

Donna Rich

From: kristengallant@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, October 29, 2018 10:11 PM
To: Planning Department
Subject: Perkins Row 40B project

Very opposed to the Perkins Row 40B project and extremely concerned about the environmental impact.

Please allow that area, road and our town to remain the special place that it is.

Kristen and Steven Gallant
41/47 Valley Road
Topsfield

Donna Rich

From: Bill Niland <topsfield@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, October 29, 2018 8:00 PM
To: Planning Department
Subject: 57 Perkins Row

May I add my voice to the chorus of Topsfield residents in opposition to the 40B proposal before you?

I made my living in real estate, have advanced training from Suffolk, University of Tennessee , Harvard, and was involved in the sale or lease of more than 384 properties.

As communities mature , there is pressure to put marginal land into production. We see it afoot here with relaxed Perk Test requirements, changing lot sizes, more debt, and the heavy hand of State government taking home rule rights from us.

The 57 Perkins Row proposal seems especially ill advised: added traffic on an already narrow country road, extreme violation of the lot size we follow, some factual inaccuracies in the application that often translate into violation elsewhere, added demand on an already taxed water system, and endangering the water supply of 17 communities.

Earlier Today Steve Foote stopped by to visit. His family has operated Foote Canoe rental for decades, and I was reminded of last year when I stopped by to check water flow and learned it was the lowest in the 80 years measurements were done!! We all suffer from an inability to water our lawns or wash cars...but at least our water is potable.. and this project puts that at severe risk.

What could be more critical than water to serve a community? Without it, life ceases.

And the evidence should be clear...this project puts a septic system for 124 people within stone throw of our water supply and is managed by people who may fudge application detail!!

I join with other residents who urge rejection, and I would probably join a class action suit should one be needed.

Thank you

Respectfully:

William Niland
244 Ipswich Rd
Topsfield, Ma 01983

978 887 6074

Donna Rich

From: Neale, Geoff <gneale@smma.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 30, 2018 3:31 PM
To: Planning Department
Subject: 40B Application at 57 Perkins Row
Attachments: Topsfield 40B 57 Perkins Row 10_17_2018.docx

Dear Planning Board Members,

Attached is our letter expressing our concerns with the 40B application at 57 Perkins Row.

Thank you for your excellent efforts so far in reviewing the application.

Geoff, Nora and Grace Neale

31 Perkins Row

October 29, 2018

Planning Board and Board of Selectmen
c/o Donna Rich
Town Hall, 8 West Common Street
Topsfield, MA 01983 [via email at planning@topsfield-ma.gov.]

Re: 40B Application for 57 Perkins Row

My wife, Nora and my daughter, Grace and I live at 31 Perkins Row, very close to 57 Perkins Row. We would like to add our comments expressing our concern for the proposed development.

Our biggest concern is the proximity of the development to the Ipswich River. The pristine river and the open space around it are what attracted us to buying our house on Perkins Row. Twenty-eight new houses right on the edge of the river will almost certainly have some negative impact on this valuable resource, even if all the regulations are met by the developer. We enjoy kayaking and canoeing on the stretch of river right behind our house. Today, if you are kayaking on the river, you cannot see our house or the other houses close to 57 Perkins Row, but 28 new houses abutting the Audubon Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary will certainly be quite visible from the river.

Our water comes from our well that relies on the Ipswich River watershed aquifer water levels, so anything that threatens our already at-risk aquifer is not a good idea. We are already restricted from watering our vegetable garden during several months a year. The additional strain of 28 houses on both the quantity and quality of the water is something to be avoided if possible.

The Ipswich River is also sometimes flooded with too much water, sometimes even flooding route 1. The field at the Topsfield Fairgrounds which is used for parking when it is dry enough held more than one foot of water most of this last spring and summer. Egrets could frequently be seen wading in the flooded area. The trees along much of the river absorb and hold significant amounts of rain water and slowly release it into the watershed minimizing flooding. Building 28 houses and the associated driveways and road will require eliminating many trees which will increase the impact of heavy rains that sometimes flood the low areas surrounding the river.

The Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary is home to many forms of wildlife. If you look closely at a map of the area around 57 Perkins Row, you can see that 57 abuts the Ipswich River Sanctuary. On the other side of Perkins Row are many undeveloped acres of wooded and swamp land extending all the way from Perkins Row to route 1. I suspect that the wooded area on 57 Perkins Row which adjoins three wooded lots with frontage on Perkins Row directly across from a wooded section on the other side of Perkins Row forms a wildlife corridor for mammals, reptiles and amphibians. We have seen whitetail deer, mink, coyote, and fishers pass through the edge of our property to cross Perkins Row into the woods beyond. Twenty-eight houses will sever this corridor completely.

The winding, scenic nature of Perkins Row is what makes it attractive to bicyclists, runners and walkers. Perkins Row also almost connects to the nearby bike path. On a nice spring or summer Saturday or Sunday, I often count more than fifty cyclists passing our house. The traffic from twenty-eight new houses with one, two or three cars each and the usual delivery vehicles for twenty-eight more houses will negatively change the nature of pedestrian and cycling travel on Perkins Row.

We also object to the claim of walkability in the application. Walking along route 97 into Topsfield center is not really safe. There is no sidewalk and hardly any shoulder on a road with heavy traffic. The road becomes even narrower with snowbanks during the winter.

Residents of Perkins Row and frequent travelers down Perkins Row know how slowly drivers need to go in certain very narrow places. The giant oak trees opposite each other a hundred yards from our driveway make the road narrow enough so two cars cannot pass. The added traffic from twenty-eight new homes will increase the chance of accidents on such a narrow road.

There are vernal pools on both sides of Perkins Row in the vicinity of 57, although they may not be certified. Last spring, there was standing water about six inches deep for at least seven weeks in the lot that abuts both our property and 57 Perkins Row. I did see several amphibian egg masses there. (I regret not taking careful photos).

We are entirely in favor of affordable housing in Topsfield and preventing Topsfield from becoming a town that only some can afford, but the location of this development is just not the right place for twenty-eight houses.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey, Nora and Grace Neale

31 Perkins Row