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Planning & Zoning Department
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Development Review Board

CC: Applicant & Landowner

FROM: Alex Weinhagen, Director of Planning & Zoning

DATE: December 30, 2014

RE: Haystack Crossing Project – January 6 meeting items

At the December 2, 2014 meeting, you began the sketch plan review for the Haystack Crossing project proposed by Black Rock Construction. The Applicant presented the project, the public provided feedback, and there was some limited Board discussion. The review was continued to the January 6, 2015 meeting. I recommend the Board try to accomplish three objectives at the January 6 meeting: 1) Discuss and find consensus on the issue of locating a stormwater detention pond outside the village growth area; 2) Continue/complete discussion amongst Board members on the issues identified in the November 26, 2014 staff report; 3) Discuss municipal capacity issues and necessary phasing.

Infrastructure Outside Village Growth Area

This potential issue was noted in the November 26, 2014 staff report. The Town Attorney is working on a legal opinion, which I hope to have by the meeting. With that said, because our regulations don't specifically address this issue, I think the DRB's decision will primarily be based on your own interpretation of the regulations, past practices, and common sense. Other municipal planners that I polled indicated that the key was to consider if the infrastructure was allowed in the district in question. Based on my reading of the regulations and the Town Plan, I'm inclined to say that the proposed stormwater treatment area in this particular project is not an issue; however, Peter Erb is still unsure. Some relevant information and passages from the regulations:

1. Section 2.4.4 (Zoning) clearly prohibits the transfer of development density into or out of the Village Growth Area from/to other zoning districts, even for single parcels divided by a district line. Density in this context refers to residential dwelling units and non-residential uses (e.g., stores, churches, offices, etc.).

2. Residential and non-residential development are allowed in the Agricultural district (section 3.2, Zoning). We regularly permit development-related stormwater ponds in this district.

3. The project is proposed as Planned Unit Developments (PUD), and a comprehensive plan has been provided. Section 4.5.6 #6 (Zoning) reiterates that development densities cannot flow across district lines into or out of the Village Growth Area. However, it goes on to say that, "the location of greenspace and/or community facilities (per section 4.5.7) is not restricted." The applicant is not proposing that the stormwater infrastructure be considered greenspace or a community facility. With that said, this section clearly allows for some aspects of a development to be unrestricted with regard to the growth area district line boundaries.

4. Existing municipal infrastructure critical to Village Growth Area development is already located outside the growth area. The municipal wastewater treatment facility is located in the Agricultural district. Hinesburg's Official Map also shows possible future community facilities such as roads and trails extending outside of the Village Growth Area districts. In other words, even the Town itself is planning for additional infrastructure beyond the Village Growth Area in order to support development planned within the growth area. With that said, the Board need not set a larger precedent here. The Board simply needs to decide if a stormwater treatment area in the context of this particular subdivision and PUD can be located per the sketch plan.

Staff Report Issues

Please see the Applicant's revised sketch plan that places the western-most house lots fully within the Village Northwest district. Also, see the Applicant's responses to the November 26 staff report – embedded in another copy of the report. I recommend that the Board take some time at the January 6 meeting to discuss these and any other issues in open session without interruption or commentary the Applicant or other interested parties. Particular attention should be paid to the proposed mix of non-residential uses (commercial, light industrial, community greenspace, etc.) – issue #1 from the staff report. Of all the conceptual-level elements, this one is key to ensuring the community's vision for a vibrant, mixed use village area with opportunities not simply for housing and new retail/office space, but also to create space for business expansion and job growth.

Municipal Capacity & Phasing

Please see the comments we have received to date on municipal capacity and related issues.

- Town Administrator (2/3/2014) – from earlier application review, but still relevant
- Police Department (12/1/2014)
- Fire Department (12/29/2014)
- Trails Committee (11/29/2014)

Beyond these written comments, the Town Road Foreman shared the following comments with me. Some are pertinent for the sketch plan review, while others are more relevant for later review stages.

1. He feels the new public roads will require the Town to invest in a smaller scale plow truck to better handle village streets with narrower roads, on-street parking, tight intersections, etc.
2. He recommends that driveways be designed to be long enough to allow for storage of multiple vehicles to make on-street parking during snowplowing less likely. Longer driveways also make snow storage from the public roads and sidewalks easier.
3. He finds on-street parking problematic from the standpoint of winter maintenance/plowing.
4. He recommends sidewalks be designed to reduce conflict between road and sidewalk snowplowing (i.e., snow storage for both is key).
5. He favors street trees on the interior side of the streetscape – i.e., between the house and sidewalk rather than between the sidewalk and the road.

The Applicant's revised projection of project-generated school aged children was forwarded to the Chittenden South Supervisory Union (CSSU) for review and comment on December 15, 2014. CSSU staff indicated that they won't be able to respond until late January or February.

As noted in the November 26 staff report, this project will require phasing due in part to municipal water and sewer capacity limitations. The comments from the previous Town Administrator and the Fire Department raise additional municipal capacity issues that should also be considered in any phasing plan. The Applicant agrees with the need for phasing, and has offered to provide a detailed proposal as part of the next step in the subdivision review process (i.e., preliminary plat review). If the Board is inclined to approve the sketch plan, some discussion of key phase one components would be helpful, along with decision conditions to specify what types of preliminary plat submissions will be expected.