

Retention Basin Concerns for Bristol Estates

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Wed 5/27/2020 4:00 PM

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Mr. Heins,

Thank you for letting me know that you received my email regarding my concerns and my photos and comments on the subdivision drawings approved by the Planning Board. I also want to thank you for forwarding me the inspection report. As you saw in the letter from the Planning Boards engineer, Mr. Nims, I was able to meet him and walked around the subdivision. I was hoping that he would have provided more information on his inspection letter/report and elaborate more about what he had found. When we spoke on the inspection, maintaining the required 6' distance, he agreed with my findings and said that the subdivision was not done yet. I agreed with him that the subdivision was not complete, but the two homes that own the property where the basin is located, myself, Lot 4, and the Bacon's, Lot 3, are moved in and trying to complete our landscaping. I was hoping his report was going to be a little bit more descriptive and would let the owner, Stone Bridge, know that they needed to make some corrections. Since the basin is not constructed properly, I was hoping the engineering report would have put them on notice to start to make the corrections and complete the work to the requirements of the approved plans.

While I was meeting with Mr. Nims, I mentioned the gravel topping of the basin. He said that the gravel top was part of the design, provided access to the basin in case it had to be cleaned out or maintained. I agreed with him, but at the same time, I asked if the gravel could then be topped with topsoil so it could grow grass and would at least look presentable. He commented that he did not have a problem with that, and if the builder presented it, he felt it would be appropriate with board approval.

I would like to ask the planning board if this was presented to the board would they approve it?

I looked at a number of different basins around town, and none of them look like the basin on Bristol Road. I have attached some photos of the Bristol basin as well as the basin on Lisa's Lane, which is right next door. My concerns are that the "gravel" the builder used is not actually gravel. Since everything I have seen on the plans, and all of the references in the town's subdivision design requirements refer to MADOT specifications and the material used on top of the basin should be gravel, M1.03.0: Gravel Borrow. However, it is not it is actually M1.09.0: Reclaimed Pavement Borrow Material, (a combination of crushed asphalt, concrete, and stone), and not gravel. Please refer to the pictures from the documentation of the basin I emailed earlier. I was again hoping the engineer would have noted that in the report.

Besides looking like hell, the gravel topped basin is an attractive nuisance. People walking on Bristol Road feel it is a place to walk their dog or walk out and view the wetland. We have had several people argue with us, on our own property, that they have a right to walk it since it is the property of the town. If it were grass, people would think twice before crossing a yard to walk on it. Additionally, since nothing will grow on, it is more susceptible to erode. At this point, the builder has to keep it up, but when they move on, the Bacon's and I will be responsible for maintaining it. This could be costly without proper checks in place.



Lisa Lane Basin



Lisa Lane Basin



Bristol Road Basin



Bristol Road Basin view from the road



Reclaimed Pavement Borrow on Top of Basin

When I read the engineer's report, he references the lack of rain garden, diaphragm trench, and roof drains drywells on a number of lots. I can say that I, Lot 4, do indeed have the rain garden, diaphragm trench for the driveway, which drains to the rain garden, and 2 drywells for the roof drains. If he had asked, I would have shown him. He should have seen them from the drainage basin during the inspection since you have a complete view of my back yard from there. I spoke to Mr. Bacon, Lot 3, and he too has the rain garden, diaphragm trench, and gutter drains into drywells installed.

As I mentioned to you when we first spoke, I have a degree in Natural Resources Planning & Management, was a town and county planner, and have been employed in the civil and environmental construction field for over 30 years. Additionally, I served on the Town of Schodack, NY, planning board for 5 years before moving to MA 7 years ago. I only mention this to provide you my experience in reviewing the construction drawings, implementation and oversite of construction projects, and planning board procedures.

Thank you for all your assistance. If you have any questions or need any follow-up please let me know. If requested, I could present the information and my concerns to the board via video conference call or plane conference call.

Andrew



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