

Neil Faiman, Chairman
Wilton Zoning Board of Adjustment

March 10, 2025

Re: William Ryan's Opposition to Case 3/11/2025-2 Lot A-47-1; 74 Stagecoach Road

Dear Mr. Faiman,

Please allow this correspondence to serve as my opposition to the application from the Dawn C. Ryan Revocable Trust of 2021 (the "Trust") to the Zoning Board of Adjustment ("ZBA"). I reside at 54 Stagecoach Road, Wilton, New Hampshire (Lot A-47-2), which directly abuts the subject property, Lot A-47-1 at 74 Stagecoach Road ("Lot A-47-1").

First and foremost, I would like to assert a few misrepresentations made by Attorney Pinsonneault in the letter to the ZBA dated February 25, 2025, regarding the history of Parcel B on Lot A-47-1. In relevant part, his letter states that the bridge on our land, through which Ms. Dawn Ryan has an easement, was "restored." This is inaccurate: the bridge was completely removed and then replaced with a significantly larger bridge, complete with five steel supporting beams and capable of handling large vehicles. The installation of the bridge, which resulted in the removal of a quantity of trees and vegetation, has left our property in a worse state.

Furthermore, we also wish to make a correction to the site plan marked by Ms. Ryan's counsel as "EX 101." Namely, the plan states that the existing bridge on Lot A-41-2 is eighteen feet in length when in reality it measures thirty-two feet long by fourteen feet wide.

Moving forward, as an abutter to the subject property, I am concerned about the overall environmental impact on the wetlands and woodlands in this area as well as to the surrounding properties. With insufficient details, the Trust has proposed a "nature path" which will run generally from west to east, through a lowland area including wetlands to a proposed bridge over Mill Brook, then continues easterly through additional wetlands and then woodlands on much higher ground. Note that the area through which the path is proposed to traverse is regularly underwater during the "melt" season as well as during periods of substantial rain, and this floodwater flows in a southerly direction.

The "nature path" is stated to be gravel, but will it require the construction of a supporting roadbed beneath it? It is reasonable to assume any roadbed would have to be of sufficient height to accommodate the abovementioned flood conditions. At the very least, the bridge will have to be at a significant height so to be above the high-water mark. This will necessitate the construction of a raised earthen berm to act as an approach to the bridge.

These topics raise the concern that land alterations resulting from construction of the "nature path" will act as a dam and impede the natural flow of water under the recurring flood conditions. There is a substantial likelihood that this will cause a backup of water on my land, as well as other abutting lots immediately upstream of the proposed project, negatively impacting property values including ours.

Moreover, the gravel path and any required roadbed, being earthen in nature, will be subject to erosion by flowing water. This condition will be present on a regular basis due to the aforementioned flooding in this area. Any erosion of the roadbed would further deposit eroded material downstream onto the abutting lot owned by the "Hoover Revocable Trust."

These are real and reasonable concerns and, apart from one single note regarding a "[c]ulvert if necessary," not addressed on the proposed plan. Holistically, the submitted plan lacks details as to how wide a track they plan to cut in order to construct and maintain the nature path. There is also no indication as to what types of motorized vehicles, if any, would be supported by such a nature path. For example, snowmobiles are mentioned, but would an excavator and/or tractor be permitted? If not, how would the Town enforce this (or any) restriction?

In sum, the "nature trail" project proposed by the Trust could have a severe, negative impact on not only my property, but other abutting properties as well. When considering an application that includes an environmentally sensitive area, the proposed plan is in no way sufficient to address the concerns set forth above. While I maintain my position that this application should be outright denied, such a plan requires, at a minimum, that a serious environmental impact study be conducted to understand the ramifications to the surrounding wetlands prior to considering such an application.

Finally, it is encouraged that the ZBA conduct a site walk at this time to understand the presence of the flood water on the property. This would present an informative opportunity, as it would clearly illustrate the conditions with which a building project in the area would have to contend. It would also shed some light on how neighboring properties would be impacted.

Thank you in advance for your attention to my concerns. While I intend to be present at the hearing on March 11, 2025, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, or wish to follow up.

Sincerely,
William Ryan (Lot A-47-1)
54 Stagecoach Road, Wilton