



LANCASTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (EDC)
Meeting Minutes
Of Wednesday, October 13, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm.

Available by Zoom, Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88459983583?pwd=dTZHSmFmZzFyYWZzLzUybi8rVzNaQT09>

Meeting ID: 884 5998 3583

Passcode: 497613

Meeting material links: See Meeting Material Directory on the Economic Development Web Page, Oct 13 meeting folder

TRAFFIC_TIAS_full_rpt_rev 20210728.pdf

TRAFFIC_TIAS_Slides-Presentation 4-22-2021_prelim.pdf

TRAFFIC_peer_Review_report 09.07.21.pdf

Phil read guidelines for meeting and said that the meeting was being recorded.

Roll call taken. Present: George Frantz, Phil Eugene, Joe D'Eramo, Rebecca Young Jones, Lenay Yorke, Roy Mirabito. Glenn Fratto was not present.

II. REVIEW MINUTES – NONE

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Vanasse & Associates, Inc, (Jeffrey Dirk) presented a Traffic Peer Report, regarding the Traffic report presented Proposed (by Capital Group LLC) for the development in North Lancaster.

IV. DISCUSSION BY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, AND
V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Roy had questions about the traffic operations analysis and statements in the report talking about intersections being at capacity. Jeff explained that it's not all intersections, some of

this is future, some of it is with or without the project, and that the timing of improvements by the State will be crucial, and monitoring is key.

Amy Facendola asked who pays for improvements needed as a result of monitoring, and has the impact of the soccer fields been considered. Jeff explained that the developer pays for monitoring, copies go to the State, the Town, and the developer, and if the results show that improvements are needed the developer would pay; this might be done by invoicing the developer or establishing an escrow fund. The soccer field traffic has been estimated in the report.

Cara Sanford thinks that existing conditions are changing because of other new development, i.e., new warehouse in Lunenburg by GFI Partners, Boy Scout property development, and others.

Ladd Lavalley, 40 Fire Road 10, questioned the applicant's trip generation numbers. Jeff said that standards have been very recently updated, and that's one of the reasons they've recommended a 24-hour profile. Jeff said that he agreed with Ladd's questions and are looking forward to feedback from the applicant.

Nick Facendola had questions on the trip generation calculation numbers as well as comments as to whether this project should be looked at as warehousing facility versus the current classification of industrial park. Jeff said that's probably appropriate if you don't know the end user, but with a strong monitoring program, the industrial park development in this case is probably stronger and the numbers would estimate higher traffic volume. Nick also questioned why current trip traffic / truck trips from the sand and gravel operations is not included in the calculations; he thinks the number shown for current truck trips is too high. Jeff will take a look at this and follow up.

Andrew Z. is concerned about the applicant being able to change the timing on the lights to correct for traffic. Jeff explained common practices and how this is connected to the monitoring program.

Greg DeBono wanted to know if the Fire Chief and the Police Chief have been consulted as to how the increased traffic will impact their ability to serve the community. Jeff explained that typically they are asked to comment. Phil noted that this will be part of the financial impact discussion at the next meeting.

Karen Cavaiolli is concerned with noise from 24-hour traffic and with light pollution, with overnight truck parking without sanitary facilities. She is also concerned with large amounts of blacktop over a sensitive aquifer and abutting Conservation areas. She asked how a community protects itself from "racket" all night long. Jeff said this was a little beyond his area of expertise, but many large warehouse projects have noise studies done. Phil said one point of information is that this will be a two-shift rather than a three-shift project. He will find this information and put it on the website.

Joe D'Eramo talked about the length of time it takes truckers to offload. He asked if while

this happens if drivers typically leave the site, creating more traffic, or stay in place. Jeff said that in the plans there is a lot of trailer parking, so typically a driver drops one trailer and picks up an empty one and leaves. Generally they don't leave without a trailer or wait for a particular trailer to be emptied.

Kathy Hughes observed that JB Hunt has 11,800 square feet and are generating about 380 trips but this warehouse, much larger, will create about the same, saying this does not make sense. She is concerned about mitigation and the traffic volume increase. She is concerned that we wait until traffic is bad before doing mitigation. She also thinks one road should not handle all the traffic, and that traffic is already bad. Jeff said mitigation will include additional lanes as well as traffic lights, some by the State and some by the developer. Jeff said that a pedestrian crossing needs to be addressed as well. The lights will create some artificial gaps in traffic, breaking up the traffic flow. Jeff also said that truck traffic is not heaviest during heavy commuter traffic because truckers don't want to get stuck in that traffic. Kathy also asked Jeff to comment on the roundabout. Jeff said it's not ideal and as the level of truck traffic increases you don't want them going over the center hub.

Justin Smith is concerned about school bus routes on Route 70 because this will increase bus travel times. He wants to know if this has been evaluated. Jeff said that this is not addressed in the traffic study report and unfortunately would be something that the School Department needed to look at. This might be a question for RKG in terms of financial impact. Justin also asked about the safety of the bridge over Route 2. Jeff said that the bridge belongs to the Department of Transportation, and that the state has made progress with bridge repairs but he is unaware of plans for replacement. Jeff will follow up to find a status.

