

Katrina Kotfer

From: Mark Wujtewicz
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 9:21 AM
To: Katrina Kotfer
Cc: Jonathan Mullen; Robert Avena
Subject: FW: Proposed housing complex in Quaker Hill
Attachments: Roberts Court demographics.xlsx

Good Morning,
Please add this to the exhibit list and provide copies for the commission of both the email and the spreadsheet.

Thanks,
Mark Wujtewicz
Planner
Town of Waterford
15 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385
Phone: 860-444-5813
Fax: 860-444-5879



Public Hearing
Roberts Court 8-30(g)
PL-24-14
Exhibit 32

From: Steve C <stevie71c@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 8:09 AM
To: Mark Wujtewicz <mwujtewicz@waterfordct.org>; Dawn Choisy <dchoisy@waterfordct.org>
Subject: Proposed housing complex in Quaker Hill

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization.
Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe.

My name is Steve Cole and I have lived on Roberts Court for 20 years. I attended the last Zoning meeting with many of my neighbors about this project. At that time I submitted several comments and questions in writing. Throughout the meeting, some of the questions were answered and comments addressed, which I appreciate, and from what I learned I have other questions and comments that I hope the Board will take into consideration when the time comes to decide on this project. I am sending this ahead of the meeting as I will be out of town and unable to attend the meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

To begin; thank you to the Board for recognizing that everyone who spoke at the last meeting had nothing against affordable housing; concerns were focused on safety and the drastic changes that would result in our neighborhood from a project of this scope being built as proposed. There immediately seemed to be a double standard for safety- the 1741 Group (the Group) expressed concerns about line-of-sight safety with both of the suggested alternate ingress and egress routes for the possible future residents. No consideration was given to the safety of those already living here with Roberts Court as the proposed access route. When safety concerns were raised about our children who currently play on Roberts Court due to its quiet nature and safety the attorney said repeatedly, "Children shouldn't play in the streets." He also stated more than once that their having a safe place to play and engage in social activities, which are more critical than ever in our current post-COVID world, was the responsibility of the town and had no impact on this project. With the

number of children in the neighborhood, quoted at 20 during the meeting, all under the age of 18 this seems extremely callous as it was made clear that our children's safety, mental health, and well-being are not a concern of this group at all and that fact that we brought this up seemed to be deemed a waste of valuable time.

A major concern I have with safety has to do with the additional amount of traffic projected for Roberts Court, 271 trips per day according to the group, and that the number of current daily trips was measured on Senkow Drive, Rte 32, and Old Norwich Rd. After multiple attempts to get an answer from the Group's traffic expert (touted as the top expert in the state with no evidence or credentials to back this up), the group finally admitted that traffic on Roberts Court was not actually measured and instead, an estimate was used. Attached is a demographic breakdown of the residents and drivers of Roberts Court, with observed average daily trips per address on weekdays. I have included 11 Senkow Dr in this analysis as their driveway is on Roberts Court. Though I am not an expert observer, as the Group's attorney will point out, after 20 years of living here and knowing everyone on the street I believe my numbers are more accurate than an estimate done by a group that does not reside here and whose numbers seem grossly exaggerated for the current residents. Estimates are fine for large areas; for a small community such as ours, they do not accurately represent reality. To summarize the attachment: The seven driveways on Roberts Court, with ten licensed drivers, account for an average of 20 round trips in and out of Roberts Court on a weekday taking into account two buses (two round trips each), postal services and the two major delivery services making an average of one round trip each per day. Adding in the estimated 271 trips the Group estimates brings us to 291, an increase of over 14 times the current weekday traffic on the street, rather than the approximately fourfold increase that the Group projects.

