From:	Amanda Ahn
То:	<u> Planning - Info - Shr</u>
Subject:	RE: 635 Sagamore Avenue
Date:	Wednesday, February 19, 2025 1:42:53 PM

You don't often get email from amanda.ahn@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

# Dear City Planning Board,

Thank you again for welcoming our group of concerned abutters from 579 Sagamore Avenue to your meetings. I plan to attend tomorrow's Site Walk and would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention specific concerns regarding the current winter conditions at my property, which are relevant to the proposed development at 635 Sagamore Avenue.

The driveway at units 47-48, much like the one at 635, is perpendicular to Sagamore Avenue, sloped, and situated in the shadow of our building. For context, my unit has a direct line of sight to the 635 property. Despite regular plowing and heavy salting by our management company, we continue to experience significant ice buildup, creating serious safety concerns. Even with an all-wheel-drive vehicle, I have experienced uncontrolled slides down into the Tidewatch roadway. This area remains dangerous due to the lack of direct sunlight in the winter. As a side note, we have taken advantage of the additional ice melt graciously offered by the City of Portsmouth. We appreciate it!

I would like to highlight that my driveway's conditions are indicative of the larger issue at hand. My primary concern is twofold:

The safety of vehicles exiting the proposed 635 property during the winter months, given the similar slope and shadowed conditions and especially the blind approach on Sagamore Avenue, as well as the excessive amount of salt that will be required to maintain the 635 driveway, which will ultimately run off into the Tidewatch area, exacerbating existing environmental concerns.

I wish to reiterate that the proposed project before us today has undergone several changes since its original approval by the ZBA. We believe these changes, particularly with regard to the visibility, configuration, and siting of the houses, blasting, drainage considerations, and the positioning of retaining walls, have led to a proposal that the ZBA would not have approved in its current form.

I look forward to discussing these concerns in further detail during tomorrow's Site Walk, and thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Kind regards,

Amanda Ahn

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AA





From:	Kimberli Kienia
To:	Kimberli Kienia
Subject:	FW: Webform submission from: Planning Board > Body Blocks
Date:	Wednesday, February 19, 2025 2:17:12 PM

-----Original Message-----From: City of Portsmouth <webmaster@portsmouthnh.gov> Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 2:06 PM To: chellman@TNDEngineering.com; Peter L. Britz <plbritz@portsmouthnh.gov>; Peter M. Stith <pmstith@portsmouthnh.gov> Subject: Webform submission from: Planning Board > Body Blocks

You don't often get email from webmaster@portsmouthnh.gov. Learn why this is important <<u>https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification</u>>

Submitted on Wed, 02/19/2025 - 14:06

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Name Rod Burdette

Email rebtrisport@gmail.com <<u>mailto:rebtrisport@gmail.com</u>>

Subject 365 Sagamore Ave. issue

Message

I am a Tidewatch resident unit number 46. I am very concerned about the proposed building project at the. 565 Sagamore Ave. There is a significant safety issue with traffic going in and out of this project. The amount of blasting that would be needed to create walkout basements on this property would be damaging to our units and Tidewatch. The amount of trees that would have to be removed would destroy the beauty of the area. There is significant drain drainage problems with this project in that we already have a lot of drainage issues in Tidewatch this wood project would just make it worse please consider reducing this project to more than one or two units as per the zoning regulation of one unit per acre. This project would have a significant impact on the Tidewatch resident community in general and I am opposed to it as in its existing plan. Thank you for your consideration.

bcc-email

chellman@TNDEngineering.com,plbritz@portsmouthnh.gov,pmstith@portsmouthnh.gov

From:	Jeff Certo
То:	<u> Planning - Info - Shr</u>
Subject:	Luster King - 635 Sagamore Ave
Date:	Wednesday, February 19, 2025 9:38:01 AM

[You don't often get email from jtcerto@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <u>https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification</u>]

#### Board Members,

As a Tidewatch resident I just wanted to send quick note to you for some considerations regarding the pending approval and development of this property.

