Kimley»Horn

October 22, 2024

Mr. Russell Karlstad, Chair
Worcester Zoning Board of Appeals
c/o Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
City Hall, Room 404
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608

Re: Grafton Woods Project, Worcester
Proposed Parking Supply Waiver

Dear Chairman Karlstad:

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. (Kimley-Horn) has completed an analysis of the proposed parking to be provided as part of the Grafton Woods development for the purpose of determining its adequacy to meet the needs of the use and if so, in support of the requested waiver from the zoning requirements pertaining to the parking supply. The following paragraphs summarize the anticipated parking supply and the analysis.

Proposed Development Project

The proposed development is currently for 491 apartment units in five (5) buildings as well as approximately 4,500 square feet of commercial space to be in Building 5 adjacent to Grafton Street. The proposed development will be providing on-site parking either in a combination of open parking lots adjacent to the buildings or in the proposed two level parking deck located between Buildings 2 and 3. Building 5 will have some below grade parking as well. In total, there are 793 parking spaces proposed. Table 1 summarizes the amount of parking spaces per building.

TABLE 1
PROPOSED PARKING BY BUILDING

Building #		# of Spaces
1		150
2		232*
3		170
4		160
5		81
Total		793

* includes parking deck between Buildings 2 and 3

Per the City of Worcester Zoning Ordinance, Section 7 – Off-Street Parking and Loading, for a multi-family dwelling residential, two (2) parking spaces per dwelling unit and commercial spaces (either retail sales or services), one (1) parking space per 300 square feet of gross floor area is required. Based on these requirements, a total of 997 parking spaces would be required per the zoning code.

Considering the current environment of encouraging less vehicle activity and the experience in the City and Commonwealth of lower parking demands typically generated for these proposed uses than zoning would suggest, it is proposed to provide fewer parking spaces than required by zoning. Factors that support justifying lower parking supplies include the project being located on a corridor that is walkable to commercial uses and having the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) that serves the corridor with two bus routes that connect with major activity zones and the train station. In addition, with services such as Uber and Lyft, the auto ownership levels for residents could be lower than typically in

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the past. Finally, there has been a significant increase in the Work From Home (WFH) practice, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic.

A parking analysis was completed in support of providing less parking supply for the project than would be required by the existing zoning bylaw. The analysis was completed for the total project but also for Building 5 separately since it is more disconnected from Buildings 1-4. The analysis was also done for Buildings 1-4 as a group as they are relatively close to each other and each parking field including the parking deck is highly walkable from each of these 4 buildings. As described below, the analysis has shown that the proposed amount of parking provided is expected to be more than adequate for meeting the needs of the project in total, as well as for Building 5 and Buildings 1-4 as a group.

The peak parking demand for the uses was determined based on the ITE models and rates, as applicable, to calculate parking demand. The parking demand models are based on actual observation of similar uses and characterized by type of area (i.e. urban/suburban, near rail transit or not) and guidance for estimating time of day patterns. Residential peak demands occur late in the night and early morning whereas the commercial demands will tend to peak in late morning or early afternoon. Table 2 depicts the estimated individual peak parking demands for the proposed development program in total while Table 3 separates out Building 5 from the Buildings 1-4 grouping. As shown, the estimated weekday peak parking demand on average is 521 parked vehicles including the commercial use demands. Compared to the 793 parking spaces provided in total, the proposed supply exceeds the estimated average peak demand by 272 spaces.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF TOTAL PARKING
SUPPLY VS. ESTIMATED PEAK DEMAND

Proposed Supply (spaces)	Estimated Peak Demands	Surplus/(Deficit)
793	521	+272

The development is predominantly residential with most of the spaces for Buildings 1 to 4 and served by the spaces close by. Not including Building 5, there are 712 parking spaces serving Buildings 1-4. The analysis has shown that the peak demands for these four buildings in total is estimated to be 478 parked vehicles resulting in 233 available spaces. Building 5 includes both the ground floor commercial space and residential units in the upper floors. In relation to Building 5, there would include some level of shared parking as residential parking tends to peak overnight when there is no demand for the commercial land use.

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF PARKING SUPPLY
VS. ESTIMATED PEAK DEMAND BY MAJOR AREAS

Building Group	Proposed Supply (spaces)	Estimated Peak Demands	Surplus/(Deficit)
Bldgs. 1-4	712	478	+233
Bldg. 5	81	36	+45

For specifically Building 5, the estimated peak parking needs based on a shared parking approach was 81 parked vehicles. The parking demand for Building 5 also peaks overnight with an estimated demand

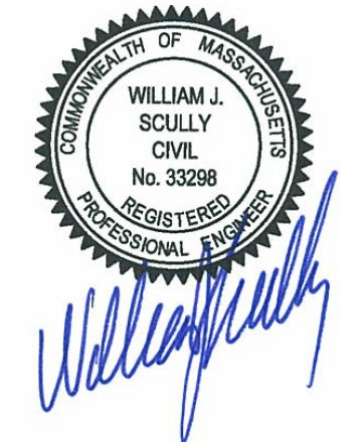
of 36 parked vehicles although the commercial use demands will occur during the daytime when the residential demands are lower. The proposed design in this area indicates that 53 surface parking spaces would be provided that could be used by both residents and demands associated with the commercial use. The below grade parking in the building would be restricted to residents.

Based on this analysis, the estimated peak demands for the project on average, in total, as well as broken out by the two main building areas remains well below the proposed parking supply and is further below what would be required by zoning by approximately another 200 spaces. Consequently, one can easily conclude that more than sufficient parking supply is being provided by the project and there is full justification for providing less parking supply than zoning would require.

In support of the reduced parking supply, the proposed project will provide sidewalk connections to the Grafton Street sidewalk, proposed enhancements of pedestrian crossings and the transit stop on Grafton Street, transit information in each building, bike accommodation within the project, and improvements to a major section of sidewalk along Grafton Street in the vicinity of the project. Less parking also results in less impervious area that benefits the environmental conditions and provides for a healthier amount of green space for project residents.

In summary, the demand analysis as shown that the proposed supply of 793 parking spaces for the development in total, which is lower than what would be required by current zoning, will also be well beyond the supply needed to meet the expected peak parking demands for the project. Based on this analysis, providing less parking than the current zoning requirement as proposed, will be more than adequate for this project.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at my email address (bill.scully@kimley-horn.com) or my cell phone (508-395-3334).



Very truly yours,
KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

Signed: William J Scully

Printed Name: William J. Scully, P.E., RSP$_1$
Title: Associate/Sr. Project Manager

Cc S. Madaus
P. Healy