

Strafford Regional Planning Commission  
Regional Impact Committee  
150 Wakefield Street, Suite 12, Conference Room 1A  
Rochester NH 03867  
January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
11:30AM

## Minutes

RIC Members Present: Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Sandy Keans (Rochester), Tom Clark (Dover), Bill Connor (Somersworth)

RIC Members Absent: Edmund Jansen (Rollinsford)

Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (AICP, Executive Director), Matt Sullivan (Regional Planner), Sarah McGraw (Planning Technician)

Members of the Public: None.

The Development of Regional Impact review is pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 36:54. The purpose of this legislation is to:

- I. Provide timely notice to potentially affected municipalities concerning proposed developments, which are likely to have impacts beyond the boundaries of a single municipality.
- II. Provide opportunities for the Regional Planning Commission and the potentially affected municipalities to furnish timely input to the municipality having jurisdiction.
- III. Encourage the municipality having jurisdiction to consider the interests of other potentially effected municipalities.

### I. Regional Impact Review

*Case SRPC/RIC 2015-01; Tara Fields (John. J. Flatley Company) proposed 3-building, 144-Unit Apartment Complex, (Map 39, Lot 03 SITE #12-2014) with access from Tri-City Road.*

Regional Impact Committee member William Connor, of Somersworth, recused himself from the case and left the table.

In the absence of Chair Edmund Jansen, Vice-Chair Sandra Keans, of Rochester, opened the meeting at 11:40 am. Regional Planner Matt Sullivan reviewed the meeting materials, which were received from the City of Somersworth and the Applicant. M. Sullivan described the proposed project as a multifamily residential development (Tara Fields) adjacent to the existing Tara Meadows development. M. Sullivan stated the site triggered the regional impact review because the site extends into the Town of Rollinsford. The site connects to High Street (NH Route-9) via Tri-City Road. M. Sullivan added that currently there is no signalized intersection where Tri-City Road meets High Street. The proposed parcel is

approximately 18.5 acres in size and located on Lot 3, Tax Map Parcel 32. The area total project area is approximately 395,000 square feet and will result in an impervious area of 167,100 square feet.

## **Traffic-Access-Parking**

### *1. Will the development cause an increase in traffic that will diminish the capacity or safety of the street system in the adjacent town/city?*

M. Sullivan stated that the development is not expected to create a significant increase in traffic. Steven G. Pernaw & Co, the Applicant's traffic and parking consultants, completed a traffic study of the road and recommended the addition of a lane exiting onto High Street from Tri-City Road. M. Sullivan noted they did receive comments from Dover relevant to the study of timing of signal lights along High street to ensure safe entrance and exit of cars on to and from Tri City Road. Tom Clark, of Dover, asked if the Applicant had submitted information including level of service information relative to the High Street and Tri-City Road intersection. M. Sullivan stated the Applicant did not submit information on Level of Service.

T. Clark inquired as to the role of Committee in making recommendations to Somersworth Planning Board. C. Copeland stated that in the past the RIC would formulate a list of questions to pass along to the Planning Board. V. Parmele asked if the project had not been located in Rollinsford would it have been determined to be a development of regional impact. M. Sullivan stated that staff cannot make that determination. T. Clark noted that the RSA states that it is up to the community to make that determination.

M. Sullivan noted that a recommendation has been made to create two turning lanes onto High Street for safety concerns. M. Sullivan added the Applicant had not created a sidewalk to connect the development with the nearby school bus stop. There are several commercial locations that may be within walking distance, as well as a COAST bus stop. M. Sullivan recommended at least one sidewalk be constructed along the proposed driveway existing the site. T. Clark asked if each recommendation should be voted on individually. C. Copeland stated that the RIC can concur with the recommendations as they are review and vote to accept all at the end of the meeting. Sullivan said he will amend the recommendation to include addressing timing of signaling along High Street.

The RIC agreed to recommend the following:

- The development warrants the provision of two approach lanes on the Tri-City Road approach to High Street. This lane configuration will reduce delays and maximize the egress capacity of Tri-City Road. Additionally, it may help address potential safety concerns.
- The Applicant should provide a stand-alone sidewalk along the primary access way that will connect Tara Fields residents with nearby commercial/retail development, as well as access to school and public transportation bus stops in the vicinity as indicated on the Zoning and Transportation map.
- Signal timing along the High Street Corridor should be reviewed to mitigate safety concerns at the High Street Tri-City Rd. intersection

2. Will the development exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the adjacent town/city for designated roads or highways?

M. Sullivan informed the group that this project does not impact roads in adjacent communities. M. Sullivan noted that he will include a recommendation that includes a request for LOS information.

3. Will the development substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., construction, gravel operation equipment)?

M. Sullivan reviewed points addressed in CLD Consulting Engineer's engineering review. M. Sullivan said the Applicant has addressed concerns about the "proposed guardrail detail" not conforming to NHDOT standard details and "low K values for the vertical curves...due to the potential for sight distance concerns, the City and Applicant should agree to a posted speed limit" in its recent response letter. The final RIC recommendation letter will not include recommendations related to this item.

