

LAMBERT



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Citizen Feedback on NED Proposed Waterfront West Plans

1 message

Linda Lambert <lambertlindamarie@gmail.com>

Thu, Sep 27, 2018 at 3:21 PM

To: Heather Shand <hshand@cityofnewburyport.com>, Jared Eigerman <jeigerman@gmail.com>, Larry Giunta <larrygiunta12@gmail.com>

Dear Sub Committee Council Members

We are in agreement with all the public comment we have heard regarding the height and density of the proposed NED plans for Waterfront West submitted to date. The buildings are too high and the density is such that it does not reflect the character of Newburyport. But the intent of this email is to voice the highest priority of our objection to the plans, and that is pedestrian and vehicle safety.

McKay's Wharf is 22 feet wide at the entrance from Merrimac Street, from the telephone pole on one side to the retaining wall for the parking lot in front of Interlock's / Horton's Yard building on the other. McKay's Wharf is proposed as one of the main entrance/egress roads to the development. We walk this pathway several times a day. There is never an instance where we are not turning around to see if we are blocking a car that is trying to pass and that we must step out of the way by pinning up against the wall, ducking behind the dumpster, or moving onto the grass on the other side of the way. We have witnessed many times that it is near impossible for two cars to be at the mouth of the way at one time, simultaneously trying to move in different directions. Change one of those cars out for a pickup truck or a truck hauling a boat, and it does, in fact, become impossible for both to pass each other side by side.

The plans to date do not show any widening of McKay's Wharf, but instead show it more closed in by the tall building that would be built where a second car now pulls over to make way for an approaching car/truck/boat or where pedestrians walk onto the grass on the side to get out of a driver's way. The grade drops 14 feet along the length of the Interlocks parking lot retaining wall, making it very steep and reducing visibility for pedestrians and anyone exiting the underground garage at Horton's Yard. The plans to date do not show any sidewalk or accommodation for pedestrians, yet it is being referred to as the main pedestrian walkway to the waterfront from the garage and Merrimac Street.

Additionally, one of the new garage's entrances is directly across from McKay's Wharf. Now that the garage is up, the driver's perspective of the intersection has changed to feel like a more narrowed intersection as well as a narrowed approach to the intersection. Drivers will be inclined to overcompensate their approach or turn, much as one might overcompensates when they encounter a jersey barrier on the road. This lends itself to increased accidents at that intersection, the blocking and buildup of passing traffic while a car/truck/trailer waits to make a turn from Merrimac Street down McKay's Wharf, and the risk to pedestrians trying to reach the waterfront from the garage or from Merrimac Street.

Please support our opinion that on future NED plans McKay's Wharf should be widened from it's current 22 feet and sidewalks should be added to both sides to keep pedestrians out of the way of road traffic on McKay's Wharf. Please support our opinion that a posted reduced speed limit or speed bumps should be place on the way because of the immediate steep grade from the Merrimac Street intersection and limited visibility exiting the underground Horton's Yard garage. And finally, please support that a 3D model be included from NED with their next submission of plans, because it is the only way that one can begin to see how height, density, pedestrian/vehicle shared spaces, and width of streets, ways, and alleyways affect the character of the development and the site lines for a community that truly loves it's waterfront.

Please feel free to share this email with the Planning Board Sub Committee Members.

Thank you for all that you do.

Michael and Linda Lambert
[58 Merrimac Street](#)

