

TOWN OF HOLLISTON
SELECT BOARD

March 29, 2021
6:30PM

Town Hall
703 Washington Street

Present: John Cronin, Chair; Tina Hein, Vice Chair; Ben Sparrell, Clerk.

Also Present: Travis Ahern, Town Administrator; Michael Cassidy, Fire Chief, Frank Petkunas, CRG Representative; Peter Bemis, Bemis Engineering; Scott Thornton, Vanasse Associates (traffic engineer); Robert Michaud, MDM (Town's traffic engineer); and Richard (Chip) Nylen, CRG Counsel; Jay Talerman, Town Counsel and Jon Delli Priscolli, owner of 555 Hopping Brook.

6:30pm J. Cronin called the meeting to order.

COVID 19 UPDATE:

Chief Cassidy began his weekly Covid 19 update by stating there are 21 addition cases since last week bringing the total of cases up to 713. There are currently 22 active cases throughout 18 addresses. Holliston remains Yellow with a positivity rate of 2.48%. There has been a slight increase in the States hospitalizations. The average age of new diagnosed individuals is 35 and those currently hospitalized is 63 years of age. Holliston now has 34.1% of its residents which have been partially vaccinated and 17.6% fully vaccinated. Thanks to the efforts of the Senior Center 95% of residents 75 and older have been fully vaccinated. The Chief concluded his update by encouraging residents to preregister through the State website if they have not done so already.

CARES ACT PROGRAMMATIC UPDATE:

Chief Cassidy presented a graphic outlining the expenses funded by the CARES Act now totaling \$718,969. He presented 2 requests for CARES Act funding. The Facilities Manager is looking to purchase 8 air purifiers for the Senior Center in the amount of \$1,996.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the purchase of 8 air purifiers for the Senior Center by the Facilities Manager in the amount of \$1,996 to be funded by the CARES Act. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

The Park & Rec Department would like to purchase an electro static sprayer to be used for cleaning at Stoddard Park in the amount of \$700.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the purchase of an electro static sprayer to be used for cleaning at Stoddard Park by the Park & Rec Department in the amount of \$700, funded by the CARES Act. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

The Chief concluded by stating that he is still waiting for word from the US Treasury regarding funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

WARRANT:

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the weekly warrant in the amount of \$1,486,722.58. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

T. Ahern stated that he will refrain from any comments and will update the Board at next weeks meeting.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT SUMMARY:

T. Ahern stated that the Warrant for the May 10, 2021 Town Meeting Articles closed at 4:00pm today (March 29, 2021). There were several changes made on Friday March 26, 2021. The Governance Committee have submitted 2 articles. A Veterans Tax Exemption Article has been added which will be sponsored by the Board of Assessors. There is a citizens petition for a Comprehensive Long Range Planning article. As well as an article regarding email accounts issued by the Town for Board and Committee members and their usage. The Planning Board, Zoning Board of Approval made several amendments to the Solar by-laws.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Planning Board decision for potential Solar Amendments to Zoning by-laws for a May 10, 2021 Town Meeting Warrant article. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

At this time there are currently 38 articles, of which T. Ahern will present a comprehensive draft at next weeks meeting.

BOARD BUSINESS:

The Finn property, Lot #5 Chapter 61A (farm land) has been offered to the Town "Right of First Refusal". T. Ahern explained that this particular property is not of interest to the Town due to its location.

B. Sparrell made a motion to exercise the Towns "Right of First Refusal" for the Finn property known as Lot#5. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

The Animal Control Officer, in conjunction with the Town of Ashland, is looking to hire a part-time assistant.

B. Sparrell made a motion to appoint Justine Grassey as part-time Assistant to the Animal Control Officer, pursuant to the memorandum with the Town of Ashland through June 30, 2021.

B. Sparrell made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2021 as written. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

At 6:55pm J. Cronin called for a 5 minute break.

At 7:00pm J. Cronin welcomed the various representatives from the 555 Hopping Brook Project and read the instructions for the remote meeting law. After which J. Cronin stated that this portion of the meeting was designed to hear input from citizens whom have not yet had the opportunity to do so.

