

Four Corners Neighborhood Concerns Regarding the Proposed 1114 Beacon Street Development.

1. Height: The proposed new buildings(s) are too high. BU2 zoning allows for 24 feet in total height and up to 48 feet with a special permit. A new building(s) at or close to 48 feet is not in keeping with the character with the neighborhood. The conforming BU2 building next door (Citizens Bank at 1126 Beacon St.) is only 24 feet in height and the other BU2 zoned buildings on the other side of 1114 Beacon are less than 24 feet high. A new building that is double or more than double the height of its neighbors would be substantially detrimental to the look and feel of the neighborhood. We are asking for the height of the proposed development to not exceed 34 feet, and for any portion closer to Beacon Street to be even lower so as not to block the visibility of business neighbors.

2. Mass: The project takes up too much open space on the lot. We would like to see the footprint decreased. In no event should it be increased (or expanded) as a result of lowering the height. Reducing proximity to neighbors' lot lines and a smaller footprint is desirable.

3. Frontage & Setback from Beacon Street: The proposal shows three townhouse style units separated at ground level from the main structure. These units are too close to Beacon Street. The existing building is also right on the sidewalk and does not conform to current zoning. The developer's proposal exacerbates the existing non-conformity by proposing a structure on the sidewalk that is both longer along the frontage and higher than the existing building. Signage and visibility from the street is vital to all businesses. All abutting businesses in the BU2 district will be overshadowed by this new structure. 1126 Beacon Street (Citizens Bank) is set back approximately 40 feet in compliance with BU2 zoning, and the existing buildings on the other side of 1114 Beacon are not even 20 feet high. These buildings will be overshadowed by this proposed three unit portion, as it will dominate the streetscape, robbing these other BU2 zoned businesses and their signage of the ability to be seen. This will have a negative impact on these businesses. We request that this front portion be removed or set back from Beacon Street so as not to interfere with the other existing BU2 buildings. As indicated above, these requested changes

should be made without moving the building's footprint back or sideways towards other abutters.

4. Drainage : Due to serious concern regarding drainage and flooding. the neighbors have hired an independent engineer and wetland scientist/hydrologist, Dr. DeSheng Wang. Dr. DeSheng is a veteran in wetland studies and water table impact. In addition to his academic qualifications, he has over 35 years of experience in the Boston area. He has expressed his concerns to both the developer and the Conservation Commission in the hope of resolving these serious issues. City Engineer Frank Nichols has been made aware of the concerns as they relate to this project, and has received a copy of Dr. DeSheng's report. There are extensive water table issues at the proposed site, and the possibility of significant irreparable harm to abutters and down-gradient neighbors. The proposed 46-50 car underground parking garage penetrates two feet into the water table. This will cause deflection and flooding. To date, sufficient data analysis has not been done and the water abatement proposed by the developer is insufficient.

5. Landscaping : The developer should be open to input and requests for trees and other landscape screening. To date, no full landscape plan has been submitted. The developer should work with the neighbors after a plan has been submitted.

The neighbors also have concerns and reserve the right to discuss traffic impact, shadowing from height, and undesired spillover parking onto abutting properties. However, we feel that if the above concerns are addressed, we would be amenable to supporting a building project similar, albeit smaller, to what the developer is seeking. We are not opposed to residential units being built, nor are we quantifying the number of units to be built. We are, however, very concerned with the issues stated above, and we hope the developer and the City of Newton will see fit to address our concerns.

Sincerely,

Four Corners Neighborhood Association

January 27, 2020