

Objection to Proposed Construction at 227 Tappan Street, Brookline MA

We strongly object to the proposed conversion of the existing single family house on the lot at 227 Tappan Street to two attached single family houses. Our objections include the following:

- The proposed single family conversion to a “two-family house” is in reality a proposal to create two minimally attached single family homes packed onto a structurally and visually inadequately small and structurally incompatible lot. This is completely out of character with the aesthetics of the immediate neighborhood, which today is comprised of single-family homes. These single family homes begin at 247 Tappan St and continue all the way to Brookline High School and extend onto Gardner Road. The families in our immediate community are long time residents of approximately 15 to 60 years.
- In particular there is a row of 6 brick houses (247 currently is sided but otherwise similar) built in the 1930's, all similar, which constitute an architectural gem giving an air of quiet dignity, calm and space to the entire neighborhood. The proposed project would demolish one of these houses and cram a huge complex of two houses with a much larger footprint onto the single lot.
- The “usable lot” is considerably smaller than the projection shown on the submitted plot plan. The back of the property consists of a steep forested hill reducing the usable size of the lot. Notwithstanding the proposed excavation into the steep hill, the proposed floor plan covers almost all of the usable lot.
- The proposed underground garage and the outside parking spaces are neither useful nor efficient. This inconvenient parking arrangement would result in the cars spending a large amount of time on the street, further aggravating an already dire street parking situation. Additionally the access to the second residence from the exterior parking spaces is extremely tight and will encourage further use of the requested reduced setback area on the right side of the lot.
- The increased number of cars and the need to move cars around to allow selected cars passage to Tappan Street presents a threat to the people walking in front of the driveway, especially children (e.g., BHS, Runkle, and Maimonides students). Moreover, the proposed driveway exits into Tappan Street at the already dangerous intersection with Beaconsfield Road. The need to move cars into the street to make space for others to exit will further increase the frequency of cars entering (likely backing into) this intersection posing a substantial danger of harm to pedestrians and drivers.
- It is unclear who would be buying these houses. Despite four designated bedrooms in each of the proposed houses, the size, location and layout of the kitchen is not family friendly (the so called “kitchen” is indeed a galley). There is no backyard suitable for children or other open space use. This is basically a stable family neighborhood (with or without children) and the design raises concerns regarding an increase in more transient occupancy.

- The proposed new retaining walls (to be created through significant excavation), further back and higher up the hill than the existing wall will divert the water flowing down the hill to the abutting properties and further aggravate the pressure on and compromise the existing retention walls of abutters as well as the proposed structures. Furthermore, the slope of the hill will be increased while the trees and vegetation that help absorb the water will be destroyed. There is also likely to be increased run-off, including from the driveway onto Tappan Street presenting safety issues, especially in the winter.
- We request an Environmental Impact Study of the proposed excavation deep into the hillside and the resulting reconfiguration of the hillside and the property. The proposed excavation and design poses a high likelihood of adverse impact on the integrity and stability of the hillside (potentially resulting in mudslides). We are concerned about the adverse impact this may have on surrounding homes and properties, including those further up the hill and those on the other side of Tappan Street. Additionally, the excavation and reconfiguration of the property will destroy and disrupt the existing natural habitat and ecosystem which enhances the neighborhood and town.
- The proposed 400 square feet of outside parking space and expanded driveway will capture significant amounts of snow that will have to be shoveled into the street or onto the sidewalks. Snow removal along this stretch of Tappan Street is already extremely challenging for the town and the residents. There are no tree islands on either side of Tappan Street; the sidewalk is adjacent to the curb on one side and retaining walls, fences or hedges on the other; and this section of the street is particularly narrow. The Director of the Department of Public Works acknowledges the ongoing difficulty for the town and for homeowners in clearing both this section of Tappan Street and the sidewalks on both sides of the street. This is even more problematic for those on the even numbered houses along this section of Tappan Street as the sidewalk caterpillars (that already have little room to put the snow) are used only on the odd side of the street. There is inadequate space to put the snow. Homeowners and the Director of DPW are engaged in an ongoing dialogue regarding how best to address this problem. This will further exacerbate this already complicated and unresolved problem.
- The major construction and excavation proposed will create noise, dust, debris, runoff, traffic problems, parking disruptions, litter, and property damage. The construction process itself will significantly disrupt the surrounding properties and the quality of life for the residents in the area, many of whom are at home during the day. Already limited on street parking will be used by construction workers and vehicles. Pedestrian safety is an additional concern.
- Construction vehicle access will be problematic without encroaching on abutting properties – especially given the amount of excavation and modification of the terrain and the existing retaining walls.
- The health of a young resident at 233 Tappan Street (adjacent to the 227 Tappan Street) who suffers from Cushing's Disease, an already life-threatening condition causing extreme bodily stress, will be at increased risk from the additional stress, noise, pollution, and disruption caused by the proposed construction. The construction will pose health

risks to other nearby residents with health conditions that make them particularly vulnerable to harm from the dust, noise, pollution, and daily disruption over many months. Many of these residents are home during the day and will be exposed for longer periods of time to the adverse conditions caused by the construction.

We have spoken with town counsel and the planning department regarding our intention to submit a warrant article to change the zoning of these 6 houses from SC-10 to S-10 for consideration at the November 2014 Town Meeting. We will provide the Planning Board with a preliminary draft of the proposed warrant article

Our position on this matter is firm; it has nothing to do with economics or property values. Instead it is rooted on defending the best for our neighbors and our neighborhood.

Please note that despite representations to the contrary by the developer, most of the neighbors with whom we have discussed this matter share our position. Several are out of town or otherwise unavailable to attend tonight's meeting but have expressed their agreement with our position.

Gabriel Bresler	
Adrian Bresler	
Samantha Bresler	
Josh Kopp	(abutter)
Mabel Kopp	(abutter)
Toby Crawford	(abutter)
Alison Kopp Crawford	(abutter)
Sungwoo Kim	(abutter)
Joan Kim	(abutter)
Alex Coleman	
Lee Cooke Childs	(abutter)
Thomas DeLong	
Hal Adams	
Ira Cohen	
Daniel Cohen	
Michele Fishel	
Barry Weisman	
Jason Snyder	
Judy Snyder	
Nelson Soo Hoo	
Karen Soo Hoo	