



Sudbury Valley Trustees

*Conservation, Collaboration, and Community since 1953*

September 20, 2021

Wayland Planning Board  
41 Cochituate Road  
Wayland, MA 01778

Dear Members of the Wayland Planning Board:

On behalf of Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT), I am writing in regard to the cluster subdivision proposed for 27 Sherman's Bridge Road. SVT has significant concerns about the potential impacts of the proposal.

Sudbury Valley Trustees has a long history of conservation work in Wayland, including the land we own adjacent to the Town's Trout Brook Reservation, which connects directly to 27 Sherman's Bridge. These properties are part of an extensive corridor of conserved land that stretches from Wayland to Billerica along 12 miles of river and includes thousands of acres of protected land.

Development of 27 Sherman's Bridge into five residential lots would have significant negative impacts on the on-site resources as well as adjacent natural resources and recreational values. These include:

- Detrimental impacts to the property itself, such as removal of mature tree canopy and extensive soil removal that would damage a unique kettlehole in the northeast corner of the property. Removal of the trees on site and the extensive soil removal necessary to accommodate five lots not only diminishes the cooling benefit this forested area provides to the neighborhood but also results in the unnecessary and avoidable release of stored carbon.
- The proposal does not appear to meet the Town's Bylaw's directives to "conform to the existing natural terrain of the site" and to create building lots "of a size and shape as shall provide a building site that shall be in harmony with the natural terrain and other features of the tract."
- The proposed open space associated with the cluster development consists, in part, of several narrow strips of land. These do not provide any meaningful aesthetic or open space benefits, and SVT has found such open space configurations to be very problematic and difficult to maintain in other locations.
- Negative impacts to user experience on the Bay Circuit Trail, which passes along the west and north sides of the parcel. During the pandemic we saw how important local trails were to the mental and physical health of our region's residents. Rather than reducing the quality of our open space, we should be enhancing and increasing available open space for passive recreation.

- Finally, it has been pointed out that there are a disproportionate number of accidents on Sherman's Bridge Road. The poor sight lines and narrow road make the Bay Circuit Trail crossing less than ideal under current conditions, and adding additional traffic from five new homes at this site would only worsen the situation.

SVT would welcome the opportunity to work with the landowners, neighbors, Planning Board and Conservation Commission to develop a plan that preserves the site's important resources and maintains the important local ecological services that this site currently provides.

Sincerely,

Lisa Vernegaard  
Executive Director