

August 10, 2020

Planning Board
Town Board
54375 Main Road
Southold, NY 11971

Re: Change of Zone Application for Fishers Island submitted by Walsh Park Benevolent Association (SCTM#1000-9-10-10)

Dear Members of the Planning Board and Town Board:

I and many of my neighbors on Fishers Island have previously submitted to you several letters regarding the Change of Zone Application submitted by Walsh Park, most recently on February 14 and March 2. Copies of those letters are attached for your convenience. We have just learned, with very little notice, that the Planning Board is meeting today to make a recommendation regarding the Application and that the Town Board is meeting tomorrow to discuss the same.

As you can no doubt tell from the correspondence you have received from us and others in the winter and early spring, this project is highly controversial on Fishers Island and creates the possibility of real and permanent damage to the neighborhood for which it is planned. To date, due to the filing of the Application by Walsh Park for the COZ in late 2019 without having first engaged with the neighborhood in any manner, and now the COVID pandemic this summer, there has literally been no opportunity on Fishers Island for any in-person dialog concerning the project. Now, with scant warning, the project has suddenly re-emerged after a 5-month hiatus, during which time Walsh Park has made no attempt to reach any consensus with the neighborhood or community as to what, if any, scale project would make sense. The need for further consideration and dialogue with and among members of the community is particularly important since there has been no time yet to consider or assess the impact of the economic damage done by the pandemic to the economy of Fishers Island or the current need for more housing.

As we have previously communicated to the Town and Walsh Park, we believe it is clear and obvious that a 6-unit proposed project on the site is ill-conceived, and any zoning change that would permit it should be rejected out of hand. As we have also communicated, we think the next step should be dialogue between Walsh Park and members of the community as to what reduced size and scale project might make sense on the site, which has never occurred and cannot easily occur this summer due to the pandemic. Fishers Island is too small, and the proposed project is too large, for there to be any rush to judgment without community involvement and consensus. Speaking for myself and all of the neighbors who have previously joined in the letters we have submitted, we urge the Town to reject the proposed COZ so that our voices can be heard and dialogue can occur without the hammer of an approved 6-unit project hanging over the Island's head.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Borden