

PLANNING BOARD



19 WASHINGTON STREET
SHERBORN, MASSACHUSETTS 01770

October 22, 2020

David Thorn, Chair
Holliston Planning Board
703 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746

To the Chairperson and Members of the Holliston Planning Board

We understand that the Holliston Planning Board will continue its public hearing on the ADESA proposal to create a satellite parking facility in the Lowland Industrial Park in Holliston this evening. As you know, members of the Sherborn Planning Board have attended your earlier hearings and have raised awareness of the potential impacts of such a development on the adjacent neighborhoods of Sherborn and in particular on the volume and nature of traffic on Western Avenue.

You will recall that we took that opportunity to inform the Holliston Planning Board, and to remind the ADESA representatives, that ADESA's existing Special Permit to use their adjacent ADESA-owned parcel in Sherborn for parking explicitly limits the size of all ADESA-related vehicles on Sherborn roads, including on Western Avenue, to 2-car carriers. We followed the wide-ranging discussion with Holliston residents of the current negative impacts of large commercial vehicles on residential neighborhoods in the Lowland Park area, and it was correctly noted that such impacts extend into nearby residential areas of Sherborn. Thus we want to affirm our commitment to keep the lines of communication between our respective Planning Boards open and to work collaboratively with Holliston to address this as a shared issue.

The potential addition of an ADESA parking facility in Holliston is of great concern to Sherborn. The fact is that Sherborn roads, in particular Brook Street and Western Avenue, are the most direct route from Lowland Park to the Framingham ADESA site. As your Town Administrator explained in his September 30 memo to the Holliston Select Board, truck exclusion ordinances have stringent requirements and we agree that this not a realistic option for Western Avenue. And as a collaborative partner, Sherborn has no desire to additionally burden Holliston roads.

Western Avenue is a residential street and has been designated as a Scenic Road. It is a historic route with 14 residences registered on the town's Historic Asset Survey; typical of historic homes, many are placed very close to the road and these residents in particular currently suffer the noise of continuous heavy truck traffic. Addition of traffic from an ADESA site in Holliston will clearly exacerbate the noise impact. Residences along Western Avenue and Brook Street currently have difficulty exiting their homes into the high volume of commercial vehicles on Western Avenue, and this too will be exacerbated by addition of ADESA vehicles. The same problem applies to Sherborn's popular public recreation sites on Western Ave.: the Barber Reservation is one of the most heavily used recreational sites in Sherborn, and the Fessenden soccer field brings families and kids in large numbers in cars, on bikes and on foot, via a narrow entry or crossing the road.

Like Holliston, Sherborn has adopted a Complete Streets policy and has made safe sharing of roads, especially our scenic roads, by vehicles, bikes and pedestrians, an important goal of our Master Plan. Increasing truck traffic on Western Avenue runs counter to that goal.

Like you, as Planning Board members we're committed to considering the long-term implications of our land use decisions. We had preliminary discussions regarding a proposal from ADESA to purchase a property in Sherborn that is near the Framingham ADESA facility, a proposal that has not been pursued further to date. One of the concerns of the Sherborn Planning Board was that the proposal involved paving of several acres of a residential property abutting wetlands, a change that would be relatively irreversible. We speculated that ADESA's current need for additional extensive used car parking areas may be driven by a short-term business opportunity. In Car and Driver on Sept. 13 2020, Sebastian Blanco wrote, citing industry analyses, "As the coronavirus pandemic continues, used cars are in demand because new-car supplies are low and people are choosing car ownership over public transit and ride sharing." Thus, the possible limitations created by the proposed ADESA infrastructure for future uses of the site might also be considered.

We trust you will consider this input in your discussions regarding the ADESA proposal, and will join us in seeking a workable solution to our shared traffic problems.

With our best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marian Neutra". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a stylized "N".

Marian Neutra, Ph.D.
Chair, Sherborn Planning Board

Note: I was elected Chair in September. Former Chair John Higley, who has contacted you previously, remains on the Board and involved in this project.

Cc: Karen Sherman, Holliston Town Planner
Gino Carlucci, Sherborn Town Planner