

Donna Rich

From: Maxwell Lawson <maxwell.a.lawson@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 04, 2018 10:35 AM
To: Planning Department
Subject: 67 Perkins Row comments on 40B Application for 57 Perkins Row
Attachments: 57 - 67 Perkins Row.png

Good morning,

My wife Kristen and my two children (Vera and Chloe) live at 67 Perkins Row, which is 2 houses down from the proposed development ("Perkins Landing"). I've circled us on the map as we are one of the most directly impacted families/houses by the new development. We have some experience with the conservation commission and building in the area as we purchased our home from the developer in 2017 while the conservation order of conditions was still open. We have then subsequently lived in the house for 18 months and become familiar with the area. We were not able to attend the meeting on Tuesday but have heard that there is interest from hearing from concerned residents.

We feel strongly that this proposal should not be approved on a number of grounds, any one of which would be cause to not approve in our opinion:

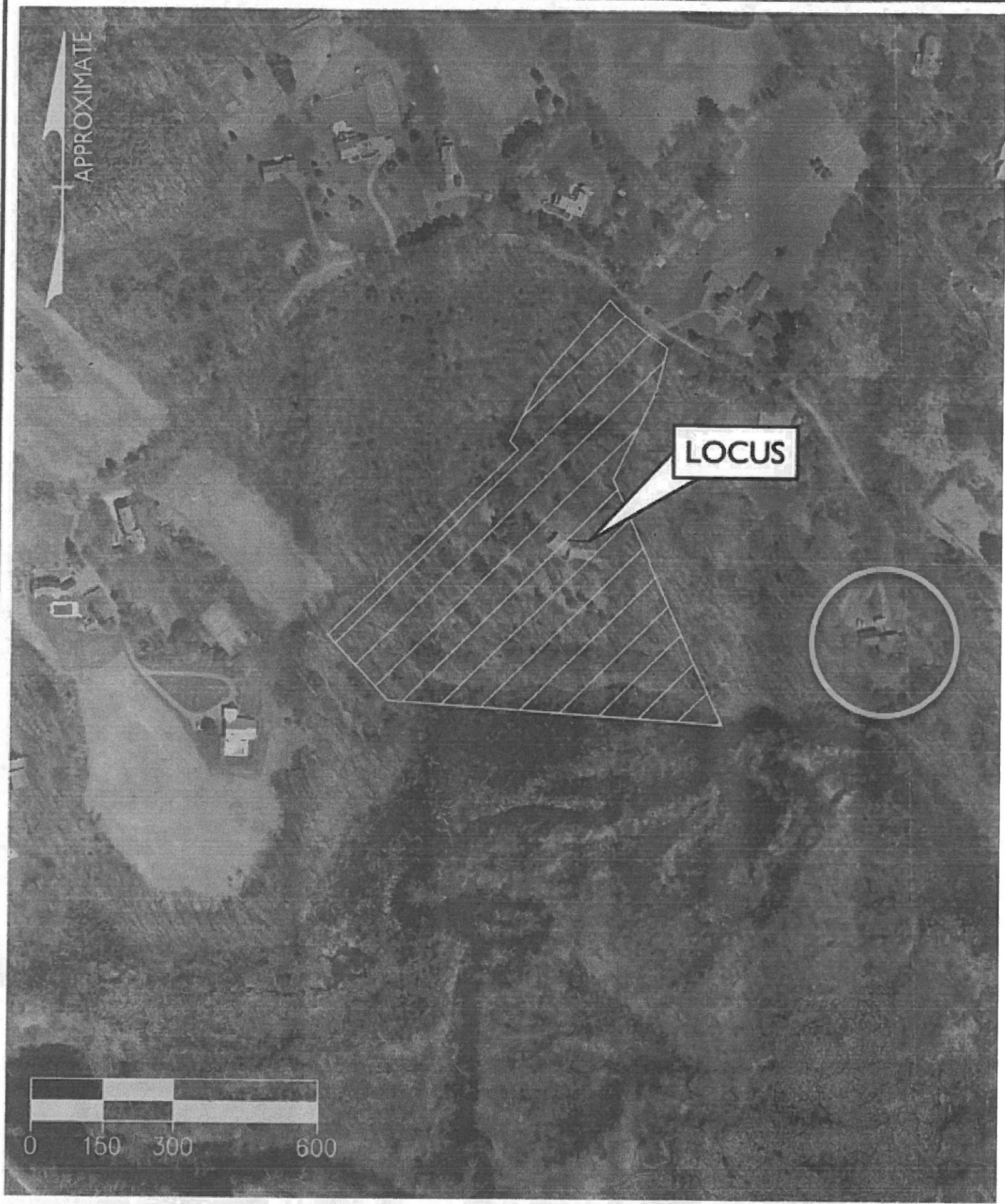
- 1) **The road and related utilities are not suitable** for such a development
 - a. It is narrow, has a few pinch points with no shoulder, and there is no sidewalk—all of which would make increased traffic unsafe for motorists & pedestrians
 - b. Widening the road would require removal of numerous trees and be impactful to the local ecosystem, disruptive for residents, and change the character of the area; it may also increase through-traffic
 - c. The increased pedestrian traffic (walkers, runners, bikers, strollers) from the development would be dangerous given the street already requires significant caution
 - d. The installation of public water main would create significant impact
 - i. The proposal indicates they will use town water, which is good because a well drawing down from the Ipswich watershed would put unacceptable further strain on a fragile situation
 - ii. However, the proposal indicates to do that they require an 850' extension of a water main; while this could be done in conjunction with widening the road, it means even more impact
 - e. The electrical utilities are somewhat fragile given the above-ground power lines and proximity to trees, exposing the development to power outages (particular in the winter); these could be particularly concerning for elderly residents to whom the development may be attractive
- 2) **The site is not suitable**
 - a. The roadway into the development would have significant impact
 - i. A 20' roadway would need to pass through some sensitive parts of the ecosystem (the existing one already bifurcates a wetlands area)
 - ii. My understanding is that a subdivision road was already a reason for not approving a previous application (per conservation commission), so why should this be different? What rights would that give the previous application to file a claim? What precedent does that set for any future proposals?
 - b. The private septic proposal seems unrealistic
 - i. Many of the houses in the area (ours included) required building an above ground septic. I can't imagine how 28x3BR septic systems can be properly designed and built on the property without any risk to the sensitive local ecosystem.
 - c. The buildable area seems unrealistic
 - i. The application suggests that 83% of the site is buildable, but given the terrain this would mean significant filling and grading (\$1.1 million in proposed earthworks) that would destroy all the local habitat and have direct impact on the river ecosystem at the base of the hill
 - ii. The site layout plan shows the majority of the houses are down along the edge of the property closest to the river, which means they are right up against or within the buffer zone for the river habitat; this seems to violate the conservation commissions requirements and certainly the spirit of preserving the river and the important habitats around it