4. Will the development result in inadequate emergency access?

M. Sullivan stated emergency access information was not included in the site-plan packet received from the Applicant and City of Somersworth. The Applicant, in their recent CLD response letter, has included a reference to an auto-turn analysis. M. Sullivan said they did not receive the analysis. T. Clark said that the Applicant should conduct the analysis with the turning template for the largest piece of equipment that Somersworth currently uses. C. Copeland stated that other communities depend on other towns for "mutual aid", meaning that their largest apparatus should also be included. M. Sullivan confirmed he will include the recommendation that the Applicant includes the turning template for the largest piece of equipment Somersworth currently operates. T. Clark referred to NFPA-I (National Fire Protection Association) regulations stating that the minimum road width be 20-foot wide paved with year-round maintained access. T. Clark strongly suggested reviewing the emergency access issues with the Somersworth Fire Department. M. Sullivan stated that the current access route on the plan is 14 feet wide. T. Clark said the connectivity of the access routes and additional access routes are likely not adequate.

5. Will the development result in inadequate parking capacity?

*No discussion.*

6. Will the development conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation?

M. Sullivan stated that the crosswalk connecting the building to the clubhouse has been amended in the plans and suggested removing this recommendation. T. Clark recommended changing the Conservation Commission recommendation from "widening the access roadway pavement to at least 4 feet" to "by at least four feet." M. Sullivan stated that he would add that as a note. The plan states that there will be bicycle storage. T. Clark recommended clearly indicating lockable bicycle storage on the site plan.

SRPC concurs with the following recommendation:

The Memorandum dated December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from David E. Sharples Director of Planning and Community Development states: “SRTC recommends that the Planning Board consider the installation of a sidewalk on one side of Tri-City Road that connects the proposed driveway to High Street in accordance with our Site Plan Regulations. There was a discussion on an internal sidewalk at the SRTC and the Conservation Commission and this could be accomplished by widening the pavement in the roadway and providing a striped shoulder for pedestrians to access the site from the right of the way or a stand-alone sidewalk. There is a bus stop at the entrance to Tara Meadows, the existing multi-unit complex and it is possible that this would be the bus stop for any children in the new development so safe access should be provided to the stop and to the businesses and commercial centers in the area.”

M. Sullivan noted that there are not currently sidewalks connecting Tara Meadows to High Street. T. Clark asked if Tri-City Road was a private road. M. Sullivan stated that according to DOT roads data, it is a city road.

M. Sullivan suggested removing the Somersworth Conservation Commission recommendation because of the overlap with Dave Sharples’s recommendation. C. Copeland agreed.

M. Sullivan noted that he has spoken with the COAST director and in order for COAST to provide service, a signalized intersection may be important between Tri-City Road and High Street. However, the existing traffic recommendations may be sufficient.

S. Keans asked how COAST would turn around down the road. M. Sullivan was concerned with the exiting lanes obstructing sight-distance on High Street.

M. Sullivan said a Complete Streets project is part of the NHDOT Ten Year plan. He added this will go from Dover to Rochester along Route 108 and is expected to provide bike lanes.

## **Conflicts with Policies, Plans and Programs**

### **Noise:**

7. Will the development expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan, noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

M. Sullivan stated some parcels will likely be impacted by noise during construction. M. Sullivan noted conservation easements are located both north and south of the project. C. Copeland noted there are ATV trails along the power lines she was not aware of. M. Sullivan stated that RIC does not address impacts of recreational activities on the site. M. Sullivan said permission will need to be granted by the land owner to use the trails. There was a question about dates of construction. M. Sullivan noted that the plan indicates that no proposed blasting. If blasting is to occur, the Applicant should provide 48-hour notice to abutters before such activities are to occur.

8. Will the development expose persons to or generate excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?  
M. Sullivan said with no expected blasting, SPRC does not expected significant ground-borne vibration.
9. Will the development permanently increase ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above existing levels?  
M. Sullivan stated that he does not anticipate a permanent increase in ambient noise levels.
10. Will the development increase temporary or periodic ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above existing levels?  
M. Sullivan stated that there will likely be temporary noise due to construction.
11. Is the development located within an airport zone or within two miles of an airport or airfield, where the project would expose residents or employees in the project area to excessive noise levels?  
M. Sullivan noted that Skyhaven Airport is beyond two miles of the project site.

#### **Hazardous Materials or Substances:**

12. Will the development create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?  
M. Sullivan said the construction notes were well done related to disposal of hazardous material. M. Sullivan pointed out three water quality hazard sites (refer to Groundwater resources and Hazards map). M. Sullivan said he does anticipate impacts to the proposed project.
13. Will the development create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?  
No discussion.
- Will the development produce hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?  
No discussion.
14. Will the development be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled by the NH Department of Environmental Services and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No discussion.

#### **Ecology and Resources:**

15. Will the development have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

M. Sullivan noted that the NHB data check letter included with the materials does indicate records in the project area but does not anticipate any impact to them.

