

Mr Leo Bartolini Jr.

Chairman, Zoning Board of Appeals

17 Common St. Southborough, MA 01772

Mr. Chairman,

My name is Todd Miller from 8 Hickory Road in Southborough and I am requesting that this letter be read on the record for the entire Zoning Board of Appeals. I moved to Southborough about 3.5 years ago because it was a safe environment to raise my family. I am writing to you today because I am deeply concerned about the safety of Flagg and Deerfoot Roads, especially as the town looks to expand traffic on these roads.

Understanding that there is a major development planned for our community, I am asking for the Town of Southborough to take very measured steps to help ensure the safety of our community on these already dangerous roads.

Flagg and Deerfoot Roads are very hazardous and narrow. In many spots, it is impossible for two vehicles to pass in opposite directions without one car pulling to the side. A severe increase in car traffic (as established by the traffic study) will only compound this issue making these roads even more unsafe.

Children walking to school and walkers/joggers are already at risk for severe injury or worse on these winding roads. Without the proper handling of additional traffic, we can expect tragic stories to emerge from Southborough that will impact all our families. That is obviously something that no one wants.

Mr. Chairman, please ask the board to carefully consider the issues associated with Flagg, Deerfoot, and access to Route 9. There are likely a number of enhancements to these roads that are required and I believe Southborough should take all steps necessary to protect members of the community while facilitating growth within the town.

Thank you,

Todd Miller

8 Hickory Rd

Southborough, MA 01772

M: 508-308-2334

JAN 04 2016

K. Kavelle

ZBA

Leo F. Bartolini, Jr. - Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
Southborough Town House
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

CC: Jennifer Burney, Town Planner, Board of Selectman

3 January 2016

Mr. Bartolini and Zoning Board Members,

I am writing you today to address concerns related to the Park Central Project. Specifically to provide comments related to the current traffic study prepared by The Engineering Corp (TEC) dated December 4th, 2015. During the last ZBA meeting held on December 9th you requested, in the interest of time, that the residents submit our comments in writing for the peer reviewer so that he can take them into account as he does his peer review.

I expect there will still be sufficient time allotted for in person discussion, comment, and review of the peer review and its findings. I expect the peer review will be made available publicly prior to the Jan 6th meeting to allow the public to review the document prior to discussion. I would also expect the board will be ready to extend the discussion past the next meeting as I am confident it will not be able to answer all of the concerns of a project this large in one evening. My comments are identical to Howard Rose of 2 Bantry Road. I have copied and pasted his comments below.

Lack of study of Flagg Road and the surrounding streets

The report states "A comprehensive field inventory of existing traffic conditions at the study area intersections was conducted by TEC staff in March 2015 to obtain information related to intersection geometry and lane usage. The field investigation consisted of an inventory of existing roadway geometrics, operating characteristics, and safety characteristics." This report focused primarily on the Rt. 9/ Flagg road intersection at the proposed location of the entrance to the proposed project site. Although it has been requested as part of the 3 previous versions of this report, no attention has been provided to the remainder of Flagg Road and the connecting streets. There continues to be no mention of pedestrian or bicycle traffic on a road that has the hosts the entrance for 2 schools in town. It is unacceptable to ignore this portion of roadway that will likely bear the majority of the impact of this new massive project. The current report notes that Flagg Rd has one location that is only 17.5 feet wide. It does not note that the majority of the road is only 21 feet wide, has no shoulders or sidewalks, or right of ways to correct this. It makes no mention of what happens when vehicles are parked on the road, snow-fall reduces the road width by a foot on either side, or even what happens when someone is walking on it. It makes no mention of the blind corner at the left turn onto Lovers Lane, or any of the other challenging locations on this roadway.

They make note of the average speed of the roadway as above the posted limit, a comment which is not supported by their data which calls out an average speed of 23 MPH on Flagg Rd. (My guess is they averaged this with the speed on Deerfoot, which is notably wider). I would also note that that speed data was taken on a straightway, arguably the fastest portion of Flagg Rd. Should you properly study this road and take speed samplings from various locations, I believe you would have significantly different results.

I would request the a full study of the true traffic conditions on all of Flagg, Deerfoot, Rd, and the surrounding roads be conducted to show the real impact this development will have on the safety of the existing and new residents in the area.

Traffic Volumes – Several issues arise with the traffic data provided.