- d. The overall environmental impact would be significant
 - i. The application indicates that there are no documented vernal pools, but there are surely many undocumented ones that would be impacted
 - ii. There is a lot of wildlife that uses the current site as both home and as a pass through; for example, we have 10 – 15 deer that live on this side of the river and travel routinely across the properties. A development of this size would certainly drastically limit their habitat (potentially making the area uninhabitable for them)
- 3) **The local amenities are not suitable** for such a development and it does not support sustainable building standards
 - a. There are basically no walkable or public transport amenities, so it seems like an unsuitable place to build such a high density development
 - b. Transportation can be expensive and so it seems a strange thing to impose on the low income units
 - c. The developer self-assessment on the sustainability scorecard incorrectly identifies the site as being walkable to downtown, library, retail, etc – we don't think it is realistic (or safe!) to expect people to walk that
 - d. The self-assessment also incorrectly identifies it as including multi-family housing and utilizing existing water/sewer infrastructure
- 4) **The sales expectations for the development seem unrealistic** and building this development will likely harm property values (and potentially the Mass Audubon site) over a broad area
 - a. The stated target price of \$669k per 3BR, 2165 sq ft single family with 2 car garage on ~0.25 acres does not seem realistic; this is above the median sales price in the area, and neglects the fact that most people choose Topsfield to have space and land
 - b. There are not really any comparable properties in the assessment given that this development is unlike almost everything else in the town
 - c. We would be very concerned that many units would not be sold and would linger on the market, driving down home values for the town
 - d. Existence of a large development on the street will change the character of the street, which may impact property values and potentially visitors to the Mass Audubon Sanctuary

Please feel free to contact us if there is any additional information or clarification we can provide. We sincerely hope that the owners will decide to stop attempting to develop this property into something more than what it has been, as it is deeply important that we preserve the environment around the river for generations to come.

Thank you,

Max Lawson
67 Perkins Row
Topsfield, MA 01983
(617) 417-9628



THE MORIN-CAMERON GROUP, INC.
66 ELM STREET, DANVERS, MA 01923

2013 ORTHO MAP
57 PERKINS ROW

Donna Rich

From: David Paulin <davidpaulin@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 04, 2018 9:59 AM
To: Planning Department
Cc: Ryan O'donnel; 40B01983@gmail.com
Subject: Perkins Row 40 B

One of the reasons we moved to Topsfield forty two years ago was the beauty of Perkins Row. We were looking to move to a place with a better school system. By chance, we took the quick turn off Rt 1 onto Howlett St. It didn't take long to discover the beauty of the entire area east of Rt. 1. Perkins Row is the main artery of that area. The windy, tree-lined road through the Ipswich River Watershed should be designated as a "scenic road", if it isn't already so. It is a favorite among walkers, joggers and bicyclists.

