had with the principal group. She was at the table that was specifically to talk about MBTA service and asked the table when the last bus came. No one knew. Of course, they didn't know they don't commute into the city. Not like she did. Guess what time on a Saturday night the last bus out of Boston that you can catch? It is 7:46 pm. So much for dinner and a movie. So your choice is no choice. You have no choice of taking the commuter rail. Now, the bus service doesn't even exist on Sunday. So forget about the bus service. Then you're only relying on the commuter rail, which is very sparse and the service keeps dropping to Newtonville. My point is,



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let's stop talking about this development like it would be transit-oriented development. We do not have any transit service at all by the MBTA servicing this area.

Kathleen Kouril Grieser, 258 Mill Street, Newton, stated some of the members of the ZBA know that she's no fan of chapter 40B, but I want to thank you, particularly you Chair Rossi, Ms. Lipsitt, and Mr. Snyder along with the peer reviewer who had a lot of good ideas for how to make this project less intrusive and negatively impactful on the people that Mr. Walter referred to as the locals. She's very disturbed by the fact that chapter 40B is making Massachusetts the laughing stock of the real estate industry. That developers are increasingly sending out prospectuses to investors guaranteeing the terrific profits to come from investing in 40B projects because municipalities basically can't stop them without safe harbor. Unfortunately, we didn't quite manage to get safe harbor in time to protect this neighborhood from yet another 40B. She really appreciates the proposals for making this project smaller, better, greener, safer and more environmentally sound. That may be the best we can do. She hopes that's not the best we can do. She hopes you'll keep working on that and she appreciates that you're doing that. The people who live in this neighborhood live in what's already a modest neighborhood and it is unfair that these projects seem to impact these people the most and displace them the most. That concerns her a great deal. Those people, those housing advocates, like Mr. Roche and Mr. Walter and the others who keep saying it's so important that we get these 62 units at 50% AMI. That would be great, but if you don't care about the people who already live in this neighborhood, maybe you could imagine caring about the people who would live in this project if built the way Boylston Properties proposes. Do you not care about those people? All of the impacts that are going to be so awful for people like Bob Kavanaugh and his neighbors and Terry Sauro and her neighbors will be just as bad for the new people that were supposedly welcoming into this paradise. Maybe we could have less than 62 affordable units and a much smaller and much better project. She thinks any developer that uses the 40B process rather than the special permit process going by our elected officials really is a bad actor. This actor in particular Boylston Properties she just wonders if they're going to flip it as soon as they get a permit. They have already tried to interfere in one of our City Council elections, so she doesn't see them as good actors. She'd like to thank you, Mr. Rossi and the others on the ZBA for looking at ways to make this project smaller and better.

Janet Sterman, Church Street, Newton Corner, stated she appreciates the opportunity to speak tonight. She does not know if anyone other than her has been listening in the last year to two years about what people want as far as affordable housing and Newton, but she is kind of appalled. She knows that all these people from Engine 6 like Lynn Weisberg and Roche and Mr. Walter talking about having to have this the 62 affordable units, but ironically, only 25% of those units are going



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to be made available to people from Newton. Not the people like the guy who lives on Floral Street who wants to make sure that the kids who grew up here can afford to stay here. No, no, no. This project is really for not only giving local preference on this project to only 25% of the project is going for local preference. So 75% of those 62 units are going to go to people not from Newton. So she loves the idea of doing affordable housing, but don't we want to be able to provide housing to our firefighters, our police officers, our dear teachers that we all supported so much during the strike. Who are we doing this for? She doesn't understand. Less than 25% is going to the people who grew up here, who work here, and the people that are so near and dear. These affordability Engine 6 Newton for Everybody, people don't get it just doesn't make sense to her at all. Somebody came up and spoke and said she's lived here for 50 years. It's quite obvious she hasn't shopped for real estate in Jamaica Plain in 50 years or in the last year, it's certainly not an affordable neighborhood. Whoever thinks Jamaica Plain as affordable today has not gone shopping for real estate in Jamaica Plain. Finally, the traffic plan that we were looking at right now they gave a seven-year projected traffic, but they didn't take into account that we're going to be reducing the number of lanes on Washington Street from four to two. You're not even taking into account the additional traffic. There's a lot of work that has to be done before you a project like this gets approved and she thinks ZBA is in a position to put some real criteria together that makes sense for everybody so that it can be a working solution. She does not see a solution being evident at this point and she is looking forward to the ZBA input as a group to put in some strong criteria to make it work better.

