

**From:** paul wiener

**Sent:** Saturday, July 09, 2016 11:04 AM

**To:** Briere, Sabra; Planning; Kailasapathy, Sumi; Taylor, Christopher (Mayor); Lazarus, Howard;  
[turner-tolbert@a2gov.org](mailto:%20turner-tolbert@a2gov.org); Building; Naud, Matthew

**Subject:** The Development of 1861 Newport Road

I'm writing in reference to your call for comments on the development and division of the property at 1861 Newport Rd. I'm writing also because I, like many people, won't be in town to attend the public meeting that was suddenly announced. Many of us make summer travel plans long in advance. But the issue of this property has been on our minds for over a year and a half.

During the past year I've spoken with many neighbors living within a mile of this property, including those living right next to it, who are disgusted and angry at the way it's been developed. It is routinely ridiculed. The land has been permanently defaced (as has the sound barrier from M-14 it represented). A monstrosity, possibly unsellable and uninhabitable, has arisen there fronting Newport Road. No one fails to comment on its ugliness, inappropriateness, and absurdity.

It's been built only a few yards from M-14. The land it's on is always muddy and highly flooded in rains, and often has a pool over 30 feet wide in front, which is iced-over in winter. It sprawls and reaches over adjacent property. From it there is no access to Newport Rd as yet (no curb cutaway, despite recent road and bridge work there), and when it comes it will create a difficult, cramped entry or departure point due to the spacing.

There appears to be no landscaping plan, and one can't imagine how there could be; all natural landscaping has been destroyed out of hand. Huge, ugly solar panels are in back of the front house, and thus will be an eyesore for any homes built in back. No yard appears possible. The builder/developer has pointedly ignored all concerns raised to him by neighbors about privacy, lighting, noise, the times construction has occurred, the plans for the future. It is unclear how water will be supplied, or how building here will affect the environment, groundwater, pollution, fire prevention (hydrant) issues, or the interests of neighboring property owners.

Two large public schools (Wines and Forsythe) are also only a few hundred yards away. The main entrance to Bird Hills Park is across the road from this property. The large Methodist church and property 100 yards away on the same side of Newport is now for sale, and no one knows how that property will be disposed or developed; it may be raised. Another house on Newport about 200 yards away is about to be built, which will create a challenge for builders since access to the recessed property will be very difficult without disrupting traffic on Newport.

In short, many people living here are appalled by what's been going on at 1861 Newport and hold the town and the Planning Commission accountable. The absurd, indefensible development that's occurring in what seems an impossibly awful, unlikely location, in a peaceful, tasteful neighborhood mystifies us. Does no one ever regulate such things? Is the town completely in thrall to big money and ignorant, overbearing owners and

developers? Are there any community values that override boorish, clueless, often out-of-town developers? What is our community - does it exist at all? No one could possibly live happily on that property. They'd have to be blind or crazy. Don't take my word for it. Look at it yourself, and decide.

The disclaimer in your notice, that basically there's nothing you can do about it if it "meets standards" is both insulting and disheartening. Are you kidding? Standards of what?

All I can do is add my voice (and speak for the silent others) to those who in every way oppose further - and even current - development of this property. It is a disgrace to taste, to the conscience of builders, and to the integrity of realtors. Most especially it's an insult to the large number of us who live in this beautiful part of town, among rolling hills, close to Bird Hills Nature Preserve and the Huron River.

Sincerely,

Paul Wiener  
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