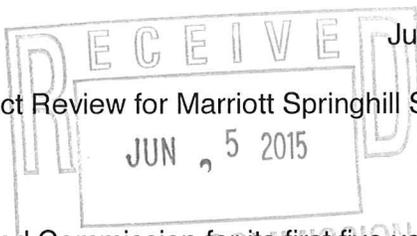


To: The Cape Cod Commission

June 13, 2015

Re: Limited Development of Regional Impact Review for Marriott Springhill Suites at 556 Main Street Falmouth



I had the privilege of serving on the Cape Cod Commission for its first five years. At that time there was no process for a limited DRI. And, I remember thinking that for some projects it would have been a good idea if we could have limited the scope of the review only to the significant impacts.

I am not familiar with all the details of the limited DRI review process, but I am fearful that it is not being successfully applied in Falmouth. Not considering traffic/transportation as a significant issue is a mistake, and I am wondering if there had been a site visit prior to deciding the scope of the DRI review. (At the first hearing it appeared to the audience that all the information had been supplied by the applicant.) Such a visit would have made obvious the limited present use on the site (which makes the traffic estimates taken from the traffic engineers manual seem ridiculous) and the site's distinct attributes and how they play into the importance of both scale and design of the structures as well as traffic flow.

As many are pointing out the Marriott site is closely backed up by a quiet and most healthy residential neighborhood. The frontage is on Falmouth, Main Street, which is totally clogged with traffic in the summer and very busy at all seasons. One maneuvers on Main Street by courtesy - a car will stop for you and let you turn into or off the street. Going through the site is a right-of-way leading to Lantern Lane and the quiet residential neighborhood. Lantern Lane leads directly to Dillingham Avenue which serves as a convenient bypass of Route 28 for anyone driving either east or west from the proposed Marriott site. How many hotel guests and delivery vehicles will be tempted to use this bypass rather than venture onto clogged Main Street? Limited DRI review has not even considered any of these ramifications because the inflated current use traffic generation figure resulted in the finding that the anticipated Marriott traffic increase would not be significant. My question is: **Is the limited DRI process significantly flexible so that the Commissioners can correct a mistake and go back and put transportation/traffic issues back in the limited DRI review?**

Few parcels in the redevelopment district on Main Street directly back up onto residential neighborhoods such as the Lantern Lane neighborhood, and for those that do, there is no direct convenient back access through the residential areas. The one exception is the property of St. Patrick's Church which has a back access to Queen Street. This access is heavily used when church or special events are ending, and there is a major impact on the neighborhood.

Another distinct feature of the site is that the residential houses are in very close proximity. A structure as large and tall as the proposed Marriott no matter what the exterior design will loom over the nearest houses. Part of the reason is that the site is basically too small for such a large hotel and as a result underground parking is proposed - requiring a taller building than would otherwise be necessary to achieve Marriott's goal of a 110 room establishment. Essential activities for the hotel, such as deliveries, I assume will take place at the rear of the building - further disrupting the harmony of the residential neighborhood. While under DRI review regulations such disruption might not come under the "umbrella" of community character, **traffic levels and patterns most certainly affect community character.**

I sympathize that at times those in the audience were less than polite listeners. Part of that was that they had the impression that the sub-committee and even the staff were not truly familiar with the site and just seemed to be parroting back the information provided by the applicant. I hope in the intervening month before the continued hearing, you have been able to see the site and gain some increased and informed perspective on the difficulties it presents.

Falmouth has not had many Cape Cod Commission regulatory projects; **I would hope that by the time you have reached your decision on the Marriott application, the residents of Falmouth will have confidence that you have made your decision with the best information available and with true knowledge of the site.**

I have been and remain a strong supporter of the Cape Cod Commission. I know that the Commission has been trying to streamline the review process. In doing so, however, I trust the members and staff are still willing to use their authority wisely and not be bound up by technical bulletins and regulatory procedures that might not be a good fit with local conditions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria H. Lowell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Victoria H. Lowell
188 Sippewissett Road
Falmouth, MA 02540