

Pepperell Conservation Commission

One Main Street, Pepperell, MA 01463

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Selectmen

From: Ellen Fisher, Conservation Administrator

Re: Comments re New Site Approval for Bayberry 40B

Date: August 9, 2007

After reading the attachment ("Project Consistency with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles") to Melissa E. Robbins' letter of March 19, 2007 to Anne Good of the MA Housing Finance Agency regarding a site approval letter for the Bayberry 40B project, I offer the following comments on behalf of the Conservation Commission.

In particular, because of the sensitivity of this site for the Bemis Road municipal well and wildlife habitat (including rare wildlife), the Conservation Commission does not believe that this site is appropriate for the type of dense development proposed. The Project Consistency report (PCR) admits initially that this project violates the Redevelop First principle. The Commission agrees.

With that admission, the PCR then claims that this project complies with both the Concentrate Development and Restore & Enhance the Environment principles. It is my feeling that because this project does Concentrate Development in an inappropriate natural resource-rich area of Pepperell, it violates the Restore & Enhance the Environment principle. There is no evidence of any restoration or remediation associated with this project, and while the PCR states that about 38 acres would be protected from development, no standard type of development of this land would protect less land. If several more ANR lots were developed from the minimal remaining frontage on Bayberry and Ashley Streets, many fewer homes would be added to this property than are proposed under this plan. Less dense development, guided by wetland permitting, would do less damage to the environment in this area. On the other hand, a subdivision following local zoning would be required to submit an Open Space Residential Development Plan (Zoning By-Law, Section 7130) which would again protect more land than this project.

I think that the project's consistency with several other of the principles is also in question, especially, Conserve Natural Resources and Plan Regionally.