

Town of Stoneham
Board of Appeals
35 Central Street
Stoneham, MA 02180
March 21, 2024

RECEIVED

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STONEHAM
BOARD OF APPEALS

Re: The Residences at Spot Pond Proposal

To the Board of Appeals:

Thank you for making the meeting of March 20th available on Stoneham TV, which allowed us to view the meeting remotely, since we are away for the winter months. My wife and I have lived at Sterling Hill at 7 Executive Drive since it first opened for occupancy nearly six years ago.

We would like to add our feedback to the many who spoke last evening and/or have already written to you. To start, we urge the Board of Appeals to approve a waiver of the Stoneham Zoning Bylaws as they relate to parking (Section 6.3) by eliminating the need for 82 spaces that would take away our green space in the front of our property. Since we first moved to Sterling Hill, this area has been a source of pride while enhancing our living experience at this wonderful community. A significant portion of our landscaping budget has been allotted to keeping this front yard in the most pristine condition as possible. Based on the joy and the aesthetic value that it brings to the wildlife, residents, and neighbors, we feel that any disruption to this limited green space would have a devastating impact on the quality of life for all who enjoy it. Not only is it pleasant to look at when sitting on or porches or walking by, it is a significant habitat for local wild life, primarily the geese and birds. While we don't encourage it as a playground, it is used by our residents' grandchildren and neighbors at Alta Clara. It is also used by the many in our community and next door as a place to let their dogs run. Again, we do not encourage it, but understand that open space is at a premium and will be greatly reduced by all concerned by the proposed project at 5 Woodland. I have attached a few photos to illustrate these points.

Any plans to also place a bus stop in front of our property would also have a devastating impact on the quality of our life from the noise and fumes from the buses which run from approximately 5:00am until after midnight.

In terms of the size of the project, as mentioned in other letters, it is overwhelming based on the sizes of other projects in Stoneham on much larger parcels of land. Both Alta Clara and Weiss Farm come to mind at once. Since the developer had previously agreed to make Alta Clara the last residential development in this complex to obtain approval, many find it unconscionable that 40B would be used as an excuse to ignore this agreement. Similarly to many of our neighbors, we support a reasonable sized development. If the needs of the surrounding communities were at the forefront, perhaps some consideration should be given to make some of the new units to be 55-plus or 62-plus housing as a means to making more single houses available for new families. If empty nesters had a viable option when selling their family houses, but could remain in the area as we did, I am sure there would be a high demand. Of course, that would strictly be the decision of the developer in the event they need to go back to the drawing board (which may need to include purchasing the Medical Arts Building). Based on concerns raised by the tenants of the Medical Arts condos in a separate letter to the Appeals Board, as well as the many vacancies there, it makes little sense to take down the hospital alone, while keeping the Medical Arts Building.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to express our feelings regarding this most concerning issue.

Sincerely yours.

W. Steve and Kimberly Collins
7 Executive Drive Unit 238
Stoneham, MA 02180



Grandpa kicking soccer ball with grandsons.



Part of the geese's habitat.



Alta Clara resident letting dog run free.