



The TOWN OF NORWOOD

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

THE SELECTMEN

William J. Plasko, *Chairman*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Board of Selectmen announce settlements with the Forbes Hill and Avalon Bay 40B Projects

After months of discussion and consideration, the Board of Selectmen has determined that a negotiated resolution of the Forbes Hill 40B and Avalon Bay Norwood 40B Comprehensive Permit applications are in the best interests of the Town of Norwood. As a result, we are announcing today that the Selectmen believe the best deals possible have been achieved with the Comprehensive Permits which have been approved by the Board of Appeals in these matters.

The Board of Selectmen appreciate the difficult position the Zoning Board of Appeals was in dealing with these matters that state law leaves them little control over. The Board thanks the majority of the Board ratifying the negotiated settlements in these matters by approving each Comprehensive Permit.

We appreciate all of the input and support from the community. Rest assured that we have heard and considered all of your concerns in these matters. These decisions were not easy ones, or ones we take lightly, and we know they will be scrutinized and criticized. But we are convinced they are in the Town's best interest.

In the Forbes Hill matter during the course of the permitting process, the Board of Selectmen have been in direct negotiations with the developer to find a way to resolve the 40B project and the 1.5% issue in the best interests of the Town of Norwood, without ongoing, expensive, and increasingly more difficult legal standards to meet.

Ultimately, we negotiated with the developer, Davis Marcus, to revise the application it presented to the Board of Appeals which resulted in a smaller project, with fewer units, 300 down to 260. Because the project footprint was condensed, we successfully negotiated for the remaining nine (9) acre parcel to become Town property which will be undeveloped space, for trails and recreation, for the next ten (10) years. After that, the Town has the flexibility to do something else with the parcel. The changed plan also insures the Forbes Mansion will remain as part of the development.

These actions will also insure that the approximately 7 acres that were owned by the developer but not part of their original application will not be further developed.

We also obtained concessions from the developer to further reduce the storm water and waste water impacts at the site to ensure that the development does not add to the existing conditions beyond the site. The developer will also make a payment to help make drainage improvements on Bird Road.

Additionally as part of the settlement the Board of Selectmen received an offer to purchase the entire site if Town Meeting approves funding allowing the sale by the end of the year. That question will be presented to Town Meeting in November.

Regarding the Avalon Bay 40B project the Board of Selectmen again determined that a negotiated resolution was in the best interest of the Town of Norwood. The Avalon Bay project cleans up the former Plimpton Press site, an old deteriorating, underused, and contaminated facility. It will be transformed into a productive modern, transitional area between the abutting residential neighborhood and the commercial areas to the north and east of that neighborhood. The negotiated Comprehensive Permit is part of the settlement of the litigation. This permit will be filed with the Housing Appeals Committee for final approval, once that approval is granted it will be filed with the Town Clerk.

The negotiated Avalon project provides fewer housing units than the Plimpton Press 40R project which received support from over 60% of town meeting members in 2014. As part of the negotiation process, the Town was able to reduce the size and density of the project and create a buffer of landscaped area over 50 feet wide in an otherwise developed area. Besides providing a buffer for the immediate neighbors, this green space created from an area that was previously built upon or paved, thus reduces the amount of impervious surfaces, and improves stormwater flow.

The town has also secured a mitigation payment from Avalon of \$198,000.00, and a \$130,000.00 infiltration and inflow payment to the Town.

As a result of our negotiations with Davis Marcus and Avalon Bay, we will not be further challenging the 1.5% issue.

As a result of these 40B resolutions, the Town of Norwood meets and exceeds both the 1.5% and 10% 40B thresholds by comfortable margins. It is important to understand that these new affordable units are affordable in perpetuity. Some of the earlier affordable units in Norwood had expiration dates, and they would come off the Subsidized Housing Inventory. With these actions the 40B door in Norwood is now firmly closed and we are fully in control of our future.