



# Town of Boscawen

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September 19, 2017

City of Concord, NH  
Planning Board  
41 Green St  
Concord, NH 03301

Subject: Expansion of retail development on Whitney Road.

The Boscawen Planning Board requests you take the following into consideration during your deliberations concerning the above captioned case:

We believe changing this property from allowing industrial (IN) and urban commercial (CU) to highway commercial (CH) is of regional impact and any future development in this area should be treated as such because:

Allowing major retail uses will cause additional traffic in the Exit 17 area and the Whitney Rd/ Hoit Rd/ Old Boyce Road intersection. This intersection is presently congested with traffic entering and exiting the incinerator, the service station and many small businesses presently located in this area.

Traffic backs up from the Boscawen round-about (a NHDOT project Boscawen did not request) to Exit 17 during rush hours and changing the Whitney Road area to allow major retail development will only exacerbate this situation

Adding retail traffic to this intersection will call for additional traffic controls, such as traffic lights or another roundabout, inconveniencing the residents of Penacook, Boscawen and the commuter traffic from elsewhere traveling to and from Exit 17.

We feel the present development covenants should not be relaxed because:

The retail development of Whitney Road will ensure no further retail uses will be proposed in Penacook Village. The demographic in both Penacook and lower Boscawen is not such that Penacook will attract a major investment in retail use, unless the retail development is forced to be there by not being allowed in its preferred area with a high traffic count.

To remain viable, Penacook Village needs businesses, such as grocery stores, that will draw shoppers into the area on a regular basis. If such a development can be attracted to Penacook Village, people will be attracted there on a regular basis. The vacant store fronts will fill up and the business that are already there, some of which seem to be just hanging on, will have an opportunity to thrive.

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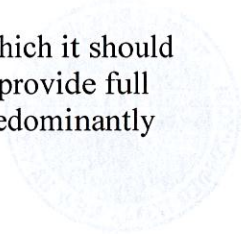
Linda Chandonnet  
*Planning & Community  
Development Clerk*

The Whitney Road development was proposed as, and is presently industrial, which it should remain. Industrial and commercial uses should be cherished over retail as they provide full time, well-paying jobs with benefits to its employees, whereas retail jobs are predominantly low wage, part-time without benefits.

Thank you for consideration of our thoughts on this matter.



Bruce Crawford Chair  
Planning Board



## Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission

28 Commercial Street ❖ Concord, NH 03301

Telephone: (603) 226-6020 ❖ Fax: (603) 226-6023 ❖ www.cnhrpc.org



### DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT REVIEW MEMO

Date: October 18, 2017

To: Concord Planning Board

From: Stephen Henninger AICP, CNHRPC Project Planner *SH*

RE: Development of Regional Impact Review for a request by Interchange Development LLC, to modify the conditions of a Covenant, and rezone 14.5 acres off Whitney Road, involving all of parcel 06/P5 and 4.6 acres of parcel 06/9/6 from a mixture of CU – Urban Commercial and IN – Industrial at the southeast intersection of Whitney Road and Hoit Road (US 4). The removal of the restrictive covenants would allow the retail area to expand from a maximum of 50,000 sf to approximately 85,000 sf.

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The CNHRPC performed a general review of the materials associated with the October 17, 2017, Concord Planning Board Agenda. Attached to the agenda was the applicant's request, the applicant's revised request, a copy of the restrictive covenant, a staff report, and a report from the City of Concord Traffic Engineer.

While no development is proposed at this time, except for the existing convenience store/fueling station on parcel 06/P/5 at 1 Whitney Road, the applicants request would allow for substantially more retail development than what would be permitted today.

The major issues associated with this project are traffic related and the potential for the project to adversely impact the future development of Penacook Village and King Street in Boscawen.

#### Regional Perspective

CNHRPC recommends the Concord Planning Board consider the following regional issues:

1. Traffic
2. Economic Impact on Penacook Village/King Street in Boscawen

#### 1. TRAFFIC

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The limitations of the Whitney Road/US 4/Boyce Road intersection as it is currently designed to accommodate additional retail development was well documented by the May 2012 Traffic Impact and Site Access Study (TISAS). The impacts identified from the construction of the convenience store/fueling station in the 2012 study "have been generally realized, since that development, daily traffic flows on Whitney road just south of Hoit Road have increased from about 1,000 vehicles per day to about 5,000

*vehicles per day. Peak hour delays for left turning vehicles are now notable, with staff aware of increasing concerns from delayed drivers.”<sup>1</sup>*

*” (City) staff does concur with the TISAS finding that signal warrants will be clearly met if an additional 46,000 sf of retail space is added .... Substantial intersection enlargement would be needed in addition to installation of traffic signals. This would include the widening of Hoit Road in the area of the intersection to provide a five-lane section: two through lanes in each direction plus a dedicated left-turn lane.”<sup>1</sup>*

In meeting with NHDOT in 2012, the Department advised that due to the close proximity of the subject intersection to the southbound ramps at I-93 Exit 17, any mainline lane widening to US 4/Hoit Rd at the Whitney Road Intersection must be extended easterly to the southbound on-ramp intersection, and indicated that alterations to this intersection may be required.

The City Traffic Engineer indicated that *“Improvements at this intersection (CIP 30) are programmed in FY 2025. \$2.25M is the current budget estimate, with \$2.05M anticipated from donations or private development and \$0.20M anticipated from general impact fees.”<sup>1</sup>* Please be advised due to actions made by the City Council on October 10, 2017, the amount of money to be collected from general traffic impact fees has been substantially reduced.

