



March 18, 2016

Nathaniel N. Strosberg
Town Planner/Director of Community Development
Town of Ashland
101 Main Street
Ashland, Massachusetts 01721

Re: 0 Megunko Road – Site Plan Review Peer Review

Dear Mr. Strosberg and Members of the Board:

Professional Services Corporation, PC (PSC) is pleased to present the peer review for the *0 Megunko Road Site Plan Review Application*. The review includes a summary of findings, comments and recommendations included in the Scope of Services provided as Exhibit A of the Town of Ashland Peer Review Services Contract.

BASIS OF REVIEW

PSC received the following documents which serve as the basis of the review:

- ***Application for Approval of Site Plan Review*** dated January 29, 2016 prepared by Connorstone Engineering, Inc., Northborough, MA including the following:
 - Application with Supplemental Information
 - Zoning Map Excerpt for Locus
 - Legal References – Deeds and Plan
 - Assessors Data
 - Site Plan and Details
 - Building (Elevations, Floor, Similar Orthoview)
 - Representative Lighting Photograph
 - Site Maps (source–Maps Online)
 - 21E Report Excerpts (Williamson Environmental, LLC)
 - Abutters List
- Site Development Plans (5 Sheets) entitled ***Proposed Site Plan of 0 Megunko Road in Ashland Massachusetts*** dated January 27, 2016 prepared by Connorstone Engineering, Inc.
- Landscape Design Plan (1 Sheet) entitled ***0 Megunko Ashland, MA Landscape Plan L 1.0***, dated February 3, 2016 prepared by Sudbury Design Group, Sudbury, MA:

PSC will evaluate the submission with respect to the following bylaws, regulations and standards:

- ***Chapter 282 – Zoning*** as amended through May 6, 2015
- ***Chapter 343 – Stormwater Management*** dated May 28, 2008
- ***Chapter 343 – Wetlands Protection Regulations*** dated January 24, 2011
- ***Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Stormwater Standards*** as outlined in the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook in effect January 2, 2008
- ***310 CMR 10.00 Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act Regulations*** in effect October 24, 2014

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SITE AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

The 1.69± acre project parcel is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Megunko Road and Cherry Street and south of the MBTA tracks. The existing lot is predominately wooded with gravel open area adjacent to Cherry Street and wetlands along the west property line. The proposed plan indicates clearing and re-grading the site to construct a 11,126 sq. ft. storage/garage building with associated access parking, sewer service and stormwater management system. A sidewalk is also proposed along Cherry Street. Stormwater management facilities include catchbasins, manholes, pipes, sediment forebays and a constructed wetland.

Topography is generally slopes down toward Cherry Street. The site contains flagged wetlands but there is no riverfront area, FEMA mapped 100-year flood zone, approved wellhead protection area (Zone 2) or NHESP mapped area of estimated habitat of rare wildlife and priority habitats of rare species within immediate proximity of the site. NRCS maps indicate the soils in the center of the site consist of Freetown muck with a hydrologic group rating of B/D.

CHAPTER 282 - ZONING

District and Use Regulations (§2.0 & 3.0)

The project site is located within the Industrial (I) zoning district and Photovoltaic Installation Overlay District (PIOD). The project is not located within the Groundwater Protection Overlay District (GPOD). Across Cherry Street is zoned Ashland Downtown District B (ADD-B) and across the MBTA tracts is Ashland Downtown District B (ADD-C).

The *construction yard or landscaping business* is allowed use by right.

Dimensional Requirements (§4.0)

The project lot meets the minimum lot area, frontage, front and rear yard and maximum height requirements.

General Regulations (§5.0)

The project proposes to create a 48 space parking lot including 2 required handicap accessible spaces.

- Z1. Correct plan to indicate 27 parking spaces along Megunko Road.
- Z2. Provide information on proposed parking demand and utilization.
- Z3. The lot which contains a proposed nonresidential use faces residential uses across Cherry Street and across the railroad, landscaped buffers should be provided to screen parking and vehicular service areas (§5.4.2 1.).
- Z4. While a buffer is provided along Cherry Street, small ornamental trees are provided. Large evergreen trees and shrubs should be provided.
- Z5. To avoid mono planting and associated risk of tree disease, PSC recommends fir (*Abies* spp.), spruce (*Picea* spp.), or other evergreen trees which hold their lower branches at maturity should be included with comparable spacing.



26. The area in front of the building will be used for loading and maneuvering of commercial landscaping vehicles and equipment. Although not as effective as a noise barrier, an opaque fence along Cherry Street and along 100 ft. of Megunko Rd. nearest to Cherry Street would help to abate noise and headlights from the commercial vehicles and equipment.
27. Provide documentation for required Site Alteration Special Permit (§5.8).
28. As a Condition of Approval of the Site Alteration Special Permit, the Board may wish to consider requiring that any motor vehicle repair operations be conducted within the building and that all building doors remain closed during these operations.

Photovoltaic Installation Overlay District (§8.3)

The project is proposing roof mounted solar panels not a ground mounted photovoltaic installation – not applicable.

