

Paul Goldstein, RTM

On August 9 the Planning and Zoning Commission granted Sig Con Associates a zoning change to allow Commercial Multi-Family Residential use on 61 and 61A Myrock Avenue. The developer plans to build 208 luxury apartments next to the 98 apartments currently under construction at 384-394 Willetts Avenue. Planning & Zoning stipulated that a 3rd party traffic study on Willetts Avenue traffic be done for the next site hearing. Traffic backups at the Route 1 intersection are a serious issue during rush hour. Ten residents from Myrock Avenue voiced their concerns at the August 9 meeting with regards to a number of other issues related to the zoning change. The RTM is encouraged to take part in the discussion of what should be built on 61 and 61A Myrock Avenue for a number of reasons.

- 1) Traffic is already a major problem with cars and trucks backing up to the New London line. The developer talked about building an additional stacking lane on Willetts Avenue at the Route 1 traffic light. The state is currently putting in new traffic lights at the intersection. The viability of adding a second lane is unknown. *Adding 98 plus 208 apartments will make the traffic worse.*
- 2) The developer requested the ability to have commercial development on the property but has no current plans. He did request use of Myrock Avenue for commercial traffic to exit 61 Myrock Avenue. Myrock Avenue is a substandard road for a subdivision (less than 30 feet wide with parking on one side). It currently supports significant traffic from Eversource cars and trucks. The Myrock Avenue line of sight at Willetts Avenue is less than the state standard and turning left to head towards Route 1 is dangerous because vehicles coming up the hill can not be seen until they are less than 200 feet away. *Additional commercial traffic from any commercial property at 61 Myrock Avenue will only make it more difficult to exit Myrock Avenue safely. We need to convince P&Z to also address the traffic issues on Myrock Avenue. It is most important to ensure the road from Lots 61 and 61A is blocked so that additional traffic from any new development on these two properties does not have access to Myrock Avenue. A proper planning decision that is fair to Myrock residents, Eversource vehicles and new commercial vehicles should require a new road through 61 Myrock to accommodate all CL&P and 61 Myrock Commercial traffic exiting directly to Willetts Avenue with proper sightlines.*
- 3) Planning and Zoning prepared a new Housing Plan on March 10, 2022. In the plan a call for 449 additional affordable housing units was made. The plan's survey shows that Veteran and Senior Housing is at the very top of the list for what Waterford residents want (see page 20). 3-4 story apartment buildings are number 12 on the list, the very bottom. The 98-unit development advertises 10 affordable housing units. This does not help Waterford achieve the 10% number called out in the new Housing Plan. Waterford's % of affordable housing is only 5.6%. *P&Z should encourage the developer to build single level Veteran and Senior housing not 3 story luxury apartments. A less dense development will ease the traffic burden particularly for folks who no longer have to drive during rush hour.*
- 4) Waterford Woods is advertised as being walkable. "Waterford Woods has 2 shopping centers within 0.4 miles, which is about a 7-minute walk." Veterans and Seniors are more likely to be walking than luxury apartment holders. There are two other Senior Housing units within walking distance of Waterford Woods so it makes sense to add more senior housing to encourage other businesses to locate nearby to support the senior residents.

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