

August 18, 2019

To: Planning Board

From: Larry Theye and Betty Becker-Theye
286 Northport Avenue, Belfast, Maine

Since the announcement in January of 2018 that Nordic Aquafarms plans to spend up to \$500 million to construct one of the world's largest aquafarms in Belfast, our lives have been increasingly negatively impacted by each announcement of specific plans by Nordic.

While all of our contacts with Nordic employees or representatives have been cordial, they have all been—without exception—at our initiative. We have had to learn every increasingly adverse aspect of impact on us—the only year-round owner residents across from their proposed construction along Route 1—from the media or from reading the voluminous applications and supportive materials. While we attended every public meeting held by Nordic, there was never any mention of a Route 1 detour or potential blasting of bedrock during the excavation of the 40-foot construction trench.

In our numerous mailings to DEP, we included copies of the permit we purchased to build a seawall. The permit specified that no equipment was allowed on the shore without mats to protect the shore, and we were vocally admonished that nary a stone was to be disturbed during the construction of our seawall. Yet Nordic is permitted to dig a 40-foot wide trench a kilometer out into the Bay from our shore, and our request for an explanation of why the standards applied to us did not apply to Nordic has gone unanswered. We are further distressed that the Planning Board has approved Nordic's request for TRI despite the credible legal challenge to their right to the intertidal zone.

But the purpose of this letter is to address the specific issues before the Planning Board at this meeting: "Visual impact on the scenic and natural beauty of the area and aesthetics." Despite the verbal assurances from Nordic that they will preserve the natural appeal of the area, a few bushes cannot possibly replace the pristine woodland and wildlife habitat that will be destroyed to make space for the gigantic buildings proposed by Nordic. It is distressing to us abutters who located here partially because of the presence of these surroundings that the City Council has placed so little value on this unspoiled asset and expressed so little concern for the permanent devaluation of this entire neighborhood.

"Buffers, including bufferyard areas, screening and landscaping." Our objection to placing a wastewater treatment facility in the grove of trees along Route 1—which Erik Heim had previously assured us would not be disturbed—was met with assurances that a 75 foot buffer would preserve the view along Route 1. It now appears that the buffer will be sacrificed to allow for a detour. While the detour will be temporary, the removal of the buffer trees will be permanent. A few bushes and small tree plantings cannot replace the mature pine trees slated for removal.

The news of greatest concern to us is the likelihood of bedrock blasting during the digging of the 40 foot construction trench along three sides of our property. Our house is built on an outcropping of this bedrock and will surely be impacted. That Nordic will be responsible for what might be irreparable damage to our property is not reassuring.

We are told that when construction is completed, Nordic will make the whole area as attractive as possible, but construction is projected to last more than five years. At our age, we will not be able to outlast what has become an obsession in our lives, a threat to our property, and a detriment to our health.

8/19

Re: Sending a message

Public Hearing

Mon 8/19/2019 9:24 AM

To: Rick <vtrick@hotmail.com>

📎 1 attachments (51 KB)

PB Agenda - Aug 19, 2019 Spec Mtg (Nordic).pdf;

Dear Mr. Bernasconi:

I acknowledge the receipt of your email and will provide such to the Belfast Planning Board. I also note that the Board is not scheduled to address Nordic's proposals to use groundwater, surface water and water from the Belfast Water District to operate their facility at tonight's meeting; reference attached agenda. The Board's present public hearing schedule is to address these issues at its meeting of September 25.

Wayne

From: Rick <vtrick@hotmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, August 18, 2019 6:40 PM

To: Public Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Subject: Sending a message

I'm writing this letter to quickly meet the deadline that would possibly allow me to speak in front of the board. I'm not sure if this is the appropriate venue but I'm sending this anyway.

I find it to be very disheartening that this is taking the direction that it is. I'm very concerned about the water usage at this one facility. This facility for production of fish will be using three times the amount of water that the Belfast community as a whole uses. There's no way of knowing how when or if this water will continue.

When do I become a person of interest pertaining to the loss of the water that we are currently allowing this company to use. Does it happen the one day as I turn on the water and then nothing comes out. I find it irresponsible if this committee allows this permit to go through.

