

**Town of Hinesburg  
Development Review Board**

**December 20, 2011**

Approved Jan 3, 2012

**Members Present:** Tom McGlenn, Zoë Wainer, Dennis Place, Ted Bloomhardt, Greg Waples, Dick Jordan, Kate Myhre.

**Members Absent:** none

**Also Present:** Peter Erb (Zoning Administrator), Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning), Sarah Murphy, Bill Moller, Patti Drew, Steve Giroux, Dena Monahan, Bill Marks, Jean Masseur, David White, Justin Peumick, Leon Lestage, David Fenn, Carrie Fenn, Bryce Busier, Barry Russell, Michael Oman, Ann Thomas, Andrea Morgante, Jean Kiedaisch, Doug Boyce, Tyler Sterling, Chuck Reiss, Dona Walker, Gay Regan, Peter Regan, John Roos, Bill Lippert, Carl Bohlen, Greg LeRoy, Ken Brown, Patricia Whitney, Hannah Whitney, Rick Bryant, Catherine Goldsmith, George Holoch, Mary Crane, Paul Wiczorek, Nancy Baker, Natacha Liuzzi, Jeff French, Scott Jaunich, Roger Dickinson, Barbara Lyman, David Lyman, Marianna Holzer, Rick Paleri, Frank Koss, Mary Beth Bowman, Dean Grover, Elly Coates, Gill Coates, Dorothy Pellet, Maggie Gordon, Margery Sharp, Jim Collins, Bob Thiefels.

**\*\*NOTE – Partial list.** Not everyone that attended signed in. Alex W counted 64 members of the audience not including the Board and Planning & Zoning staff.

Tom McGlenn chaired the meeting, which started at 7:33pm.

**Minutes from December 6, 2011 Meeting:**

Tom M MOVED to approve as amended. Dick J SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED 6-0. Greg Waples arrived at the meeting just after this vote.

**Hannaford:**

Site Plan, Conditional Use, and Sign review for proposed grocery store on property owned by the Giroux family on Commerce Street (lot #15 of Commerce Park) in the Commercial zoning district. Tax Map #20-50-02.100. *Continued from the December 6 meeting.*

Tom M noted that this review was continued from the December 6 meeting. He explained that the focus of tonight's meeting would be traffic impacts and Hannaford's revised traffic impact study.

David White (of White & Burke, representing Hannaford) introduced himself, and said that Roger Dickinson (traffic engineer) will be doing the presentation on traffic. David W said that Hannaford is pursuing the architectural design charette idea that was mentioned at the 12/6 meeting. He said they have hired Bast & Rood Architects (a Hinesburg firm) to help with the architectural design and to help organize the charette. The date, time, and venue for the charette are still to be determined, but it will be open to the entire community.

Roger Dickinson introduced himself, and noted that everything he will be presenting is covered in the written memo that was submitted last week. He reviewed their refined traffic impact study, which has been updated based on the new mitigation measures that Hannaford proposes to make at the Route 116, Charlotte Road intersection:

1. Switch to concurrent traffic signal phasing for the Lantmans exit and Charlotte Road (i.e., both would have a green light at the same time).
2. Formalize/stripe a left turn lane/pocket for southbound traffic turning left into the Lantmans entrance.
3. Move the sidewalk, and the stop bar for traffic exiting Lantmans, closer to Route 116 to improve visibility and allow for right turn on red.

Roger explained that the updated analysis included simulations using computer software to model traffic flow, queuing, etc. He reviewed various tables showing existing and projected levels of service based on trip generation figures as well as the simulation models.

Ted B asked why the queue length drops so much (from 685' to 95') in the simulation results for the build-out scenario at the southbound Route 116 traffic at the Mechanicsville Road intersection. Roger D said the drop is due to the improvements at the Charlotte Road intersection, and also due to the secondary effect this will have on driver behavior. He noted that as the Route 116 queue lessens, fewer Route 116 drivers will stop to let vehicles out of Mechanicsville Road. For the Charlotte Road intersection, the simulation results show that the southbound Route 116 queue is projected to be 1046' in the 2017, no-build scenario (i.e., no Hannaford), versus 842' in the 2017, build scenario (with Hannaford). Ted B noted that the simulation model was performed with non-optimized signal timings for the Charlotte Road intersection. Roger D said this means that the amount of green light time for the side roads would stay the same as it is now. If the light was optimized, a bit more green time would be added to the side roads.

