

Technical Review Group (TRG)

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Town Council Chambers

NOTES OF MEETING

TRG members present:

Michael Behrendt, Town Planner

Rene Kelley, Police Chief

Brendan O'Sullivan, Deputy Fire Chief

Rich Reine, Public Works Director

April Talon, Town Engineer

Applicants present:

Jim Mitchell, applicant

Matt Perry, The Engineering Group

Scott Thornton, Traffic Engineer, Vanasse & Associates

Matt Perry introduced the project. He said the site is now nearly 100% impervious. The impervious amount will be reduced. Jim Mitchell said that Irving is taking over the current Dunkin Donut space with expansion of the convenience store.

Mr. Perry said the site will be completely redeveloped. Only 7 parking spaces are required but they will provide 15. There will be 5 employees on the maximum shift and 8 seats inside. The dumpster will be screened. Snow storage will be tight. Snow will be removed from the site in a significant storm. There is a bike rack in front.

Rich complimented the applicant on the stormwater report. He said it is important because the runoff goes to a waterway. He said that traffic is obviously a big issue. He said that he would not provide comments on traffic until NHDOT reviews the traffic.

Scott Thornton said they had a scoping meeting with NHDOT in October. They received feedback from NHDOT and the Town about left turns into the site. There should be as much storage on Dover Road as possible for the turn. Left turns out would be prohibited during peak hours. DOT will probably take 6-12 weeks for their review. He said 70-90% of the traffic is passing by and not destination traffic. It is already there. West bound right in and right out are okay. For left it turns out

they would need a gap in the 2 eastbound lanes. If they can't make the turn then they won't.

Rich asked if the prohibition on left turns out will be at both exits. Mr. Thornton said they don't have control over the access on the hotel property. People will not have the ability to go behind the hotel but there will be use of two lanes in the easement that is adjacent to the subject lot. He does not know if they could put signage there. Rich suggested they talk with the hotel about this. Mr. Thornton said they have trip generation at the existing Dunkin Donuts. It was counted at the site.

Rich asked if DOT does not allow a left turn in, do they have an alternative plan. Mr. Thornton said they will cross that bridge if it happens.

Mr. Perry said the grading will mimic the existing situation. There will be deep sump catch basins on the easterly side and roof drains leading to them. Runoff will then go into the Town's system. Rich said we require an inspection of the catch basin in Route 108 for its conditions. That should be done as part of the site review. They will need an operations and maintenance plan and reports will need to be submitted annually, possibly by February 1.

Rich said we need a maintenance plan for the grease trap. He asked the thickness of the sidewalk that will be rebuilt in the right of way. He said we require a cast iron truncated dome.

Mr. Perry said the grease trap will be at the rear. They are trying to use existing water and sewer stubs on site. The water and sewer department said they should be adequate. The contractor will verify that later. April suggested they do TV the sewer line in Route 108 to make sure it is functioning correctly. The town has a back flow prevention program.

Mr. Perry said there would be no trenching in Dover Road. They will take construction access off Dover Road.

Brendan asked about left turns into the site. He asked if they would consider an island if it did not work. Nobody will know for sure how prohibiting left turns out during peak hours will work. He sees people shooting out all the time to try to make a left turn. They will hold up traffic. They don't care.

Mr. Thornton interpreted Brendan's comments to refer to a median on the site at

the exit. Michael asked about a median in Dover Road to prevent left turns in and out. Rich echoed this possible approach. Mr. Thornton said that is not desirable as it would restrain the business and he questioned if installing a median would be workable. Michael asked if the project was approved and the board included a condition that the applicant would install a median in the future if left turns ended up being problematic is that an approach that might make sense? Mr. Thornton said again that he thinks installing a median in Dover Road would not be appropriate.

Mr. Thornton said there are numerous Dunkin Donuts in the area. If accessing this restaurant were problematic for a particular driver that person could simply patronize other Dunkin Donuts. He said there is a Burger King/CVS on Loudin Road in Concord with a restriction for left turns out during peak hours and it seems to be very effective.

Mr. Thornton said that they are taking traffic from an existing Dunkin Donuts and moving it across the street. There is lots of traffic already going there. There will be a window for pedestrians. There is one now at the existing Dunkin Donuts.

Rich asked if they could get a response from NHDOT before Planning Board action. Mr. Thornton said that it could take DOT up to 4 months. They have an agreement with the hotel with time constraints.

Michael said it would be preferable to have a response from NHDOT prior to the board taking action. He said we have never required this before. Typically, obtaining state approvals is a precedent condition. But where there is a significant concern it is better to have a response earlier if possible. Mr. Mitchell said it would be appropriate to just follow the standard procedure regarding the NHDOT permit.

Michael mentioned that the Planning Board prefers to not make precedent conditions to obtain approval from a Town board, like the Zoning Board of Adjustment because that can put the ZBA in an awkward position, if the main application has already been approved. Mr. Thornton said that is not relevant here. NHDOT has a responsibility to maintain the integrity of the system and they are focused on that. They will be diligent in their review regardless of whether the site plan has been approved or not. No activity could occur with a site plan until NHDOT approves the access.

Michael said even though the traffic is largely being transferred from the existing

site across Dover Road, how are the two sites different in terms of impact on Dover Road. Mr. Thornton said 73% of the existing traffic would shift to the new site.

Rene said that he was listening to the comments and did not have a comment at this time on the site plan.

Michael said the Planning Board might require a third party review the traffic. Such a review would be paid by the applicant. He said whether the board requires such a review might depend on whatever feedback we get from NHDOT and the timing of that feedback. Mr. Thornton said that any third party review would likely offer the same comments that NHDOT would make.

Michael said there are some other minor issues that he will mention soon in his writeup for the project. He said the application is being presented to the Planning Board next Wednesday. He expects it will be accepted as complete and then a public hearing would likely be held on March 26. He asked Mr. Mitchell what their desired timeframe is.

Mr. Mitchell said they would like to start construction as soon as the weather breaks. Ideally they would start in April or May and open in the early winter of 2025.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Behrendt, Durham Town Planner/TRG Chair