



Amesbury Technical Review Committee
February 5, 2025

City Hall Auditorium
62 Friend St.
9:30 am

In attendance: Chief Bailey, Robert Serino, Nipun Jain, Lisa DeMeo, Lauren Blatchford
Jim Wilson, Nick Cracknell, Howard Snyder, Amanda Armington, and Becky Frey
Absent: Joe Buckley and Chief Nolan

Chief Bailey called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

Project Review:

1. Rocky Hill Development

TJ Melvin from Millenium provided a brief overview of the project. The proposal is for approximately 380 mixed units spread out over the site. The development will be divided into a southern neighborhood and a northern neighborhood. The main boulevard will consist of 14-foot one way travel ways, 6-foot planting strips, and 5-foot sidewalks. There will also be room for parallel parking on the street. There will be a secondary main road to northern neighborhood. The street ends in a cul-de-sac with adequate access for a firetruck to turnaround. There will be 22-foot-wide secondary two-way streets off the main boulevard. The utilities will come off Elm St. and there will be a 10-inch water and 10-inch sewer stubbed on the property. During initial discussions with the City there appeared to be capacity. They can do a flow test and have a meeting offline to discuss fire hydrant locations. They also believe that the sewer capacity was partially resolved with the Lake Gardner repair. They will evaluate the capacity. The soils are not great for storm water management. There will be larger infiltration basins and detention basins on site.

Lisa DeMeo commented that they can reach out to DPW to go over utilities offline and questioned if they got the certificate for the DEIR.

Jeff Dirk commented that the proposal is similar to what was filed in the comprehensive transportation impact assessment with the EIR. They worked with the city to identify parameters and initial thoughts on needs. The city, regional planning, and Mass DOT have all commented on it. The state has commented that the project is moving in the right direction. They assessed to see if a lefthand turn lane was needed for access into the property and determined it was not necessary. Most of the traffic will be coming and going to and from Route 110. Cars will be taking lefts out of the development and rights into the development. They will install a flashing beacon at the driveway to make sure there is a safe crossway. They will upgrade the crosswalk with an RFFB. The movements in the intersections are operating at or above the design today and they are mindful of safety and pedestrians. There will be connections to trails and they are



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extending it to get safely across Route 110 to the river. They have been looking at improvements to the two high crash locations at the Rabbit Road and Route 110 intersection and the Elm St/Clarks Road Route 110 intersection. There needs to be safety improvements before adding traffic to them. Their consultant will be doing a road safety audit and OCED, DPW, and the police should be contacted to coordinate with that. The road safety audit needs to be completed before the next filing. They will identify which measures the applicant will be undertaking as part of the project. They are in the data collection process now. They will be looking at the safety and capacity. They agreed to undertake some physical infrastructure improvements and general operating conditions such as re-timing lights and adjusting the coordination. Right now, the Carriagetown Marketplace is coordinated with Elm St., but it is not coordinated with Rabbit Road because it is too far away. They are envisioning that at some point the exit ramps will be signalized and if that happens, then light coordination would be possible. The capacity improvement would be possible if they reconstruct the Elm St./Clarks Rd intersection. Currently there are issues with queuing and capacity. The westbound side of Route 110 can queue to the point that it blocks the off ramp from I-95 and the on ramp to I-95 southbound. They need to pull traffic from the ramps. They are proposing to widen Route 110 to allow for travel lanes specifically in the westbound section. That added capacity will allow for retiming traffic signals and additional time for the Elm St. approach.

Lisa DeMeo questioned if there was a capacity issue, then why were they proposing to reduce a lane. Jeff Dirk responded that they would be adding a third lane on the westbound approach. Once cars are past the intersection, then the lanes will need to go from 3 back to 2 by the carriage town marketplace.

Jeff Dirk commented that the additional westbound lane will be extended back to the highway which would allow for a left turn movement onto the highway ramp. It won't block the lane. This interchange needs improvements larger than this project can accommodate. An interchange improvement study was included in the EIR and shows options for a roundabout or traffic signals. The intent is to provide clarity on an alternate that would allow for it to be put on the TIP or into a grant application. They show how the Elm St. improvements tie into future interchange improvements. Alternate modes of transportation are also included in the transportation improvement program. There is a required traffic monitoring program subject to the EIR to make sure they are staying in the bounds of the estimated impacts. They need to be within 10% of the trip estimates and consistent with what they estimated, and the crash rates have hopefully improved on. The monitoring program will identify if corrective measures are needed.



