

March 10, 2020

Board of Adjustment

Dear Members of the Board:

As an abutter to the Petition from Mark Broderick and Emily Spencer of 70 Sims Ave seeking relief from a Zoning Ordinance to build a new home on a non-conforming lot, I am writing this letter to express my concerns.

I live at 65 Benson Street, one street below Fletcher Street, the location of the proposed site. On Benson Street we have a horrific water problem that many are likely unaware of since we are a dead-end street, off another dead-end street, at the bottom of a hill. As the photos attached will show, the water is overwhelming already on our street, even worse when there is rain.

1. The culvert on Benson Street clearly cannot handle the water that flows down from Fletcher and Sims. It floods my yard at 65 Benson and the yard of 66 Benson nearly every time it rains. My driveway is ALWAYS flooded when there is rain.
2. From my understanding, the pond into Essex has to be checked regularly because of the water level. We have to contact the city nearly every time there is rain to help the water flow in the culvert. Regardless, my front and side and back lawns all have large amounts of water that take days to absorb. Most recently there was water in my front yard over a week after the most recent rain storm. Snow adds to this problem as well.
3. Currently the water at the back of my house where the pond lies comes right up to the fence in my back yard, deeper than ever in the 4.5 years I have lived at this location. A LOT of water.
4. I chose my home because it sits on the edge of conservation land. We have many birds but the painted turtles have been diminishing every year. They crawl across my yard in search of dry land to lay their eggs on dry land. The runoff that will surely happen will impact their ability to reproduce.
5. I myself have French drains in the basement and the sump runs every hour typically, in dry weather. The hill and trees behind 66 Benson Street, the location of the proposed home site, absorb a lot of water when we have rain or snow. Removing that absorption assistance and thereby creating even more runoff will, I fear, totally flood my property to the point that I will have little to no dry land, at least even less than I currently have.
6. The rendering on page 9 of the application shows a flat backyard. As you can see from the photo attached here, this is a hill. This hill absorbs runoff. Putting a house INTO the side of the hill will add more runoff that already exists as we get water running down from Sims Ave as well.
7. In contradiction to the statement on page 3 of this application which states "the values of surrounding properties will not be diminished by granting the variance," the impact of a house on that hill will absolutely lower the value of my property as I will have more and more water



¹ This is the view looking down to the end of Benson Street. 65 Benson, my home, sits on the LEFT in this photo.



² This is the view on my FRONT YARD on the end of Benson Street. Clearly the water is overwhelming.



³ This is the view from 65 Benson Street looking at 5 Benson Street. Snow and water are flooding the yard.



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⁴ This is the view from my driveway looking up Benson Street towards Sims where the water comes down to us.



⁵ Looking from my driveway across to the garage of 66 Benson Street



^{6 1} View from my driveway towards Sims Avenue.

These next 3 photos are taken from my driveway looking at the hill where this proposed home site is located. This is not a level lot at all. It is a hill that absorbs water.







I ask that these issues be considered and due diligence be done to prevent additional water issues for those of us at the bottom of the hill before the land that absorbs this water is disturbed for the building of a home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Angela P. Lambert
Owner, 65 Benson St.
Portsmouth, NH
