

June 4, 2024

Town of Concord
Zoning Board of Appeals
c/o Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner
22 Monument Square
Concord, MA 01742
ehughes@concordma.gov

Re: Comments regarding the proposed 40B Project – The Residences at Thoreau, Concord, MA

I am writing in response to the developer's request for a blanket waiver of Article 23 for the proposed new 40B project - The Residences at Thoreau.

There are conflicting goals inherent in the request for a waiver: the first being the short-term goal to build much-needed affordable housing in Concord; the second being the long-term goal of achieving Concord's (and the State's) climate goals for reducing GHG emissions. Failing to address the energy mandates of the Commonwealth now may cause major challenges for meeting the state's goals for 2025, and every 5-years following that up to the 85% reduction in fossil fuel emissions and net zero emissions provided by forests requirement by 2050.

Planting a few small trees and adding EV charging stations will not mitigate the climate damage of clearcutting hundreds of mature trees in good condition and capable of continuing to sequester significant amounts of carbon dioxide now and in the future. Additionally, a blanket waiver would also place no limits on the use of fossil fuels rather than encouraging more efficient and sustainable options.

I suggest that the Zoning Board balance the affordable housing goal **AND** the stretch energy goal to reduce CO2 emissions by having the developer provide a defensible Energy Impact Study by qualified professionals. With a deeper understanding of the energy impact of the project, surely the developer can submit a revised proposal to balance these two important goals.

Sincerely,

Ronald Whitfield
67 Whit's End Road
Concord, MA 01742

Cc:

Kerry Lafleur, Town of Concord, Town Manager
Wendy Rovelli, Select Board
Mark Howell, Select Board
Eric Simms, Sustainability Director, Town of Concord