- The current data was taken at a time when traffic was at its minimum levels. While I understand a seasonal adjustment was included, the data was taken at a time when school traffic was at a minimum, around the winter break when most extracurricular activities were not being run. I am confident that counts taken at an alternate time would have provided significantly different numbers as much of the existing traffic can be attributed to the schools.
- The Traffic studies only study defines the peak hours as 7-9AM, and 3-6PM, and only data from these time frames were included in the analysis. While this may be the national average, in this area many people, including myself, leave significantly earlier. I would suggest these timeframes be expanded to include 5:00AM – 9AM in the morning, as well as 2PM- 7PM in the evening (includes school release) to get a true representation of the rush hour traffic associated with the area.
- Assumed Growth numbers –The calculations for expected growth are exactly that, estimations. Please note the data used to prepare this estimation is now 3 years old, and limited. The town of Southborough is in the unique position to verify the growth estimations, by recounting the traffic now and comparing it to the original to see the actual growth over the last 3 years and see if the expectations were correct. At minimum a single location could be used to establish a multiplier that could then be used to adjust all of the expectations. I believe we still do not have enough data to properly estimate the potential traffic coming into this area as such a large amount of construction is planned, and not planned in the surrounding towns. Many of the projects such as the build out on the EMC property are incomplete. While the roadways are done, it is impossible to know the final impact the build out of the entire site will have. Knowing that the current estimates are accurate seems to be logical first step to ensuring we can manage the continual build up of traffic in the future.
- The current traffic volumes were based on demographics provided by the Census Bureau from the year 2000. The demographics of this town, as well as all of the country, in terms of dual income families, etc. has changed

dramatically in 15 years. I believe the estimations of the traffic that will be generated by this new development are extremely understated and have not been updated since the developer changed the project to include 60% (80 units) as 3- bedroom units. There must be an alternate data source that can be substituted to provide more accurate estimations. I find it implausible that as shown, there will be less than 1 car from each housing unit leaving the site during peak hours. That is less than the percentage leaving from the surrounding neighborhoods. Based on the price point of these units and the expected demographics of their tenants, this number appears to be extremely low.

I request that the town revisits the counter data to confirm the growth estimates predicted in this study, as well as for the peer reviewer to provide comment and/or more accurate data as to the prediction of the traffic that will be generated by this site.

Traffic Pattern Assumptions

- Simply, the assumptions expressed in the current study do not match the traffic patterns provided by the data. The current study states 85% of the traffic leaving the site via the Flagg Rd. exit will exit right, onto RT 9. However, if you review the data of the existing cars leaving the Blackthorn neighborhood, 81% of them actually turn left and head away from the troubled intersection at Flagg and Rt. 9 (Figure 2, Page 8 of the report). If the existing neighborhoods have figured out that it is easier and faster to head in the opposite direction, it is a rather bold and presumptuous (perhaps wishful) statement to say 85% will go the other way. **I ask that a sensitivity study be produced showing a traffic condition that mimics the current real numbers.**
- One of the traffic modifications noted in the report is the “improvements” to RT 9, specifically the newly added acceleration/deceleration lane. They note this is designed to offer a separate lane to allow people to get off and on RT. 9 more easily as it provides a separate lane to accelerate to speed, or slow down to exit to the various businesses and Flagg Road. I have to disagree with the effectiveness of this new design. While a nice theory, what it really provides is a 3rd lane and basically an extension to the exit for 495 North. While this provides some relief to MassDOT’s challenge of weaving traffic at that location, it actually makes it more dangerous to attempt to get on RT. 9 from Flagg road, which will encourage people leaving the new site to find a safer alternative, namely the other direction on Flagg Road.
- Based on this new traffic pattern at the intersection of Flagg Rd and Rt. 9, MassDOT’s concern (and denial) about using Park Central as the main egress for this project site, I believe strongly as a town we need to address the likelihood that MassDOT will at some point in the future, attempt to close the intersection of Flagg Rd and Rt. 9. They had already considered closing Park Central, it stands to reason that as you now put close to 3,000 car trips a day

onto the road, 200 yards away), they will have to deal with the same challenge.

If this project is to continue, I would ask for an additional sensitivity study showing the effects on Flagg Rd should the state close the intersection of Flagg and Rt. 9. I would also ask that the town request and receive a letter from MassDOT stating they will not close this intersection. If this is really not on their radar, a letter should not be a challenge. If they will not provide such a letter, the town should then plan appropriately to ensure the current and future residents of this town are safe.

From the existing traffic counts, intentional lack of study of the remainder of Flagg Rd/Deerfoot Rd., and the surrounding areas, it is apparent that that the provided report is designed to look favorably on the project build out to push the project through without true consideration of its impact. It is interesting to note that as part of an agreement between the developer and the direct abutters they agreed not to oppose this traffic plan. It should also be noted at a recent Planning Board meeting it was learned that the developer sent a letter to the head of the planning board asking him to step down and not comment on the project. This is presumably because he lives on this side of town and has firsthand knowledge of the challenges associated with these roads, however because the letter has not been made public yet, that is only my assumption.

