

RE: 404 Islington St (Martin Hill Inn)
Meeting: Planning Board 06/16/22

Dear Members of the Planning Board

June 13, 2022

Changing the 404 Islington St from a Bed and Breakfast to an Inn may have little impact on the use due to there being no one on-site to supervise the property. There will be “the others” using the Inn to “self monitor” most situations. The number of rooms at the Inn are being increased **from 7 (plus the live in area) to 10 (with no live in area)**. There will be an outside cleaning crew and other support staff.

The question looms as to whether the entire Inn can be booked by one party. Weddings, funerals or reunions may want to do this. **If yes, there could be a stipulation preventing that or requiring physical check-ins twice a day on the property by someone during the day and the evening**, since “self monitoring” would not be effective.

If the number of rooms was only increased to 9 rooms it would only need 11.25 spaces, 8 rooms would be 10 spaces. They have chosen 10 which requires 13 spaces. Their proposed overflow parking is at : 54 Court St quite a distance away. This would be very convenient for people to use to go downtown. **Will these 5 spaces be available 24 hours a day? Will the overflow spaces also be assigned during the reservation process? Perhaps a stipulation...??** As a guest one may want to bring a second car and car swap to be able to drive downtown instead of using other transportation. It would be cumbersome but some guests may be willing to do the back and forth, once its availability is known. Something to consider when assigning these spots.

404 Islington St stated the following, in a letter to TAC, on May 3rd: *“The applicant’s operation of the inn shall be on a remote check-in model, whereby guests will be provided in advance with access codes to the building and individual rooms. When guests secure a room they are required to provide vehicle information (make, model, etc.). **Each unit will have a designated parking space with the space corresponding with the guest unit.** Video of access and location will be provided with check-in material and available through the Inn’s website. Check-out will be 11AM and Check-in will be 4PM allowing for any delivery, maintenance, or janitorial vehicle requirements to take place within that five hour period. There will be **no on-site custodial** so there will not be a need for any more parking than the unit count.”*

Some rental units have assigned parking by units but often people come home to find someone else parked in “their” space. **With no one there to supervise the parking, how will this issue be handled? Does the video monitoring include parking as well as room check in?**

It would seem logical that all support staff only arrive after AM Check Out to ensure there is a place for them to park. **This could be a stipulation with an exception for extreme emergencies (plumbing freezes, water overflows etc).**

All in all with some specific stipulations and consideration of most scenarios this could work. If desired it could be a limited approval to be reviewed by the Code Enforcement and Parking Enforcement for two years or more after completion. Most complaints go to these departments and therefore they would be best suited to provide review information. Thank you for considering these points.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bratter
159 McDonough St
Portsmouth Property Owner