We are talking about a natural resource that belongs to all residents of Belfast and should not be arbitrarily given away to a company such as this. I've been to several meetings and look on the faces of individuals on this board and has seen nothing that would indicate rejecting this proposal. This is of a big concern for me.

Thank you, Rick Bernasconi 207-691-3710, living at 46 Battery Road

Re: Planning Board meeting letter

Public Hearing

Mon 8/19/2019 3:30 PM

To: schlueter.eric@gmail.com <schlueter.eric@gmail.com>

Dear Ms.Shlueter:

I have received your email I will be providing printed copies to the Board at tonight's meeting.

Wayne

From: schlueter.eric@gmail.com <schlueter.eric@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 19, 2019 3:13 PM

To: Public Hearing <public@cityofbelfast.org>

Subject: Planning Board meeting letter

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

Aesthetics are subjective but I ask the Planning Board to try and look at two different perspectives when looking at the Visual Assessment Report and the proposed Buffers.

1 The existing properties around the proposed site for the Nordic Aquafarm was zoned as Residential and re zoned by the City Council on behalf of Nordic Aquafarms to Industrial. If your family home or the home you planed to spend your retirement in or your children owned and are raising their children in was one of these properties would you be happy to see what Nordic Aquafarm is proposing to build and create a buffer for? Have you driven up and down Perkins Road and rout 1 and walked on the Little River Trail, asked to see the current view from properties next to the proposed site as it is today so you know how what Nordic Aquafarms is showing to the Planning Board will alter the existing views from these perspectives? It is my understanding the Planning Board walked the proposed Nordic Aquafarm site so you were on the inside looking out but have you all really looked in from the outside?

2 Would you be happy to have what they are presenting in your backyard? Maybe you live in a residential area, or out in the country? What if the City changed the zoning to industrial just over your property line or your neighbor sold the field next to your house and it gets rezoned for industrial, would you want to stay in your house if what Nordic Aquafarm is proposing to build and the buffers they are proposing were to be your new neighbor?

If you won't be living next to the proposed site or have to drive by it everyday what would you really care how it all looks in the end? But I'm hoping you all do care.

Thank you for the all the hard work you are doing.

Erica Schlueter
Belfast

Re: submittal for tonight

Wayne Marshall

Mon 8/19/2019 3:32 PM

To: Natalie c <mallard1843@gmail.com>

Hello Natalie

I have received your email. I will be providing printed copies of your comments at tonight's Board meeting.

Wayne

From: Natalie c <mallard1843@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 19, 2019 2:23 PM

To: Wayne Marshall <wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org>; Wayne Marshall <wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org>

Subject: submittal for tonight

Dear Members of the Belfast Planning Board:

Here are some concerns about Nordic's technical ability:

Nordic's experience with salmon is limited to a facility in Norway that is not yet operational. So they have no track record with salmon, let alone a factory the size of what they propose for Belfast. Further, nobody else has a track record with a facility of this size.

Nordic has never run a facility anywhere near as big as what they propose to build here. While they assure us that they have some experience with pod technology and that there would just be many more pods in their potential Belfast facility, a project magnitudes larger will have its own significant unforeseen problems.

These concerns are borne out by the insurance industry's caution about insuring RAS facilities. Here is just one of many recent articles on this topic that came up on an online search:

<https://salmonbusiness.com/aquaculture-insurer-on-ras-less-than-2-premium-but-over-5-of-the-losses/>

Here are two quotes:

"“(RAS has) less than 2% premium, but over 5% of the losses. This has so far been a loss making project for us.” That is what Geir Myre, global head of aquaculture insurance at insurance company AXA XL Catlin, said during a presentation during the North Atlantic Seafood Conference in Bergen on Tuesday."

"“This is our insurance risk,” he said. “There are many small things that can go wrong. We need more expertise in place before we can assure it or if we are going to insure it.”"

Banks also share concerns about lending to RAS facilities because it is very new, untested technology. Here is a quote from the Deloitte Report commissioned by the City of Belfast:

"Bank financing will likely be dependent on a high share of capital being raised from private investors."

Articles addressing this concern are also available online.

If the board does approve this project, an adequate Security Bond must be in place to cover any environmental damages from technology failure to protect Belfast taxpayers.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Natalie Charles, Belfast