



# CITY OF NEWBURYPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES

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ANTHONY J. FURNARI, DIRECTOR

December 28, 2016

Newburyport Planning Board  
c/o Andrew Port, Director of Planning & Development  
City of Newburyport  
60 Pleasant Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Subject: Evergreen Commons Development  
Newburyport DPS and Board of Water and Sewer Commissioner Comments

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

The Newburyport Department of Public Services and Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners remain concerned about the proposed Evergreen Commons Development off of Boyd Drive in Newburyport. The proposed development, which is at the site of the Evergreen Valley Golf Course, is located within the Zone II of the City of Newburyport's Well No. 2. The proposed development is also located within the City of Newburyport's Water Resource Protection District. The purpose of the district is to:

1. To promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the community by ensuring an adequate quantity and highest quality of water possible for residents, institutions and businesses of the City of Newburyport.
2. To preserve and protect existing and potential watersheds and aquifers for drinking water supplies.
3. To prevent temporary and permanent contamination in the water resource protection district.
4. To protect the community from the detrimental use and development of land and water within the water protection district.

Well No. 2 is a pristine water source for the City of Newburyport, providing between 10 and 20 percent of the drinking and fire protection water to the residents of Newburyport. Water from Well No. 2 is not treated (other than pH adjustment and fluoride addition) prior to being consumed by customers. Groundwater flow in the vicinity of Well No. 2 is such that most of the groundwater from the site of the former golf course flows into the well. The Evergreen Valley Golf Course sits in a valley between Boyd Drive, Interstate 95, and Ferry Road with no natural surface water flow off the site. Therefore, most precipitation and stormwater reaching the golf course site infiltrates into the groundwater. Seasonal high groundwater levels on the golf course site are shallow, with an average depth of approximately 7 feet. Shallow groundwater depths mean less ability for the soils to naturally filter impurities out of the water before it reaches the groundwater.



The proposed Evergreen Commons Development will result in the construction of between 38 and 44 homes at the Evergreen Valley Golf Course. In addition to new homes, the development will also include new paved roadways and sidewalks, new landscaped yards, and open space on the western part of the site closest to Interstate 95. Though residential development is not typically considered high risk for a Zone II of a well, the Water and Sewer Commission believe that the characteristics of the Evergreen Golf Course site make it susceptible to an increased risk of groundwater contamination.

To date, the Newburyport Department of Public Services and Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners have not received detailed enough information to make a decision on the proposed project. More information is required for the Water and Sewer Commission to review the project, including:

1. Detailed design plans of the proposed development showing:
  - a. existing and proposed grading;
  - b. location of homes, roads, and sidewalks;
  - c. foundation elevation of the proposed basement homes and any associated pools; and
  - d. proposed stormwater collection, treatment, and infiltration
2. Baseline sampling results for the groundwater and topsoil at the Evergreen Valley Golf Course site as detailed in a November 8, 2016 email from Doug Gove, AECOM to Lisa Mead. Note that the City sampled groundwater from monitoring wells B-4 and B-6 on December 21. Results are expected in mid-January. No sampling results have been provided for groundwater or soil at the golf course site. Although the developer's representatives previously agreed to soil and groundwater testing at the Evergreen Golf Course site, it now appears that the development team is reluctant to undertake this baseline sampling collection and analysis until after the project has been approved by the Planning Board. We recommend against this sequence of project approval. If the data collection or analysis suggests that there are compromised soils on the site or that the proposed project will likely contribute to the contamination of the Well No. 2 it will be too late in the development review process.
3. Proposed restrictions and conditions during construction including the handling and removal of potentially nutrient rich top soil from the site (to be confirmed by baseline sampling), proposed erosion control, restrictions on refueling construction vehicles, detailed spill prevention plan, groundwater quality sampling plan, etc.
4. Proposed restrictions and conditions post construction including restrictions on lawn care chemicals, restrictions on de-icing compounds, annual public education requirements, groundwater quality sampling requirements, stormwater treatment system maintenance and upkeep, etc. Details are required on how the home owners will be legally bound to the



conditions, department responsible to oversee and enforce the conditions, and the legal and financial obligations of the homeowners should contamination occur also must be defined.

Once the information above is provided and thoroughly reviewed, the Newburyport Department of Public Services and Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners will take a vote to determine their level of support of, or objection to, the proposed Evergreen Commons Development.

We recommend that any approvals for the proposed project be withheld until such time as adequate data and engineering details have been provided for review by the Planning Board, Department of Public Services, Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners, and Board of Health. It is also recommended that the City be given adequate time to determine whether a replacement well can be constructed on City property within required setbacks, or, alternatively, if approval and construction of the proposed development project would undermine the City's ability to replace this key infrastructure in the future (due to the close proximity of new house lots to the Well No. 2 site).

Please call me at 978-465-4463 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Anthony J. Furnari".

Anthony J. Furnari, Director  
City of Newburyport  
Newburyport Department of Public Services

Cc: Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners