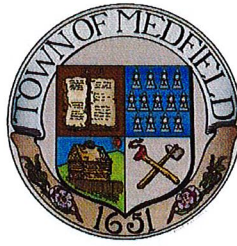


Select Board
Eileen Murphy, Chair
Gustave H. Murby, Clerk
Osler L. Peterson, Member



Kristine Trierweiler
Town Administrator

Frank Gervasio
Assistant Town Administrator

TOWN OF MEDFIELD

Office of the Select Board

Town House • 459 Main Street • Medfield, Massachusetts 02052-0315

Phone: 508-906-3011 • www.town.medfield.net

October 29, 2024

Ms. Kat Miller
Senior Planning and Programs Analyst
Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency
One Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02180-3110

RE: Municipal Comment Letter
Application for Project Eligibility/Determination/Site Approval, 86 Plain Street
Comments Due: October 30, 2024

Dear Ms. Miller,

In response to an application for Project Eligibility Determination/Site Approval (the "Application") submitted to the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency ("MassHousing") by 86 Plain St, LLC for a proposed development of twenty-four (24) units on Plain Street in Medfield pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40B, Sections 20-23 ("Chapter 40B"), the Medfield Select Board submits the following as written comment pursuant to 760 CMR 56.04 (3).

The Select Board appreciates the opportunity to comment on this application having previously attended a site visit on Monday, September 23rd. The correspondence submitted today include comments by Town of Medfield Department Heads as well as other town officials. It is our understanding that the Medfield Affordable Housing Trust as well as Medfield residents have submitted comments directly to MassHousing.

On October 15, 2024 the Select Board voted to authorize the Town Administrator to submit this letter on our behalf.

DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE

Background: Late last year, the applicant engaged in preliminary discussions with both the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission regarding a proposed nine-home residential subdivision. During the Planning Board meetings, the applicant sought several waivers for this project, including:

1. A waiver to extend the road beyond the 500-foot maximum allowed by local regulations.
2. A waiver regarding sight distance requirements.
3. A waiver related to the proximity of the proposed road to Briar Hill Road, as the distance between the two roads is less than the required separation.

Waiver Process and Planning Board's Considerations: In accordance with subdivision regulations, applicants may request multiple waivers during the planning process. The Planning Board has the discretion to grant such waivers if it determines that public health, safety, and welfare will not be compromised. At the time of the preliminary, non-binding discussions, it appeared that the Board was open to considering these waivers, contingent on further review.

The Planning Board also discussed with neighboring property owners that a denial of the proposed nine-lot subdivision could potentially lead to the submission of a Chapter 40B affordable housing project, which would likely result in a higher number of units and, consequently, a greater impact on the site.

Abutters' Opposition: Abutters submitted numerous letters to both the Planning Board and Conservation Commission, expressing their opposition to the project. Their primary concerns were environmental and safety-related, specifically citing the potential adverse impact on wetlands and the noncompliance of the proposed road's intersection with Briar Hill Road. Additionally, they raised concerns about the sightline issues when traveling north on Plain Street, asserting that it fell below the minimum required standards.

Multiple abutters submitted identical letters, signed individually, reiterating these concerns. Copies of these letters are attached for your reference. Some of the feedback received was that the distance between roads was not appropriate. While the roads are fairly close to each other, the mandated distance between roads is somewhat arbitrary and reflects each municipality's developmental preference. Medfield requires all roads be 500 ft away from each other, while other Towns require as much as 1,000 ft and others as little as 250 ft. The applicant also had Howard Stein Hudson (HSH) submit a memo to the Planning Board regarding all traffic-related concerns.

HSH's technical memorandum for 86 Plain Street, dated March 26, 2024, evaluates the sight distance and driveway spacing for a proposed residential subdivision. The report assesses stopping and intersection sight distances using industry standards, finding that while sight distance to the north exceeds the required stopping sight and intersection sight distance, sight distance

improvements to the south are currently below desired intersection sight distance but exceed stopping sight distance. To achieve the desired intersection sight distances recommendations are provided. HSH's recommendations include tree trimming and other visibility improvements to ensure safe access to the site. Additionally, although the proposed driveway is closer to Briar Hill Road than town standards allow, HSH states it still exceeds MassDOT requirements and "is expected to allow for acceptable vehicle paths from a traffic safety perspective." This will need to be peer reviewed if the project moves forward. The HSH memo is attached to this letter.