Roger D explained that the queue lengths from the simulation results are affected by a model assumption that once traffic is moving at 7mph or more, the queue ends. He noted that slow moving queues (more than 7mph) are referred to as rolling queues, and that the simulation software doesn't allow this assumption to be changed. He said that rolling queues appear to be common for southbound traffic on Route 116 during the pm peak hour. Dick J asked where the 7mph criteria came from in determining that slowly rolling traffic should not be considered as part of the queue. Roger D said he didn't know the rationale for the speed cut off – i.e., it is simply built into the simulation model software.

Roger D then addressed some of the issues raised at earlier meetings. First, he said that Michael Oman's estimates of potentially high trip generation for future uses of the Lantmans property are unrealistic. He said Oman used a "shopping center" category to estimate future trip generation, and that this category describes much larger shopping centers, and is not appropriate given Lantmans small size. Second, he said that Oman assumed a mixture of high trip generating uses (e.g., office, video store, drive-in bank, fast food, etc.) that just don't happen in the real world. He said he is not aware of any examples of such a suite of uses. He

said these uses appear to have been cherry-picked to create the largest possible traffic impact. Third, Roger D said that Hannaford has considered a scenario where Lantmans existing trip generation stayed the same after Hannaford was built. According to the simulation models, the future built scenario (with Hannaford) would still be better for traffic flow and levels of service than today's situation. He noted that in such a scenario, traffic levels would be higher than what they anticipate, because they still feel that Lantmans traffic will be reduced. Finally, Roger D gave a series of examples of how the Lantmans property could be used in the future. These included various use combinations, and in each case, the overall trip generation was still much lower than what Lantmans generates today. Ted B asked what the trip generation currently is for Lantmans. Roger D said that Lantmans currently generates 250 trips during the pm peak hour.

Roger D also noted that their proposed left turn lane/pocket for southbound Route 116 traffic to enter Lantmans is not critical, and has little impact on projected traffic flows or levels of service. He said that even with this lane added, there is still room for defacto 4 lanes of operation – i.e., still room to pass on the right for both northbound and southbound traffic on Route 116. Dick J noted that the left turn lane pocket will only hold 2-3 cars. David W and Roger D both said that left turns into Lantmans in the am peak hour are minimal (approx. 20 per hour) – i.e., there aren't enough left turning vehicles to create issues for northbound traffic flow in the am peak. Peter E reviewed his concern that creating this left hand turn lane will move the center line and restrict the room currently available for northbound traffic on Route 116. He said this is not a fatal flaw as long as northbound traffic flow is not impeded in the morning rush, and any necessary accommodations are made (possibly road widening) to continue to allow northbound vehicles to pass on the right.

Roger D discussed previous comments made about the CVU Road, Route 116 intersection being a high crash location. He said that the intersection itself is not a high crash location, but rather the high crash data reflects the overall CVU road segment of which the intersection is just a portion.

In summary, Roger D said that under the build scenario (with Hannaford):

1. Delays at the Charlotte Road intersection will decrease substantially.
2. PM peak hour queuing on Route 116 will decrease substantially south of Commerce Street.
3. Hannaford's traffic impact is not only fully mitigated, but the proposed mitigation measures will also result in a net improvement to traffic flow through the village.

Ted B asked how much the traffic will improve if the Charlotte Road intersection improvements were completed without Hannaford. Roger D said that they haven't modeled or assessed such a scenario. Ted B asked about a VTrans comment regarding the possibility of a new right hand turn lane for southbound Route 116 traffic at the Charlotte Road intersection. Roger D said that about 20% of the southbound pm peak traffic on Route 116 wants to turn right on to Charlotte Road, and the other 80% wants to continue straight. He said it would be impossible to make the right turn lane long enough to show a benefit to traffic flow given this ratio, and the various site constraints (overhead utilities, on-street parking, etc.).

Dick J asked about the projected queues for southbound traffic on Route 116 at the Commerce Street intersection. He said the queues projected by the traffic study make him wonder if there will need to be three lanes of traffic (two southbound, one northbound) over the box culvert that spans Patrick Brook. The proposed left turn lane extension shown on the plans do not indicate this. Roger D said that this may in fact be necessary, and if so, Hannaford will have to work this out with the VT Agency of Transportation.

