

Week ending April 30, 2021

From: Olivia Binette <olivia.binette@gmail.com>

Subject: Perkins Landing Concern

Date: April 27, 2021 at 7:07:55 PM EDT

To: Planning@topsfield-ma.gov

Hello!

I am a proud Topsfield resident (and have been all my life) and I would like to express my deep concern for the Perkins Landing 40B project. I lived with my family at this address from 2015-2018 and every summer the turtles used to come up from the Ipswich River to lay their eggs in our backyard and even up next to our driveway. As I agree that the town needs more affordable housing, this project would be devastating to the surrounding Ipswich River wildlife, of which these turtles are only one example.

If that wasn't enough, the preliminary architectural drawings are completely inadequate. As an architectural designer myself, I believe that these designs do not at all reflect the charm and style of the rest of the town.

Thank you,
Olivia Binette

-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Binette <bewilliams01983@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 7:52 PM

To: Zoning <Zoning@topsfield-ma.gov>

Subject: 57 Perkins Row

I'm writing to inform you of important information about this property. I lived at 57 Perkins Row as a tenant from September of 2014-November of 2017. During the time I was there I witnessed the fact that many turtles were using the property as their egg hatchery. In addition, the area housed a number of important species including red belly woodpeckers, pileated woodpeckers, barred owls and Cooper's hawks.

An other concern I want to bring to your attention is the extreme narrowness of the road and the steep curves that often made two- way driving dangerous.

As a resident, I witnessed that the area was barely able to handle the traffic and other human impacts already in place.

Thanks for your attention to this matter.

Barbara Williams, former resident of 57 Perkins Row

Sent from my iPhone

Citizen / Resident Email Received Relative to Perkins Landing / 57 Perkins Row
Hello Zoning Board of Appeals,

Brian Drozdowicz (brian.drozdowicz@gmail.com) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.topsfield-ma.gov/user/38/contact>) at Topsfield MA.

If you don't want to receive such e-mails, you can change your settings at <https://www.topsfield-ma.gov/user/38/edit>.

Message:

Hi Zoning Board - Thank you for the informative meeting last night to describe the road ahead. As it was suggested that we document questions/concerns, I wanted to use this opportunity to share some viewpoints/questions/concerns regarding the development.

While I am not an abutter to the property, I abut the abutters (as I reside at 46 Perkins Row), and have owned the home here for several years. Having shared concerns previously, and also having read through those submitted by other concerned residents, I will not further detail concerns around impact to environment and the river. I believe these are incredibly well documented by the Ipswich River Audubon and other environmental agencies, and I don't have anything incremental/substantive to contribute here.

What I will share are concerns around the practicality and impact of drastically increasing traffic on an already over-burdened roadway in safe manner. Over the last year I've worked from home most days throughout the pandemic, and have made it a point to try and get out for a walk on days that the weather permits.

My questions/concerns/requests fall into several categories here:

- 1) Increased traffic between 57 Perkins Row and the Route 97 intersection As noted by others, the width of the roadway from Route 97 to 57 Perkins Row is, in most places, 1 lane wide. Increasing traffic is going to further strain this already stressed road, and without increasing the width, it is not safe for cars, bikes, and pedestrians. In most places along the road, you will see tire marks from cars that need to pull up on neighbors front lawns to avoid oncoming traffic that is not accustomed to the width of the road. Adding 80+ cars traveling this roadway on a daily basis is going to push this beyond it's limits and there will be considerable incremental damage to homeowners property. Amongst other residents, we would like to see the results of the traffic study, with detailed specifics around width, capacity, and impact to current road infrastructure. While not likely a cost-viable solution, it would be far safer with a lesser impact to the current Perkins Row roadway to access the property from an access point adjacent the rail trail. Noted last night - there will be a complete traffic assessment completed; I would request this to be shared with all residents, and also the lists of 'asks' that the town prepares to make to remedy the expected concerns cited in this report.
- 2) Overflow parking and it's impact on Perkins Row (both during construction and post-project completion). The plan does not detail parking of contractors during the time of construction and also post-construction, in the event that parking is not available on the property. The current access point to the property is adjacent to perhaps the most dangerous blind corner on Perkins Row, where there is no available parking on the street without creating a considerable danger to other motorists and/or pedestrians. The home on the corner adjacent (64 Perkins Row) underwent a large renovation this past year, and the congestion on that corner alone from contractors made the roadway difficult to safely pass by, and that is a single family home with in-law; imagine the impact should contractors need to park along Perkins Row during construction for 40 units. In addition, once the project has been completed, what is the plan for overflow parking? I understand that there are 2.4 parking places per unit - does this include the garage spot for the units? If so - then there is likely to be a severe shortage which would then force visitors/residents to resort to on-street parking which is not feasible.
- 3) Lack of sidewalks; pedestrian and bicycle safety - Tying to both of the above points, Perkins Row is already a dangerous roadway for pedestrians given width and current traffic. Adding these new residents will increase both

