

November 6, 2023
355 Hoyts Wharf Rd.
Groton MA 01450

To:
Groton MA Zoning Board of Appeals
Groton MA Select Board

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My wife and I moved to our current residence on Hoyts Wharf Rd thirty years ago with our one-year-old son. Our second son was born within two weeks of moving in, and we raised our family here. We chose the location because of its quiet, rural character. The Transfer Station and Highway Dept were nearby but other than Saturdays, when most of Groton brings their trash and recycling, our kids could learn to ride their bikes on Cow Pond Brook Road because there was almost never any traffic.

Since then, over a dozen new single-family homes were built in the area and we have been glad to welcome those new neighbors. Soccer and baseball fields were installed, which caused a significant increase in traffic, mainly on weekends at first. Then lights were installed at the ball fields, so now we're seeing 70 - 100 cars entering and exiting the area over several 15 minute periods on most evenings and weekends, and that doesn't stop until well after dark. With the lights, which are often on when nobody's there, our night sky isn't what it used to be.

About 15 years ago, there was a movement to convert the town's existing landfill into a regional waste depository for eastern Massachusetts. This was expected to bring dozens of large semi-trucks down Cow Pond Brook Road daily for several years. Fortunately, that initiative was voted down.

A police firing range was created, and soon we saw law enforcement from as far away as Springfield coming to practice with automatic weapons as early as 7am on some days. Fortunately, it only took a few calls to our police department for this to change so that now, only Groton PD uses the range and rarely at that. Recently, a regional composting facility was installed. As a result, our yard smells of rotting cheese whenever the wind blows from the north which is nauseating and produces headaches among our family members.

Our neighborhood is also the recipient of a solar field and a cell tower. Fortunately, these are merely eyesores and do not add to the noise or traffic.

Now we learn that a 40-unit high-density development is about to go in next to the solar field, the police shooting range and the composting facility. The sand pit that is the intended site for Heritage Landing already has a checkered history. The owner aggressively extracted sand until his excavator broke through into the aquifer below. It sat there for at least a year until it was finally removed. Since most of the homes in the area get water via private wells, we are justifiably concerned about landfills and cluster homes in our neighborhood as health hazards.

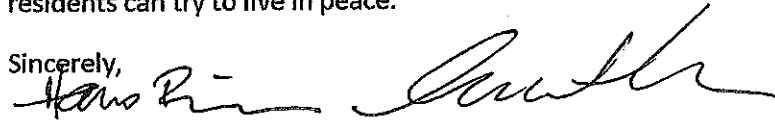
I say all of this not to be verbose, but to demonstrate why it appears that our quiet little part of Groton has become the preferred site for any noisy, smelly, traffic-generating or unsightly new initiatives that the town wishes to undertake.

A 40-unit development is totally out of character for this part of town. It's going to add over 100 vehicles per day to an already-crowded Cow Pond Brook Road. The added septic load threatens the aquifer upon which all of our private wells depend. It introduces environmental issues like noise and light pollution that negatively affect wildlife habitat and the folks that live nearby.

In short, Heritage Landing is the latest insult in a series of encroachments on the "Quiet Enjoyment" that we contracted for when we bought our properties in this neighborhood.

We ask that you do not approve this development. That sand pit already produced a lot of money for its owners through mineral extraction, while making noise and destroying habitat. At this point, a responsible owner would make every effort to restore it to its natural state so that the wildlife and area residents can try to live in peace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Hans Riemer".

Hans and Anne Riemer
355 Hoyts Wharf Road