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January 17, 2017

Topsfield Planning Board
Topsfield Town Hall
8 West Common Street
Topsfield, MA 01983
Martha A. Morrison; Chairwoman

RE: A&M Project #2165-01A
Rolling Green Elderly Housing
Development
470 Boston Street
Topsfield, MA 01983
**Response to Town of Topsfield
DWP & Water Department
Review**

Dear Ms Morrison:

On behalf of the applicant, Sarkis Development Company, Allen & Major Associates, Inc. (A&M), respectfully submits this response letter. This letter is regarding the comments generated by the Town of Topsfield Public Works Water and Highway Departments for the Planning Board's review. The review is for the proposed Elderly Housing Development known as Rolling Green, located at 470 Boston Street, Topsfield, Massachusetts.

The following comments below were provided to the Topsfield Planning Board from Mr. David Bond and Mr. Gregory Krom in emails dated January 2, 2017, and December 29, 2016. The emails were received by the applicant from the Topsfield Planning Department on January 3rd, 2013. The applicant & A&M also had a productive meeting to review the comments with the Town of Topsfield Highway Superintendent on January 13th. Each comment is followed by A&M's response in bold.

WATER DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

1. Water main on the plan is 6" CLDI but our specs require 8" CLDI. Hydrant laterals are 6" connections.

A&M Response: Since the original submission, additional information has been received on the existing water mains. Based on a record town plan it has been confirmed the existing water main in Boston Road and lateral into the project site is an 8" CLDI pipe. The existing water mains on the Existing Conditions Plan as well as the proposed water mains on the Water and Gas Utilities plan have been updated to 8" CLDI pipes. The hydrant laterals have been updated to 6" connections.

2. The water main entering the property should stay on the access road. It is currently routed through the wetland just north of the access road.

A&M Response: See the Existing Conditions Plan which shows the nearby wetland location (flags B1 –B16 near Route 1). The locations of the wetlands onsite have been previously approved by the Conservation Commission. The proposed water main is located outside of the wetlands and in the

upland areas of the site. To the extent possible, the proposed water main has been adjusted to be further from the wetlands.

3. The existing hydrant on the property does not show on the plan. It is located along the Route 1 property boundary, on the Rolling Green side of the connection for 458 Boston Street. This hydrant was not installed properly by Mr. Conn, it does not have an isolation valve. The hydrant needs to be removed from the tee, a 6" valve attached to the tee and the hydrant reinstalled.

A&M Response: The Existing Conditions plan has been updated to show the existing hydrant or hydrant riser. Due to a conflict with the proposed emergency access drive, the hydrant location will be moved further south off of the proposed road. The proposed new hydrant will include a new 6" CLDI lateral, a new tee, & new 6" valve. See the Water and Gas Utilities Plan.

4. The 8" gate valve just west of the hydrant mentioned above is not shown. The developer can connect to the existing water main on the property but the pressure and bacteria testing will be conducted starting with this valve.

A&M Response: See response to item #3 above. The applicant agrees that the pressure and bacteria testing can be conducted starting with the new valve.

5. An additional hydrant should be installed along the circle, preferably on the southern side of the detention pond opposite units 12 & 13. Guideline for this is a hydrant is needed every 500'.

A&M Response: The applicant updated the Water and Gas Utility plan appropriately with an additional hydrant. To provide an even spacing of the 3 hydrants in the area, the new hydrant is proposed in the landscape island opposite unit 7. If the Topsfield Water Department prefers a different location it can certainly be adjusted on the plan.

6. Initial discussions with the developer included extending the water main to the property line between units 18 & 19 to allow for a potential easement through the Larson property to access North Street and the elimination of two long pipeline dead ends. The extended water lines are not shown on the plan and may not have required clearance from the reserve septic field behind unit 18.

A&M Response: The applicant has agreed to extend the proposed 8" CLDI water main to the southwestern property line. As currently shown on the updated the Water and Gas Utility plan, the proposed water main stub is located between units 14 & 15. The proposed water main will be stubbed to this location and a valve added for a future connection. The plan also includes a 20 ft. wide conceptual easement for a future connection by the Town of Topsfield. The location of the stub allows flexibility for the future offsite connection and provides a clearer route from the applicant's roadway. Once the offsite route to North Street is determined by the Town of Topsfield, the water main can be connected to this stub.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

1. **Dead End Street:** The secondary access driveway should be a requirement if the Board is going to grant a waiver for the dead end roadway in excess of 650 feet. I strongly recommend that this roadway be paved in its entirety. Paving will require little or no maintenance and will be much easier to plow in the winter. Given the fact that there are perc tests right under the proposed road (perc6), the additional stormwater could be handled in a subsurface system underneath the road way. The proposed water and gas utilities should be constructed under the roadway and not into the wetlands as currently designed. I also agree with the applicant's consultant, VAI, that any dead or diseased trees along the existing roadway should be trimmed or removed to prevent potential blocking of the roadway in the future.

