

TRANSPORTATION PEER REVIEW



TO: Bruce Hunchard, Chairman
Town of Franklin Zoning Board of Appeals

DATE: August 25, 2025

FROM: Steven C. Findlen
Melissa Restrepo

SHS PROJECT NO.: 2025069.00

SUBJECT: Transportation Peer Review – Response to Comments
Residences at 444 Central
444 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts

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As requested, *Howard Stein Hudson (HSH)* has conducted a transportation peer review of the materials prepared and submitted by TAG Central LLC (the Applicant) as part of the proposed development, known as Residences at 444 Central (the Project), located at 444 East Central Street in Franklin, Massachusetts. The proposed Project would involve the removal of the existing nursery and greenhouse buildings, and the construction of 264 residential units in five separate, wood-frame buildings ranging from three to four stories in height, a standalone one-story clubhouse, and amenities including a swimming pool, fitness center, dog-park, walking-trails surrounding the existing stream, outdoor recreation area, and more. The Project will also provide 356 parking spaces, at a ratio of 1.35 spaces per unit.

The purpose of this memorandum is to present a summary of our comments on the most recent response to comments provided by the Project's team (Applicant) listed below as *HSH Response 2*. The following is a summary timeline of the correspondence between HSH and the Applicant representatives.

- *Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), Proposed Multifamily Residential Development 444 East Central Street (Route 140), Franklin, Massachusetts*, prepared by Vanasse & Associates Inc (VAI), February 2025; *Civil Site Plans for: 40B Multi-Family Site Development, 444 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts*, prepared by Allen & Major Associates, Inc., (A&M) February 11, 2025; *Alternative Conceptual Site Plan, 40B Multifamily 444 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts*, prepared by Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc. (kzla), May 5, 2025; and *Comprehensive Permit Application, Residences at 444 Central, 444 East Central Street, Franklin, Massachusetts*, prepared by TAG Central LLC, February 27, 2025.
- Our initial comments were included in a letter dated May 30, 2025 (listed below as *HSH Comment*).
- The Applicant submitted a response to the Town of Franklin that included a response letter dated June 16, 2025, from VAI, listed below as *Applicant Response*.
- Our responses to Applicant's June 16, 2025, letter were included in a letter dated July 1, 2025 (listed below as *HSH Response*).



- The Applicant submitted a response to the Town of Franklin that included a response letter dated August 19, 2025, from TAG Central, LLC, listed below as ***Applicant Response 2***.

On-Site Planning and Parking

ISSUE 1

HSH Comment: HSH requests the Applicant confirm how many parking spaces will be designated as electric vehicle (EV) charging stations spaces and recommends EV charging stations be provided at all five residential buildings.

Applicant Response: Initially, 10 vehicle charging stations will be provided for use by residents of the Project, with infrastructure provided to support future EV charging for a total of 20% of the proposed parking spaces. EV charging stations have been labeled on the revised Site Plan that has been submitted by A&M under separate cover. As shown, a minimum of two (2) EV charging stations will be provided in front of each residential building, plus one (1) at the clubhouse.

HSH Response: Based on the submitted Site Plan, the 10 EV charging stations are distributed amongst the proposed five buildings. Additionally, HSH generally agrees with the infrastructure that will be provided to support future EV charging. **No further action is required.**

ISSUE 2

HSH Comment: HSH generally agrees with the location of the service/trash areas; however, no service/trash area seems to be designated for the clubhouse building. HSH requests the Applicant confirm the trash operations for the clubhouse building.

Applicant Response: A separate dumpster is not proposed for the clubhouse building. Trash from the clubhouse building will be collected by the on-site management staff and deposited in dumpsters for the residential buildings.

HSH Response: HSH generally agrees with the service/trash operations for the clubhouse building. **No further action is required.**

ISSUE 3

HSH Comment: HSH acknowledge the delivery parking stall located across the clubhouse building; however, this delivery zone is designed for a typical delivery box truck (maximum 22-foot-long) for possible short-term deliveries. HSH requests the Applicant provide a detailed plan as to where move-in/move-out activity will take place, including an AutoTURN analysis to demonstrate that all anticipated vehicles (moving and delivery trucks) can safely access the Site. If the parking areas are



anticipated for move-in/move-out activities, demonstrate that moving vehicles will not block drive aisles while parked.

Applicant Response: Tenant moves will be coordinated with the property manager and will be required to be scheduled in advance. Moving vehicles will be staged in parking spaces proximate to the building entrance and will be reserved by placing cones or otherwise cordoning off the space(s) to be used. A vehicle turning analysis for a moving van (SU-30) has been prepared by A&M as part of the revised Site Plan that depicts the typical moving condition for each building and is included as an attachment.

HSH Response: HSH agrees with the move-in/move-out plan. Based on the submitted vehicle turning analysis plan, an SU-30 is able to safely access and circulate the Site. **No further action is required.**

Pedestrians/Cyclists

ISSUE 4

HSH Comment: HSH generally agrees with the proposed pedestrian facilities including the five-foot-wide sidewalks around the Site as shown in the submitted plan; however, to better understand the existing foot traffic along Route 140, HSH requests the Applicant provide a summary of the existing pedestrian volumes, with figures, at the study area intersections.

Applicant Response: Figures 1P, 2P, and 3P summarize the pedestrian volumes observed at the study area intersections during the weekday morning, weekday evening, and Saturday midday peak hours as observed in December 2024 as part of the [Turning Movement Counts] TMCs that form the basis of the February 2025 TIA. As shown thereon, pedestrian activity within the study area was relatively low, ranging from one (1) to eight (8) pedestrian crossings, with the majority of the observed pedestrian crossings occurring at the Route 140/Chestnut Street/King Street intersection followed by the Route 140/Horace Mann Plaza/CVS Pharmacy driveways intersection. It is likely that pedestrian activity within the study area is higher during the more seasonable months of the year.

HSH Response: The submitted figures summarize the existing pedestrian activity as was observed during December 2024 when the traffic data collection took place. HSH agrees with the Applicant's determination that pedestrian activity is likely higher during the more seasonable months of the year. **No further action is required.**



ISSUE 5

HSH Comment: Bicycle parking areas are not shown in the plans. HSH requests the Applicant confirm the number of secure bicycle parking spaces and the number of exterior bicycle racks that the Project will provide and submit a revised site plan to confirm the location of these bicycle parking areas.

Applicant Response: The Site Plan has been updated to include the location of bicycle parking within the Project site. Sixty (60) bicycle parking spaces will be provided within the Project site. The Layout & Material Plan from the revised Site Plan are attached.

HSH Response: HSH agrees with the quantity and location of the exterior bicycle racks shown in the revised Site Plan; however, secure indoor bicycle parking is not provided. HSH requests the Applicant confirm if the proposed buildings will include a secure indoor bike room.

Applicant Response 2: We originally proposed uncovered exterior bike racks for bicycle parking. Rather than covering some of the exterior bicycle racks, we believe incorporating an indoor bike storage area better addresses the Board's concern. We are amenable to providing an indoor bicycle storage room as a condition of approval in addition to the planned uncovered exterior bike racks if it pleases the Board.

HSH Response 2: The Applicant has agreed to provide an indoor bicycle storage room. **No further action is required.**

Geometric Design Criteria

ISSUE 6

HSH Comment: HSH generally agrees with the Applicant's calculations of the [Stopping Sight Distance] SSD and [Intersection Sight Distance] ISD. HSH requests the Applicant prepare a sight distance plan and show the sight triangles, showing the appropriate location of the vehicle at the site curb cut, and confirm that the field-measured distances are adequate and that the sight triangle areas are maintained clear of signs and landscaping.

Applicant Response: A sight triangle plan has been prepared for the Project site driveway intersection and is included as an attachment. As shown thereon, the clear sight lines are available to allow the Project site driveway to function in a safe and efficient manner.



HSH Response: The submitted sight distance plan confirms that the field-measured distances are adequate, and no vegetation or signs were found within the sight triangles. **No further action is required.**

Site Improvements

ISSUE 7

HSH Comment: HSH generally agrees with the proposed site improvements; however, HSH requests the Applicant prepare a sight distance plan and show the sight triangles at the Project site driveway to confirm that signs and landscaping do not restrict driver's lines of sight.

Applicant Response: A sight triangle plan has been prepared for the Project site driveway intersection and is included as an attachment. As shown thereon, the clear sight lines are available to allow the Project site driveway to function in a safe and efficient manner.

HSH Response: The submitted sight distance plan confirms that landscaping and signs were not found within the sight triangles. **No further action is required.**

Off-Site Improvements

ISSUE 8

HSH Comment: Although HSH generally agrees with the Applicant's off-site mitigation measures to address project impacts, HSH requests additional information be submitted for both the mitigation measures at the Route 140/Chestnut Street/King Street intersection and Route 140 Corridor Improvements for review. These include:

- Preparation of cost estimates of each of the off-site improvements; and
- Identification of any Right of Way (ROW) impacts associated with the proposed off-site improvements, and if any eminent domain actions or takings are required.

Applicant Response: The following is a summary of the off-site improvement measures and the associated preliminary costs:

- Route 140/Chestnut Street/King Street – Design and implement an optimal traffic signal timing and phasing plan. Estimated cost: \$15,000.
- Route 140 Corridor Improvements – Prepare a Corridor Improvement Study (CIS) with an accompanying Conceptual Improvement Plan and preliminary construction cost estimate,



and assist the Town to prepare a MassWorks or HousingWorks grant application. Estimated Cost: \$20,000.

The Route 140 Corridor improvements are envisioned to include: i) mobility enhancements such as reconstructing sidewalks where necessary to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and providing a continuous sidewalk along the south side of Route 140 to the Wrentham town line; providing bicycle accommodations by way of a marked bicycle lane or defining shared-use of the traveled-way through “sharrow” pavement markings and accompanying signs; and restriping the westbound segment of roadway between the Horace Mann Plaza and King Street/Chestnut Street to provide two (2) westbound travel lanes before transitioning to a westbound left-turn lane at the Route 140/King Street/Chestnut Street intersection. The aforementioned improvements can be completed within the available public right-of-way.

Additional capacity-related improvements along this section of the Route 140 corridor would require the acquisition of private property. Focusing on the Route 140/King Street/Chestnut Street intersection, in order to add capacity to the intersection, the addition of a second left-turn lane on the Route 140 westbound approach coupled with the addition of a right-turn lane on both the Route 140 westbound approach and the Chestnut Street southbound approach would be necessary along with a corresponding widening of the King Street southbound departure lane would be necessary to achieve intersection operations where no movement would operate over capacity. These improvements, or any improvement that would add travel lanes to the intersection or reconfiguration of the intersection to function as a modern roundabout, would require the acquisition of private property. The proposed retiming of the traffic signal that will be undertaken as a part of the Project will offset the predicted impact of the Project and restore levels of service to No-Build conditions. None of the potential future Route 140 Corridor Improvements are necessary to mitigate the impacts from the Project. The existing conditions along Route 140 that the CIS seek to assist the Town to improve exist with or without the Project.