Bill Marks, of the Conservation Commission, would like to know if the increased traffic from Hannaford will occur immediately upon opening the store, or some time later. Roger D said that the projected trip generation is based on a mature store. He said their model numbers are based on national trip generation rates for supermarkets that have been open for some time (i.e., mature). Bill M wondered how long it will take for Hannaford to get to that mature state.

Jeff French expressed concern about the Commerce Street, Mechanicsville Road intersection given that Commerce Street will have about seven times as much traffic as it does today, and given that the project will divert traffic from the state highway on to this Town road. He said that there are no pedestrian crosswalks across Mechanicsville Road at this intersection. He feels some improvements should be made to this intersection in order to ensure pedestrian safety.

Mary Crane encouraged the Board to consider the future development that will be coming to Hinesburg, and how those future traffic loads will affect the town. She is concerned that the Hannaford project may use up all the available traffic capacity.

Nancy Baker said she appreciated the work that Hannaford has done to help address the traffic issues; however, the Hannaford proposal is based on a promise to get the necessary State permits. She wondered why the DRB should grant approval to the project with such questions still outstanding.

Rik Paleri wanted to know how many trucks will come to the Hannaford site per week. Doug Boyce, of Hannaford, said that they do daily replenishment of goods in the store to help ensure a fresh and consistent supply. He said that there will be approximately one or two large Hannaford delivery trucks per day, and that these will come to the store during off peak traffic times. He said they will also get deliveries throughout the day from other smaller trucks from area suppliers and distributors. Rik P asked if the trucks will cause back up or congestion given the narrow width of Commerce Street. Doug B said that he didn't feel there would be an issue, especially given that the Hannaford supply trucks would be delivering during off-peak times.

Mary Beth Bowman said that she doesn't believe that Hinesburg's traffic issues will actually improve if the Hannaford is built. Harshad Vyas said that according to the traffic study, the level of service at the Route 116, Mechanicsville Road intersection will decrease. He wanted to know what the applicant will do to address this. Roger D noted that the issue is just during the pm peak hour, and that for the rest of the day, traffic exiting Mechanicsville Road will have little to no delay. He noted that they have demonstrated that Commerce Street has the capacity to handle the diversion of traffic headed to Route 116 from Mechanicsville Road.

John Roos noted that Lantmans generates approximately 255 trips during the peak hour, while Hannaford is projected to generate 386 trips during the peak hour. He finds it odd that traffic generation is only 50% larger for a new supermarket that is 300% larger than Lantmans. He feels the traffic numbers are cherry-picked and flawed. He feels the queue calculations are flawed due to the rolling stop/queue assumption. He feels the traffic modeling doesn't take into account increases in future traffic related to the eventual end of the recession. He has a big concern that the bridge/culvert over Patrick Brook will become a bottle neck, and if so, he wonders who will pay to fix this and how long will it take. He would like to ask David White why Hinesburg needs a store that is 300% larger when traffic impact is only increased by 50%. He wants to know why Hinesburg can't have a smaller store. Roger D explained how trip generation is calculated, and how grocery stores in smaller communities can actually generate more traffic than expected. David W said that they recognize that the three separate queues reported in the simulation modeling do in fact function as a single queue. However, he noted that they have measured the current queue at about 1700' from Charlotte Road, and under the Hannaford build scenario (with the Charlotte Road improvements), the combined queue would be reduced to 900'.

Bob Thiefels asked if the store size is non-negotiable. Tom M said that the 36,000 square foot store size is what the applicant is proposing.

Carl Bohlen said that the Board should look at the whole street network, and not simply the Route 116, Charlotte Road intersection. He is wary of the traffic data presented by the applicant, given that similar modeling and assurances were made when development at Tafts Corners in Williston was proposed, and the results were very different. He encouraged the Board to be careful about the assumptions being made. He said the community wants a vibrant downtown including significant use of the Lantmans property – likely with trip generation similar to what the site produces today. He is worried about the Hannaford project creating the need for a new traffic light at the Route 116, Mechanicsville Road intersection, which would be unfortunate.

