

John B. Linsley
169 Perkins Row
Topsfield, MA 01983

February 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Moriarty & Topsfield ZBA Members:

I felt compelled to write this letter after learning about the proposed Emerson Homes project. Growing up in Topsfield and now living here again as an adult, I have always appreciated its New England charm and small-town atmosphere. We are so fortunate as a town to still have remaining parcels of woods and fields in our historic, downtown area. Construction of a largescale residential complex on the Emerson property will permanently alter this open space landscape and forever change the downtown area's quaint nature with the arrival of more lighting, more signage, and more passenger as well as service and utility vehicle traffic. In addition, the proposed development's proximity to our common and many of our town's most iconic buildings will be a major juxtaposition. The area in question is also rich in wetlands and other environmentally sensitive features, including vernal pools and perennial streams, which is deeply concerning.

While development in Northshore towns, including Topsfield, is inevitable, it is important that any new development in town be approached thoughtfully and with consideration for what open and other natural spaces we want to leave for our future generations to enjoy. To proceed with a residential project of this scope in what is both a historically and environmentally sensitive area does not meet the bar we should be setting for our town.

Thank you for your consideration of my concern regarding the proposed Emerson Homes project.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. Linsley", written in a cursive style.

John B. Linsley