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Durham Planning and Community Development
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RECEIVED
Town of Durham

JAN - 9 2015

Planning, Assessing
and Zoning

Dear Michael:

The Police Department is desirous to construct a Firearms Range at the Public Works Facility located on Stone Quarry Drive. The range would be used exclusively by the Durham Police with qualifications occurring at least two times annually, possibly three as one of exercises occurs in "low-light" generally after Daylight Savings time occurs. The actual training with the weapons would take place over a 20-hour combined period throughout the calendar year. The actual discharge of a firearm probably consumes half that time for a total year of 10-hours of actual noise. The training requirements are based upon requirements from the New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council, supported by Statute, which require the completion of sanctioned firearms and use of force training with qualifications occurring at least once annually. As the Durham Police are a nationally accredited agency, members of the department must qualify twice annually in addition to the low-light familiarization for a total of three times annually while remaining with the 20-hours.

While we await the proposed construction of a County-wide facility on Strafford County land in Dover, the immediate practical option appears to be the construction of a low cost earthen berm firearms range at the Durham Public Works facility to be the most cost effective and reasonable solution. For the last ten (10) years, the Durham Police have been fortunate to have the use of the Rochester Police Department's outdoor Firearms range at minimal cost. However, recent changes in the utilization of the City of Rochester owned property surrounding the Police Department's Firearms Range has led to significant restrictions regarding the use of the range. As we have researched a number of viable and not so viable alternatives it is clear there are limited options available even with significant cost implications. All have a component of challenge to their use.

As you may know, the area surrounding the existing Public Works facility on Stone Quarry Drive was in fact a stone quarry with numerous indentations and berms remaining from that activity. There is an exceptional area behind and virtually parallel to the existing truck storage building which is well suited for this purpose. Minimal work such as the addition of a gravel base as well as adding dirt to the backdrop of the range coupled with the construction of a small storage shed for targets and other equipment is easily addressed. I plan on working with the Oyster River High School to have one of their shop classes construct this shed with materials the police department would purchase thereby creating a win-win situation.

A NATIONALLY ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY



All of the work will be in adherence to an Outdoor Earthen Berm Firearms Range adhering to guidelines set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Best Management Practices Plan, The National Rifle Association (NRA), the National Firearms Sports Foundation (NSSF) and other Best Practices Plans for the management of Outdoor Firearms Ranges. The plan is currently being reviewed by the New Hampshire EPA as the use of lead bullets may, however minimal, warrant their input.

Specifications

- The approximate footprint of the range is seventy-five (75) feet wide by one hundred-fifty (150) feet long.
- While there is an existing berm due to the removal of granite slabs many years ago, the designed backstop height will be between fifteen (15) and twenty (20) feet with twenty-five (25) feet being ideal according to the recommendations of the National Firearms Sports Foundation.
- The minimum height for the side berms will be eight (8) feet high, with ten (10) to twelve (12) feet high being ideal according to the recommendations of the National Firearms Sports Foundation.
- The slope of both the Backstop and Side Berm(s) will also follow the recommendations of the National Firearms Sports Foundation and will be no less than a ratio of 1-to-1. The contour of the ground will be a slight grade downward toward the backstop to ensure that any runoff drain to the base of the backstop, but not allow for water permeation into the backstop to mix with lead shot. It is recognized that there will be some permeation of runoff into the backstop but all design efforts will be made to minimize the potential of runoff mixing with lead.

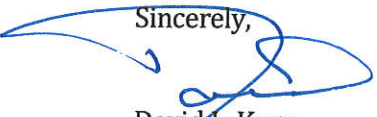
Construction Schedule

During the Spring of 2015 and into the Summer, based on the work schedule of DPW workers, completion of the project should occur in June or July .