Rebecca had personal observations; there are no good passing lanes now on Route 70, and the truck particulate is heavy from trucks driving now on Route 70. Jeff explained that the State's intention is to provide turning lanes at lights but that due to the high speed nature of the road, not to add passing lanes which would increase speed. He noted that truck emissions is out of his area of expertise. Phil noted the Board of Health will be installing emissions sensors.

Victoria Petracca commented, thanking the EDC for commissioning the Peer Review Traffic Study. She wanted to be sure that Jeff had the most recent plans showing the 40R development dated 9/24/21; if not, it is available on the Affordable Housing Trust's website. She noted that the study mentioned that retail was shown as dry goods only, but that restaurant usage was allowed in the proposal.

George Frantz said he was pleased with the comments offered tonight. He looked at the proposed sites for air monitoring, and finds it odd that five sites are on Main Street but only two in North Lancaster. He suggests this should be modified.

Rob Zidek, 103 Kaleva Road, stated that the crash data omitted some recent incidents, giving dates and descriptions. Because of this he thinks the entire data set should be scrubbed. He also would like an estimate of the projected increase in accidents with more traffic. He also would like a pedestrian safety assessment to be undertaken, preferably as a

separate report. He recommends slowing the traffic at McGovern and Lunenburg. He also would like the study to be expanded out beyond seven years; he believes that further than this traffic will reach saturation. He would like to see mitigation ideas listed. Rob has submitted a 537 page document that he does not believe has been reviewed. Jeff explained that seven years was a standard for traffic assessments, unless there is a phased buildout. Phil asked Jeff how pedestrian safety is handled. The applicant will be providing sidewalks and bicycle lanes; Vannasse has asked the applicant to expand on the explanation of this.

Alix Turner, speaking for Frank Streeter, asked if there was any metric published that calculated the maintenance cost per car trip or per truck trip per mile. Jeff explained that lifecycle costs are typically built into the financial analysis, not as part of the traffic study.

Ed Pearlman brought up concerns about the Route 2 Exit offramp, saying it needs attention now, even before more development. Jeff explained that this is an outstanding item and his report asks the applicant to address this, whether it's managed by the State or by the developer.

Anne Ogilvie, 4 Turner Lane, wants to drive home that Route 70 is the only artery for much of North Lancaster. She asked for an explanation of next steps in the traffic study, and exactly who will communicate this to the developer and to residents. She said that there are many flaws in the report, and wants to know how the EDC will address residents' concerns. She wants to know if the plan will be thrown out and redone based on new plans per earlier comments by Victoria Petracca. Phil said questions, suggestions and changes will be given as feedback to the developer and he will have to come up with a full new traffic analysis as part of the MEPA process. Phil will be talking to Vanasse and will discuss how to give feedback to the developer.

Victoria Petracca (illegible) asked that Vanasse provide documentation that they can use... also, MART (Montachusett Area Regional Transit) has confirmed that they could extend transportation to this project in two separate stops. She wanted to make sure that Vanasse was aware of this. Jeff believes this is addressed in the study; he notes that this certainly is a benefit.

Ladd Lavallee said when a truck is making a pickup or a delivery, it is by appointment. Trucks do not want to get stuck in traffic or to violate DOT hours allowed on the road. He noted that trucks often get as close as possible to their destination and park, idling, there for the night, with no bathroom facilities. Jeff has not experienced this, although he understands the concerns about inadequate parking. He suggests that it comes down to regulating.

George Frantz reminded attendees that the Select Board is going to schedule open meetings with the Capital Group.

Rebecca said wear and tear on Route 70 will be significant, questioning if the Town gets paid annually for road use. Phil said this is a good question for the DPW.

Cara had a question for Jeff, asking if the scope of the study looks at increased traffic on

Route 117 through Bolton to Route 495. Jeff said yes, the study does look at traffic in different directions outside of the study area.

Rob Zidek noted all the answers have to do with the physical scope of the project and the seven year timeline, asking if the Town should hire a group like TEC or Vanasse to look at a broader scope for the Town. He notes that the backup on Route 2 westbound is backed up at Exit 103, so will people exit at an earlier exit (Shirley) adding traffic to Old Union Turnpike. Jeff said the dynamics of the human factor are always difficult to predict, but the goal is to fix the problem rather than creating diversions.

Rebecca said it's not a human factor; her GPS already routes her the shortest way, so this will be an issue.

Kathy Hughes asked when Jeff expected a response from the Capital Group, and in his opinion, would he expect a project of this size to have more than one roadway. Jeff said yes, this was shown on the plans. Kathy said this was more of a driveway, but not an access road. He said that in terms of a response, 2-3 weeks was typical.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

George moved to adjourn; several seconds were heard. George, Aye; Roy, Aye; Joe, Aye; Rebecca, Aye; Lenay, Aye; Phil Aye. Meeting adjourned at 9:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Doiron

Phil Eugene, Chair
Approved and accepted: