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Town of Woodbury
Zoning Office
Main Street
Woodbury, CT 06798

Re: Outdoor Wood Furnace (OWF) Application - Stokes

To Whom It May Concern:

Mary,

Thank you so much for taking your time to sit with me last week to allow me to describe the situation and familiarize you with the issues that we have with our neighbor's OWF located at 76 Cross Brook Road. As promised, here is my letter requesting that the application for the installation of this OWF be **DENIED**.

First, our neighbor has installed and burned this unit for nearly two years now, without a permit or apparent consideration to the harm it is doing to both us and our neighbors, the Geladas. We are in the direct path of the smoke and literally live in a perpetual forest fire. It is so bad at times, that we are not able to use go outside and enjoy our deck or pool. We sometimes have to shut windows and turn on the air-conditioning, even in the fall, as the smoke seriously irritates my husband's allergies. Once he starts to show signs of labored breathing, we must get him to cleaner air. I am constantly cleaning rugs, drapes and upholstery, as the smoke permeates the materials. Our lives are seriously impacted by this unit. At minimum, we respectfully request that Mr. Stokes not be allowed to burn this unit until after he files the permit and receives lawful permission to burn... Yet ultimately, we hope that the Zoning Board sees the merits of our concerns and denies the permission.

Secondly, we have contacted the DEP (Phil Schnell, Tim Marsh), the Pomperaug Health District (Neil Lustig), the Attorney General's office (Kimberly Massicotte), the First Selectman (Jerry Shomsky) and various town and state officials and experts. Thus far, no one has been able/willing to help us to get this nuisance shut down. We have been pursuing these avenues for nearly two (2) years now, filing complaint after complaint, meeting with officials...contacting every agency we can find, with no relief. One of the problems is that Mr. Stokes will burn at times when the various agencies are closed, i.e. early morning and evening... so there is no one available to come and observe the extent of the nuisance and discomfort this smoke creates.

I have attached some of the reports provided to me by the DEP, to show the timing and actions taken by Mr. Stokes. However, of due note is that no one is mentioning or investigating the travel of the smoke and its impact on us. Due to our topology, the smoke flows into Mr. Gelada's front windows and then continues down our driveway right to our home... and we understand by the DEP's own literature, that it contains potential toxins, carcinogens and harmful particulates. We have been breathing this for nearly two years now. Mr. Gelada suffers from asthma, which is greatly exacerbated by the smoke. We often wonder if some catastrophic event needs to occur to one of us to get someone to listen and act upon this situation.

I have also attached, for your reference, a copy of a message sent to me showing bona fide accounts of complaints filed and the subsequent impact of an OWF. Hopefully, this will help in the decision to deny its installation.

Finally, we have spent an inordinate amount of time and effort trying to get this resolved through the laws and regulations currently in our state to remedy such a situation. We have come to a dead end. Mr. Lustig had candidly told Mr. Gelada and my husband on one visit to our site that the DEP would not enforce against a homeowner, and to date, his comment appears to be true.

We are strongly urging you to do the right thing and immediately issue a "cease and desist" to stop the burning until such time as you have had a chance to review the application and render a decision. Our hope is that you will understand and agree with our position and deny it.

I close with one thought. We selected our home site, as it was located in an area which is clear and natural. We enjoy the wildlife that surrounds us, and love the fresh air and crisp evenings that we had enjoyed prior to the installation of this OWF. We implore you to consider what you would do if this was adversely affecting the quiet enjoyment of your home and more importantly, your family's good health?

Please feel free to contact us should you wish to discuss this in greater detail...and we would ask if you would be so kind as to advise us of any meetings which may be held to review his application? We would like to be present to answer any questions which may arise.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration,

Andrea Fitzgerald
Bruce Fitzgerald

Cc: Louis and Sara Gelada
64 Cross Brook Road