

Lauren Gibbs remarks for 6-17 2009 Ordinance Committee Meeting on proposed Lesley re-zoning

I am Lauren Gibbs at 3 Newport Road Apt 1. 20 other unit owners on Newport Road representing 22 units who share a concern about the adequacy of Lesley's planning for parking are listed below.

I see you are allowing the possibility of a parking structure, with caveats, on the University lot and I think that is wise of you to give yourselves wiggle room on that point, and I am glad to see construction mitigation as well.

But pushing the traffic study off until the special permitting process is still a problem and I support Councillor Kelley's remarks on the dangers of passing control of parking decisions to other bodies than yourselves. Beth Rubinstein's description of the Traffic Study did not include a parking analysis and I hope that that was just an oversight, but I will study Section 19.20-24 to see [it seems to have been just an oversight].

Why is not dealing with the parking issues now a problem? Lesley has not done the planning that encompasses either current parking usage (since NEITHER of its (two) 2008-2009 parking studies were performed on days that classes were in session), nor the long-range plans of the University (i.e. the FULL AIB move - which has NOT yet occurred), the 39% growth in enrollment by 2018, transfer of day institutes with 1,400 attendees to University Hall, and 500 pre-College students). So you do not operate with the information you need to evaluate the project and its impact on the neighborhood.

I urge you to get some of this information. I have asked Brad Gerratt, Deputy Director of Cambridge's Traffic, Parking and Transportation for one small piece of the data you need for an accurate picture of parking demand - I requested the number of Lesley dorm students with parking permits. Lesley says no dorm students have permits. It cost me \$17.78 and is taking the Parking Department one hour but they are doing that work Friday morning so I'll have that info then. (And I'd appreciate being reimbursed, if you are so inclined!) For less than \$500 and about 25 hours work - way beyond my modest budget - you could ask for Lesley to pay for research on the names and addresses of all Lesley community members (Lesley and AIB faculty, staff, students, and adjuncts) if they would provide such a list so that the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department can identify the number of Lesley community members who have Cambridge permits and therefore can park legally on neighboring streets. And you could ask Lesley to pay for comparable research by the Boston Parking Department to match AIB faculty, staff, students and adjunct names and addresses with Boston permits - that would be a pretty good estimate of the number of AIB folk who might be interested in driving to Porter Square. Then you don't have to rely on guesstimates based on inconsistent responses to surveys that do or do not include the whole Lesley community (since BOTH Lesley's prior 2008-2009 parking studies excluded part-timers who are most likely to drive, since they are most likely to have multiple jobs and therefore multiple workplace locations).

Why is this important? If there are few in number who are going to park on our streets, that could be fine. But if there are a significant number - and much more than expected - then it could be a real nightmare, not only for the immediate neighbors, but also for the larger neighborhood and for other commuters since the height of Lesley's student contact hours is also the height of the afternoon commute. For instance, if Lesley says there are no dorm students who have car permits and there are really 5, ok. However, if Lesley says there are no dorm students who have car permits and there are 50, then that could be a problem. Not to mention potential dorm entrepreneurs who might sell permits to interested parties...

Doing some brainstorming, we would like to ask that the Zoning language (or the Memorandum of Understanding - but I am in agreement with Councillor Kelley that that is a MUCH weaker vehicle) include description of some specific vehicles to ameliorate parking issues that neighbors will face.

Here are some ideas - I realize that some of these ideas conflict with others of these ideas and some are more appealing than others - this is just brainstorming:

(RAN OUT OF TIME HERE, PLEASE CONTINUE TO READ FOR SPECIFIC IDEAS)

- Make signage and special Porter Campus area stickers so that only Cambridge AREA residents with those special Porter Campus area stickers can park on specific neighboring streets during afternoon and evening hours - ie NOT all Cambridge residents with stickers can park on these streets during these hours - only Porter Campus area residents - and monitor this. THIS IS REALLY THE BEST SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, NOT ONEROUS TO ADMINISTER AND A VERY REALISTIC SOLUTION WHICH DOES NOT REQUIRE ENFORCEMENT BY LESLEY i.e. the enforcement of which is under City of Cambridge control. And we think it is reasonable to ask Lesley to commit to paying the City of Cambridge for the additional administrative cost to operate such a special sticker system.
- Allowing Porter Campus area neighbors on very clearly defined streets to park for free in Lesley lots - especially in those busy afternoon and evening hours.
- Require Lesley to provide free parking to Lesley community members who are Cambridge residents to reduce motivation to avoid Lesley parking fees.
- Require Lesley to devise financial or other penalties for Cambridge residents who park on local streets.

Regardless of the way you choose to reduce the parking issues for neighbors - and you really need to do so - we think the City of Cambridge should commit to language in the Zoning (or, again, the Memorandum of Understanding if necessary, even though it is much the weaker vehicle) to increasing monitoring/ticketing of parking in the area - especially of non-resident parkers on neighboring streets during the afternoon and evening hours (4 pm on?). And it would make sense for the City to require Lesley to pay for such additional parking monitoring required in the area (especially if it requires overtime since the hours most in conflict are outside of regular City Parking Monitoring shifts).

And, also regardless of the way you choose to reduce the parking issues for neighbors - and, again, you really need to do so - we think the City of Cambridge should commit to language in the Zoning (or, again, the Memorandum of Understanding if necessary, even though it is much the weaker vehicle) to providing subsidized T passes to all Lesley & AIB employees - including adjuncts - and Lesley & AIB students who require them for commuting to and from Lesley. But it is not enough to rely on T services, when the T is planning cutbacks in service.

Again, what we think is best is for you to delay support for this Zoning proposal until proper and comprehensive long-term planning has been accomplished and for you to evaluate development plans to handle the move of the AIB to Porter Square separately from Lesley's future development plans for other Lesley lots. Give them bonus FAR outright, if you must, but do not also give them a blank check on other lots, which is what the Overlay Zone, as currently constituted would entail. And require them to provide the parking that City planners have decided is needed - in other words, if City zoning regulations say that a 100,000 sf educational institutional building will use

100 parking spaces, then don't pretend that 0 will do, and don't allow Lesley to only provide replacement parking 10-20 years from now when it is needed on Day One when new buildings are put into use.

We think that, if Lesley cannot afford to meet the needs of the City, then maybe Lesley should do less on the site.

Thank you,

Lauren Gibbs, 3 Newport Road #1, 02140

Dorothy Bourget, 1783 Mass Ave #8
Mary Christie, 5 Newport Road #6
Sara Dilliplane & Adam Looker, 1783 Mass Ave #3
Roby M. Fader & Donal O'Leary, 8 Newport Road #B
Martha Hass, 4 Newport Road #7
Joan Hutchinson, 6 Newport Road #7 and #8
Larry Minear, 3 Newport Road #7
Pat Rieker, 3 Newport Road #2
Jonathan Rowe, 1 Newport Road #1
Burt & Rhoda Unger, 3 Newport Road #4
Michiko Vigden, 8 Newport Road #1

Amery Burnham, 1 Newport Road #6
Margaret E. Curtis Jr., 1775 Mass Ave #8
Nora Etkin, 1783 Mass Ave #7
Joanna Handlin & Bob Smith, 3 Newport Road #6
Boazhang He, 5 Newport Road #7
Eduardo Lozano, 3 Newport Road #3
Janet Reckman, 4 Newport Road #1 and #3
Rebecca Rivera, 1 Newport Road #2
Elizabeth Taylor-Mead, 2 Newport Road #6