

From: [Heather Smith](#)
To: [John Sych](#); [Steve Hannon](#)
Subject: comments on the BATA/TCHC PUD
Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 2:35:32 PM

Dear John and Steve,

Can you please distribute these comments to the Planning Commission ahead of tomorrow's Planning Commission meeting? They are intended for the entire Commission.

I am writing to comment on the BATA/TCHC PUD that is scheduled for discussion. As you may know, the Watershed Center is leading many water quality initiatives in the Mitchell Creek watershed and we work hard to be a consistent advocate for wetland and stream protection in this fragile subwatershed of the Grand Traverse Bay watershed. While we are pleased that development plans at this site generally respect the environmental sensitivity of the site, we want to raise our concern with a woodchipped trail through onsite wetlands.

Trail systems through wetlands require careful consideration. Open-pile trail systems such as boardwalks are the least impactful type of wetland trail systems as they prevent the need to compact, fill, or dredge wetland soils or remove wetland vegetation. In addition, open-pile systems do not impede the natural surface flows within a wetland. While we appreciate the trail is through the narrowest section of wetland, we recommend an open-pile, raised boardwalk to connect the residential and transit sections of the development. This will prevent wetland isolation.

We are pleased to see that much of onsite wetlands will be preserved through a conservation easement. Wetlands have a tremendous capacity to provide benefits in our community and local units of government have the ability to ensure they stay protected. Thank you for your consideration.

Heather Smith
Grand Traverse BAYKEEPER
The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay
13170 S. West Bay Shore Drive, Ste 102 | Traverse City, MI 49684

231.935.1514 x3
www.gtbay.org

Our office is currently closed – all staff are working remotely and are available by email and our main line.