Please also note that Plain St is a scenic way, and any cutting of trees or removal or alterations of a stone wall within the public right of way will require a Planning Board public hearing.

As to the environmental impacts raised by abutters, this project will go through Conservation Commission's jurisdiction, and require a Notice of Intent (NOI). Regarding Planning and Zoning, I have no major concerns at this time, but will encourage the applicant to follow HSH's recommendations as a starting point to improve site conditions. I will defer the environmental impacts to the Conservation Commission.

As for the other letters received by this Dept, there was a more detailed letter regarding environmental concerns was submitted to Conservation Commission Chair Deborah Bero on March 27, 2024, by abutters Rozlynn and Bobby Desilets. The letter outlines concerns about the potential impact of the proposed development on local woodlands, wetlands, and vernal pools, which provide habitat for various wildlife, including salamanders, frogs, and turtles. Additionally, the letter notes that the development may affect the aesthetic and historical features of Plain Street, and requests that waivers for the project be denied to help preserve the area's natural environment. You can find a copy of this letter attached to this letter.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Medfield Conservation Commission Chair, Deborah Bero, prepared a letter with project feedback, sent on 10/15/24. The Commission noted that a significant portion of the project site consists of resource areas protected by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) and the Town of Medfield Wetlands Bylaw. These areas include an unusually large certified vernal pool and surrounding wetlands, which serve important ecological functions such as flood control and groundwater protection. The Commission emphasized the need for MassHousing to ensure that the applicant accurately identifies these sensitive resources and considers the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development.

The Commission expressed concerns about the project's ability to meet sustainable development criteria, particularly regarding the preservation of open space and protection of ecosystems. The applicant claims the project preserves open space through increased housing density, but the Commission questioned the quality and extent of this preserved space, given the proposed site's

sensitive environmental features. They urged MassHousing to require the applicant to provide more specific evidence of how the project aligns with sustainable development goals.

Additionally, the Commission objected to the applicant's multiple requests for waivers from the Town's Wetlands Protection Bylaw. They requested that the applicant provide detailed information justifying the need for these waivers and demonstrate that any granted waivers would have minimal impact on protected resources.

The Commission also highlighted the importance of addressing these environmental concerns early in the project approval process. They requested MassHousing to give serious consideration to the comments raised, ensuring that the site's resources are protected throughout the project's development. The Commission emphasized the need for detailed information on the project's environmental impacts, particularly given the projected profit margins and the potential for a lower-density development with fewer impacts on the site's sensitive areas.

A copy of the letter prepared by Chair Deborah Bero is attached to this letter.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DPW Director Maurice Goulet submitted comments in writing dated 10/07/24. A copy of the memo is attached to this letter.

- Regarding the plans for the new single-family homes, snow removal areas must be shown to indicate if there is proper snow storage for the new right-of-way drive. If there is not sufficient snow storage areas on the property, plans for removal to a proper off-site location should be indicated.
- A stormwater management plan to control pre and post construction of stormwater must be developed. These plans would need to be submitted and reviewed by the Town's peer review consultant. It is the responsibility of the developer/property management company to ensure that all drainage catch basins within this private development are cleaned at least once per year for stormwater compliance with MassDEP.
- All Public Works permits if applicable (water connections, trench, street opening etc...) shall be obtained prior to the commencement of work for these particular units and development.
- It is understood that the water main, laterals, hydrants and valves within the property of this 40B development are privately owned and maintained by the property management company/HOA.
- The water main should loop around the proposed roadway onto itself as not to create a dead end main. The Public Works Department would need to review and approve the

finished utility design plan. It is strongly recommended that a meeting be held with the Department to discuss utility issues prior to plan approval.

- Plain Street is designated as a scenic road in the Town of Medfield. Any planned tree removal and/or modifications to any existing stonewall should be documented and submitted to the Director of Land Use and Planning Board for review and approval prior to any work commencing.

RESIDENT CONCERNS AND OPPOSITION

The Medfield Select Board has received numerous emails and letters from abutters and residents of the Town of Medfield. It is our understanding those comments have been submitted directly to MassHousing, however, we would like to highlight the concerns that have been raised and ask that you take them into consideration as you review this application.

