

TAG Central, LLC

February 19, 2024

Via E-mail: alove@franklin.ma.us

Ms. Amy Love, Town Planner
Franklin Planning & Community
Development Town of Franklin
355 East Central Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Re: Response to Comment Letter from Department
of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) Dated 1/30/24
Applicant: TAG Central, LLC
Project/Property: Central Street Residences/444 East Central Street, Franklin, MA

Dear Ms. Amy Love and Members of the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD),

In response to the 1/30/24 DPCD Letter and the 1/22/24 Planning Board Meeting, the Applicant provides the following responses organized and formatted pursuant to the 1/30/24 DPCD Letter accompanied by supporting documentation including a revised Conceptual Site Plan.

- **DPCD Comment:** Turn the clubhouse main entrance towards the street and provide parking behind the building.
 - **Applicant Response:** The clubhouse, housing the community's amenities and essential operating functions such as property management, leasing and mail/package delivery, should be central to the residential buildings and away from street traffic. As such and due to site restrictions related to the wetlands, the clubhouse must remain in its current configuration proximate to the residential buildings with necessary parking provided for employees and visitors and an essential turnaround function in front of the clubhouse.

- **DPCD Comment:** Consider the 56-unit building located on the east side and closest to an abutter be three-stories.
 - **Applicant Response:** The site plan has been revised accordingly. Not only has this building been reduced to three-stories, but it has also been relocated towards the center of the site resulting in an increased setback to the easterly abutting properties.

- **DPCD Comment:** Apply with Design Review.
 - **Applicant Response:** As discussed at the 1/22/24 Planning Board Meeting, Design Review is not applicable to the project given its status as a Friendly 40B and resulting jurisdiction under the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Should the project progress to the ZBA level, Applicant will produce further detailed, developed design plans including renderings, perspectives, and complete building elevations. Please note Applicant has submitted typical building elevations contained in the Preliminary Plans dated 12/20/23.

- DPCD Comment: Use elevation on the site to hide the buildings or ways to make the buildings look smaller, by providing an elevation study.
 - Applicant Response: While detailed grading plans have yet to be developed for the project, the vast majority of the site is flat featuring minor topographical changes which affords flexibility in grading the site and locating the proposed buildings. The four-story buildings have been strategically located to be shielded both from the residential abutters to the east and from the perspective of East Central Street. As part of the site plan improvements made, the closest residential building to Central Street, which remains at three-stories, has been pulled 110' further inbound to the site from Central Street causing the building to appear smaller from the street. Please note Applicant has submitted typical building elevations contained in the Preliminary Plans dated 12/20/23.

- DPCD Comment: Provide a shadow study for the four-story building to see the shadow cast onto the abutters.
 - Applicant Response: The four-story building in question has been reduced to three-stories. Furthermore, this building has been relocated internal to the site resulting in an increased setback from the easterly abutters. Both of these improvements significantly mitigate the existence of shadows cast onto the abutters.

- DPCD Comment: Suggested parking requirement of 1.35 seems low, and 1.5 would seem a little better.
 - Applicant Response: Site plan has been updated to increase the parking ratio to 1.45 spaces/unit. Multiple factors are weighed to determine the appropriate parking count including the unit mix, the anticipated number of onsite staff, proximity to public transportation, visitor parking and market data. The proposed parking ratio is further verified by a comparable parking analysis, specifically, a review of parking demand ratios at existing comparable communities in similar MA suburban settings (ie. the number of parking spaces actually utilized divided by the number of units at the subject property). Further, Traffic Engineer, VAI, has reviewed the proposed parking ratio and verified it “is within the range of values documented by the ITE for a multifamily residential community in a similar setting” (Preliminary Transportation Impact Assessment, Page 3). As such, Applicant is confident the proposed parking ratio is sufficient to service the community.

- DPCD Comment: Look to add more 3 story buildings and less 4 story buildings, decreasing the unit count.
 - Applicant Response: The site plan has been updated accordingly. One of the four-story buildings has been reduced to three-stories. This building has also been relocated internal to the site rather than along the easterly property line which results in a greater setback to the abutters.

- DPCD Comment: Drop off and pick area for bus/GATRA
 - Applicant Response: As a result of a 2/5/24 phone call with Dr. Robert Dutch, the Interim School Business Administrator of Franklin Public Schools and members of his staff, the Applicant has confirmed the current proposed site plan is sufficient for school bus drop-off and pick-up. School bus drop-off/pick-up will occur along East Central Street in front of/proximate to the site whereby current school bus routes exist. The site plan provides unimpeded pedestrian connections to this location via sidewalks stemming from the residential buildings to East Central Street.

TAG Central, LLC

- DPCD Comment: Show the free-standing garages on the concept plan.
 - Applicant Response: The site plan has been updated accordingly to illustrate the proposed free-standing garages.

- DPCD Comment: What is the total impervious coverage amount?
 - Applicant Response: The total proposed impervious coverage is +/- 282,391 square feet which equates to an impervious coverage ratio of +/- 43.2%.

Respectfully,



A.J. Alevizos of
TAG Central, LLC