

# TOWN OF WESTON

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selectmen@westonmass.org  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN



November 6, 2015

Richard Vallarelli, Jr.  
1265 Main Street LLC  
Waltham, MA

Re: Proposed Regional Transportation Improvements

Dear Mr. Vallarelli:

Thank you for coming to Weston in August to meet with us and solicit feedback on the proposed improvements in the area of the 1265 Main development. The following represents our views and requests based on your presentation, including input from the Traffic and Sidewalk Advisory Committee, staff, including the DPW Director and Town Engineer, and of course, the Board of Selectmen.

We believe the proponent for the subject project is focused on the State's portion of the infrastructure improvements. Local impacts should also be considered. In our opinion, some consideration should be given to the various infrastructure impacts within the Town of Weston as well. Some thoughts:

- 1) **Intersections** – We have engaged traffic consultants, including VHB, to study several intersections in Weston. We are hopeful that the proposed developments (this one and others) will incorporate our traffic studies in the evaluation of the impacts of all of the planned new development in the area. We appreciate that you have evaluated some of the major, regional infrastructure needs (bridge widening, interchange modifications, service road connections, etc.), but we urge you to also consider the more local impacts and needs including:
  - a) **Route 117 (North Avenue) at Church Street and Lexington Street intersections** should at a minimum be evaluated and recommended modifications be discussed, such as intersection geometric modifications. Note that, as with Route 20 and Boston Post Road/Wellesley Street, our traffic engineer, VHB, has done studies at this location and recommended geometric modifications which we expect to implement within the next year. We expect this to remain an unsignalized area. Consideration should also be given to assure that truck traffic does not traverse Lexington Street, which may require additional dedicated traffic police patrols for enforcement, additional signage, etc.

- b) **Impacts to the Route 20 corridor** including, but not limited to:
- i) *Route 20 at Highland Street.* This is a busy intersection during the morning and evening peaks. Could some improvements be made at the intersection to improve traffic safety?
  - ii) *Route 20 at School Street intersection.* We have already studied this intersection. Note that there is a preferred alternative that has already been discussed. However, we believe that work on this intersection should be deferred until such time that intersection improvements are made to the Route 20/Boston Post Road/Wellesley Street intersections.
  - iii) *Route 20 at Boston Post Road/Wellesley Street intersection.* Various public meetings and hearings have been held concerning intersection improvements. At this stage, the preferred alternative, from our standpoint, is for a signalized intersection at this location. VHB has taken into account future traffic volumes, including your development. We will be glad to provide a copy of the studies done, and we would ask that impacts of this proposed development be considered as part of any additional studies.
- c) **Route 30 at Route 128/95 interchange, Route 30 at Park Street/Newton Street intersection, and Route 30 at Wellesley Street** should at a minimum be evaluated and recommended modifications discussed, which may include signal timing adjustments, signal improvements (such as the proposed project at Route 30 and Wellesley Street), etc. The importance of Route 30 to the overall public transportation system should be recognized.
- 2) **Rail and/or Bus alternatives/improvements** – We assume that the proposed new multi-modal transportation facility would be only one part of other improvements to service on the Fitchburg line. We assume that all of the impacts of a station location change will be thoroughly evaluated including how access for Weston’s rail commuters will not be so inconvenienced that ridership declines. We also urge that accommodations be made for commuters who would bicycle to the new station.
  - 3) **Sidewalk Improvements** – Should additional consideration be given to sidewalk improvements for portions of Route 20 from Weston Town Center to the proposed multi-modal transportation facility? Should additional sidewalk consideration be given to sidewalk construction on portions of Route 117 from Church Street to Waltham and ultimately have a connection point to the proposed multi-modal transportation facility? Should consideration be given to sidewalk construction on River Road to allow easier access to the Brandeis area?
  - 4) **Bicycle Accommodations Improvements** – Can bicycle accommodations be facilitated on Route 20 and Route 117 to create a link to the proposed multi-modal transportation facility? This may involve roadway modifications, restriping of travel lanes and the addition of bike lanes, a rail trail connection(s), etc.? We assume the rail trail connection east and west of Route 128 will be connected with dedicated lanes on a new bridge if the existing railroad bridge is not to be repurposed for this important connection,
  - 5) **Utility Improvements / Rehabilitations** – There are a number of utility issues that exist in Weston from electric power surges to dips, and the gas main distribution system is at the end of its service life in various parts of the Town. Has any consideration been given to the needs

to the proposed developments and the impacts of those developments on already questionable utility infrastructure?

- 6) **Quality of Life Improvements** – There are a number of residential Weston properties in close proximity to several major transportation networks (Route 128/95, Route 20, Route 117, etc.). Has any consideration been given to improving these impacted properties by reducing noise, improving air quality, addition of improved streetscapes, etc.? We recognize that the type of development (office versus residential versus retail, etc.) will impact the infrastructure in differing ways.
- 7) **Stormwater Improvements** – We assume that stormwater improvements will be incorporated into any proposed designs per permitting requirements.
- 8) **Transit Oriented Apartment Development** – We note that there may be an opportunity to create a transit oriented apartment development in connection with the new transit station plans. Weston has identified the dearth of rental housing as an unmet need in our town and an apartment development at this site could satisfy a number of town and regional needs.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Harrity, Chair  
Board of Selectmen

c: Traffic & Sidewalk Committee