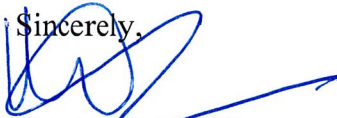
The comments have included but are not limited to the following concerns:

- Safety Concerns
- Natural Resources including wetlands, vernal pools and pond
- Driveway width
- Site Distance on Plain Street
- Increased Traffic
- Scenic Road
- Waiver Requests

APPLICATION DISCREPANCIES

The Medfield Select Board respectfully request that MassHousing review the comments of the Medfield Conservation Commission and the Medfield Affordable Housing Trust that identify discrepancies in the application regarding the location of vernal pools and wetlands on the site. Any discrepancies in the application should be addressed before this project can move forward for consideration.

Sincerely,



Kristine Trierweiler

Town Administrator

March 26, 2024

Chair James Brand
Medfield Town Planning Board
459 Main St.
Medfield, MA 02052

Dear Chair Brand and board members,

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed "sub-division" at 86 Plain St.

Our preliminary opposition stems from two issues.

Environmental and safety.

This proposal would have an adverse impact on wetland characteristics and values.

The location of the proposed road is not only out of compliance with the intersection of the existing Briar Hill Rd, but the site line as your traveling north on Plain St is less than the minimum requirement.

Please be aware that a previous developer proposed a similar sub-division that the Medfield Planning Board denied on May 21, 1996.

The circumstances are principally the same today, and we ask that you deny any waivers necessary for this proposal to move forward as they would not be in the best interest of the Town of Medfield.



Michael & Susan Weiner
86 Plain St.

March 27, 2024

Chairperson Deborah Bero
Medfield Conservation Commission
Town House
459 Main St.
Medfield, MA 02052

Dear Chairperson Bero and Conservation Commission members,

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed subdivision at 86 Plain Street.

Many wooded areas in Medfield are rapidly disappearing due to numerous developments. The woodlands at 86 Plain St. are truly special, as they are home to wetlands and vernal pools that provide critical breeding grounds and shelter for species such as salamanders, frogs, toads, and peepers, and turtles.

As you are likely aware, the property at 86 Plain St. borders conservation land. The existing woodlands at 86 Plain St. serve as shelter and protection for deer, coyotes, and turkeys – animals that are all quickly losing natural land within which to hunt, roam, and shelter.

In addition, Plain Street, which has been designated as a Scenic Road, contains many beautiful and majestic shade trees and historic rock walls which would be adversely impacted by this development. Plain Street itself is a very narrow “country lane” – made even more narrower by snow drifts in the winter, and, during the growing season, cars parked on both sides of the road by gardeners utilizing the town’s community garden plots.

We respectfully ask that you deny any waivers necessary for this proposal to move forward – and in doing so, protect the vital natural landscape of our beloved Town of Medfield.

Thank you,
Rozlynn and Bobby Desilets
94 Plain Street
Medfield, MA



TO:	Town of Medfield	DATE:	March 26, 2024
FROM:	Ian McKinnon, P.E., PTOE, RSP	HSH PROJECT NO.:	2024036.00
SUBJECT:	86 Plain Street, Medfield – Sight Distance and Driveway Spacing Evaluation		

Introduction

As a part of the proposed 86 Plain Street Project, *Howard Stein Hudson (HSH)* has been retained to evaluate Sight Distance and assess driveway spacing in respect to other intersections. As we understand it, the applicant seeks to construct a new residential subdivision with 12–15- single family units. The Site is currently a single-family residence with an existing curb cut on Plain Street. Sight distance was evaluated at the future subdivision driveway entrance, approximately 20 feet from the abutting 82 Plain Street property line. The measurements were taken in accordance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets (Green Book), 2018 and Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), 2023.

Methodology

The sight distance measurements were taken in accordance with industry guidelines (AASHTO and MUTCD) for calculating intersection and stopping sight distance. The evaluated height of object and observer was set at 3.5 feet above the driveway surface which represents the AASHTO Green Book published eye level of a motor vehicle operator.

STOPPING SIGHT DISTANCE

Stopping sight distance (SSD) is defined as the distance needed for drivers to see an object on the roadway ahead and bring their vehicles to safe stop before colliding with the object. The distances are derived for various design speeds based on assumptions for driver reaction time, the braking ability of most vehicles under wet pavement conditions, and the friction provided by most pavement surfaces, assuming good tires. A roadway designed to criteria employs a horizontal and vertical alignment and a cross section that provides at least the minimum stopping sight distance through the entire facility.

