

Good evening:

Thank you for allowing me to come before the Wetlands Protection Committee. My name is Michelle Ho and I reside at 9 Lanark Road. I am here to speak about the wetlands associated with the 489 Worcester Street (formerly 8 Cliff Road) project.

The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Wellesley Wetlands Protection Bylaws prohibit altering land, water or vegetation in lakes, streams, wetlands, floodplains, or areas within 100 feet of wetlands (and 200 feet of perennial streams) without a permit from this Committee. The project developer has already submitted a letter of intent and proposed development plans for this project. They are asking for the Committee's approval to begin site preparation and development work within the 100-foot buffer zone. The site as you are aware has existing wetlands and abuts a stream that runs along the back of the project and through 20 Cliff Road which borders the proposed project site. The existing wetlands are identified in the Commonwealth's MassGIS map which clearly shows the wetlands area at the rear of 20 and 23 Gilson Road properties and bordering the proposed project site. Under the Town of Wellesley Wetlands Protection Regulations, the 100-foot buffer zone bordering vegetated wetlands is considered a Resource Area.

Wetlands serve a critical role in our environment and should be preserved and not altered at all by encroaching development. Briefly I want to highlight some benefits of ensuring are wetlands are not altered.

- Wetlands are complex ecosystems that provide valuable services to humans and animals alike.
- Wetlands protect our water supplies by recharging ground and surface waters and filtering contaminants.
- Wetlands help control flooding by storing water during storm events and slowly releasing it into surface and ground waters.
- Wetlands protect us from storm damage by serving as natural buffers.

Other residents have already spoken before you about the danger of the chemicals that will be used in the explosives for the proposed blasting that will be required to build an underground garage housing 70+ cars. I am concerned about the lasting effects of those chemicals in the ground and the potential for seepage into the groundwater and the abutting wetlands given the nature of the ledge on the site. The proposed blasting is likely to cause impacts to the hydrology of the project site as well as the wetlands and the abutting stream.

I ask the Committee to seriously consider these potential impacts as we cannot afford to irreparably damage the environmental conditions on the site. Maintaining our existing wetlands is so important to addressing climate change as discussed in the Climate Action report recently released by the Commonwealth's Climate Action Chief, Melissa Hoffer.

I do not support the 489 Worcester Street project as currently configured; there is likely to be potential damage to our wetlands as a result of the proposed blasting and significant alteration in the site hydrology. I also ask you to consider whether a 100 ft. buffer is sufficient or whether the site could qualify for a 200 ft. buffer given that the stream abutting the project is likely a perennial stream as defined in the Wellesley regulations and not an intermittent stream as indicated in the developer's application.

Thank you.