HSH Response: HSH generally agrees with the preliminary cost estimates for both off-site improvement measures. The Applicant described two envisioned improvements along Route 140: i) mobility enhancements including sidewalks improvements, bike lanes, and restriping to provide two westbound travel lanes between Horace Mann Plaza and King Street/Chestnut Street intersection. This set of improvements can be completed within the available public ROW; and ii) additional capacity at the Route 140/King Street/Chestnut Street intersection which includes adding travel lanes to the intersection or reconfiguring the intersection as a modern roundabout, which will require obtaining private property. However, as a short-term improvement, the Applicant’s proposed retiming of this intersection will offset the Project’s impacts and the intersection is expected to



operate at the level of service (LOS) of the No-Build condition. HSH generally agrees with this assessment. **No further action is required.**

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

ISSUE 9

HSH Comment: HSH generally agrees with the proposed TDM measures; however, the pick-up/drop-off zone for carshare was not located on the submitted plans. HSH requests the Applicant provide more information of this zone within the project site. HSH also requests the Applicant confirm how many parking spaces will be designated as EV charging stations spaces and recommends these stations be assigned to each building. Lastly, HSH requests the Applicant also confirm the number of secure bicycle parking spaces and the number of exterior bicycle racks that the Project will provide, and submit a revised site plan to confirm the location of these bicycle parking spaces.

Applicant Response: There is a pick-up/drop-off zone directly in front of the clubhouse (i.e. east side of the clubhouse just above the ADA parking space), and there is also ample parking in front of the clubhouse, including parallel parking spaces, that can be utilized as short-term parking for visitors and pick-ups/drop-offs.

Initially, 10 vehicle charging stations will be provided for use by residents of the Project, with infrastructure provided to support future EV charging for a total of 20% of the proposed parking spaces. EV charging stations have been labeled on the revised Site Plan that has been submitted by A&M under separate cover. As shown, a minimum of two (2) EV charging stations will be provided in front of each residential building, plus one (1) at the clubhouse.

The Site Plan has been updated to include the location of bicycle parking within the Project site. Sixty (60) bicycle parking spaces will be provided within the Project site. The Layout & Material Plan from the revised Site Plan are attached.

HSH Response: HSH generally agrees with the pick-up/drop-off zone in front of the clubhouse and the EV charging stations within the Site. Although outdoor bike racks are being provided, HSH requests the Applicant confirm if the proposed buildings will include secure indoor bike rooms.

Applicant Response 2: We originally proposed uncovered exterior bike racks for bicycle parking. Rather than covering some of the exterior bicycle racks, we believe incorporating an indoor bike storage area better addresses the Board's concern. We are amenable to providing an indoor bicycle



storage room as a condition of approval in addition to the planned uncovered exterior bike racks if it pleases the Board.

HSH Response 2: The Applicant has agreed to provide an indoor bicycle storage room. **No further action is required.**

Construction Period Issues

ISSUE 10

HSH Comment: HSH encourages the Applicant to evaluate the short-term construction impacts of the Project and provide preliminary details of the overall construction schedule, working hours, number of construction workers, transportation and parking, number of construction vehicles, and routes to and from the Project site. To minimize transportation impacts during the construction period, HSH suggests the Project proponent limit the number of construction worker parking spaces on-site, encourage workers to carpool, and provide secure spaces on-site for workers' supplies and tools.

Applicant Response: Construction impacts associated with the Project will be limited in duration and in number to the extent that the overall impact of construction-related traffic will be lower than the impact of the completed Project as assessed in the February 2025 TIA. That being said, it is important that a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) be an integral part of the Project. CTMP should include the measures that have been suggested by HSH to include the following:

- The General Contractors will encourage workers to carpool or use public transportation services to access the Project site to the extent practicable.
- Truck routes will be established that use regional roadways or where such vehicles cannot be accommodated due to reduced roadway width (i.e., less than 22 feet in width) or deteriorated pavement conditions to the extent practicable.
- Equipment storage areas will be provided in order to reduce trips associated with the transporting of equipment to the Project site.
- Construction worker parking will be prohibited along Route 140 or other roadways where on-street parking is prohibited.
- The hours of construction will be consistent with local ordinances.

HSH Response: HSH generally agrees with the Applicant's short-term construction impacts of the Project. **No further action is required.**