Table 6C-2 Stopping Sight Distance as a Function of Speed was used to determine the applicable stopping sight distance for the field measurements. The prima facie speed limit at the location is 30 miles per hour (mph). Table 6C-2 provides a stopping sight distance as a function of speed. According to the table, 200 feet is the required stopping sight distance at 30 mph on a level roadway.



INTERSECTION SIGHT DISTANCE

Intersection sight distance (ISD) was measured at the proposed site driveway on Middlesex Turnpike. Sight distance measurements conform with the latest edition of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO's) manual, A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets (the Green Book). ISD identifies the required sight distance for vehicles turning left from the driveway with a STOP control onto the major road (Middlesex Turnpike). The sight distance needed is for motorists to see oncoming traffic from both directions to determine if they have enough time to complete their left-turn maneuver. ISD factors include the vehicle type, roadway speed, intersection alignment, roadway grade, and number of travel lanes to be crossed.

DATA COLLECTION

Observations were conducted on February 29, 2024, with clear visibility. Sight distance measurements were taken along Plain Street northbound for vehicles taking right turns out of the driveway and Plain Street southbound for both left- and right-turning vehicles. The Site driveway observer was located 15 feet back from the paved travelled way along Plain Street at the closest approximation of the stop-line at the future Site driveway. A target observer stood along Plain Street in the travel lane while the Site driveway observer noted how far out the target observer was visible from a spotting height of 3.5 feet above the existing surface. The distance at which the target observer was spotted was recorded for each direction of Plain Street. Results of the evaluation are shown graphically on **Figure 1** and discussed further below.

Table 6C-2. Stopping Sight Distance as a Function of Speed

Speed*	Distance
20 mph	115 feet
25 mph	155 feet
30 mph	200 feet
35 mph	250 feet
40 mph	305 feet
45 mph	360 feet
50 mph	425 feet
55 mph	495 feet
60 mph	570 feet
65 mph	645 feet
70 mph	730 feet
75 mph	820 feet

PLAIN STREET FACING NORTH

At the westbound driveway approach, the observer was able to see the target at 342 feet. The target was visible and the Plain Street's alignment with a curve northwest is beneficial for visibility. Photos of sight distance evaluations facing North from the Site Driveway and from the point of the view of the driver heading southbound are shown in **Figures 2 and 3**. However, observations were completed in winter when tree coverage is minimal, future tree trimming activities by Eversource in Spring 2024 are expected to improve visibility. Additional tree trimming is recommended to ensure observed sight distance remains.

