

To: Land Use Committee of the Newton City Council

From: Lou Mercuri, Planning Horizons

Re: 35-37 Lincoln Street, Best Fitness Proposal

Date: June 21, 2019

On behalf of the petitioner for this land use petition, I am submitting this report regarding the availability of parking for the proposed Best Fitness health club and fitness center at 35-37 Lincoln Street in Newton Highlands.

#### Best Fitness Proposal

The proposed fitness facility will operate at the renovated space at 35-37 Lincoln Street in Newton Highlands, a location previously occupied by a children's clothing and artificial flower stores. It is expected that four employees will be on site during the largest shift. A zoning and parking analysis conducted by the Inspectional Service department reveals that the proposed use will require a parking waiver of 9 parking stalls. The expected peak hours of operation (classes only) will be in the morning hours. Weekdays between 5 and 6 AM, between 9 and 10 AM as well as Saturdays between 8 and 9 AM are expected to be the busiest hours of operation.

#### Existing Conditions

The interior of 35-37 Lincoln Street will be renovated to accommodate the new use. It is located on the first floor of retail space in the heart of the Newton Highlands village shopping district. A small parking area in the rear of the lot with 18 spaces (many not in compliance) exists for employees only.

The fitness facility will need to rely on off-site parking to meet its customer demand for parking. Parking for customers needs to be readily available and within a comfortable two-minute walk for patrons. Typical classes will be between 45 minutes and one hour in length.

Planning Horizons conducted surveys of public parking usage in the area when parking demands of the proposed fitness center would be the greatest. The results of these surveys are described in this report and include available public parking areas within a two-minute walk of 35-37 Lincoln Street.

Eight different parking locations were surveyed for potential use by patrons and employees. The eight areas and surveyed capacities are noted as follows:

1. Lincoln Street westbound between Walnut Street and Hartford Street, 12 one-hour metered spaces, including the area in front of 35-37 Lincoln Street
2. Lincoln Street westbound between the Hartford Street crosswalk and the Newton Highlands Post Office, 6 one-hour metered spaces
3. Lincoln Street westbound between the Newton Highlands Post Office and Chester Street, 7 two-hour unmetered spaces

4. Lincoln Street eastbound between the Hyde Community Center playground and the closest parking meters, 10 one-hour unmetered spaces
5. Lincoln Street eastbound from in front of the Hyde Center to the intersection with Hartford Street, 6 one-hour metered spaces
6. Lincoln Street eastbound between Hartford Street and Walnut Street, 11 one-hour metered spaces
7. The Hartford Street municipal lot includes a total of 61 spaces, for this survey the long-term (12-hour) parking spaces, handicapped spaces, and spaces reserved for the Brigham House were not included, leaving a net total of 50 three-hour metered spaces
8. Hartford Street eastbound between Erie Avenue and the Brigham House Community Center, 12 two-hour unmetered spaces

This inventory of parking areas includes a total of 114 available public short-term parking spaces during the regular 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM daytime business hours. Our survey was limited to short-term parking areas (three hours or less) as most or all patrons of 35-37 Lincoln will typically need parking for 60 to 90 minutes or less. There are five additional long-term parking spaces in the Hartford Street lot (12 hours) and others further away from the site on Walnut Street traveling northbound towards Beacon Street.

#### Parking Methodology and Results

Planning Horizons surveyed the eight available parking locations on three different occasions, one survey was conducted at 6 AM on Wednesday June 19, one survey was conducted at 9:30 AM on Tuesday June 18, and a final survey was conducted at 8:30 AM on Saturday June 15. Per Appendix "A" provided by Best Fitness, these three times most closely correspond to their expected peak use periods based on other facilities already in operation.

