



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners

Ed Burt, Chair
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December 9, 2022

To: Zoning Board

From: Tim Watson, Manger
Water & Sewer Departments

Subj: 75 Plain Street, Ground Water District Special Permit

Dear Board,

As 75 Plain Street proceeds with your Ground Water Protected District Special permit review, I thought I'd pass along some additional information, expanding upon my February 11, 2022 letter.

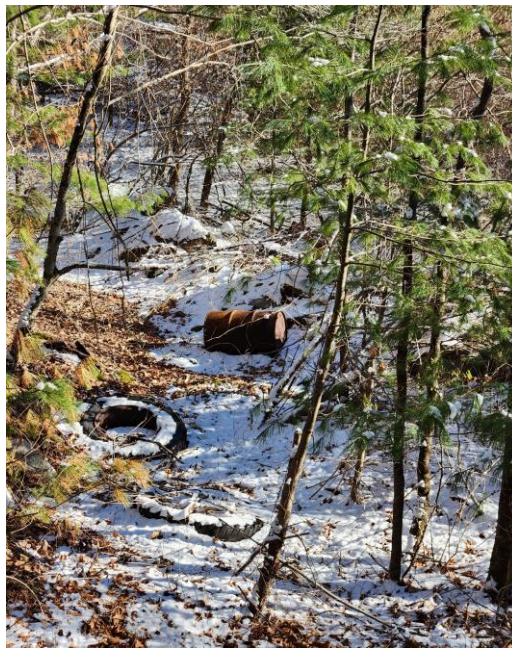
The site is a direct abutter to the Mill Street Well Field, approximately 300 feet from the property line to the closest well. The project addresses existing site issues, while also providing the Town with an opportunity to explore the area for a future new water source.

By addressing a number of existing site issues, I believe the project improves and strengthens the overall water protections, for the following reasons:

- Currently dozens of trucks that have been sitting on the site both inside and outside for years. These vehicles have been in place within the ground water protection area with no storm water protection system in place. There are also several abandoned trucks, barrels, engines, and cement mixing bodies on the property line near the Town's wellfield. These same type of materials along with precast forms, staging areas, metal sheds and parts litter the boundaries of the site. The developer has committed to cleaning up these areas.



The pictures below are on the boundary line of the Mill Street Well field.



- **Runoff:** the site is very expansive and consists of years of cement waste that has been crushed and spread out over vast area of the property. In the late 1920's, fly-ash was introduced into the cement process to enhance the strength of the concrete. Fly-Ash also has severe environmental impacts as it contains organic pollutants and toxic metals. With the site having no storm water management system in place, runoff at the site flows to the boundaries or outskirts of the property that have been filled with this material. This includes our wellfield. Water that does sit and puddle on the site slowly infiltrates into the ground. The effects of this are unknown but with a proper, regulated storm water system, with pretreatment and oversight, clean recharge into the ground water protection area will be maintained.



- Settling pond: for the concrete process, a settling basin or pond was created on the site. The contents of what is in this basin are unknown to me, but with a significant rain event, overflow into the ground water protection area is unavoidable. Obviously, this would be removed for site development. On my visit as you can see from below, these ponds were overflowing.



- Contamination: we all know of the reported contamination on the site while still being compliant is due to the conditions being pre-existing. This is a major concern and would be remediated if developed. If the current operations were to continue, remediation would not be required. We can also assume that additional areas have experienced some type of spills or contamination due to the past activities over the years on the site. The developer shared pictures of the current maintenance garage in one of their presentations. These photos were alarming and to think that those operations and truck repairs on site have been ongoing for over nine decades. This facility is scheduled for demolition if the project is approved, and all needed remediation will be required if issues are found. This is one of I believe four garages that will be removed, and the site cleaned up, along with the removal of the fuel pumps and tanks.



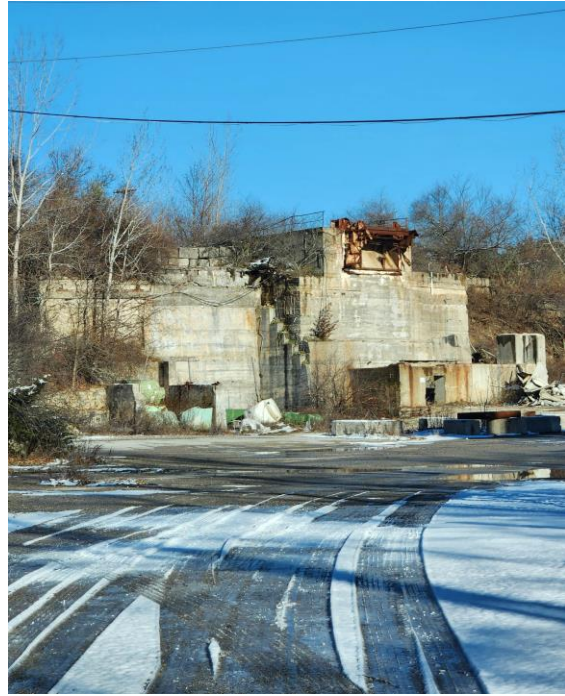
- Septic: the current facility houses a septic system or septic pits/holding tanks. On my site visit, one was simply covered with a thin steal plate that did not cover the entire opening. In most cases, issues with septic systems are almost never found or reported until the sale of a property. The new facility will include the connection to the Town's collection system and alleviate the need for septic tanks and systems in the Zone II. Additionally, the developer has committed to remove 4 gallons of I&I for every gallon of sewage put into the Town's sewer system—a benefit to all Hopedale users of the system.
- Above ground fuel tanks: beside the fuel pumps above, I saw no fewer than 3 additional above ground fuel tanks. One I believe was for heating fuel the others seem to be for filling equipment. None of these systems had the required spill berms or covers.



- Chemical Barrels: there are also dozens of poly chemical barrels on site. I have no idea what could have been in these barrels or if they were washed out prior to being dumped on the site. If they were rinsed out prior to being thrown out, where did they wash them out to.



- General Hazards: there are sections of the site that have over the years been demolished but the foundations remain. Some of these are pose a safety threat. The picture below has an approximate height of 30 feet with no fencing above which is at grade level. These hazards will also be removed according to the plans submitted.



- Water usage: as we are aware, certain types of water use is of great concern. Usage with high demands times such as morning or night become problematic for us. Consistent low usage is much more bearable. The facility proposed will only consist of bathrooms and a break room. I have also suggested to the developer to avoid the Town's water for irrigation, instead utilizing one of the many natural or man-made ponds.
- Naturally wooded areas: the proposed facility is being constructed on the same material as stated in the runoff sections of my comments. Removal and disposal of this material for clean gravel and fill for the foundation and parking construction will have a positive effect. The natural wooded areas of the site that provide the best filtration and recharge to the ground water will see very little disturbance.
- Future water exploration: the developer has also indicated that they would provide access to the Water Department for future water exploration on the far east/west portion of the property—towards the end of Rosenfeld Drive and the Mill River in an area that has not been disturbed by the gravel operations.

Regarding section 17 of the Zoning By-laws, I believe the plan to utilize greater than 15% of impervious service, in this specific situation, will not impact the ground water protection district negatively. In fact, due to the current site conditions and proposed placement of the facility it may actually improve the recharge from the removal and remediation of the compromised areas of disturbance. Thus providing greater wellhead protection and when constructed, bring the entire 145 acre site into modern compliance with local and state requirements as well as provide the Town with needed oversight of a Storm Water Management System that currently does not exist.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Tim Watson

