

From: Ann Sgarzi

Sent: Monday, July 31, 2023 10:26 PM

To: Hayleigh Walker <hwalker@concordma.gov>; Elizabeth Hughes <ehughes@concordma.gov>; Heather Carey <hcarey@concordma.gov>

Subject: 166 Commonwealth Avenue

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July 31, 2023

Theo Kindermans, Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
Concord, MA
(via Hayleigh Walker)

Dear Chairperson Kindermans,

I am writing regarding the requested parking exemption for the proposed project at 166 Commonwealth Avenue in West Concord, current site of the E&S service station.

As a resident of nearby Maple Street I have impact and safety concerns. I understand that in-town or downtown businesses often require exemptions from parking requirements. And I appreciate that a new restaurant at that end of Commonwealth Avenue could be good for the community and other downtown businesses.

But the scale of the requested relief seems egregious, and some of the purported mitigating factors cited in the requestor's proposal (e.g., "Employees will be encouraged to carpool") seem disingenuous.

The requestor points to the nearby Rideout Playground parking lot as an option for evening diners. On the way to Rideout, those diners will pass by Maple Street.

Maple Street is a family neighborhood that historically has kids playing in the street and each other's yards. Many years ago, the Town designated both sides of the street as No Parking zones Monday through Friday, 8am to 6pm. This was before we lived here but understand from neighbors that the reason for this was that Commuter Rail riders would park on Maple Street to avoid paying to park in the municipal lot. It was unsafe, and, given that the street is not very wide, at times created an impassable lane for emergency vehicles. The vehicle owners were nowhere nearby to move their vehicles in case of emergency, as would be the case with the restaurant diners.

Maple Street homes are on small lots with short front yards and houses close to the street. There are no sidewalks to keep residents and other walkers out of the road, and there is a fair amount of through traffic due to cars traveling to and from the Wheelhouse and other

businesses on Bradford Street. Adding parked cars to the street would create an unsafe situation for anyone walking on the street, particularly the young children that live here.

Ten units of housing, a 61-seat restaurant (with staff and deliveries), and an unspecified retail space (with staff and deliveries) with only 21 parking spaces does not seem to take into account the needs, safety, or the best interests of the nearby community.

I ask that the ZBA not approve the requested parking exemption for the proposed project at 166 Commonwealth Avenue, or, ask the requestors to submit an alternate, scaled back proposal that reduces parking needs.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Best,

Ann Sgarzi
33 Maple Street
Concord

Additional signees:

Jean and Al Easterday, 48 Maple Street
Joe, Pam, and Joseph Koontz, 41 Maple Street
Michelle and Bob Windheim, 31 Laws Brook Road

cc:

Zoning Board of Appeals, via Hayleigh Walker, hwalker@concordma.gov
Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner, ehughes@concordma.gov
West Concord Advisory Committee via Heather Carey, hcarey@concordma.gov
Planning Board via Heather Carey, hcarey@concordma.gov