

Zoning Board of Appeals  
Wellesley Town Hall  
525 Washington Street  
Wellesley, MA 02482

Re: 680 Worcester Street/ 16 Stearns Road

Dear Board Members

I am forwarding this letter as a concerned neighbor and taxpayer. At the recent hearing on April 30, 2019 on the referenced development I voiced my concerns about the impact that blasting at the site could have on the below ground infrastructure of culverts, connecting piping, drains and retention basins. I asked questions expressing my fear that aging Town infrastructure could be compromised and if so what party would be responsible for the cost of replacement. Would the Town be forced to incur the costs? Would the developer? Would the Blasting Company?

At the aforementioned meeting I reviewed and projected onto the screen the close proximity of two major culverts and four important retention basins and the related interconnected network at the front entrances of both the Newton Wellesley Alzheimer Center and the Sprague School. It is obvious to me and should be to most that there are inherent vulnerabilities. In fact, one of the culverts that carries water from the north side of Route Nine travels under the west and east lanes to a point that parallel the actual blast imprint within two car lengths. What conditions could your Board impose on the excavation work that would protect taxpayers from incurring the potential high costs of replacement and rebuild of this vital infrastructure? I would like to offer some recommendations.

My blueprint for protecting Wellesley taxpayers, its residents at the Newton Wellesley Alzheimer Center, the children at the Sprague Elementary School and the neighbors and users of the Sprague field site is as follows:

1. We immediately conduct a pre-blast in pipe camera analysis of both our 48" and 36" culverts to verify their current condition as a baseline for comparison after blasting has concluded.
2. We initiate similar pre-blast camera viewing of the four below surface retention basins and follow-up with a viewing post-blast.
3. We consult immediately with professional geologists and hydrologists to investigate the likely influence of the high water table at the Sprague area and whether seepage from a contaminated landfill could migrate to abutting areas. Test borings should be conducted both prior and after the blasting to analyze soil quality to ensure that no migration has taken place.
4. Seismographs should be in multiple locations to record the radial drainage pattern of the blasting and should be monitored and recorded for the Public record for all to view. There is concern that set-up and positioning of the

- seismograph equipment can be manipulated to lessen actual readings. It is discomfoting that the Town has not engaged with a qualified, experienced and objective reviewer (outside of Town employment) who has no familiarity with employees, on site supervisors or management of the Blasting vendor who can observe, manage, and record without bias.
5. Town sewer lines should also be inspected and monitored both prior to and after blasting to ensure their integrity and proper functioning.

In summation, it is my view that more detailed work needs to be done prior to the commencement of any construction work at either 680 Worcester Street or 16 Stearns Road to guarantee the safety of the community beyond a reasonable doubt. An effective plan which accounts for pre construction overview and investigation would help alleviate the stress and anxiety forced onto the community by these construction projects. For without the due diligence we need and expect from our Town officials we allow ourselves to be compromised by the vulnerabilities of projects without the necessary controls.

Respectfully,

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Wellesley, MA