Site Plan Review (§9.4)

- P1. Provide AutoTURN plan to show adequate access for all vehicles to use the site including emergency vehicles in an out of site and dumpster service vehicle (§6.3.1) & (§9.4.4.4).
- P2. Provide proposed landscape features, including the location and description of screening, fencing and plantings (§9.4.4.6).
- P3. Include the location, dimensions, height and characteristics of proposed signs (§9.4.4.7).
- P4. Include the location and details of all outdoor lighting, on the plans (§9.4.4.8).
- P5. A construction timetable indicating estimated startup and completion dates (§9.4.4.11).
- P6. An architectural rendering and/or cross-section of the development shall be submitted (§9.4.4.12).

Site Plan Review Criteria (§9.4.6)

Site Plan Review Criteria and Design Plan Review; General Criteria. The following criteria shall be considered by the aforementioned Boards in the review and evaluation of a site plan, consistent with a reasonable use of the site for the purposes permitted or permissible by the regulations of the district in which it is located. If the proposal also requires a special permit, it must conform to the special permit requirements set forth herein. The development shall be integrated into the existing terrain and surrounding landscape and shall be designed to protect abutting properties and community amenities. Before approval of a site plan, the Planning Board may request the applicant to make modifications in the proposed design of the project to ensure that these criteria are met. Site plans shall, to the extent feasible:

- PR1. Minimize use of wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains and hilltops; **Proposed work is located outside wetland areas. Project does not contain steep slopes, floodplains and hilltops.***
- PR2. Minimize obstruction of scenic views; **Site is not located in an area with scenic views – not applicable.***



- PR3. Preserve unique natural or historical features; **Site does not contain any obvious natural or historic features – not applicable.***
- PR4. Minimize tree, vegetation and soil removal and grade changes; **The project proposes to clear the lot. Grading is required to provide a level pad for the building.***
- PR5. Maximize open space retention; **The entire parcel is to be developed with no open space preserved.***
- PR6. Screen objectionable features from neighboring properties and roadways. **See comments on landscaping and lighting.***
- PR7. Consideration shall be given to the impacts of the project on town services and infrastructure. **Project does not include new residences and should have minimal impacts to town services and infrastructure.***
- PR8. Electric, telephone, cable television, gas, water, sewer, drainage and other such utilities shall be underground except in cases of extreme physical and environmental constraints. **See comments in Buildings and Stormwater Management sections.***
- PR9. Exposed storage areas, machinery, service areas, truck loading areas, utility buildings and structures and other unsightly uses shall be set back or screened to protect the neighbors and those using public ways from objectionable features. Such areas shall not impede the flow of traffic on public ways. The area in front of the building will be used as a loading area. Refer to Comment Z6.*
- PR10. When applicable, the site plan shall show measures to reduce and abate noise generated from the site that will impact surrounding properties. **Other than noise from vehicles and landscaping equipment. See Comments Z6 and Z8.***
- PR11. The site plan shall comply with all zoning requirements for parking, loading, signage, dimensions and environmental performance standards and all other provisions of this By-law. **See comments in Zoning section.***
- PR12. The site plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable specific plans adopted by the Planning Board. **PSC defers to Planning Board.***

Building Design (§9.4.7)

- BD1. Provide building elevations to show architectural characteristics of proposed building.
- BD2. Show electric services including transformer if required.

Traffic (§9.4.8)

Traffic impact analysis was not submitted for review.

- T1. Board should determine if a traffic impact analysis should be provided for this project.

Water (§9.4.9)

For comments on drainage and stormwater management see stormwater management section.



Landscaping (§9.4.10)

See comments in Zoning above related to buffers, screening and landscaping requirements.

Buildings (§9.4.11)

PSC defers to the Board on the applicability of this section.

Stormwater Management (Chapter 343)

The project proposes to install impervious surfaces (roofs and pavement) over two-thirds of the site. Proposed stormwater management system includes catchbasins, manholes, pipes roof drains, a trench drain, sediment forebays and a constructed wetland. Due to the size of the project a Stormwater Management Permit from the Conservation Commission is required.

- SW1. Provide test pits sufficient to determine groundwater elevations (§7.6.10.7).
- SW2. Provide drainage calculations (§7.6.12)
- SW3. Provide earth removal/fill calculations (§7.6.13).
- SW4. Provide Stormwater Management Plan (SMP) all required documentation (§7.6.16).
- SW5. Provide Operation and Maintenance (O7M) plan all required documentation (§7.6.16). It should include documentation as to who is responsible for maintaining the drainage swale. If the Town is responsible PSC recommends the applicant grant an easement to access and maintain the swale.
- SW6. Provide documentation to show compliance with General Criteria (§8.1.1-8)
- SW7. Show snow storage areas.
- SW8. Provide details for constructed wetland including cross sections, planting plan and details and species list.

If there are questions or you need additional information regarding this review do not hesitate in calling the undersigned.

Very Truly Yours,
Professional Services Corporation, PC



Philip Paradis, PE, LEED AP, CPSWQ
President

