



## TOWN OF CONCORD

West Concord Advisory Committee

c/o Department of Planning & Land Management

141 Keyes Road – Concord, MA – 01742

September 8, 2021

To: Members of the Planning Board, 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA

From: Geoff Walton, on behalf of the members of the West Concord Advisory Committee

**Re: Concord Housing Authority Planned Residential Development at 365 Commonwealth Ave.**

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During its September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 meeting, the West Concord Advisory Committee had a presentation from Rick Eifler, Chair of the Concord Housing Authority, regarding the Authority's plans to construct a new 1,100 square foot, two bedroom affordable housing unit at 365 Commonwealth Ave.

The Committee reviewed the project, which would develop the last housing lot on Commonwealth Avenue aside from the structure on State Land next to the prison employee parking lot. The lot to be developed is immediately adjacent to a historic structure, also owned by the Housing Authority at 365 Commonwealth Ave.

When the proposed project is complete, there will be two affordable single-family homes at 365 Commonwealth Ave, comprised of the existing house on the lot and the new house that the Housing Authority is proposing to build. The property is across Commonwealth Ave from MCI-Concord and abuts the future Gerow Recreation Area as well as its access road. The Bruce Freeman trail parking lot is immediately to the north of the Gerow access road.

In voting to draft this memo of support for the Planning Committee, the Committee favorably noted several features of the proposed project:

- The project increases available affordable housing and helps meet established Town affordable housing goals.
- The architectural design of the new building is consistent with the neighboring historic structure, increasing the visual cohesiveness Commonwealth Ave neighborhood.
- The project is consistent with the West Concord Design Guidelines preamble recently approved by the Planning Board. This is particularly important due to the prominence of the project near heavily trafficked roadways. The Committee noted that it could serve as a "front door" to the community for those exiting from Rt. 2.
- The project will include removal of invasive species and restore native plant life surrounding an important natural recreation area (Warners Pond and Gerow Recreation Area).
- The resulting new housing will not utilize fossil fuels. The unit will exclusively use electrical equipment such as heat pumps to service the units.

The Committee appreciated the opportunity to review the plans for this development. The Committee voted to draft this memo to the Planning Board fully supporting the project.