

Thomas Siebert
52 Grove Street
Concord, Ma. 01742

April 9, 2022

To the Town of Concord Zoning Board of Appeals
cc. Ray Matte, Building Commissioner, Town of Concord,

As the across the Street abutters to 57 Grove Street my family and our property will be the most directly affected by the proposed development by Eycon Development. We concur with our neighbors that it is long overdue that this lot be cleaned up. A new house there will be a great improvement to Grove Street. My concern is that this proposal is for far too large a house and contributes to the "Mansionization" of our neighborhood. Concord has for many years had a sensitivity to this problem and tried to deal with it in various ways. The FAR calculation is the tool that the Zoning Board has now for limiting the size of new houses. In this particular case it seems that it is not adequate to protect the special qualities of our Grove Street neighborhood.

The applicant has written in their description of the project that Grove Street has "many homes in the immediate neighborhood [that] are of similar size or larger". This is absolutely false. This house will be the largest on the street by far. The closest in square footage of living space is 68 Grove St. across the street with 3,800 sq.'. It is 600 sq.' less than 4,400 sq.' proposed for #57. Also, more importantly, the lot size of #68 is 36,000 sq.' conforming to present zoning and twice the lot size of #57. The front yard setback is at least three times that proposed for #57. Much of the structure is a single story with a low ridge line so the visual impact from the street of a large looming facade is much reduced. #75 next door is 2,400 sq.' on a 29,350 sq.' lot. My house #52 is 1,900 sq.' on a small 9,150 sq.' lot with a deeper front yard setback than the proposed setback for #57. My neighbor to the east, 22 Grove Street, has a 2,600 sq.' house on a 17,920 sq.' lot with generous corner lot setbacks. The relatively new house at #37 is 3,040 sq.' on a 12,400 sq.' lot. 1,400 sq.' less in floor area than the proposed house. I don't understand and strongly dispute the claim that the proposed house is in scale with the neighborhood. It is not! In fact, I've studied the assessors maps and information and I can't find a 4,400 sq.' single family house in any nearby neighborhood. The applicant should explain this discrepancy.

The original houses on the west end of Grove Street were built in the 1890s as residences for prison workers. The narrow lots were 10,000 sq.' +/- . Most of these houses were originally about 1,200 sq.' when built and like my own, have been added onto in the last 35 years. The additions go to the rear because the side yard setbacks are now constrained by zoning. This preserves the street view and the historic architectural vernacular of these modest victorian cottages. The additions have been built with attention to good design and detail. Some have porches. A very pleasing visual experience as one drives or walks by. The east end of Grove Street was subdivided from farmland about 1900 and at least one of the houses from that period survives. A few have been torn down and replaced by reasonably sized more modern three bedroom houses.

A review of the plot plan shows that for whatever reason the proposed house is being squeezed onto the lot. The side setback to the east is the minimum 15'. The front setback is also at the minimum of 20' which places the new house 9' closer to the road and to my property than the existing house. My wife has been enthusiastically thinking that we will get more sun when the trees along the road are thinned out. I haven't worked out all the sun angles but it is possible we could be more shaded by the 34'+ high ridge of the new house in its planned location. I find that

unacceptable. Why is it necessary to move the house forward on the lot? I imagine to reserve space in the back for a new 5 bedroom septic leaching field with back up. The septic plan is not included in these documents. We don't presently have one nor do we need the first 5 bedroom house on Grove Street. There are now just a few with 4 bedrooms. Virtually every existing house in the neighborhood has the 75% second floor allowance with ceiling height provided by dormers. This keeps their roof ridges and eaves 10' lower than the proposed structure. My house with a 22' ridge height will be dwarfed by its closest neighbor.

While it is within the dimensional constraints of the zoning bylaws this house is not a good fit for Grove Street. I would like to see it downsized, reduced in height and moved back on the lot to the front setback of the existing house. Stylistically it makes no attempt to fit in. The plans are a stock set that the builder also intends, with minor changes, to use for at least one other project he is proposing in Lexington and not at all specific to 57 Grove Street. The computer generated renderings of the to be built house in the application are illusory. They show a berm that does not exist and is not in the plans and a generous and lushly landscaped front yard which is not possible with a setback of only 20'. These renderings are of the proposed Lexington house!

My neighbors and friends think these observations and criticisms, while justified, could interfere with progress on permitting, finishing the clean up and removing a big eyesore. I have been dealing with and looking at this mess for 34 years. They join me in wanting to see it replaced with a house that is smaller, lower and set back further from Grove Street. Based on your consideration of our concerns we respectfully urge you to deny the Special Permit application from Eycon without significant revisions to the plans. We deserve and expect a more sensitive design for this development.

Cosigned By:

Signature[s]	Address	Date
Thomas D. Smith	52 GROVE ST.	4/9/22
Ann "Patsy" Seibert	52 GROVE ST.	4/9/22
Shelley R. Hawks	68 Grove St.	4/9/22
James J. Smith III	68 Grove St.	4/9/22
John Smith	75 GROVE ST	4/9/22
Richard Higgins	15 Grove St	4/10/22
Mike Smith	15 GROVE ST	4/11/22
Jimmy Paulson	15 Grove St	4/10/22
Christine Anderson	113 Grove St.	4/10/22
James Anderson	113 Grove St.	4/10/22
Bob Schumacher	99 Grove St	4/11/2022
Minor C. Jones III	114 GROVE ST	4/11/22
Jim Healy	309 Barretts Mill	4/11/22
Stanley Thompson	109 Grove St	4/11/22
William Smith	88 Barretts Mill	4/11/22
William	(corner of Grove)	4/11/22
Cheryl Walker	883 Barretts Mill	4/11/22
Cynthia Warr	97 Grove St.	4/10/22
Greg Winter	821 Barretts Mill Rd	4/11/22
Greg Winter	821 Barretts Mill Rd	4/11/22
Quinn Robinson	86 Grove Street	4/11/22
John Smith	86 Grove St	4/11/22
John Smith	109 GROVE ST	4/11/22

