



**Town of Reading**  
**16 Lowell Street**  
**Reading, MA 01867-2683**

**JULIE D. MERCIER**  
**Community Development Director**  
**Phone: (781) 942-6648**  
**Fax: (781) 942-9071**  
**jmercier@ci.reading.ma.us**

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**To:** Zoning Board of Appeals  
**CC:** Matt Zuker & Ken Chase, MKM Reading / Geoff Engler, consultant  
**From:** Julie Mercier, Community Development Director  
**Date:** February 4, 2016  
**Re:** Reading Village 40B - Feedback Received to date

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Please note that some of these comments refer to items that are typically provided after the project is approved – either before a building permit or occupancy permit is issued – they are included here as a heads-up to the Applicant.

In addition, the Development Review Team had an informal meeting with the Applicant on May 13, 2015 (before the application was officially submitted). The notes from that meeting, as well as a letter from the Town Manager regarding the project, are attached at the end of this memo.

**Fire Department:**

The information on the construction of the proposed building is limited in the proposal. However, In reviewing the Massachusetts State Building Code 780 CMR 8<sup>th</sup> edition, I believe the building project presents a fire and life safety risk based upon the following:

- Section 504.2 Automatic Sprinkler System Increase: The building as presented does not comply with this section. The maximum height for a Group R building equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system is 60 feet and 4 stories. The proposed building is 5 stories and height of 63'-7" and is therefore has too many stories and is too high.
- Section 509.7 Open Parking Garage beneath Groups A, I, B, M and R: The height and area of the portion of the building above the open parking garage shall not exceed the limitations in Section 503 for the upper occupancy. The height, in both feet and stories, of the portion of the building above the open parking garage shall be measured from the grade plane and shall include both the open parking garage and the portion of the building above the parking garage. This section reinforces the maximum height of 60 feet and 4 stories above a Group R building with an open parking garage.
- Proximity to Existing Properties: I am very concerned with how close the project is to existing properties. The project is proposed to be constructed 3.0 feet from the property lines of properties located on 1 Fulton Street, 6.4 feet from 16 Prescott Street, 10.9 feet from 31 Lincoln Street and 5.6 feet from 96 Washington Street. Considering the location of these existing properties to their lot lines this new building creates an unnecessary life hazard.
- A fire in the proposed building or an existing neighboring building would present an extreme exposure hazard that would likely result in fire extending from one structure to another and the destruction of more than one property. Although the proposed building will be equipped with internal fire sprinklers, this system will not be able to control the spread of fire on the exterior of the building. Fire traveling up the exterior of the building has the potential to enter the building on multiple floors and exceed the design requirements

of the sprinkler system. I have witnessed a fire extend up the exterior of an occupied four story residential building located on Avalon Drive in Wilmington Massachusetts on February 8, 2013 and enter the building on several floors and attic. As a result of this fire the building was completely destroyed.

- As we are provided with more information I may have additional comments.

**Police Department:**

Our biggest concern is the amount of parking spots.

**Reading Municipal Light Department:**

- We will need information regarding service size(s), service voltage, number of services, info on house services, number of residential services, electric room locations, elevator information, load information, etc.
- We will need a 10' x 10' area for the pad-mount transfer(s) for this project. I didn't see much room on the site for this location(s). This location(s) cannot be under the building.
- We will need to work out a riser pole location for the underground service.
- We will need to sit down with the owner, at some point, and go over our requirements. Until we get all this information and meet with the owner, we can't design the electric service into the property.

**Board of Selectmen (BOS):**

The BOS will have a formal presentation by the Applicant at their meeting on February 23, 2016 at 7:00 PM at the Parker Middle School.

**Community Planning and Development Commission (CPDC):**

The CPDC will attend the Applicant's presentation to the BOS on February 23, 2016.

**Historical Commission:**

The Historical Commission will discuss the project at their meeting on February 9, 2016.