



TOWN OF HOPEDALE
Planning Board
TOWN HALL
78 HOPEDALE STREET
HOPEDALE, MA 01747

Stephen Chaplin Chairman
Kaplan Hasanoglu, Member
Jimmy Kohkar, Member
Michael Costanza, Member

**Hopedale Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom Video Conference
April 6, 2022**

Recorded meeting can be found on the Town of Hopedale website under meeting videos.
The continuation hearing was opened at 7:00 pm.

Members that were present:	Stephen Chaplin, Chair Kaplan Hasanoglu Michael Costanza Jimmy Kohkar
Interim Secretary:	Mary Arcudi
Applicants and Representatives:	Joe Antonellis, Doug Hartnett, William Buckley, Mark Wallace, Hilde Karpawich
Town Administrator:	Diana Schindler
Legal Counsel:	Jonathan Silverstein
Guests:	Colleen and Bryan Stone, Tim Watson, PF Butcher, Kenny Mitchell, Michelle Bird, Brian Poitras, Ann DeMattis, Ricardo Lima, Christine Howard, Jeanne Russell, Steve Zemanski, Rick Espanet, Lewis Family, Ashworth Family, Jason MacDonald, Mike Reynolds, Brian Pinch, Jacqueline Bart, Kastrinelis Family, Mike Ledone, Chris Parker, Carole Mullen, Mike Hyland, Rob Callahan, B Ferreira, Robin Pino, Mark Rizoli, Sara Pellegrini, Police Chief Mark Giovanella

Kaplan Hasanoglu made a motion to approve the minutes of March 23, 2022, seconded by Jimmy Kohkar. All were in favor.

Continuation of the Public Hearing for 75 Plain Street – Application from GFI for Site Plan Review

Stephen Chaplin opened the continuation hearing noting that this hearing will be a “citizen’s evening” regarding this site plan review at 75 Plain Street.

Attorney Joe Antonellis stated that this is meeting is for the residents to ask questions to the Planning Board members and the Board does not expect the applicant to respond. The application up to this point is complete and thorough and in compliance with all of the various subsections of Section 18 of the Site Plan Review. All evidence has been submitted. Any answers needed from the applicant will be addressed at the next meeting. Residents can review the documents and peer reviews that are available on the Planning Board webpage or the Town Clerk’s office.

Stephen Chaplin remarked that the meeting has over 30 members of the public, consistent with the number present for this warehouse project hearings and far in excess before the availability of zoom.

Public Comments

Michelle Bird, 15 Ben’s Way was concerned that certain reported information seemed watered down or downplayed. She contacted warehouses in the area regarding the number of emergency calls to local services and their numbers were higher than reported. In regards to section 18.5G in the zoning bylaws, noise will still have a negative affect even below or at the 37 decibels and diesel emissions are a well-known carcinogen exposing elderly and children at day care centers.

Traffic is still a concern as it will increase travel on the side streets and impact small roads with 18 wheelers. This area has stop and go traffic already heading towards Bellingham shopping area. It appears that the applicant did not consider the drivers of the trucks, their safety record or how they are paid. With these unanswered questions, she requested that the applicant consider supplying the tenant information.

Colleen Stone, 21 Ben's Way read a statement she had prepared. She believes this project does not meet the 18.5G zoning bylaws regarding that provides protection from undue disturbance. Noise, traffic and pollution will be a disturbance in an area surrounded by residential homes. She has concerns regarding the 24 hours of operations and the constraints on town services including town wells. Donations and promised tax revenue relief does not negate the massive detriment of this warehouse to the quality of life of residents in this area.

Heather Lewis, 17 Ben's Way also read a written statement. She has attended all meetings and did her own research regarding the undue disturbances this project will create. The size of the warehouse is excessive for the location, extreme number of trucks involved and is not the right fit. Residents who signed the petition agree it is not the right fit. The tax revenue is not a net revenue in her opinion and would not come to fruition for at least 2-3 years. The tax revenue will not lower current tax bills. She questioned why this location was chosen by the applicant as it is not right off the highway and is in need of significant clean up, and costly mitigation plans.

Mark Rizoli, 232 South Main Street discussed that the town did hire experts regarding noise and traffic and questioned the zoning and if a warehouse use is allowed in the zone. Stephen Chaplin clarified that the applicant did hire their own independent engineers and additional experts were hired to review those reports at the applicant's expense. These engineering reports were very thorough and their analysis held up in the review process. These reports are listed on the Planning Board webpage. Zoning is light industrial and the warehouse is allowable use. Due to the proximity to the wells at the Hopedale Country Club, the applicant needs the Ground Water Protection special permit which has been applied for with the Zoning Board of Appeals. At the 232 South Main Street location, Mr. Rizoli watches hundreds of trailer trucks travel by and believes the pollution for additional trucks would not be a drastic increased impact for this area. He is in favor of the project.

Rick Lima, 3 Whitney Road, Ben's Way, is in favor of this warehouse project and with the impending predicted override, the town does need the tax revenue this project will generate along with the building permit fees that will be paid. This town needs to grow and offer professional services such as a Town Planner and these additional fees would cover this funding. 6,000 residents in town, some are for this and some are against. The property needs to be cleaned up, removing contaminants and with proper management, this location will be greatly improved.

Rick Espanet, 50 Westcott Road, also agrees the tax revenue is needed and this project is properly zoned. The applicant has done their due diligence, answered all questions and concerns. This will be good for the town. This will also show other future applicants the process expected when other development projects are proposed. All sides have had an opportunity to share their concerns and be heard and a decision should be forthcoming.

