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PUBLIC HEARING/WORKING SESSION MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 23, 2018
MEETING DATE: March 27, 2018
TO: Land Use Committee of the City Council
FROM: Barney S. Heath, Director of Planning and Development
Jennifer Caira, Chief Planner for Current Planning
Neil Cronin, Senior Planner
CC: Petitioner

In response to issues raised at the City Council public hearing, the Planning Department is providing the following information for the upcoming continued public hearing/working session. This information is supplemental to staff analysis previously provided at the public hearing.

PETITION #68-18

227 Washington Street

Special Permit/Site Plan Approval to establish a for-profit educational use.

The Land Use Committee (The "Committee") opened the public hearing on this petition Tuesday, February 13, 2018, and held the public hearing open for the petitioner to respond to questions and concerns raised in the Planning Department's Memorandum and at the public hearing by the Committee as well as by members of the public. This memo reflects those issues and concerns, as well as revised materials submitted by the petitioner as of March 20, 2018.

The petitioner is seeking a special permit to establish a for-profit educational use at 227 Washington Street. The property is improved with a two-story, mixed use structure located in the Business Use 1 zone in Newton Corner. The structure was used as office space for many years before a day care center on the first floor and two residential units on the second floor were permitted in 2015. The footprint of the structure consumes much of the lot, but there are seven nonconforming parking stalls on site. Due to the historical uses of the structure, the property carries a parking credit of eight stalls in addition to the seven stalls on site. For a complete analysis of this petition concerning zoning, please see the Zoning Review Memorandum, dated December 11, 2017. **(Attachment A)**

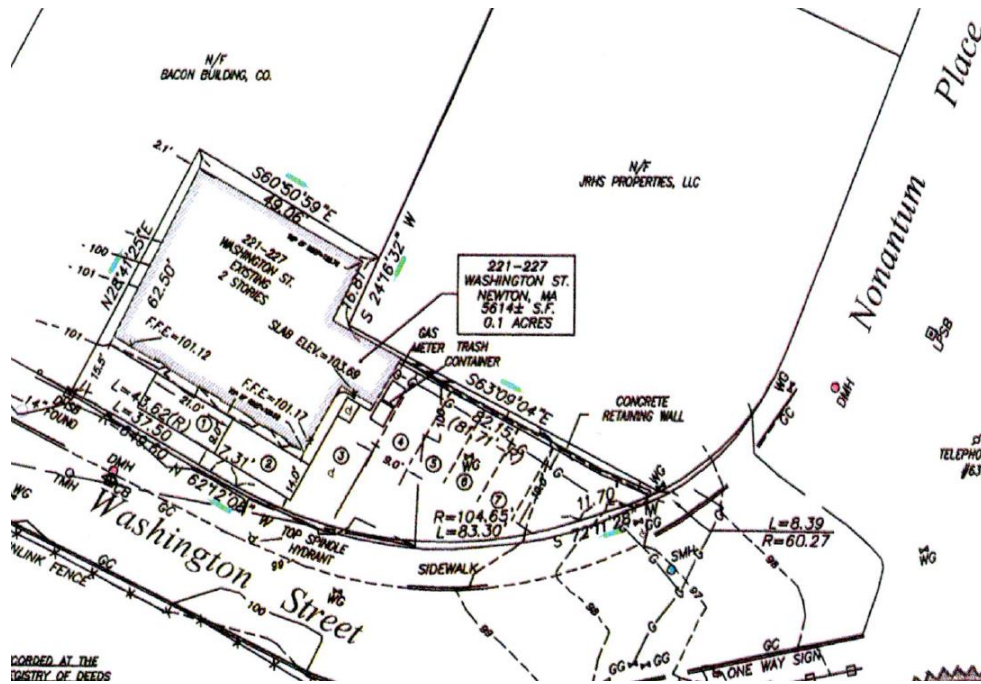
In the Public Hearing Memorandum, the Planning Department expressed concerns regarding the site's ability to safely accommodate the number of vehicle trips generated by the for-profit educational use. The petitioner proposed holding small group tutoring sessions after school and on the weekends. Each

session consisted of three classes, each class containing as many as ten children, for a total of 30 children on site. In addition to the 30 children, there will be 11 employees on site. Staff believed the potential for high turnover (30 children arriving to and exiting from the site simultaneously over the course of several hours) presented safety concerns given the limited parking stalls on site, limited maneuverability of vehicles within the site, and the restricted access to the site. These concerns were also expressed by the Committee at the public hearing. In response to those concerns, the petitioner is proposing to implement the following measures to address those concerns:

- Reduce the number of children per session from 30 to 18. This translates to 6 children per class. For a complete breakdown of the schedule, please see the attached schedule. **(Attachment B)**
- Stagger class start times by 15 minutes to allow for children to be picked up before children attending the next class arrive on site.
- Dedicate one staff member to assist with pick-up and drop-off.
- Require all 11 employees to park off site, dedicating the seven stalls on site to pick-up and drop-off.
- Offer transportation for up to ten students total to the site via the petitioner's private passenger vehicles.

The petitioner is also proposing camps during the summer as well as during scheduled days off for local schools. The petitioner proposes to enroll 30 children total for these all-day camps operating from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The petitioner proposes to stagger pick-up and drop-off for the camps as well. The Planning Department has asked the petitioner to detail how pick-up and drop-off for camps will be managed and enforced.

The Planning Department believes these are positive changes which address some of the concerns concerning turnover. Nevertheless, staff believes the petition still creates a high level of turnover that, coupled with the physical limitations of the site, may create safety concerns for pedestrians and vehicles. Staff believes the seven parking stalls will not be able to accommodate the number of vehicles traveling to the site, which may result in queuing and/or "live-parking" on Washington Street and children walking into the building. Staff believes the limited maneuverability within the parking lot may require vehicles to encroach into the sidewalk before exiting the site; therefore, increasing potential pedestrian-vehicle conflict.



Additionally, the site's location on a one-way portion of Washington Street restricts site access from only Charlesbank Road and Nonantum Place which are densely developed neighborhood streets. Staff believes these streets may be impacted by the number of vehicles traveling to the site, especially if vehicles queue or live-park in front of the site. The Planning Department recognizes the petitioner's willingness to enact measures which reduce the number of trips to the site, most importantly reducing enrollment and staggering session start times, but staff believes the site's limitations present safety concerns given the intensity of use proposed.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A:** Zoning Review Memorandum, dated December 11, 2018
- Attachment B:** Arbor Learning Center Class Schedule, as of March 20, 2018