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STONEHAM
BOARD OF APPEALS

Date: March 26, 2024
To: Stoneham Board of Appeals
From: Brian and Susan O'Leary, 11 Executive Dr. Unit 123, Stoneham, MA
Subject: The Residences at Spot Pond

We are writing in connection with the Comprehensive Permit application submitted by Fellsway Development LLC in connection with their proposal to build a 378 unit residential development at 5 Woodland Rd., the site of the former Boston Regional Medical Center.

We live at the Sterling Hill Condominiums and have lived in Stoneham since the Sterling Hill development was completed in 2018.

In reviewing the plans submitted by the developer and the comments submitted by the peer reviewers there are a number of concerns that we would like the Board to take into consideration.

SIZE OF DEVELOPMENT: The developer is proposing to build 378 units at the site and is seeking a variance in connection with Zoning section 4.15.2.4 to exceed the maximum limit of 30 units per acre. The 5 Woodland Road parcel is 10.02 acres but the topography and irregular shape of the parcel greatly impact the usefulness of portions of the site. The current zoning would allow a maximum of approximately 300 units which seems far more appropriate than the proposed 378 units. The reduction in the number of units would also reduce traffic and the need for parking while allowing increased space to be allocated for recreational areas and much needed greenspace. The Alta Clara development, located on an adjacent parcel of 9.03 acres consists of approximately 261 units. While this is less than the maximum of 30 units per acre, the layout for Alta Clara contains virtually no greenspace other than a 10-20 foot landscaped buffer area around each of their 3 buildings.

PARKING: Fellsway Development has proposed exercising a parking easement to build 82 parking spaces in the grassy area that exists in front of our buildings. The conversion of the existing green space into a parking lot with lighting and 24 x 7 residential use would result in significant quality of life issues due to increase in noise, pollution and increased security concerns for our property. We would ask that the Developer and the Board consider other solutions that would preclude the need for the use of this area for parking.

BUS STOP: There is an existing bus stop in the lower portion of the former hospital parking lot for the MBTA Bus Route 99. Woodland Road is the last stop on this route and as a result busses tend to idle at this stop for an extended period of time prior to starting their return trip. There has been a discussion of relocating the bus stop from its existing location to the area in front of our buildings at 7 and 11 Executive Drive. This relocation would result in significant noise and pollution issues for our property. I would suggest a more appropriate location would be adjacent to the proposed 5 Woodland Rd development as this is the historical site of the bus stop and the significantly larger population of new development would be better served by closer proximity to the bus stop. I would suggest that the developer seek ways to incorporate a bus waiting area into their plans as a convenience to not only their residents but other area residents and the employees at the LifeCare Center.

Thank you for your consideration.