

August 11, 2020

Town of Walpole Conservation Commission  
135 School Street  
Walpole, MA 02081  
Attn: John Wiley, Chairman

Town of Walpole Zoning Board of Appeals  
135 School Street  
Walpole, MA 02081  
Attn: John Lee, Chairman

I am writing with comments and concerns about the proposed development, "The Residences at Pinnacle Point" on Pinnacle Drive in Walpole. I have reviewed the Comprehensive Permit Site Approval Application dated May 3, 2020, currently posted on the town's website.

Living in the neighborhood and very frequently using the Pinnacle and Endean Trails, I am quite familiar with the surroundings. While I was not aware that the area proposed for development is privately owned, that is clearly the case. I am aware that it is a former industrial area and therefore qualifies as a "brownfield" development; even though its state and use for the last 25 years resembles "greenfield" open space.

My main concern about the proposed development has to do with the amount of earthwork that would evidently be required. The application materials do not seem to represent that or address it in any way. Specifically, the application materials para. 3.1 Required Attachments Related to Section 3 calls for "Preliminary Site Layout Plans" that include proposed site grading. No new grading design is shown. While the Section 2 questionnaire includes a query about the presence steep slopes and the applicant responds "No", there are obviously areas of steep terrain in the transition from Pinnacle Drive to the riverfront below.

While there may be a design to accomplish the development within engineering guidelines, it is not shown. I assume that any design would require a good deal of imported material. Extensive retaining walls would be required along with extensive excavation for their construction. Location adjacent to the Neponset River is obviously a concern with respect to earthworks.

There is a listing of specific requirements for the Preliminary Site Layout Plans (setbacks, utilities ....) and it is not clear that all these are delineated. A clearly stated requirement that the plans be signed and sealed by a registered professional engineer or architect is not met.

The Tabular Zoning Analysis shows a rear yard setback (this is the riverfront side?) of 3.75 ft, while 30 ft. is required by the zoning ordinance, which catches my eye.

As a professional architect and an advocate for sustainable building practices, the Sustainable Development Criteria Scorecard – Developer Self-Assessment section of the application is of interest to me. While some of the queries beg responses that may be subjective, I find several of them to be suspect, at least based on the information I see included. In any case, there are spaces on the form for "Explanation (Required)"; in many cases none is given. Certainly, there is room for discussion and consideration.

I have been told that there is a determination to be made whether the waters known as Bird Pond shall be deemed a "pond" or a "river" for purposes of regulating adjacent development. In my view any

determination of this reach of the Neponset River as anything but that would be ludicrous. While the "Bird Pond" stretch just upstream of the East Walpole / Hogie Bear dam is evidently an impoundment of long standing, the hydrological operation at this time is clearly run-of-the-river as the dam is not utilized or operated to any purpose, nor has it been for quite some time.

In closing, as a frequent user of the trails I have urgent hope that any development will preserve the public access that allows connection of the Pinnacle and Endean trails. The ability to access the Pinnacle Trail at Plimpton Street (near Hemlock Street) and connect to the Endean Trail near Washington Street in East Walpole, enabling a loop around the entire reach of the Neponset back to Plimpton Street at "dog rock" near the Plimptonville Commuter Rail stop is a valuable recreation opportunity that benefits the public.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to following the progress of the application/approvals process in your hearings. Please call on me with any questions about the foregoing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Wildnauer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

David Wildnauer

42 Plimpton Street, Walpole

(508) 641-0108

david.wildnauer@verizon.net