

November 23, 2015

John Eaton  
18 Citation Ave  
Stoneham, MA 02180

BY ELECTRONIC AND U S MAIL

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Attn: MEPA Office  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114

Subject: The Commons at Weiss Farm

Dear Secretary Beaton:

This is to comment on the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) filed by proponent, Weiss Farm Apartments, LLC, on proposed subject project.

We residents of Stoneham and surrounding towns have attended, or are aware of, public hearings conducted by local town boards on subject project. The project proposes 264 apartments, 10 buildings, 438 parking places and other construction. The enormous size and density of this project, relative to the site location at 170 Franklin Street, together with the large new impervious area resulting from such construction, would likely have a substantially negative environmental impact. Specific problems are listed below.

### Storm Water Management and Flooding

History shows that when it rains, flooding at Weiss Farm can be extensive and water runoff to off-site locations has occurred in the past. This has affected residents of Stoneham and Melrose who have experienced flooding in the streets and water in their homes.

Page 10 of the ENF states that the proposed storm water management system for the project has been designed in accord with MassDEP management standards.

Not everyone agrees that the proposed storm water management system for this project is adequate. On July 9, 2015, at a public hearing held by the Stoneham Conservation Commission (SCC), Stoneham's consultant engineer, Robert Griffin, said that developer's plans for the proposed project do not meet storm water management standards. He said that the proposed system would exacerbate off-site flooding and make conditions worse. The SCC told the

applicant that there were unanswered questions regarding storm water management and flooding. The applicant provided the SCC an engineering report on the day of the hearing (July 9) but refused to grant a short 13-day continuance. On July 22, 2015, with its questions still unanswered, the SCC had no choice but to deny the project and close the public hearing.

On pages 3 and 13 of the ENF, proponent states that construction work would result in creation of 5.9 acres of impervious area where previously there was none. Four (4) of the impervious acres are for the parking lot and other paved areas. The remaining 1.9 impervious acres pertain to the buildings and internal roadways.

Failure of this project to meet storm water management standards, together with the creation of 5.9 acres of new impervious area, could make flooding and water runoff conditions worse resulting in negative impact on the environment.

### Potential Destruction of Wetlands

The project site consists of a single parcel of land totaling 25.7 acres of which 11.9 acres are wetlands. A drainage ditch reportedly constructed by the U S Army Corp of Engineers goes around the farm area and is considered part of the wetlands.

On page 7 of the ENF, proponent states that storm water runoff from the parking lot and roof areas into the wetlands will be treated to remove in excess of 80% (not 100%) of suspended solids.

Stoneham's Wetlands Protection Bylaws (Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 11) states that construction work within 100 feet of wetlands would bring a high likelihood of adverse impact on wetlands, either immediately or over time. At the Stoneham Conservation Commission (SCC) hearing held on March 19, 2015, developer acknowledged that construction work would indeed occur within 100 feet of the wetlands perimeter. Such construction includes portions of a maintenance building, townhouses, a seven car garage and the parking lot.

The addition of 5.9 acres of impervious area created by this project would likely contribute to contaminated water runoff from the parking lot and other construction into the nearby wetlands. The proponent has acknowledged that storm water treatment devices will not remove 100% of suspended solids. Over time, this project could deteriorate a significant amount of wetlands resource thereby having negative impact on the environment.

### Traffic Increase and Congestion

On page 25 of the ENF, proponent indicates that this project will generate a 9.7% increase in daily traffic on Franklin Street (1,774 new weekday trips /18,250 existing trips = 9.7% increase).

An increase in daily traffic of 9.7% on Franklin Street is unacceptable. There is already too much traffic and congestion on Franklin Street. Franklin Street is a narrow road which serves as an access way for commuters to three major highways. In addition, there are many single family homes, condos, apartments, a high school, two child care centers, an assisted living complex and several businesses on Franklin Street in the vicinity of the project site.

The developer's application filed in June 2014 provides detail pertinent to the topic of traffic. Section 10 of the application includes the *Traffic Impact and Access Study* (TIAS). The methodology of Levels of Service (LOS) is used to evaluate traffic flow. Six lettered rankings or "levels of service" are utilized from LOS A through to LOS F. LOS A is the optimal level for good driving conditions. LOS F, the worst level, is considered unacceptable to most drivers because of very high delays.