Frank Petkunas, CRG Representative began the presentation by sharing slides outlining the *Proposed Use of the site*: The proposed building is a warehouse for storage and distribution with a 24/7 operation with 500 employees working 3 shifts. Vehicles, cars and trucks trips are not to exceed 1,310 ADT. Although they know the type of tenant this would fit there is not one confirmed. *Site Design Evolution*: The site was originally zoned as industrial in 1969, in 2003 it received MEPA approval. CRG signed a sale contract in 2019. In 2020 there was a Site Plan approval as well as a special permit application for the warehouse itself. At this point based on citizens concerns activity with the project came to a halt. F. Petkunas added an additional slide *Impact Mitigation Results*: some of which, reduction of trailer spaces and loading dock doors. Addition of a 8ft fence on top of the berm as well as evergreens. Use of monitoring devices to insure the maximum amount of trips in and out of the Industrial Park. F. Petkunas concluded by stating that the overall message they want to convey is to offer the Town a less impactful alternative to what was originally planned for the site.

Scott Thornton, Vanasse Associates traffic engineer for the project also presented a slide highlighting traffic at the site and throughout town. As part of the project a traffic light would be installed at the Hopping Brook entrance as well as signage and constant monitoring for compliance. Traffic studies will be ongoing. S. Thornton stated that the overall projected increase in volume is estimated at 2.4%-5.2%

At the conclusion of the presentation J. Cronin introduced Jay Talerma, Holliston Town Counsel and asked that he moderate the meeting going forward if needed, then J. Cronin opened up for questions starting with the Select Board members.

B. Sparrell noted that not knowing who the possible tenant of the property is frustrating. It creates a great deal of speculation. R. Nylen stated that there are no plans for refrigeration storage in the building and or automation is unlikely. Also there is no intent to have gas/fuel pumps on the site. B. Sparrell thanked the residents for staying engaged and involved throughout this process.

T. Hein began her comments by stating this project in her opinion "is all about trucks". She asked if this facility would operate 24/7. F. Petkunas stated that if the facility did not run on a 24/7 basis it would not be profitable. T. Hein asked if the 2.3 mile route in Holliston (which is mostly residential and narrow roadways) was a typical route in his experience. F. Petkunas replied that CRG has developed other properties that had longer routes and that this location was selected due to its location and zoning and the availability of the site. T. Hein asked that a more extensive Truck Study be done to compare exiting truck traffic west of Hopping Brook

Industrial Park to include the anticipated changes (the development of site) are made. Also a study of the traffic at intersections east of the Park with those changes. R. Nyland stated that instructions "no right turn east bound" could be incorporated in the lease. T. Hein also asked if the monitoring devices/data collection for traffic violations would be legally binding. R. Michaud indicated that there is not a device that is capable of automatically generating tickets. J. Talerman added that if it was determined that vehicles were non-compliant then zoning enforcement would be possible. T. Hein also asked what the impact would be on wastewater management at the site. R. Nylen stated that currently there are two options under review, one to have a septic system designed and installed or two have a private wastewater treatment system on the lot. Both are under the jurisdiction of the DEP. J. Cronin asked how the traffic study differentiated between automobiles and trucks. S. Thornton replied that it can distinguish larger-slower moving vehicles which would indicate the truck traffic. When asked if the project included widening Route 16 on the cemetery side of the road S. Thornton responded that very little widening would be needed when installing a traffic light at the entrance to Hopping Brook. J. Cronin also asked if there was any indication as to when peak hours of traffic may be. This however is directly related to whom the tenant may be. F. Petkunas stated that there would be no drone activity at the site in response to a question by J. Cronin. In conclusion J. Cronin asked that an analysis of the actual roadway on Route 16 in that area of Town be done. In his opinion the condition of the road is in need of improvement.

At 8:35pm the Board opened the discussion to the public. T. Ahern stated that the public can stay informed on the project and all updates by accessing the website, and can sign up to receive alerts when updates are posted.

Gary Donlin, Alberta Lane: Presented several slides outlining the timeline of the project and the potential impact on the Town by the additional traffic generated. Some of the questions he addressed to the Select Board as follows; Will the Town require a comprehensive Traffic Impact Analysis using the originally identified Land Use Code, (LUC) 155 High-cube fulfillment center warehouse? What are the specifics, average daily trips, am and pm peak hours etc. Also if there is no tenant information currently should the Town consider and review the project based on the most intense possible use of the building and its potential impacts, both now and in the future.

P. Bemis responded by stating that the project stands by the traffic study previously presented and that a condition imposed at the site will be to cap daily trips at 1,310. J. Cronin asked that CRG respond to G. Donlins questions in writing.

