

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Dwyer, Walt <WDwyer@BabsonCapital.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 07, 2014 3:35 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Cc:** Dwyer, Walt  
**Subject:** Sard Custom Homes LLC IWW application #982 and SUB #287  
**Attachments:** TPZ Speech Jan 2014 #2A.docx

Todd — As Commissioner Prestage suggested last night, attached please find a copy the remarks I had planned to make last night. Please circulate it to the members of the Commission and other Town Staff and have it placed into the record.

Also, I think it would be wonderful if the Town could invite Dr. Danzer to appear at the Special TPZ Meeting on January 22. The applicant here has already spoken out against the findings of the Independent Study at the December 30 Conservation & Environment Commission meeting as well as at the hearing last night and surely Mr. Logan will be criticizing Dr. Danzer's report when he speaks on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. It would be nice to give Dr. Danzer the opportunity to defend his work.

Thank you very much for all your hard work in connection with this project.

Best regards, Walt.

*Walter T. Dwyer  
101 Cliffmore Road  
West Hartford, CT 06107*

This e-mail transmission may contain information that is proprietary, privileged and/or confidential and is intended exclusively for the person(s) to whom it is addressed. Any use, copying, retention or disclosure by any person other than the intended recipient or the intended recipient's designees is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient or their designee, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail and delete all copies.

January 7, 2014

Town of West Hartford  
Plan & Zoning Commission  
c/o Mr. Todd Dumais, Town Planner  
West Hartford Town Hall  
50 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

RE: Sard Custom Homes, LLC IWW application #982 and SUB #287

Dear Members of the Town Plan & Zoning Commission:

I attended the January 6, 2014 Town Plan & Zoning (TPZ) Commission hearing. At the suggestion of Commissioner Prestage I am forwarding a slightly expanded version of the comments I would have made last night if time had permitted so that they may be included as part of the public record on the above applications. At this time I would also like to thank the Commission and Town Staff for all the time and effort they have already expended on this project.

#### **SPEECH TO TPZ JANUARY 6, 2014**

My name is Walter Dwyer. I have been a resident of 101 Cliffmore Road for over 21 years and I am a member of the neighborhood group that has been monitoring this project. Our group has over 60 homeowners on our email distribution list with a substantial amount of resident expertise since our group includes civil engineers, conservationists, environmental engineers and consultants both employed by the State and independent, lawyers, retired MDC and numerous other business people. This is a group of people with different interests and agendas. But without exception everyone I have spoken with has been surprised and concerned, some might say appalled, by the aggressive environmental nature of this proposed project.

I have written this Commission letters dated October 2, October 3, October 23 and November 21, 2013 stressing the water management and water quality, sanitary sewage, public safety, wildlife and environmental problems associated with this project. I have also written a letter to the Conservation & Environment Commission dated November 18, 2013. I stand by those letters and incorporate them by reference.

At this point in the permitting process, there is nothing more I would have liked than to stand up here and say "I support this project". Sadly, I cannot do that. Instead, I would like to make three simple points. If left unmodified:

1. THIS IS A BAD PLAN.
2. IT **WILL** HARM THE WETLANDS
3. **CLEARLY**, THE APPLICANT IS UNWILLING TO VOLUNTARILY CHANGE IT.

Therefore, I ask you to deny the requested wetland permit application IWW #982 on the basis of the findings in Dr. Danzer's independent study because the project, as proposed, will surely harm the wetlands. I specifically cite page 7 of the report. In the discussion of lot #9 the report identifies the significant impact of the potential erosion problems that will likely develop. It states "... This will create a situation in which runoff will concentrate and increase velocity as it flows over the lip of the slope, and likely result in erosion of the slope below, resulting in deposition of sediment into the wetland areas below, triggering Sections 2.1 jj (1,4,6) of the Inland Wetland Regulations (Significant Impact)." In other words, it will be negatively impactful to the wetlands.

Likewise, in the discussion of the "Development of Lot 6" on page 10 the report says "...Without adequate design and stabilization, it would be expected that the fill slope would serve a source of sediments that would migrate into the wetland area. The potential volume of sediments is large enough to result in damage to the resource, enough in my opinion to trigger Sections 2.1 jj 2 and 4 (Significant Impacts) of the Inland Wetland Regulations."

These items have not been suitably addressed in the applicant's current plan, and I feel there's ample reason to deny the permit application because of that.

There was a time when I thought – well, there are problems and concerns, but there are practical common sense solutions to address them. I have my own list right here (see attached Exhibit A). Yes, the appropriate conservation easements will be very beneficial. Yes, it makes sense to be very careful with developing near the steep banks of the parcel. Yes, maybe the applicant is trying to squeeze too many houses into this development. The comments and recommendations of Dr. Danzer, the Conservation & Environment Commission, and Staff are all well taken and they should all be adopted. But it's pretty evident to me the applicant is not interested in accepting them. All through this 6 month process the applicant has begrudgingly paid lip service to most of the Town's suggestions and has pretty much stonewalled the neighborhood group.

