

****This is a summary of the statement to the ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING on Feb 7, 2024****

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I oppose re-zoning a commercial access road at 200 Pond Road, located in a residential neighborhood, and will focus my thoughts on three areas: zoning, risk, and timing.

Our neighborhoods generally lie in residential districts intentionally established by our zoning by-laws, whose objectives read in part as follows:

- to lessen congestion in the streets
- to prevent overcrowding of land
- to conserve natural resources
- to prevent blight and pollution
- to encourage the most appropriate use of land

But there is another, unspoken, objective to our zoning by-laws, and that is the covenant between the town and our citizens that we will all play by the same set of rules. That a citizen may build and invest and live in a residential district free from fear that their right to the quiet enjoyment of their property will be taken away by special interests.

Rather than working with us through the planning process and participating constructively in our shared destiny, a \$6 billion corporation is asking you for preferential treatment, asking you to break the covenant between the town and the people, and trying to play by a different set of rules.

If it were ever necessary to break the zoning covenant, one ought to do so only under these conditions.

- the proposed plan is completely understood
- the site is objectively the best suited for the intended use
- the developer has made binding site use commitments
- no one property owner receives a windfall of enrichment at the expense of the town or the people

None of these conditions is met here.

You are being asked to support rezoning for a project that has not been designed or reviewed or approved by anybody. There are no architectural plans, no lighting plans, no drainage plans, no landscaping plans, no specifications, no binding site use commitments.

Natick has not seen or approved anything. It would be a huge risk, to both Wellesley and Natick, to approve a commercial access road to a project with so many significant unknowns, and this is a risk there is no good reason to take.

We must also be considerate of Natick. As Tom Ulfelder said at the Select Board, "I think there is a benefit and a purpose to the process in Natick through Town Meeting to consider whether they want this project and what that project might look like."

I urge you, please, to honor the zoning covenant, to avoid risk, and to be a good neighbor to Natick by not recommending a favorable vote on Article 43.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.