

Holland Planning Board
27 Sturbridge Road
Holland, Ma. 01521

January 16, 2007

Dear Board Members:

Please accept this letter as my appearance before your public hearing on the proposed Zoning Bylaw changes as I am unable to attend.

I am opposed to changing the frontage requirement for a common driveway to 300 feet for the following reasons. In all of the meetings and conferences held over the past several years one theme has been presented by the residents of Holland. We want to keep the rural nature of our town and control the density of housing units throughout town, but especially in the Agricultural/Residential Zone. That being said, a look at the zoning maps shows there are many large acreage parcels that have less than 300 feet of frontage. In my opinion, this proposed change would be overly restrictive on those landowners. The purpose of a common driveway generally is to allow the frontage requirement to be met on the driveway rather than the public way. The control of the density of housing is already in place in the requirements of acreage and frontage in the specific zone. Frontage for a common driveway should take into account the need for safe access and egress allowing for sight lines on the public way. I remind the board that a variance for frontage is prohibited by statute, therefore there is no appeal for the aggrieved landowner. I would ask that the board reconsider the frontage requirement and suggest either 75 feet or 100 feet be the standard.

Another consideration should be the value created by the zoning bylaw. Properties that currently have less than the 300 feet of frontage and contain more than 10 acres could be devalued if there is currently one house on the property. There are many examples currently in town that fall into this category.

Life in a rural community has great value but it should not be so restrictive as to prevent future generations from being able to afford to live in their hometown. I fear that if we become overly protective of growth we will price ourselves out of our homes. We do not want to encourage sub-divisions with the attendant new roads they create. The common driveway approach is a good alternative provided it allows for fair development.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

James Wettlaufer
101 Vinton Road.