

Nic Strong

From: Rob Clemens <rhclemens@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 2:50 PM
To: Nic Strong
Subject: ACC Comments - 86 Chestnut Hill Rd. (Lot 11-10)
Attachments: 75666-41 Norwood Wetland Buffer Impact_86 Chestnut Hill Rd_2024-02-07.pdf

[External Sender]:

Nic,

The Amherst Conservation Commission (ACC) heard a presentation from Tom Burns, T.F. Moran, regarding a proposed residential building project for the subject parcel at our meeting on 2/14/24. A copy of the site plan is attached. The principal question by Mr. Burns, and concern for the ACC, is the proposed construction of the residence within the wetland buffer delineated for the site. The ACC raised the following questions and concerns:

- The proposed residence is sited within the delineated wetland buffer, in fact, 55% of the proposed building occupies the wetland buffer. The Town's wetland ordinance expressly prohibits this (Article IV, Section 4.11).
- Any site preparation and construction activity would disturb additional buffer area, potentially extending to the jurisdictional wetlands themselves.
- The proposed well is presently sited at the wetlands margin resulting in additional impacts to the wetland buffer associated with well installation and maintenance.
- The proposed septic system is located between Chestnut Hill Rd. and the residence but has not yet received a test pit or further inspection for separation from the water table. Given the poor drainage of the site soils, suitability for a septic system installation remains a major question. The ACC noted that the abutting property to the south has an above-ground leach field, presumably due to a high water table.
- The ACC questioned whether an alternative location on the site, or an alternative building design had been considered, but apparently, the site constraints, e.g. wetlands and required setbacks, do not permit this.

It is the ACC's understanding that the property owner intends to seek a waiver from the Town's Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) to avoid the Town's wetlands ordinance restrictions for building on this property. The ACC is not in agreement that the Town's duly adopted wetlands rules should be waived. The subject property is part of a very large wetlands complex that serves as the headwaters for surface water drainage extending to, and through, the Town's Joe English Reservation. Impacts from additional wetlands disturbance, wastewater infiltration and stormwater run-off associated with this proposal should be avoided.

Nic, could you ensure that these comments are made part of the record if/when this proposed project comes before the ZBA? Thanks. - Rob Clemens, Vice Chair, ACC