

From: [Carroll, John](#)
To: [Karen Edwards](#)
Cc: [Madbury Admin Asst](#)
Subject: Please send to Conservation Commission Chair and Members
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 10:03:31 AM

TO: Bart McDonough, Chair, and Members of the Conservation Commission
FROM: John E. Carroll, Professor Emeritus of Environmental Conservation, UNH

Dear Bart and Members,

Re: Intertown Durham/Madbury Conservation Effects of Gerrish Ext. Proposal

The new iteration of the proposed Gerrish Extension and associated new housing development by engineer Mike Sievert (on behalf of the Mulherns) will come before the Conservation Commission at your next meeting on April 27th. This iteration does not address the serious and related ecological questions of both downstream watershed issues, nor of the related question of extensive tree removal in the jurisdictional wetlands in the town-owned Gerrish Access land (as well as tree removal on the owner's property). Not only does it not address the impact on the watershed of such tree removal, but it also fails to address the impact on flooding and water movement of extensive hard surfacing in the access road and throughout the project land. (U.S. Forest Service urban forester John Parry, a Durham resident, can address the question of flooding impact from the removal of so many trees and thus the elimination of their capacity to absorb, to take up, both flowing and standing water.) All of this is in light of the well documented steadily increasing annual precipitation levels that our region is experiencing due to climate change.

Nor does this iteration address the question of a bridge vs. culverts, given the significant water flow involved off the town land (and as recorded in videos which are available to you). The downstream flooding issues would be expected to impact across the town line in Madbury in the Gerrish Brook Basin and through the Rte. 108 crossing (with its combined threat from both that Gerrish Brook floodwater and, as well, Great Bay rising tidal water, as delineated on Strafford County Planning Commission maps). As well, the lower Johnson Creek watershed, as well as return to Durham in downstream Johnson Creek, are also ignored in this iteration.

Because of these inter-town impacts, there is a need here for an independent wetlands scientist and an independent watershed hydrologist to be hired to examine and assess these broader watershed considerations beyond the immediate neighborhood. There may also be a need for you to confer with the Town of Madbury and its Conservation Commission following such an independent study and assessment. (Former Durham Conservation Commission Chair Rob Sullivan may also be able to shed light on these watershed questions, if he is available, as he has some knowledge of this watershed.)

The Gerrish Extension idea should not proceed without such independent scientific studies, as serious conservation interests in both Durham and Madbury are at stake. You may wish to refer to my op-ed on these issues in Fosters Daily Democrat/Portsmouth Herald/Seacoast On-Line, published on February 26 and 27.

Thank you.

John

John E. Carroll

cc.: Eric Feigenbaum, Madbury Conservation Commission