1) Safety - I suggest you drive up the hill from the coast (Atlantic Grill) area on 1A and envision trying to turn in or out of this property just below the peak of the hill. Envision having to stop and turn into this property with a large truck going over the speed limit tailgaiting your vechicle. Then consider this same experience in peak tourist season with increased traffic. Also, consider increased new resident volume, bikers, walkers, contractors, landscape vehicles, garbage trucks & bus stops.......This is a blind turn with limited reaction time on one of the busier roads in our community. We currently deal with this experience at the entrance of our community which has greater sight line reaction time and at times it is an issue.

2) Sagamore Ave Construction - The town finally just finished "multi year" infrastructure improvements on Sagamore ave that included utilities, sewer lines, sidewalks, bike lanes and new paving. Will these improvements be impacted with new construction? Where will all the construction and delivery equipment be parking during this process? Will the newly paved road be getting torn up?

3) Abutters Impacts - Leveling off the top of the hill will no doubt impact other local residents. Are explosives required? How long with this construction last? Will there be water and ground runoff considerations for the properties that are "downhill"? Water runoff follows the path of least resistance. Will the destruction of the existing natural ground habitat that has been in-place for years create a significant amount of new "unintended" drainage issues?

\*\*Maybe take a walk into the Tidewatch development for perspective and see what "downhill" looks like behind this proposed project?

I am not sure I can offer a solution to what type of development should occur on this property to mitigate some of these concerns but I would most certainly suggest a large private road with ample parking and room to support any increased activity. A large driveway with plenty of "emergency avoidance" options probably would make sense as that is what they have in place currently.

Thanks for your consideration in these matters.

Tracy & Jeff Certo Tidewatch. From: JAH <samjakemax@aol.com> Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 9:05 AM To: samjakemax@aol.com Subject: 635 Sagamore Ave

Dear Planning Board:

In preparation for your visit tomorrow at the subject site and to get a better understanding of site conditions, I would encourage you to review the following materials that were not included in the February 20 Planning Board meeting packet:

1) My email dated December 21, 2024 to City Staff after the December 19, 2024 Planning Board Meeting. See string below.

2) The November 5, 2024 TAC meeting video for this project. This project starts at 8 min 45 secs and ends at 47 min 00 secs.

Public Comments starts at 16 min, 35 secs. City Staff comments run from 37 min to 47 min and are worth hearing, especially on drainage and driveway sight distance (37 min :42 sec)

11.5.2024 Technical Advisory Committee - YouTube <<u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-I7IQHEtkk</u>>

3) Although City Staff doesn't feel Portsmouth Driveway Rules regarding safe sight distance need to apply at this site (see link in my December 21 email below for Portsmouth Driveway rules), I hope the Planning Board does. Note the driveway location when this project was first presented to the Planning Board on January 27, 2022. It was located at the far end of the property as you head out of town. If you stand at this location during your site walk, you will find the sight distances looking left and right to be far greater (i.e. safer) than the driveway as located on the most recent plans.

SKM C650i22010501310

<<u>https://files.portsmouthnh.gov/agendas/2022/planning+board/sagamoreave\_635\_695\_pb\_01272022.pdf</u>> January 27, 2022 635 Sagamore Ave Submission

635 Sagamore portion starts at 8 min 45 secs and ends at 47 min 00 secs

Regards,

Jim Hewitt

All Planning Board members have been blind copied (BCC) on this message to encourage proper communication in accordance with NH RSA 91:A'

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: JAH <samjakemax@aol.com <<u>mailto:samjakemax@aol.com</u>>>

To: Peter M. Stith cityofportsmouth.com <mailto:pmstith@cityofportsmouth.com<>; Peter L. Britz <plbritz@cityofportsmouth.com<>p>

Cc: Rick Chellman <chellman@thdengineering.com <<u>mailto:chellman@thdengineering.com</u>>>; Kimberli Kienia <kkienia@cityofportsmouth.com <<u>mailto:kkienia@cityofportsmouth.com</u>>>

Sent: Saturday, December 21, 2024 at 11:28:39 PM EST

Subject: 635 Sagamore Ave Driveway

During the December 19 Planning Board meeting, I was disappointed (again) that Planning Board volunteer members are being compelled to conduct technical reviews of project elements that are supposed to be completed by paid City staff as part of the TAC review process.

