

The Sarno's
6 Ellen Rd
Stoneham MA 02189
November 13, 2013

Board of Selectmen
Stoneham Town Hall
Stoneham MA 02180

Dear Selectmen

RE: New England Fund Site Approval Application (Project Eligibility) for The Commons at Weiss Farm/170 Franklin Street.

LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION!

This project's building orientation is not conducive to a sense of community. The building scale and design are inconsistent with established traditions in Stoneham and with the surrounding neighborhoods. **This development is too large for the community.** This development is subject to the State Wetlands Protection Act and requires a review from MEPA since in excess of 25 acres.

Realizing that traffic is not an issue that would likely be under consideration by Mass Housing, you must consider it as a significant point for public safety due to the density of the area with Stoneham High School and 9 other schools in close proximity. We also have places of worship directly on Franklin Street. If you are a member of: Advent Christian Church 200 Franklin St, Melrose, MA 02176 or Kingdom Hall Jehovah's Witness 203 Franklin St Stoneham Ma you need to leave earlier to get to services on time once the construction and completion of The Commons at Weiss Farm happens. These places of worship do not have parking lots so parking on Franklin Street and intersecting streets is what happens.

Franklin St. is a two-lane highway that is not under the State Highway jurisdiction but is similar to a Chapter 90 access roadway since it connects with the neighboring community of Melrose.

Franklin Street is a highly traversed roadway since it connects Melrose to Stoneham and provides an easy route to 2 major highways Route 93 and 95.

At peak hours during the school year:

- ✓ Children walking or driving to the high school.
- ✓ Parents dropping and picking up children from Kinder Care

- ✓ Parents taking children to the local grammar school off Franklin St will be caught in excessive traffic.

You also once completed will have an 88 apartment assisted living dedicated to our senior citizens and disabled residents.

Even off peak hours there is significant traffic in this area.

264 units' means approximately 1.9 cars per unit will increase traffic problems particularly if dwelling geared to professional people with 75% of the apartments expensive rentals.

Franklin St. according to the dispatch report from the Fire Department averages 3 calls per week. Common sense tells you with the addition of the 88 assisted living apartments geared to our Seniors and disabled, along with the high school, Kinder Care, the grammar school, currently two condo complexes and existing older apartment building and single family residences the addition of 264 units will cause extreme stress on existing fire, police and ambulance services.

This project will generate higher service costs mainly for public safety and other municipal services; it is speculative whether it will generate revenue from non-local resource.

Public education is the most expensive component of community's costs to serve residential development. In Stoneham and virtually every town in the Commonwealth, however school expenditures have increased at a much faster rate than enrollments. Like all school districts, Stoneham receives educational aid from the state but has received fewer dollars than surrounding communities, which are more affluent. A development of this magnitude will cripple the existing school programs and will require additional funds from the state that the tax revenue gained by this development will not cover.

No one can determine the number of school children this project will envision.

There are 9 schools in the surrounding area that will be affected.

It is important to note that the Middle School expansion was initially considered on Franklin St but due to the density of the population in that area it was taken off the table and built in another location to best serve the needs of the children of our community.

The Commons of Weiss Farm development will not only cause on site soil erosion but off site soil erosion. The rates of erosion do not have to be high for significant quantities of the agricultural pollutants of Weiss Farm to be

transported off site. Remember what is in close proximity to Weiss Farm, Stoneham High School, Kinder Care, the new assisted living and families in residential dwellings. What about the off-site effect where eroded soil has a decreased capacity to absorb water. This development is situated near swamp and allegedly will buffer Wetlands but there is also an intermittent stream. Eroded soil has a decreased capacity to absorb water and increased runoff may lead to downstream flooding and local damage to property,

Has anyone considered the major off-site impact results from the agricultural chemicals that move with eroded sediment? These chemicals move into, and pollute, downstream watercourses and water bodies. Can the developer stop this from happening?

Forget the scale of the project. It does not belong on this location. Over and over again residents have stated the serious problems it will create and cost to our community. Now we are hearing it from our neighbor Melrose.

This development will have a significant and cumulative effect upon:

Public and private water supply

Ground water

Flood control, erosion, and sedimentation control

Note: The existing water and sewer mains in this area are atop wooden piles that are 12-18 feet deep. This indicates poor soil conditions.

State statutes and regulations, such as the Wetlands Protection Act, Title 5, and all building codes; remain fully in effect under the comprehensive permit.

The purpose of **Title 5**, 310 CMR 15.000, of the State Environmental Code is to provide for the protection

Of public health, safety, welfare and the environment by requiring the proper siting, construction, upgrade, and

Maintenance of on-site sewage disposal systems and

Appropriate means for the transport and disposal of seepage

The reason we all live here is because of the quality of life our community provides for our families. We need to protect our children, our senior citizens and residents of Stoneham from a development that will strain our existing services, our police, fire and schools.

Our town needs to start developing smart growth as a community. Create a Fair Housing Committee and use Chapter 40R to guide developers to locations and settings that are more appropriate and conducive to our town.

Respectfully submitted.