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Lisa DeMeo requested that they send her the comments from DOT. Jeff Dirk confirmed he would send them as well as the comments from the regional planning agency.

Nipun Jain questioned if the road widening would be on private property. Jeff Dirk responded that the state has a large right of way in that area, and they would be doing it in the right of way.

TJ Melvin commented that they have looked at adding a secondary access to the northern neighborhood out of the Amesbury Animal Hospital for police and fire. Rob Serino questioned if there was any intention to bridge the gap from the Amesbury Animal Hospital to the development. TJ Melvin responded that they modified the plan from the original layout. Bob Dale commented that they had an existing easement. Rob Serino commented that they should think about putting in direct access over the storm water to get to the neighborhood. It is not really a secondary access because they still need to use the main access to get to it. TJ Melvin clarified that they were proposing a completely separate access. They will provide full turning templates through the entire site.

Chief Nolan questioned what kind of material the roadway would be. TJ Melvin responded that they were proposing gravel, not full pavement.

Rob Serino commented that it should be paved. The gravel will be harder to maintain. TJ Melvin responded that they were trying to minimize the disturbance but can look at porous pavement. Rob Serino commented that it needs to be something that can and will be maintained.

Jeremy Lake from Union Studios commented that the southern neighborhood will have town houses and single family attached housing. The homes will be 2-2.5 stories with parking. The neighborhood will have common green areas for storm water and community gathering. There will be community buildings like a recreation building and leasing and management office toward the center. The northern neighborhood are multifamily stacked duplexes with 6-10 units. There will be two conventional multifamily 28-unit buildings that will likely be 4 stories. The northern neighborhood still has green spaces. The goal is to have doors approaching out to the streets. The parking will be a combination of street parallel parking and parking behind most buildings.

Chief Nolan questioned what they would do for trash management. Jeremy Lake responded that they have identified locations for common dumpsters in the northern neighborhood. The southern neighborhood would most likely be individual barrels.



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Nick Cracknell questioned if they anticipated it would be private collection. Jeremy Lake confirmed that was correct. Nick Cracknell questioned if they had determined the ownership for the infrastructure. Jeremy Lake responded that they have not determined that. Lisa DeMeo responded that if it's a public street, then the street parking would not count toward parking calculations.

Howard Snyder commented that the vista terminations do not match the renderings with the plan changes, so there will need to be some coordination between the vision and the plan. The parking islands on the edge of the northern neighborhood may not be necessary because they have buffers. They could add parking there and remove the parking that is closer to the building. If the units are rentals, then people will be moving in and out a lot. It would be good to create a 5-foot walking path to get out to the parking area. Parking island trees do not survive well, so they will need more air and resources to survive better. Jeremy Lake confirmed they would look to invert the parking and create walkability in the front and with a canopy.

Nipun Jain commented that the EIR talks about using alternative modes of transportation. It would be helpful to have a layout to show how the open spaces are connected to the trail networks and sidewalks to offsite areas. That will make it clear how the neighborhoods connect. Jeremy Lake confirmed they would make it clear.

Nick Cracknell commented that he appreciated the widened parking lanes. They should look at making the sidewalks on the main road slightly wider given the volume of pedestrian traffic. The median strips should be wide enough to support the landscape that would be installed. Nick Cracknell agreed with Howard Snyder's comments on the terminal vista coordination. They should continue to look at the secondary access. It is understood they do not have site control for that drainage area. The easement applies to the first section of the pavement at the animal hospital. It would probably be more convenient to not do all of the turns and look if there is another way to connect to the neighborhood without snaking over to the right. Nick Cracknell agreed with the fire department that it needs to be a more permanent surface. There is a 500-sf wetland direct impact associated with that. If it is paved, then the impact could increase for a conservation impact. They should be thinking about some traffic calming at the crosswalks on the main street. At a minimum they should put in textured crosswalks. There should be some visitor parking at the civic campus even if it's a private way. The trail network is really important for traffic and to make it a great site. The community campus should have a drop off area and shared parking. The civic campus needs to be really strong as a connector between the neighborhoods.



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Rob Serino questioned if they thought water would be an issue for domestic and fire flow. A lot of the buildings will need to be sprinkled. Lisa DeMeo commented that she did not have an answer to that. TJ Melvin confirmed that they were still working on it. It was their understanding that it was adequate, but they were willing to do flow tests to prove it. Rob Serino commented that a 10-inch main should be acceptable for most of it, but they will need to confirm capacity.