Rami Mitri, Winthrop Street: Expressed his frustration in attempting to obtain data directly from CRG in an effort to conduct and create his own studies. J. Cronin asked that the R. Mitri and CRG look to find common ground going forward.

Teri Stiffler, Front Street: Spoke on behalf of the Stop 555 Hopping Brook coalition and thanked the Select Board for the opportunity to voice concerns. The coalition has been doing research on the impact the project will have on the community and has also received professional advice on the matter.

Virginia Roach, Arch Street: Had concerns regarding storm water and wastewater at the site. She voiced the need for a Mass DEP review of the wastewater. V. Roach also noted that wetlands in that area could be at risk. Lastly she asked if the model proposed addressed fire safety. P. Bemis responded by stating that the design for a septic system will not include a cafeteria on site. The MASS DOT storm water report has been completed with all the required setbacks in place. Also the water supply loop system is designed with a pump for use during a fire emergency. R. Nylen added that all wastewater designs are subject to DEP requirements.

Travis Hein, Union Street: Had several questions regarding the Land use codes and how they determine the scope of a project. He cited two other CRG projects in Massachusetts which he identified as 155/156 land use code and noted that the site in Holliston is a 150 land use code. P. Bemis explained that when a tenant is not yet determined the best practice is to speculate use and therefore the conditions of the permit would limit how much traffic may be generated.

Eileen Muller, Courtland Street: Recommends the Town commission a more comprehensive traffic study. She is also concerned about the possibility of future sales of the site and how that could affect the Town. R. Nylen responded by stating the deed conditions would "remain on the deed regardless of owner"

Andreas Vargas, 12 Curve Street: Main concern regarding the increase in traffic and noise that will be generated by a warehouse operation at 555 Hopping Brook. A. Vargas took issue with what he felt is data manipulation on the part of CRG representatives.

Donald Taylor, Madison Drive: Asked that Town Counsel review the purchase & sale agreement between CRG and Jon Delli Priscoli the owner of 555 Hopping Brook. D. Taylor voiced concerns regarding J. Delli Priscoli's business dealings/practices in other towns. J. Delli Priscoli responded to D. Taylor's concerns by stating that he has owned the property for 23 years and has worked over the years with the Towns' various boards and committees and feels this CRG project is a "once in a lifetime" opportunity to work with a "world class developer".

Barbara Ryan, Washington Street: Recently moved to Holliston. She is concerned about the impact on the quality of life in Town with the increase in traffic and its impact on the environment. She is also concerned about the condition of Washington Street, to which J. Cronin advised her that a majority of Washington Street is a State Road and is maintained by the State. P. Bemis stated that the 1,310 average daily trip is a hard number and that environmental issues have been taken into consideration.

Steve McElhinney, Carriage House Medway: Regarding traffic, asked if there could be a hard limit rather than a daily average trip. P. Bemis responded by stating that it is always a 5 day (daily) average and never a daily maximum number used. S. McElhinney also asked if there were to be any "yard dogs" electric tugs on site. F. Petkunas responded that there would be yard dogs in use.

Atul Siri, Praying Indian Way: Voiced concern over the possible impact the development would have on other town services, Fire, Police, and water. F. Petkunas noted that the site would most likely have its own security and the water system would have a pump for Fire Department needs. J. Cronin added that further discussion around these topics will continue.

Teri Stiffler, Front Street: Returned to the discussion asking that a more comprehensive study be done around the impact on the vernal pools in the area. She feels Holliston would benefit by obtaining legal guidance to secure an accurate study. P. Bemis stated that he feels the study previously done was done ethically.

Joe Cooper, Rockland Street: Asked if CRG would appeal a decision by the Town if it was to vote the project down. F. Petkunas stated that he did not have an answer however he pointed out that CRG has invested a great deal of time and money into the project.

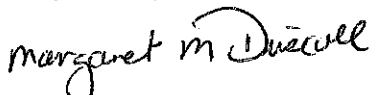
Janet Sheehan, Surrey Lane Medway: She is very concerned about the truck traffic that will also travel through Medway to this site and stated that she had one comment only "No"

J. Cronin thanked everyone for their thoughtful comments and opinions. He stated that the Town officials will remain vigilant and keep communication open and encouraged citizens to stay engaged in the process.

P. Bemis on behalf of CRG thanked the Select Board and T. Ahern for their time.

At 10:59 B. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn. T. Hein second. Vote 3-0.

Respectfully submitted;



Margaret M. Driscoll

Approved 4-20-21