Jason McDonald, 127 Mendon Street and the railroad and Cumberland Farms are his neighbors. The applicant is taking responsibility to mitigate and clean up the site. Pollution concerns are controlled by government agencies and electric vehicles will be used on site. Year after year the town budgets have been asked to be reduced by the town administrator so the additional tax revenue is needed. He is in favor of this project and feels the updating of the Plain Street intersection is a positive move.

Sara Kastrinelis, 7 Thayer Street, does not believe this project is fit for Hopedale citing noise, diesel and pollution concerns. She is concerned about the town's ability to manage this project in the future and what penalties or repercussions are in place when conditions are not enforced.

Robin Pino, 110 Plain Street, cited that this is not the first new industry to the town. The footprint will be the size of Wrentham Outlets and is asking if the size can be reduced as other warehouses in the surrounding area are smaller. She also asked if the conservation concerns had been addressed at the property. Stephen Chaplin said the Planning Board does have an open mind regarding this project. A smaller project had not been proposed and the Planning Board's job is to vet the project as presented and ensure that the project meets the criteria in the zoning bylaws. The board will either vote to approve with conditions or to not approve. Conservation Commission has been meeting with the applicant parallel to the Planning Board meetings as the Planning Board does not oversee wetlands.

Mike Reynolds, 209 Dutcher Street, is highly in favor. The project is zoned properly and the applicant will be a great partner with the town. This will benefit the town beyond the tax revenue. The property will be mitigated and the facility will be modernized.

Christine Howard, 2 Mellen Street, lives across the street from this proposed warehouse. She has listened to both sides. She believes the proposed warehouse is too large, too many truck trips will be generated and is concerned for the environment due to the diesel trucks and water concerns.

Ann DeMattia, 11 Richard Road, reviewed the mitigation factors in place. She cited that the sound study was too narrow and the light pollution was detrimental to the surrounding homes. In regards to the traffic, the mitigation plan solves one issue but creates issues for other neighborhoods. Employee traffic is not being controlled and will increase traffic. She questioned limiting the hours of operations. Abatements are not guaranteed to be granted to the tenants and this would delay tax revenue for up to ten years, before ever seeing tax dollars. The "Good Neighbor" plan does reflect what the actual corporation will be held to but not the tenant. There will certainly be more trucks and traffic. Her concerns regarding the hours of operation were addressed by Stephen Chaplin. If the board restricts the hours of operations and reduces them in any way, the applicant may not be able to solicit a tenant for the warehouse. It is a practical consideration, not a legal one. He also addressed her concerns regarding Neck Hill Road which is narrow and a shared road with Mendon and he also has apprehensions regarding how this road can be mitigated. Mike Costanza remarked that this road is similar to Bear Hill in Milford which is narrow and windy. Truck drivers would say away as it is not easy to drive on such roads.

Steve Zuromski, Richard Road mentioned his concerns that once the potential revenue is spent, the town would still have financial issues that would continue. Backup alarms cannot be controlled; traffic will be a nightmare and the proposed warehouse is enormous.

Christine Howard, Mellen Street stated that cars will use this area to cut through and the number of truck trailers has increased over the years.

Jeanne Russell, 13 Richard Road also commented on the increased trailer truck traffic and the concerns regarding vehicles cutting through Route 16 to Neck Hill Road area.

Mike Reynolds also commented that folks on this side of town are concerned regardless of where we live. More traffic was created from new developments over the years increasing the traffic on Dutcher Street for those heading to Route 495. Also, the cost of town services is outpacing current incoming revenue. Mike Costanza also remarked that the same issue will be on this side of town whenever the Draper facility has a project proposal in the future.

Denise Linder, 5 Overdale Parkway, understands the need for tax revenue but does not believe this is the right project. Air, noise, traffic and the size of the warehouse will dramatically change the quality of life that people appreciate in this town. A warehouse of this size is wrong for this site.

Mike Hyland, 124 Plain Street stated that although this property is zoned light industrial it is also surrounded by residences. The proposed new traffic light will cause backups and trucks idling in front of people's homes, waiting for the light change. He lives across the street from the ice rink and they are good neighbors. He stated that nearby residents will not be able to open your windows due to the noise level that is being considered. This will change everyone's quality of life. The size of the project is his major objection.

Adam DeMattis, 11 Richard Road commented that once this large warehouse is built, if the impacts or disruptions are different than what was anticipated, it would not be easy to correct. The warehouse would be there forever.

Chairman Stephen Chaplin thanked the participants and felt the questions and comments were very thoughtful creating a thorough proceeding. He also thanked the Planning Board members for taking the job seriously and thanked the applicant for their very professional presentations at every meeting.

Attorney Antonellis and the applicant agreed to continue the hearing to April 20, 2022.

Mike Costanza made a motion to continue the hearing to April 20, 2022 with approval from the applicant, seconded by Kaplan Hasanoglu. All were in favor.

The agenda for the April 20, 2022 will also include a new public hearing for Overdale Parkway, Hopedale Ridge subdivision which will begin at 7:15 pm. The applicant for 75 Plain Street will then complete their presentation with closing statements with evidence outlining their thoughts on the final decision and the Planning Board will then close the hearing moving into deliberations.

Kaplan Hasanoglu made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 pm, seconded by Jimmy Kohkar. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Arcudi
Planning Board Interim Secretary