In particular, city staff failed to ensure the proposed driveway satisfied the requirements of Portsmouth's Driveway Rules and Procedures and AASHTO's "A Policy of Geometric Design of Streets and Highways".

In particular, on sheet H1, the plan view shows a sight line for a vehicle exiting the property while the profile view shows the sight line for a stopped vehicle on Sagamore waiting to enter the property with a left turn. Sheet H1 needs to be revised to show a separate plan and profile for both an exiting vehicle from the development and from a stopped vehicle on Sagamore waiting to enter the property. For the exiting vehicle plan view, the sightline origin needs to be 14.5 feet back from the white line and the distance shown on the plans.

These two sight line distances need to be calculated using AASHTO's formula for Stopping Distance on Grades formula. Also, an explanation of where the 33 mph design speed came from was not clear.

As per AASHTO, the sightline for a vehicle exiting the proposed development is 3.5 ft for driver eye height and also 3.5 ft for the object to be seen.

Lastly, as per Section 10 (f)(1) of the NHDOT driveway policy, it is recommended a 20 ft long platform at 6% of flatter be installed where the driveway meets the street / highway. See page 18 of NHDOT policy.

A review of the driveway related emails in pages 50 to 57 of the 635 Sagamore Ave submission (below) did not provide any information to clarify these issues.

SKM\_C650i18110819411

<<u>https://files.cityofportsmouth.com/files/planning/apps/SagmaoreAve\_635/SagamorAve\_635\_pb\_12192024\_combined.pdf</u>>635 Sagamore Ave December 19, 2024 Submission

Driveway Rules and Procedures <<u>https://files.cityofportsmouth.com/files/dpw/DrivewayRulesProcedures.pdf</u>> - Portsmouth Driveway Rules & Procedures

driveway-policy-nhdot.pdf <<u>https://mm.nh.gov/files/uploads/dot/remote-docs/driveway-policy-nhdot.pdf</u>> - NHDOT Driveway Policy

See "Definitions" 3 (b) - All season safe sight distance - page 4 of 46

See Typical Rural Drive in Cut Section - page 40 of 46 - platform illustration

I hope a driveway sight line analysis will be conducted for a driveway located at the far southeast end of the property where the driveway was shown on project concept plans for this site presented to the Planning Board on January 27, 2022.

Regards,

Jim Hewitt

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### Dear Board Members,

I am an abutter of the above property, living at 579 Sagamore Avenue.

I continue to have the following concerns concerning this project as proposed:

- The sight lines on Sagamore have been described as less than desirable in length, particularly for a left turn into the property, coming down the hill. A speed sign is proposed, to be maintained by the City of Portsmouth. Some speed signs, Middle Road for example, do not seem to be effective. An accident in these circumstances could be as severe as the recent one on Lafayette and Mirona.
- The slopes on the development raise concerns. The entrance to Sagamore Avenue is downhill, on the north side, and prone to icing in the winter. For the rear of the property a drive is proposed that is roughly as steep as the hill on Sagamore Avenue just before the property. While this could be a challenge for the residents, I am also concerned that drainage be properly addressed. I'm unclear how a drainage area covered by ice and snow will accept rain water if conditions warm, such as may happen over this next week. The drainage of fertilizers and pesticides onto the Tidewatch property is a concern.
- When I pass homes that are having gatherings, it's not uncommon for half a dozen cars to be parked on the road. There does not appear to be sufficient room for guest parking and snow storage as this development is now proposed.
- Would blasting require the temporary closing of the Tidewatch road? It is the only access to the development. There can arise immediate need for access such as unplanned medical visits and for ambulance or fire. 117 units are served by this road.
- The property places burdens of significant responsibility and potential expense on a small condo association. These include monitoring the drainage pond and proper parking of multiple vehicles including, personal, landscaping, and maintenance.

I thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Andrew Jaffe 603-491-3150

From:	<u>K Lien</u>
To:	<u> Planning - Info - Shr</u>
Cc:	Howard John; Tim McNamara
Subject:	635 Sagamore Ave
Date:	Wednesday, February 19, 2025 11:20:04 AM

[You don't often get email from kmlien11@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <u>https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification</u>]

Members of the Planning Board,

This email addresses our concerns with the 635 Sagamore Ave project to develop and build four houses on a lot zoned for one. We are abutters at Tidewatch and feel that, in addition to the loss of privacy due to the proximity of the planned houses and the over-development of property, there are other worrisome issues.

1. It's our understanding that blasting would be required for construction which creates a risk of damage to our homes.

2. With four homes on the lot, which is higher than Tidewatch, drainage is a serious concern.

3. There will be an increase in traffic coming out onto Sagamore Ave. There is a hill which cars must come over from the Rye direction and often, even when there is no car in sight, by the time a driver enters the road from Tidewatch for a left turn, a car is on his tail. The 635 driveway is even closer to the hill, creating more of an accident risk.

4. The wildlife habitat will be disrupted. We currently see a variety of wildlife throughout Tidewatch, including deer, fox and bobcat in addition to squirrels and chipmunks.

Sincerely,

Jack Howard and Kathryn Lien Unit 66 579 Sagamore Av Portsmouth, MA 03801

# 635 Sagamore Road – Luster Cluster

The following photos show the view of the current building from the Tidewatch Road.

The current distance from the east property line to the existing building (in photo) is approximately 130' and from the south it is approximately 160'. The new plan has the new houses (which are much higher) approximately 80' and 50' respectfully. How can such a material change in the position of houses on the lot not have to go back to the ZBA for reassessment and approval. Especially, because the ZBA approval document stated "you would not even see the buildings from the road". That is clearly not true.

See below;





From:	<u>Tim McNamara</u>
To:	<u> Planning - Info - Shr</u>
Cc:	Peter L. Britz
Subject:	635 Sagamore Ave. Planning Board (PB)
Date:	Wednesday, February 19, 2025 10:18:59 AM

Planning Board Members,

Please take the time to review the following comments and view the associated links to the youtube of previous meetings.

In the December meeting a PB member brought up that project was first considered 3 years ago. That alone should tell all of us, including the applicant, that they are trying to do too much on this undevelopable lot. They are trying to put 4 big homes on less than an acre. That is because the site is a granite hill with a severe slope that makes most of it unusable. The third party engineering firm that the city hired stated in the review that the site had "little to no infiltration" which means that water will run down the slope to the neighborhood below. That is why TAC was reluctant to approve the engineering plans and hoped that PB would disapprove the application and ask the developer to come up with a different plan. Click (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-I7IQHEtkk ) Please protect the surrounding neighbors.

From the December PB meeting I thought it was really interesting the Eric Weinrieb from Altus who did the third party review at TAC's request (5 iterations of review) stood up put on record the fact that he did not propose or suggest the "sand drainage in the drainage plan" please click <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvO8Od7n0Z4</u>

The PB members had wide ranging concerns about the current application and plan. Drainage, traffic safety - UNRESOLVED -, parking snow storage, HOA responsibilities, and the fact that the plans have changed significantly from the plans that ZBA approved.

Finally, in the multiple ZBA meetings prior to zoning adjustment approval the ZBA members continuously stated that safety and drainage were up to TAC and the planning board. We believe there are more than enough compelling reasons why the PB should deny this application or at a minimum continue the application until all of the planning board's concerns and requirements are met.

