



TOWN OF WINCHESTER

PLANNING BOARD

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71 Mount Vernon Street
Winchester, MA 01890

January 24, 2019

Select Board
Town of Winchester
71 Mt. Vernon Street
Winchester, MA 01890

Re: 735 Main Street redevelopment

The Planning Board reviewed the alternate design for the entering and exiting traffic flow at 735 Main Street at its meeting on January 22nd, 2019. Given that the applicant is seeking modifications to Town property (roads and islands) to benefit their project, the Board feels that a more expansive review is necessary to ensure that the Town's interests are protected and that it benefits from any changes. The Skillings – Lake – Main St. intersection is one of the major gateway intersections in Winchester. Its streetscape and the adjoining structures must therefore undergo heightened design review.

The Board offers the following comments relating to the Special Permit petition and the proposed change to the intersection.

1. Given the purchase price for the property (\$2.8M in 2015) it is highly likely that the residential units would be targeted towards the high-end market. The town desperately needs more affordable housing.
2. The site is an integral part of the gateway intersection and should be an attractive addition to it.
3. The proposed layout of the island and road disrupts traffic flow and has a potential for increased friction between vehicles entering and exiting the site. Left turns going into the site or coming out of the site should not be allowed under the proposed layout.
4. The streetscape should be welcoming to pedestrians; the alternative design is not.
5. The Planning Board recommends that the Zoning Board use MGL c. 44 53G to hire an urban designer to look at the entire intersection, in addition to a traffic engineer to study the traffic flow and the entrance/exit ways of the site.

Diab Jerius, Winchester Planning Board Chair