

June 26, 2020



Dear Natural Resources Commission:

I have lived at 131 Carr Road, adjacent to 676 Monument Street and Fenn School, since 1996. I am writing to share concerns about the construction of a dock and gangway at 676 Monument Street. My objections to this project are based both on an interest in protecting the Concord River and its wetlands and on the prior history of segmental expansion of projects by the Fenn School.

Although any dock is likely to disturb wetlands and wildlife, this location is of particular concern because it would sit across a narrow riverway from Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. The birds, like great heron and wood ducks, who sit at the edge of Great Meadow often fly to the opposite bank. The blanding turtle, a threatened species known to be in Great Meadow, may "suffer mortality from landscape fragmentation" (Great Meadows Web site). There are countless other examples of impacts on flora and fauna about which you are aware. Furthermore, review of the plans suggests that the proposed dock is more like a commercial marina than a canoe launch.

The problems of a dock itself are also numerous: reducing light penetration, directly disturbing aquatic life, and altering the water flow of the river. Dredging the river may alter the shore line; and repeated dredging may be necessary to maintain the dock. Such dredging will disturb river sediment which may contain excess levels of toxic metals.

In addition to these concerns, there is the pattern by Fenn School of incrementally increasing their footprint and failing to provide a master plan. In the past, permits have given Fenn permission to establish guidelines as they see fit. We will elaborate on these issues if you consider them relevant.

Once there is a dock, will there will be a boathouse, parking, parties, excursions and other activities inimicable to a wild and scenic river and the Wildlife Refuge nearby? Will further disruption of the adjacent wetlands occur because a permit gives permission to slowly extend the river footprint?

The history of 676 Monument Street is interesting as the previous owner had filled and drained the wetland theoretically to obtain an agricultural exemption to grow hay, meanwhile opening the river view and landing for his hillside home and then selling the property to Fenn.

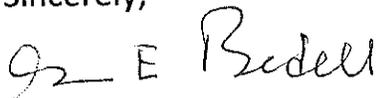
Fenn has already destroyed wetland and further expanded their field by mowing and destroying habitat of bobolink birds sited there.

Fenn has previously encroached on wetlands and river front when building a synthetic turf field. The snow on the field is plowed in the winter, pushing crumb rubber to the river. In the fall leaves are blown from the field into wetlands. With the leaves is crumb rubber. Trash from the fields blows into the woods and down to the river where we regularly collect it. The cumulative impact on the river needs evaluation.

The application submitted by Fenn lacks detail about the plan to develop the property at 676 Monument Street. It is appropriate that a master plan be submitted as part of a review of this application. The only responsible way to fully evaluate the impact of a dock is to fully understand the total land use. Will there be roads and parking areas that generate harmful stormwater runoff? Where will the dock and boats be stored? Will there be continuous use of the dock as there is of the synthetic playing field?

Given the history of land use by Fenn, it is likely that the intent of this dock is for more than "educational activities." There is already an easy landing spot on the river that would allow small groups of students to explore the River's wonders without destroying the habitat.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susanna E. Bedell". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Susanna E. Bedell