Mary Shepherd, 85 Kingswood Road, Newton, stated this project is insane in its size for the neighborhood. The fact that they don't want to do stormwater study is disturbing. All those houses in those neighborhoods from this low-lying thing and what they're building. Is it all going to flood down their driveway and flood the entire neighborhoods? It just it sounds like insanity. The traffic one way in and one way out doesn't seem safe for firefighters or police. The idea of extending some green grass for firefighters to drive over doesn't sound good to her. It just sounds like it's going to really ruin a neighborhood. She agrees that most of these housing is being dumped in Newton Corner and Nonantum and it doesn't seem right. It's already the most congested area of Newton. It's going to look like Watertown with one giant building after another. It's sad. She just heard 25% of Newton residents are allowed to apply. That is how many people are on the Newton housing list right now? How many people? People have been on the list for 10 years. It's wrong.

Dan Ruben, 175 Auburn Street, Newton, stated that he supports this project and other housing projects in Newton and around our region because housing prices are so outrageously high. That



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has terrible ramifications for our community. The reason why our prices are so high is because the demand for housing greatly outstrips our supply. We need more housing. He is personally tired of seeing my friends have to move away because the renters and their rent becomes too extreme and they have to leave. Our young people are particularly affected. They're priced out of the market. Our young people we're seeing a great out migration of young people from this region that harms our vitality and will eventually harm our workforce and our economy. These high housing prices because we don't have enough housing is separating families. Our young adults cannot afford to live here. They're separated from their parents. They want to be able to help their parents as they age, but they can't because they can't afford to live in our region. Lastly, these high prices force people further and further away. It forces them to drive more and enhances the spew of greenhouse gas emissions that will be so harmful to our young and middle-aged people because they exacerbate climate change.

William McQuillan, Principle, Boylston Properties stated he is appreciative of the ZBA, staff, and public. They will be meeting with NBBJ to discuss the peer review. He feels some of the ideas will improve the plan and the issues they are facing. They expect a full and robust discussion and the process and foresee changes to the project.

Chair Rossi continued the item until March 27th.

Agenda Item 2: Discuss and/or adopt changes to the City of Newton Rules of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Sitting Members: Michael Rossi (Chair), Brooke Lipsitt, Elizabeth Sweet, William McLaughlin, Stuart Snyder and Jennifer Pucci (alternate).

Chair Rossi proposed change to our rules has to do with the way we receive public comment. The intent was to try to be clear to all parties that submit materials to us as to how and when we will receive those materials. The draft before us eliminates the discretion of the Chair to accept materials that are submitted after our deadline which is something that I support because I think it provides better and greater clarity to members of the public in the applicant who are submitting materials to us. The way these rules are drafted, they clarified that the submission deadline only applies to the submission deadline in Section Eight of the rules applies only to applicants and petitioners. The deadline was changed from five business to five calendar days. The proposed challenges changes as they said remove the board's discretion to accept materials after the deadline has passed. A new section was added creating a 48-hour deadline for written public comment



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finally, the number of paper copies required to be filed has been decreased from 15 copies to 12 copies for comprehensive permits and six copies for administrative appeals and variances. Thanks again attorney Wilson for preparing the draft and this memo. Does anybody have any comments?

Ms. Sweet stated she supports the rule changes.

Ms. Lipsitt made a motion to adopt the amendments to the rules as drafted. The motion was duly seconded by Mr. McLaughlin

The motion passed unanimously 5-0

Chair Rossi concluded the meeting at 10:30 p.m.

ZBA DECISIONS can be found at www.newtonma.gov/ZBA