



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
March 23, 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, Ken Cram, 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, Stephanie Thomas, Patrick Melle, Lewis Family, Ashworth Family, Matt Madden, Rich Anton, Jason MacDonald, Mike Reynolds, Brian Pinch, Jacqueline Bart, Kastrinelis Family

Kaplan Hasanoglu made a motion to approve the minutes of March 2, 2022, seconded by Jimmy Kohkar.
All were in favor.

Correspondences received by the Planning Board will be discussed during the continuation hearing.

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 wrap up the review of the traffic mitigation and sound study.

Attorney Joe Antonellis reviewed the status of the application and remarked that the review is continuously moving towards the final decision. The applicant has met with the Conservation Commission for their seventh meeting for the Notice of Intent with the project update and with the Zoning Board of Appeals for their ninth hearing whose sole jurisdiction is the special permit for the ground water protection district. Both boards are waiting for the Planning Board's decision to finalize their board's decision.

Mr. Antonellis reviewed the site plan process and noted the following:

- The site/Stormwater Peer review is complete which demonstrates compliance with site plan review regulations and DEP Stormwater Management Handbook.
- Special Permit Compliance review for Groundwater Protection District is complete and demonstrates compliance with the special permit review criteria through protection of the Town's groundwater resources. This is subject to final review by the ZBA.
- Traffic peer review is complete and project demonstrates compliance with appropriate mitigation through signalization of Plain Street/East Hartford Avenue and implementation of agreed mitigation measures.

- Sound peer review is complete and project demonstrates compliance with Mass DEP regulations by not exceeding 10dB noise level during quietest time period. Sound mitigations include earthen berms, sound walls/fences and “Good Neighbor” measures.
- Project and Community mitigations packages have been prepared and will be reviewed at this hearing.
- The applicant will prepare closing presentation for April 6, 2022.

Mr. Antonellis stated that mitigation packages are not unique in Hopedale as compared to other surrounding towns. There haven’t been any major projects where the Planning Board was actively involved since Pinecrest, Laurelwood and Harmony developments.

Ken Cram presented a review of the traffic mitigation and expressed appreciation that the Planning Board allowed him to work together with the Town’s peer traffic review done by MDM. The traffic mitigation work is expected to exceed \$750,000 in costs and has agreed to mitigate the traffic impacts as follows:

- Design, construct and install a new four-way traffic signal at the Plain Street/ Hartford Avenue intersection.
- Provide a permanent easement or grant a fee interest in the portion of the applicant’s real estate located at the south side of Plain Street and Hartford Avenue, necessary to allow for expansion of the Plain Street/Hartford Avenue intersection as shown on the conceptual design.
- Conduct a comprehensive traffic review for the purpose of securing a heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion designation to restrict truck traffic on Newton, Mellen and Warfield Street and Neck Hill Road.
- Develop and implement a Traffic Monitoring Program.
- Prepare a Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis for the intersection of Plain Street and South Main Street.

The applicant will also be maintaining an area for a bus stop near the site if the MWRTA service is ever extended to Hopedale.

Marc Wallace with Tech Environmental reviewed the sound mitigation that the applicant has agreed to in response to the Town’s peer review consultant. No additional sound analysis needs to be completed. The sound mitigation work is expected to exceed \$200,000 in cost and includes the following:

- Series of extensive landscaping, earthen berms, walls or fence to shield and abate the sound generated from the project to the closest residences on Plain, Newton and Mellen Streets. The same will be completed for the closest residences located off Neck Hill Road across the Mill River.
- “Good Neighbor” conditions agreed to in writing by the applicant.

Kaplan Hasanoglu requested a review of the “Good Neighbor” conditions and Mr. Antonellis reviewed this agreement that includes:

- Tenant to designate a person responsible for on-site compliance
- Post signage and require tenants to enforce anti-idling law
- Require all rooftop equipment to comply with DEP regulations
- Actively promote the use of white noise backup alarms to the extent permitted by law
- Provide on-site break room to minimize vehicle trips
- Prohibit refrigerated storage or trucks unless they can meet sound requirements of this decision
- Require dock/exterior doors to be closed when not in use
- Require tenants to train managers on efficient scheduling and load management
- Require the use of electric powered yard trucks during established quiet hours and provide charging stations for their use

Post signs and educate drivers on approved truck delivery routes and clearly designate site entrance and exit points
Prohibit any parking of vehicles on Plain Street and no overnight on-site
Prohibit any tenant installed speed bumps
Prohibit the use of “Jake Brakes” on Plain Street or anywhere in the facility except when required for life safety
Prohibit any alterations of buildings that would locate any additional dock doors on the Plain Street or Mill Rive sides of the building
Maintain site paved areas
Perform preventative maintenance of all rooftop equipment
Prohibit use of any exterior public address systems that are audible at the property

Mike Costanza reviewed the proximity of the closest neighbor to the proposed building is 900 feet and compared it to his home which is closer to the Draper facility and its recent demolition. He was barely bothered by the noise of this demolition. He inquired with the applicant about other projects where they implemented the “Good Neighbor” mitigation plan. Mr. Buckley stated this was something he derived from online and applied to other projects indirectly as they always try to be respective of the neighborhood areas.

