

**From:** Kimberly Sweetman [<mailto:kimberly.sweetman@me.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 06, 2020 1:10 PM  
**To:** Durham Town Council  
**Cc:** Michael Behrendt; Karen Edwards  
**Subject:** Proposed Gerrish Road Extension

Dear Councilmembers,

We are writing regarding the proposed extension of Gerrish Road to be discussed at the Town Council Meeting on January 13, 2020. We oppose this extension on two grounds: traffic impact and environmental impact.

In the site analysis narrative for the project

([https://www.ci.durham.nh.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning\\_board/page/55416/4-site\\_analysis\\_narrative\\_for\\_prel\\_consultation\\_11-19-19.pdf](https://www.ci.durham.nh.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_board/page/55416/4-site_analysis_narrative_for_prel_consultation_11-19-19.pdf)), MJS engineering references the Institute of Traffic Engineers trip generation manual, indicates that a development of this size (8-12 homes) would increase traffic by 6-9 vehicles at the morning rush and 8-12 vehicles at the evening rush. The report deems this increase as "insignificant." We disagree. There are 23 homes on the Ambler/Gerrish horseshoe. Common sense indicates that increasing the number of homes by 35-52% would also increase the traffic proportionally. Even if the total number of additional cars is a small number, adding one third to one half more cars to a quiet residential street

is quite a significant increase. Residents in this area chose to live there, in part, because of the lack of traffic, and increasing the traffic by 35-52% would negatively impact all 23 families in our community.

The site identified for the Gerrish extension contains flowing water, which is not represented on any of the project maps we have seen. We are concerned that the site maps only identify wetlands on the property to be developed, but don't identify the active brooks on the site of the proposed road. This is an inaccurate representation of the land in question. In fact, the maps we have seen seem to suggest that the Gerrish right-of-way has an existing road on it, which is not the case. The area designated as the Gerrish right-of-way contains an active stream bed with flowing water year-round. While the project engineer admits that a wetland would need to be crossed, this doesn't accurately describe the situation: the proposed road would be built up the stream bed, not across it. Our concern as nearby property owners in an already wet area is the impact this could have on drainage, particularly as we face a changing climate. According to the project engineer, the Gerrish right-of-way was identified in 1972 when the Ambler/Gerrish horseshoe was developed. Certainly 48 years ago we had different conventions about developable land, nature and wetlands protection than we do today, and whether or not the Gerrish right-of-way is a viable access point deserves to be carefully reconsidered with today's understanding of the importance of wetlands.

Please understand that we are not opposed to the development of the parcel as a neighborhood. The conceptual design that the engineer has presented seem fine. Our concerns are around the development of the Gerrish right-of-way. The engineer and developer have concluded that possible access from Bagdad road or Route 108 are "unusable" because the developer doesn't own that property. But that doesn't make the access impossible, it simply means that the developer would need to look into acquiring the land.