A&M Response: The Applicant requests that either a secondary means of emergency access such as currently shown or residential sprinklers be a condition of approval and not both. Based on the close proximity to the wetlands, both the applicant and Topsfield Conservation Commission maintain that the emergency access drive is not converted into a paved roadway. As shown, the emergency access road will primarily consist of gravel with a paved and curbed apron near the Route 1 entrance. The gravel surface is proposed to be 12" thick for adequate support. As shown on the Fire Truck Turning Plan, the gravel access path will be adequate for emergency vehicles. The access drive will be gated at both ends, and will be used for emergency response vehicles only.

In regards to the location of the wetlands and proposed water main, see response to the Water Department item #3 above. The proposed gas and water utilities are proposed outside of the existing wetland resource area.

The applicant agrees that any dead or diseased trees along the existing roadway will be trimmed or removed during the construction period to prevent potential blockage and improve future access.

2. **Sidewalks:** Pedestrian access should be provided to the mailbox area via a sidewalk as B&T suggests. In addition to the sidewalk suggested in front of units 1-6, I suggest the same be considered in front of units 27-30 so pedestrians in the Pavilion area can access the mailboxes without having to walk in the roadway.

A&M Response: The applicant has added a bituminous sidewalk with crosswalks in front of units 28-30 to the proposed mailbox location. All residents will be able to access the mailbox without having to walk along the length of the roadway. Additionally a parking spot is been provided for easy drive-up access to the mailbox area. Alternatively, the walking path through the woods may be utilized to reach the mailbox area on foot.

3. **Street Lighting:** As B&T suggests, lighting on the west side of Boston Street at the intersection should be proposed and reviewed. Additionally, some minimal lighting at the mailbox area should be required.

A&M Response: The applicants intention has been to add lighting along both the Boston Street main entrance and in the mailbox area. The lighting options will be reviewed and designed by a lighting consultant. The landscape & lighting plan will be updated in the future with this change.

4. **Wood Guardrail:** Request that the Applicant provide a specification that the proposed wood guardrail meets MassDOT Standards. I suggest that the Applicant consider using “Cor-ten” guardrail panels if the desired effect of a rustic appearance is the goal.

A&M Response: As discussed in the January 13th meeting with the Topsfield Highway Department, the applicant will leave the existing MA DOT steel guardrail intact and add a few additional sections of MA DOT steel guardrail along the main entrance road. To enhance the appearance, a wooden facing on top of the steel will be added.

5. **Pavement Detail/Cross section:** The pavement cross section for both roadways and sidewalks as shown on sheet D-3 should be changed to the standards found on Plate #1 in the Town of Topsfield, Subdivision Rules and Regulations. All of the roadways and sidewalks should be constructed to the same standard, not two different standards as shown on the plans.

A&M Response: As discussed in the January 13th meeting with the Topsfield Highway Department, the applicant has updated the pavement cross section to the Town of Topsfield standard. See detail sheet D-3 in the enclosed plans for the updated detail.

6. **General Comments:** The proposed pavement markings at the intersection of the main roadway with Boston Street, specifically the crosshatched depiction of an island, should be reviewed. The existing intersection, although constructed to MassDOT standards at the time, does not meet the geometric design standards required by the Town of Topsfield, Subdivision Rules and Regulations. That standard is 90 degrees. Drivers from the south, turning left into the roadway, are essentially making a 125 degree turn. Given the proposed use of the property, that could be problematic. Understanding that this intersection is pre-existing and not subject to the Town’s standards, I request a second look at the current proposed configuration. I would suggest that a slightly raised channelized island (concrete) be considered as well as the addition of “keep right” signs on both ends of the island. The applicant’s Traffic Consultant should be able to offer some suggestions.

A&M Response: As discussed in the January 13th meeting with the Topsfield Highway Department, the applicant has modified the painted traffic island at the main entrance. Additionally, the applicant will review the geometry and layout of the intersection with Route 1 with MassDOT. The geometry of the island has been adjusted to allow for a 90 degree turn into the site from the south of Route 1. Additionally, the island will include a sloped granite curb and a hardscape surface (pavers or cobbles).

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at (781)-935-6889. We look forward to further discussing the project at the Topsfield Planning Board public hearing on February 7th. Please provide A&M with the time and place of that public hearing.

Very truly yours,

ALLEN & MAJOR ASSOCIATES, INC.



Ryan Bianchetto; LEED AP
Project Manager

Cc via email: Sarkis Development Company

Enclosures: 1) Revised Site Plans for Rolling Green Elderly Housing Development, prepared by Allen & Major Associates, revised through January 17, 2017