



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

WILLIAM F. MACGREGOR  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Committees  
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Community Development and  
Small Businesses

Stephanie Haynes  
Boston ZBA & ISD  
1010 Mass. Ave, 4th Floor  
Boston, MA 02118

Dear Ms. Haynes,

I write today concerning the proposed shelter at 5 Redlands Road in West Roxbury.

Over the past several months, in my capacity as State Representative for the 10th Suffolk District and in collaboration with my colleagues, I have helped plan and organize community meetings bringing together the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), Making Opportunity Count (MOC), the project developer, and nearby property abutters.

On February 27, elected officials were notified for the first time that EOHLC and MOC had been considering converting the Stonehedge Nursing Home into a shelter, and that they had been doing so since the late Fall/early Winter of 2024. As elected officials, we wanted more information about what was occurring in our community. We scheduled a meeting and requested that, as with any significant development in the City of Boston, a robust community process occur before a lease or any other agreements were signed. We instructed EOHLC several times that the neighborhood needed to be informed before anything was finalized. Unfortunately, those instructions were not followed, and a lease was signed anyway. Regardless, elected officials continued to advocate for a community engagement process.

Residents have raised legitimate questions and concerns about the proposal throughout the limited community engagement process. These concerns mainly pertain to the safety of shelter residents and property abutters. Many of those concerns are due to the lack of information and transparency. This has left many residents frustrated, overlooked, uninformed, and unsure of how this facility will be managed.

I recognize that the Commonwealth's need for family shelters and living spaces for those in need is high. I was elected to help and assist those in need, and I am proud to have voted for funding that has done that throughout my tenure as a State Representative. My initial understanding was that this site would primarily serve families in dire need of support, which we are obligated to do. That said, both the application and community process for this proposal has resulted in major concerns in the community that have not yet been adequately addressed.

The City of Boston Inspectional Services should not grant a permit where there are legitimate concerns about the legal definition of the use allowed on the site and the community needs certain guarantees from MOC and EOHLC to ensure that the promises being made during this process are kept during the operation of MOC's development.

Based on how this process has unfolded, residents have concerns that need to be answered before any additional steps are taken:

- Congregate living is undefined as a use in the Boston Zoning Code, which has caused confusion and concern for residents about what an allowed and conditional use would be on the site.
- To address resident concerns, as well as the safety of residents and abutters, all shelter applicants with Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) violations shall not be placed at this site at any time.
- As proposed, the site will not have enough staffers throughout the day and night. The operators must have a minimum of three staffers working on the property overnight and have a minimum of five staffers during the day.
- There must be a trained security guard on site at all hours and operating staff cannot double as the security guard to ensure safety of the residents.

The Board of Appeals hearing on Tuesday, October 28th is questioning the validity of the permit for congregate living. In my role, I have an obligation to help people. However, approving a permit that has an undefined occupancy definition greatly concerns me. I have to consider the concerns raised by the residents of the Redlands and Manthorne Roads. I am requesting the Board of Appeals to delay granting the permit on Tuesday, October 28th, and ask that the applicant come back with a defined occupancy that they plan to present. With more questions than ever, I want the community to feel heard and have many of the questions answered and concerns addressed prior to any decision from the Board of Appeals.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. Please reach out to my office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wm. F. MacGregor', with a stylized, flowing script.

William F. MacGregor  
State Representative  
10th Suffolk District