The previous traffic report raised concerns when 1,000 car trips a day were anticipated on these roadways. Under the current build out proposal they are estimating over 3,000 car trips a day on the same roadways. Logic alone says there is a problem. I believe a proper study of the ENTIRE roadway will also agree with my concerns. So I ask again, in order to truly understand the impact of the largest project ever in this town, one that will over double the number of housing units on this side of town and add over 3,000 car trips a day to our roads, please review and consider all options to keep our current and potential new residents safe. Other alternatives that should be considered;

- Making all traffic exiting and entering the new site go right (to Rt. 9.) If 85% of the traffic is truly going that way anyway, the last 15% should be a minor implication.
- As Capitol Group Properties already owns the small corner property at the Flagg Rd / Rt. 9 intersection, consideration to use that land to provide a left turn lane to enter the property should be studied to alleviate the likelihood of traffic backing up onto Rt. 9 when a car is prevented from turning left into the property because traffic is backed up getting onto Rt. 9.
- The Culvert location that is currently only 17.5 feet wide should be widened to accommodate a full two trucks passing side by side. (It is interesting to note everyone else considers this location to be a hazard, the applicant calls it out as traffic mitigation for their site).
- It making the site access available from Rt.9 only is not sufficient to moderate the traffic at the corner of Flagg Rd and Rt.9, the town

should be prepare to dead end Flagg at the culvert, providing the Flagg RD / Rt.9 intersection for access to the new site only while preventing any traffic from the existing roadways access, and vice versa. This will provide the reduced traffic in the existing neighborhoods (even more so, as it will remove the ability to cut through from Rt. 30 to Rt. 9 which is currently adding to the traffic on the local roads).

It is your legal obligation to provide objectivity in managing the process and ZBA. The town can be legally and financially liable if evidence is provided that ZBA did not provide the appropriate checks and balances to the largest project ever to be proposed in this small, rural town. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Marnie L. Hoolahan
26 Clifford Road
Southborough MA 01772

Leo F. Bartolini, Jr. - Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
Southborough Town House
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

CC: Jennifer Burney, Town Planner

2 January 2016

Leo Bartolini and Zoning Board Members,

I am voicing my concerns regarding the proposed project at Park Central Drive. The proposal on the table by developer, Mr. DiPeitri, calls for a 40B development of 180 units and a 40A of 135 town houses. During the initial filings with the state of Massachusetts, a feasibility study was conducted to ensure the town could support the initial 40b project, that we had enough resources, water, power grid, space in our schools etc. While this process was completed for the 180 unit development, this review and documentation was never, to my knowledge, updated to reflect the current build out as currently proposed by the developer.

The applicant has chosen to bring the development under a legal loophole that treats the entire site as one project instead of as multiple projects. That legal loophole eliminates the checks and balances normally associated with the process of going in front of the Planning board. Instead it is my understanding this review process will now fall under the purview of the Zoning Board of Appeals as part of the 40b process. If this entire site is going to fall under the 40b process, than I would expect the requirement for the feasibility study still exists, to ensure the town's resources, including the school system, can support the revised build conditions.

Please review if this study has been revised, if as I suspect it has not, please do so immediately, as it could have severe impacts on the viability of the site planning and the town's legal liability for approving a development that has not adequately satisfied the laws or residents' concerns. I look forward to review the report and its findings.

Sincerely,

Marnie L. Hoolahan
26 Clifford Road
Southborough, MA 01772

December 29, 2015

Mr Leo Bartolini Jr.
Chairman, Zoning Board of Appeals
17 Common St.
Southborough, MA 01772

Re: Proposed Park Central Development – Traffic Study

Dear Mr. Bartolini:

I am writing to express my concerns over the Park Central development proposed by Capital Group Properties, and specifically, the traffic resulting from this project as currently proposed. The traffic study produced by TEC, Inc. was eye-opening and raised a number of concerns that I wanted to express. Based on the projections in this report, I believe it would be irresponsible to allow the project to move forward as it's **currently** constituted without significant traffic-oriented changes or concessions. I do want to stress that I am not opposed to developing the Park Central parcel; I just want to make sure that the development is done in a way to not inhibit the safety of our residents, and most importantly, our children. My specific concerns include:

