



Town of Walpole
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Community & Economic Development

JAMES A. JOHNSON
Town Administrator

Patrick Deschenes
*Community & Economic
Development Director*

Memo

To: Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Patrick Deschenes, Director of Community & Economic Development

Date: 10/11/2023

Subject: Darwin Commons 40B – 28 Unit Plan – May 11, 2023 HAC Remand

Project Breakdown:

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| Applicant: Wall Street Development Corp. | Project Engineer: Glossa Engineering Inc. |
| Traffic Engineer: Ron Muller & Associates | Architect: Morabito Architects |

Materials Submitted for Review:

- Application Package submitted on 4/28/2022
- Site Development Plans, dated 8/13/2021, revised 8/22/23
- Traffic Impact Report, dated 4/12/2022
- Preliminary Architectural Plans, dated August 2021
- List of Waivers, dated 4/28/2022
- Fire Truck Turning Analysis, dated 8/17/2023
- Landscape Plan, August 2023

General Comments

1. The density and style of development is completely out of character for the surrounding neighborhood. I would strongly encourage either a reduction in the number of units or a more appropriate site layout to avoid the tight and overly built-up appearance of this current proposal. Affordable housing options are extremely important, but so is proper site design. I strongly encourage the applicant take the existing character of the neighborhood into consideration and revise this proposal appropriately.
2. The site location is within Area 1 of the water resource Protection Overlay District (WRPOD) and has the proposed impervious surface listed at 45.6%. With being so close to the wellhead I would strongly encourage the applicant significantly reduce the amount of proposed impervious surface at the site.
3. Please include the landscaping plan and truck turning plans as part of one complete plan set and not multiple separate submissions.

Site Development Plans

Sheet 1:

1. Why is the zoning schedule listed twice? Please revise to avoid any confusion here.
2. The listed proposed building height of 20 feet is conflicting with both the architectural renderings and waivers requested.

Sheet 2: No comment.

Sheet 3:

1. Mail boxes for this development should be contained within the site and not within the public right of way on Darwin Lane.
2. What will the material of the curbing be?
3. All driveways and visitor parking spaces should have dimensions listed.
4. Parking schedule should be listed.
5. Waivers reference rear yard decks. These should be depicted on the plans.
6. What are the heights of the retaining walls?
7. This proposed development will extend the existing dead-end street of Darwin Lane. Please identify the new distance from the end of this proposed development to the access of Darwin Lane off of Common Street.
8. I would strongly encourage finding a second point of access to the site, especially given this proposed development is located at the end of the dead-end street, and has a significantly higher density than the surrounding neighborhood.

Sheet 4:

1. I will defer to engineering for review of grading and drainage. However, I would encourage utilizing elements of a low impact development.
2. The roof drain collector piping is represented with a light blue color. It's difficult to make these out. Please make their representation black and consistent with all other elements of these plans.

Sheet 5:

1. Location of hydrants should be agreed to by the Fire Department.
2. Proposed sewer system should be approved and agreed to by DPW.

Sheet 6: No comment.

Sheet 7: No Comment

Sheet 8: No Comment

Landscaping Plan

1. Please be sure that landscaping does not interfere with turning and access of emergency vehicles or proposed snow storage locations.
2. I would strongly suggest increasing the vegetative buffer between the proposed site and the abutting residences. This includes those on both Darwin Lane and Eleanor Road.
3. There are currently no proposed fences on site. I would encourage the applicant to discuss preference with neighbors.

Preliminary Architectural Plans

1. Please provide revised preliminary architectural plans to scale! These are unreadable
2. The plans provided show only a four-unit design. The site plans also show a three-unit, five-unit, and six-unit building. The Board should see preliminary architectural plans that reference all proposed building for the site.
3. Will there be rear yard decks? Please depict this on the plans.

List of Waivers

1. A general waiver to 40A rules and regulations is really not applicable.
2. There is a request to waive the maximum height of 35 feet for units 13-19. This is conflicting with the zoning schedule listed on sheet 1 of the revised site plans which states the proposed building height is 20 ft.
3. **The project site is within Area 1 of the Water Resource Protection Overlay District. Unless the applicant seeks a waiver they should be compliant with Zoning Bylaw Section 12.3.C.**
4. Either the waivers should be revised or the plans should be revised to reflect consistency with Walpole's Zoning.