16. Will the development have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the NH Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

M Sullivan stated the Applicant provided a conditional use permit (CUP) for wetlands impacts caused by the installation of utilities and storm water basins. M. Sullivan noted that the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan (NHWAP) shows the project site to include Tier 3 habitat priority areas (Tier 3 refers to supporting landscape areas for proximate highest ranked habitat areas in New Hampshire). To the West of the project, there are 760 acres of un-fragmented land.

17. Will the development have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

M. Sullivan stated there were no federally protected wetlands and any on-site wetlands have been delineated. NWI data indicate that the southeast side of the property is within a wetland. M. Sullivan noted that their wetlands data concurred with Applicant's data. M. Sullivan added that the wetland buffer will be impacted as a result of construction and utility placement. The Applicant should also utilize available wetland crossings when and where possible.

18. Will the development interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

M. Sullivan stated the project will have minimal impact on the largest segment of unfragmented land.

19. Will the development conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a conservation easement, tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No discussion.

20. Will the development conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?

No discussion.

21. Will the development have a substantial adverse effect on Groundwater Quality?

M. Sullivan stated that the Applicant has applied for an alteration of terrain (AOT) permit.

M. Sullivan stated the Applicant should address the protection of aquifer resources in the plan. V. Parmele asked if information was provided about aquifers. M. Sullivan replied that such information was not provided by the applicant.

22. Will the development have a substantial adverse effect on Air Quality?

M. Sullivan stated there are no anticipated adverse effects on air quality. SRPC does recommend the utilization of green infrastructure where and possible.

**Hazards-Public Health and Safety:**

Will the development expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides or flooding?

No discussion.

23. Will the development result in soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

M. Sullivan stated that the CLD recommendations may be removed as addressed by the Applicant.

24. Will the development be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

No discussion.

25. Will the development be located on soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

M. Sullivan read a statement from Dave Sharples addressing a review from Underwood Engineers about the capacity of wastewater treatment. The Committee was comfortable with including this in the final technical report.

**Facilities:**

26. Will the development require new or expanded public facilities or services in the adjacent municipality in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance standards for any of the following public services?

No discussion.

27. Will the development cause an increase in new or expanded utilities, treatment facilities, storm water, water supplies, etc., that would result in a negative financial or environmental impact to the adjacent municipality?

M. Sullivan stated that a negative impact is not anticipated but addressed the storm water basins in Rollinsford. Rollinsford Planning Board has already who provided conditional site plan approval. Rollinsford also granted a waiver for a high intensity soil survey on site. M. Sullivan said CLD will submit a letter to the Rollinsford Planning Board following a favorable review of the application.

### Scenic and Visual Character:

28. Will the development convert Prime Farmland to non-agricultural use?

V. Parmele inquired as to the presence of prime farmland soils on the site. M. Sullivan said there was no high intensity soil survey completed. NRCS soil data did not indicate prime farm soils. See the prime farmland map for more information.

29. Will the development conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use?

No discussion.

30. Will the development involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

No discussion.

31. Will the development have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

M. Sullivan stated the proposed project would impact the un-fragmented area but no substantial impact.

32. Will the development substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No discussion.

33. Will the development substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

No discussion.

34. Will the development create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

T. Clark asked if Somersworth site plan regulations require the submission of a photometric plan. M. Sullivan confirmed Somersworth did not require a photometric plan.

SRPC concurs with the following recommendations and notes from CLD's Engineering Review that would allow for a more accurate determination on Question 36:

- Complete interior parking lot calculations were not provided
- We strongly recommend that the lighting layout be revisited. The current layout is designed with many "dark areas", one located at the exact location pedestrians are likely to cut through the parking areas to access the sidewalk adjacent to the buildings.

V. Parmele asked whether a landscaping plan was included. T. Clark said landscaping is within the Somersworth Planning Board's jurisdiction, not the Regional Impact Committee's. M. Sullivan presented the landscaping plan and noted there are no anticipated impacts to the adjacent community.

35. Will the development conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation including, but not limited to the master plan or zoning ordinance?

M. Sullivan noted that the Applicant went before the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the project was granted a variance for this use.

### **Housing and Population Growth:**

36. Will the development induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

M. Sullivan said the project could increase the census tract population by as much as 5%. C. Copeland added that the figures presented in the fiscal analysis appeared to be inadequate.

37. Will the development displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No discussion.

38. Will the development displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No discussion.

39. Is the development compatible with existing or planned cross border development?

M. Sullivan said Rollinsford has provided conditional site plan approval and waiver relative to high intensity soil survey.

*T. Clark made the motion that the Regional Impact Committee endorses the recommendations made in the technical review, second from V. Parmele. VOTE: Unanimous*

## **2. Citizens Forum**

There were no members of the public present to make public comment.

## **3. Meeting Adjournment**

*T. Clark motioned to adjourned, second by S. Keans. VOTE: Unanimous*

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah McGraw

Planning Technician