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Redstone Town House Condominium ■ P.O. Box 2024 ■ 272-4-6 Main Street ■ Acton, Massachusetts 01720

December 3, 2009

Board of Selectmen
Town of Acton
Town Hall
274 Main Street
Acton, MA. 01720

Re: Proposed Plan to Relocate Utility Poles & Equipment
in Preparation for Widening Sidewalk in front of Redstone
Townhouse Condominiums at Kelley's Corner

Dear Selectmen:

This letter is to communicate the Redstone Townhouse Condominium Association's desire to work with the Town of Acton towards a mutually beneficial solution to the incompatibility of the newly purchased snow plow and the sidewalk that is currently located in front of our complex.

Fourteen years ago we cleared the thicket of weeds in front of the wall and created out of that space a well-tended cottage garden of perennials, roses and vines. It has become a recognized landmark at the town's busiest crossroads characterized by concrete, asphalt and steel. The naturalistic garden has been the subject of professional photographers and even of an award-winning filmmaker from Cambridge. It has also been featured with one of the first colored pictures on the front page of The Beacon, and pedestrians as well as the traveling public have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic in their appreciation of our hard work. We have worked diligently to maintain the garden at our own expense, not only for the benefit (curb appeal) of our neighborhood, but to create a refreshing and restorative oasis for the general public.

Recently the Town/Tufts' Open House/Workshop invited participants to express their ideas for improvements to Kelley's Corner with many positive changes being submitted via computer graphics, maps, etc. It is exciting that Acton is committed to revitalizing Kelley's Corner. Highlighting the public's suggested plans was a common recurrent theme: a resounding emphasis on green space with combinations of trees, shrubs, or flowers.

This is at odds with eliminating our garden. While we understand the relocation of utility poles and extending the sidewalk to the wall eliminating the garden is to accommodate the width of the new plow - there may be other options that can address snow removal in a far less invasive (i.e. disruptive and costly) manner. One possible solution is for Redstone to include that 100-foot-stretch of sidewalk in its regular snow removal program when it cleans the sidewalks to our units. Our long-standing service is

dependable and always comes in a timely manner for the early-rising commuting residents – sometimes twice a day.

Reading in the current Beacon about Acton's cost-cutting concerns, we wonder if this project is in the town's best interests in analyzing the cost-versus-benefit. As people who work or live in this area can tell you, there is very little pedestrian traffic. And there is hardly anyone walking on that stretch of sidewalk fronting Redstone. That is because the shops are routinely the main destination and they are more easily accessed across the street, pedestrians having crossed from Mass Ave. at the light and on Main Street at the Hosmer House. Most of what comprises the walking traffic is students who, when we asked out of curiosity why pedestrians don't walk on the sidewalk in front of Redstone, they say they take the driveway because "it's shorter and we're always in a hurry." So the question is: Does uprooting and reinstalling utility poles, guy wires and underground utility equipment, re-grading the hill-end and reconstructing 100 feet of new sidewalk costing tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars justify accommodating the few pedestrians choosing to take a longer walk?

We respectfully request that you reconsider the planned removal of this recognized landmark, which exemplifies the very heart of what neighborhood is all about. The garden reflects not only the care and quality of living at Redstone but redounds positively to the Town as a well-tended garden in the heart of a business district with its emphasis on commerce shows.

We would like to continue to partner with the town in its commitment to improving Acton and we are available to discuss further the ways in which we can find a solution to this arguably smaller issue on your agenda. It is our intent to find common ground between expansion and history, creating a consensus that encourages participation by each individual to do their part as a citizen to improve our neighborhoods. In their willingness to partner with the residents of Redstone, the selectmen demonstrate a respect for each individual homeowner's contribution towards our common goal of making Acton not only a more beautiful town, but also a progressive community.

Sincerely yours,

James Connolly, Trustee



Albert C. Van Mourik, Trustee & Treasurer

representing absent:

William Silverton, Trustee

Janet Olofson, Trustee

Mike Kanter, Trustee

Board of Trustees

Redstone Townhouse Condominiums