Mr. Antonellis reviewed the building mitigation and presented the community mitigation package. The building mitigation includes the financial commitment of \$750,000 towards the redesign of the intersection of Plain and Hartford Avenue. It also includes continued studies to be done regarding the heavy commercial traffic, providing counts and analysis to limit traffic on the neighboring streets. Sound mitigation includes berms and walls, fencing, and extensive landscaping. Additional berms and walls will be added to mitigate the noise going in the direction of Neck Hill Road and Ben’s Way. The Community Mitigation Package was detailed as follow and was shared with Town Counsel:

- Construct the extension of an existing water line on Plain Street approximately 500 feet from an existing fire hydrant to the Town line of Hopedale and Mendon at the intersection of Plain Street and Hartford Avenue. This extension will be provided in conjunction with the construction of the intersection.
- Provide access easements in areas agreed to by the applicant and the Hopedale Water and Sewer Department to assist said department in accessing potential off-site well locations.
- Provide the sum of \$25,000 to the Town of Hopedale Department of Public Works to be used for any engineering and construction costs necessary to mitigate the pre-existing drainage concerns on Plain Street.
- Provide the sum of \$200,000 to the Hopedale Water and Sewer Department to be used for assistance regarding the costs and expenses associated with the Town’s new water tank.
- Provide the sum of \$238,500 to the Hopedale Water and Sewer Department for the purpose of implementing inflow and infiltration measures.
- Provide the sum of \$200,000 to the Town of Hopedale to be used, in its discretion, for upgrades, improvements or repairs to the Town’s existing parks and recreation areas.
- Provide the sum of \$200,000 to the Town of Hopedale to be used, in its discretion, for improvements or expansion of existing Town services.

The annual projected tax revenue is approximately \$1,004,000 and the building permit is estimated at \$750,000.

Board Comments

Kaplan Hasanoglu requested clarification on the extension of the water line on Plain Street and Mr. Antonellis reported that this was requested specifically by the Water and Sewer Department. This

is a safety issue for their employees and is an improvement for the Town. The applicant worked with Tim Watson and allowing the easements assists facilitation exploration of wells.

Mike Costanza questioned if the project begins and other water issues arise, would the applicant be covering those costs. Mr. Antonellis stated the costs are defined and the demand for water is very low for this project.

Kaplan Hasanoglu still had additional concerns about the air pollution even though any concerns would be handled by the existing standards in place. Marc Wallace reiterated that the air emissions standards have been stringently tightened as of March 7, 2022.

Stephen Chaplin did inquire with Graves Engineering regarding air quality peer reviews and they are rarely performed due to the DEP monitoring programs. The board discussed whether there was a need for further study regarding the air quality concerns and it was agreed that no further review is needed.

Public Comments

Rick Lima, 3 Whitney Road, remarked that not all residents are against this proposed warehouse. There are many who welcome this applicant and the tax revenue is important for our town finances along with the building permit fees which could assist in hiring a Town Planner. The community mitigation plan allows for major water and sewer improvements and money towards the park and fields which are lacking. As a police officer in town, there have not been any traffic concerns with large tractor trailer trucks in this area. This is an industrial zone and the applicant is also improving the intersection concerns.

Matt Madden, 12 Tiltson Street also agrees that this is a very good project for an underutilized site and improvements to the storm water. He also agrees the town needs the tax benefit.

Mike Reynolds, 209 Dutcher Street thanked the Planning Board and the developer for their diligence on this project and is also in favor of the warehouse at 75 Plain Street. The community mitigation goes a long way and is pleased with the modernization of the industrial area.

Mark Rizoli, 232 South Main Street has done some of his own research on this project and does not see any negative impact. He agrees with the modernization of the site, and believes it will bring jobs and income to the town.

Rick Espanet, 50 Westcott Road appreciates the due diligence of the applicant and their excellent presentation throughout the process. Rick asked that the funds for the parks and recreation be put into a fund that the Park Commission would handle directly.

Jeanne Russell, 13 Richard Road, has concerns regarding the warehouse operation 24 hours a day and is worried about the direct abutters to the project site.

Sarah Kastrinelis, 7 Thayer Street is an abutter and hears trucks already from Braun Transportation and is concerned with truck drivers ignoring the signs and driving through neighborhoods.

Jason MacDonald, 1 Mendon Street lives 15 feet away from the active train tracks and Cumberland Farms. He experiences very little disturbance from the railroad but does find Cumberland Farms to be an issue with car radios and loud customers in the parking lot. He has no concern with the air pollution from vehicles on Route 6. He finds the tax revenue to be an extreme need as a member of another board in town, where they experience cuts and constant review of the budget.

Mr. Ashworth, 32 Anthony Road continued the conversation regarding the traffic and the mitigation suggestions and wondered if there were additional mitigations that could be put in place for the morning commuters. Ken Cram replied that the applicant did look at this and since the intersection had recently been redone, no other mitigations were needed. There will be a monitoring program in place and if additional mitigations are needed when the site is occupied, the board will be notified.

Ann DeMattia, 11 Richard Road asked if the hours of operations will be limited. Stephen Chaplin stated that once the hearing is closed, the Planning Board will review this topic during deliberations and a formal decision will be made.

Mike Reynolds added that back in the day, families could play on Dutcher Street and that is not possible any more due to the developments added that added to the traffic.

Final comments from Mr. Antonellis included that once the Planning Board closes the hearing, there would be no further commentary as the board moves to deliberations and their final decision.

The Planning Board had a lengthy discussion regarding the possibility of having an in-person meeting. Zoom has increased the public participation tremendously. The Draper Room has a limited number of seats and not certain it can accommodate residents who may choose to attend. The High School auditorium is not set up for a zoom connection and the board is unaware if this facility is available. Legal Counsel, Jonathan Silverstein stated that if you cannot accommodate all residents who may want to attend, it is therefore not a good venue. The board agreed that the best option is to continue with the full zoom meeting for April 6, 2022.

Mike Costanza made a motion to continue the hearing to April 6, 2022 with approval from the applicant, seconded by Kaplan. All were in favor.

Kaplan made a motion to adjourn at 9:19 pm, seconded by Jimmy. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Arcudi
Planning Board Interim Secretary