**Sent:**Sunday, July 10, 2022 8:01 PM  
**To:**[selectmen@topsfield-ma.gov](mailto:selectmen@topsfield-ma.gov); [selectpersons@topsfield-ma.gov](mailto:selectpersons@topsfield-ma.gov)  
**Subject:**Concern about new development to replace ball fields near the Gould Barn

Dear Selectpersons,

I recently read a description of the new development being considered for construction by the Caleb Group near the Commons and the Topsfield Town Library.

What struck my eye was the need stated by the developer to add a layer of four feet of soil to the plot before building so that the septic system could meet standards.  Four feet of soil is an enormous amount of fill to be used, even if it is not intended for the entire lot.

I know there are regulations about removing soil from the town of Topsfield for a project, but I do not know if there are rules about bringing a large amount of soil into town.

How do we know about the quality of the soil?

Last Wednesday, the Boston Globe had an article about Westminster, MA distributing compost to many locations with everyone expecting it to be organic and healthy; only to learn later that it was contaminated with PFAs. As a result, the water supplies of many were ruined.  Even good intentions could result in disasters if careful testing of soils is not made.  See [When organic is toxic: How a composting facility likely spread massive amounts of ‘forever chemicals’ across one town in Massachusetts - The Boston Globe](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bostonglobe.com%2F2022%2F07%2F06%2Fscience%2Fwhen-organic-is-toxic-how-composting-facility-likely-spread-massive-amounts-forever-chemicals-across-one-town-massachusetts%2F%3Fp1%3DBGSearch_Overlay_Results&data=05%7C01%7C%7Ca509b98454774b62163f08db3096d773%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638157196645250175%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=cMgzYfgBDmNF94TbJ2dlhp2mZAEUMKFFSRFDGFXCwpY%3D&reserved=0)

Please consider this soil issue carefully.  It seems that if a four foot high layer of soil has to be added, it indicates the location is not suitable for what is planned in the first place.  Yards and yards of new soil could be hiding poisons we do not need here, especially near a tributary that feeds into the Ipswich River.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Hariton

12 Willowdale Road