

From: Marilyn Kobus <Marilyn.Kobus@richardsonsalesperformance.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 3:34 PM

To: Sarah Mellish <ZBACHairperson@manchester.ma.us>

Cc: Town Clerk <townclerk@manchester.ma.us>; Gail Hunter <HunterG@manchester.ma.us>

Subject: TIME SENSITIVE: Perspectives on the SLV project

Importance: High

 Dear Sarah Mellish, ZBA Chairperson,

As a concerned citizen of Manchester-by-the-Sea, I am heartsick at the thought of the irreparable damage to our town's character and feel as a result of SLV's ill-conceived Shingle Place Hill project. Not only that, but of grave concern is the impact on our precious environment and the town's infrastructure.

My family and I have written letters over the past several months to the Board of Selectmen to express our concerns about the project, which are many. I understand that citizens' letters are not carried over into the ZBA proceedings, so I am writing again on behalf of my husband and children in the hopes that our town leaders and decision-makers **will choose to decline the proposed SLV project**. It in no way seems to be a fit.

I will be brief here. I know and support the focused, professional, and thorough work organized by the Manchester Essex Conservation Trust, and share fully their grounded perspectives and opinions. That said, I will speak personally, not as a scientist, but as an active citizen who appreciates what our town stands for, its values, and the natural beauty, wildlife, and precious resources of our surroundings.

First, what stands out for me is the quote that is placed on the plaque – **“To the glory of God and for the benefit of man these woods are preserved forever – 1879.”** We have learned that in these woods are certified vernal pools. Manchester has created very strong by-laws to protect the vernal pools and has long stood by them. I implore you to do the right thing and maintain your steadfastness and commitment to these values and **decline any request that will waive their protection**.

In addition to the vernal pools, I am deeply concerned about the proximity to the Saw Mill River and the impact on our water supply. Please listen to the experts who have written the technical reports. I respect the difficult situation the ZBA is in. However, what we have in nature cannot be regained once we give up on it and go down the route of development – all in the midst of a conservation area!

Besides the negative and irreversible environmental impact caused by such a huge development, we have as a town to deal with the increased need for wastewater treatment. After much investment, we have begun to make progress in that area. If the proposed Shingle Place Hill project comes on the scene, a significant amount of the hard-won increased capacity will be diverted to that one area. Somehow that does not seem prudent for our town. I would encourage **no waivers on this regard as well**.

Finally, it comes down to “people” – as stated, preserving the woods for the “benefit of man”... Yes, I agree that having affordable housing will also benefit people, but not in this proposed format. Not at all.

I cannot see how this development “fits in” or suits the wooded conservation area. The visuals would be abhorrent, in my opinion, as a traveler on the road to Essex who enjoys the peace and serenity of the natural roadside. Even more so, **those woods are a haven** for our family and so many others who seek the calm and healing value of being in undisturbed woods and natural settings. Having a monstrosity

sitting on a once beautiful hill is so distasteful, **not in keeping with the area (as required by the MA 40B guidelines)** or with our town's values. Clearly this would upset our citizens' ability to find the sense of peace, solitude, and healing from the physical and emotional stresses of busy lives. And once it's gone, it's gone. Sadly. There is no going back.

I beseech you to think about the future. Please do the right thing. Please make the decision to be firm and continue preserving what we have. The affordable housing we develop should be consistent with the area. Shingle Place Hill is not consistent in any way with what our town stands for. Our town is small in character and feel and all of the destruction would produce only 35 units of affordable housing out of the huge number being planned. **We would lose so much only to gain so little. Please help protect what is priceless and what past generations have worked so hard to keep!**

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share our family's perspective, and for your openness to fully-informed decision-making in this entire process.

Sincerely,

***Marilyn Kobus**

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