

From: [Ben St. Jean](#)
To: [Dwayne Johnson](#)
Subject: 77 New Castle Avenue - Conditional Use Permit
Date: Sunday, August 11, 2024 10:55:51 AM
Importance: High

To the Planning Board,

These remarks are concerning a request by Elisabeth Blaisdell, Sheppard Houston and Charles Stewart (Owners) for a property located at 77 New Castle Avenue.

The request is to convert an existing accessory structure into a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit that does not conform with the dimensional requirements of the Ordinance.

We are abutting backyard neighbors to this property at 54 Humphreys Court.

Although we are very much in favor of ADUs and the benefit they can bring to our city, we do not favor this particular application. Our main reasons are:

- The density of our neighborhood is already very high. Adding more people to such a small lot and neighborhood would adversely impact the already crowded feel of the neighborhood.
- As the structure is right on the property line separating our lots, we feel this would be an impingement on our privacy. (Please see attached picture)
- This structure was expanded some years ago to include a shed and office. At the time, we were not in favor of the two story building the owners wanted to erect. We did agree to a shed and office although we were reluctant. Now, the owners want to make this a permanent living space as opposed to an office and shed. The original intended use seemed to be reasonable. Expanding the use to permanent housing is not reasonable to us.
- As we see the development of this structure over time, we also see changes in intended use. The original structure was a storage facility. Basically, a large shed. It was expanded to act as a shed and office. Now, the request is to make it a permanent living space. We are aware that this property has been used as an Airbnb in the past. Could this be a path to making this ADU an Airbnb in the future? We believe this is a reasonable question.
- Lastly, what would be the impact on parking? The driveway already has several vehicles as well as a RV.

We ask the Planning Board to dismiss this request as we believe this small property, currently housing a family of four is at a reasonable and proper density. To increase it for any reason would create a negative impact to all abutting neighbors.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in this matter.

Ben & Andres St. Jean
54 Humphreys Court



Ben

Ben St. Jean
e- benstjean@outlook.com
m- (603)205-5772

August 15, 2024

Dear Planning Board:

Our family resides at 244 Wibird St. and, as direct abutters, we are writing this letter in opposition of the application for a conditional use permit for the construction of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) located at 252 Wibird St.

Section 10.814.624 of the ordinance addressing ADUs requires the Planning Board to make a specific finding that the proposed ADU “will maintain a ***compatible relationship*** with the character of adjacent and neighborhood properties in terms of location, design, and off-street parking layout, and will ***not significantly reduce the privacy*** of adjacent properties.”

252 Wibird St. is accessed via a shared driveway easement over our property. The easement was created in 1904 and, given the relatively small size of the lot it services, it contemplates use for access to 252 Wibird as a single-family dwelling. Using the driveway to access an additional household will materially exceed the scope of the easement and is an unreasonable expansion of its use. The easement’s capacity is full with the two existing residences that share the space. Placing a third residence at 252 Wibird would overburden it physically and increase congestion. This congestion will be particularly acute during the winter months when the driveway will need to accommodate up to 6 vehicles in the context of snow and ice removal. **We do not accept this arrangement as a compatible relationship with our property with respect to location and off-street parking layout.**

The proposed construction plan contains 3 windows facing East which will have direct sight into a fenced garden and sitting area in the front/Southside our garage structure. See included images. In contrast, please note that the existing single-family dwelling, while closer, is oriented away from our property. Privacy is further reduced by the increase of ingress and egress from the additional residents/tenants passing in close proximity to the side of our household living space. **This arrangement will significantly reduce our privacy.**

Furthermore, Section 10. 814.622 requires the Board to make a specific finding that “the exterior design is architecturally consistent with or similar in appearance to the existing principal dwelling on the lot.” The application does not contain any renderings or elevations of the principal dwelling. There is nothing in the application upon which the Board can base this required finding.

For the reasons above we vigorously oppose the approval of this application.

