

MEMO

DATE: 3/2/2023
TO: WINCHESTER SELECT BOARD
CC: BETH RUDOLPH, TOWN MANAGER
FROM: MARTY JONES, CHAIR, AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
RE: 278-292 WASHINGTON ST. / 12, 16-20 SWANTON ST. PROPOSAL

In response to the February 15 letter from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) to Chair, Rich Mucci, the members of the Affordable Housing Trust have asked that I convey our comments on the Melanson Development Group's proposal for the subject site.

As we noted, during the Select Board's review of the proposal and also at Fall Town Meeting, the Trust is strongly supportive of this proposal. The Trust is pleased to see the plans for development on this site moving forward after the property has been vacant and derelict for many years. The addition of 60 residential rental units will expand the variety of housing resources in Town. Winchester's housing stock is predominantly single-family, owner-occupied dwellings and the need for rental housing is well documented in the Housing Production Plan and other studies of our local housing market.

With 2 units for households below 60% AMI and 14 units for households below 80% AMI, this development will increase Winchester's affordable housing inventory; however, Trust members expressed disappointment that more units are not targeted to lower income families. We would also like to see the two proposed 60% units be a 2BR and a 3 BR unit. This would help address the lack of affordable housing for families in our Town.

Trust members were generally pleased with the building's design and massing and felt it would be a positive addition to the neighborhood. It was suggested that:

- The developer consider ways to make the retail space more visible to vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Washington Street.
- Landscaping along Swanton Street be carefully designed to create a welcoming, residential streetscape.

We look forward to a positive determination of project eligibility by MHP and will continue to express our support for this development as it goes through the local 40B approval process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.