

RECIEVED 1/18/2022

January 18, 2022

To the Town of South Kingstown Zoning Board:

My husband and I have lived at 61 Matunuck School House Road - the historic Matunuck School House abutting the Matunuck Firehouse - for the past 12 years. I understand that the Zoning Board is considering the request for variances and waivers needed to construct a new town EMS facility and a rebuilt and expanded Matunuck Firehouse according to a plan referred to you by the Planning Board. As a registered landscape architect with over 35 years of community planning, sustainable design and project construction experience, I understand the need for need for reasonable waivers and variances, and those being requested here are beyond the realm of reason or fairness to the surrounding neighborhood, and represent an attempt to shoe-horn in a land use on a site that is simply too small and constrained. As you consider this matter, we would like to vehemently restate some of the objections to the proposed plan that we have made to both the Town Council and the Planning Board over the past months, which have resulted in the Town seeking and identifying a potential alternate site for the EMS station.

This ¾ acre rural site is NOT an appropriate location for a high density, high intensity emergency services complex, much less a doubling of the density already present at the volunteer firehouse site, enabled only through non-conforming pre-existing conditions provisions made over 40 years ago. **The applicant cannot even manage to accommodate the barebones requirements of its G/I zone without resorting to close to zero lot line setbacks and unlimited lot coverage and the need for significant waivers of basic parking, driveway width, and landscape buffer requirements.**

EMS Chief Stanley himself has said repeatedly that the site is not ideal and tight, and **also that we will soon need multiple vehicles in the south side of town area. Granting these requested variances and waivers to over-build this site to the tune of 1 million dollars on a bad lot, in a bad location with no chance of being expanded in the future does not make long term sense.**

To be clear we are 100% behind the firehouse getting redone in the approximate existing footprint. We also support the expansion of EMT service to our community. We purchased our property knowing FULL WELL it had a Volunteer Firehouse next door, w/its associated zoning of Government/Institutional land use, and could not be expected to have known or imagined that the Town would use this isolated, constricted site to build a municipal facility. **This is NOT just a NIMBY situation, and should not be viewed as a decision about "life vs. back-up-beepers".**

The recent identification of a site along Post Road for the EMS station shows that there are much better site alternatives for the needed EMS use, but the plan you are considering asks us to simply trust that this a necessary exploitation of this one site. In fact, one of the supporters of the project who spoke at the Planning Board last fall stated we should "exploit every square inch of this and any property we have in town", regardless of context. The Planning and Zoning Boards' granting approvals of significant waivers and variances that they would never grant to private citizens would be evidence of such unchecked exploitation. If exploitation is driving planning and zoning decisions for the Town's own facilities, it's a sad day for our town.

Now that a more suitable alternative site has been identified, we ask you to table this proposal to await the process being undertaken to confirm its viability. Thank you for your consideration.

Kristin & Richard Schwab