

Jane Howard
17 Damon Street
Ipswich, MA 01938

November 4, 2021

Town of Ipswich
Ipswich Planning and Development Department
25 Green Street
Ipswich, MA 01938

Dear Town of Ipswich Planning Department, Planning Board and Open Space Committee members:

I am a lifelong resident of Ipswich and have watched Ipswich grow and change. With specific reference to the current debate over the application by Ora Inc. to develop commercial office space at 55 Waldingfield Road, I believe we need to preserve what is already there to the greatest extent possible. The Great Estates Preservation Bylaw is a tool that conveys considerable power to the Town to shape our future.

From my perspective the Ora Inc. plans are simply too large, too out of character to the Waldingfield Road environment to be granted a permit for development. Compared to the other GEPB sites in Ipswich, this location on a scenic and historic rural road is incompatible with corporate development. I am mindful of Ora Inc. statements in the newspaper that the firm may leave if they are not permitted to retain certain Conservation Reserve land on their side of the ledger. While the threat may not be idle, Ora Inc. is out of bounds in portraying a corporate entity as a savior from a possible subdivision. It is entirely likely there are other alternative buyers of the property and it is not inevitable that the property would be sold to a developer for a subdivision.

In closing I recognize your need to respect the GEPB. I interpret the GEPB to consider an application in its totality to include overall impacts including the intangibles of a setting. My encouragement to you is to vote to deny the permit application as I do not believe the development plans are respectful of the character and beauty of the location.

Sincerely



Jane Howard