I am concerned about the potential impact of twenty-eight additional housing units on the town's water supply. As a volunteer for the Ipswich River Watershed Association, I know how fragile the water supply is. Moreover, every Topsfield resident should realize the precarious situation we find ourselves. After all, for many years there has been a mandatory water ban in effect for typically five months a year. I encourage you to check the IWRA website for detailed information. ([Wwww.ipswichriver.org](http://www.ipswichriver.org))

Sincerely,
David Paulin
96 Howlett St.
Sent from my iPhone

Donna Rich

From: Brooke Drozdowicz <brookedroz@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 03, 2018 9:53 PM
To: Planning Department
Cc: 40b01983@gmail.com; Brian Drozdowicz
Subject: Fwd:
Attachments: IMG-5215.JPG; IMG-5256.JPG; IMG-5214.JPG; IMG-5213.JPG; IMG-5212.JPG; IMG-5211.JPG; IMG-5209.JPG

As property owners at 46 Perkins Row we list of our concerns about the development project at 57 Perkins Row:

-Perkins Row is not a street I feel safe walking or biking on, especially with my small children ages 6,5, and 1. The road is narrow near our house and near the proposed development. It gets even narrower in winter when there is snow. Snow plows are forced to push snow into (and damage) our mailbox because the road is so narrow.

-Our driveway has poor visibility to traffic coming from the side where the development is proposed. We are concerned about additional traffic coming from that direction especially.

-Approximately 1/4 of my car trips on Perkins Row require me to stop for oncoming traffic to pass. Even small cars cannot pass where the trees are very close together between #13 and #17 and cars can't pass anywhere on the street if bicyclists or pedestrians are present.

-Mail, landscaping, garbage, recycling, and delivery trucks frequently have to pull on to our property to let cars pass because the road is so narrow. This creates potentially dangerous traffic and the truck tires tear up our and our neighbors' property, especially when it is wet and muddy. This damage can be seen all along the road and I have attached pictures of just a few of the examples. Where the trees are close together between 13 and 17 Perkins Row trucks have difficulty maneuvering alone even without oncoming vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian traffic. The heavy equipment required for this project will have difficulty navigating the road.

-The school bus travels down our street with barely enough room to maneuver itself let alone accommodate oncoming traffic. Where the trees are close together between #13 and #17 there is barely enough room for the bus to pass, let alone accommodate oncoming traffic. Bus routes show there are at least 15 families with school age children on Perkins Row, and 17 families on roads between Perkins Row and Route 1 or Ipswich Road. This does not include families whose children are not yet in school or families with children who do not attend Topsfield Public Schools.

-All means of egress from Perkins Row are challenging. Perkins and 97 gets backed up frequently during rush hour, has poor visibility, and no traffic light. Howlett and Route 1 (South only I believe) is a hairpin turn and steep incline with no traffic light. Averill and Route 1 is near a busy intersection and has no traffic light.

-The proposed development is not near public services like grocery stores and restaurants. One must travel down a narrow street with no sidewalks and no streetlights, then maneuver past a dangerous intersection at Route 97, travel on Route 97 (which also lacks sidewalks), and cross Route 1 (an even more dangerous intersection) to reach downtown to get even the most basic of supplies.

-Pulling onto Route 97 from Perkins Row is treacherous. Additional traffic may warrant a traffic light which would increase safety but also congestion especially when that area backs up at rush hour.