Please tell the developer to do what is right and reasonable. Propose two houses which is what the area was originally zoned for.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tim

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvO8Od7n0Z4

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvO8Od7n0Z4

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvO8Od7n0Z4

Tim McNamara 617 413 4884 Planning Board

I am opposed to the density and placement of housing at the Luster King Site. After these recent snowstorms, Tidewatch roads have been ice bound. I can't even image how much worse the ice will be with down hill run on increased by impervious surface above us. The entrance and ability to enter or exit is , at times, difficult enough. There is no way the Luster King project won't make that worse. For pedestrians as well as vehicles. The sight line on the top of the hill is hazordous.

Fewer houses should be permitted to be built there. Period. The developer's desire to maximize profits will have a negative impact on our complex.

I have a conflict and unfortunately cannot be at the meeting. Please enter my email into your minutes.

Sincerely,

Lennie Mullaney 579 Sagamore Ave Unit 52 Portsmouth, NH 03801 603-828-4556 www.lenniemullaney.com You don't often get email from robrien@csuchico.edu. Learn why this is important

#### Dear Sirs/Madams:

I am a Portsmouth resident who often drives north Route 1A past the proposed development at 635 Sagamore Avenue. Like others who drive this route, I know the danger posed by the line-of-sight problems at this spot.

Every time I pass it, I think about being rear-ended.

I hope the Planning Board has considered what will happen if people try to slow down or stop to make a left turn at this place. They and the people in cars behind them have a good chance of being rear-ended. If someone tries to leave the development by turning left, they risk being T-boned.

The chances of this are even higher in the summer when visitors heavily traffic Route 1A.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Robert O'Brien 579 Sagamore Avenue, Unit 70 Portsmouth, NH 03801 From: Mary Pontrello comcast.net>
Date: February 19, 2025 at 1:42:28 PM EST
To: plbritz@portsmouthnh.gov
Subject: The infamous Luster Cluster

Dear Mr.Britz:

Bad weather and a recent bout of Flu and Pneumonia preclude me from participating in the on-site review of 635 Sagamore.

To be brief and direct, as is preferred by the Planning Board... This project must be rejected as presented. Over many, many months, your department, and numbers of neighbors to this project have consistently discussed myriad safety and land use issues that should constrain the implementation of this project.

Your department has invested an inordinate amount of effort in listening and fairness to the developer and yet several issues remain incompletely resolved or inappropriately addressed.

Overarching is the incontrovertible fact that this project as presented and as OVER engineered is completely in compatible with the topography and morphology of this site.

There is no GUARANTEE that the solutions presented for drainage and impact on neighbors will work.

The buildings are of too great a height for the surroundings.

The buildings as presented in the plans will impact approximately 75% of the tall tree cover. No amount of proposed landscaping can effectively replace these long standing Happy trees. Buyers will not want tall trees around new dwellings.

Will the new Condo owners continually replace and replenish landscaping and trees that will fail because of the ill conceived building on truly unbuildable topography Not to mention:

Where will the condo store snow removal?

Poor design for fire and safety access.

Traffic problems are only minimally addressed.

On the softer side of this issue....

there is the disruption to the deer herd passing thru ....The Bobcats fun place to run around and chase each other will be destroyed ....in the summer the Hummingbirds will lose their decades long

Summer nesting in the trees, as will our declining population of

Monarch butterflies

I respectfully urge the Planning Board to outright reject this project as presented Perhaps....a new design of less density and more respectful of the neighbors and the land will be more in keeping with the purpose of the Planning Board and the City.

With many thank yous for all the efforts by the Department Respectfully, Mary Pontrello

579 Sagamore Ave.

Unit #5

To Whom It May Concern,

This proposal has cost so much time and money for everyone involved! It is time to move on.

There have been so many aspects pointed out why this is a very poor dubious project! The list includes traffic, safety, drainage, environmental damage, blasting, large granite ledge, buildings towering the sloping parcel visible to 117 units of Portsmouth resident taxpayers, and not to mention the lack of open space around the buildings.