Chief Nolan questioned if they would be using a loop system for the water. TJ Melvin responded that they were not at that design level yet. Chief Nolan questioned what the width of the street was. TJ Melvin responded that the boulevard would have 14-foot travel lanes on either side of an 8 foot island.

Nipun Jain questioned if they only did the test pits shown on plan. TJ Melvin responded that they did some along the roadway as well to test for ledge. They did them in all of the proposed storm water areas as well.

Lisa DeMeo commented that they could create an access from the roundabout to the secondary access. TJ Melvin commented that they could look at it.

Jim Wilson commented that Nipun Jain brought up a good point about the test pits. They should do more on the site. TJ Melvin commented that they mostly focused on the storm water areas. They did enough to meet requirements for the EIR. They did 35 through the roadway about a week or two ago and can send the results.

Nipun Jain questioned if they had a lay out for the catch basins and sub surface treatment at all. TJ Melvin responded that they did not yet because they wanted to get feedback first. They may be able to get the entire development on gravity sewer.

Rob Serino questioned if they knew which neighborhood they would build first. Bob Dale responded that they would build both neighborhoods simultaneously. One will be home ownership and the other one rental units. They will need to build all of the offsite infrastructure and the road before any neighborhood development. They have not thought about which will be occupied first. Rob Serino commented that he was just thinking about fire access during the construction phase. They will need to discuss that closer to that point.

Chief Nolan commented that they will need to coordinate on knox boxes. The southern neighborhood will be harder to manage access unless the HOA requires a certain lock.



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Lisa DeMeo commented that they will need to coordinate the storm water phasing during construction as well. TJ Melvin commented that the main boulevard will need to be fully constructed before the construction entrance and side streets from there. Nipun Jain commented that for a large period of time the boulevard will have a binder course. Lisa DeMeo commented that they will need to be aware of tracking anything out to Elm St.

Nipun Jain questioned if the development team had any questions for the TRC. TJ Melvin responded that they would reach out to individual departments to finalize some things.

Chris Lucas commented that they addressed a lot of the wetland issues in the EIR. Amanda Armington commented that some of the trails are in proximity of the river. They should consider getting a waiver for work in that area and include any slope work plans. They should also include a map with anything from Natural Heritage for Endangered Species. Chris Lucas responded that they did not see any endangered species in that area. Amanda Armington noted that they should confirm that and send the letter from NHESP confirming that.

Nick Cracknell questioned if there were significant concerns about putting down pavement on the secondary access. Obviously, less is more but there are competing objectives. Amanda Armington responded that it would be good to see an impact report on the difference between gravel and pavement to show the Commissioners.

Nick Cracknell commented that the development team and departments should work to ensure that any individual conversations are relayed to the larger group, so everyone is on the same page.

Comment Review:

1. Meadowbrook Solar Project – [Site Plan](#) and [Special Permit](#)

Nick Cracknell provided an update. The Meadowbrook project is on the Planning Board agenda for Monday to open their public hearing. Bill 2024-096 will also be on the agenda for a continued discussion on the REDD amendments that was filed in July. They have been working under the assumption that this is under the dover amendment and provided substantial protections for solar facilities located anywhere in MA. They can only regulate under a site plan review and can't unreasonably regulate them. They wrote the zoning amendment with input from the solar developer to strengthen the



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performance standards. They have an interconnection permit. The applicants decided to file their project before the zoning amendment process was over. The Planning Board did a completeness check, and requested additional information at their 1/13/25 meeting. Staff is bringing a list of peer review options to the Board for their March 10th meeting. They are going to prepare an ecological report and a peer reviewer will look at it. They will peer review the Storm water, ecological, and environmental aspect, and the battery storage.

Rob Serino commented that he could provide a list of peer reviewers for the battery storage piece.

Becky Frey commented that each department should submit their comments to her by Friday.

Chief Nolan commented that this could have an impact on New Hampshire as well if anything impacted the water supply.

Nick Cracknell commented that it would be good to get comments from the water treatment plant as well.

Administrative:

1. Minutes 12-18-24; 1-8-25; 1-22-25

Rob Serino motioned to only review electronic versions of the minutes. Seconded by Lisa DeMeo. The motion passed unanimously.

General Communications:

Lisa DeMeo motioned to adjourn at 11:09 am. Seconded by Rob Serino. The motion passed unanimously.