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To The Durham Planning Board,

Residents in the Gerrish Drive neighborhood have asked me to comment on the proposed development in their part of town. I am not an expert and will comment as a citizen who has listened to others and studied comments, along with maps of the area which is intended for development. I believe the citizens have raised reasonable concerns and this is not a "not in my back yard" matter. I offer the following thoughts.

There are two different proposals for septage. One proposal shows a series of septic systems adjacent to the development. The other maps a sewer and drainage easement directly impacting home owners on Gerrish Drive. Which plan has the least negative impact on the Gerrish Drive neighborhood? Which plan is most satisfactory long- term?

Residents in the area have expressed concerns regarding the wetlands which directly affect the current neighborhood. There are seasonal issues already with high water on some properties. Will the planned road worsen those problems? What will be done to minimize or alleviate negative impacts?

Building the road~~s~~ over wetlands between two developed properties, which are all ready environmentally sensitive, would require serious engineering to protect those two properties, while preventing further environmental damage along the road and shoulders. Are there any plans to mitigate the abutting properties with trees and other landscaping?

Homeowners in the area bought their properties being told that the surrounding woodlands would never be developed because of wetlands. Now they find that even with state and local regulations in place, the land is planned for development with a concentration of homes. Granted, the homes will be for those over 55 years of age, so there will be fewer people, but those homes will be surrounded by (mapped) poorly drained soils and wetland "buffers". The residents rightly question—is this the best use for this land? Is it in the public's interest to use a wooded area full of wetlands for housing—concentrated housing with well- documented drawbacks?

The plan shown on the 2015 Master Plan Update details expected floodplain changes. On that map, it suggests how to access further information worth consideration. The Current and Potential Future Floodplain map pictures FEMA's potential 12-foot sea level rise nearby. What will happen to area homes when impacted, if not directly by water level rise, but by future wetlands associated with nearby water? Will current wetlands expand?

Not only are there considerable considerations with environmental impacts on current land and the land intended for development, but it is important to take into account the current neighborhood, in which home buyers were assured they would enjoy peace and privacy. Again, the residents have raised reasonable concerns. This is not the average development planned for an ordinary piece of property. The state and local regulations, of course, apply to the proposed development. The whole footprint of the development, the conditions of the land together with the closely built homes and the Gerrish Drive/Ambler Way neighborhood all need to be reviewed.

I humbly trust the Planning Board will look at all aspects of that area of town as you deliberate and make your decisions. I thank the Board for including my thoughts on behalf of local residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet G. Wall".

State Representative Janet G. Wall