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Richard Harris, Director of Planning and Conservation
Planning Department
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South Hadley, MA 01075
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Project: **Skinner Woods Flexible Development**

Subject: **Response to 6/26/19 Conservation Commission Letter**

Client: Skinner Woods, LLC
Thomas Spring
2 Cedar Ridge
South Hadley, MA 01075

Dear Richard,

Below, please find a point-by-point reply to the comments from the Conservation Commission.

1. All septic systems will meet Title V requirements. General tree mitigation is being considered. 3.5 acres of pine forest is not being cut, as indicated in the letter. Only 1.2 acres will be disturbed.
2. An arborist will be consulted to provide a plan to mitigate the 3 significant trees. The plan will be reviewed and approved by the Tree Warden.
3. Only 1.2 acres of trees will be cut. In conformance with the turtle protection plan, the limits of disturbance will be delineated in the field by silt fencing which will keep the turtles out and the construction equipment inside the work area. Disturbance is being kept to a minimum to accommodate drainage and septic systems. Trees which are beyond the limits of work, which may be partially damaged by construction operations can be removed, as recommended by an arborist at the time of construction.
4. The original application to NEHSP erroneously indicated that the open space would be conveyed to the Conservation Commission. This intention was repeated in NHESP's review letter. In fact, the condominium association will retain ownership of open space and a restrictive covenant shall be recorded which designates this land shall be for passive recreation purposes only.
5. After discussion with the Planning Board, it seems that the general public will not be invited to access the open space. Access to these areas will be for the use and benefit of condominium residents.

6. Earth removal activities predate current ownership and future stewardship of the land. Ecological restoration is not the responsibility of Skinner Woods, LLC, but would have been the responsibility of the previous quarry operator, if an agreement with the town was in place. It is my understanding that no such agreement was in place and further restoration is not required. Preserving the open space is already a boon for the local ecology, as a private subdivision could also be created on these same lands.
7. As the trail will not be public, the maintenance of it will be left to the discretion of the condominium association via the restrictive covenant requiring general and perpetual maintenance of the open space.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Brightly,


Bucky Sparkle, PE

CC: Thomas Spring
James Canning, Vice Chair, Conservation Commission
116 Main Street, Room 204, South Hadley, MA 01075
(via acapra@southhadleyma.gov)