



## **GREEN'S FARMS ASSOCIATION**

# **WINTER 2007 NEWSLETTER**

**Green's Farms Association • P.O. Box 10 • Green's Farms, CT 06838 • [www.westportct.net/gfa](http://www.westportct.net/gfa)**

### **An Update on the Green's Farms Association from its President**

During the past year the Green's Farms Association has been active in zoning matters of town-wide and local interest. Last October, a resident of Turkey Hill Road South filed an application to rezone her property for affordable housing. This rezoning would have permitted the construction of an eight-unit housing development on less than one acre.

Answering the call of our members, GFA directors attended multiple zoning hearings and met with concerned neighbors to organize a successful opposition to an application that would have introduced a high-density project into a block with mostly one-half acre plots.

We continue to monitor the P&Z docket to identify matters that may affect the town as a whole and Green's Farms in particular. Most recently, we have been taken a stand on an application to amend Westport's Zoning Regulations to allow intense development of property under Connecticut's affordable housing statute, Section 8-30g.

A developer filed a proposed amendment to the Zoning Regulations to allow affordable housing to be built on any property that can contain a rectangle of 100 by 150 feet, has access to sewers and 30 feet of footage on a public street. The maximum lot size would be 2 acres with housing density of 15 units per acre.

This amendment has the potential to affect virtually every neighborhood in Westport, including Green's Farms. It is estimated that there are over 1000 sites in town that would fit this description.

The developer is seeking to develop a 20-unit condominium on Gorham Avenue. As part of the development, two older homes would be

demolished. We strongly support the efforts of the Gorham Neighbors group that is on the front lines of this battle.

The Green's Farms Association had representatives at each of the (marathon) four hearings on this proposal and submitted its written opposition. The P&Z has not yet ruled on the application.

Unfortunately, as the amount of available land in Westport dries up, developers can be expected to target smaller sites for "affordable housing" developments. These are attractive because by setting aside 30 percent of the units for affordable housing the developer can qualify for increased housing density. We expect this trend to continue.

Usually a developer submits a text amendment to the Zoning Regulations for an affordable housing zone with town-wide application. If the amendment is accompanied by an application to rezone or a site plan adjoining neighbors will be notified. If only a text amendment is submitted, the only notice will be in the newspaper.

GFA does not oppose construction of true "affordable housing" in Westport, but we are dedicated to discouraging high-density developments motivated by profit that threaten to destroy the character of the neighborhood and impose noise, health or traffic risks upon those who live nearby. Through efforts of membership groups like the GFA, we are able to make our voices heard and present a coordinated response.

If you have any concerns about zoning or development projects affecting your neighborhood, contact a member of the GFA Board of Directors, whose telephone numbers appear on this newsletter.

Peggy Haering  
President, Green's Farms Association

## Row, Row, Row Your Boat

This should be the theme song of any Green's Farms resident who lives adjacent to Muddy Brook. On several occasions during the past spring and summer we experienced severe flooding. Weather patterns have been changing, and we have had more frequent and much heavier rains. Contributing to the problem, the stream has silted up badly over the last two or three years. The small holding pond, just below the Barnes and Noble and another one just before the culvert on Hillandale Road are silted and overgrown. A number of neighbors in the vicinity of this culvert have been pressing the Department of Public Works to take some sort of corrective action, but so far nothing has been done. DPW produced a plan for an expanded culvert that would span the stream. It would be three times wider than the present culvert and require the removal of several trees on both sides of the stream. In addition, all four property owners near the corners of the culvert would lose some property.

These property owners have met with the DPW and asked if a less disruptive solution was possible. DPW proposed a modified version that was still quite large and equally disruptive. In May, the neighbors had an impromptu meeting with Steve Edwards during a heavy storm. He stopped by the area as Muddy Brook was raging far beyond its normal boundaries. The neighbors asked him about the possibility of dredging the stream. He said that dredging was not an alternative.

Several days later DPW sent a letter to all four of the involved neighbors indicating that the project was being dropped from the Town's list of local streams improvement work. The next step is taking this matter to the First Selectman for resolution.

Interestingly, the original development permits for the Barnes and Noble property imposed certain conditions on the owner regarding the holding pond. If these had been enforced, the problem would be alleviated somewhat. Barnes and Noble has no intention of doing any site work to address this situation, and the Town has shown no inclination either to bring suit against the property owner or to pay for the work to be done.

All residents who live along both sides of the stream will be affected by the increasingly more frequent flooding. We do not have a solution yet, but if you are concerned about Muddy Brook, please contact one of our directors so that we can present a unified front at Town Hall.

## We're Looking for New Members

The Green's Farms Association stands ready to respond to critical issues in the community. By maintaining a solid presence we represent the neighborhood before the Town in an effort to head off problems before they reach a crisis point. One way to keep our organization strong is to grow our membership.

If you have any new neighbors on your street, please consider sharing a copy of the newsletter with them and encouraging them to contact any of the Board members to join the organization or download a membership application at [www.westportct.net/gfa](http://www.westportct.net/gfa). Current year dues for new members who join after December 15th will be at half the normal rate of \$25.00.

## Visit GFA on the WEB

Keep up with the activities of the Green's Farms Association by checking out our website at [www.westportct.net/gfa](http://www.westportct.net/gfa) where you can download past newsletters, membership applications and a history of the Association. Much useful information is available, such as GFA contact information, email addresses for local elected representatives and even the current weather conditions in Green's Farms.

### GFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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