

Jon & Colleen Bond
23 Philomena Way
Franklin, MA 02038

TOWN OF FRANKLIN
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October 31, 2022

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)
Town of Franklin
Franklin, MA 02038

Submitted by email to: Bruce Hunchard, Chair: bruce.hunchard@yahoo.com and fellow ZBA Members

RE: Subdivision of land and 64 unit multi-family development proposed at 237 Pleasant Street

Dear Chairman Hunchard and fellow ZBA members,

As residents of Padden Estates, directly opposite St John's Episcopal Church, we are writing to express our concern about the proposed subdivision of land and development of multi-family housing at 237 Pleasant Street.

One concern is that St. John's Episcopal Church and The Community Builders are proposing to place a development with 64 dwelling units in an area that is zoned for single-family housing (SFRIII). Multi-family units are not generally allowed in this zone. We have read through the documents that St. John's and The Community Builders have submitted in their request for approval. They reference that there is already a development that abuts their property that has multi-family dwellings. They fail to point out that this development (Station 117 on Dean Avenue) is zoned as General Residential V which allows for multi-family dwellings, where 237 Pleasant Street is not zoned for this use.

Another concern is for automobile and pedestrian traffic. In the traffic study that was submitted with the application to the ZBA, it mentioned the 2 driveways that are currently used by the St. John's community. What the study failed to mention is that Padden Road is across the street and in between the 2 St. John's driveways and poses hazardous driving conditions. The 2 driveways for St. John's and Padden Road intersect Pleasant Street where sight lines are currently limited for westbound vehicles on Pleasant Street (headed towards Main Street). We are concerned about the additional traffic that the proposed 237 Pleasant Street development would generate and fear that this will cause greater potential for motor vehicle accidents on Pleasant Street. Additionally, a bus stop for the Franklin Public Schools is located on Pleasant Street directly across the street from Padden Road. The proposed development will make an unsafe situation worse.

The traffic study also references sidewalks in their Safety Analysis. We suspect that this is to show that there would be a sidewalk available between the proposed 237 Pleasant Street location and the town common, as well as sidewalk access to the downtown area and Dean College MBTA Station via Dean Avenue. We would like to clarify that there is no sidewalk on the 237 Pleasant Street side of the road. The sidewalk on that side coming from Main Street

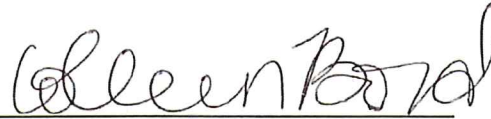
towards St. John's ends at Hillside Road. There is a sidewalk across the street from St. John's, but there may not be a safe location for a crosswalk on that stretch of road from the proposed 237 Pleasant Street development. Furthermore, this section of sidewalk from Padden Road towards Main Street is not part of the Town of Franklin's sidewalk plowing route, and neither is the stretch of sidewalk on Dean Avenue between Pleasant Street and Hillside Road (the main route for pedestrian traffic from the proposed development to the downtown area and the Dean College MBTA station). The lack of sidewalk access (especially in the winter) will be a safety hazard for additional automobile and pedestrian traffic.

In reviewing the 2022 Housing Production Plan for the Town of Franklin, as well as attending the informational meeting held at St. John's on October 23, 2022, we understand that there is a need for affordable housing. However, 237 Pleasant Street is not the appropriate location for such a development. The proposed 237 Pleasant Street development is outside of the scope of the Franklin For All 40R Smart Growth Overlay District initiative which strives to revitalize the downtown Franklin area. This initiative is looking to create an inclusionary district for areas currently zoned as Commercial I, General Residential V, and potentially some zoned in the Single-Family IV district by special permit. The 2022 Housing Production Plan supports this overlay in order to maintain Subsidized Housing Inventory over the 10% threshold through 2030.

The number of waivers being requested in the Comprehensive Permit Application is also an indication that this is not a feasible spot for the proposed development. It was also mentioned in the meeting on October 23rd that the state will determine who would live at the proposed development and there were no guarantees that the dwellings would go to Franklin residents on the waiting list for affordable housing in town.

We have resided in our home in Padden Estates since 1998. We bought a single-family home in a single-family zoned neighborhood. The expectation of any resident in a single-family zoned neighborhood is that multi-family properties are not permitted. Given that the town of Franklin has met its obligation for Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory (11.9% where 10% is required), we respectfully request that the Comprehensive Permit for the proposed development at 237 Pleasant Street be denied.

Sincerely,



Jon Bond and Colleen Bond
23 Philomena Way, Franklin, MA

cc: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator
Amy Love, Planner II
Town Council Members, Town of Franklin
Casey Thayer, Staff Contact for the Franklin Zoning Board of Appeals