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To: [LaRow, Patrick](#)
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Subject: Vinci Terrace
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 10:49:00 AM
Attachments: [2023-02-22 BNA Letter to P&Z re Vinci Gardens.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL]

Patrick

Attached is a letter from the BNA with our response to the proposed Vinci Gardens Stipulation of Settlement that will be discussed at today's PZC meeting. I will provide a verbal summary of the BNA's position during the public comment period.

As always thanks for your assistance and for the opportunity for the Byram community to provide feedback.

Regards,

Al Shehadi | *Shehadi Advisory*

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Byram Neighborhood Association

Serving Byram Since 1982

February 22, 2023

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Patrick LaRow
Planning and Zoning Commission
Greenwich Town Hall
101 Field Point Road
Greenwich, CT 06830

Dear Patrick,

I am writing to provide comments on the proposed Stipulation of Settlement of the lawsuit filed by the Housing Authority of the Town of Greenwich (“Housing Authority”) against the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Greenwich (“Commission”) regarding the Commission’s approval of Vince Gardens last September.

I am a longtime resident of Byram and am currently the Chair of the Land-Use Committee of the Byram Neighborhood Association (BNA). My comments are on behalf of the BNA. The BNA respectfully requests the Commission reject the Stipulation of Settlement.

The Commission’s September 2022 approval of Vinci Gardens was an imperfect compromise between the Town of Greenwich’s need for affordable housing and objections from the Byram Community and several Commission members that the size, scale and design of Vinci Gardens was out of place next to the historic former Byram School. The proposed Stipulation of Settlement eviscerates any semblance of compromise.

Condition 10 of the Commission’s approval states:

- “The Commission voted...to modify the building in the following ways:*
- a. Revise the building’s roofline to match the style of the historic Byram School (also listed on the National Historic Register) on the property.*
 - b. Replacing the proposed vinyl siding and using a brick or brick veneer for the exterior cladding of the new building also matching the school; and*
 - c. Plans reflecting both the above design changes shall be submitted to Commission Staff....”*

The drawings attached to the Stipulation of Settlement reflect only the most minimal changes from the design previously proposed by the Housing Authority. The only changes made in response to Condition 10 are to revise the roofline on the narrow north elevation of the building; clad three windows bays on the northwest corner of the building in brick veneer; and, add a “barn-style” roof above the main entrance.

By the drawing’s own notations, the entirety of the building’s east and west roof remains a mansard roof. There is no mansard roof on any portion of the former Byram School.

The west roofline, facing the former Byram School, previously had 14 windows in shed dormers. The new drawings show 16 windows in shed dormers on the west roofline. The

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roofline of the former Byram School facing the proposed building has no shed dormers.

The previous design had 10 window bays on the west elevation and all window bays on the east elevation clad in vinyl siding. The revised design has 8 or 9 window bays on the west elevation and all window bays on the east elevation clad in vinyl siding (the drawing are too dark to clearly identify the cladding on one window bay on the west elevation). No portion of the former Byram School is clad in vinyl siding.

The one-sided nature of the proposed Stipulation of Settlement is hard to understand given the clear language of Condition 10 of the Commission's approval. The one-sided nature of the proposed Stipulation of Settlement is even harder to understand given the clear language in the 1985 Town lease governing the Housing Authority's use of the property, which states:

“This Lease is contingent upon the [tenant] being able to obtain the proper planning and zoning authorization, including variances, site plan approval... from the Planning and Zoning Commission...”*

Separate and apart from whether Housing Authority's suit against the Commission has any merit, the Town of Greenwich has full right to require the Housing Authority to comply with the requirements of the ground lease for the property. Why is it unwilling to do so?

The Byram community was thrilled by the care the Housing Authority took to respect the historic nature of the former Byram School when it converted that building to affordable housing in the 1980s. The BNA, on behalf of the Byram community, testified repeatedly in 2022 to have the size, scale and design of Vinci Gardens revised to better respect the historic character of the former Byram School. The conditions included in the Commission's approval of Vinci Gardens last September were an imperfect compromise to bring Vinci Gardens into somewhat greater harmony with the former Byram School.

The proposed Stipulation of Settlement eviscerates that attempt at compromise and should be rejected.

Al Shehadi
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** Refer to Book 1620 page 200 of the Town of Greenwich land records.*