

SANFORD A. WOODMANSEE
34 Elm Street
North Reading, MA 01864

JAN 31 2019

January 28, 2019

North Reading Zoning Board

North Reading, MA 01864

To Whom It May Concern:

We are against the proposed new development at 20 Elm Street in North Reading.

Our family has resided at 34 Elm Street for approximately 60 years. During this time, 20 Elm Street has received several variances which allowed this property to circumvent existing building codes for a residential neighborhood. These variances allowed the construction of the Thomson Country Club across the street as well as a clubhouse, for functions and events normally associated with the golf club. The Thomson Club, as it was run for approximately 50+ years, was never a good neighbor. Our property, along with our other long-term neighbors', have almost continuously endured loud parties, both at the swimming pool and at almost every other large event held at the club house. Parking lot trash including bottles, cans and paper trash were tolerable compared to the dirty diapers left by visitors who preferred to throw these items onto our property rather than to dispose of them properly. As a child, it was one of my chores to pick this up at least weekly.

When the variances were issued many years ago, promises were made to the residents that the property involved would never be developed, and more importantly, that the property would never be subdivided. These records can be obtained by and or through the town via their "minutes" of the many meetings held to discuss the changes to 20 Elm Street. At this time, I would like to mention that 20 Elm Street and the proposed development surrounds our property on all three sides with Route 62 (Elm St.) on our or north side. With our property being surrounded by 20 Elm Street we are uniquely affected by this proposed development. The wet land on town maps immediately behind our property and adjoining the parking lot and the tennis and swimming area used to provide true wetlands for conservation and wildlife habitat and used to be used as a cranberry bog (found on prior deeds for both properties). As of 5 or 6 years ago when the extensive remodeling occurred at Terases, lady slippers, jack-in-the-pulpits and swamp cabbage used to be found in large numbers. These wetlands have been destroyed by ongoing development without any permitting over many years. The brook (not named), has been dredged and the

water table lowered by the construction of a sinkhole within the wetland and a culvert installed. This culvert installed many years ago, now reflects the way in which such projects were done back then, quickly and quietly for the sake of a parking lot. This culvert has failed in the past few years as evidenced by the rather large pool or puddle found in the middle of the parking lot as it surrounds the storm drain. This drain is not protected from the oils and other pollutants associated with such parking facilities. Any soil testing done on the outlet side of the culvert will undoubtedly discover long term pollutants entering the Ipswich water basin through this illegal diversion.

Please also note that the yearly draining of the Olympic sized swimming pools has no proper facilities for such discharge, especially with the assumed large volume of chlorine, which I believe is also directed into this water way. Although this draining usually occurs during the late summer, periodical cleaning waste is also discharged on a regular basis. Again, soil testing for long-term pollution will explain our concerns.

This culvert/brook will also require the access road (as proposed) to cross above it. Although use of calcium chloride products has been used sparingly in the existing parking lot in the past, the new driveway, which will be required to handle approximately 1,000 (one thousand) vehicle transits per day will require a larger amount of these products, which I am sure are not allowed to enter the Ipswich water basin per existing rules. As recently as 4-5 years ago, (during construction and remodeling of the club house) the brook was dredged and the water table dropped. Never in all the years of residing here has anyone been able to walk through the woods to the swimming area without getting their feet wet. Since the brook was dredged you can now walk through, jump the lowered brook and not get your feet wet. This is proven by the existing root structure of the trees now growing on this part of the property. The trunks of the trees are raised above grade proving where the flood or wetland water table has existed for hundreds of years.

I also have knowledge that approximately 20 years ago, perk tests were done for installation of septic systems similar to what were installed across the street at the Greens. Those perk tests failed! There are several areas in which these test sites are still visible. Otherwise, we would have condos exactly like the Greens on the other side of Elm Street. I'd also like to point out that when the remodeling was done for the new Teresa's restaurant, that the septic design or modification was done which included areas now within the proposed subdivision. This point we would consider very important to the Ipswich watershed association and everyone who access this for their domestic water supply which is extensive.

I would also like to reiterate that this project will circumvent our property. This home was purchased as a single-family home and my parents raised three children here. The family as a whole has been very active in town for a lifetime. We have not spoken to any lawyers yet but how can this be legal? If not legal, it's certainly wrong for such long-term residents to be thrown under the bus with such a disaster.

This is a residential neighborhood. There are no services that would help to alleviate the burden that a 200-unit apartment complex needs. With no areas for recreation the areas

proposed for wetlands protection will be voided by the simple fact that these protected areas will be overwhelmed by population. The "protected" area along the river will no doubt be destroyed or at least compromised.

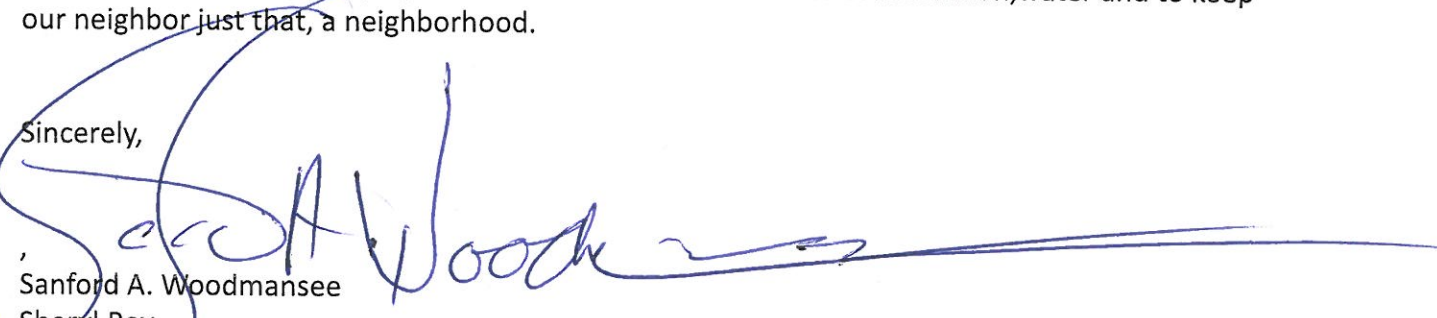
This proposal will put an excessive number of pedestrians onto Elm Street. Although there are sidewalks out front here there are no sidewalks into Middleton, Peabody, or Lynnfield. There are no services within walking distance of this proposal. North Reading does not have senior services that will access this site.

Lastly, we believe that this project will require a new well to provide water to this project. Our home was built in 1905 and there has never been an issue with water or a lack of it. The original well here was a man-made dug well reinforced with red brick and installed with an old-fashioned hand pump in the kitchen. Sometime around 1958, piping was put in and a pressure system was installed. We have never had any issues with our water supply (we are not connected to the town's water grid). Our concern is that with the illegal dropping of the water table per the illegal dredging mentioned above and with approximately 30,000 (Thirty thousand) gallons to be removed per day with a new well, this project will permanently destroy a wetland that is already in trouble.

This proposal for 200 apartments in this residential neighborhood is wrong. It does not do anything except lower every single abutters' property value. It traps our property with a commercial entity. It is not in the Town of North Reading's best interest. This is a beautiful, quiet and almost perfect residential neighborhood. This is just wrong!

Please help us defeat this project and save these vital areas for conservation, water and to keep our neighbor just that, a neighborhood.

Sincerely,



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