

May 16th, 2019

Mr. Michael Antonellis, Planning Director,
Zoning Board of Appeals
and

Mr. David Koonce, Town Conservation Agent,
Conservation Commission
Lancaster Town Hall
Lancaster, MA 01523

Dear Sirs,

I have lived at 663 Sterling Road, directly across the street and upgrade from the proposed Goodridge Brook Estates with 152 units, since September 1988. I've always loved living here. Lancaster is beautiful, full of exciting early-American history, and still has the small town atmosphere I find so appealing.

Over the years, there have been changes on Sterling Road: the Eagle Ridge development, Bestway of New England, Reliance Engineering, and the expansion of James Monroe Wire and Cable, and others. Now we have the Goodridge Brook Estates proposal to consider. I have four major areas of concern about this, and I'll deal with them first from my perspective as a contented homeowner, and then as a logical tax-paying citizen of this town. They are:

1. Water, Part One – Supply and Usage
2. Sewage Issues
3. Road and Traffic Conditions
4. Water, Part Two – Storm drainage

1. WATER: When I moved from Worcester, the first thing I noticed about my new home was the low water pressure. While I was used to filling a tea kettle, washing machine or bathtub quite quickly, I could now iron a blouse as I waited for the dishpan to fill. When I inquired what, if anything, could be done to improve the pressure, I was told there was no solution: for our immediate neighborhood, what we had already was the best available.

Several things concern me now about the still-low water pressure in this area. If we have two to four-hundred new residents in Goodridge Brook Estates, how will decreased water pressure effect other residents when a large number of people are showering to go to work in the morning, or washing cars or watering lawns in warm weather? Far worse would be the danger to lives and property in case of fire anywhere in the development.

2. SEWAGE: When Monroe Cable expanded a couple of years ago, the town ran a sewer line up the road; with Monroe's increasing employee numbers, septic systems were no longer practical. New water piping was added also, and most of the current residents happily joined the sewer. But I saw the piping installed, and the available capacity of an eight-inch sewer pipe will not be adequate for the factories, current residents *and* Goodridge Brook Estates!
3. TRAFFIC AND ROADS: When I first moved here, it was safe to go for a walk anywhere on Sterling Road (even after Bestway was built a few years later) – and so it remained until other factories came in over recent years. On weekdays between seven and nine in the morning, and again between three and five in the afternoon, traffic above the Deershorn Road intersection is extremely heavy, and compliance with the speed limits (30 and 35 mph posted at either end) is nonexistent. Bringing school buses and at least a hundred-fifty or more additional cars into the weekday traffic flow will only make matters worse. Almost no one walks on Sterling Road any more: It just isn't worth the risk.

4. WATER – STORM DRAINAGE: This section of Lancaster has a very high water table but normally, aside from damp cellars that can be remedied with dehumidifiers, there isn't much of a problem. However, as I found out after torrential rains last fall, it doesn't take long for major property issues to develop. I found myself dealing with a significant mold problem, water oozing up through the porous concrete cellar floor, and subsequent property damage and loss that (of course!) was not covered by my insurance policy.

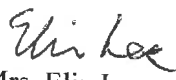
One day while interior drains were being installed at the base of my foundation walls, the foreman called my attention to the opening he had just made near the furnace – and the impressive sound of water running beneath my house. He concluded that I lived directly above an underground water source. His opinion matched mine: "Your house should never have been built here."

The problem I had took several weeks and many thousands of dollars to correct – but I have a dry cellar now. Pity the house wasn't built in soil that would drain water to begin with – instead of in clay that traps it.

Finally, most of these homes will be built at a lower elevation than mine, on land that is always boggy. The injustice of knowingly approving this development on substandard land that will have continual drainage issues could open Lancaster to lawsuits in the millions of dollars. Consider the fiasco involved with the gray house under construction around the corner from me on Deershorn Road.

Please add this letter to your Goodridge Brook Estates file. I'm providing additional copies for members of the ZBA and Conservation Commission. I can be reached at 978-990-2369.

Very truly yours,


Mrs. Elin Lee

Cc: Zoning Board of Appeals Members, Conservation Committee Members