The traffic impact at the project site driveway at 170 Franklin Street is explained on page 33 of the TIAS. Following is quoted from the middle of the page:

The site driveway southbound left-turn movement is expected to operate at LOS F with a 50.1 seconds of delay during the weekday AM peak hour and LOS F with more than 100.0 seconds of delay during the weekday PM peak hour while the right-turn movement is expected to operate at LOS C. Even though fewer vehicles are exiting the site during the weekday PM peak hour, the delay for the vehicles exiting is longer due to the increased traffic making a left-turn into the site as well as the increased traffic on the eastbound through movement.

The TIAS study clearly indicates that vehicles attempting to exit the project during the weekday at AM and PM peak hours will experience significant delays at times approaching two minutes. During peak traffic times, this intersection is designated LOS F – the worst designation.

In a letter dated July 17, 2014, to Chairman Robert Saltzman of the Stoneham Board of Appeals, Chief James McIntyre of the Stoneham Police Department said, "I am concerned that operators attempting to exit the site during these times will begin to experience frustration and take risks in order to merge into traffic, thus increasing the potential for a vehicle crash."

None of the traffic mitigation commitments proposed on page 26 of the ENF would improve the LOS F designation on Franklin Street during peak hours. It is readily apparent that the substantial increase in traffic, congestion and vehicle emissions brought to Stoneham by the addition of hundreds of motor vehicles at this location, will negatively impact the environment and quality of life in Stoneham.

## Elimination of Bike Lane

This project would eliminate a 100-foot segment of Stoneham's bike lane on the project side of Franklin Street to make room for construction of a recommended left-turn lane on Franklin Street for eastern bound vehicles to enter the project. (The bike lane marked with a white line is more accurately called a shoulder actively used as a bike lane). The proponent considers the left turn lane a mitigation commitment because of the addition of 1,774 vehicle trips per day at the project site driveway intersection at 170 Franklin Street. See pages 25 & 26 of the ENF. Elimination of a 100-foot segment of the bike lane is bad news for Stoneham and surrounding communities because the bike lane on Franklin Street is the public road connection to the Tri-Community Bikeway/Greenway project that proponents fought so hard to get passed at Town Meeting last January. Construction of the \$5.5 million Bikeway will begin next year with state and federal funds already approved for construction. If the 100-foot segment of bike lane were eliminated, bicyclists on Franklin Street would be forced to interact with motor vehicles for that 100-foot distance. I understand the need for a left-turn lane for vehicles turning into the project. On the other hand, in this day and age when environmental issues are so important, bicyclists should not be required to forfeit their accommodation on a public road because of this development. Eliminating bike lanes discourages bicyclists and increases the use of automobiles and related vehicle emissions resulting in negative environmental impact.

## Conclusion

My understanding of MEPA policy is that any new development must provide mitigation when the project significantly exacerbates pre-existing problems. The facts cited above show that this project would make several pre-existing problems worse. These problems are not corrected by existing mitigation commitments. Stoneham's engineer consultant stated that proponent's plan for storm water management would make flooding conditions worse. Stoneham's bylaws state that construction within 100 feet of wetlands could have adverse impact on wetlands, either immediately or over time. The size and density of this development would significantly increase traffic and congestion on Franklin Street from bad to unacceptable, increase vehicle emissions and create a possible safety hazard. The elimination of a 100-foot segment of bike lane on Franklin Street would add to the problems. Overall, it appears that this project would make the environment and quality of life for local residents substantially worse.

Thank you for reading this list of potentially harmful environmental impacts.

Sincerely,

John Eaton

cc: Michael Day, Representative, 31<sup>st</sup> Middlesex  
Jason Lewis, Senator, 5<sup>th</sup> Middlesex  
Stoneham Board of Selectmen  
Stoneham Board of Appeals  
Stoneham Conservation Commission

Following concerned residents asked that their names be added to this letter:

<u>First Name</u> <u>Last Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>ZIP</u>
Vincent & Debra Aliberti	2 Gerald Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Lawrence & Anna Allen	8 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Keith & Gina Anderson	12 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Tony Antoniou	25 Newcomb Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Lorrie & Delores Arena	1176 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Paul & Kristen Armano	9 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Robert & Elsie Ashworth	41 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Douglas & Jeanmarie Avola	17 Rustic Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph & Arlene Avola	22 Evergreen Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Natalie Baldini	159 Franklin St, #6	Stoneham	MA	02180
Silvia Banos	4 Pearl St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Frank & Joan Barker	17 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Wystan & Elizabeth Benboe	100 North Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Arthur & Bernice Bennett	7 Sunset Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Jack Bernard	22 Tamarock Ter	Stoneham	MA	02180
Ken & Mary Blake	219 Green St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Daniel & Susan Blyde	4 Hampton Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Lucille & Vincent Bonfilio	133 Franklin St, #206	Stoneham	MA	02180
Ken & Caitlyn Bowdidge	4 Columbus Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Ken & Carol Bowdidge	2 Kevin Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Kevin, Kyle & Kristopher Bowdidge	2 Kevin Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Bill & Youlia Bowerman	1163 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Michael & Kim Bowler	16 Citation Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Mary Lou Bracciotti	36 Broadway	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph & Martha Buckley	6 Carmen Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Bob & Chris Buttiglieri	195 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Allison & Caroline Buttiglieri	195 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180

Bob Campatelli	3 West Ferdinand St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joe & Claire Capraro	7 Dinnano Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph & Barbara Casararo	12 Murdock Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Karen A Caswell	2 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Alfred & Joann Cataldo	72 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Stanley & Camille Chesnick	2 Sparhawk Cir	Stoneham	MA	02180
Robin Cohen	12 Sunset Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Ray & Deb Colamata	107 Forest St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Caroline Colarusso, member of Stoneham Board of Selectmen	4 Patrick Cir	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph & Rebecca Coluntino	197 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Suzanne Cryan	40 Isabella St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joe Cutone	8 Rivers Ln	Stoneham	MA	02180
Andrew Da Prato	307 Green St	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Denise Daly	5 Citation Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Marilyn Danico	4 Carmen Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Heike R Daya	51 Perkins St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Brian DeLacey	1 Earl St	Malden	MA	02148
Vincent & Virginia Delvecchio	34 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Laurie Denison	27 Spring St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Pattie DeSantis	32 Citation Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
James & Gloria Devine	42 Spring St	Stoneham	MA	02180
James Jr, & Caitlin Devine	42 Spring St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Rosario & Christine DiMartino	12 Benjamin Ter	Stoneham	MA	02180
Marilyn Donovan	42 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Julie Driscoll	23 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Elizabeth A Erk	13 Lincoln St, Unit B	Stoneham	MA	02180
Carol Feise	12 Sunset Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Adam & Ashley Fiedler	1 Nina St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Richard Fortuna	18 Longbow Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Lisa Funciello	15 Cricklewood Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Frank & Donna Gargiulo	4 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Dahai Gong	24 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Tom & Pam Gorham	33 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Randall & Margaret Grometstein	198 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Ruth Gross	7 Nina St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Dennis & Deborah Gudzevich	83 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Linda Hanson	14 Fells Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Marjorie Hartnett	14 Perkins St	Stoneham	MA	02180

Faith Harvey	19 West St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Paul & Sandra Hatch	159 Franklin St, B3	Stoneham	MA	02180
Kevin & Caitlin Haughey	35 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Cynthia Hemenway	14 Fells Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Marlene Heroux	137 Franklin St, #203	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Celine Hubbard	183 Orris St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Walter & Betty Hunt	40 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Wallace & Karen Jakimczyk	4 Woodbriar Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
William & Kathleen Jenkins	8 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Arthur W Kanavos	20 Pebble Place	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Anna Keeley	2 Tedford Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Terrence & Darlene Landers	20 Brackett Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Tim & Seamus Landers	20 Brackett Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Jim Langone	27 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Anthony & Sandra LaRosa	9 Carmen Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Robert & Tara Lawler	53 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Xinhua Lee	24 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Jim Leeman	4 Nina Street	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joan Lemire	12 Fairview Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Steven Liebman, Chairman, Melrose Ped/Bike Advisory Committee	11 Ridgewood Ln	Melrose	MA	02176
Joelle Littlefield	30 Citation Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Allyson Looney	8 Winthrop St	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Janet MacDonald	26 Citation Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Claude & Lori Mack	21 Clearview Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joshh & Amanda MaGee	173 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Domenic & Kathleen Maitino	23 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Jim Malarkey	15 Cricklewood Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Michael & Mary Marchant	4 Ferdinand St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Daniel & Ryan Marchant	4 Ferdinand St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Thomas & Evan Marchant	4 Ferdinand St	Stoneham	MA	02180
David Marrano	10 Stonewood Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Todd & Elizabeth Maul	30 Perkins St	Stoneham	MA	02180
William & Susan Max	21 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Frank & Diane Mayo	22 Bow Street	Stoneham	MA	02180
Paul Mazzotta	7 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Joan McDermott	31 Parkway Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph McGovern	25 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
William & Mary Lou McKinnon	12 Rustic Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180