- I do not agree that only 15% of the traffic exiting the project onto the Flagg Road access road will turn left up Flagg Road – I think the percentage will be a lot higher. Given that the report stated that a delay of an average of 3 minutes per vehicle can be experienced at the Flagg Road/Route 9 intersection, and that it is likely that multiple cars will be queued up there at all times, it won't take residents of this project and other people using the access road long to figure out that they can bypass Route 9 by traveling up Flagg and using a variety of different routes to access Route 9 East/West. I currently do this often myself when leaving my house in the Blackthorn development – usually heading onto Route 30 and connecting to Route 9 Eastbound off of Route 85 or further east. As a result, I believe this project will have a major spillover effect on many nearby roads, including Deerfoot, Main Street, Clifford Road, Lovers Lane, and Route 85.
- Any traffic traveling northbound on Flagg will be exacerbated by the proposed ^{all} 4-way traffic stop at the ~~Deerfoot~~^{Blackthorn} Road intersection. While I think this is a good idea for safety reasons, I am anticipating that this will create a significant backup in both directions at this intersection. If many cars end up turning left out of the development onto Flagg, this could result in a bumper-to-bumper situation through this intersection.
- Given that Flagg Road does not contain any sidewalks, I am greatly concerned for the safety of pedestrians and those on bicycles on Flagg Road. Since Trottier and Neary schools are located off of Flagg, children are often walking on this road; it is not uncommon to currently see two children walking side-by-side on this road. If additional traffic is produced from people turning left out of the access road, this will produce a significant safety issue to our children.
- The culvert on Flagg Road is also problematic as it's currently built. In most instances when I travel over that culvert and there is another car coming towards me on the other side, one of the cars has to pull over to let the other one through because the culvert is

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JAN 04 2016

KT Finelli ZBA

not really wide enough for two cars (it is barely wide enough for two sedans to pass through, but not wide enough for a car and a truck/SUV to pass through at the same time). If the traffic going over this culvert increases significantly, more people will have to stop on either side of the culvert to let traffic pass through. I could see this backing up traffic not only along Flagg Road, but ultimately it could back traffic up onto Route 9 during rush hour periods (depending on where the access road is in relation to the culvert).

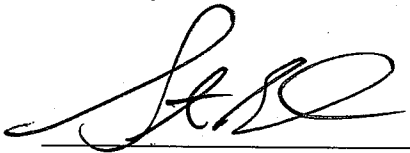
- Flagg Road has some sharp corners currently with minimal visibility; this will obviously be exacerbated by an increase in traffic, posing additional safety concerns.

Ultimately, I believe that Flagg Road is not wide enough to handle the significant increase in traffic that is forecast to result from this project. I'm not sure what can be done about this, given the topography of the properties abutting Flagg Road. Here are some suggestions I'd make:

- Ultimately, traffic should be allowed to exit the Park Central development directly onto Route 9 as well as Flagg Road; I think this would be a huge help to the overall traffic situation.
- If access onto Flagg Road is required, sidewalks should be installed along Flagg Road, particularly to allow children to safely walk/ride to school.
- If Flagg Road can also be widened in certain spots, that would help to mitigate certain concerns as well.

We have an opportunity to address these traffic concerns now to ensure that the site gets developed in a responsible manner; I am hopeful that you can take these and other concerns into consideration as you review the project. I'd be happy to discuss this further if you have any specific questions – please feel free to contact me at steveblondin@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Stephen T. Blondin
Bantry Road Resident

December 27, 2015

Board of Selectmen
17 Common St
Southborough, MA 01772

Dear Board of Selectmen,

The Residences at Park Central project being proposed by Capital Group Properties will introduce a large traffic load onto Flagg Road, creating unsafe conditions. We respectfully request that the Board of Selectmen review the proposed traffic plan to ensure the safety of those using Flagg Road.

The Residences at Park Central is a combined 40B apartment complex with 180 units and condominium development with 135 units. All residents will use Flagg Road as their sole access. The developer has submitted a traffic study that fails to address serious safety concerns that we, as abutters, have regarding traffic on Flagg Road.

Our concern is that Flagg Road does not have the capacity to handle the increased traffic that will be generated by such a large project. The road is narrow, curves sharply, and has poor sight lines. There are multiple large trees located at the road edge and a culvert that narrows the road to 17.5 feet. There are no sidewalks. Vehicles, bicycles, joggers and pedestrians, including children walking to school, share this road. It is not prudent to simply dump traffic from the Residences at Park Central onto Flagg Road.

The traffic study states that 81% of current traffic exits the Blackthorn Drive neighborhood by turning left onto Flagg Road. The study estimates that 85% of the traffic exiting the Residences at Park Central will turn right toward Route 9. We disagree with this estimate and expect that, like the Blackthorn neighborhood residents, most traffic will exit left from the development onto Flagg Road.

We propose three possible ways to mitigate the huge traffic volume we expect on Flagg Road:

1. Put a stop light at the intersection of Flagg Road and Route 9.
 - This will allow traffic exiting Flagg Road to merge onto Route 9 safely, instead of having to dodge traffic travelling in the 'right turn only' lane. It will help to alleviate traffic backup on Flagg Road so drivers exiting the Residences at Park Central will be more inclined to turn right onto Route 9 than to turn left onto Flagg Road.

