

Wrentham Board of Health  
Wrentham Planning Board  
Wrentham Conservation Committee  
79 South Street  
Wrentham, MA 02093

July 10,2022

RE: Sheldon Meadow and Sheldon West

Subject: Proposed Development in an Aquifer Protection District

Dear Board Members,

My name is Alexander Lyon. I have lived at 1129 West Street since 1992 and am an abutter to both proposed developments. These developments present many troubling issues to my wife Diane and myself. I will present my concerns in bullet format and will be as brief as possible.

- My first concern is groundwater and flooding. As we all know, both projects lie in areas with extremely high water tables. If you review the existing conditions plans presented by the developer, you will see very small “islands” of uplands that can be built on. The developer has proposed a couple of schemes that require vast amounts of fill to be brought in to make the projects viable. The latest presentation calls for 5’ of fill to be added to both sites. I find it troubling because this fill and terra-scaping will make all of the existing historic homes in Sheldonville lower in elevation than these new projects. All the residents in Sheldonville will attest to flooded basements and over-taxed sump pumps November to late June. I need to appeal to common sense and point out that water will always seek the lowest elevation or groundwater, our basements!!!
- In order for the developers scheme to work, the developer needs huge infiltration basins to absorb all the excess water generated from the impervious roadways, side walks, patios, and roofs. The developer has the audacity to locate these infiltration basins on the abutters property lines. Is it not the purview of the local boards to look out for the current residents when projects like this are proposed? Appealing to common sense reasoning, Wrentham was incorporated in 1679. In the last few hundred years, every farmer in Sheldonville has realized that these properties are too wet to build on, otherwise houses would have already been built.
- Please review a topographic map and notice that Sheldonville lies at the lowest elevation in town. Why, because it lies in a massive watershed that supplies the Diamond Hill Reservoir, which in turn provides water to the city of Pawtucket, RI. If you leave the Sheldonville Post Office, every direction you travel is uphill; West Street in both directions; Sheldonville Road; Hancock Street and Arnold Road. We in Sheldonville are literally ground zero with flooding issues already. Are two new high- density SLC’s right in the middle of a flood plain, raised 5’ higher than the rest of Sheldonville a benefit to the Town of Wrentham and its tax paying citizens or an out of town developer looking to profit from a hot real estate market? To me as a resident and an abutter, these projects do not pass the common sense test.

- In order to maximize profits, the developer is proposing community septic systems on both sites. Despite all assurances from the developers engineers, these systems are unproven, expensive, and very costly to manage. Both sites are being proposed as “affordable” housing for senior citizens looking to downsize and simplify their lives. I don't think that the elected heads of the homeowners association will have any experience running these mini treatment plants. Common sense tells me that when expensive things fail, it is very expensive to repair. Isn't this project supposed to be affordable? As town officials, will you require that these septic plants be well capitalized? I ask the board of health to consider the problems and cost overruns at Fox Run off Park Street, Oak Hill further down West Street, and the plant at the high school that needed to be replaced with a conventional septic system. Does it make common sense to require these developments be a conventional subdivision with private septic? Will a conventional subdivision be less dense and less harmful to the surrounding Sheldonville community? Will a conventional subdivision be in keeping with the existing town by-law that stipulates 2-acre zoning?
- As a resident of Sheldonville, this end of town was set aside by the town forefathers to be open and rural with R-87 zoning. I think the town officials had great wisdom in making this end of town rural. Sheldonville has a vibe, a look, a feel about it that will forever be altered by this type of development. Common sense says “if it isn't broken, don't fix it” I don't think you will find a person who thinks Sheldonville is broken. There is no need to alter the zoning to accommodate this type of development.

In closing, I would ask each board member to use common sense and not rely on a preponderance of data to make an informed decision and recommendation on these proposed projects. Diane and I would like to thank all the board members who take the time to carefully consider the impact to the wider community when projects of this scope are brought to the boards for consideration.

<b>To</b>	concom@wrentham.gov
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<b>Subject</b>	Sheldon Meadow and Sheldon West

Dear Board Members and Administrators,  
Please enter my letter into the public record for consideration regarding both proposed developments.  
Thank you. Alex Lyon.