

Elie Daniels
8/26 PB Hearings

In writing this testimony, I have found it very difficult to separate the issues of visual impact from those of noise, and therefore those of buffer. As abutters to the property, we are not situated in either of the areas that are named "scenic". And yet, every day, dozens of bikers, runners, and walkers travel on Perkins road. It is a favorite spot for its views, its open air, and the birds and animals that can be seen in the fields. As abutters, our neighbors to the East and ourselves are afforded almost no natural buffer, and we have now learned that Phase One is proposed to be located as close as possible to the back line of our property, just 300' away. The entire visual and privacy orientation of our house is on the South side, facing the proposed project. The visual impact along with the noise, the artificial light, and the loss of privacy, present an unimaginable and "unreasonable interference with use and enjoyment" of our property. (Language in quotes directly from Sec. 90-42(b)(21) of the Site Plan Ordinance Standards.)

In my reading of the application, I have noted a nearly complete absence of addressing implications of the construction phase of the project. Our residence and that of our neighbor to the East on Perkins Rd. has almost no natural buffer, just a few exposed old pines and a smattering of brush and low bushes. Shouldn't it be reasonable to expect a buffer against the associated impacts of construction, that could go on over a period of more than five years? It is very tidy to see computer rendering of buffers and roadways and finished buildings 5-10 or even 30 years from now, but the realities of the in-between time have not been addressed and could have a devastating impact on those of us who own property and depend on the value of that property to remain stable and unharmed. What if you had a project close to your home such as this and could not go anywhere else unless you were able to sell and get your money out of your home? What if realtors are advising you not to list your house without taking a huge loss, and it is your greatest asset? We have been regular hikers on the Little River Trail, and we mourn the potential loss of the pristine nature of that area. And yet, we have hundreds of choices for where we could take a beautiful hike, but only one place that we can enjoy our beautiful home.

My wife and I are also Intervenors in the BEP Permit process, and as such, are included in all communications that pass between the Department of Environmental Protection, the Applicant, and other Intervenors. On June 25, 2019, the DEP requested additional technical information from Nordic Aquafarms concerning details of the construction activities. In the August 8th, 2019 Nordic response to the DEP, we learned significant details that are not addressed to this Planning Board. What we learned is hugely significant to all of the abutters of the project, the neighborhood as a whole, and the experience of the construction phase which could last five years or more for the entire community.

Nordic's buildings as proposed will cover 807,254 square feet. To put this in some perspective, this is greater than 14 football fields of land. In their response to the DEP, Nordic talks about the need for extensive excavation of the building sites, as the ground there is dense clay and unsuitable for a stable footing. This soil will not be useful to reuse for the project for any of their needs.

At the BEP's request, Nordic has provided a table of depths to which each plot or area of land will need to be excavated, ranging from 8' deep to 20' deep, based on multiple soil borings. Excavated soil from these areas would be removed from the site, and suitable material would be brought in to replace it.

Phase One alone will construct 414,450 square feet of building. If an average of excavation depth of 14' was needed throughout, this would be 5.8 million cubic feet of soil to be removed from the site, and an equal amount to be brought in to replace it. I am told by a dump truck owner that a cubic yard (27 cubic feet) of soil weighs an average of 3,000 pounds, and a construction dump truck can carry 10 yards of that material. That leads me to realize that during the construction phase, we will experience the removal and replacement of up to 215,000 cubic yards of soil weighing up to 322,500 tons and requiring more than 21,500 dump loads to move it offsite, and a similar number of dump loads to bring suitable fill onsite. For Phase One.

This is an incredible departure from Nordic's Traffic plan for 27-45 daily vehicle trips during regular operations leading to the conclusion that DOT doesn't need to put in a traffic light or widen the road or change the traffic pattern or anything to accommodate it. The implications of the construction phase for visual disturbance, excessive noise, traffic hazards and holdups, truck fumes, and general disturbance are boggling for us to think about. And yet, almost nothing is written about the construction phase in the applications to the City or to the BEP for Permits. Which is why we learned any of this to begin with. Because the DEP asked for more information.

We urge you to do more due diligence with this application in terms of the impact of the construction phase on Visual, Buffers, Noise, Odors and Air Quality, and Traffic patterns. Clearly, this is a big hole in the application that should be requested, considered, and provided for.