



Town of Coventry  
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### **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Douglas McLean, AICP - Director of Planning and Development & Town of Coventry  
Planning Commission

FROM: Joseph Levesque, P.E. - Town Engineer

DATE: October 16, 2025

SUBJECT: Construction Bond Reduction – Phases I, II & III  
The Oaks at Hope Furnace  
AP. 97/Lot 6 & AP. 89/Lot 3  
Hope Furnace Road  
Coventry, Rhode Island

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The developer, Hope Furnace Land Company, LLC has requested an initial bond release on October 17, 2024. The request was to reduce Phase I to the 20% one-year maintenance level and reduce Phases II & III to reflect completed work. The request was denied. Structural issues with the Phase I stormwater drainage system were identified by the Town Engineer during an inspection, requiring further investigation.

The developer, Hope Furnace Land Company, LLC has requested a second bond release on August 12, 2025. This request is to reduce Phases I, II and III to the 20% one-year maintenance levels.

The original bond for the entire project (approved by the Planning Commission) was \$1,739,050.00 and the portion for each phase is:

Phase I Bond =	\$949,750
Phase II Bond =	\$200,550
Phase III Bond =	\$588,750

Two bond reductions (May 2023 and November 2023) have been made since the bond was originally set by the Planning Commission.

**Bond Reduction #1 (May 2023)**

Phase I Bond =	\$949,750
Phase I Release =	<u>\$356,000</u>
<b>Phase I Retention =</b>	<b>\$593,750</b>

<b>Phase II Retention =</b>	<b>\$200,550</b>
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<b>Phase III Retention =</b>	<b>\$588,750</b>
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**Bond Reduction #2 (November 2023)**

Phase I Bond =	\$593,750
Phase I Release =	<u>\$120,550</u>
<b>Phase I Retention =</b>	<b>\$473,200</b>

Phase II Bond =	\$200,550
Phase II Release =	<u>\$102,140</u>
<b>Phase II Retention =</b>	<b>\$ 98,410</b>

<b>Phase III Retention =</b>	<b>\$588,750</b>
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An inspection of the Phase I, II and III construction for the Oaks at Hope Furnace subdivision was conducted on October 31, 2024. Structural issues with the Phase I stormwater drainage system were identified by the Town Engineer during the inspection, requiring further investigation. The entire project's stormwater drainage system was constructed under Phase I.

The developer, Robert Deblois of Hope Furnace Land Company, LLC was informed by the Town Engineer on December 17, 2024 that structural issues were identified with the drainage system and an independent investigation by an engineering consultant was forthcoming. Immediately after that interaction, the town received emails later in the day on December 17, 2024 and December 20, 2024 from the developer's attorney that the town does not have permission to inspect, test, or enter the Property.

Regardless of the lack of access to the property, an independent engineering investigation was performed based on all information available at the time issues with the drainage system were identified (see attached report prepared by Fuss & O'Neill dated March 20, 2025). The report concluded by recommending the following:

- A thorough visual site inspection of the drainage basins should be performed by the Town to evaluate and locate any further erosion that has occurred since October of 2024. All specific areas of erosion and berm failures should be visually recorded by photographs and/or video, and locations marked on the plans for reference.

- Test pit excavations should be performed in areas that have exhibited erosion in pond berms, basin bottoms, swales and fill areas. In particular, test pits should be performed at the sand filter A berm and the Pond A earthen embankment to identify the materials used for construction of these features, and also to confirm that the materials meet the requirements of the plans. Further investigation of those project elements should be performed to ascertain the full extent of the use of the fill materials pictured.

- Additional test pit excavations should be performed in the areas where sink holes have developed around the outside perimeter of the site and drainage basins. These excavations should be performed to identify materials used within the backfill at these locations and ascertain the cause of the sink holes. If unsuitable materials or improper construction methods are identified, then a plan for replacement/reconstruction would need to be developed. If not addressed these sink hole areas will likely worsen and be a continued safety concern for residents of the development and surrounding properties.

- The Town should request submission of documentation by the developer's Site Engineer and/or Geotechnical Engineer documenting the required monitoring of fill operations per the notes on the approved plans.

- The Town should request submission of all compaction testing reports to verify compliance with the notes on the approved plans.

- The Town should review other findings with the developer (Riprap stone size, non-monolithic concrete curb weir, missing inlet screen, etc.) to determine acceptable corrective actions for those items.

Only after access was granted to enter the property, an inspection was performed by the Town Engineer on September 24, 2025. It was observed that areas previously noted as having structural issues were backfilled with soil. Other than a visual confirmation of these areas being backfilled, no evidence has been transmitted to the Office of the Town Engineer that the noted problems have been satisfactorily corrected. In addition, a section of Cassidy Trail adjacent to Sediment Forebay A was been noted numerous times to exhibit excessive ponding during and after rain events.

Based on the findings during my October 31, 2024 inspection, the conclusions of the independent investigation performed by Fuss & O'Neill, my recent September 24, 2025 site inspection and the on-going Cassidy Trail ponding issue, I do not recommend bond reductions for Phases I, II and III until:

- 1) Evidence that the on-going ponding issue in Cassidy Trail has been completely mitigated;
- and
- 2) The Phase I stormwater drainage system investigation is completed (as recommended in Fuss & O'Neill's investigation report dated March 20, 2025) and after all required investigation information is reviewed and approved;
- or

- 3) The Engineer of Record, DiPrete Engineering issues a Certificate of Conformance to the Town of Coventry certifying that the Phase I Drainage System was constructed in accordance with the documents approved as part of the Final Plan Submission.

Current bond retention for each phase is:

<b>Phase I</b>	Currently Retained	\$473,200
	Recommended Retention	\$473,200
	<b>Amount to be Released</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Phase II</b>	Currently Retained	\$ 98,410
	Recommended Retention	\$ 98,410
	<b>Amount to be Released</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Phase III</b>	Currently Retained	\$252,230
	Recommended Retention	\$252,230
	<b>Amount to be Released</b>	<b>\$0</b>