I wish you would just say no. If they want to improve the property, I have always felt that they could replace the two existing buildings with two houses in the same general location similar to that area of Sagamore Avenue. However that doesn't eliminate all the issues!

Thank you for all your time and hard work! Please don't let the developers manipulate you. Why don't you send them back to the drawing board. If you lived on Sagamore Avenue, what project would you like to see in that neighborhood?

Sincerely, Jane Pratt Reynolds 579 Sagamore Ave, Unit 84 Portsmouth, NH 03801

Lynn Schweikart
<u> Planning - Info - Shr</u>
Tim McNamara
635 Sagamore Avenue
Tuesday, February 18, 2025 1:18:58 PM

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#### Hello:

I am sorry to be unable to attend tonight's meeting in person. I am especially sorry to be unavailable for the today's walkabout, which I think is critical to understanding the negative impact of this four-house development. Alas, the ice, wind, and cold will keep me at home. As a 34-year resident at Tidewatch (579 Sagamore Avenue), there are a number of things I'm concerned about, especially as the plans have changed from what was originally proposed to/approved by the ZBA.

— Two of the units are now larger than approved, with walk-out basements, which I find problematic, given the amount of blasting that would be required for even the original plan.

— These units are now closer to the Tidewatch property line.

— The placement of the drainage retention pond has been changed.

— There is a newly proposed overflow well at the corner of Sagamore Avenue and our driveway.

—The negative impact to our property of blasting during construction and storm water drainage on an ongoing basis.

-Traffic safety

As I mentioned in a previous email, it still bothers me that in their ZBA presentation, the developers misrepresented the density of Tidewatch—the number of buildings with respect to the acreage here, as well as the number of units ultimately built here, rather then the number proposed.

I hope you will reject this proposal and send it back to ZBA for reevaluation.

Sincerely, Lynn

## Lynn K Schweikart

Marine Docent | University of New Hampshire Author | <u>Peaceful Places Boston</u> Portsmouth, NH | 617.312.1497

You don't often get email from annekwalsh1@verizon.net. Learn why this is important

# Dear Planning Board,

I urge you to reject the current plan and recommend 2 homes closer to the existing buildings.

There are many concerns with this project, which is why it's been close to three years in the making and has incurred many, many changes. The developer's representatives didn't give a strong professional presentation for the December meeting. In fact, at one point they didn't answer a direct question and instead answered a previous question. This does lend concern for an also sloppy implementation of the project and the lack of proper care and safety of all involved, including the abutters.

The proposed homes have changed and increased in height due to the walk out basements, so they will be looming that much more. The zoning board indicated in their report that this development wouldn't even be seen by us, which not true. Currently, we can see the Luster King buildings through the woods at the top of the hill, so four homes on the hill would be that much more visible. The increased lights, noise and other pollution would also impact our home, and we are unsure of how it would impact our fair market value. Our unit 7 is directly at the bottom of the hill and would be directly impacted.

The drainage has been a huge concern since the very beginning. As another Tidewatch resident pointed out, we don't know the prior and future chemical leaching that could potentially drain down the hill toward us. As pointed out in the December meeting, I became more concerned with the discussion about the future chemicals used on the property filtering into fill soil and eventually into the storm management. What would be in the runoff coming down the hill and into our community **and** the wetlands, especially when the land is frozen over and there isn't anywhere to go but down? Tidewatch has had many costly issues with drainage over the years, and this proposal may add additional and costly future issues.

Since the beginning, I have also been very worried about the blasting. Our unit had to have videos taken before the blasting on Sagamore to document any damage. The Luster King property is closer and has significant granite that will need to be blasted.

The fact there are so many concerns about this project that has been taking so long to approve just may indicate how overzealous the plans may be. I hope you will have a clearer picture when you walk the site tomorrow.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Anne K. Walsh Tidewatch 7 410-903-3972