Q. 1
A. 1

Q. 2

A. 2

Q. 3

A. 3

Q. 4

A. 4

Q. 5

A. 5

2. Create a dead end on Flagg Road at the culvert.
 - Traffic from the Blackthorn Drive neighborhood must take a left turn from Blackthorn onto Flagg. The traffic study indicates 85% of residents already do this so there should be little disruption in Blackthorn traffic.
 - Traffic from the Residences at Park Central must make a right turn when exiting onto Flagg Road. This agrees with the traffic study that indicates 85% of the residents will want to turn right.
 - Exiting Route 9 onto Parkerville Road will provide access to Flagg Road and surrounding streets.
 - Exiting Route 9 onto Flagg Road will lead directly to the Residences at Park Central. There is no access to Flagg Road past the culvert.
3. Create a new Flagg Road intersection with Route 9 at the vacant parcel owned by Park Central between Wendy's and the present Flagg Road. The present Flagg Road and Route 9 intersection becomes the Residences at Park Central access to Route 9. There would be no connection between Flagg Road and the Residences at Park Central access.
 - Traffic patterns on Flagg Road would see minimal change as a result of the Residences at Park Central.
 - Traffic from the Residences at Park Central will be directed onto Route 9. This agrees with the traffic study that indicates 85% of the residents will want to turn right.

We respectfully request that the Board of Selectmen further investigate the traffic issues that will be generated from the Residences at Park Central, especially as it relates to safety on Flagg Road.

Sincerely,

Christopher and Linda Perkins
1 Tara Rd
Southborough, MA 01772

cc:
✓ Planning Board
Zoning Board of Appeals

12 0 0

Zoning Board of Appeals,

As a follow up to the meeting last week regarding traffic from further developing Park Central, I have a few recommendations that I was asked to put in writing. I think we should consider these improvements as part of the project to avoid having the town and the taxpayers responsible once the development is in place.

The following points are existing conditions that are an issue today, and with either the addition of a 40B alone or the addition of the 40A and 40B will cause additional traffic and safety issues for the existing roadways. The primary area to focus on is the traffic in both directions on Flagg Rd intersecting Rt. 9 at the southern end and Deerfoot Rd. at the northern end.

1. The traffic studies have traffic moving toward Rt. 9 from Flagg Rd.. Today's environment is dangerous at this intersection with no light and an intersection that is contending with movement to Wendy's, Flagg Rd., Cumberland Farms, Park Central and the on-ramp to 495. A suggestion would be to put a light in at the intersection or to hold the light at Madison Place to allow for a break in traffic and allowing the existing and increase of traffic to exit onto Rt. 9 West in a safe manner.
2. The on-ramp from Rt. 9 onto Flagg Rd is narrow. Today, vehicles entering Flagg Rd. are going too fast and the hill and turn becomes an issue with cars veering over the line. I would consider opening the road way for better site lines coming onto Flagg Rd. to avoid potential accidents. This would also help with site lines egressing to Rt. 9 as the new travel lane goes all the way through the Flagg entrance unlike prior to the reconstruction in the last month or so.
3. The culvert bridge toward the end of Flagg Rd at Rt. 9 is narrow. The traffic study refers to this as 17.5 feet wide. The typical SUV is 7 ft. wide. I would consider that with the amount of traffic being added in either situation (40B or 40A) that there will be standing traffic in the culvert. I know for example that buses come through (my son's bus 8:00 am) the bridge as well as landscape trucks and oil trucks. You will not have room for passing traffic. This is another existing condition that is a problem today and with any increase in traffic should be mitigated.
4. Similar issues are existing on Flagg Rd between Rt. 9 and Deerfoot Rd. today. There are a number of narrow areas with existing tree structure. One that comes to mind is an area with trees on both sides of the road at about the Strawberry Hill entrance. There is also a very narrow corner in front of the intersection of Lovers Ln. that has very poor site lines to on-coming traffic or pedestrians on the road. There are no existing sidewalks in this area even though it is approaching the schools on Deerfoot. I would suggest that the town/developer widen the road at all points to an appropriate level that would be equal to a new subdivision where possible and add sidewalks. Again, this is an existing condition that should be fixed with either a sole 40B project or in conjunction with a 40A. Any additional density and traffic in this area should be subject to improving the safety of the area and existing roadways to an appropriate level to the best of the towns and developers ability.

