

133 Boston Post Road

- Background
- Feedback
- Process

133 Boston Post Road

Background

- HPP was created/certified to contribute to affordable housing and achieve safe harbor against hostile 40B's.
- BOS approached BP to implement major item of HPP (200 units)
- BP returned with counter-proposal of 345 units and 250k sf of office space
- BOS asked PB to study and make recommendations

133 Boston Post Road

Neighborhood Meetings

- 4 Neighborhoods
 - Hobbs Brook
 - Pigeon Hill
 - Carroll Circle/ Church/ Coburn
 - Crescent/ Hill Crest
- Approximately 60-70 people total attended

Neighborhood Concerns

- **General**
- Biogen should be part of the negotiations and explain their stance with regard to the office building and access off of Route 20.
- Project viewed as Boston Properties getting what they want, rather than a concern for housing or for the town.
- Frustration at BOS meeting.
- Concern of fairness for one region to take the impacts of housing for the entire town's benefit
- Process can be lengthened to make sure that it's done right and more carefully consider impacts and other options.
- Concern over Boston Properties experience with residential development
- Fear that the project will be altered again. There is no permanent control.
- There is a feeling of losing control of the town.

Neighborhood Concerns

40B Questions/Clarifications

- Opposed to the project and willing to take risk of other 40B's/ This decision is being made on the fear of a 40B.
- The town will have to deal with affordable housing and get to 10% or risk further hostile 40B projects
- The 1.5% land area safe harbor should be re-analyzed for the properties that have been moved into conservation.
- What is the relation to the 104 Boston Post Road project?
- Has the constitutionality of 40B ever been challenged?
- Does not believe that 40B truly serves an underprivileged population given that the majority of units are market rate.
- 40B projects have not brought benefits to other towns. Property values have dropped and property taxes have risen.
- Why does 40B not allow the town a say in the location of a project?
- Can there be a fund to fight 40B's.

Neighborhood Concerns

HPP Questions/ Clarifications

- Are other sites being pursued? The HPP mentioned a number of possible sites, Regis, Seminary, Campion Center.
- Can the safe harbor be accomplished with 3-4 smaller projects distributed through the town?
- Can the town invest the money in Brooks School, specifically the wastewater to expand the Brooks School Apartments
- Can the town buy affordable deed restrictions, particularly for elderly projects?

Neighborhood Concerns

Project Questions/ Clarifications

- What is the status of Church Street exit? What is the disposition of Waltham to the Jones Road access? If that is denied will Church Street come back?
- Could this be an over 55 development? Impacts on Schools would be reduced.
- Chemical composition testing on the upper site has not been done.
- Does the last language of the amendment give the Selectmen the ability to unilaterally revise the amendment?
- If a town backed proposal is reached will the current proposal still go ahead at Town Meeting? What would be the Planning Board's position?
- The town wants a credible and decent developer as a partner and they tend to need a bigger project.

Neighborhood Concerns

Project Size

- A project of this size in one location is too dense/ intense/ disruptive. Project sizes between 50 and 200 units were mentioned as acceptable
- Would like to see an FAR comparison of this to other properties and examine what would be an acceptable increase above the average or typical?
- If the project is to be built it should not be less than what is required for 10% safe harbor.
- The lower building (Building 1) at 200 units alone would make sense. The impact would be moved away from Duck Pond.
- Four story buildings would be more acceptable.
- The trees will not block the building on the site of the PV array. Residents on Hillcrest can currently see the New York Life Building in Waltham.
- The town wants a credible and decent developer as a partner and they tend to need a bigger project.
- The first attempt to develop Mass Broken Stone was 485k sf. The town settled at a building that was 25% smaller. The current proposal is now 25% larger than that original proposal. They are getting a second larger bite at the apple.

Neighborhood Concerns

Project Scope

- Broad objection to the office building as it does not relate to the Town's 40B needs and was to be prohibited by the original development agreement.
- Questions around the scope, size, and timing of the intermodal transportation facility. The question for the town is, "What is the benefit of an intermodal station?"
- The multi-modal station should be limited in size.
- Other town stops/ stations will close with the multi-modal station.
- The multi-modal center will bring parking on Hobbs Brook and cut throughs over trail easements.