With a more cooperative developer, you **could** probably turn this into a workable project; one that everyone could be proud of. But let's look at the history here. Of course there was the lip service paid to the CEC September 2013 recommendations, as so tactfully described on page 2 of the December 2013 CEC minutes. In September the CEC asked for a conservation easement along the entire eastern boundary -- and in the November revised plan we get it in lots 8, 9 and part of lot 10. Now, since the CEC meeting last Monday, easements have suddenly been added to lots 6 and 7 – but note it's still not the full length of the eastern boundary. There has been an established pattern of late filings and information held back by the applicant to minimize Staff's review time. For example, at their September 30 CEC meeting the commission recommended advancing the applications provided the applicant favorably addressed the items in Mr. Guarino's September 13 letter and Mr. Dumais' September 27 letter. The applicant responded to the items with brief or one word answers very late in the day on Friday October 4, one business day before the scheduled TPZ hearing date. Also, in her November 22 letter Associate Planner Dorau recommends a revised time of concentration (Tc) worksheet since the original filing used outdated assumptions. The revised worksheet was filed December 26. It uses a more conservative assumption and obtains even better results than before. A very curious result indeed! As implied by some of your earlier questions, this is a somewhat misleading analysis in its application as, among other things, it does not examine total water run-off from the site.

Do you remember the quibbling over how to measure a tree at the September CEC meeting? At the same meeting the applicant said how hard it would be to construct the tree map. Then it was magically ready a few days later. As it turns out the map was a required filing. It was probably ready all along, but held back in the hope of changing the measurement methodology so the map wouldn't look so bad. After all, it doesn't take too much thought to realize that cutting down 85-90% of the 331 trees on the map won't look too good.

Let's discuss the trees for a moment. Last Monday Mr. Alford likened them to lollipops. Tonight I guess they are bean poles, part of a canopy where they hold each other up. Take out some and they all fall down. What are they, trees or dominos? Last Monday he said after a storm homeowners will want them removed, presumably due to utility damage. But aren't the utilities here underground? No, the real reason to remove most of the trees is that clear cutting and bulldozing the property all at the same time is the cheapest and most expedient way to begin development. Has anyone asked what will be done with the trees? I did. Chipped on site? No, the trees have economic value as timber and will be trucked off-site and sold for lumber—much like a logging operation. Many developers, as a courtesy to a neighborhood, will offer to restrict the hours of heavy truck operation when school children are active and present. Has

this been offered? No. Mr. Wise said their drivers will do what I must do – obey the traffic laws. That’s fine, but I don’t drive a heavy construction vehicle or logging truck.

You just saw Mr. Alford demonstrate how on lot number 3 it will be all but impossible for him to keep more than one maple tree in the front of that home. So you **know** he doesn’t intend to retain many trees. The conclusion I draw from his example, however, is not that most of the trees must go but rather that is what happens when your density is too high. It begins to become apparent that there are too many homes on the plan and they are too close together. In fact, many of the impactful problems of this project would be reduced if there was a reduction in the number of homes. At every opportunity Mr. Alford has mentioned that technically they could have put 15 homes in the plan. Yet this was never on the table. At the May 22, 2013 meeting hosted by the American School for the Deaf (see Exhibit B along with my handwritten meeting notes) Executive Director Edward Peltier said there would be 9-12 homes (Mr. Sard was scheduled to present at the meeting but did not attend). The current application is for 9-12 homes. There were never going to be 15 homes. Now I could be wrong but I would guess that if you went into Mr. Sard’s offices, somewhere you would find a workable 9 home development plan with reasonable developer economics. He’s still sitting here on his opening bid.

I could go on and on with other gems. At our November 4 meeting, when questioned about the need for including differing ground assumptions in his run-off analysis, Mr. Alford said we don’ get rain on top of a snow and ice cover. Did anyone look out the window today? For that matter, did anyone look at the impounded wetlands today? If I lived down river the first question I’d be asking is “who’s going to be checking the dams?”

No, by their actions, or in other cases inactions, I feel the applicant has left this Commission with no alternative other than to deny the requested wetland permit application due to the disruption of the wetlands area.

If you do decide to go another route, I implore you to adopt all of Dr. Danzer’s, Staff’s and the Conservation & Environment Commission recommendations. And you **must** make them **mandatory** or else the applicant won’t do it. Through their track record the applicant has proven that words like suggest, consider, or recommend will not be effective. Saying things like “consider maximizing the number of trees to be preserved” just won’t cut it. If you do that I can guarantee you what will happen. The applicant will remove all the trees, say they considered it, and that they just couldn’t do otherwise.

Now, realistically I know that development of this land will occur. I would just like to see smart development. Smart development would use the concepts of the Open Spaces Zoning code the Town has devised and act in greater harmony with the existing environment. It would use current best practices and not a 1970’s slash and burn mentality like this environmentally aggressive project.

Thank you for your time and public service.

Very truly yours,

Walter T. Dwyer  
101 Cliffmore Road  
West Hartford, CT. 06107

cc. Todd Dumais  
Catherine Dorau  
Duane Martin  
Chuck Guarino  
Essie Labrot

## EXHIBIT A

### ASD / SARD HOMES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

- **People are concerned about the amount and quality of storm water runoff into Trout Brook.**
  - a. Concern over veracity of hydrology report.
  - b. Concern over proper sizing of the detention basin.
  - c. Concern that conservation easement doesn't extend along entire wetlands border.
  - d. Concerned about construction on or adjacent to steep slopes.