In Summary, the existing roadway conditions are a safety challenge today with narrow roads and limited sight lines with no sidewalks moving north on Flagg Rd. to Deerfoot Rd and the School entrances. The intersection at Flagg Rd. and Rt. 9 does not have a light and is a conversion point for traffic going to Wendy's, Flagg Rd., Cumberland Farms, The Red Roof, Park Central and 495. There needs to be some thought put into how to create a safe environment for increased traffic to egress onto Rt. 9 and in a timely manner. I believe if we wait on making these mitigations until after a decision on a 40B or in conjunction with a 40A it will become the responsibility of the town and taxpayers, which I don't think is fair.

Kind Regards,

Jonathan Green
10 Tara Rd. Southboro, MA

Karen Finelli

From: Green, Jonathan <Jonathan.Green@monster.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 5:03 PM
To: Jennifer Burney; Karen Finelli
Cc: jongreen10@hotmail.com; Green, Jonathan
Subject: ZBA Request for Traffic Comments
Attachments: Zoning Board of Appeals.pdf

Good Afternoon,

I have attached a letter to the ZBA as requested by the Developer and Board at our previous meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Jonathan Green

Enterprise Solutions Sales and Implementation
Software and Cloud Solutions-North America

C: 774-262-2608

F: 978-823-4773

Email: jonathan.green@monster.com

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Karen Finelli

From: Bill Depietri <wdepietri@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 17, 2015 10:22 AM
To: Karen Finelli
Cc: Daniel Ruiz
Subject: Re: Attached please find a letter from Jonathan Green regarding Park Central Traffic

thanks Karen

William A. Depietri
President
Capital Group Properties
259 Turnpike Road, Suite 100
Southborough, Ma 01772
Cell 508-326-1810
Direct 508-357-8825 x 116
Fax 508-357-6859
wad@cgpllc.net

On Dec 17, 2015, at 10:00 AM, Karen Finelli <kfinelli@southboroughma.com> wrote:

Hi Bill and Danny,
I am sending you a copy of a letter from Jonathan Green, 10 Tara Rd an abutter to Park Central development.
If you would like me to forward a copy to anyone else please let me know.
Regards, Karen Finelli
Southborough Building & Zoning

<J Green traffic comments Park Central 12.17.15.pdf>

Leo F. Bartolini, Jr. - Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
Southborough Town House
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

CC: Jennifer Burney, Town Planner

20 December 2015

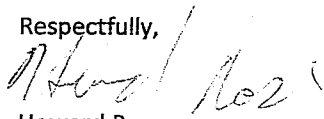
Mr. Bartolini and Zoning Board Members,

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As the applicant has chosen to bring the entire site under a loophole in the law that treats the entire site as one project instead of as multiple projects, we have removed the checks and balances normally associated with the process of going in front of the Planning board. Instead it is my understanding this review process will now fall under the purview of the Zoning Board of Appeals as part of the 40b process.

If this entire site is going to fall under the 40b process, than I would expect the requirement for the feasibility study still exists, to ensure the town's resources, including the school system, can support the revised build conditions. Please review if this study has been revised; if as I suspect it has not, please do so immediately, as it could have severe impacts on the viability of the site planning. I look forward to review the report and its findings.

Respectfully,


Howard Rose
2 Bantry Rd.
Southborough MA 01772

Leo F. Bartolini, Jr. - Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
Southborough Town House
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

CC: Jennifer Burney, Town Planner, Board of Selectman,

20 December 2015

Mr. Bartolini and Zoning Board Members,

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Please find below my comments for the peer reviewer to address.

- Lack of study of Flagg Road and the surrounding streets
 - The report states *"A comprehensive field inventory of existing traffic conditions at the study area intersections was conducted by TEC staff in March 2015 to obtain information related to intersection geometry and lane usage. The field investigation consisted of an inventory of existing roadway geometrics, operating characteristics, and safety characteristics."* This report focused primarily on the Rt. 9/ Flagg road intersection at the proposed location of the entrance to the proposed project site. Although it has been requested as part of the 3 previous versions of this report, no attention has been provided to the remainder of Flagg Road and the connecting streets. There continues to be no mention of pedestrian or bicycle traffic on a road that has the hosts the entrance for 2 schools in town. It is unacceptable to ignore this portion of roadway that will likely bear the majority of the impact of this new massive project.

The current report notes that Flagg Rd has one location that is only 17.5 feet wide. It does not note that the majority of the road is only 21 feet wide, has no shoulders or sidewalks, or right of ways to correct this. It makes no mention of what happens when vehicles are parked on the road, snow-fall reduces the road width by a foot on either side, or even what happens when someone is walking on it. It makes no mention of the blind corner at the left turn onto Lovers Lane, or any of the other challenging locations on this roadway.

