

To: Jay Sheers, Chair, and the City of Beacon Planning Board

Date: August 4, 2017

Re: **Edgewater Site Plan and Subdivision**

I have reviewed the response letters from Michael A. Bodendorf and Aryeh Siegel and three revised site plan sheets, including a revised Sheet 1 Site Plan, Sheet 10 Grading and Utility Plan, and Sheet 14 Stormwater Details, all dated July 25, 2017.

Proposal

The applicant is proposing to demolish two existing buildings, construct seven apartment buildings containing 307 units on 12.009 acres in the RD-1.7 zoning district.

Comments and Recommendations

Most of these comments are the same as last month, since only a few new site plan materials were submitted.

1. The applicant is requesting further discussion on land-banked parking, given the consensus at the July meeting against the idea of land-banked spaces with a high retaining wall on the very steep slopes along Bank Street. The proposed site plan shows 336 spaces, plus 33 land-banked spaces west of Building 1 for a total of 369. This is 18 less than the required 387 spaces. There appear to be several options: find the required minimum spaces in a less visible area on the site, reduce the number of units or bedrooms, ask the ZBA for a parking variance, or ask the City Council for a waiver under 223-26 F(1), because the location is within 2,500 feet of the Train Station platform.

My suggestion would be to add three spaces north of Building 1, three spaces to the land-banked area west of Building 1, and 13 land-banked spaces west of Building 7. When locating additional spaces, the applicant should be aware that the City's recently amended parking standards in Section 223-26 C(7)(b) state that side yard parking should be screened from street views and, whenever possible, be located 40 feet from any side property line that fronts on a street. That may affect some proposed spaces near Bank Street, which already need a 27.5-foot setback due to the requirements in 223-26 C(1) and the side yard footnote in the RD-1.7 bulk table.

The new parking standards also allow 18-foot spaces and 24-foot aisles. All the parking areas should be narrowed to reduce unnecessary asphalt and drainage requirements, add landscaping, and allow separation from sidewalks where cars may overhang curbs.

2. Several variances are being requested for this project, including:
 - Maximum stories for Buildings 3, 4, and 6;
 - More than 36 units per building (Buildings 1, 2, 3, and 6 have between 48 and 59 units);
 - Less than 30 feet between buildings (building separations range from 12 to 24 feet).

The Board will need to issue recommendations to the ZBA.

3. The Planning Board will need to issue an LWRP Consistency Determination for the project. The applicant's consistency statement addresses all the appropriate LWRP policies and provides a visual simulation from the most significant public viewpoint near the Metro-North platform.
4. Although not yet shown of the plans, the applicant has agreed to extend the sidewalk east from the Tompkins Avenue entry to a crosswalk at Bank Street, as suggested by the Creighton Manning traffic consultant.
5. The under-building ADA parking spaces must be located at the shortest accessible route of travel to the elevator entrances, not in the center of the podium away from the elevators. Also, the garage entry, as shown, is too narrow for two-way traffic.
6. A note on the Landscape Plan should confirm that the trees adjacent to the parking lots will be at least 3-inch caliper at four feet above the ground level.
7. The building elevations should continue to be reviewed by the Architectural Review Subcommittee.
8. The *School Impact Study* concludes that the Beacon School District has adequate capacity for the projected 47 school-age children and that the proposed project will have a net positive financial impact on the school district. However, the demographic multipliers are based on a 2006 Rutgers study that has several rent levels. The applicant's consultant should justify the rent level used. The study should also address the potential cumulative impacts of approved and proposed projects.

The Rutgers multipliers do not have a separate calculation for studio apartments, so the one-bedroom multiplier is used for the 96 studio units. This may overestimate residents and school-age children. The study mentions more recent research that shows that the Rutgers multipliers are too high. The consultant should provide citations for these studies, especially for comparable projects near transit stations. According to a footnote in the demographic profile on the U. S. Census Fact Finder website, Beacon's 2010 population count was revised down to 14,599 on October 22, 2012.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

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