

Mr. Rick Chellman, Chair
Portsmouth NH Planning Board
1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801

November 16, 2023

Dear Mr. Chellman:

The members of the Sea Star Cove Homeowners Association, which abuts the property at 1155 Sagamore Avenue, would like to express concerns about development plans which were discussed at the November 7 Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

For perspective, we are supportive of the development of housing which is taking place along Sagamore Avenue. We worked cooperatively with developers of the 1169 Sagamore property relative to stormwater management, landscaping, and the location of houses. We provided an easement to the owner of 1155 Sagamore for a sewer which runs across our property and under our private street, connecting to Portsmouth's major sewer project. We welcome this property's redevelopment, ideally in conjunction with the adjacent property to the north.

We are concerned about the scale and location of the four-unit building being proposed.

- We have not seen any official rendering of what is proposed to be built.
- The drawings shared with us and discussed at TAC do not define the building height and offer differing interpretations. The Site Plan (Sheet 2) shows a "proposed 4 story" building, with the Zoning Data showing "to conform" with either a 40-foot sloped roof or a 30-foot flat roof. Discussion at the October 10 TAC work session questioned the roof design without resolution. Three stories would be consistent with what is being done elsewhere on Sagamore Avenue.
- The Site Plan "Zoning Data" shows a Side Setback of 21 feet with a 10 foot requirement. The Site Plan page reflects about an 11-foot setback, but the Landscape Plan shows patios extending as close as 2 feet from our property line, separated by walls which are attached to the building and extend to within the same 2 feet of our lot line. Further, a rendering of a potential four-plex house plan provided to us by the developer in April showed balconies off the rear of the homes, which would intrude into a 10-foot setback.

The size of the lot is unclear. An earlier survey of the property - by the same engineer proposing this development - indicated that the lot was 29,672 square feet; the current applicant approached us in April about buying 328 square feet to enable the building of four units, and we declined. This application claims 30,264 square feet. An unbiased third-party opinion is needed.

We have a concern about the ability of the applicant to complete the project. Build America, is shown in February at [nhcompanyregistry.com](https://www.nhcompanyregistry.com) (https://www.nhcompanyregistry.com/company?utm_source=build-america-of-nh-llc) as being in "administrative dissolution".

At a minimum, we would like a significant fence to separate the new building from our property. Significant issues with large, aggressive dogs intimidating our members and their dogs caused the current owner to install a solid 6-foot fence. We installed and maintain an attractive entry way to our development which will be located a few feet from the new development's patios.

There is an apparent assumption that the new development will use the fire hydrant which we installed and maintain on our property. We would like clarification of rights and responsibilities.

More broadly, we would ask for a review of traffic controls on Sagamore Avenue as this becomes more of a residential neighborhood. The 35-mph speed limit is too high, and a flashing yellow light would be helpful.

Thank you.

Joseph Harding, President
Sea Star Cove Condominium Association
1163 Sagamore Avenue; Unit 60
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Cc Peter Stith, Planning Manager
1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Attachment: Letter of April 29, 2023, from Thomas Frangos to Joe Harding

From: [Thomas Frangos](#)
To: [Joe Harding](#)
Subject: Proposed plan for 1155 Sagamore ave.
Date: Saturday, April 29, 2023 6:09:00 PM
Attachments: [1155 Sagamore Ave Survey.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from thomasfrangos@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello Joe,

Thanks for returning my call today. Please see an attached approximate townhouse architectural rendering in the link for a 4-plex (shows 5 units but it would be only 4 units) and the prior engineer's existing site plan for 1155 Sagamore Ave.

I am in negotiations with the Seller to buy his property, demolish the existing structure, get rid of the septic system, and construct a 4-unit townhouse. Minimum required area for 4 units in this zone is 30,000 sf. The Portsmouth assessor's plan shows .69 acres, or 30,056 sf, which the field surveying engineer says is not correct. The actual area is 29,672 sf, about 328 square feet short of allowing the 4th unit.

Might your association be interested in conveying that approximately 328 square feet to this lot, at a price to be determined, to allow me to satisfy the Seller and make this eyesore disappear? Three units are not financially viable given the Seller's demands.

Additional area is not physically necessary to build the proposed building, parking, or landscape features, but only a zoning regulation requirement. It potentially could be a long while before he changes his mind, if at all, but I'm not at risk for any loss if I do not proceed.

<https://www.architecturaldesigns.com/house-plans/modern-4-plex-house-plan-with-match-2-bed-and-2-5-bath-units-666129raf>

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Thomas Frangos
(617) 877-6711