To the editor,

Clean, safe drinking water is one of the most valuable resources we have in this region and the citizens of many towns, including Ossipee, have voted to protect groundwater through their ordinances.   The Ossipee Aquifer is made of sand and gravel which means it can be easily contaminated. Some areas are more permeable than others, which is why Ossipee residents chose not to allow uses such as gas stations and underground storage tanks in certain areas.

On February 21st at 7:00 the Ossipee Planning Board will be reviewing the application for an eight pump gas station and convenience store with a drive up window at the intersections of routes 41 and 16 in West Ossipee near the Tamworth/ Madison line. This use is not an allowed use at this site without a variance from the Ossipee Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).

At the ZBA meeting on July 14th 2015, two variances were applied for, one for allowing a gas station in an area that it is not permitted due to groundwater protection and the second variance was to allow underground storage tanks where they are not permitted for the same reason.   This is also the site of NHDES Case #199309040 which is a known underground storage tank contamination site from 1993 with, according to White Mountain Survey and Engineering at the January 3rd Planning Board meeting, 1.5 million dollars in a clean-up fund with $547,000 expended to date.  Mark McConkey was present in the audience and commented on the risks of the proposed underground storage tanks (see Ossipee ZBA meeting minutes from 7/14/2015 Case 15-4V) “The question is not whether it is a 2, 3 or 4 walled tank or a vault. It’s the excavation that has to be done on a site that is already extremely contaminated. It is possible that you could break loose a plume that could float in any direction. He stated that he asked for the above ground tank because it will limit the amount of excavation on the site and in turn limits the risk of plumes breaking loose in the area.”.  These variances were granted with a four to one vote.  Now this proposed gas station development needs approval from the Ossipee Planning Board.

We/I urge concerned citizens to come out to the Ossipee Planning Board Meeting at 7:00 pm on Tuesday February 21st at 1 Moultonville Road (the Ossipee Freight House) in Ossipee to urge the Planning Board to say “ no” to this proposed gas station based on their own existing ordinance that was enacted by Ossipee residents to protect the groundwater that they rely on.

Sincerely,

Corey Lane

Water Quality Coordinator

Green Mountain Conservation Group