#### ***POSSIBLE PROPOSALS:***

1. Inspect the existing concrete dam and determine ability to withstand a surge.
2. Extend conservation easement along entirety of wetlands border, covering entire east side of parcel.
3. Have hydrology analysis re-run using state-of-the-art software and new standard sheet flow values (100 rather than 300 feet). Require a before and after analysis.
4. Input actual soil conditions into hydrology analysis rather than using desktop values.
5. Analyze total volume of site run-off (as distinct from peak rate runoff).
6. Mandate no vegetation removal from any slopes exceeding 15 degrees.
7. Retain sufficient spare land for any necessary detention basin expansion.
8. Retain existing private drainage lines from 59 and 61 E. Maxwell in undisturbed fashion.

- **People are concerned about the long term maintenance of the storm water control system (catch basins, detention basin, level spreader, etc.).**

#### ***POSSIBLE PROPOSALS:***

1. Mandate that the homeowners' association, rather than individual owners, own the detention basin and associated facilities.
2. Maintenance/inspection requirements and liability assigned to homeowners' association in perpetuity; with appropriate easements to allow access.
3. Bond required assuring availability of funds for any maintenance/repairs.
4. Alternatively, consider a system that absorbs runoff water in place, returning it to groundwater flow.

- **People would like to see as many large trees retained as possible.**

#### ***POSSIBLE PROPOSALS:***

1. Extend conservation easement to entirety of wetlands border; entire east side of parcel.
2. Also, creation of a conservation easement along the other border areas.
3. Require all lots to have a minimum size buffer from neighboring property lines.
4. Clean up existing border trees, removing dead trees and limbs.

- **People are concerned about added stress on an already inadequate sanitary sewer system.**

#### ***POSSIBLE PROPOSALS:***

1. Obtain and review capacity report from MDC.
2. Have MDC conduct TV inspection of sewer line running through parcel and wetlands.
3. Likely need to clear and reline sanitary sewer line running through parcel and wetlands.

- **People are concerned about large construction vehicle safety.**

***POSSIBLE PROPOSALS:***

1. Require developer, as neighborhood courtesy, to limit large construction vehicle activity during the hours children are going to or coming home from school.
2. Developer must provide suitable arrangements with Town addressing on-site parking, noise and dust control.

- **People are concerned about the number of lots and their alignment.**

***POSSIBLE PROPOSALS:***

1. Require the developer to build fewer homes.
2. Make the case to the developer that fewer homes can be built while simultaneously preserving the developer's economics and reducing the number of environmental / wetlands issues to a manageable level.
3. Reorient the lot positioning to preclude homebuilding near the steep slopes of the parcel.

December 2013

EXHIBIT B



AMERICAN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

Edward F. Peltier, Executive Director

April 16, 2013

Dear Neighbors:

The American School for the Deaf will host a meeting for our neighbors in the school's Cogswell Building on May 22, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide the following:

- An update on our new building construction.
- Plans on the sale of the school property and two school buildings.
- Presentation by real estate developers, Sard Custom Homes.

572 Fern  
73 Hilltop

Zoned  
R10 9.3 acres  
9-12 houses

I hope to see you on May 22, 2013. Please RSVP to Lois Procopion via email at [lois.procopion@asd-1817.org](mailto:lois.procopion@asd-1817.org)

edpeltier@ " Sincerely,

Edward F. Peltier

Edward F. Peltier  
Executive Director

Jeff Peltier  
Tom Wood CFO

Parcel #1 - school  
#2 - Montessori interest  
#3 - Cogswell (listed)  
#4 - Sard

EFP:lp  
cc: David Carter  
Tom Wood  
Marilyn Rettig

1. Sell subdivision
2. Divide plots.
3. Public hearing  
wetlands

(A) Sewer line issues - Maxwell 8" pipe  
Storm system  
Drainage from homes go to Brook.  
MDC plan - public hearing?

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** E.G. <egeigle@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2014 10:14 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Subject:** Questions for 6/22 hearing

Mr. Dumais --

I have two brief observations that I would like to be passed along to the P&Z Committee in an anticipation of the special session next week. First, during the 1/6 meeting Councilperson Prestage asked Mr. Alford about the difference in *volume* of water that will be absorbed by Trout Brook before and after development. Mr. Alford responded by reviewing the *rate* of flow of water. This does not answer Councilperson Prestage's question, as rate is a measurement of volume over time and doesn't tell us anything about the total volume. This is a very important question that the council deserves an accurate answer to so they can gauge the impact of development on downstream neighbors.

Second, Sunday's Courant had a profile of an architect couple in which the following observation was made: "When you're building something, you're not just doing it for yourself or the client — you're doing it for the community, the community that comes long after we're gone." (<http://www.courant.com/features/home-garden/hc-home-poesis-20131209,0,473764.story>) This seems like a very appropriate consideration, and the council should consider whether or not the applicant has taken this into mind. I believe that the many significant objections about multiple aspects of this proposal suggest that the applicant has made little effort to do so, and may serve as grounds to reject the application.

Sincerely,  
Eric Geigle  
2 Rustic Lane

---

Inside every sane person there's a madman struggling to get out. No one goes mad quicker than a totally sane person. -- Terry Pratchett

In their hypnoid states they are insane, as we all are in dreams. -- Sigmund Freud

So sing! Sing while you may! It may not be very long... -- The Legendary Pink Dots



## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Char Wilkins <charwilkins@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 12:10 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Subject:** Sard Project

Dear Mr. Dumais,

I just want you to know that Troutbrook runs in my backyard. I live on Montclair Drive, and it already regularly floods it's bank. We've given up trying save the banks and that part of our yard because the force of the water is so powerful as it tears through.

I also want to say that most of my neighbors experiencing flooding in their basements yearly. And many of my neighbors across the street (not directly on the brook side) experience sewer backup into their basements.

We can't even get the town to attend to these problems and you are thinking of approving a project that will surely increase our flooding problems. Please re-consider.

Char Wilkins, homeowner  
108 Montclair Drive

--

*One breath at a time. One step at a time. One bite at a time.*

Char Wilkins, LCSW  
*A Mindful Path LLC*  
Center for Mindful Living  
860-402-9333  
[www.amindfulpath.com](http://www.amindfulpath.com)  
[info@amindfulpath.com](mailto:info@amindfulpath.com)  
[www.tcme.org](http://www.tcme.org)

The information in this email is confidential and is intended solely for the addressee(s). Access by anyone else is unauthorized. If this message has been sent to you in error, do not review, disseminate, distribute or copy it. Please reply to the sender that you have received the message in error and then delete it. Thank you.

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Deborah McGrath <deborahmcgrath12@ymail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 12:47 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Cc:** asdneighbors@googlegroups.com  
**Subject:** Sard application

Dear Mr. Dumais,

I am writing to present some concerns I have regarding Sard Custom Homes application regarding wetlands on property they are hoping to purchase from ASD and develop. After reviewing all available materials and attending the meetings regarding this application these issues stand out for me:

1. it is my understanding (and I am not certain that it is correct) that Sard plans to clear and grade the land, and the sell it to other developers. If this is true I am very concerned as to how we and the Town can be certain that the plans to protect the wetlands and neighboring properties from erosion and flooding will be followed-through. It would seem that the new developers would not necessarily know or comply with the plans.
2. there have been recommendations that a Homeowners Association will be created and tasked with maintaining the catch basin as well as the common drain. How will this be assured?
3. There is also a recommendation that access to the catch basin be carved out of the adjacent lots. I do not see this on the plans submitted to the TPZ.

I would also share with you a conversation I overheard while standing in the hallway after the last P&Z committee. Mr. Wise, attorney for Mr. Sard, was chatting with some other people. I am not sure what they were discussing but suddenly I heard Mr. Wise say "you'd think that we were putting something nuclear in there!" To me this sarcastic-sounding comment crystalized the Sard/Wise attitude to the concerns of the TPZ Committee and the many neighbors who have expressed concerns. It seems clear that they do not take a commitment to preserve and protect the wetlands seriously. It also seems that they are blind to the needs of the surrounding communities and to the Town's conservation plan.

I would again ask that the TPZ either reject the application until these concerns are addressed, or restrict development to the lots on the west side of the planned cul de sac, and thereby protect the uplands and the wetlands. This will in turn protect the surrounding communities.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Deb McGrath  
59 East Maxwell Drive  
West Hartford

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Steve DaCunha <nhfortyeight@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 11:45 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Cc:** Duane Martin; Essie Labrot; Steve DaCunha  
**Subject:** IWW #992 137/139 North Main St. ASD/Sard Application Detention Basin and Rejection of Rational Method  
**Attachments:** Engineering Department, Town of Fairfield, Connecticut.pdf

Dear Mr. Dumais,

I have learned that the town of Fairfield, Connecticut does not accept the rational method for new applications(<http://www.fairfieldct.org/engineering.htm>). There are a number of limitations that I believe are the reason for this.

Fairfield requires 28.3 cubic feet of detention basin capacity per 100 square feet of impervious surface. Since Mr. Alford verbally informed me of the capacity of the detention basin being approximately 15000 cubic feet, this basin meets this recommendation.

Of concern is that the plan submitted is incomplete in that it does not explicitly state the capacity of the basin before overflow, and that the basin flow analysis when calculated for a Tc of 20 minutes ( the example storm is over at 56 minutes ) has a peak storage of 13,136 cubic feet, or 87% of capacity in a very short storm.

Since the volume of the detention basin is not stated explicitly, it would not be appropriate to approve the application.

The prior study which used a Tc of 35 minutes had a storm of less than 98 minutes that showed peak storage of 14,866 cubic feet, or over 99% of capacity.

It is my opinion that storms of such short duration are not real life situations and that they represent the minimum statutory requirement for calculations. Considering the risk to property and potentially life, the factor of safety should be greater than 1 for a minimal design load.

The consequence of an overflow would be that the rainfall from the entire upper site would be concentrated in the detention basin area for discharge, resulting in erosion and deposit into the channel.