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car and pedestrian/bike traffic. Per the proposed plan, sidewalks will be installed but only within the proposed development. Could a proposed solution here to be to install sidewalks from the intersection with Perkins Row to Route 97? Could a bike/pedestrian lane be added to the roadway?

4) Potential access to Topsfield Linear Common/Rail Trail - Building upon point 3, if a sidewalk is not a feasible solution, would it be possible to build a trail from the rail of the property (which would require a bridge over the river) to the rail trail/Wenham canal? This could potentially be a simple and safe solution to diverting pedestrian/bike traffic away from what will become a very high traffic area, at the junction of 57 Perkins and Perkins Row. While a simpler solution, a major development in Danvers on Route 1 has made access to Dayton St. instead of having residents need to walk/ride along Route 1 to access other services. Another potential solution would be to add a short bike lane along Route 97 to enter the rail trail at the entry point to the Route 97 fair entrance.

I am happy to discuss any of these in more detail at the board's request.

Thanks for consideration.

Best,
Brian Drozdowicz
Brooke Drozdowicz
46 Perkins Row

From: Joel Hariton <jhariton@hotmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 8:49 PM

To: Zoning <Zoning@topsfield-ma.gov>

Subject: Perkins Landing concerns

To the Zoning Board of Appeals:

More diversity enriches Topsfield. But a development that endangers its occupants and surroundings will work against that goal. Perkins Landing is wrongly situated, especially for a dense housing project.

Forty families, probably over 150 people, will live on this site where one family has lived before. Half of them will live directly on the banks of the Ipswich River, which was recently named by American Rivers the eighth most endangered river in the entire United States. The original house is situated much further from the river. So, a natural barrier is greatly minimized.

After 2 years of waiting for clarification, the sewage system remains poorly defined, and apparently poorly designed. Current drawings of the "Grading and Drainage Plan, 5 of 14" show that untreated waste-water must be mechanically pumped up from septic tanks near the river to leach fields at higher elevations than half of the homes. Few details have been provided, but what is clear is that the system relies on a mechanical pump to clear the rise, with no back up power indicated. It **will** fail, and the waste-water could end up in the river, if not the resident's homes. Gravity never stops, but all mechanical systems do at some point.

Two hundred feet downstream from the proposed Perkins Landing development, the Audubon Sanctuary land starts. The Ipswich River and the Audubon Sanctuary are two of Topsfield's natural treasures. According to my calculations, a spill of any kind that reaches the river will give us just a few minutes to remediate the failure **when** it happens. The homes are expected to last 100 or 150 years, if

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they are built well. So, who pays for maintaining the septic system and for the rapid-response clean-ups? And who reimburses the Town of Topsfield when the Town of Ipswich sues us for polluting their water?

There needs to be a well-funded septic system operation and spill remediation trust fund established before the first family moves in, and managed professionally until the last family moves out, in a century or two. The trust fund must be able to cover the septic operational costs and fast clean ups of each and every spill that falls into the Ipswich River from the Perkins Landing site.

Independent experts, paid by the Town of Topsfield, and not the developer, must calculate the initial financing of the trust fund. In order to obtain ZBA approval the developer should endow this trust fund and also reimburse the town for the cost of the expert's analysis and report.

Perkins Landing remains a danger, and the attempt to safely place 20 buildings for 40 homes on a few acres appears to be an unsolvable puzzle. This seems to be why the developer has continually said that the septic system will be solved "later." In my view, for the safety of the endangered river, The Audubon Sanctuary, the new home-owners and the Town of Topsfield, guaranteeing clean water management through a proper septic system should be one of the first challenges resolved.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Hariton

Willowdale Road, Topsfield
