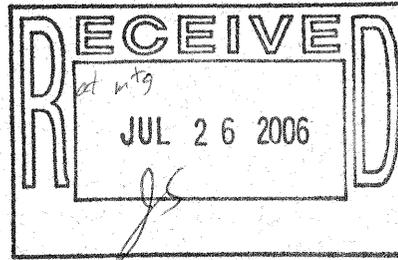


Summer 1222

July 26, 2006

Mr. Jay Szklut  
Planning and Economic Development Manager  
Town of Belmont  
455 Concord Avenue  
Belmont, MA 02478



15 Elkins Street  
Boston, MA 02127

Tel: 617-896-4300  
Fax: 617-896-4301

Re: The Residences at Acorn Park, Belmont, MA  
Traffic Engineering Peer Review

Dear Mr. Szklut:

The purpose of this letter is to summarize the status of the traffic engineering peer review as of today. The letter summarizes issues in three categories: Access Management; Site Plan Revisions; and Traffic Mitigation.

#### Access Management

BSC Group (BSC) has reviewed a letter dated June 14, 2006, written by Mr. Robert D. Vanasse, P.E. of Vanasse and Associates, Traffic Consultants for the proposed Residences at Acorn Park development. The letter is in response to BSC's comments in a memo dated March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2006 relative to driveway spacing for the above referenced project.

Mr. Vanasse's letter stated that the references made in the Transportation Research Board Access Management Manual were "intended for commercial drives on public ways with traditional levels of commercial traffic volumes". Contrary to this statement, access management is intended for all types of roadways to preserve the safety, function and capacity of transportation corridors. Furthermore, the status of Acorn Park Drive as a private road in Belmont and a public way in Cambridge, just a few hundred feet away, does not negate the fact that with the completion of Discovery Park, traffic volumes on Acorn Park Drive during the weekday morning and afternoon peak hours would range from approximately 600 to nearly 800 vehicles per hour. These volumes would be considered a traditional level of commercial traffic subject to access management.

The new MassHighway *Project Development and Design Guide (January 2006)* has an entire chapter devoted to Access Management. In particular, Section 15.1 – "Relationship to Context" states that "Access management can be an important component of new facility plans since the designer has more flexibility in the location and design of driveways".

A direct reference to driveway spacing guidelines contained in the Access Management Manual under "Right-turn Influence" notes that:

*"Driveways that are spaced too closely can impact through traffic operations when a driver must monitor more than one right turn merging movement (called right-turn conflict overlap), or when upstream through traffic is required to brake and slow down for right-turning vehicles (referred to as the driveway's influence distance)." - Page 15-9 of the MassHighway Project Development and Design Guide.*

Engineers

Environmental  
Scientists

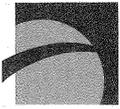
GIS Consultants

Landscape  
Architects

Planners

Surveyors





It is clear that a reduction in the number of driveways would reduce conflict points and that well spaced driveways would improve the decision-making by drivers and thereby enhance the safety of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians traveling in the corridor. BSC recommends that the minimum driveway spacing of 185 feet recommended in the Access Management Manual should be implemented with respect to the access drives to the Residences at Acorn Park. BSC also recommends that the proponent consider an on-site circulation plan that would permit vehicles to enter the site at the northern drive and exit at the south drive, eliminating the center drive as currently proposed.

#### Site Plan Revisions

In addition to the driveway spacing issue, BSC made a number of comments on the site plan, for which no response was received. Therefore, we maintain that these are outstanding issues that need to be addressed by the applicant. The comments are repeated as follows:

- The throat length of the center drive with the angled parking appears to be too short and could result in conflicts with entering and exiting vehicles. Consider removing the two parking spaces nearest to Acorn Park Drive.
- The access to the underground parking garages for Buildings D and E as well as Buildings A and E are very close together. There are several movements into and out of these garages that would be difficult to make, especially in the presence of other vehicles. The proponent should re-evaluate the layout at these entrances and if possible provide more separation between them.

BSC has not received any revised site plans from the applicant's engineer nor have the applicant's engineers agreed to meet to discuss these issues. Therefore, we are unable to make final comments on the site plans at this time.

#### Traffic Mitigation

BSC has reviewed the proposed off-site mitigation package and concurs that the mitigation plans should minimize the traffic impacts of the proposed housing development. This includes the applicant's interim measure to re-stripe the Cross Street approach to provide separate left-turn and right-turn lanes with the understanding that the applicant's engineers will explore other measures to improve operations at this key intersection.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

BSC GROUP, INC.

Charles A. Kalaskas, P.E.  
Executive Vice President