Please distribute this letter to the Town Planning and Zoning Commission.

Thank you for considering this.

Steven DaCunha  
12 Cobbs Rd.  
West Hartford

cc:  
Duane Martin  
Essie Labrot  
file

# THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD CONNECTICUT

[BLATOWN](#) [TOWN OFFICIALS](#) [MUNICIPAL SERVICES](#) [EVENTS](#) [TOWN MEETINGS](#) [SITE MAPS](#)

[▶ HOME](#) [▶ SEARCH OUR SITE](#)

## Engineering Department

Sullivan Independence Hall  
725 Old Post Road  
Fairfield, Connecticut  
Phone 203-256-3015  
Fax 203-256-3080  
Engineering Manager – William Hurley  
[whurley@town.fairfield.ct.us](mailto:whurley@town.fairfield.ct.us)

- [ROW \(Right of Way\) Permit](#)
- [Street Opening Permit](#)

Town of Fairfield Engineering Department  
General Guidelines for Stormwater Detention Design Criteria for Single Lot Development.

Rev. December 6, 2013

### FOR ADDITIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS AND/OR DRIVEWAY EXPANSION INCLUDING KNOCK DOWN/REBUILDS

Stormwater detention required for increase in impervious surfaces (200 sf or greater) created from expansion/increase of paved surfaces or roof areas for individual lots only. All other developments will require detention for up to and including the 100 yr storm event (Rational Method may not be used).

DESIGN CRITERIA IS BASED ON THE SCS TR-55 METHOD OF CALCULATING RUNOFF VOLUMES FOR THE 10- YR FREQUENCY, 24 HOUR STORM DURATION\*.

This also meets the current requirement for detention determined by averaging the volumes calculated using the Rational Method and SCS TR55 for the 100-year storm event.

FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION - Stormwater Detention Design Shall Be Shown On Site Plan Accompanied By Drainage Report Prepared By A Connecticut Licensed Professional Engineer.

ALL CALCULATIONS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION WILL BE BASED ON RAW LAND; NO CREDIT WILL BE ISSUED FOR ANY PRIOR SITE DEVELOPMENT.

*\*minimum required storage volume*

IMPERVIOUS  
AREA STORAGE VOLUME  
EVERY 100  
SF 28.3 CUBIC FEET\*\*

## EXAMPLES:

200 SF 56.6 CF = (2) CULTECH  
RECHARGER 100 or equal  
300 SF 85 CF = 3 UNITS  
400 SF 113 CF = 4 UNITS  
500 SF 142 CF = 5 UNITS  
600 SF 170 CF = 6 UNITS  
800 SF 226 CF = 8 UNITS  
1000 SF 283 CF = 10 UNITS  
etc

Other methods may be used to determine detention requirements. Drainage report should accompany site plan.

\*\*Units are surrounded in 6" of stone, bottom, sides and 6" above chamber crown or per manufacturer's specifications.

When Town drainage system is accessible to site, a high level overflow pipe should be constructed connecting the detention system to the Town drainage system. A back flow preventer (check) valve should be placed in the line between the two systems. A permit will be required to connect into the Town of Fairfield drainage system as well as an executed Hold Harmless Agreement that can be obtained in the Engineering Department.

For developments from one acre to under 5 acres in size, a Phase II NPDES Stormwater Pollution Prevention Control Plan will be required and should be submitted to the Town of Fairfield Engineering Dept. for approval.

For developments 5 acres or greater in size a DEP Phase II Stormwater Pollution Prevention Control Plan will be required and should be submitted to the State of Connecticut DEP for approval.

The detention system depicting Cultec Recharger units is for illustrative purposes only. The Town of Fairfield does not endorse any specific product.

[home](#) / [our town](#) / [town officials](#) / [municipal services](#) / [events](#) / [town meetings](#) / [site outline](#)

Town Hall/Independence Hall 644/725 Old Post Road Fairfield, CT 06424 203-256-3000

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** happylegs@gmail.com on behalf of Diana Sutcliffe <dianasutcliffe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 17, 2014 10:25 AM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Cc:** asdneighbors@googlegroups.com  
**Subject:** Proposed residential development of American School for the Deaf property

Todd Dumais  
Town Planner, Town of West Hartford  
150 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

RE: Proposed residential development of American School for the Deaf property

Dear Todd Dumais:

Assuming that the ASD sale and development project in some iteration will move forward and is unavoidable at this time, I would urge the town to consider the impact of allowing developers to pack homes into this lot to the current zoning capacity.

It is extremely clear to the neighbors of this proposed lot and the ASD property that the current infrastructure for sewage and water removal in this area is very taxed, and during heavy rains and flooding, not sufficient. We are very concerned that the removal of trees on this parcel and the new housing structures' run-off will overburden the system. So far, the proposed plans by Sard do not seem to adequately address these issues. The potential impact to the existing neighborhood and the environment, including Trout Brook, warrant a thorough review and cautious planning.

It is rare in a town that is so developed that there be an available parcel of untouched land like this nestled in a highly developed residential area. I would urge the Town Planning and Zoning Commission to consider ways in which this land can be very carefully developed, if at all, whilst conserving as much open and green space as possible and protecting Trout Brook and the wetlands.

