

Re: Washington & Swanton Streets, Winchester, MA (the "Property")  
Project Eligibility Application of Melanson Development Group, Inc.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Pursuant to 760 CMR 56.04(3), please consider this comment letter of the Winchester Select Board (the "Board") in response to the above-referenced Project Eligibility Application. For the reasons set forth herein, the Board provides its enthusiastic support for the application and looks forward to working with the Applicant and Winchester Zoning Board of Appeals in the ongoing review, permitting and construction of the proposed project.

As noted in the application submitted to the Mass Housing Partnership, the Town is the present owner of the Property. The Property is an underutilized site that is situated in a high visibility area that is close to the Town's center, transportation and other amenities. The Property also has existing environmental issues that have long been a concern. The redevelopment of the Property has long been a high priority for the Board and the Town. Accordingly, the Town exercised its eminent domain authority to acquire the Property and then issued proposals for its redevelopment.

The Board has accepted the Applicant's proposal and has executed a comprehensive Land Disposition Agreement which sets forth the terms for the permitting and redevelopment of the Property, which, when completed will include 16 units of perpetually restricted affordable housing. The Board has also diligently worked with the Applicant on the details of the project proposal. Additionally, the Board has sought the direction of a variety of municipal officials and boards, including but not limited to the Planning Board, the Design Review Committee, the Finance Committee, the Affordable Housing Trust, the School Committee, the Housing Partnership Board and the Town's engineering department. The Town has also held several public information sessions. The robust scrutiny that the proposed project has received has resulted in a proposal that meets all of the Board's goals for the redevelopment of this site.

Notwithstanding the Board's and the Town's staff's diligent efforts to facilitate the proposed development, it is mindful that much work remains to be done. Through numerous public meetings, the Board is acutely aware of concerns raised by area residents on a number of issues, including, but not limited to, traffic and parking impacts. While the Board is confident that any such concerns can be addressed and that appropriate mitigation will be provided, it is respectful of the discretion of the Zoning Board of Appeals in its ultimate review of the Comprehensive Permit Application that will ultimately be submitted. The Board is confident that the ZBA and the Applicant will engage in a thorough, good faith effort to address any concerns raised by area residents.

We hope that this letter is helpful as you conduct your review of the Applicant's Eligibility Application. During such review, please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any information or have any questions.

Sincerely,