

To Chairman Ellis and Members of the Hingham Planning Board,

We are direct abutters to the parking area at the South Shore Country Club. We write to express our initial concerns regarding the special parking permit, including but not limited to how it is going to be enforced and/or controlled. As briefly mentioned below, we also own an easement in the Country Club parking lot.

The pool complex is very large in scale, much larger than simply “bringing back the town pool.” Therefore, it is not surprising that approximately 400 people are projected to be using the facility at one time. Having lived next door for years, we have observed how busy the parking lot can already be during the summer due to golfers, golf tournaments, events at the function hall, the restaurant, and any other reason. We have commonly observed a full parking lot, cars parked all over the roadways, on the grassy areas, and have even observed cars stuck in the grass. Naturally, it should not be surprising that we are perplexed as to how this project makes sense from a parking perspective (ignoring the myriad other reasons the project does not make sense). While we expect that supporters may argue that the number of projected guests is significantly inflated, we have routinely observed that there is simply nowhere for even a small portion 400 projected guests to reasonably park on already busy days.

The proposed project contemplates the use of a parking shuttle. We question whether that makes sense both from a pure parking perspective as well as to how guests will respond to the lack of parking and taking a shuttle. While we know the Conservatory uses a shuttle, those concerts are well planned out in advance. Here, it will be far less predictable as to the parking needs of the pool and golf guests.

We have serious concerns as to where even a small portion of 400 people will park on already busy days. The proposed grass area has a brook running on it. Assuming the proposed plan passes muster from an environmental perspective, what happens when there has been inclement weather and the area is unavailable for parking? Also, what if a vehicle parked on the area has a gas/fuel/anti-freeze leak that would impact that environment? It is far from uncommon to see these areas flooded and muddy and filled with wildlife (animals are there constantly). In addition, how will this parking area impact the summer camps that routinely play in that area?

Our homes have been here since 1990 and we have always had a good relationship with the Country Club. In fact, in the 1990s John Barry approached us with regards to the easement area in front of our properties known as “Country Club Road” to make sure that the Country Club could still plan on using the parking area. As part of those conversations, he assured us that nothing would ever replace the tennis court area, nor would there be any building in that area.

While we understand the town residents have voted for a pool, we would appreciate our concerns being addressed and believe that our property rights must be enforced:

1. Please explain how shuttle parking will work, who is responsible for overseeing it, and who will pay for it?

2. Privacy and Security:

The proposed plan included a chain link fence. Ignoring the optics of a chain link fence, this type of barrier provides no privacy, security, or noise reduction. We are requesting a solid material barrier/fence of significant height on the Splash Pad and mechanical room side of pool structure, due to the elevated height of the structure a minimum of 15 feet is most likely needed. We ask that no additional trees be removed and that more trees, be added to the woods area surrounding this same area with large Leyland pines, Arborvitaes etc. We are equally concerned about security, since the tennis courts were daytime only with a maximum of 12 people and the pool area will have hundreds more people. We want to ensure our privacy and properties security.

3. Trash has always been an issue with litter strewn on our property. While this has been manageable to date, trash will surely increase significantly due to the snack bar and hundreds of people in closer proximity to our homes. We request that trash barrels be placed in the parking lots and that they are emptied on a nightly basis, as well as regular cleaning of the parking lots. Even with these mitigation strategies, the litter will blow onto our properties, attract varmints and other animals, and damage the land around the country club. This is a serious concern that needs to be adequately addressed.

4. Noise: We request that reasonable noise mitigation strategies be added to the plan. These should include quiet hours in the mornings, no whistles or PA equipment before 9am, use of a low volume PA system for swim meets, prohibition of large parties in the evenings, and limited hours of operation.

5. Hours of operation: Requested summer hours 9am-7pm.

6. Lighting: Given the close proximity, we ask that there be no spotlights or lighting directed towards our properties.

7. No running or idling vehicles or buses in parking areas.

8. Construction: During pool complex construction we are asking that the hours be kept to weekdays only, with no construction before 7:30am. No construction on weekends or Holidays.

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