Respectfully,

David Gray, MD
Melody Gray

244 Wibird St.
Portsmouth, NH 03801





From: [Elizabeth Lieberman](#)
To: [Planning - Info - Shr](#)
Subject: Abutter Notice - 252 Wibird
Date: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:50:56 AM

Good morning. Please add this to the August 15 Planning Board Meeting record. I am unable to attend. Please acknowledge receipt of this email.

Hello my name is Jay Lieberman. We live at 269 Wibird in Portsmouth. There is currently a massive street project going on at Orchard and Wibird Streets. Residential street parking has been extremely limited for months. I am concerned that work at 252 Wibird will make this problem even worse. I kindly ask the homeowners to tell their contractors to not park on Wibird Street between Orchard and Hawthorne Street. There is plenty of parking on Wibird Street closer to Lincoln Avenue.

Thank you.

Jay Lieberman

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From: [Mark O'Leary](#)
To: [Planning - Info - Shr](#)
Subject: Planning Board 8/15 meeting comments re 252 Wibird DADU
Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 9:31:42 AM

My name is Mark O'Leary and I live at 225 Wibird St, diagonally across the street from 252 Wibird. I am writing to express my support for the request of Matt Ball and Andrea Fershtam for the DADU conversion. Adding an ADU will not change the character of the neighborhood which is currently a mix of single and multi-unit lots. In fact, by facilitating multi-generational living situations, ADUs positively enhance the neighborhood.

I encourage the Planning Board to grant this request.

Thank you,
Mark O'Leary
225 Wibird St

From: [Jonathan Sandberg](#)
To: [Planning - Info - Shr](#)
Subject: Housing Development at Christchurch
Date: Thursday, August 15, 2024 7:44:29 AM

Dear Planning Board,

I am writing to strongly support approval of the proposed housing development at the site of the Episcopal Church on Lafayette Road. Portsmouth is in desperate need of affordable housing units and this project represents a major step in the right direction. Not only will this make it possible for more of the hard working people who contribute enormously to our community to also live in it, but also provides a home for HAVEN which is such an important agency that works with some of our most vulnerable population.

Furthermore, it's really hard to believe there's anything anybody could possibly find objectionable to it. The site doesn't actually abut any other residents and it's hard to imagine that it would add even a fraction of the traffic congestion that the McDonalds Drivethru located just across the road does to Lafayette.

So please approve this project without any delay.

Thank you,
Jonathan Sandberg
160 Bartlett Street
Portsmouth

Sent from my iPad

From: [Kimberli Klenia](#)
To: [Kimberli Klenia](#)
Subject: FW: Webform submission from: Planning Board > Body Blocks
Date: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:13:25 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: City of Portsmouth <webmaster@cityofportsmouth.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 7:38 PM
To: chellman@TNDEngineering.com; Peter L. Britz <plbritz@cityofportsmouth.com>; Peter M. Stith <pmstith@cityofportsmouth.com>
Subject: Webform submission from: Planning Board > Body Blocks

Submitted on Tue, 08/13/2024 - 19:37

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Name
Ethan Underhill

Email
ethan.underhill93@gmail.com <<mailto:ethan.underhill93@gmail.com>>

Subject
Christ Church Parish proposal

Message
To the Planning Board:

Thank you for frontloading this Thursday's meeting with the site plan review of the Christ Church Parish proposal. I write in support of this project and the Conditional Use permits the Christ Church Parish seeks in its efforts to add these much-needed workforce and transitional housing units to our community.

In a state where a plurality just told UNH that housing is its top issue and where nearly 25% of homes cost over \$1 million; in a city with 1% of land available for new development, where 55% of people can't afford a home in town, Portsmouth should seize every responsible opportunity it has to build cost-effective units for the people who make its economy hum.

What great fortune that the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire, HAVEN, and the Portsmouth Housing Authority understood this well enough to come together for such a unique collaboration that not only yields 44 new workforce housing units and 7 transitional housing units, but also allows the Little Blessings Daycare Center to watch over more kids, empowers the largest violence prevention agency in the Granite State to grow, and continues to celebrate the African Burying Ground at Langdon Farm – with a new COAST bus stop to boot.

