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Memo To: RPC Development of Regional Impact Subcommittee
From: Rockingham Planning Commission Staff
Date: July 23, 2021
Subject: Rye Regional Impact Declaration – 0 Lafayette Road, Multi-Family Site Plan

Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) was notified on July 14, 2021 that a site plan application and a special use permit before the Rye Planning Board were declared a development of regional impact under RSA 36:55. The proposal submitted by Jones and Beach Engineering on behalf of Malcolm E. Smith, III is for a 30, 2-bedroom residential condominium units at 0 Lafayette Road, just north of the North Hampton/Rye boundary. At the direction of the RPC Regional Impact Committee chair, RPC staff was requested to write a memo regarding potential regional impacts for the applicant and the Rye Planning Board.

The proposal is to be located on Route 1 on the Rye/North Hampton/Greenland town boundary, located at 0 Lafayette Road (Lot 10-1) in Rye's Commercial, Multi-family Overlay District and within the Aquifer and Wellhead District. The use is a permitted in that district. The municipalities with potential impacts from the proposal within New Hampshire and the RPC region include: North Hampton, Greenland and Portsmouth.

Comments below regard the proposal's potential regional impacts as identified under RSA 36:55 that can reasonably be expected to impact on a neighboring municipality, because of factors such as, but not limited to, the following:

I. Relative size or number of dwelling units as compared with existing stock.

The proposal includes a total of 30 residential units. Rye currently has a total of 463 multi-family housing units compared to 2,373 single-family dwelling units according to *NH Office of Strategic Initiatives' study Current Estimates and Trends in NH's Housing Supply (2010-2018*). The proposed units are two-bedroom units.

The applicant has also proposed that six of the 30 units will qualify as workforce housing as required by Rye's zoning ordinance. In general, the RPC region's availability of workforce housing units low.

II. Proximity to the borders of a neighboring community.
The proposal is located fully within Rye but is located immediately north and west of the Rye/North Hampton/Greenland town boundary. As noted above, the proposal is located within Rye's Commercial, Multi-Family Overlay District; the area is surrounded by a mixture of industrial uses and commercial uses, but with nearby residential uses. The area to the south in North Hampton zoned as Industrial- Business/Residential District along Route 1 with residential and uses located away from the Route 1 corridor. In Greenland, the immediate area is zoned as Residential, with the Commercial A District to the north of this project.

III. Transportation networks.

- **Traffic Impact Study:** Overall, the Trip Generation Memorandum completed by Stephen G. Pernaw and Company, Inc. utilizes appropriate and practical assumptions and the analysis indicates a reasonable volume of trips generated by the proposed development.

- **Traffic volume:** NHDOT data indicates that Average Annualized Daily Traffic on US 1 (Lafayette Road) in the vicinity of the site driveways was 16,139 (2019). Data from an RPC study of speeds on Dow Lane (2018) showed 1,238-2,050 vehicles per day (not factored into an annual average) along that roadway depending on the day of the week. Approximately 60% of the traffic on Dow Lane was northbound from US 1 towards Washington Road and the vast majority of traffic approaching US 1 from Down Lane turned left onto US 1 southbound (94%).
- **Trip Generation:** Analysis in the Trip Generation memorandum indicates that the completed townhouses would generate approximately 186 trips per day (50% entering/50% exiting). Only a small portion of these trips are indicated to occur during the AM (8%) and PM (10%) peak hours on US 1.
- **Trip Distribution:** The distribution of trips from the proposed townhouses is 46% northbound along US 1, 33% southbound along US 1, and 21% eastbound on Dow Lane.
- **Safety:** The Trip Generation memorandum indicates that with appropriate design, maintenance of sight triangles, and the use of Left Turn Lanes, vehicular access should be relatively safe.
- **Signalized Intersections:** A traffic signal is not warranted at this location.
- **Active Transportation:** No accommodations are included for pedestrians or cyclists.
- **Public Transportation:** No accommodations are included for public transportation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The existing two-way-left-turn lane on US 1 will need to be restriped through the Dow Lane intersection to accommodate left turning vehicles into this development.
- Consider requiring a wider shoulder on US 1 to align with that on the east side of the roadway. The shoulder on the west side of US 1 widens just to the south of this site and this would be an opportunity to extend that wider shoulder further north past Dow Lane providing additional safety benefits for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles. A wider shoulder could also be utilized to provide space for a future bus stop for service along US 1.
- The emergency access included in the site plans would indicate an interest in the future development of the adjacent parcel (currently the same landowner). NHDOT and the town of Rye should consider requiring a shared driveway between the two sites so that there is a single access point on US 1 instead of two. This would move the site access further north on US 1 and out of alignment with Dow Lane which would eliminate most conflicts with turning movements from that roadway.

IV. Anticipated emissions such as light, noise, smoke, odors, or particles.

Anticipated emissions are expected to be either nonexistent or very limited, and typical of multi-family housing.

RECOMMENDATION: To minimize potential light impacts, it is recommended that Rye evaluate the potential for any light spillage on to adjacent properties or Route 1 and put measures in place to minimize any spillage that may cause a nuisance or safety issues.

V. Proximity to aquifers or surface waters which transcend municipal boundaries.

The proposal is located in the Coastal Drainage (Rye Harbor) Watershed. The site is located above a stratified drift aquifer and is within Rye Aquifer Protection District. The site is not located within the wellhead protection area for any public water supply well. The proposal is slated to be served from a public water supply and onsite septic systems.

The entire proposal also is located with the regulated, urbanized area in Rye that is subject to the federal MS4 Stormwater Permit. As such, Rye is required to implement regulations that reduce stormwater runoff pollution on developments such as this proposal from entering surface and groundwater sources. Rye's current stormwater regulations conform to the requirements of the MS4 Permit. Any stormwater generated from the proposal that enters on to municipal property (including roads) or state property (specifically Route 1), could leave the municipality or state responsible for the treatment of that stormwater.

RECOMMENDATION: To mitigate any potential surface water or groundwater pollution, it is recommended that any proposal be required to follow stormwater regulations required under Rye's MS4 Permit, and that Rye implement the conditions of their aquifer protection ordinance.

VI. Shared facilities such as schools and solid waste disposal facilities.
The proposal does not appear to rely on any shared municipal facilities, however, there is potential to required shared municipal emergency services given the location near North Hampton and Greenland. It is recommended that the Planning Board receive input from the Rye emergency services personnel and Select Board regarding the handling of emergency services near the Rye/North Hampton/ Greenland border.

Finally, it should be noted that the above comments and recommendations are considered advisory only. The RPC, nor the impacted municipalities, have any authority under the regional impact statute to interfere with the decision-making power held by the Rye Planning Board.

Cc:
Town of Rye Planning Board
Town of North Hampton
Town of Greenland
Town of Portsmouth