

From: Deb Abrahams-Dematte deb.abrahamsdematte@gmail.com
Subject: Variance for San-Ken / Barrett Hill Rd
Date: October 18, 2022 at 4:48 PM
To: zba.002@wiltonzba.org, wiltonzba@wiltonzba.org
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DA

October 18, 2022

To the Wilton Zoning Board of Adjustment:

We are writing in reference to the request by San-Ken Homes to receive a special exception on lot A-44-1 to build a driveway which will cross a designated wetland area. We are abutters to this project at 72 Barrett Hill Rd, and we have serious concerns about the poorly thought-out plans that have thus far been submitted by San-Ken Homes. Bill is also a professional hydrogeologist with over 25 years of experience. He is licensed in NH and NY.

The lack of preparedness in the plans thus far and the multiple re-mapping to add additional wetlands areas that were not mapped the first two times suggests to us that this developer has no intent of following rules with the development any more than he did when he logged the site last year, ignoring setbacks from Barrett Hill Road and wetlands, which at the time were not even included on the map created by his engineer. This is why we object to the granting of this special exception to obstruct 1,000 feet or more of wetland. This will create a narrow culvert by which to funnel wetland waters and thereby increase water flow velocities downstream of the culvert in the wetland that will surely increase erosion in these areas. If this is not enough reason, consider these additional issues.

- There is currently no approved sub-division for this lot at all. There is no comprehensive lot plan that has reasonable and safe access and building lots all on the same plan. This alone indicates that there is no thought going into how the property is being developed. The latest plan shows the driveway going through the middle of Lots 1 and 3. It is premature to request variance to plow through wetlands when it is unclear as to where the lots and homes are to even be located.
- The proposed driveway will be a large cut and fill on a seriously steep slope. The cut and fill will not even reduce the slope of the drive, but maintain the current slope, which is shown at 10% grade. Just as a frame of reference, the grade coming off Temple Mountain on Route 101 is on the order of 6-7%. Imagine a fire truck needing to get down that driveway on an icy winter day. The road agent for the town of Wilton has brought this exact safety issue up himself in addition to the inability of this historic town road (Barrett Hill) to sustain a 100% increase (doubling) of traffic on Barrett Hill. Note: it appears that his plan seeks to add 7 lots and 4-6 road cuts to Barrett Hill.
- Going back to the proposed access drive -- at 10%, the amount of armor (rip-rap and other erosion control measures) that would be required to prevent erosion off the sides of the drive would be significant, increasing the breadth of the drive to such proportion that would be out of line with the character of Barrett Hill Rd. It would be something like Route 101 intersecting Barrett Hill, akin to the logging access that has already been installed, wiping out riparian growth adjacent to wetlands that takes runoff to the wetlands at the bottom of Barrett Hill and the river system across the road. At 10% there would be great potential for erosion into the wetlands, not only from the placement of the road but during the construction process.
- Finally though not specifically related to the driveway variance but

...many, though not specifically related to the driveway variance but indicative of the thoughtlessness of this project, there has been no mention or consideration of the water supply for this development and the impacts that it is likely to have on neighboring properties on the hill. A development of seven residences would require something on the order of 4,200 gallons of water a day to support these residences. There has been no study at all as to the impact of withdrawing this much water from the aquifers on this hill and how it would impact existing water supplies and wetlands in the area. Water, presumably drawn from bedrock aquifers and disposed of through overburdened septic systems will increase water flow in this environment. In my experience, this is one of the most overlooked items when people talk of developing building lots.

There have been multiple meetings on this project but no agreement on a proposal. The property under consideration is part of the watershed district and watershed protection district, both of which would be endangered by this proposal. The original site plan did not accurately depict the land and left out areas of running water and vernal pools. We are aware that the Planning Board has requested that both districts be surveyed and accurately identified, so that they may be appropriately protected under existing rules and guidelines. This needs to be done by an independent third party, especially as the developer's own mapping has consistently shown a disregard and/or ignorance of what are wetlands and vernal pools.

Given Wilton's Master Plan has designated constraints on future development in wetlands, on steep slopes, and on poorly and very poorly drained soils – ALL of which exist here on this site, it seems prudent that a very well thought out proposal should be completed before the Zoning Board or Planning Commission make any variances or approvals of any sort; particularly since the property in question is clearly noted on the Wilton Constraints map as not-developable due to steep slopes. The driveway exception being asked for directly relates to this concern as it impacts erosion and runoff into existing wetlands.

It is confusing and discouraging as residents to know that the town and state have made agreements, plans, and regulations to protect our natural areas, yet there is an on-going demand to develop this area in ways that are contrary to our own established environmental protection regulations. The proposed plan would significantly alter the character of this rural neighborhood and compromise the rights and safety of everyone who lives here and of those who are in charge of safety (i.e. fire department services). We hope that our previous community agreements and the Zoning Board's own existing rules will prevail in this matter. We ask that you deny the special exception requested by San-Ken.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Abrahams-Dematte (NH PG #415, Hydrogeologist, AECOM)
& Deb Abrahams-Dematte

72 Barrett Hill Rd
Wilton, NH