As I see it, there is a great opportunity here for the town of West Hartford to be forward-thinking on this project and require a thoughtful, environmentally-aware development, or better yet, to consider preserving the land altogether by purchasing it outright from the ASD to maintain as green space. If

the development plan with Sard does not continue, I would ideally like to see the land purchased and preserved for the citizens of West Hartford. I think there would be much support for this option within the town at large and certainly you could count on the highly-involved neighbors of the ASD to champion this cause, should this option ever be considered.

Please forward this letter to the Town Planning & Zoning Commission in advance of the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Diana Sutcliffe & Joseph Galluccio

14 Hilltop Drive

West Hartford, CT 06107

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Dwyer, Walt <WDwyer@BabsonCapital.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 2:00 PM  
**To:** Chuck Guarino  
**Cc:** Todd Dumais; Duane Martin; Dwyer, Walt  
**Subject:** East of East Maxwell Drive and Rear of 137 North Main Street --- IWW #992

Hi Chuck – I spoke with you last Fall about correcting the applicant’s sheet flow assumption from 300’ to 150’. Thank you for requiring the adjustment to bring that portion of the hydrology analysis in line with Connecticut DOT standards.

I notice on the revised Summary of Hydraulic Impact dated 12/19/2013 that TIME = 21 minutes; as compared to the original summary dated 7/25/2013 where TIME = 35 minutes. If I understand this correctly, this means that water is projected to accumulate at a 40% more rapid rate in the revised analysis ( $(21-35)/35$ ) as compared to the initial analysis. I also note that there has been no adjustment to the detention basin or any associated structures since revised plans were filed in October. Is the Town comfortable that the detention basin is adequately sized and that the other parts of the water control system have been properly designed even after a more rapid accumulation of storm run-off has been suggested by the 12/19/2013 hydrology analysis completed by Mr. Alford?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Best regards, Walt.

*Walter T. Dwyer*  
*101 Cliffmore Road*  
*West Hartford, CT. 06107*

This e-mail transmission may contain information that is proprietary, privileged and/or confidential and is intended exclusively for the person(s) to whom it is addressed. Any use, copying, retention or disclosure by any person other than the intended recipient or the intended recipient's designees is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient or their designee, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail and delete all copies.



## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Arthur W Frank Jr <arthur\_frank10@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 4:54 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Subject:** Proposed Sard development of ASD Property

Dear Sir, This is to advise you of my concern that development of the property in question will seriously impact my property at #10 Wyndwood Road, which is downstream from the proposed development. Trout Brook already backs up into basements along lower Wyndwood Road when rainfall is heavy. My concern extends to other properties which will be impacted by increased run-off from the proposed new development.

The bridge which carries North Main Street over Trout Brook already acts as a dam when the rainfall is heavy. A large pipe empties into Trout Brook immediately west of the bridge. This pipe apparently drains service water and probably ties into the sewage system.

The bridge which carries North Main Street over Trout Brook already acts as a dam when the rainfall is heavy. A large pipe empties into Trout Brook immediately west of the bridge. It apparently drains service water. When water backs up behind the bridge as it does this pipe forces the combined ground and, I believe, sewer water into the basements of houses to the south of the brook. I have twice expanded the sump pump capacity in my basement and even so the pump allowed a small amount of water into my basement. Naturally I am very concerned about drainage from the proposed development. My understanding, possibly wrong, is that the Metropolitan District is planning to separate its sewage drainage system from the ground water system which is the Town's responsibility. Further, the rumor is that the Trout Brook bridge at North Main is scheduled for some type of reconstruction. Taking this whole picture into consideration my plea is that the TPZC will up work on the development of the ASD property until all aspects of the consequent drainage property have been jointly considered. Perhaps the

. When water backs up behind the bridge, this pipe forces the ground and ( I believe ) sewer drainage back through this pipe into the basements of houses adjacent to the brook. I have twice expanded the sump pump capacity in my basement. Despite that there was a small amount of water in my basement after the last heavy downfall.

Naturally I am very concerned about the impact of drainage on my property from the proposed development, but the issue is much broader than the impact on my property. My uncertain understanding is that the Metropolitan District is planning to separate its sewage drainage system from the ground water system; the latter being the Town's responsibility. How will that MDC's plans impact management of the run-off? Further, the rumor is that the Trout Brook bridge at North Main is scheduled for some type of reconstruction. How much water will the new bridge be able to handle? There is the further issue of the impact on properties east of the North Main Street bridge due to the evidenced increasing volume of run-off drainage as storms increase in intensity. To this risk has to be added the further risk resulting from overlapping jurisdictions and responsibilities of the several government bodies. Somewhere the U.S. Army Corps seems to be involved. No one government body seems to have overall responsibility to protect the interests of a sizeable body of potentially impacted taxpayers. My point is that a number of taxpayers' interests are involved and the issues are complex and interactive. Until these various issues are resolved and locus of overall responsibility is determined, action by the TPZC on the ASD sale of its property should clearly be deferred. Thank you for your consideration of these matters and of my thoughts upon them. Sincerely yours,

