

Date: September 3, 2021

To: Chairman Ellis and Members of the Hingham Planning Board

Re: Neighbors Opposed to Hingham Yacht Club Proposed Construction of a  
Two Story, 2,160 SF Boat Storage Barn

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Please let this letter convey the strong opposition from many of the neighbors to the Hingham Yacht Club (HYC) proposed expansion and relocation of their boat storage barn. Our opposition is directed at the following elements of their new construction plans as follows:

1) Inadequate On-Site Parking

The current HYC parking lot falls well short of meeting the parking needs of its members, patrons and employees. At any given time during their operating season, the parking lot is full beyond its capacity. Cars are parked 3 to 4 deep in a space designated for one car. Once the lot is full, cars begin to park along the narrow streets of Downer, Marion and Merrill rendering portions of these streets impassable for two-way traffic and posing an extra challenge for emergency vehicles to access neighboring homes. Parking on these streets continues year after year despite Town of Hingham posted "No Parking" signs. The site plan for their Special Permit Application shows only half of the lot striped for legal spaces, however, the HYC should be required to show the entire lot striped for parking and comply with all parking requirements for their Use under the Hingham Zoning Bylaw.

We are confident that even if the existing barn were to be demolished with no new barn constructed that the parking lot would still not accommodate the parking needs of the HYC and we will continue to have our streets periodically lined with parked vehicles.

2) Destruction of the Coastal Bank

The Coastal Bank area where the proposed barn is to be constructed is a sensitive resource area with an extremely steep slope and a thick stand of existing mature trees. The stand of mature trees are the only buffer for the neighbors on Merrill and Marion Streets from the noise and night lighting generated by the HYC. Removing these trees would further expose the neighborhood to the commercial activities of the HYC which would clearly be more detrimental to the neighbors. Many of us that live along the steep coastal bank know that it can be unstable even with mature vegetation securing it.

We also have serious concerns about the plans to dig into the steep slope of the bank to construct the barn and the potential for erosion during construction. There does not appear to be any erosion control plan included in the HYC submission nor have they provided any lighting plan or cross-section of the proposed new driveway.

3) New Curb Cut on Marion Street

Adding a new curb cut on Marion Street for accessing the second floor of the proposed barn would also be an unnecessary hardship on the neighborhood. The existing barn is accessed through the HYC parking lot and this should continue for any new barn. Marion is a narrow street, providing the only access to our neighborhood, and adding more commercial activity to the street is not reasonable.

4) New Barn Represents Substantial Expansion of the Non-Conforming Use

The existing barn located at the outer edge of the HYC is virtually invisible from the surrounding neighbors. Raising the barn and putting it front and center on Marion Street would make this commercial building much more prominent. The size of the proposed barn also represents an expansion of 300% over the existing structure. The existing structure (25'x22') is only single story, and the proposed building with a larger footprint (30'x36') is two stories. The significant expansion and prominence of the proposed building is more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure and will irreversibly alter the character of the neighborhood.

We encourage the HYC to consider a plan that would replace the current size and scope of the existing structure in its current location or some other location on the HYC property that would not require removal of the mature trees buffer or disturb the coastal bank nor require a curb cut on Marion.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Neighbors Opposed to HYC's Boat Storage Construction Plan

Brett and Kate Holmgren, 2 Merrill Street

Jim and Holly Rader, 5 Merrill Street

Sean O'Brien, 8 Merrill Street

Norma Atkinson, 10 Merrill Street

Tom and Mary Dinneen, 20 Marion Street