Figure 1. *Intersection Sight Distance*

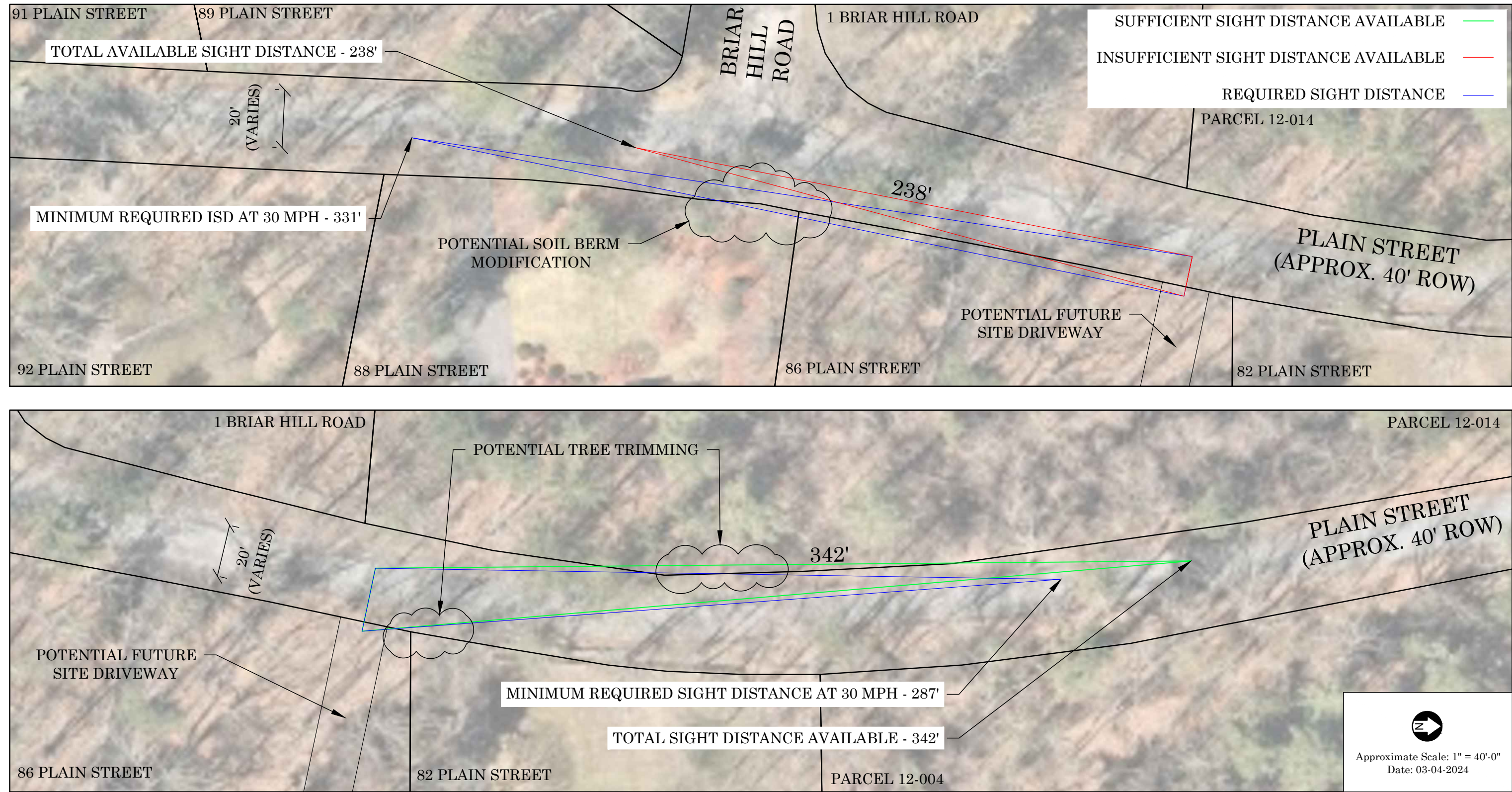




Figure 2 Facing North from Site Driveway



Figure 3. Facing South from Plain Street Southbound

PLAIN STREET FACING SOUTH

At the westbound driveway approach, the observer was able to see the target at 238 feet. The target was visible beyond the Briar Hill Road Driveway. However, existing vegetation and a berm directly south of the future driveway along the east side of Middlesex Street may impact visibility. Photos of



sight distance evaluations facing South from the Site Driveway and from the point of the view of the driver heading northbound are shown in **Figures 4 and 5**.



Figure 4. Facing South from Site Driveway



Figure 5. Facing North from Plain Street Northbound

The required and measured sight distances for the future driveway are presented in **Table 1**. Measured sight distances are conservative, in practice drivers will approach the travelled way much



closer than 15 feet. Measured sight distance to the north exceeds the required stopping sight and intersection sight distance. Sight distance improvements to the south are currently below desired intersection sight distance but exceed stopping sight distance. To achieve the desired intersection sight distances recommendations are provided to achieve extended sight distance. Sight distance triangles demonstrating areas of driver visibility at the proposed driveway approach are shown on Figure 1.

Table 1. 86 Plain Street Driveway Sight Distance Summary

Sight Distance Location	Required Minimum SSD (feet)	Desired ISD (feet)	Measured (feet)
Looking Left (south)	200	Left Turn: 335	238+*
Looking Right (north)	200	Right Turn: 290	342+*

** Measured from future subdivision site driveway*

Signs, landscaping, and other features located within sight triangle areas should be designed, installed, and maintained so as not to exceed 2.5 feet in height. Snow accumulation (windrows) located within the sight triangle areas that exceed 3.5 feet in height or that would otherwise inhibit sight lines should be promptly removed.

