

MEMORANDUM

TO: Effingham Planning Board
FROM: Mark Longley, Center Sandwich
DATE: 5 April 2022
SUBJECT: **Proposed Construction of Service Station in Effingham**

Thank you for declaring the Meena LLC gas station proposal a Development of Regional Impact. As a resident of Sandwich and chemist familiar with our aquifer's challenges as a groundwater monitor and coordinator of our town's well water quality assessment program, I would like to express two serious concerns.

1.) Watershed Interdependence

Sandwich and Effingham share a common water source in the Ossipee Aquifer. Although Sandwich has the advantage of being in the 'upstream' position with respect to water flowing in Effingham's direction, any town's actions have effects on 'downstream' localities. Sandwich has a strong groundwater protection ordinance, but if we approved a variance allowing the construction of underground storage tanks in one of our aquifer's sensitive recharge locations, and if there was a contamination incident causing harm not only to our residents but also downstream localities, I certainly would concur with the folks in Effingham should they rebuke (or more!) Sandwich authorities for their unwise decision to approve the variance.

2.) Precedence

The role and responsibility of municipal governments is to uphold their groundwater protection ordinances, especially as these regulations directly involve the health and safety of its residents. We in neighboring towns are concerned that abating an ordinance in one town opens the door to similar actions in other towns in the watershed, placing us all at risk. Many in my town share the opinion that Effingham should be a positive example in standing up for the laws protecting our people and environment - not the reverse.

Thank you for taking so much of your board's time to review and consider feedback from local folks, including residents from other towns in the watershed. We sincerely hope you decide to do the right thing and deny this application.

Sincerely,

Mark Longley
North Country Farm