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August 23, 2020

Planning Board  
Town Board  
54375 Main Road  
Southold, CT 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 am writing to encourage you to deliberate closely and carefully before making any decision regarding the zoning application submitted by Walsh Park Benevolent Association. It is my opinion not enough attention has been given to a number of issues.

My grandfather originally built on Fishers in the 20's and my family, both on my father and mother's sides have built here, bought here, rented here, lived here. We are invested and care deeply about the island. I do not live in the neighborhood that would be impacted. I am a staunch supporter of Fishers Island initiatives and I believe we all have Fishers best interests in mind. Nevertheless, not every idea is a good one and I have seen other decisions made that adversely affect a subset of the Fishers population without care. I would not like to see this happen here.

My concerns are:

1. No neighbors have been shown plans or invited to discuss plans. In fact, information has been requested multiple times and nothing has been forthcoming from Walsh Park. On an island like Fishers, not engaging with neighbors collaboratively is a red flag and a significant concern.
2. Sewage and water delivery infrastructure in the Fort Wright area is the oldest on island and already stressed by its age and the number of homes it serves. To add on a number of homes that will further impact water pressure and delivery seems irresponsible to me.
3. The proposed building site is in one of Fishers' few 'neighborhoods'. It is already densely populated with venerable brick buildings consistent with the time in which they were constructed. Fishers Island has always been proud of and celebrated its history. I urge you to

preserve the integrity of the Fort Wright area. Changing zoning in order to wedge new housing into an interior lot will irrevocably change the character of the neighborhood to its detriment.

4. The proposed lot is in a heavy traffic area for Fishers. This lot sits between two busy roads that already experience significant traffic. They are the only two roads that traverse east to west to serve the ferry, the airport, numerous contractors and their equipment, the dumps and the school in addition to all the Fort Wright housing. Children ride bikes daily on these roads (the sidewalks are not level enough for bikes, although that is a separate issue) which makes adding more families, inevitably with children, even less advisable. I believe a road study would show the inadvisability of adding 12-20 cars to this already congested area.

5. Additionally, Walsh Park is just now completing /refurbishing/renovating apartments down by the ferry. They are not yet completed, they have not been fully funded, and reallocation of individuals or families to new apartments or houses has not yet taken place. Until all of those things have been done, need can be re-established and funding appropriated, I don't believe it is in Fishers best interests to even consider this application.

We all know housing is a significant and important issue on Fishers Island. There are a number of lots available and other organizations that might collaborate to address housing issues. I support the mission of developing housing options on Fishers. I just don't think this particular option is a good one. I know this one looks 'easy', but that doesn't make it right. If a builder approached Any Town, USA, and presented an application to change zoning in order to build multiple family housing but had no plans, no studies, no viability, no information regarding need and suitability, their petition would not be heard. Why is this? It makes no sense.

I urge you to give equal weight to all concerns surrounding this particular application. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,  
Audrey N Ludemann