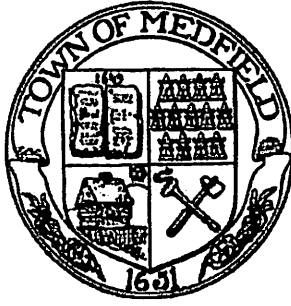
Driveway Spacing

Under Chapter 310 Subdivision of Land, requirements of the Street Design Standards are established for new Subdivision driveways. Within Table 1 Street Design Standards the minimum distance between entering streets not directly opposite each other is set at 225 feet. The Proposed subdivision driveway is approximately 192 feet from the centerline of Briar Hill. MassDOT maintains the Standards for Streets and Highways as adopted by the Federal Highway Administration. Amongst the directives and policies is the Massachusetts' Amendments to the MUTCD. Under Section 11A-12 Locations of Drives in Respect to Intersections, MassDOT requires "Wherever possible, drives are to be set back a minimum of 50 feet with a recommended set-back of 75 feet or more from a street corner, measured between the nearest edge of the driveway and the crossroad edge of pavement." The existing driveway spacing distance regulations in the Medfield Subdivision Standards exceed what MassDOT would allow on a roadway under their jurisdiction. As such sight distance is the engineering metric for the safety of vehicles entering a roadway from driveway. Sight distance and geometrics, such as angle of approach and roadway slope are the sole indicators of safety and potential hazards. Given the proposed driveway's spacing exceeds the MassDOT requirement by nearly fourfold, the driveway is expected to allow for acceptable vehicle paths from a traffic safety perspective.



Conclusion

With an expected low volume of traffic and adequate sight distance for the roadway conditions under improved conditions, the Site subdivision driveway is expected to provide safe and suitable access to Plain Street. The site distance observations were evaluated based on national standard AASHTO guidance for intersection design. Site driveway and roadway improvements are recommended to eliminate any object located within the sight triangle that would obstruct the driver's view of an approaching vehicle should be removed or shorter than 2.5 feet in height (the assumed 15th percentile vehicle height). The Project's Site civil and public way improvements will recommend landscaping modifications and tree trimming as part of the Site design review process to maintain adequate sight distance at the project driveway.



Medfield Conservation Commission

Town Hall

459 Main Street · Medfield, Massachusetts 02052

(508) 906-3028 · Fax (508) 359-6182

October 11, 2024

Eileen Murphy, Chair
Medfield Select Board
Town Hall
459 Main Street
Medfield, MA 02052

RE: MassHousing Site Eligibility Application
Comprehensive Permit Site Approval Application
Homeownership
Winder Estates – Medfield, MA 02052
Application ID: 352

MEDFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION COMMENTS

Dear Ms. Murphy:

The Medfield Conservation Commission submits the following comments in response to its review of the above-referenced application.

1. Existing Site Conditions/Site Information and Site Characteristics and Development Constraints. The Commission draws to your attention the fact that a very substantial portion of the proposed project site consists of resource areas protected by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) and the Town of Medfield Wetlands Bylaw (Town Bylaw). As you know, the WPA and the Town Bylaw are intended to protect multiple resources which, in Medfield, are significant to the following interests: protection of public and private water supply, protection of ground water supply, flood control, storm damage prevention, prevention of pollution, and protection of wildlife. These resources include an unusually large, certified vernal pool providing significant breeding habitat for protected vernal pool species and an adjacent, surrounding, high quality wetlands with upland forest within the 100-Foot Buffer Zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands. As the applicant correctly notes (Existing Conditions/Site Information page 6 of 23) the site is heavily wooded. The applicant incorrectly states, however, that the site does not contain a vernal pool (Site Characteristics and

Development Constraints page 8 of 23). MassHousing should require the applicant to correctly identify at the outset resources at the site including those protected by both the Wetlands Protection Act and those protected by the Town of Medfield Wetlands Bylaw. This site warrants strict scrutiny of the applicant's application and requested waivers to ensure there is a true balancing of competing governmental interests (housing development and protection of resources) leading to a just result in keeping with the Town of Medfield's needs.

