



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

December 12, 2023

Rebecca Tepper
Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attention: Alexander Strysky, MEPA Office
The Highlands at Overlook Ridge, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: The Highlands at Overlook Ridge, EEA #11971

Dear Secretary Tepper:

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) regularly reviews proposals deemed to have regional impacts. The Council reviews proposed projects for consistency with *MetroCommon 2050*, MAPC's regional land use and policy plan, consistency with Complete Streets policies and design approaches, as well as impacts on the environment. Furthermore, the Commonwealth has a statutory obligation to reduce GHG emissions by at least 50% from 1990 levels by 2030, 75% by 2040, and 85% by 2050, in order to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Overlook Ridge, LLC (the Proponent) has submitted a Notice of Project Change (NPC) for the Highlands at Overlook Ridge (the Project). The work proposed in the NPC would be the final phase of the build-out of the 99-acre former rock quarry site situated on either side of the Malden-Revere lines and including a total of 3,938,071 square feet of mixed-use development including 2,714 residential units. The NPC proposes an overall reduction of 604,929 square feet of development including 86 residential units. Upon full completion, the Project is projected to generate approximately 13,587 trips per weekday, a net reduction of 12,293 trips compared to the previously reviewed NPC filing.

The Proponent has already constructed 1,977 residential units and 3,414 parking spaces. The NPC proposes the construction of 737 residential units and addition of 1,675 parking spaces. **According to the NPC, while the building program has been reduced, the amount of parking has remained the same at 5,294 spaces. MAPC notes that the Parking Summary provided by the Proponent proposes a total of 5,089 parking spaces, while the Proponent is requesting approval for 5,294 parking spaces. The location and purpose of the 205 additional parking spaces is not clearly conveyed in either the NPC or the additional transportation information provided by the Proponent to the MEPA office¹.**

MAPC respectfully requests that the Secretary require the Proponent to “bank” these 205 spaces as a landscaped parking reserve until and unless they are determined to be necessary based on monitoring. As long as these 205 parking spaces are not needed, the land should be landscaped or used for other non-vehicular amenities.

MAPC applauds the Proponent's plans to encourage the use of public transportation, by working with the MBTA to facilitate the sale of transit passes at the site and continuing to provide a shuttle service between the Project and the Malden Center and Haymarket MBTA Stations. The Proponent also plans to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access including a new bikeway connection to the Northern Strand

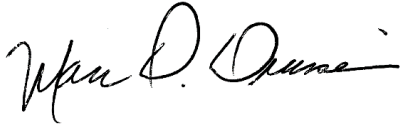
¹ Proponent's additional transportation information shared by the MEPA off on November 29, 2023.

**Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) comments on
The Highlands at Overlook Ridge, Notice of Project Change, EEA No. 11971**

Community Trail. MAPC recognizes that the Proponent proposes to work with MassDOT and the MBTA to improve bus connections at the site.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Marc Draisen
Executive Director

cc: Deborah Burke, Malden
Tom Skwierawski, Revere
David Mohler, MassDOT