

March 16, 2021

Planning Board
Town of Groton
Groton, MA 01450
Email: ttada@grotonma.gov

Re: Hayes Woods Definitive Subdivision Plan

Dear Mr. Tada and Members of the Planning Board;

We are writing to you relative to the recently submitted Hayes Woods Definitive Subdivision Plan (the “Definitive Plan”) as residents of the Town of Groton who regularly walk, bike and run along Maple Avenue. The signatories to this letter include residents of Maple Avenue and other members of the Groton community.

While we are by no means expert in reading plans, even a layman’s review of the Definitive Plan that was submitted in February 2021, reveals that this Plan does not include the vast majority of the 100’ buffer along Maple Avenue that was promised last September. As previously reported in the Groton Herald, the Preliminary Plan approved by the Planning Board on September 10, 2020, “saved Maple Avenue.” The result of months of hearings and Russ Burke’s creativity was preliminary approval of a development plan with a single road running parallel to Maple Avenue and, equally important, a 100-foot vegetated buffer between the new road [Hayes Lane] and Maple Avenue within which no trees would be removed and no development would be permitted, “thus preserving the quiet rural character of the much-beloved byway” (*The Groton Herald*, 10/01/2020). The 100 foot buffer is shown on the approved Preliminary Plan, was promised at the September 10, 2020 hearing, confirmed by the Developer’s engineer during the Planning Board’s site walk last November [at the end of which he promised there would be no tree removal within the buffer], and confirmed again by the Developer’s attorney at the February 23, 2021 Conservation Commission hearing. The Definitive Plan does no such thing. Further, if the development moves forward as proposed on the Definitive Plan, virtually all, if not all, of the large maple trees which give Maple Avenue its name will be destroyed. This represents another very significant deviation from the Preliminary Plan.

We respectfully request you to ask Nitsch Engineering, the Town’s independent engineer, to review the Developer’s Definitive Plan and include consideration of the following:

1. Whether relocation of Hayes Lane near Lots 3, 4 and 5, further back into the development, would permit preservation of the 100’ buffer on those lots;
2. Whether removal of the house on Lot 5 would permit the subsurface infiltration system located on that lot to be located higher on the landscape, sufficient to preserve the 100’ buffer on Lots 4 [H #66], 5 [H#78] and 6 [H#90];
3. Whether relocation of the drainage easement and infiltration basin on Lot #7[H#106] to the low area between the house and Maple Avenue thereby creating a natural basin, perhaps even rotating the house 90 degrees, would be sufficient to preserve the 100’ buffer on Lot 7 [H#106], including the large Maple trees in the right of way;
4. Whether finishing the gated section of Hayes Lane with a pervious material designed to allow for absorption and control of rainwater and other sources of water would permit reduction in size or

relocation of the drainage easement on Lot 6 [H#90] sufficient to preserve the 100' buffer on Lot 6 [H#90]], including the large Maple trees in the right of way; and

5. Whether relocating the construction entrance to the end of Hayes Lane nearest to Hill Road might be beneficial for two reasons:
 - i. Safety – the entrance is currently between 30 - 50 feet from the blind curve; Maple Avenue experiences very significant traffic from pedestrians and cyclists (including many children), and runners
 - ii. The width of Maple at the current location is such that heavy trucks pulling onto Maple Avenue will either ride the edge of the asphalt or exceed the asphalt, likely resulting in significant damage to the integrity of the pavement. [See Fire Truck Turning Exhibit].

We also request the Planning Board conduct a second site walk to view the newly proposed edge of the development activity along Maple Avenue. As commented on during the Board's hearings regarding the Village at Shepley Hill, the "Subdivision Regulation has been in place for more than 40 years and is one of the most important regulations in maintaining the natural appearance and visual character of Groton." The Developer's proposed Definitive Plan will result in serious degradation of the beautiful rural character of Maple Avenue. We respectfully ask that the Board review these issues with the Developer and its representatives to ensure that the integrity of the Town's development regulations, as well as the natural beauty and scenic nature of Maple Avenue, are upheld and protected before any approvals for this Development are issued.

Sincerely,

Deborah Collum & David Wittek
137 Maple Avenue

Chris Shattuck
134 Maple Avenue

John and Beth Konetsky
157 Maple Avenue

Jon Shattuck
134 Maple Avenue

Lisa and Aubrey Theall
197 Maple Avenue

Brian Barnes
238 Maple Avenue

Torrey and Cindy Holmes
240 Maple Avenue

Laurie and Warren Callan
236 Maple Avenue

Diane and Tim Mahan
242 Maple Avenue

Ellen Cocossa
127 Hill Road

Lisa and Hugh McLaughlin
151 Hill Road

Jeff and Olga Box
409 Pepperell Road

Rob Smith
269 Pepperell Road

Jay and Doris Saoud
271 Pepperell Road

Dan Royalty
40 Throne Hill Road

Joe Gill
41 Castle Dr

Tom and Kerry Bielicki
186 Hill Road

Chloe Fross
137 Maple Avenue

Jonathan Wilson
53 Castle Drive

Kosea Frederick
54 Castle Drive

cc: Groton Conservation Commission
Groton Stormwater Advisory Committee
Groton Tree Warden
Groton Friends of the Trees
Groton Conservation Trust