2. Sustainable Development Criteria. In keeping with the Commission's charge to protect resources deemed significant to defined WPA and Town Bylaw interests, all of which confer community health, safety and well being benefits as well as they work to mitigate the impacts of climate change, the Commission supports sustainable development criteria, particularly with respect to land and ecosystems. (Sustainable Development Criteria (3) Protect Land and Ecosystems page 21 of 23). Of the eight (8) objectives under this principle (Protect Land and Ecosystems), the Applicant indicates that it meets only one of the eight criteria listed: "Creation or preservation of open space or passive recreational facilities." The applicant states that "[t]he Comprehensive Permit allows for increased density, thus preserving open space." At present, however, there is just one house on the existing fourteen acres, that, as previously mentioned, consists of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW), forested upland in 100-Foot Buffer Zone, and unusually large, certified vernal pool. Any subdivision-type development of the site with multiple housing units, such as that proposed by applicant's Comprehensive Permit Application, necessarily reduces the amount of open space available. The applicant does not provide any detail about the quality of the open space that would remain and does not address the development and human impacts upon that remaining open space and the sensitive resources at the site. If protection of land and ecosystems is, in fact, an important criterion, then the applicant should be required to demonstrate that quality open space is, in fact, preserved and that wetlands resources are protected. Given that this applicant previously proposed a smaller development under the Town's Zoning Bylaw Chapter 300, Article 7 (Open Space Residential Zoning) which would support development without Town waivers, the Applicant should be required in the context of the Comprehensive Permit Application to present meaningful evidence as to why/how this project meets the Sustainable Development Criteria of the MassHousing Application, particularly in the context of a project in Medfield, which is a community that consistently identifies its open spaces and conservation lands as hallmark features of the town contributing not only to its visual appeal but also to the health and wellbeing of its residents.
3. Waivers. The Medfield Conservation Commission objects to the applicant's multiple requests for waivers under the Town's Wetlands Protection Bylaw. The Commission requests the applicant provide relevant and material information demonstrating the need for any requested waiver (in that the applicant would suffer significant economic hardship absent a waiver) and then provide relevant and material information demonstrating that the waiver sought is that which results in the least impact on a protected resource.

The Medfield Conservation Commission acknowledges that it expects the applicant to submit a Notice of Intent for Commission's review of this project in the near future. To the extent that the applicant or MassHousing feels that the Commission's comments should be held until such time as a Notice of Intent is filed, the Commission respectfully disagrees and requests attention to the

concerns raised by the Commission from the very inception of this project through its conclusion. Absent attention from the very beginning of this process, the resources at the site may become an afterthought for other reviewing boards despite the Commission's best efforts to protect them.

The Medfield Conservation Commission requests MassHousing require the applicant to submit at the outset of this process more detailed information about the open space and protected resources at the project site and to submit meaningful evidence in support of the otherwise unsubstantiated conclusions that the project as designed meets the Sustainable Development Criteria identified and that the project warrants waiver of Medfield's Wetlands Bylaw provisions. This applicant projects a seventeen percent profit on the project, which profit is estimated at about three million dollars. The applicant, however, does not provide any analysis of the potential project impacts on the resources at this site given the density of development, and the applicant does not provide any data on costs and projected profit with a lower density development such as the previously proposed Open Space Residential Zoning project.

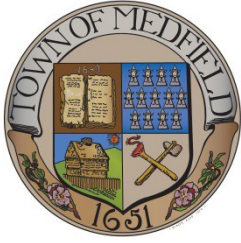
Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments for your consideration

Respectfully,
On behalf of the Medfield Conservation Commission,



Deborah J. Bero, Chair

cc: Medfield Select Board
Medfield Town Administrator
Medfield Land Use Department
Medfield Zoning Board of Appeals
Medfield Planning Board
Medfield Building Commissioner
Medfield Board of Health
Medfield Department of Public Works
Medfield Parks and Recreation
Medfield Police Department
Medfield Fire Department
Robert Hartzel, Medfield Conservation Commission Interim Agent



TOWN OF MEDFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS
Department of Public Works

MAURICE G. GOULET
Director of Public Works

55 North Meadow Road
Medfield, MA 02052
(508) 906-3002
Fax (508) 359-4050
mgoulet@medfield.net

MEMORANDUM

TO: Maria De La Fuente, Director of Land Use and Planning

FROM: Maurice G. Goulet, Director of Public Works

DATE: October 7, 2024

SUBJECT: 40B Development: 86 Plain Street

Public Works Department was asked to provide comments on the proposed 40B development of twenty-four single family homes at 86 Plain Street in Medfield. This Department has the following comments:

- Regarding the plans for the new single family homes, snow removal areas must be shown to indicate if there is proper snow storage for the new right-of-way drive. If there is not sufficient snow storage areas on the property, plans for removal to a proper off-site location should be indicated.
- A stormwater management plan to control pre and post construction of stormwater must be developed. These plans would need to be submitted and reviewed by the Town's peer review consultant. It is the responsibility of the developer/property management company to ensure that all drainage catch basins within this private development are cleaned at least once per year for stormwater compliance with MassDEP.
- All Public Works permits if applicable (water connections, trench, street opening etc...) shall be obtained prior to the commencement of work for these particular units and development.
- It is understood that the water main, laterals, hydrants and valves within the property of this 40B development are privately owned and maintained by the property management company/HOA.
- The water main should loop around the proposed roadway onto itself as not to create a dead end main. The Public Works Department would need to review and approve the finished utility design plan. It is strongly recommended that a meeting be held with the Department to discuss utility issues prior to plan approval.
- Plain Street is designated as a scenic road in the Town of Medfield. Any planned tree removal and/or modifications to any existing stonewall should be documented and submitted to the Director of Land Use and Planning Board for review and approval prior to any work commencing.



