

444 E. Central St

May 2, 2025

Franklin Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Franklin
355 East Central Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Re: Opposition to Proposed 264-Unit Apartment Complex and Request for Zoning Oversight Regarding Stormwater Management

Dear Members of the Franklin Zoning Board of Appeals,

We are writing to formally express our concern regarding the proposed 264-unit apartment complex at 444 East Central Street. We have attended recent meetings held by both the Zoning Board and the Conservation Commission, and while we appreciate the efforts of both bodies, it has been made clear that the Conservation Commission is considering only the environmental impacts specific to the 444 East Central parcel. Therefore, it is our understanding that the Zoning Board bears responsibility for ensuring the protection of adjacent properties—including ours—from potential adverse impacts, particularly regarding stormwater runoff.

We reside at 19 Northern Spy Road, where our property includes a detention pond that has functioned exactly as designed for the past nine years. This pond is engineered to retain stormwater for no more than 72 hours before fully dissipating. We are deeply concerned that the proposed development could disrupt this balance. Any extension of water retention in our pond beyond the current 72-hour threshold would represent a significant and unacceptable change—one for which we would hold the Town of Franklin accountable.

To quantify our concerns: a 1-inch rainfall over 15 acres generates approximately 405,000 gallons of water. Presently, because the land at 444 East Central Street is largely undeveloped, nearly all rainfall is absorbed or naturally dispersed without issue. However, the proposed development—with its substantial impervious surfaces such as roofs, roads, and parking areas—would drastically change this natural process. It is unclear whether the proposed underground stormwater management system can adequately contain this volume of runoff without causing overflow or redirection to adjacent properties like ours.

We are not opposed to responsible development, but we strongly urge the Board not to waive zoning regulations related to stormwater runoff for this project. Specifically, we request that the Board ensure that:

1. Stormwater management systems are designed to fully accommodate runoff from major rainfall events;
2. There is no adverse impact on existing residential drainage systems, including our detention pond;
3. An independent review is conducted to assess the adequacy of the proposed mitigation strategies.

The risk of unwanted and deliberate property damage due to insufficient planning and oversight is real. We ask that you act in the best interest of Franklin residents and uphold zoning standards that protect our homes and land.

Sincerely,



Doug Oppelt
Tricia Oppelt
19 Northern Spy Road
Franklin, MA 02038

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