



TOWN OF IPSWICH

POLICE DEPARTMENT

15 Elm Street
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Paul A. Nikas
Chief of Police

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Lt. Jonathan M. Hubbard
Executive Officer

April 30, 2019

Bob Gambale, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Ipswich

Mr. Gambale,

I have reviewed the application for the proposed Essex Pastures development located at 42-44 Essex Road, Ipswich, Massachusetts. Below I present my findings and concerns.

The sheer size of these buildings is unlike anything that currently exists in Ipswich and is more suited for urban environments. That being said, we are a small police agency and are not accustomed to responding to calls in such vast structures. Placing this many residents in such a small area will change our policing style for these units. If an officer is dispatched to a call in these buildings, due to their sheer size, we will need to almost always send a secondary backup officer. This is due to the fact that if an officer needs assistance, the time to respond to a building of this size will be greater than any other property we currently have in town. We currently staff our patrols with four officers on a shift, with the minimum allowance of three officers. A call to this location could potentially tie up two thirds of our patrol shift available to all of Ipswich. Additionally, due to the size of these buildings, they create a longer response time to the rest of town if we are needed to respond from inside the building.

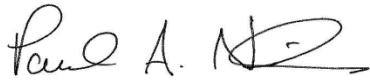
With buildings of this size, we also anticipate that we will have difficulty transmitting on our portable radios. Our radio infrastructure is not designed to work in large scale buildings such as these. Line of sight and avoidance to obstructions to repeater signals are important to successful radio communication. If our portable radios have too many obstructions for it to transmit to the nearest repeater site the officer will have no communication with the station. This is obviously a serious officer safety concern.

There is also a concern for traffic as such a high density population center added to an area that is already very busy could potentially lead to more accidents, more speeding complaints, and more traffic congestion on already congested roadways. Having to deal with these increased traffic issues will put a further strain on the department's already limited resources. Traffic on Rt. 1A/Rt. 133 during the hours of 4-6pm is already to a breaking point. Traffic through the center of town routinely backs up to the south side cemetery and sometimes beyond the YMCA. Adding this many living units to this area of town will further increase the traffic counts and lead to more gridlock on the roadways, decreasing emergency response times for public safety personnel.

In summation, the police department is already at a point in which we struggle to handle our current calls for service volume. A development of this size will cripple our current staffing levels, create an officer safety issue and lead to a decrease in services town wide. It will also put a burden on town's infrastructure and could potentially create an issue with our radio communications due to the size of the structures.

For the safety of our public safety personnel and the Ipswich community, I recommend the buildings in Essex Pastures be constructed to a smaller scale to accommodate the needs and patrol capabilities of the police department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul A. Nikas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chief Paul A. Nikas
Director of Law Enforcement