They make note of the average speed of the roadway as above the posted limit, a comment which is not supported by their data which calls out an average speed of 23 MPH on Flagg Rd. (My guess is they averaged this with the speed on Deerfoot, which is notably wider). I would also note that that speed data was taken on a straightway, arguably the fastest portion of Flagg Rd. Should you properly study this road and take speed samplings from various locations, I believe you would have significantly different results.

I would request the a full study of the true traffic conditions on all of Flagg, Deerfoot, Rd, and the surrounding roads be conducted to show the real impact this development will have on the safety of the existing and new residents in the area.

- Traffic Volumes – Several issues arise with the traffic data provided.
 - The current data was taken at a time when traffic was at its minimum levels. While I understand a seasonal adjustment was included, the data was taken at a time when school traffic was at a minimum, around the winter break when most extracurricular activities were not being run. I am confident that counts taken at an alternate time would have provided significantly different numbers as much of the existing traffic can be attributed to the schools.
 - The Traffic studies only study defines the peak hours as 7-9AM, and 3-6PM, and only data from these time frames were included in the analysis. While this may be the national average, in this area many people, including myself, leave significantly earlier. **I would suggest these timeframes be expanded to include 5:00AM – 9AM in the morning, as well as 2PM- 7PM in the evening (includes school release) to get a true representation of the rush hour traffic associated with the area.**
 - Assumed Growth numbers –The calculations for expected growth are exactly that, estimations. Please note the data used to prepare this estimation is now 3 years old, and limited. The town of Southborough is in the unique position to verify the growth estimations, by recounting the traffic now and comparing it to the original to see the actual growth over the last 3 years and see if the expectations were correct. At minimum a single location could be used to establish a multiplier that could then be used to adjust all of the expectations. I believe we still do not have enough data to properly estimate the potential traffic coming into this area as such a large amount of construction is planned, and not planned in the surrounding towns. Many of the projects such as the build out on the EMC property are incomplete. While the roadways are done, it is impossible to know the final impact the build out of the entire site will have. Knowing that the current estimates are accurate seems to be logical first step to ensuring we can manage the continual build up of traffic in the future.
 - The current traffic volumes were based on demographics provided by the Census Bureau from the year 2000. The demographics of this town, as well as all of the country, in terms of dual income families, etc. has changed dramatically in 15 years. I believe the estimations of the traffic that will be generated by this new development are extremely understated and have not been updated since the developer changed the project to include 60% (80 units) as 3- bedroom units. There must be an alternate data source that can be substituted to provide more accurate estimations. I find it implausible that as shown, there will be less than 1 car from each housing unit leaving the site during peak hours. That is less than the percentage leaving from the surrounding neighborhoods. Based on the price point of these units and the expected demographics of their tenants, this number appears to be extremely low.
 - **I request that the town revisits the counter data to confirm the growth estimates predicted in this study, as well as for the peer reviewer to provide comment and/or more accurate data as to the prediction of the traffic that will be generated by this site.**
- Traffic Pattern Assumptions
 - Simply, the assumptions expressed in the current study do not match the traffic patterns provided by the data. The current study states 85% of the traffic leaving the site via the Flagg Rd. exit will exit right, onto RT 9. However, if you review the data of the existing cars leaving the Blackthorn neighborhood, 81% of them actually turn left and head away from the troubled intersection at Flagg and Rt. 9 (Figure 2, Page 8 of the report). If the existing neighborhoods have figured out that it is easier and faster to head in the opposite direction, it is a rather bold and presumptuous (perhaps wishful) statement to say 85% will go the other way. **I ask that a sensitivity study be produced showing a traffic condition that mimics the current real numbers.**
 - One of the traffic modifications noted in the report is the “improvements” to RT 9, specifically the newly added acceleration/deceleration lane. They note this is designed to offer a separate lane to allow people to get off and on RT. 9 more easily as it provides a separate lane to accelerate to speed, or slow down to exit to the various businesses and Flagg Road. I have to disagree with the effectiveness of this new design. While a nice theory, what it really provides is a 3rd lane and basically an extension to the exit for 495 North. While this provides some relief to MassDOT’s challenge of weaving traffic at that location, it actually makes it more dangerous to attempt to get on RT. 9 from Flagg road, which will encourage people leaving the new site to find a safer alternative, namely the other direction on Flagg Road.

- Based on this new traffic pattern at the intersection of Flagg Rd and Rt. 9, MassDOT's concern (and denial) about using Park Central as the main egress for this project site, I believe strongly as a town we need to address the likelihood that MassDOT will at some point in the future, attempt to close the intersection of Flagg Rd and Rt. 9. They had already considered closing Park Central, it stands to reason that as you now put close to 3,000 car trips a day onto the road, 200 yards away), they will have to deal with the same challenge. If this project is to continue, I **would ask for an additional sensitivity study showing the effects on Flagg Rd should the state close the intersection of Flagg and Rt. 9. I would also ask that the town request and receive a letter from MassDOT stating they will not close this intersection.** If this is really not on their radar, a letter should not be a challenge. If they will not provide such a letter, the town should then plan appropriately to ensure the current and future residents of this town are safe.

