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TOWN OF FRANKLIN

JAN 18 2023

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

January 17, 2023

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

Town of Franklin

Franklin, MA 02038

Christine Apicella  
27 Padden Road  
Franklin, MA 02038

TOWN OF FRANKLIN  
TOWN CLERK

2023 JAN 18 A 10: 58

RECEIVED

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

Dear ZBA members,

I am writing to you as a resident of Padden Road, directly opposite St John's Episcopal Church. I have participated in the November and December 2022 ZBA meetings in which the above development proposal has been on the agenda. I reviewed the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) prepared by Langan dated January 2023. I offer the following comments on the TIS for your consideration.

The TIS is comprehensive in scope and appears to reflect standard methodologies. I look forward to reading the peer review by Hancock on behalf of the ZBA to determine the adequacy of the methodology. The description of existing conditions continues to contain directional errors and incorrect street names that were included in the July 2022 Traffic Assessment. These errors make it challenging to understand the details, and raise doubts about the overall quality and accuracy of the TIS.

I continue to be concerned that the transportation impacts of the proposed development are not evaluated in a holistic manner. The conclusion of the TIS that "...the four intersections expected to be most impacted by the development and found that the existing roadway infrastructure is adequate to support the nominal increase in traffic volume generated by the proposed *warehouse* [italics added for emphasis] development. No improvements to the study intersections are required or recommended at this time..." The conclusion of the study that references a "warehouse", rather than the proposed 64 units of residential housing, is indicative of a copy and paste error from a prior, likely unrelated study. My concern is that the conclusion is made on the limited assessment of the peak hour vehicle trips on four study area intersections. I respectfully request the ZBA to consider the sum of the parts as you evaluate the TIS to determine the transportation impacts the proposed housing development will have on our community.

I appreciate the documentation of a site visit by Langan presented in Appendix C that substantiates some of the safety concerns expressed by those in the Padden neighborhood and Pleasant Street abutters. It acknowledges the sight distance constraints for those exiting Padden Road, and I concur that this is an existing condition. I disagree that "... this is a pre-existing condition that is not affected by the proposed residential development across the street." On the contrary, Figure 1 of Appendix C is a photo (included here) that captures the proposed site driveway in the context of demonstrating the limited visibility for Padden Road. The suggestions for improved and additional signage on Pleasant Street are helpful, but will not negate the impacts of the proposed development on Pleasant Street.

## MEMO

Padden Road and Pleasant Street Evaluation  
237 Pleasant Street Residential Development  
Franklin, Massachusetts  
Langan Project No.: 151019601  
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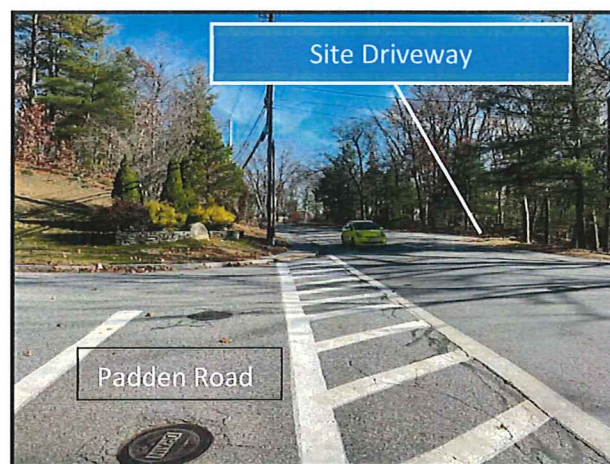


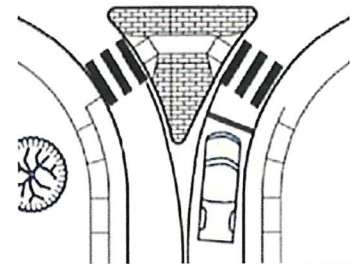
Figure 1: Sight line looking northeast from Padden Road.

The TIS indicates that traffic signal warrants are not met for the site driveway east of Padden Road, proposed to accommodate the 64 residential units. The TIS also indicates that the available crash data is not remarkable. While both may be technically accurate, it is the combination of two site driveways (proposed to each be two-way, rather than one-way under existing conditions), Padden Road, school bus stop, the curvature of Pleasant Street and the topography of the area that poses a safety concern. Please consider the overall context as well as the following as you evaluate Langan's conclusion:

- How does the intersection of the proposed two-way site driveway operate in the context of the Church site driveway (also proposed to be two-way) and Padden Road?
- Has the Franklin Police Department provided additional crash data and input to supplement the readily available data from MassDOT Crash Data portal?
- Was an intersection field review completed to determine if the intersection sight distance (ISD) of the 385-foot (to the west) and 445-foot (to the east) sight triangle are unobstructed by topography, landscaping and other features?
- Has the Franklin Public School's transportation department been consulted regarding the school bus stop in the context of the proposed development?

The property is zoned Single Family III which does not allow for the multifamily housing proposed without the Comprehensive Permit requested via the ZBA process. Increased density at this location is not consistent with Town plans. The area has not been included in the proposed zoning changes to increase density in targeted areas of Town through the "Franklin for All" process. <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/franklin-for-all/> If the ZBA allows this development to proceed, please pursue mitigation of impacts such as the following transportation improvements:

1. Mitigate the impacts of conflicting left-turn movements: Require the residential site driveway (east of Padden Road) to be right-in/right-out only. This can be achieved by using a triangular island at the driveway apron at Pleasant Street. Left turns into and out of the proposed development should be provided at the church site driveway (west of Padden Road) so there are fewer left turn conflicts created by the proposed development. Potential impacts to Monterey Drive should also be considered.
2. Ensure that the lower vehicular trips the proponent expects are realized by improving access to active, sustainable transportation modes.
  - Provide an ADA-compliant sidewalk along the frontage of 237 Pleasant Street with a safe, ADA-compliant crosswalk for residents of 237 Pleasant Street to access the existing sidewalks on the north side of Pleasant Street. Alternatively, provide a sidewalk on the south side of Pleasant Street between the development site and Dean Street so that the development has a safe pedestrian connection to the sidewalk network that connects to downtown Franklin.
  - Explore options for creating a walking and biking connection from the development site to Dean Avenue via Station 117 apartments so residents have a more direct access route to the MBTA Commuter Rail Station and downtown Franklin than using the existing limited facilities on Pleasant Street.



[https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/speedmgt/ePrimer\\_modules/module3pt3.cfm](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/speedmgt/ePrimer_modules/module3pt3.cfm)

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Christine Apicella

Christine Apicella

cc: Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator  
Casey Thayer, staff to the Franklin Zoning Board of Appeals