

August 16, 2007

Town of Pepperell
Attn: Board of Selectment
1 Main Street
Pepperell, Ma 01463

RE: Comments, Bayberry Proposed 40B Development

To Pepperell Selectmen:

The first point I would like to make is that the proposed Bayberry 40B development is not in accordance with Pepperell's Affordable Housing plan that has been accepted by the state. It is located in a section of town that is not serviced by town sewer and it is also very sensitive environmentally. All factors that are in direct opposition to the characteristics identified as preferable by the Pepperell Affordable Housing plan for projects of this nature. This is why the Affordable Housing plan for Pepperell does not recommend a higher than normal density development in this part of town. The Master Plan for the town also stresses that the proposed area for this project should remain low density.

The location of this development on the outskirts of the community does not correlate with "Smart Growth" practices, as the development would be as far removed from the community commercial and employment areas as it could possibly get. There are also concerns that the small country roads that service this part of Pepperell would be over loaded and lose their rural country character, should a project of this size be located here. This could heavily impact the character of Pepperell and would severely diminish the areas of town where these lost characteristics could be preserved.

I would also like to note that one of the roads in the proposed plan is a dead end road that is in excess of 1000 feet. That is more than twice the standard length allowed by the town for a public dead end road and at least another twenty five percent over the allowable exception of 750 feet for extenuating circumstances. Pepperell has placed a limit on the allowable length of a dead end road for public safety purposes. I feel the number of residences a dead end road of this size could support presents a public safety threat for access purposes in the event of an emergency and subsequent road closure.

Finally I would reiterate that Pepperell has identified areas of the community for which this type of project would be acceptable and there is even land available for development in those areas. I would prefer the developer work with the community on this kind of a project in a location that coincides with our Affordable Housing and Master plans, both of which have been recently updated. The proposed location of the project in its current form does not meet the needs of the community and poses serious threats to both the character and environmental well being of the town. It seems foolish to pursue this at the proposed location, when there are alternative locations available that would be much better suited for this kind of development.

Although these comments are not official comments of the entire Pepperell Planning Board, they do represent positions the board has taken on similar circumstances encountered in the past and are in line with the goals of the towns' Affordable Housing Plan and Master Plan that have been endorsed by the Planning Board. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this plan.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Cate
Planning Board Chairman
Town of Pepperell