

444 East Central Street

To: Town of Franklin Zoning Board

From: Rob Rappa & Susan Rappa / 40 Red Gate Lane / [rappa22@comcast.net](mailto:rappa22@comcast.net)

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed 40B housing development at 444 East Central Street. My wife and I both grew up in Franklin and are now raising our children here and as you can imagine, we've seen a lot of change in the past 50 years, some positive and some negative. We believe this proposal would be one of the negative changes to our town & community.

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First and foremost, the proposed development is simply too large for our area. The increase in population density would put a strain on our already overburdened infrastructure and specifically the water well that serves the surrounding neighborhood. The development would also lead to an increase in traffic congestion (which is already problematic on route 140), increase in noise pollution, additional strain on our public services and concern over the protected wetlands on the site.

Additionally, the type of housing being proposed is simply not keeping with the character of our neighborhood. The proposed development is massive in size and would drastically alter the aesthetic of our area, replacing the existing greenery, wetlands, and open spaces with a high-density housing complex directly abutting our backyard with little to no buffer or fencing in the proposed plans.

We invite any Zoning Board member to our home to see firsthand how close this massive project would be to our backyard and other homes near us and how it would affect the surrounding area. The picture of the proposed project that was submitted by the developer does not reflect how invasive and close it would be to our home and the other abutting properties. I have enclosed pictures from our backyard which shows how close our property line is in relation to the project site proposal.

Again, we are opposed to this project all together but we would be more open minded to other options, like affordable town houses or condominiums, which we also believe would be more financially beneficial to the town and less invasive to the residents of Franklin. At the least, we would certainly like to see a change in any plan being presented where there would be a greater distance between our property line and any proposed construction or parking areas. We would also like to ask for additional buffers for privacy & security (i.e., fencing, rows of mature coniferous trees and/or bushes).

Another major concern for this project which has not been discussed, is the length of time it would take to complete. The homes in the surrounding area would be greatly affected by the months and possibly years of daily construction with noise from the builders and large ground-shaking construction vehicles also affecting so many residents.

Historically there has been ledge in the area of this proposal, and many of our homes sit on top of ledge. Any blasting required could have a devastating impact on homes in the area with the potential to cause structural damage. We have an in-ground pool on our property which is held up by a retaining wall that sits very close to the property line where the proposal of two large apartment buildings and parking area would be. It is concerning that blasting and major construction going on for months and years could damage the foundation of our pool and our home. How would this issue be handled? Would the developer work with the abutters and provide an independent structural engineer to inspect and document their findings on our homes before the project starts and once completed? We as homeowners should not have to just deal with the issues and damage caused.

Our home is our greatest asset, and the need for it to remain that way is a priority. For all of the reasons we have listed, we are deeply concerned about the impact that this development could have on our property value and quality of life for our family and the other residents in the surrounding area.

As you are aware, Franklin is currently over the 10% requirement for 40B housing. This means the ZBA does not need to approve/recommend this project that we believe would have a detrimental impact on our community and a direct impact on the home we live in. For a contractor who has a proposal that contains 18 waivers attached to it, and for the Town to approve all 18 waivers for the project just doesn't make sense. There are reasons why these Zoning bylaws are in place.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Rob & Susan Rappa