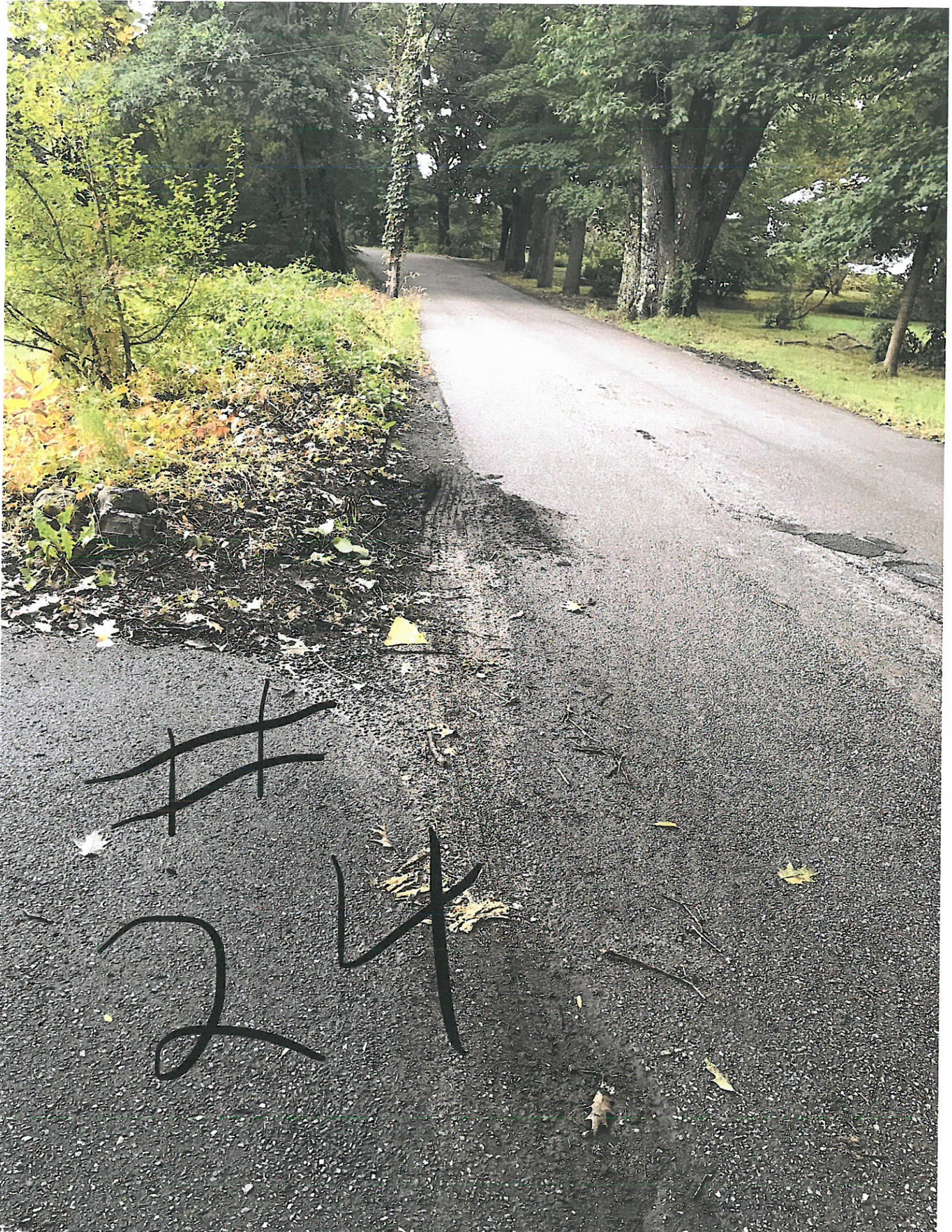
-There is a high volume of deer, turtles, coyotes, and other wildlife that create additional driving hazards. We've had some near misses

-We have a designated wetland near the road on our property. On multiple occasions this area is submersed such that we cannot mow the lawn. We are concerned additional development will adversely change the run off pattern.

-We see so many bicyclists and I worry about their safety given the narrow street and additional traffic.

Thank you for hearing our concerns.

Sincerely,
Brooke & Brian Drozdowicz



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Donna Rich

From: Joel Hariton <jhariton@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2018 9:10 PM
To: Planning Department
Subject: 57 Perkins Row

Dear Topsfield Planning Board:

I attended tonight's meeting regarding the new 28 home housing project being considered for 57 Perkins Row, and would like to bring to your attention something that may not have been considered.

I often walk and bicycle along Perkins Row on my way to the Topsfield Linear Common, sometimes several times a week. A country lane, Perkins Row is narrow and beautiful, which makes it appealing for a pedestrian or a biker as long as the traffic is low. Currently, that is the case.

There are numerous places where old, majestic trees on either side of Perkins Row cause a narrowing that restricts two vehicles to pass, and in some cases, a vehicle and a pedestrian, or a vehicle and a bicycle to pass. One such place is near 14 Perkins Row, where I have had several close calls. Each time I approach, whether on foot or on a bike, I carefully check who is approaching from both directions.

One time, a UPS truck was rushing down the road. The driver was clearly unfamiliar with Perkins Row and need to get to his next delivery as quickly as possible. As he approached me from behind, I signaled from my bicycle with an open palm towards him not to pass me as I came up to those two big trees narrowing the road by 14 Perkins Row. Luckily, he responded by slowing way down. Otherwise, he would have run me off the road or into one of those trees. After we both cleared the hazard, I waved a thanks and he responded similarly. We both shared the recognition that we dodged a bad accident.

So, my point is that 28 additional homes would not just increase car traffic unacceptably on Perkins Row, it would greatly increase UPS and Fed Ex truck delivery truck traffic on Perkins Row as the new home owners will likely be ordering more and more from Amazon and other on-line suppliers, like the rest of us. These trucks are moving quickly through a dangerous road, and the drivers are often unfamiliar with the challenges of driving on a street that varies in width quickly.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Hariton
12 Willowdale Road