From the existing traffic counts, intentional lack of study of the remainder of Flagg Rd/Deerfoot Rd., and the surrounding areas, it is apparent that that the provided report is designed to look favorably on the project build out to push the project through without true consideration of its impact. It is interesting to note that as part of an agreement between the developer and the direct abutters they agreed not to oppose this traffic plan. It should also be noted at a recent Planning Board meeting it was learned that the developer sent a letter to the head of the planning board asking him to step down and not comment on the project. This is presumably because he lives on this side of town and has firsthand knowledge of the challenges associated with these roads, however because the letter has not been made public yet, that is only my assumption. The previous traffic report raised concerns when 1,000 car trips a day were anticipated on these roadways. Under the current build out proposal they are estimating over 3,000 car trips a day on the same roadways. Logic alone says there is a problem. I believe a proper study of the ENTIRE roadway will also agree with my concerns. **So I ask again, in order to truly understand the impact of the largest project ever in this town, one that will over double the number of housing units on this side of town and add over 3,000 car trips a day to our roads, please review and consider all options to keep our current and potential new residents safe. Other alternatives that should be considered;**

- **Making all traffic exiting and entering the new site go right (to Rt. 9.)** If 85% of the traffic is truly going that way anyway, the last 15% should be a minor implication.
- **As Capitol Group Properties already owns the small corner property at the Flagg Rd / Rt. 9 intersection, consideration to use that land to provide a left turn lane to enter the property should be studied to alleviate the likelihood of traffic backing up onto Rt. 9 when a car is prevented from turning left into the property because traffic is backed up getting onto Rt. 9.**
- **The Culvert location that is currently only 17.5 feet wide should be widened to accommodate a full two trucks passing side by side.** (It is interesting to note everyone else considers this location to be a hazard, the applicant calls it out as traffic mitigation for their site).
- **It making the site access available from Rt.9 only is not sufficient to moderate the traffic at the corner of Flagg Rd and Rt.9, the town should be prepare to dead end Flagg at the culvert, providing the Flagg RD / Rt.9 intersection for access to the new site only while preventing any traffic from the existing roadways access, and vice versa. This will provide the reduced traffic in the existing neighborhoods (even more so, as it will remove the ability to cut through from Rt. 30 to Rt. 9 which is currently adding to the traffic on the local roads).**

Thank you in advance for taking my comments under advisement. I look forward to your responses.

Regards,



Howard Rose
2 Bantry Rd.
Southborough MA 01772

September 28, 2015

Mr. Leo Bartolini, Chair
Southborough Zoning Board of Appeals
Southborough Town House
17 Common Street
Southborough, MA 01772

Re: Comprehensive Permit – The Residences at Park Central

Dear Mr. Bartolini:

Our neighborhood has had the opportunity to review updated plans for The Residences at Park Central that were presented to the SHOPC committee earlier this month. Included in those plans is a breakout of the total units based on number of bedrooms. The details are: 81 one bedroom, 81 two bedroom and 18 three bedroom units. In the original MassHousing eligibility letter dated February 11, 2014, the site plan details included "a total of 180 one-and-two bedroom" units. There were NO three bedroom units.

Research has shown us that, according to a Massachusetts Interagency Agreement, the State's "Chapter 40B comprehensive permit rules for which a Chapter 40B Project Eligibility letter is issued on or after March 1, 2014" is subject to a new requirement "that at least ten percent (10%) of the units in Affordable Production Developments funded, assisted or approved by a State Housing Agency shall have three (3) or more bedrooms."

We submit that this project, The Residences at Park Central, be excluded from that ruling due to the fact that the second project eligibility request was actually a reapplication for a project that was already approved. The reapplication was only necessary because the Developer was working and cooperating with Southborough's town boards and the neighborhood to create a solution that worked better for everyone. The configuration of one and two bedrooms was solidified only after extensive negotiations and analysis based on Southborough's affordability requirements, the overall needs of the town and extensive research, including 3 independent traffic studies.

Given that argument, we respectfully request that the Southborough Zoning Board of Appeals petition MassHousing to reconsider requiring 3 bedroom units and allow their original approval of only one and two bedroom units for the Residences at Park Central project to stand.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this pressing issue.

Regards,

The Bantry / Blackthorn / Tara Neighborhood

cc: W. Depietri, Capital Group Properties