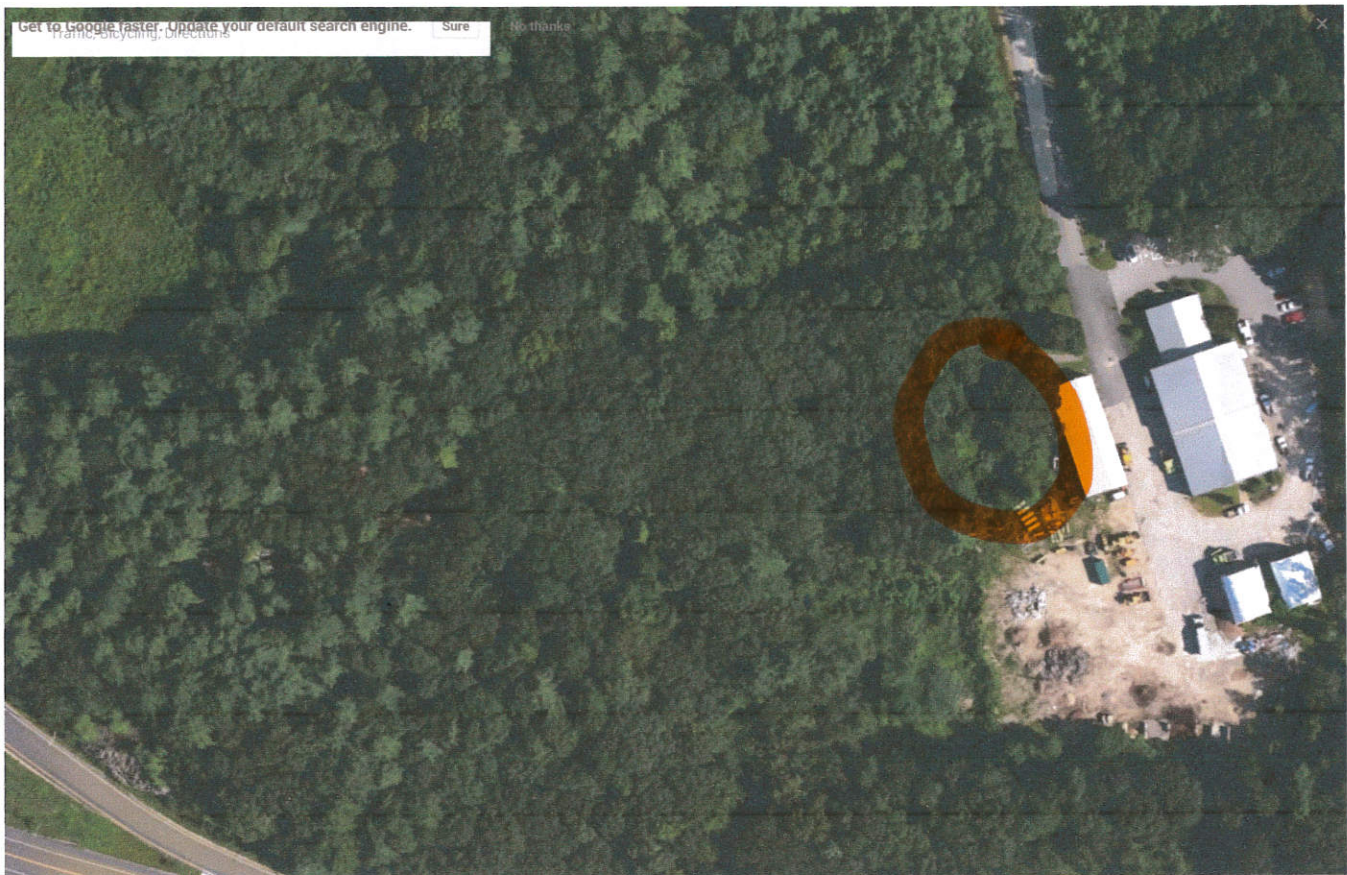
Director of Public Works, Mike Lynch, has authorized the use of DPW personnel and equipment as needed for the completion of the project. This effort will keep the costs down significantly.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this concept to the Durham Planning Board and look forward to their feedback and recommendations. In the interim, if there are any questions or desire to speak with me prior to the scheduled meeting, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



David L. Kurz
Chief of Police



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