


Question follow-up from 12/1 meeting

Heather Lewis <hllewis6@hotmail.com>

Wed 12/8/2021 2:03 AM

To: Hopedale Planning Board <PlanningBoard@hopedale-ma.gov>

Cc: Thomas Lewis <telewis843@gmail.com>

 1 attachments (996 KB)

555_hopping_brook_decision.pdf;

Hello,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak at last week's meeting concerning the warehouse at 75 Plain. As noted on the meeting, we do have many questions regarding the topic of the sound study, and those follow further along in this message.

However, the one question we had asked is for the Planning Board to confirm that you do in fact have the authority to deny the applicant's proposed project. It seems there was some confusion about that. Although we're not experts, we do believe the Planning Board does indeed have that authority, which is the purpose of the applicant's presentations to the Planning Board – to seek approval.

The Hopedale Zoning by-laws states:

"The Planning Board, as the special permit granting authority, shall review all site plans subject to the procedure, standards, and limitations set forth herein, and review or disapprove said plan. No performance development shall be entitled to a zoning permit until and unless the Planning Board has approved said site plan."

We believe it's crucial that Planning Board know the rights and extent of its authority here – and that you **do** have the option to deny the proposal (vs. an 'automatic/required approval' decision with conditions). Perhaps town counsel can provide final/affirmative guidance here?

We're also attaching the PDF from the Holliston Planning board, which outlines in detail their (the Planning Board's) decision to deny an applicant's proposed warehouse project – a solid and informative read (pg 10 and forward), which covers so many of the same concerns here. I'm happy to contact the Holliston Planning Board as well for anything they can share on their experience if you hadn't already(?).

Specifically, regarding the sound study and the presentation from the 12/1 meeting:

- Thank you for suggesting the Peer review of the sound study – that was #1 on my list.
- For the sound study, how is it (or what technology is used) that they were able to emulate the sounds of multiple tractor-trailers (driving, idling, back-up beeping) and the sounds of powering a massive building, without any of those things actually being present?
- Additionally, were sensors the only resource used in interpreting those sounds? Were no humans present at different abutting locations to hear? Where specifically was the sensor placed on Bens Way (since the entire wooded section of the cul-de-sac is private property,

there is some question as to whether that did indeed even occur)? If the entire study consisted of purely computer-generated predictions, we'd argue that it is very much incomplete without any 'in the field' testing.

- The study indicated that the end of Bens Way can expect 38 dBA. While on its own, that number holds little meaning to anyone that is not in the field, the comparison chart shows that this is equitable to a quiet suburban night. Again, we're not experts, but there is absolutely no way that the surrounding 'quiet suburban' sounds we currently hear will remain unchanged once a 616,875 square foot warehouse with over 300 daily tractor-trailers operating 24/7 goes in a few hundred feet away (and be essentially quieter than some of the occasional Rosenfeld Concrete noises). This point needs to be raised during the Peer review.
- Of the "comparable" warehouse sites that were shown in the presentation, how many of them were about 50% or more surrounded by residential streets/neighborhoods?
 - How many of them, meeting the criteria above, operate 24/7 with hundreds of tractor trailers per day?
 - I didn't yet see the presentation posted on the website. And that may be in progress, but the in meantime, I'd like for those comparable addresses/locations to be shared again so I may do my own homework and contact those towns' Planning Boards to inquire about the impacts on the abutting residences.
- In the Hopedale Zoning by-laws it states:

"18.5(g) Protection of adjoining property or the Town from any undue disturbance caused by excessive or unreasonable noise, smoke, vapors, fumes, dust, glare, etc."

How is that measured or qualified? We certainly believe this warehouse will cause an undue disturbance caused by a several of those listed items. The applicant states in their last presentation that it will not, but that is entirely subjective (and grossly inaccurate).

- Can you please detail how the town plans to monitor and enforce any restrictions or conditions (ultimately related to any and all of the concerning aspects – noise, traffic, pollution, etc.)? What is the exact process/escalation for this?

Based on what we saw from the applicant's last presentation, their 'worst case scenario' is incredibly conservative and not at all representative of what reality will certainly be.

While we completely understand that a response to these questions (which require input from a variety of players) will take some time, ***we would kindly request confirmation that this message was received.***

Many thanks,
Heather & Tom Lewis
17 Bens Way