It would appear to me that the primary purpose of a density bonus is to advance a communal vision by developing more affordable housing options near public transit. To say that the Christ Church proposal seeks these ends would be quite the understatement. It will preserve and strengthen the character and sense of our extraordinary community. As someone who lives just 5 minutes down Lafayette Road, I look forward to welcoming my new neighbors.

I hope you will join the Technical Advisory Committee in voting unanimously to continue this project's exciting progress.

Best,
Ethan Underhill

Sources:

- https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1797&context=survey_center_polls <https://linkprotect.eudasvc.com?url?&context=survey_center_polls&e=1,XDEHxNmtWUuXU68yFX6QCu9LNP9j-DB7wXb1E2DmmTWzY7xk7We4uAcd6YHmYegHbIiH9nmFKDaEBmXDTZleUoxsb8I039MBrVgGQ08wQDrk3ThyU-cx8,&typo=1&ancr_add=1>
- https://www.unionleader.com/news/homes/housing/1-in-4-homes-for-sale-in-nh-costs-at-least-1-million/article_c4ef289c-2f11-11ef-82aa-0365d720bf21.html#:~:text=Nearly 1 in 4 homes, Lakes Region and North Country <https://linkprotect.eudasvc.com?url?&context=survey_center_polls&e=1,XDEHxNmtWUuXU68yFX6QCu9LNP9j-DB7wXb1E2DmmTWzY7xk7We4uAcd6YHmYegHbIiH9nmFKDaEBmXDTZleUoxsb8I039MBrVgGQ08wQDrk3ThyU-cx8,&typo=1&ancr_add=1>
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From: [Kimberli Kienia](#)
To: [Kimberli Kienia](#)
Subject: FW: Webform submission from: Planning Board > Body Blocks
Date: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:12:57 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: City of Portsmouth <webmaster@cityofportsmouth.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:33 PM
To: chellman@TNDEngineering.com; Peter L. Britz <plbritz@cityofportsmouth.com>; Peter M. Stith <pmstith@cityofportsmouth.com>
Subject: Webform submission from: Planning Board > Body Blocks

Submitted on Wed, 08/14/2024 - 12:32

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Name

Judy Hiller

Email

hillerj@rcn.com <<mailto:hillerj@rcn.com>>

Subject

Co-living residential space proposed for the J.J. Newbury building

Message

I am writing in response to the Herald newspaper article of Co-living residential space proposed for the J.J. Newbury building which is coming before your board.

I'm sorry, but a proposal of this nature in the center of downtown Portsmouth makes no sense, and the arguments to support this are unsubstantiated and have no basis in reality. The 1st and most glaring representation is that 'no parking equals lower rents'. That may be true on the surface, but if someone needs parking, as I would expect most renters would, that will be an expense that will just be paid elsewhere. The other idea that people do not drive in urban areas and are utilizing scooter and bicycles is 30% and rising and that that applies to Portsmouth is a stretch at best. If you want any mobility at all, then the idea that you don't need a car is utterly ridiculous.

I have noted all the vans around the city and many have very few riders or are empty.

You can't even get the basics as there are no supermarkets or drug stores within walking distance?

Renters that would avail themselves of this type of housing are not going to frequent the downtown stores and restaurants. A more likely scenario would be a Walmart or Dollar store like I do.

And any suggestion that all these renters will be working in the downtown stores and restaurants sounds good. I'd just like to know how that is provable?

The one statement that was made in the article I can agree with in that most colleges in America use co-living to house students. Why then would you would want that in the downtown. The one thing I think you can expect with that type of housing is the behavior that goes with it.

If the developer is dead set on this type of development, then he should look into a location that can include parking and in a less congested area. A target market should be traveling health care workers which we are in desperate need of and have few options available to them for their short-term assignments. I am familiar with this market and is something I would support 100%.

This proposal as presented is wrong for this location and should not go forward.

Sincerely, Judy Hiller

bcc-email

chellman@TNDEngineering.com,plbritz@cityofportsmouth.com,pmstith@cityofportsmouth.com