

Stormwater Management Code Revisions and Development

Helen Maccarino <hmaccarino@gmail.com>

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To: Mayor <mayor@scarsdale.com>;Trustee Gans <jgans@scarsdale.com>;Trustee Lewis <jlewis@scarsdale.com>;Trustee Brew <kbrew@scarsdale.com>;Trustee Mazer <kmazer@scarsdale.com>;Trustee Whitestone <rwhitestone@scarsdale.com>;Trustee Ahuja <sahuja@scarsdale.com>;Robert Cole <rcole@scarsdale.com>;Greg Cutler <gcutler@scarsdale.com>;David Goessl <dgoessl@scarsdale.com>;Taylor Emanuel <temanuel@scarsdale.com>

CAUTION: External sender.

Dear Mayor Veron, Members of the Board of Trustees and Village officials:

I attended the public hearing when revisions to the Chapter 254 Stormwater Management Codes were presented to you. I'm sure you will fine tune the proposed changes to make sure we enact regulations to mitigate the flooding risks Scarsdalians deal with now and will continue to deal with in the future. As more frequent and intense storms are predicted, stricter regulations are needed immediately.

I tend to get tongue-tied at public hearings so I wanted to present my concerns to you a bit more cogently in this letter.

As you may know, a proposed 8 home subdivision at 80 Garden Road, now referred to as "The Gardens", has recently been resubmitted. The proposal, while not yet on the Planning Board agenda, clearly runs counter to the primary change recommended in Chapter 254: the creation of an Adjoining Property Buffer (APB), the 25 foot side and back yard setbacks from neighboring property lines, land that is to remain undisturbed.

I am particularly worried about the timing of the applicability of the revised code and urge you to require "The Gardens" to adhere to the new codes rather than allow the project to proceed under inadequate stormwater management codes.

"The Gardens" is an enormous project covering over 6 acres, the equivalent of nearly 5 football fields. If you are unfamiliar with the plan, it calls for clear-cutting hundreds of trees, raising the terrain by approximately 4 feet, and installing a retaining wall just 6 feet from the adjacent property lines. Not only is there no APB, there is a retaining wall instead of a "tapered slope", a wall that runs the length of the entire site. The subdivision plan also ignores the findings of NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation which the Chapter 254 code cites prominently from the outset. The NYS DEC states that clear-cutting and terrain-raising risks altering drainage patterns across property lines, cause erosion and "have significant impact on the health, safety and welfare of the community."

New development plans submitted prior to the enactment of the revised Chapter 254 code should be required to adhere to the stricter stormwater management regulations, especially multi-acre and multi-home proposals and especially those to be built in sensitive drainage areas. There is consensus that Scarsdale needs stricter stormwater management codes. Do not let a multi-home, multi-acre subdivision slip in under the old regulations when you know the current stormwater regulations are inadequate. The damage that will be done once 5 football fields of woodlands are destroyed cannot be undone.

Immediate adherence to stricter stormwater management regulations is critical. The sheer size of this subdivision provides the Village with the opportunity to demonstrate responsible practices for flood mitigation. Scarsdale can be a model of environmental responsibility as it relates to development by heeding the advice of the NYS DEC, our own Village Engineer, our Planning Dept and our Dept of Public Works.

Thank you for your service to our community.

Sincerely,
Helen Maccarino
83 Cushman Road