



Bedford Housing Partnership

Anna Dolmatch
Deputy Associate Director
Department of Housing and Community Development
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114
anna.dolmatch@state.ma.us

September 13, 2021

Dear Ms. Dolmatch,

On behalf of the Bedford Housing Partnership, I am writing to endorse the Village at Merriam Farm Local Initiative Project (LIP) Application for 330 South Road by 330 South Road Realty Trust (Project Revision dated August 7, 2021). The project will include the following:

- 20 rental units including 16 market rate units and 4 (20%) affordable units.
- The 4 affordable units will be available to families earning 50% or less of area median income.
- Three historic structures on the site will be renovated for residential uses and there will be one 2-unit town house constructed.

The Bedford Housing Partnership met with the developer of the LIP over the course of two years and was able to provide guidance and input that created a significantly better and more livable project plan than was originally envisioned. The Bedford Housing Partnership strongly encouraged the developer to include larger unit sizes for the affordable units than was first proposed so that affordable-rate and market-rate households will share the same physical, social, economic and mental health benefits created by sufficient living space. The Bedford Housing Partnership also strongly advocated for deeper affordability of rents. The Bedford Housing Partnership also worked closely with the developer to include indoor storage for exercise equipment and to address community concerns about size, scale, density and traffic so the development would be at a scale that is more in keeping with the neighborhood. The Bedford Housing Partnership has also been encouraging roof solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations keeping the cost of utilities and transportation as well as the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report in mind.

As a result of these negotiations, the developer increased the sizes of the affordable designated units to make them more livable. The square footages of affordable-designated units now range from 760 square feet for a 1-bedroom unit to 1,200 square feet for a 3-bedroom unit. The developer also reduced the overall height and density of the planned new building. In response to Bedford Housing Partnership's serious concerns about affordability at 80% AMI, the developer proposed changing the affordability mix from 25% affordable units at 80% AMI to 20% affordable units at 50% AMI. This change in the affordable calculation will create more opportunities for low to moderate-income families to live in Bedford which are much needed. As the project develops, we will continue to encourage refinements in the plan to benefit residents and the environment such as secure, indoor storage for exercise equipment (bikes, kayaks), electrical vehicle charging stations, and solar panels specifically targeted to reduce energy costs for the affordable unit residents as well as help the environment.

We believe there are benefits in working with MCO Housing Services LLC for the marketing and initial lottery and lease-up of the unit to ensure compliance with guidelines and regulations. The Town and the Bedford Housing Partnership will continue to work with the developer to ensure that the (to be selected) property manager is capable of ongoing compliance.

We believe working together, we are able to create a much more livable and affordable development that is forward-looking and thoughtful of which our community can be proud. We enthusiastically support this version of the Village at Merriam Farm Local Initiative Project Application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christina H. Wilgren". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Christina H. Wilgren

Chair, Bedford Housing Partnership

CC: Bedford Select Board