

Tuesday, February 2, 2016

To: Members of Sherborn's wider community and especially our Board of Health

Two points I'd like to make and enter into public record at tonight's February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 BOH hearing as a citizen living in Sherborn and following the Comprehensive Permit Process for the Fields at Sherborn proposed development.

- 1) As is the case across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Board members who sit on our Town's Zoning Board, Board of Health, Conservation Board, Advisory, Selectmen and further are elected by fellow citizens to represent them and the business of the town as unpaid, volunteers. Many hours are put in by our neighbors after a full day at their "day job" and often forsaking family commitments to serve the Town interests. Learning how to accomplish the work of Town Boards is done on the job and under scrutiny in the presence of Open Meeting transparency.
  - a. Specifically the task of the Board of Health to oversee protection of all resident's access to safe drinking water via scrutiny of building application for wells and septic systems is done by following bylaws in place based on science to provide reasonable safety measures for individual homes.
  - b. When confronted with an atypical non-single family home development without standard land spacing to fit the bylaws the board members have a difficult challenge in order to determine the unknown. The safety of private septic systems and private well water for individual homeowners on 1 acres or more are well documented. It is unknown when faced with multiple homes, private wells and private septic systems with significantly less land to mitigate any septic effluent.
  
- 2) There is ample evidence of private septic systems contaminating and causing illness in private well water when systems are overburdened. I'd like to point out one case of several cited by the Center for Disease Control's Environmental Health Services Branch (EHSB) scientists Richard Gelting and Michael Herring in a 2005 White Paper found on the CDC site (and attached) at: [http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Docs/Small\\_Flows\\_Gelting\\_Herring.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Docs/Small_Flows_Gelting_Herring.pdf).
  - a. In February 2001, the Wyoming Department of Health reported cases of acute gastroenteritis from vacationers at a snowmobile lodge. A study showed that there was a significant association between water consumption and illness. "Norwalk-like virus (NLV) was found in eight of 13 stool samples and one well," according to "A Waterborne Outbreak of Norwalk-Like Virus among Snowmobilers," published in the Journal of Infectious Diseases, volume 187, 2003. The three wells that served the lodge were located within 92 to 115 feet of a septic tank or outhouse. "Contamination of the water supply is attributed to the geological

conditions of the area and to an overloaded sewage disposal system. The sandy, porous soil present at the lodge has poor adsorption qualities and permitted rapid water percolation, decreasing the soil's ability to filter and remove viruses. Any viruses reaching the fractured granite bedrock below could then be easily pulled into the groundwater well source by the well's pumping action. The lodge owner remodeled the facilities in November 2000, and the increased sewage load was not matched with a larger septic system, which caused more effluent to pass through the leach fields at a faster rate. **The site of this outbreak is illustrative of the need to carefully consider local geology and not simply distance siting requirements for septic systems and wells to ensure safe drinking water.**

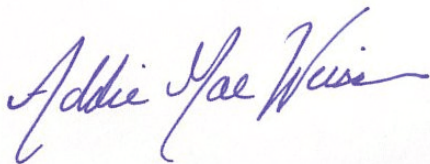
Further reference to health risks posed is found on State of Massachusetts's Official Website of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/wastewater/failing-septic-systems-can-be-hazardous-to-your-health.html>

"Inadequately treated sewage from failing septic systems poses a significant threat to drinking water and human health because diseases and infections may be transferred to people and animals directly and immediately. Dysentery, hepatitis, typhoid fever, and acute gastrointestinal illness are some of the more serious examples. Inadequately treated sewage from failing septic systems is the most frequently reported cause of groundwater contamination."

Thanks for accepting my entry into record. At the end of the day in a town such as Sherborn and the roughly 12 other towns throughout the commonwealth unique in having no infrastructure in place for public water or sewer – it is essential to rely on known measures to ensure safe drinking water because no one can live in a home of any size without access to clean water.

Respectfully,



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