TOWN OF MEDFIELD
DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE AND PLANNING
159 NORTH MAIN STREET
MEDFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 02052
TEL. (508) 906-3027 FAX (508) 359-6182

MARIA DE LA FUENTE, DIRECTOR OF LAND USE
CARA WISE, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

October 24, 2024

Kat Miller
Senior Planning and Programs Analyst
Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency
One Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108-3110

Re: Application for Project Eligibility Determination/Site Approval 86 Plain St
Municipal Comment Letter; Due October 30, 2024

Dear Ms. Miller:

In response to an application for Project Eligibility Determination/Site Approval (the "Application") submitted to the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency ("MassHousing") by 86 Plain St, LLC for a proposed development of twenty-four (24) units on Plain Street in Medfield pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40B, Sections 20-23 ("Chapter 40B"), the Medfield Affordable Housing Trust (the "Trust") submits the following as written comment pursuant to 760 CMR 56.04 (3). It is our understanding that the Medfield Select Board will be submitting their own comment letter, as well as some Medfield residents.

On October 17, 2024 the Trust convened to discuss the 86 Plain Street Chapter 40B development proposal. We are writing to formally present several points for your consideration as the project moves forward:

- **Wetlands and Vernal Pools:** The Trust concurs with the Medfield Conservation Commission's assessment of discrepancies in the application. The Application indicates minimal wetlands and no vernal pools on-site; however, it has been confirmed that there are significant wetlands and a large, certified vernal pool present on the property, resource areas protected by both the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Town of Medfield Wetlands Bylaw. These natural features must be adequately addressed in the applicant's proposal; the Application should accurately identify these sensitive resources and consider the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development to ensure compliance with existing environmental protections.
- **Waivers and Safety Concerns:** The number of waivers requested by the applicant is substantial, notably the waiver concerning the minimum distance between roads.

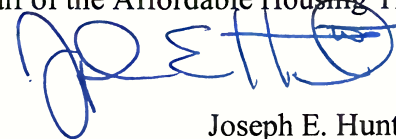
Specifically, Briar Hill Road is located too close (within 500 feet) to the proposed entryway for this development, raising significant safety concerns. In addition, certain sight distances along Plain Street are currently below desired intersection sight distance requirements. The Trust does not believe the current design meets the safety standards expected for such a development.

- **Impact on Scenic and Rural Area:** This project is located in a rural, scenic part of Medfield – Plain Street is designated as a scenic road in the Town of Medfield – with many public shade trees and an extensive stone wall that contribute to the town's character. The Trust is particularly concerned that sight lines along the road are insufficient for safe travel as noted above, especially with the anticipated increase in traffic from 24 new homes. Tree trimming and other visibility improvements will need to be undertaken to ensure safe access to the site; however, as a scenic road, any cutting of trees or removal or alterations of the existing stone wall within the public right of way will require a public hearing of the Medfield Planning Board. Any development in this area must prioritize maintaining the safety and character of this important public space.
- **Abutter Concerns:** Abutters who attended the Trust's October 17 meeting expressed serious concerns about the impact of the project on nearby vernal pools and the small pond located on-site. Due to the proximity of these natural resources, we understand that the proposed road for the development cannot be further widened, leaving a narrow driveway as the only means of access and egress. This presents a significant safety issue, especially in the event of an emergency.
- **Traffic Impact:** Abutters and the Trust are also worried about the volume of traffic that would result from the construction of 24 homes, particularly given the narrow access point and sight line concerns. The Trust believes this could lead to congestion and increased safety risks on this already challenging scenic roadway.

While the Trust fully supports the creation of affordable housing to help Medfield meet its affordability goals, there are critical issues with the current Application that need to be addressed before the applicant moves forward with a Comprehensive Permit. We urge the applicant to reconsider aspects of the design to ensure that environmental, safety, and abutter concerns are properly considered and managed.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure that any development in Medfield meets both the needs of our community and the appropriate regulatory standards.

Respectfully,
On behalf of the Affordable Housing Trust



Joseph E. Hunt IV
Affordable Housing Trust Liaison