

Dear Walpole ZBA

I'm writing this letter to voice my strong opposition for the 55 Summer Street 30B project as it is currently proposed. I live on Summer Street very close the intersection of Neponset, Washington and Summer. My wife and I live in a single family house with 3 small children and have serious concerns on how this project will negatively impact our quality of life and those of our neighbors, many of whom also have small children. Largely our concerns stem from the size of the project in the proposed location. Our small quaint neighborhood simply cannot handle a development of this magnitude. There are 3 themes that I will further detail below on specifically why I am voicing these concerns and what I hope can be done to change the project scope.

1. Traffic and Safety

This section of Summer street is not large enough and does not have the proper infrastructure in place to handle the additional traffic that this development will spill onto Summer St, especially during the rush hour times. I fear my driveway will be obstructed for large parts of the day and that the intersection of Summer, Neponset and Washington will become a traffic jam during many hours of the day. Add small children running around, riding bikes and playing this is a recipe for a tragedy to occur. There are also not sidewalks on both sides of summer street to provide safe passage from the development to Boyden school/ playground without crossing Summer street multiple times. There is also the concern of the commuter rail which already creates traffic jams when it passes 20+ times daily, which will only get worse as more traffic is added to this section of Summer street.

2. Environment

I fear that removing the natural forest that exists today will hurt the air quality, displace animals and wildlife and generally change the makeup and texture of the neighborhood. South Walpole is quaint and quiet and cannot support a development this size. There is nothing close to another development this size in South Walpole and honestly this is the wrong location for something this big. We've already seen how Patriot place has displaced so much natural land and beauty we can't afford to lose this acreage to another development so large. This land should be protected and not bulldozed. This development needs to be reduced plain and simple.

3. Demand and Housing

Walpole doesn't need any more apartments or town homes right now. Demand is surging for single family houses with the pandemic and I foresee this to continue as more and more people work from their homes. Apartments are sitting vacant as people want space and they are willing to move away from cities to get it. There are several new apartment and condo projects in Walpole that will be ready well before this one and the capacity at these will drive down pricing and create more vacancies. I fear this project will also have many empty apartments as a result of drops in demand. We do not need this kind of housing in Walpole now or in the near future.

To restate again, this development is way, way too big for South Walpole and for Summer Street. Allowing this development to proceed "as is" will significantly damage quality of life to current and future residents and will create a traffic and safety nightmare for South Walpole. Please do everything in your power to get the developers to rethink this project. This is not what our town needs or wants.

Recommendations:

- Reduce the size of the development by at least 50%. Preferably to under 100 units.
- Add a 2nd entrance to the development that is accessible from Route 1A.
- Expand Summer street and add traffic signals to better regulate traffic.

- Create another throughway to route 1 from summer street.
- Reconfigure the intersection of Neponset, Summer and Washington.

Thank you.
Mark Major

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