## Todd Dumais

---

**From:** Mary Pelletier <maryp@parkwatershed.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2014 11:11 PM  
**To:** Todd Dumais  
**Cc:** rosalind katz  
**Subject:** for TP&Z: letter re ASD proposal  
**Attachments:** Jan16\_ASD issue WHPlan\_P&Z.pdf; Oct2\_WHPlan.pdf

**Importance:** High

Dear Todd,

Attached and copied below are my comments:



16 January 2014

Todd Dumais  
Town Planner, Town of West Hartford  
150 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

*RE: Proposed residential development of American School for the Deaf property at Trout Brook*

Dear Todd,

Attached is my October 3, 2013 letter regarding the residential development proposed by Sard Custom Homes, LLC for property owned by American School for the Deaf, west of Trout Brook. Thank you very much for managing a thoughtful process, which has included an independent Environmental Review by Steven Danzer, and numerous conversations with concerned citizens of West Hartford.

West Hartford Town Planning & Zoning Commission would be wise to recommend the development proposal be reconfigured to remove the lots that are on the steep slope upland of Trout Brook. Reducing the total number of lots to six will balance conservation of Trout Brook with new economic development and protect established residential properties downstream from increased flooding. Building fewer houses will reduce surface stormwater runoff, and slope erosion while preserving more of the existing forest that captures and infiltrate precipitation. Fewer homes within a development that conserves the natural landscape are likely to attract higher prices.

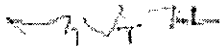
The developer seems to dismiss the recommendation that the number of lots be reduced, which was noted on page 4 of the Danzer Review (see the third bullet listed under "Reducing adverse impact"). There are no guarantees that the re-graded slope fill will not eventually shift sediments into the wetland area (Danzer page 10). The Environmental Review raises numerous concerns related to the extensive reengineering of the slope, which is necessary for the development plan of twelve lots as proposed. Who will be responsible to downstream property

owners if development increases erosion and flash flooding? A beautiful scenic brook can increase property values, yet a brook degraded by erosion and flash flooding is a property liability.

There are so many unanswered issues have been raised by the Environmental Review, and by neighbors – over eighty are now following group list emails – the Town Planning and Zoning Commission ought to make a conservative decision that protects the wetlands and the community. Fewer residential homes will reduce erosion and stormwater runoff that damage wetlands and watercourses. Reducing the number of lots to six, will spare the upland review area from being clear cut, re-graded and re-engineered, and will also reduce the Town's risks. Fewer homes designed with respect to site conditions, where Trout Brook is a unique natural resource integral to downstream properties, will also better reflect the character of West Hartford.

Please forward these letters the Town Planning & Zoning Commission in advance of the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Thanks !



Mary Rickel Pelletier  
Executive Director  
Park Watershed, Inc.  
P.O. Box 271646, West Hartford, Ct 06127

*For more information, see [www.ParkWatershed.org](http://www.ParkWatershed.org) or <http://www.parkwatershed.org/current/trout-brook/>*

--  
Mary Rickel Pelletier  
Director, Park Watershed, Inc.  
cultivating urban-suburban watershed stewardship  
[www.parkwatershed.org](http://www.parkwatershed.org)



16 January 2014

Todd Dumais  
Town Planner, Town of West Hartford  
150 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

RE: *Proposed residential development of American School for the Deaf property at Trout Brook*

Dear Todd,

Attached is my October 3, 2013 letter regarding the residential development proposed by Sard Custom Homes, LLC for property owned by American School for the Deaf, west of Trout Brook. Thank you very much for managing a thoughtful process, which has included an independent Environmental Review by Steven Danzer, and numerous conversations with concerned citizens of West Hartford.

West Hartford Town Planning & Zoning Commission would be wise to recommend the development proposal be reconfigured to remove the lots that are on the steep slope upland of Trout Brook. Reducing the total number of lots to six will balance conservation of Trout Brook with new economic development and protect established residential properties downstream from increased flooding. Building fewer houses will reduce surface stormwater runoff, and slope erosion while preserving more of the existing forest that captures and infiltrate precipitation. Fewer homes within a development that conserves the natural landscape are likely to attract higher prices.

The developer seems to dismiss the recommendation that the number of lots be reduced, which was noted on page 4 of the Danzer Review (see the third bullet listed under “**Reducing adverse impact**”). There are no guarantees that the re-graded slope fill will not eventually shift sediments into the wetland area (Danzer page 10). The Environmental Review raises numerous concerns related to the extensive reengineering of the slope, which is necessary for the development plan of twelve lots as proposed. Who will be responsible to downstream property owners if development increases erosion and flash flooding? A beautiful scenic brook can increase property values, yet a brook degraded by erosion and flash flooding is a property liability.

There are so many unanswered issues have been raised by the Environmental Review, and by neighbors – over eighty are now following group list emails – the Town Planning and Zoning Commission ought to make a conservative decision that protects the wetlands and the community. Fewer residential homes will reduce erosion and stormwater runoff that damage wetlands and watercourses. Reducing the number of lots to six, will spare the upland review area from being clear cut, re-graded and re-engineered, and will also reduce the Town’s risks. Fewer homes designed with respect to site conditions, where Trout Brook is a unique natural resource integral to downstream properties, will also better reflect the character of West Hartford.