The following three tables depict the results and parking occupancies of the survey:

Planning Horizons

781-373-1375

502 South Avenue, Weston, MA 02493

Early Morning Weekday Count Wednesday June 19 6:00 AM			
Parking Area	Capacity	Occupancy	Number of Vacant Spaces
Lincoln St westbound, 1 hr metered at site	12	1	11
Lincoln St westbound, Post Office, 1 hr metered	6	0	6
Lincoln St westbound to Chester St, 2 hr unmetered	7	0	7
Lincoln St eastbound, Hyde Center, 1 hr unmetered	10	1	9
Lincoln St eastbound Hyde Center, 1 hr metered	6	1	5
Licoln St eastbound, 1 hr metered	11	0	11
Hartford St Municipal Lot, 3 hr metered	50	2	48
Hartford St, 2 hr unmetered	12	1	11
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>108</b>

Morning Weekday Count Tuesday June 18 9:30 AM			
Parking Area	Capacity	Occupancy	Number of Vacant Spaces
Lincoln St westbound, 1 hr metered at site	12	10	2
Lincoln St westbound, Post Office, 1 hr metered	6	1	5
Lincoln St westbound to Chester St, 2 hr unmetered	7	4	3
Lincoln St eastbound, Hyde Center, 1 hr unmetered	10	1	9
Lincoln St eastbound Hyde Center, 1 hr metered	6	0	6
Licoln St eastbound, 1 hr metered	11	7	4
Hartford St Municipal Lot, 3 hr metered	50	30	20
Hartford St, 2 hr unmetered	12	5	7
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>56</b>

Saturday Morning Count June 15 8:30 AM			
Parking Area	Capacity	Occupancy	Number of Vacant Spaces
Lincoln St westbound, 1 hr metered at site	12	10	2
Lincoln St westbound, Post Office, 1 hr metered	6	4	2
Lincoln St westbound to Chester St, 2 hr unmetered	7	7	0
Lincoln St eastbound, Hyde Center, 1 hr unmetered	10	1	9
Lincoln St eastbound Hyde Center, 1 hr metered	6	0	6
Licoln St eastbound, 1 hr metered	11	5	6
Hartford St Municipal Lot, 3 hr metered	50	16	34
Hartford St, 2 hr unmetered	12	12	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>59</b>

The results of the data reveal two important factors. First, the overall parking demand in the Newton Highlands village center is greatest between the business hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Our surveys focused on morning times when demand for on street parking is reduced but when Best Fitness hold its classes. As could be expected, there was an almost unlimited supply of available parking at 6 am; the other weekday count at 9:30 showed an overall availability of 56 spaces and finally the 8:30 Saturday count showed an availability of 59 spaces.

The second common factor relates to the location of the availability of parking. Generally, the metered spaces in front of the businesses are most widely used, however the Hartford Street municipal lot is presently an underutilized resource with an average of 34 available spaces at the time of the surveys. This lot is particularly valuable for patrons of 35-37 Lincoln as it is such a close walk to the fitness center and offers three-hour parking limits which meets or exceeds an ideal length of time health club patrons.

The data indicates that there is on average a large surplus of available parking in the area to allow the 9-space parking waiver. The three surveys revealed totals of 108, 56, and 59 available spaces at the peak times for Best Fitness.

The most available areas from all three surveys were the Hartford Street Municipal lot (48, 20, and 34 spaces respectively) and along Lincoln Street eastbound in front of the Hyde Center (9 spaces available at all three counts, these are one- hour unmetered spaces). Both areas are readily accessible to 35-37 Lincoln Street and together they supply a total surplus of well over 9 parking spaces.

In addition, it is expected that several employees will access the site from the nearby MBTA Green Line station in Newton Highlands. In addition, Best Fitness will rely on some walk-in traffic from the numerous businesses and offices in the immediate area, which will not alter or increase the parking demand.

#### Summary and Conclusion

Based on the observations and analysis contained in this report, it appears that the 35-37 Lincoln Street Best Fitness health center can readily meet the 9- space parking waiver requirement. On average, there are at least 56 available parking spaces within a two-minute walk of the site during the three surveyed periods that correspond to the peak periods for the facility.

Appendix "A", provided by Best Fitness, indicates their expected peak class periods and enrollments based on similar facilities in other communities.

**APPENDIX A**

**Expected Peak Class Periods and Enrollments**

<b>Monday through Friday</b>		<b>Saturdays</b>	
5:00 AM	25	7:00 AM	18
6:00 AM	20	8:00 AM	25
7:00 AM	7	9:00 AM	22
9:30 AM	20	10:00 AM	10
12:00 PM	10		
4:30 PM	12		
5:30 PM	10		
6:30 PM	6		

Source: Best Fitness Corporate Office