

Good evening. My name is Ann Rappaport and I live at 7 Bradford Road. I am a life-long resident of Wellesley. I am direct abutter to the proposed 489 Worcester Street project formerly known as 8 Cliff Road.

I've spoken to you before, but I want to continue to stress that the project as currently designed at 48 units is too big and too dense for the area in which it is proposed, an already busy corridor along Cliff Road and Route 9 with major traffic problems even before adding additional housing. I will leave the discussion of traffic impacts to other speakers but traffic in the lower Cliff Road area is already a problem that has only gotten worse in the almost 30 years I've lived on Bradford Road. Increased traffic in this area will affect many Wellesley residents, not just abutters – anyone who takes back roads to the Mass Pike via Cliff and Hundreds Road will know what I am talking about.

I am particularly concerned about the 40R rezoning being proposed, which will remove 489 Worcester as well as 4 and 14 Cliff Roads from the 20,000 sf single family residence district. This directly contradicts the 2019 Unified Plan, which specifies that any new housing “maintain the primarily single family character of Wellesley’s housing stock” with the associated policy goal being to “preserve the character of single-family streets”. Route 9 in Wellesley is largely a residential street, unlike Route 9 in Natick or Newton, with many gracious older homes built before Worcester Street became a highway.

The town currently exceeds our 10% affordable housing goals so Wellesley is no longer threatened by Chapter 40B projects in which town zoning can be set aside by the state. Wellesley is already zoned with sufficient density in the appropriate areas to meet our MBTA Communities guidelines. If the town chooses to rezone part of a single family residence district, which will require Town Meeting approval, that's a huge precedent to set. I would submit that any zoning change of this magnitude be subject to the usual 2/3 supermajority typically required by zoning bylaw changes at Town Meeting and not the simple majority allowed under 40R zoning.

Town Meeting just approved \$65,000 of CPA funds for a Strategic Housing Plan. One of the goals stated in the Advisory Report describing this Housing Plan is “to involve the community in the planning process to gather input, address concerns, and build consensus around housing development goals and strategies”. Another is to “foster collaborations between the public and private sectors to facilitate the development of affordable and market-rate housing.”

I read with interest today that \$48.5M of Haynes Management commercial properties were just sold, many near the Wellesley Hills train station, which might be eligible to be redeveloped as multifamily housing and would not require any further rezoning. Why not focus on redeveloping areas of town close to the commuter rail stations where rezoning is unnecessary and where the community is unlikely to have the same level of major concerns as with a single family residence district rezoning? Why could the Select Board not work proactively with nonprofit developers to build multifamily or workforce housing in these or similar properties by offering tax incentives or other sweeteners? The Select Board and Planning Board should be looking at the town's needs more broadly and not just reacting to each new project as it comes along. Hopefully, the Strategic Housing Plan will be a good start.

We, the residents of Wellesley, have elected the members of the Select Board to represent us, not developers in Wellesley. Given the significant neighborhood opposition to this project and with so many potential positive housing developments on the horizon in already appropriately-zoned areas, we ask you to reject this massive and out-of-scale project and send the developers back to the drawing board.