

CLIENT'S COPY

November 10, 2014

**Via Email: [christy.a.geffen@state.ma.us](mailto:christy.a.geffen@state.ma.us)**

Christy A. Geffen  
Northwestern District Attorney's Office  
One Gleason Plaza  
Northampton, MA 01060

**RE: Northwest Road, Westhampton, MA**

Dear Christy:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me earlier this week regarding Northwest Road, Westhampton, MA.

As I indicated to you on the telephone, my firm represents Mr. Paul Silvernail, an individual that resides on Northwest Road, Westhampton, MA. In addition, my firm represents Mark E. and Sarah A. Chalet who live at 324 Northwest Road, Westhampton, MA.

The reason that I have contacted you is that Mr. Silvernail is extremely concerned regarding three real estate transactions that have occurred between Mr. David Cotton ("Cotton") and Walter and Mary Challet. Walter and Mary Challet are 80 and 84 years old respectively. Over the last several years the Challets have entered into three separate real estate transactions with Cotton and Dodge Maple Grove Farm, LLC, which is a limited liability company operated by Cotton. The real estate transactions are as follows:

1. On May 17, 2011, Walter and Mary Challet conveyed to Doge Maple Grove Farm, LLC 78 acres of land off Northwest Road, Westhampton, MA for the sum of \$49,040.00. In consideration for this conveyance, Dodge Maple Grove Farm, LLC granted a mortgage to the Challets promising to pay on or before May 17, 2021 (10 years later).
2. On January 23, 2014, Walter and Mary Challet conveyed to Doge Maple Grove Farm, LLC their home located at 315 Northwest Road, Westhampton, Hampshire County, MA for \$1.00.
3. On January 23, 2014, Walter and Mary Challet conveyed to David Cotton individually property located at 320 Northwest Road, Westhampton, MA for \$1.00.

By way of background, it is believed that Cotton intends on owning and operating a sawmill on Northwest Road. To that end, there have been six public hearings about the sawmill in the past year. At some point, Cotton, having ownership of some of this real estate, commenced logging on this land. Neighbors up and down the street complained to the Westhampton Building Inspector about the noise and log trucks running up and down the street. As a result, Cotton was ordered to cease and desist any and all activity relating to said conduct.

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Accordingly, he has sought a special permit to allow him to continue performing those practices and ultimately construct a sawmill on the property.

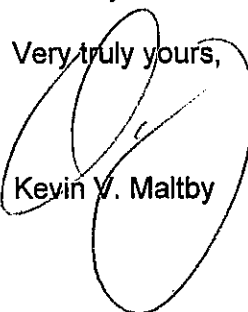
Walter and Mary Challet are currently 80 and 84 years old respectively. At this time, the fair market value of 315 Northwest Road is approximately \$242,391.00 according to Zillow. In addition, there is now a listing on Zillow for 320 Northwest Road indicating that the sale price of this parcel is \$137,000.00. In short, the combined value of these two parcels of real estate is approximately \$379,391.00, which the Challets conveyed it to Cotton for only \$2.00.

It is deeply concerning that these transactions would occur for less than fair market value given the age of the Challets and the intentions of Mr. Cotton. Especially given the age and station of Mr. and Mrs. Challet, a transaction for less than fair market value may have effects on their lives, including how Medicare and Medicaid view them.

Also, please be advised that Cotton is represented by Attorney Melnick, who has appeared with him at various planning board meetings as well as assisting him in seeking his application for a special permit.

It is my understanding that Mr. Paul Silvernail and/or Mark and Sarah Challet would be happy to discuss with you their concerns regarding these real estate transactions. In terms of full disclosure, please also be advised that Cotton has brought a lawsuit against Sarah and Mark Challet alleging that he is owed money for work performed on their property. Please note their willingness to speak to you about the transactions has nothing to do with the lawsuit instituted by Cotton against them, but out of concern for their grandparents. They are deeply concerned, as is Mr. Silvernail, regarding how Cotton, who is of no relation to the Challets, can encourage and/or be involved for the conveyance of real estate for \$2.00.

It is my understanding that they would be happy to speak with you. To that end, please contact my office to coordinate a time for them to meet with you.

Very truly yours,  
  
Kevin V. Maltby

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cc: ✓ Paul J. Silvernail