

August 16, 2023

Revised October 26, 2023

Ms. Breeka Li Goodlander, Agent
Franklin Conservation Commission
355 East Central Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Re: 100/200 Financial Way
MassDEP File No. 159-1270
Notice of Intent Peer Review

Dear Ms. Goodlander,

On behalf of the Applicant, Berkeley Partners, Highpoint Engineering, Inc. requests a variance from Town of Franklin Wetland Regulations Section 4.2.1 to perform work within the 0 - 25 foot no-disturb buffer zone to modify the existing site entrance driveway to promote safer traffic operations. During the Planning Board's Site Plan Review process, the Board and peer reviewer requested an evaluation of the existing entrance to determine if there is adequate geometry to accommodate trucks exiting the driveway. The study demonstrated that trucks exiting the driveway are required to maneuver into the opposing travel lane to make the turn, and wheels track off the traveled driveway entering the driveway. Trucks exiting the site and maneuvering into the opposing travel lane is considered a public safety issue and must be addressed.

The Applicant has agreed to modify the site entrance driveway to allow trucks entering the site to stay within the entrance travel lane, while also allowing trucks exiting the site to stay within the exit travel lane and the adjoining Washington Street south bound travel lane. The 300 Financial Park internal driveway intersection was also modified to accommodate internal truck maneuvering. The proposed re-alignment and widening of the existing site entrance will require an alteration of ~~2,240~~ 2,557 square feet in the 0 - 25 foot no-disturb buffer zone.

Alternatives Analysis

The alternatives to the proposed improvements to the existing Financial Park entrance are as follows:

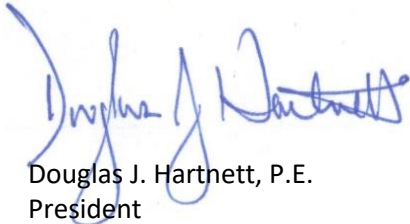
1. **Alternative 1 - No Changes:** Maintaining the existing driveway would result in no new alterations to the 0 - 25-foot buffer zone but would not be acceptable from a public safety perspective. As observed by the Planning Board's traffic engineer, the current alignment and width of the driveway intersection forces trucks exiting onto Washington Street to cross into the opposing travel lane, resulting in potential vehicle conflicts and a public safety issue. Maintaining the driveway intersection in its current configuration is not an acceptable alternative and not in the Town's interest.

2. **Alternative 2 - Re-Locate Site Entrance:** Re-locating the existing site entrance to any point along the site's frontage along Washington Street, beyond the location proposed, will result in significantly more alteration to the 0 to 25 foot no disturb buffer zone, as well as direct wetland resource alterations. This is not an acceptable alternative and does not serve the interests of environmental protection summarized in the Wetlands Protection Act and Franklin Wetland Protection Bylaw.

In summary, the Applicant believes the proposed driveway modifications serve the public interest to improve traffic safety. Furthermore, the proposed driveway modifications minimize wetland resource area buffer zone disturbances, which serves the interest of the Franklin Wetland Protection Bylaw and the Conservation Commission.

We appreciate your consideration of this variance petition.

Best regards,
HIGHPOINT ENGINEERING



Douglas J. Hartnett, P.E.
President

cc: Andy Ramirez, Brendan Pellerin, Berkeley Partners
Connie Lu, Highpoint