

From: [Anne Forbes](#)
To: [Board of Appeals](#)
Subject: 40B proposal for 248 High Street
Date: Tuesday, July 19, 2016 12:23:01 PM
Attachments: [act_671.248_High_St..docx](#)

Dear Board members,

In your review tonight, I hope you will make it a strong priority to require that the existing historic house on the property at 248 High Street be integrated into the plans for the upcoming 40B project. (See attached.)

In recent years, in spite of the number of dense new developments in Acton that have resulted from the 40B/affordable housing process, our town has begun to build up a commendable record of working pre-existing buildings into the overall designs. A shining example, of course, is the conversion of the 1920s Acton High School. In another, at 747 Main Street, a former farmhouse was moved forward to become the focal point of a small group of buildings with architectural features based on those in the old house.

As an abutter to another planned 40B development on Martin Street, I have become aware of some of the few possibilities that can make these very dense housing projects more compatible with the character of the neighborhoods around them. In the upcoming Martin Street project, the developer has found a way to save at least two or three of the historic buildings on the site--again by repositioning them and making them both a focal point and a stylistic inspiration for the new ones.

The introduction of such density into our older, more sparsely-developed neighborhoods changes their character forever. I believe that any developer who does so owes something back to the town in order to soften that blow. The Berglind House, with its clear connections to the activities around the powdermills, and as a good example of the American Four Square that dotted our streets early in the 20th century, deserves this consideration.

In order to mitigate the injury to the fragile area around the intersection of High and Parker Streets, I urge you to require that the existing building be reused, and retained as part of the streetscape. Fortunately, there is ample space beside the house for access to the rear part of the property, and even the expense of relocating the building can probably be avoided.

Sincerely,
Anne Forbes
25 Martin Street