

July 24, 2022



Dr. Duncan Berry, Chairman
Harwich Planning Board
Town of Harwich, MA

Re: Parking Concerns for 575 Route 28

Dear Chairman Berry and Members of the Planning Board,

We are a group of neighbors from the Cross St., Pleasant St., Lewis Ln., and Miles St. neighborhood and are writing regarding the parking proposal for 575 Route 28.

According to the *Cape Cod Chronicle* of July 6, while 68 parking spaces are required by zoning, only 37 spaces are provided in the plan. We are concerned that waiving 31 spaces will significantly increase parking demand and impact our neighborhood.

Because parking is not allowed on most of the central streets south of Route 28, overflow parking in the village most often takes place on our streets. This happens in spite of the fact that the vast majority of our neighborhood is deep within the residential zone.

Further, as Planning Board members might recall, four years ago there was considerable debate about expanding the Schoolhouse Rd. parking lot. Many of us were involved in those discussions, and we felt strongly then—*just as we all feel today*—that such an expansion would have a very negative impact on our neighborhood.

Those discussions resulted in the creation of the Parking Committee, which worked hard to come up with a plan to relieve parking stresses in the village. To date, the plan has largely been successful. However, parking remains tight in town, the municipal lot is regularly full to capacity, and it seems doubtful that the village can easily absorb still more parking demand—at least not without affecting neighbors. That is our main concern: that our neighborhood would likely bear the brunt of the parking space shortfall.

Looking at parking projections for this development more closely, of the 37 spaces proposed, it seems likely that a dozen or more would be needed for the residential units and for employees in the complex. This would leave only some 25 spaces available for patrons. Indeed, staff for the restaurant might well be quite large, taking up still more parking than this.

According to the plan, the restaurant and coffee shop together will comprise 3850 square feet. Using calculations suggested by various internet sites (e.g., <https://www.restaurantfurniture.net/restaurant-design>), if 60% of this space is used for dining areas, and 15 to 20 sq. ft. is allotted per restaurant seat, there would be somewhere in the range of 115 to 154 seats. Accounting for additional seating on the patio, as well as for patrons in the retail stores, not to mention customers standing at bars and others waiting for tables, it doesn't seem at all unlikely that there would be some 150 patrons at peak times, perhaps more. Not all will need parking spaces, but certainly a good many will.

These are only rough calculations, but they suggest the scale of the potential problem: it seems unrealistic to think that a scant 25 or fewer patron parking spaces will be sufficient for so large a number. The original 68 space requirement seems far more likely to be in line with actual needs. No doubt there is a well-founded reason that such a requirement was established in the first place.

Given the projections—whether using the calculations above or the zoning requirements themselves—the 68 space requirement seems entirely reasonable and appropriate. By contrast, cutting the requirement by 31 spaces—by almost half—seems not only unreasonable but irresponsible, especially in light of the parking crunch in town.

Moreover, it would be unfair to those residents—likely us—who would ultimately pay the price of increased parking demand: crowded and sometimes hazardous streets, degraded neighborhoods, and/or expanded parking lots elsewhere in the village.

Because of all this, we strongly urge you to *not* grant a waiver of the requirement for 68 parking spaces.

We hope the proposal can be reworked to comply with zoning requirements. As a possible alternative, perhaps valet and/or long-term leased, shared parking of nearby underutilized lots might be explored. As only one example, Heather’s Hairport is closed after six and might provide an additional twenty or so spaces during peak times.

Thank you very much for considering these issues.

Respectfully,

Douglas Karlson	—	10 Pleasant Street
Marilyn Scola	—	14 Pleasant Street
Ken Scola	—	14 Pleasant Street
Donna Hanson	—	24 Pleasant Street
John Hanson	—	24 Pleasant Street
Kristin Ferioli	—	27 Pleasant Street
Jessica Small	—	28 Pleasant Street
Peter Small	—	28 Pleasant Street
Marcia Caissey	—	29 Pleasant Street
Bob Cohn	—	29 Pleasant Street
Ellen (Kelly) Carr	—	31 Pleasant Street
Bryan Sherbacow	—	31 Pleasant Street
Maureen Rowley	—	34 Pleasant Street
Jack Rowley	—	34 Pleasant Street
Lori Rome	—	35 Pleasant Street
David Rome	—	35 Pleasant Street
Claudia Dragun	—	48 Pleasant Street
Barbara Nickerson	—	49 Pleasant Street
Bob Nickerson	—	49 Pleasant Street
Paula Beauregard	—	72 Pleasant Street
James Beauregard	—	72 Pleasant Street
Margaret R. Hinkle	—	78 Pleasant Street
Nancy Andresen	—	35 Cross Street
Tracey Fraser	—	7 Lewis Lane
Alfred Roberts	—	7 Lewis Lane
Kerry Higgins	—	36 Miles Street