

## Neighbors Voice Concerns About 40B Proposal

By RYAN BRAY Feb 3, 2016

Some Falmouth residents who spoke out against the proposed Marriott hotel on Main Street say they also have concerns with the 40B development recently filed for the same location.

"We are confident this beautifully designed and well apportioned development will be a true asset to the town of Falmouth," Robert A. Walker of Falmouth Hospitality said in an e-mail on Wednesday, February 3.

Mr. Walker said that he has spoke with residents who have expressed support of including affordable housing as part of the proposal. Selectmen have recently discussed the towns ongoing need for more affordable housing, while the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development encourages communities to work toward making 10 percent of their housing stock affordable.

However, others say that they have similar concerns to the ones they had regarding the Marriott project, namely the size and look of the project.

"Every developer has the opportunity to do a project well," Falmouth resident and architect Jill Neubauer said. "(Mr. Walker)'s shown a long, deep history of doing projects that are not sensitively designed."

Ms. Neubauer also criticized Chapter 40B, which she called a "terrible law" for the way that it can allow developers to sidestep local zoning bylaws in exchange for the inclusion of affordable housing as part of their projects.

Matthew R. Gould, an abutter to the proposed development on Lantern Lane, also cast a skeptical eye on what is being proposed for Liberty Green.

"It's certainly a concern," he said. "Anything that developer brings here is suspect to me."

Mr. Gould said he saw the proposal as retaliation for the commission's decision in September to vote down plans for the Marriott hotel.

"It's like. 'You deny me once, I'll give you something you can't deny,'" he said.

Both Ms. Neubauer and Mr. Gould said that while they are not opposed to large-scale development in town, larger projects should be designed to fit in with the character of the town. Ms. Neubauer cited Atria Woodbriar Place on Gifford Street as an example of a large project that aesthetically fits in with the town's character.

"You don't have to do the lowest common denominator," she said. "You can do some cool stuff."

Anne E. Connolly, executive director of the Falmouth Housing Trust, said while she was not familiar with the specifics of the Lyberty Green proposal, she supported the idea of bringing 26 affordable units to downtown.

"I would encourage the town and the neighbors to work with (the developer) toward a positive result that's good for the community," she said.