



**TOWN OF MEDWAY**  
**Planning & Economic Development Board**  
155 Village Street  
Medway, Massachusetts 02053

*Andy Rodenhiser, Chairman*  
*Robert K. Tucker, Vice-Chairman*  
*Thomas A. Gay, Clerk*  
*Matthew J. Hayes, P.E.*  
*Richard Di Iulio*

April 24, 2019

Medway Zoning Board of Appeals  
155 Village Street  
Medway, MA 02053

RE: Friendly 40B Local Initiative Program application – 33 and 39 Main Street

Dear Chairman Stumpf and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

At its meetings on April 9 and 23, 2019, the Planning and Economic Development Board (PEDB) discussed the Comprehensive Permit application filed by Strategic Land Ventures Medway I, LLC of Needham, MA with the Zoning Board of Appeals for construction of 190 rental units on the 12.3 acre site at 33 & 39 Main Street under the Massachusetts 40B Local Initiatives Program. The site plan dated 3-26-19 by Legacy Engineering and the undated architectural and elevation plans by Cube 3 were reviewed. The Board offers the following comments to the ZBA for receipt, discussion, and consideration at the April 24, 2019 public hearing.

- The Board acknowledges the Town's need to increase the number of affordable housing units in our community in accordance with the Commonwealth's 10% affordable housing goal and recognizes that the proposed apartment development will provide a substantial boost to the Town's accomplishment of that important goal.
- The Town's 2016 *Housing Production Plan* clearly identifies the need for rental housing in Medway. The existing stock of apartment residences is very limited. The last year an apartment building was constructed in Medway was in 1975. The Board is pleased that this development opportunity has presented itself to meet the community's need to diversify its housing supply to include suitable options for young professionals, young families, empty nesters, downsizers, and renters by choice.
- Main Street, as Medway's major arterial roadway and the location of the proposed development, has the most capacity to handle the increased vehicular traffic that will be generated by the residents of the apartment complex with the least impact on local streets serving residential neighborhoods.

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- This location is close to retail stores, restaurants and businesses at Medway Commons. We are pleased to learn that the developer has committed to constructing a sidewalk along the south side of Main Street to provide pedestrian connectivity between the apartments and Medway Commons. We believe this sidewalk will promote enhanced livability and walkability and reduce vehicular trips from the apartments to the nearby services. However, the agreed upon Main Street sidewalk work is not shown on the provided plan set. We recommend the plan set be revised to include a separate sheet for off-site improvements to show the sidewalk construction. If the Main Street right-of-way width allows, we would suggest that the sidewalk meander around any existing trees located within the right-of-way area so as to retain those trees instead of removing them.
- The Board recommends the construction of a sidewalk on the west side of the roadway/driveway into the complex from Main Street so as to better connect pedestrians with the planned Main Street sidewalk westerly to Medway Commons.
- Apartment residents may well include persons commuting to work on regional transit. We believe this development would be an excellent additional pick up and drop off location for Medway's GATRA rush hour shuttle service to and from the Norfolk train station. We are pleased that the applicant has proposed a small bus shelter. However, we would suggest that the bus shelter be internal to the site and not located out on Main Street.
- It does not appear that any landscaping plan has been provided. This is an absolutely critical element for a development of this nature and scale. The ZBA should require the applicant to prepare and submit such for review during the current review process. The landscaping plan should also include provisions for a substantial landscape treatment at the development's primary Main Street entrance. We would also recommend that the plan show a location for a development sign with associated landscaping.
- The site plan shows the location of parking around the perimeter of the building. Through the installation of well-designed fencing and substantial landscaped buffers, the negative impacts of traffic lights and noise on abutters may be lessened. Although the applicant has requested that the *Site Plan Rules and Regulations* be waived in their entirety, the Board asks the ZBA to consider the buffer area landscaping regulation noted below as it negotiates the project's landscaping and site amenities with the applicant.

***Landscape Buffers*** - Four (4) season evergreen landscape buffers between the site and adjoining properties are encouraged. If a commercial site abuts residential property then four (4) season visual and sound buffers shall be required and shall protect the residential area to the greatest extent possible. At least fifty (50) feet of either supplemented existing woodland or dense, native vegetation shall be employed to buffer the proposed use from the residential area. The vegetation may be supplemented with earth berms of a reasonable height and quality fencing using wood or other materials approximating wood. Where buffers are required, one (1) native evergreen tree of at least six (6) feet in height shall be planted six (6) foot on center. If woodlands currently exist on the site as a natural buffer, they shall be incorporated into the plan. The buffer shall provide four (4) seasons of screening.

- The Board recommends the inclusion of more landscaped breaks in the considerably long runs of parking spaces. Although the applicant has requested that the *Site Plan Rules and Regulations* be waived in their entirety, the Board asks the ZBA to consider the parking lot landscaping regulation noted below as it negotiates the project's landscaping and site amenities. Additional landscaping with trees will provide shade and break up the long expanses of parking lot pavement.

**Parking Areas** - *The Planning Board requires substantial planting islands in parking areas to break up the "sea of asphalt" appearance. Internal landscape planted divisions (islands and peninsulas) shall be constructed within all parking lots to provide shading and buffering. At least one deciduous tree of a minimum two and one-half (2 1/2) inches caliper in diameter shall be provided for every six (6) parking spaces.*

- The massive scale of the proposed development is accentuated by it having only one building. It has the feel of a large hotel instead of a residential apartment in a small suburb. The substantial scale of the building could be mitigated by breaking the one building into several. This would also create some pockets of lawn and landscaped areas to provide some much needed visual relief.
- The applicant has proposed 304 parking spaces on the site; this is a ratio of 1.6 spaces per dwelling unit. This is less than the Town's standard parking requirement of 2 spaces per unit for multifamily dwellings. The Board would encourage the ZBA to require the applicant to provide documentation that this lower number of parking spaces is justified and appropriate based on data from similar large apartment developments located in outlying suburbs similar to Medway. Comparing parking needs and supply for this site to apartment developments located in the inner suburbs with real public transit options is not a thoughtful or helpful approach.
- It is not clear how the applicant intends to manage trash on the site. If outside trash dumpsters are to be provided, they should be surrounded by wood looking enclosures of sufficient height to fully conceal the dumpster equipment. Such locations should be specified on the plan with sufficient short term parking provided for residents who may "drive" to the dumpsters to drop off their trash.
- Lighting – We note the photometric plan included with the site plan does not comply with the provisions of the *Zoning Bylaw* in terms of light spillage beyond the property lines nor has the applicant requested a waiver from that section of the *Zoning Bylaw*. The applicant should either comply with the lighting provisions or request a waiver. However, it seems that compliance with the Bylaw's lighting requirements would not be an unreasonable or overly burdensome undertaking.
- The installation and construction of site amenities including landscaping and the off-site sidewalk improvements on Main Street should be completed before an occupancy permit is granted for the building or suitable performance security is provided by the applicant.

We understand the Design Review Committee has also submitted a letter to the ZBA. We heartily encourage the Zoning Board to fully consider the DRC's comments and recommendations regarding the building's architecture in order to refine the proposed architectural design of this large scale residential development toward something more compatible with Medway's character, the Medway *Design Review Guidelines*, and the sensibilities of this community.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Rodenhiser', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andy Rodenhiser  
Chairman