

February 14, 2019

Re: Proposed development of Healy Corner, 195 Tahattawan Road

To the Town of Littleton Planning Board:

We are a group of involved citizens who support town growth and development when prepared in accordance with the proper standard of care and safety provisions. As abutters of this site, we would like to formally register our concerns about the proposed Healy Corner development as planned, given what we feel are substantive issues based partially on inaccurate or incomplete information. Below you will see our concerns regarding traffic, the proposed location of Dennis Road, and effects of the development on drainage and wetlands.

1) Traffic and intersection concerns.

Per the GPR subdivision application, the traffic study for this development indicates peak traffic currently on Harwood Avenue at 10 vehicles per hour. We have seen more than 10 cars in 2 minutes at rush hour, leading us to presume that real peak is over 10 times that amount at more than 100 trips per hour. We remind the Board that Harwood Avenue is a main path for commuters to and from the MBTA Commuter Rail station, and is a favorite route for significant numbers of road bikers, and that assessments of traffic should take this into account. This traffic study needs to be revisited as it also references the proposal for only 9 new single family lots, yet the latest plan includes 17 new lots. We would suggest the town install traffic counters to secure accurate information.

As per the current plan the Dennis Circle road will intersect with Harwood directly across from the existing skewed intersection of Tahattawan. This is already a dangerous intersection which cannot safely accept additional traffic from the development as proposed. Vehicles would enter

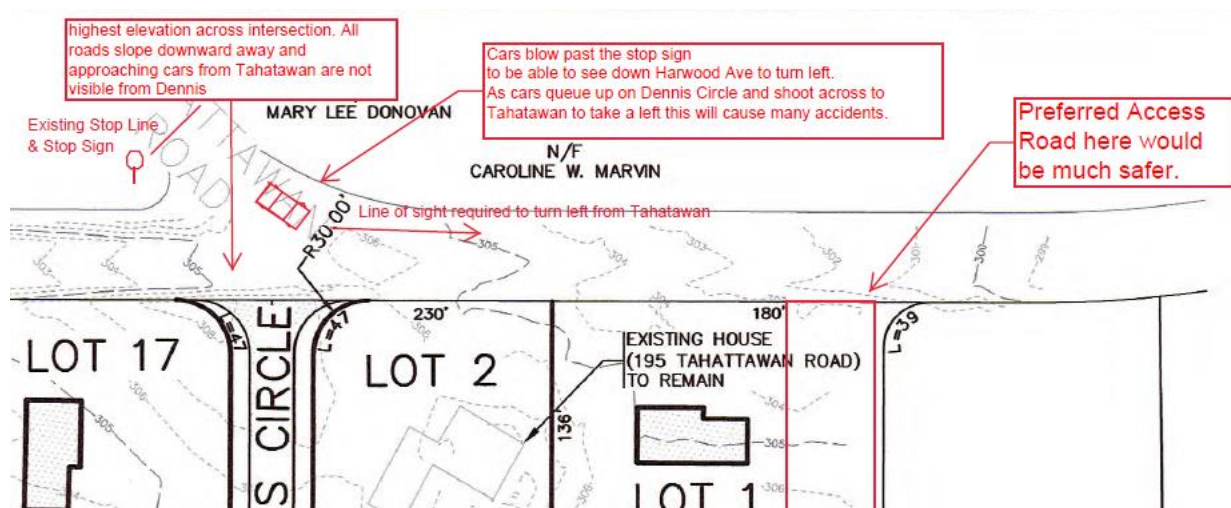


Figure 1 Intersection traffic pattern

this intersection driving south on Tahattawan directly into new oncoming traffic from Dennis Circle, prior to having the necessary line of sight to proceed (see Figure 1.)

Furthermore, traffic heading east on Harwood approaching this proposed intersection has a solar-obstructed view during the morning rush hour for much of the year, creating a life-safety hazard for potential new development housing owners and oncoming traffic. As can be seen clearly in figure 2 and 3, while there is a 25mph sign visible in figure 3, this is not visible and fully obstructed with the solar glare during rush hour. Up to that point the speed limit is 35mph upon which actual traffic is regularly speeding well above 35mph. What traffic planning efforts have been performed to mitigate the impact to the current Tahattawan and Harwood intersection? Consideration should be given to moving the Dennis Circle road to the easternmost property development limit to move as far from the existing intersection as possible.



*Figure 2: Photo taken 1/15/19 8am, Harwood Ave. facing east to Healy Corner*



*Figure 3: Google street view image of Harwood Ave facing east to Healy Corner*

Based on the Federal Highway Administration the following tables illustrates the safety risk associated with stopping distance and intersection geometry. This intersection includes a Y-diverge on road and high-volume traffic at rush hour. This is further complicated with a crest with limited sight distance (due to a 6% grade) combined with solar glare. Just one of these is considered a major safety risk, yet this location combines multiple risks.

These are directly from the Federal Highway Administration website at the following link.

[https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/geometric/pubs/mitigationstrategies/chapter3/3\\_stopdistance.cfm](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/geometric/pubs/mitigationstrategies/chapter3/3_stopdistance.cfm)

Relative Safety Risk of Various Conditions in Combination with Non-Standard Stopping Sight Distance

Geometric Condition	Relative Safety Risk
Tangent horizontal alignment	Minor
Mild curvature >2000 ft (600m) radius	
Mild downgrade (<3%)	
Low-volume intersection	Significant
Intermediate curvature 1000 ft (300 m) to 2000 ft (600 m) radius	
Moderate downgrade (3–5%)	
Structure	
High volume intersection	Major
Y-diverge on road	
Sharp curvature <1000 ft (300 m) radius	
Steep downgrade (>5%)	
Narrow bridge	
Narrow pavement	
Freeway lane drop	
Exit or entrance downstream along freeway	

The application also cites a posted speed limit of 25mph in the vicinity of the proposed site access. While this is accurate, the 25mph starts right at the proposed intersection and the sight distance as previously described is obscured. More so, Harwood Ave regularly draws speeding vehicles due to its long straights and has been the focus of regular police speed traps at the bottom of the hill. This can be validated by the Littleton Police records.

This plan seems to have substantive issues which must be addressed prior to granting any approvals.

2) Drainage and storm water.

The storm water culverts at the base of the hill just west of this development are regularly flooded. Therefore, the inclusion of lots 10-13 and presumed associated increase in impervious area and grade changes raise concern. What storm water analysis/mitigation has been done to ensure these changes do not cause Harwood Avenue to become flooded and impassable? We would support the Board's recommendation to move those houses into the eastern part of the development.

3) Wetlands.

Is the increase in impervious area for this development requiring wetland restoration/mitigation? What efforts have been made to protect the vernal pool immediately adjacent to the project site, on the 271 Harwood Ave. property?

Additionally, we take issue with the Planning Board Meeting of February 7, 2019, in which protocol was clearly not followed as there was no invitation or opportunity for community members to speak on the project. The Chair did not open the meeting for public comment; when Brian Beam approached the Chair after the topic had been closed, he was directed to address his concerns to the project engineer. We will be attending future meetings and expect that the community will be given the opportunity to participate as listed in the Public Hearing Guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our concerns. Below you will find our contact information, as we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this project further.

Signed,

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Cc: Bruce D. Ringwall, President, GPR Civil Engineering