

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** 1/11/2016

**TO:** Richard Seegel, Chair, Wellesley Zoning Board of Appeals  
Lenore Mahoney, Executive Secretary

**FROM:** Wellesley Natural Resources Commission

**RE:** ZBA 2015-83; Wellesley Country Club Short Course Proposal

The members of the Natural Resources Commission are very concerned about the Wellesley Country Club's proposed expansion of its golf course to include a 6-hole course designed to be used by children. This project will involve the loss of trees, the use of cut-and-fill practices, and potential sediment deposition into one of the Town's critical aquifers. Part of the expanded course will be located on Wellesley Water Supply Protection lands, leading to the NRC's apprehension that the use of pesticides for turf management might affect the Town's supply of drinking water.

The NRC requests that the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals consider adding the following requirements to any approval of the golf-course expansion:

- Every three years, the Wellesley Country Club (WCC) should provide the NRC with an update of their Integrated Pest Management Plan, listing any substances that are applied to the course, particularly in the Town's wellhead protection areas.
- The WCC should provide the NRC with a copy of any Pesticide Use Report Form submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture.

Furthermore, the NRC requests that the members of the ZBA suggest that the WCC consider adopting the *Audubon International Environmental Management Practices for Golf Courses*, and work towards earning *Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program Certification*. This program encourages standard environmental management practices, such as identifying "no spray zones" and buffer areas (particularly around water and environmentally sensitive areas); highlighting wildlife habitat; and adhering to best management practices for chemical use.

In the past, the WCC has demonstrated an interest in working with the Town on issues of concern to residents. In a letter to the Wellesley Wetlands Protection Committee dated December 7, 2007, the Wellesley Country Club stated, "The Club has gone to great lengths to work with the Wellesley NRC, the Board of Health, and the Water Department in protecting both environmental and public health." By agreeing to be fully transparent in the use of pesticides as part of a turf management program, the WCC would be further demonstrating a commitment to act as an "environmental steward," and to ensure the safety of WCC members, Town residents, and local wildlife. Going a step further, the WCC could become a standard bearer for environmental and water quality protection by adopting the *Audubon International Environmental Management Practices for Golf Courses*.

We respectfully ask you to consider these requests during your upcoming hearing. We would be happy to discuss any questions you may have.