Please forward these letters the Town Planning & Zoning Commission in advance of the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Thanks !

Mary Rickel Pelletier  
Executive Director  
Park Watershed, Inc.  
P.O. Box 271646, West Hartford, Ct 06127

For more information, see [www.ParkWatershed.org](http://www.ParkWatershed.org) or <http://www.parkwatershed.org/current/trout-brook/>



**PARK WATERSHED** INC.  
CHANGING PERCEPTION, TRANSFORMING PLACES

Mary Rickel Pelletier  
P.O. Box 271646  
West Hartford, Ct 06127

3 October 2013 - *revised*

Todd Dumais  
Town Planner  
Town of West Hartford  
150 South Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107

RE: Proposed residential development of American School for the Deaf property at Trout Brook

Dear Todd,

Please take time to further study the proposed residential development at property owned by American School for the Deaf, at Trout Brook. Within the context of West Hartford, and the entire Park River regional watershed, this brook has relatively rare high water quality, wetlands, and forest.

A stream survey of Trout Brook between Trout Brook Drive and the American School for the Deaf (ASD) property was conducted in the autumn of 2009 (Sep 23 and Oct 11) for a US EPA Healthy Communities grant study of urban tributaries within the Park River regional watershed. The grant was received by The Children's Museum in partnership with Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA). Trout Brook downstream of ASD property was clearly one of the most beautiful stream segments surveyed. Upstream of North Main Street Trout Brook is especially scenic, and so an unique asset to properties along Brookside and Wyndwood Road.

Over 20 stream segments were surveyed by family volunteers. The survey form, protocol, and maps were prepared for the project by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. At that time, Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative was a project of FRWA. This project has evolved into the Park Watershed, a 501c3 urban-suburban watershed stewardship organization.

While over 14 miles of West Hartford streams (8.48 miles of Trout Brook and 5.86 miles of Piper Brook) have been designated as impaired by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, note that the ASD Trout Brook stream segment is **not** impaired. In fact, a number of residents who spoke with the stream survey team mentioned that the riparian corridor of Trout Brook, as a unique quality of life asset to the neighborhood. The remaining open spaces along Trout Brook also serves as habitat and migration corridor for diverse wildlife.

Increased development, such as the proposed ASD development on the steep slope above the brook can damage properties downstream by increasing erosion and flooding. Homes located near the brook are especially vulnerable. Over fifty homes downstream of the bridge at North Main

Street home are within the FEMA 2008 Zone X floodplain. Clearing away the forest on the steep ASD property above Trout Brook, for twelve large houses, twelve driveways, patios, lawns and a cul-de-sac will increase the volume of stormwater run-off flowing into the detention basin, which overflows into Trout Brook during heavy rain storms.

Note also that there is an old dam on the American School for the Deaf property. Although not of concern to CT DEEP, because the dam has been breached for decades, the impounded wetland water level behind the dam is at least three feet above the flow of Trout Brook. The dam retains shallow water of the wetlands across the entire eastern edge of the property, and so reduces peak stream flow volumes. Who will be responsible for flood damage to downstream properties if the dam fails during a heavy rain storm or if the wetlands fill with sediment from slope erosion?

In addition to the impact of flooding on downstream property values, there are safety and health concerns. Questions have been raised about the capacity of the existing sanitary sewer system. Along the 2009 stream survey route we encountered children playing in the brook.

Because of the ratio of population density to land area, West Hartford is designated by US EPA as one of three 'urban' municipalities within the Park River regional watershed. Development that could further degrade water quality ought to be of concern. Beautiful landscapes along scenic brooks can be an attractive to homeowners \_ or a liability. The West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development emphasized 'sustainable' design. For this reason it was recommended that future development be focused on transit oriented locations, not stream corridors.

Please consider how a reduction in the number of homes built, along with a conservation easement to protect the wetlands, will benefit the neighborhood context. Fewer residential homes built on that property will reduce hardscapes (and traffic) while preserving more of the existing ecosystem. Fewer homes within a development that conserves the natural landscape are likely to attract higher prices, protect downstream property values, and reflect the character of West Hartford.

Sincerely,



Mary Rickel Pelletier  
Executive Director  
Park Watershed, Inc.

Attached: map of the 2009 stream survey  
2009 photograph of the ASD dam (looking south standing in Trout Brook)

To review photographs from the 2009 stream survey, see:  
<http://parkwatershed.smugmug.com/Trout-Brook-Cliffmore>

Note that the photos sequence begins at the eastern end of Linbrook, east of Trout Brook Drive, and end at a bridge on ASD property. The bridge at North Main Street and Scarletts Mill dam at Wyndwood Pond are useful mid-point references to the sequence of field conditions.

To review the complete Connecticut 305b Assessment Report:  
[http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/water\\_quality\\_management/305b/ctiwqr10final.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/water_quality_management/305b/ctiwqr10final.pdf)  
The 305b Assessments for the Park River regional watershed (#44) are on pages 85-87 (hard copy page # left middle side of report pages) the web pages # are 88-90.