

March 6, 2024

Mithila Chakraborty
Department of Housing
505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106-7106

Re: Revised Notice of Scoping for Oak Woods, Plymouth

Dear Mithila,

The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) has reviewed [this scoping notice](#) and would like to provide the following comments:

1. The revised scoping notice's Project Description states the following:

The neighborhood for the proposed Oak Woods is within walking distance to a high concentration of residential related services, including, but not limited to, recreational areas, green spaces, medical facilities, banks, schools, grocery stores, sports facilities, library.

Access to services is often a challenge for low-income residents, but it does not appear that the proposed project is within walking distance of the services described. Many of those services are >1 mile from 9 Scott Road. Further, there are noticeable gaps in sidewalks between the proposed development and places that would be within walking distance. Does the town have plans to fill such gaps or encourage greater non-motorized mobility?

While OPM believes the walkability of the area is overstated by this scoping notice, accessibility issues are further amplified by the lack of transit serving the Terryville / Plymouth area. A state-funded housing project – especially one intended to serve those who earn below the area median income – should prioritize connections to transit and local services.

2. The updated scoping notice indicates the developer has acquired additional property connecting the project to Main Street, though the Project Description states:

The proposed 59-unit development will be located at 9 Scott Road. The other two parcels at 431 and 435 Main Street will remain undeveloped

The Project Description and Project Map also suggest that the only access point for the development will be connected to Scott Road. Creating an access point to Main Street, through the 431 and 435 Main Street parcels may reduce walking distance to the businesses and other services further east by as much as a 1/2 mile. Are there any plans to include direct access from Oak Woods to Main Street?

Developers and agency project managers should ensure that the information provided for review under CEPA provides clear, realistic, and thorough descriptions and expectations of a proposed project. This is especially important for projects providing affordable housing, given that future residents may have fewer options for getting around the neighborhood, whether to access a local store, job, or park.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



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