

15 January, 2017

Dear Board,

When I first learned of the 'Birches' development, of which I am an abutter, I was concerned about the impact of a 50% growth in population our neighborhood would have all in under 5 acres of land. I thought my water would be protected by existing laws and technical understanding of the project.

What has come to the surface over the last few years is indeed that water concerns are far greater than any other. Water Nitrate levels are predicted to be likely far in excess of state and federal limits of 10mg/l. What this means to me as the owner of this property is that its value as my primary investment in life is at risk.

Moreover the State and Town Government's (HAC and ZBA) are weighing the possibility of risking my and other abutters well safety (aka property equity) in favor of the 4 affordable houses this development would provide. And even further the State and Town Government consider any financial consequence of the decision to be purely assigned to the abutters. Not the developer or the Government. This is the loud and clear message of the public hearings to date.

I consider this a violation of my 5th amendment rights of just compensation should this tragedy occur. My family would be destroyed financially, and I am deeply perplexed at the lack of maturity in the Government's ability to cope with such an outcome. This is truly the elephant in the room for this entire process.

If due to this development I am required to access clean water from another source, that supply should be provided by or coordinated through the town government. Furthermore the full legal cost associated with the review of any documents should be payed by the developer not the abutters. It would be far preferable to have the town provide municipal water but I recognize that is not feasible.

At the last opportunity of the public hearings the developer introduced not heretofore mentioned algorithms and computations and suggested to the board my water quality will not be impacted - in total contradiction to the town's independent scientist. This shows two aspects of what is happening; that the approach to determining water impact isn't normalized enough to contain speculation, and that the developer has every incentive to show favorable results for his financial benefit. The risk is being assigned 100% to the abutters or future buyers not the decision makers here.

In summary I purchased this residential property and home based on a reliance of a clean water supply. This reliance is an expectation that all property owners, and their stakeholders such as lenders and must maintained for a viable residential ecosystem. That expectation is coming into question with this proposed development. As such what transpires here is not only critical to the abutters but also to the Town and to the State. I am counting on my Government to protect my rights in this extremely stressful process.

Sincerely,
David Ringheiser
68 Garnet Rock Lane
978-394-4840, dringheiser01@me.com

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