Patrick & Susan McNamara	1171 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Paul Means	199 William St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Marie Meibaum	18 Citation Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Carlos Mendonca	7 Gavin Cir	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph Mendonca	2 Spruce St	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Jan-Marocco Merlino	15 Bow St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Frank Messina	43 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Karen Miller	52 Adams St	Melrose	MA	02176
Karen Mole	189 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Fred Moreau	4 Christopher St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Eileen Mullen	17 Summerhill St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Lauren Murphy	41 Fairway Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Kanneganti & Kodela Murphy	4 Benjamin Ter	Stoneham	MA	02180
Sebastian & Maria Musto	7 Ellen Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Michael & Patricia Nolan	21 Sunset Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Antoinette Nolfi	4 Victoria Ln	Stoneham	MA	02180
Thomas & Joe-Ann Palermo	14 Sunset Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Eugene & Caroline Passaro	41 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joseph Pecoraro	5 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Mary Pecoraro, former Chair, Board of Selectmen, former member School Committee	5 Walsh Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Michael & Linda Picariello	20 Ellen Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Michael & Donna Pisari	17 Dapper Darby Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Peter & Rebecca Pouliot	1166 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Kathleen Presti	3 Standish Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
John & Meredith Pustell	198 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Joan Quigley	2 Merrow Ln	Stoneham	MA	02180
Frank & Elaine Raffaello	181 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Frank & Diane Reagan	25 Landers Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Sandra Riggillo	14 Sparhawk Cir	Stoneham	MA	02180
William & Grace Rosselli	17 Cricklewood Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
David & Claudia Rugeles	3 Sullivan Cir	Stoneham	MA	02180
Kevin & Alicia Russell	12 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Paul & Maria Sagarino	65 Spring St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Christina Sagarino	65 Spring St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Carmine J Santoro	10 Cherry Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
James & Paula Sarno	6 Ellen Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180

Steven & Valarie Sarsfield	44 Isabella St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Tina Saunders	2 Fieldstone Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Priscilla Schoelzel	5 Cricklewood Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Al & Carla Sciola	15 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Al Jr Sciola	15 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Rose Sena	97 Walton Park	Melrose	MA	02176
Frank Simonetti	33 Perkins St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Lucas & Megan Soucy	27 Isabella St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Teresa & Francois Soucy	39 Ellen Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Roland & Gale Spadafora	21 Stonewood Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Stefanie Spadafora	21 Stonewood Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Katelyn Sullivan	4 Christopher St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Evelyn Surette	8 Windsor Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Michael & Nicole Taranto	7 Dinnano Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Nancy Taylor	30 Newcomb Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Daniel & Lucy Tempesta	20 Kenneth Ter	Stoneham	MA	02180
Chris & Theresa Trant	5 Whittemore Ln	Stoneham	MA	02180
Leila M Tutela	24 Ellen Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
David & Claudia Vaccaro	3 Sullivan Cir	Stoneham	MA	02180
Robert & Diane Verner	4 Tedford Dr	Stoneham	MA	02180
Scott Viselli	9 Stonewood Ave	Stoneham	MA	02180
Richard & Patricia Walsh	36 Westwood Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Martin H Wantman	20 Gerald Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Mark & Rachel M Warren	111 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Terri Webber	185 Franklin St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Scott & Carren Webber	7 Nina St	Stoneham	MA	02180
Geraldine Whalen	137 Franklin St, #501	Stoneham	MA	02180
David & Virginia Wholley	16 Rustic Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180
Ciro Wholley	16 Rustic Rd	Stoneham	MA	02180