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Connecticut Fund for the Environment

TO: Old Saybrook Planning Commission
FROM: Charles J. Rothenberger
Connecticut Fund for the Environment
DATE: November 30 2004
RE: The Preserve Open Space Subdivision Special Exception Application

To the members of the Old Saybrook Planning Commission:

This letter and the accompanying materials are being submitted in connection with the presentation made by Connecticut Fund for the Environment at the November 17, 2004, public hearing of the Old Saybrook Planning Commission. The accompanying illustrations were referenced during that presentation.

The attached map and overlays illustrate the modifications suggested by the Commission's staff and consultants to the applicant's 'Conceptual Standard Plan,' submitted in connection with River Sound Development's application for a special exception for an open space subdivision.

The applicant has portrayed a total of 293 units as a realistic "traditional" subdivision on the property. Looking at the suggestions made by various Town staff and consultants, the number of units provided for in the applicant's conventional subdivision "strawman" appears to be overly optimistic. Nathan Jacobsen and Associates has suggested the elimination of 93 lots.¹ These lots are outlined on map SB-O "Overall Conventional Subdivision Plan," in yellow. In some cases, the recommendation was to eliminate a certain percentage of lots from a certain area, rather than identifying specific individual lots to be eliminated. Where this is the case, those areas and the lots occupying them are shown in solid yellow.

Concerns expressed by the Town's Planner over significant cultural structures and preserving significant natural features has suggested the elimination of 5 additional lots and the reconfiguration of 8 more.² Those lots are outlined in the first overlay, "OL-1," in blue.

Taken together these recommendations would reduce the conventional subdivision lot yield by a third, from 293 (as proposed by the developer) to 187. This

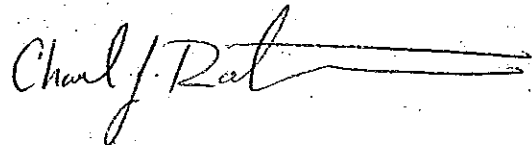
¹ Exhibit no. 28, Letter Report from Geoffrey L. Jacobson, P.E., to Christine Nelson, AICP, regarding "The Preserve - Conceptual Standard Subdivision Review", dated 10/27/04.

² Exhibit no. 40, Letter report from Christine Nelson, AICP, Director of Land Use, Town of Old Saybrook, to Robert J. McIntyre, Chairman, regarding "The Preserve" Conceptual Standard Plan, dated 11/3/04.

“approvable” lot configuration is outlined on the second overlay, “OL-2,” in red. Note that approximately 35% of the solid yellow lots are also recommended for subtraction from the lot yield.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the Commission is not comparing the so-called “traditional” subdivision plan with the Open Space plan in order to evaluate alternatives. The underlying zone here, “Conservation C,” requires an open space subdivision plan. The Traditional subdivision is presented *only* to establish the maximum number of units that can be presented in the Open Space plan. Nevertheless, as the accompanying maps illustrate, the natural constraints of the property severely limit the level of development that it can support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles J. Ral", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.