Bringing up the residents raises two other safety concerns. In addition to the children in the neighborhood, there is a significantly mentally handicapped adult who resides at 11 Senkow Dr and cannot function on his own. Even a fourfold increase in traffic will present an enhanced risk to this individual, much less the other residents; an increase calculated as above would raise the danger to our children and his person accordingly. Along with this individual, two handicapped children live at the corner of Senkow Dr and Old Norwich Rd. Even a best-case traffic split of drivers going left and right onto Senkow Dr from Roberts Court would result in a significant increase in traffic going past this property, with the associated increased danger to them and their family.

A concern raised by more than one person was for the density of the anticipated housing, with as little as ten feet between dwellings. This brings two questions- first, how much difference in the total percentage of affordable housing in Waterford will an additional 8 units, the first of which won't be built until two regular housing units are built, make to the total number and percentage and second, what will the quality of life be for anyone who ends up residing there? I am aware that the provisions of affordable housing allow the Group to ignore current zoning regulations; however, is allowing this dense area to be built the right thing to do? Ten-foot clearance between houses for permanent residences seems extremely close and is smaller than in many beachfront vacation areas where people are there for a week at a time rather than being full-time residents.

Questions were raised about how long this project will take to complete. The construction representative of the Group would not give an estimate on how long construction would take and, when pressed, said, "Sure why not?" when a date range of 7 to 8 months was suggested for the basic infrastructure build, including the caveat that this number depended on the weather. This does not impart any sort of confidence in the estimated time and raises the question of how long all of this will take. How many years will the lives of the current residents be disrupted by construction that has not been guaranteed? Are there any time restrictions on how long the lots have to be filled? Clearly this is a multiyear project; at what point if there are no sales or interest would the Group abandon the investment and then what would happen to the base infrastructure or any other work that has already been done? Would the Group be responsible for restoring the property to its previous state or would it simply be abandoned in place for the town to assume responsibility and liability for the property?

Access via Roberts Court is the easiest route to go but does it make the most sense, is it safe for those already living there and is it the right thing to do? Was Connecticut College, which owns the property that abuts this area to the north, even approached by the Group to see about securing access or was it simply assumed that they would be declined? With two other alternatives offered by the Board which would minimize disruption to those of us currently living here, I hope that the Board will inform the Group that Roberts Court is not a viable option and that they must use one of those two alternatives or, if not already done, that they must contact Connecticut College about the possibility of access that way via Benham Avenue, which provides access to both Old Norwich Rd via stop sign and Rte 32 via stoplight. The stoplight on Benham also allows access to and from the northbound and southbound lanes of Rte 32 which would result in less traffic on Old Norwich Rd, something that Roberts Court and Senkow Drive do not provide (southbound ingress and egress for Rte 32 only). Surely with three other possible avenues of access, one of which involves property owned by a member of the Group, an alternative can be found that would be viable and not cause the disruption and safety concerns that access through Roberts Court would bring to the lives of those already living here.

To close, I would like to thank the Board for taking the questions and concerns of my neighbors and myself into consideration and making two final comments. First, I would again like to thank the Board for recognizing that our concerns are for our safety and that we have no issues with affordable housing. Second, I would like to commend the Board for not reacting to the approach or attitude presented by the Group's attorney. The level of condescension, arrogance, and complete disregard for any sort of public safety beyond that which involved and benefitted his client was beyond anything I have experienced and was, quite frankly, shocking and appalling. My sincere hope is that the Board will reject their proposal as is on the grounds that public safety would be compromised for multiple households by accessing via Roberts Court, along with endangering the mental health, wellbeing, and lifestyles of the same households with multiple years of construction disruption which have no clear or even estimated end date available.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Steve Cole
5 Roberts Court

Address	Licensed drivers	Weekday daily trips
1 Roberts Court	1	1
5 Roberts Court	2	3
7 Roberts Court	2	3
4 Roberts Court	2	2
6 Roberts Court	1	1
8 Roberts Court	1	2
11 Senkow Dr	1	1
Buses		4
Mail		1
Deliveries		2

	Licensed drivers	Weekday daily trips
Totals	10	20