Bill Lippert asked what standing Hannaford has to negotiate with the VT Agency of Transportation about changes to roads and intersections in Hinesburg. Roger D said it was standard practice for developers to negotiate with VTrans when a project impacts a state highway. Bill L asked if those negotiations were done in collaboration with the Selectboard. Roger D said they were not. Bill L said he was concerned about an applicant stepping into a relationship with VTrans.

George Holloch asked the Board to pay particular attention to two documents that were previously submitted regarding the project's lack of compliance with the Official Map: 1) a letter from attorney James Dumont; 2) a staff memo from Peter Erb (Zoning Administrator).

Chuck Reiss introduced Michael Oman (of Oman Analytics) who is a traffic engineer retained by Responsible Growth Hinesburg. Michael O said that Hannaford's traffic simulation still needs to be calibrated better since they haven't fully captured the existing conditions on the ground. He said the simulation shows existing queues that don't extend beyond Commerce Street, when

actual conditions show a much longer queue. He also said that a moving or rolling queue is still a long queue in reality. He felt the simulation is the right modeling tool, but it still needs further calibration. Michael O reiterated his previous comments about the ITE methodology being used in the Hannaford traffic impact study. He said that the ITE manual recommends the use of a trip generation equation that shows that smaller stores do generate relatively more traffic than Hannaford's assessment. He clarified his previous comments regarding future trip generation for the Lantmans site. He said his estimates were based on what the Zoning allows for and what could be possible based on the agreement the Lantmans owners made with Hannaford. He said he did select high trip generation uses in order to demonstrate what could happen. He also said that a small, neighborhood size shopping center could in fact locate in Lantmans, and that such a use would generate the trips he suggested.

Michael O noted that if Lantmans trip generation remained the same, the applicant's simulations show that there would be a larger queue for northbound traffic that would extend beyond Silver Street. He noted that even with the proposed mitigation measures, the level of service for the Mechanicsville Road intersection still drops to an F, and to level E for the Silver Street intersection. He also noted that the left hand turn lane/pocket at the Charlotte Road intersection may be problematic because in his experience, drivers do not typically pull to the left to let traffic by on the right, as is proposed/suggested for northbound traffic by Hannaford.

Greg W asked how the simulation could be improved if it doesn't capture the existing conditions on the ground. Michael O said the simulation clearly doesn't account for the current queuing, but he is not sure how it should be better calibrated. He said this is Hannaford's modeling, so they would be the ones to improve it. Ted B asked if Michael O agreed with Hannaford's projected trip generation numbers. Michael O said he does not agree with the numbers, and he feels that they will be higher.

Gill Coates read a written statement that he then submitted to the Board. Some of the points he touched on included:

1. He agreed with the DRB statement at the last meeting that subjective decision making is at the crux of this review.
2. He said there is no objective design standard, so this leaves the decision up to the sensibility of the DRB.
3. Why does Hinesburg need to look like something else? Why can't Hinesburg look different from other places?
4. Since there are no specific design standards, perhaps the various boards that created the regulations actually wanted all the buildings in Hinesburg to look different.
5. He disputes the Village Steering Committee's contention that Hannaford will attract significant traffic during the peak traffic times.
6. Placing Hannaford on lot 15 on Commerce Street will allow residents living on Pond Road, Mechanicsville Road, and Richmond Road access to important services without having to cross Route 116.

Greg W asked David White for something in writing to summarize the Official Map proposals made by Hannaford at the December 6 meeting. David W said he will address this.

Chuck Reiss introduced Dean Grover, a stormwater consultant hired by Responsible Growth Hinesburg to review Hannaford's stormwater treatment plan. Dean G said the stormwater treatment plans are crude and do not show how water quality will be addressed. He said treatment is not happening in the underground storage chambers. He said that the State of Vermont's stormwater permitting process does not require the applicant to demonstrate what will happen beyond a 10-year storm event. He said the DRB has it in their power to ask the applicant what would happen with stormwater in a larger rain event. Ted B asked if Dean G knew why the State's bar is only the 10-year storm. Dean G said it a size-based standard, and that larger projects with 10+ acres of impervious surface are required to plan for a 100-year storm event.

Tom M MOVED to continue the hearing to the January 17, 2012 meeting. Ted B SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED 7-0. Greg W MOVED to adjourn tonight's meeting. Tom M SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:50pm.

Respectively Submitted,  
Alex Weinhagen  
Director of Planning & Zoning