

40 Winsor Lane  
Topsfield, MA 01983  
February 9, 2023

Robert Moriarity, Esq., Chairman  
Topsfield Zoning Board of Appeals  
8 West Commons Street  
Topsfield, MA 01983

Dear Mr. Moriarity:

Speaking as residents of this wonderful town who cherish its history and quaintness, we are opposed to the Caleb Group's Emerson Homes 40B project as it presently stands. We all know that we need more affordable housing and market rate housing in Topsfield, but we feel that moving forward as planned will be devastating to this town and to our historic downtown. We feel there is still time to avoid this catastrophe.

These are and our concerns:

Aesthetics:

1. The current design of the building is not in keeping with the charm and character of our historic district. It would be nice to see a design more fitting of our historic district.
2. This project will not meet our 10% affordable housing requirement. Scaling down the size of the project on that piece of property would be better for the town.

Serviceability:

1. Most of these units are not appropriate for people over 65 as there is no elevator to the second floor. Some seniors have medical conditions and or disabilities that required them to use an elevator if not currently more than likely in the future.

Having some knowledge of the towns aging population and the need to have housing for all ages this project concerns us. Also, not many Topsfield residents will meet the financial threshold to live there. Currently only 11 residents of our town are on the lists for affordable housing.

The financial burden on our middle-class residents is an issue as well. There will be a need for more police and fire services to deal with the health emergencies of the elderly people without support.

The Topsfield Council on Aging is already maxed out and would need another van and more space to host seniors at their activities.

Increase in our property taxes places a financial burden on our middle-class residents. There are many that would be forced to move out of town. I do not see how our taxes would not increase with this project and the services required.

There is concern from a conservation point of view as well. The septic system would more than likely change the natural water drainage and affect the brooks and vernal pools.

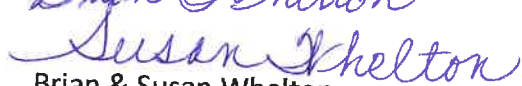
Not sure how all the paved areas would affect the area as well.

We do value our open space in this town and would it not be a better idea to find a suitable location on Route 1 for a larger complex to be built. Public transportation is an issue no matter where this is built in our town anyway.

The other issue of concern I am sure is traffic congestion where the proposed driveway enters and exits onto High Street. There are many times already that this is an issue.

We are curious if the town were to purchase this property verses the cost of all the extra services needed to support this project what the difference on our tax rate would be.

Sincerely,



Brian & Susan Whelton