

Pine Brook Neighborhood Association
Wayland, MA

Board of Selectmen
Town of Wayland, MA 01778

June 2, 2016

Re: Proposed Development of Mahoney's Garden Center on Route 20.

To the Board of Selectmen:

A former Wayland resident, Steven Zieff, has met with some Pine Brook Neighborhood Association members to discuss his proposed 60 unit development of the Mahoney's site. His preference is to work with the Town in a "friendly 40B" option or to convince the Town to create a new overlay district that would allow increased density housing on that site. The good news supporting some version of his concept is that 45 or so units could help us achieve the 10% affordable housing threshold. This, combined with the River's Edge development of 190 units could prevent the constant threat of commercial development under the guise of 40B. The bad news is that the buildable area on the Mahoney's lot is so small that Zieff proposes to build three story and five story apartment buildings over two stories of parking (partially buried under ground). The following letter defines the sentiment of neighbors.

- 1) As everyone in town knows all too well, traffic on Route 20 is a nightmare during both the morning commute and the 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. commuting hours. The thought of having a minimum of 60 more cars entering and exiting from this site daily would only further compound an already troublesome highway. We doubt the developer's argument that 50% of the residents would be in Florida 6 months of the year. He has no facts to back that up when the residents are as yet unknown.
- 2) The developer suggests that this would not be a residential cluster that would attract families with school-aged children as there are no plans for play areas within his development. Yet he plans to maintain an existing bridge and existing trails through the conservation area on the property. Many families wanting to move to Wayland to access the schools may well be happy to rent to obtain school access were they unable to afford to purchase property.
- 3) There are wetland issues for the Conservation Commission to address if the integrity of Pine Brook conservation land and river setback area is to be maintained.
- 4) The developer seems to think that a three-story building near the front with five stories above grade in back plus two levels of parking garage below is an acceptable residential profile for Wayland, approximately a 60-70 foot high building in an area zoned for 35 foot high buildings. The impact on directly abutting properties with single family houses would be enormously detrimental from a sheer scale factor, let alone light and shade impacts.
- 5) The Board of Health needs to look deeply into what was being proposed for a septic system to accommodate 89 bedrooms. How such a system could be placed without impacting the wetlands would seem to be an unlikely challenge.

- 6) We can appreciate the fact that town boards are always on the lookout for tax-generating development, but at what price? The town just voted unanimously at Town Meeting to preserve Mainstone Farm from development. That vote made a major statement about how town residents feel about large housing developments taking over every available space of land.
- 7) The 60 unit rental complex proposed for the Mahoney's site, does not fit into the Wayland's "semi-rural" character, the stated goal in the town's Master Plan. It would permanently alter the character of Wayland's main entrance from Weston in particular and the entire neighborhood along the eastern end of Route 20 in general.
- 8) We support the initiative to provide housing for low/moderate income residents in Wayland and we support efforts to increase diversity in our community. But we ask this be done thoughtfully with the goal of retaining the physical character of our community. People want to live in Wayland because we have held the line in protecting the semi-rural character of our town. We owe the same to those who will come after us in the future.

Here is how Wayland needs to proceed:

Under the Commonwealth, the state administers the Housing Production Program, that enables cities and towns to adopt an affordable housing plan that demonstrates production of at least 0.50% over one year, or 1.0% over two years, of its year-round housing stock eligible for inclusion in the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). Wayland will have to produce at least 25 affordable units annually to meet these production goals through 2020. However, it has 81 units built that can be added to the SHI and 362 in production that can be added to the SHI by 2017 to reach 10%. Therefore, it will only need to produce an additional 5 units per year to remain at 10% when the 2020 census is completed. If the Commonwealth certifies that Wayland has complied with its annual production goals, the Town will be able, through its Zoning Board of Appeals, to deny what it considers to be inappropriate comprehensive permit applications.

Therefore, we strongly urge the Town to adopt a Housing Production Plan and get it approved by DHCD as soon as possible. Even by state standards, this small footprint at the Mahoney's site should only support 15-20 units of housing, a size that is on par with the scale of Post Road Village, the 40B development next to the nearby clock shop.

Sincerely,

Pine Brook Neighborhood Association

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