



PLANNING BOARD

P.O. Box 1305
Littleton, Massachusetts 01460

May 5, 2011

Littleton Board of Selectmen

RE: "Fifteen Great Road Apartments" Project, OMNI Development LLC
Comments on Site Eligibility process

Dear Members of the Board of Selectmen:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this project during the "Site Eligibility" process conducted by the State. Open communication is an integral piece of any development proposal that has the potential to impact the Town as significantly as the proposed 40B project at 15 Great Road.

Concerns raised by Planning Board members at their meeting of Thursday, April 28, 2011 included safety and environmental concerns, as well as the impacts to Littleton residents and Town services.

TRAFFIC SAFETY:

Project Location: The location of the proposed project on the very edge of Town, presents congestion.

Great Road/2A/119: The design of the entrance to the project off Great Road/Route 119/2A should be carefully reviewed and redesigned, as there is no turn lane proposed into the site from either the easterly or westerly approach to the site. There is no accommodation for bicyclists, even though Route 2A/119 is a link to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail; consideration should be made for a bicycle lane and for sidewalks. A single turn lane was required at Great Road/2A/119 for the entrance to Grist Mill Road, and traffic levels from the proposed project are significantly higher than those for the adjacent Grist Mill Road subdivision. Sight distance for vehicles exiting the site is not shown, and may be a significant safety concern, given the grade change on Route 2A/119 in the vicinity of the entrance.

Grist Mill Road was not designed nor constructed to meet increased traffic proposed by either the 200-unit proposed development, or other possible future development on the remaining land shown in the development proposal. The Planning Board attempted to restrict access from the project site through any residential lots on Grist Mill Road. Should, however, access be allowed, Grist Mill Road should be upgraded to collector street standards, with an increased pavement width and sidewalks on both sides.

TRAFFIC LEVELS: A detailed traffic report is needed to determine the effects on traffic safety and to determine what mitigation measures are necessary. No detailed information is provided.

FIRE SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: It is not clear if the fire trucks are properly equipped to handle buildings this scale. There is no access to the rear or side of the structures for



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firefighting equipment or ambulance access. Water service (fire flow) adequate for fighting fires must be provided; no information on the availability of adequate fire flows is provided.

WATER QUALITY IMPACTS: No information regarding impacts to water quality is provided. Surface water and groundwater impacts must be defined, given the proximity to the Town of Concord Water supply at Nagog Pond and the Town of Littleton well sites at Cobb Pond. Design of the drainage system to control and treat surface water runoff is a concern; no details are provided regarding impacts to surface or groundwater. Design of the wastewater treatment system and impacts to groundwater is a concern; again, no details are provided.

IMPACTS TO SCHOOLS: The effects of 200 new housing units on school population and associated costs must be addressed to assess the impacts.

DENSITY: The project density, building height, and architectural details are concerns as well. The height of the structures is a concern both for fire safety as outlined above, and proposed at a height to avoid requirements of the State Building Code requirements for a high rise. The structures are not appropriate scale for this rural setting.

AFFORDABLE UNITS: The Town has made progress recently regarding providing affordable housing. The Town has provided a fair amount of affordable housing, including adding several new affordable units in the past few years through the local Over 55 Residential Development bylaw in this period of historic economic depression.

PROJECT ROADWAY DESIGN: The project proposes a subdivision roadway adjacent to the rear of houses along Grist Mill Road and has the potential to adversely affect that neighborhood.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION: The property current uses include open space and recreation, with public and private trails. The location near a public water supply reservoir heightens the risk of water quality impacts.

PROJECT SEGMENTATION: The preliminary development proposal includes several parcels with undefined future development. Overall impacts of development of the project area must be reviewed as a whole. Segmentation of the project will not provide an adequate review of all impacts.

Sincerely,

Maren Toohill
For Littleton Planning Board Members