Neighborhood Concerns

Rail Trail

- There is a diesel fuel pipe under the rail trail.
- How will the rail trail and vehicle access be accommodated? The project should include bike paths, walking paths and bike stations.
- Currently kids park at the BP site and get on the rail line and conservation land at night.
- Thought 1997 Town vote had eliminated the Rail Trail.
- Is there any existing precedent for cars and Rail Trail side by side - and over an active rail line? And around high tension power lines? What happens if a car drives into one of the towers?

Neighborhood Concerns

Traffic

- Support use of Jones Road over Church Street, however there is concern that Waltham would deny and then would Church Street as an option come back.
- Access to Route 20 and Biogen's limit upon the use should be explored further.
- Traffic is regional issue that is largely being driven by increased development along 128 and Winter Street. There needs to be a regional solution.
- The traffic impacts that the town has planned for some time, such as School – Church- Boston Post intersection should be completed prior to or as part of this project.
- Questions on traffic study and its conclusions. The trip generation numbers used in the traffic report are national averages. In the past few years the traffic on Church Street has increased notably.
- The traffic on Route 20 will increase substantially with a new office and Route 20 is already at capacity
- A train station would be the best way to handle moving the large amount of people that would come with a 40B project, however a train station would also facilitate more development and generate its own traffic impacts.

Neighborhood Concerns

Environmental Impacts

- Concern with the environmental sensitivity of Duck Pond.
 - People will begin accessing the pond.
 - There is a great diversity of wildlife, especially birds (owls, cavity nesters, herons, eagle), in and around Duck Pond that will be affected and displaced by the development.
 - The pond is a complicated ecosystem that includes wetlands and islands etc
- What becomes of the adjacent conservation property?
- How will the access including a bridge affect the nearby Cambridge Drinking water supply, Hobbs Brook and associated wetlands? Notably the use of road salts which deteriorate wetland health.

Neighborhood Concerns

Town Services

- Will the project overburden the town center businesses such as Brothers.
- Does the town have the capacity to support and regulate the development?
 - Water, especially as there is an ongoing water use restriction?
 - Fire Department. Recent Waltham fire adds concerns.
 - Emergency Services, particularly servicing this concentration in the event of a disaster
 - Schools and School Buses
 - Building Inspections
- Concerns raised about the septic system design and reserve area?
- Concerns that the project will propose a tie-in for MWRA septic which will open up further development
- How many buses would be required to serve the property?
- Cited research on effects on town services when populations is increased by 1%, 2%, 5% 10% etc.

Neighborhood Concerns

- **Rural Character**
- The project is not keeping with the rural character of Weston.
- The design is not consistent with Weston
- This will be part of a larger commercial development of the area with 1265 Main, the multimodal center and the junkyard that will lead to further commercialization in Weston.
- Further impacts of traffic, more people and effects to the rural character of the town.

Neighborhood Concerns

Other impacts and concerns

- There are layers of character. Like schools vs built form.
- The project segregates a certain population, particularly with entry through Waltham, and that will result societal unrest.
- The town has always changed and more diversity would be a benefit and reflective of the broader world.
- The 9 acre junkyard was purchased for 16.5 million. That should be the relative price point of entry for an office building. Estimates that would 50 million for Biogen site.
- The give back to the town for the office is the affordable housing.
- When Richardson owned Mass Broken Stone there were measures to keep the industrial impacts away from residences such as leaving the ledge on Route 20 to screen the quarry. Placing residences here is not consistent with that intent.
- 40B will impact someone and in this case the neighborhood is that someone.
- Concern that after the project and commuter rail station are built that the voter demographic shift could bring the Church Street access back.
- The rail station will accommodate further development beyond what is already being proposed both in Weston and Waltham. There will be a snowball effect.
- Safety concerns of more people, more impacts, more crime.
- Will there be an effect on real estate values and has this been studied?

Meta Issues to be Resolved

- Viability of an elderly/ assisted living/ age restricted project
- Recalculate the 1.5% land area safe harbor
- Update the HPP recommended sites and progress on those

Next Steps

- Early September Town-wide public hearing
- Planning Board and Boston Properties work on acceptable project proposals
- Negotiations
- Second round of neighborhood meetings to discuss revised project if negotiations are successful