*“Central NH Regional Planning Commission (NHRPC) has included this project in its current FY19-28 10-year Transportation Improvement Plan for the region. CNHRPC submitted this recommendation to the NHDOT, however the subject project is not being considered in the current draft of the State’s latest 10-year plan.”<sup>1</sup>* No public or private funding has been allocated to date to improve, or even study this interchange, as well as the intersection of Whitney Road/Boyce Road/US 4 Hoit Rd. Following the release of the draft Ten (10) Year Plan, CNHRPC has advocated for the inclusion of funding to undertake an engineering study of this intersection.

**Recommendation:** A study needs to be funded and completed to determine the necessary traffic improvements required to support any additional retail development at this location. As part of this study, potential funding scenarios should be evaluated and participation in the study by the NHDOT, the City, and the Towns of Canterbury and Boscawen, along with affected property owners is essential.

## **2. ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

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The present Urban Commercial –CU was an attempt to allow greater flexibility in creating a commercial node at this location, at the request of the applicant, without creating a new commercial area that would adversely affect Penacook Village. The City at the time was well aware that the zoning applied to this location was not designed for an area like this. But the compromise reached was deemed to be reasonably consistent with the Master Plan when the Restrictive Covenant was applied. With surface parking, 10,000 sf building for retail uses per useable acre is used for estimating future development potential. A five acre retail commercial area would likely to generate up to 50,000 sf feet of gross floor area consistent with the restrictive covenant on the property.

It is clear that the demand for additional retail space is limited in the region. Nationwide it has been estimated is that up to 1/3 of the existing retail space is no longer required. The creation of a larger commercial node at this location could act to siphon additional non-residential development from Penacook Village and Fisherville Road, and from the Town of Boscawen along King Street (US 3 & US 4).

A complete streets improvement plan for King Street (US 4 & US 3) is currently included in the 2019-2028 Regional Transportation Plan, and has been included in the draft 10 Year State Transportation Plan. The Town of Boscawen's goal is to increase the intensity of development in this corridor that is suitable for pedestrian, bicycle, as well as motorized vehicle users along King Street.

**Recommendation:** The impact on the future redevelopment/development in Penacook Village/Fisherville Road, as well as King Street in Boscawen, should be addressed when considering the rezoning and/or release of the restrictive covenant on the Whitney Road property.

<sup>1</sup> "Traffic Considerations - Proposed Whitney Road Rezoning", Robert J. Mack, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer, report to City Planner dated September 28, 2017.

Thank you for providing CNHRPC with the opportunity to comment on this development of regional impact.



October 18, 2017

Dear Planning Board,

Thank you for all your hard work and dedicated time to making Concord and Penacook Village a welcoming, diverse and prosperous city! Kudos to you all. I live on Elm Street in Penacook and truly admire the new Village appeal. I see residents walking through the Village, shopping at the Pharmacy, Foxes, Chiefs and supporting the Village Garage. Evidence that the Village redevelopment is beginning to bring people back to the Village.

At this time, I urge you to continue limiting development at Exit 17. If development at Exit 17 moves forward in the manner the current developers (who are CANTEBURY residents mind you) want it to, the effects would be a negative impact to the Village.

- Penacook Pharmacy could shutter its doors, leaving a beautifully restored Historic building mostly vacant.
- Sam's store could close. Another vacant building.
- The sidewalks become empty. The roads become busy with drive through traffic.

The Rauseos state that the Village "doesn't have the buildable space for a drive through experience." I beg to differ. If the covenants are lifted and expansive development occurs at Exit 17, Penacook Village could be nothing but a drive through experience, with little to offer residents, visitors and future generations alike.

- The last thing Concord needs is another drive through, fast food restaurant feeding passerby's low quality food and providing zero dining experience.
- The last thing the Village needs is the lifting of covenants at Exit 17 to allow expanded development such as a franchise restaurant, bank, self-storage, strip mall, pseudo grocery store (I don't believe the Rauseos plan to do this), chain pharmacy, etc.

We all know taxes are high. My fiscal conservative nature wishes for lower taxes. That's another discussion. However, my independent nature recognizes that unique experiences – provided by local business owners in a Village setting – outweigh redundant, franchise experiences based on convenience. Exit 17 development is not nearly enough to lower taxes. And it's not worth the cost.

Sincerely,

*Brian C. Adams*

Brian C. Adams  
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Penacook, NH 03303  
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603.496.8250

October 17, 2017

Dear Planning Board

I've lived close to downtown Penacook for almost 10 years, and I strongly oppose lifting the covenants at Exit 17. I urge the city to continue limiting development at the exit.

- The city recently invested in downtown Penacook and it's looking nicer than I've ever seen it. A housing development is finally in the works for the tannery site. This is a better time than ever to promote business development in the village – and the exact *wrong* time to encourage development at Exit 17 that will directly threaten village businesses (both existing and potential).
- Chain stores, fast food restaurants, and increased traffic at Exit 17 greatly diminish the visual and emotional appeal of this part of Concord. Trees, natural wetlands, and quietude are valuable in their own right and something that I tremendously value about the place I live. I am sorely disappointed in the gas station and Dunkin' Donuts and they have already harmed the character of our community. Adding a bunch of chain stores and restaurants is going to seriously compromise the look and feel of this community.
- There are more than enough places for people to get gas, groceries, food, etc. along this stretch of I-93 – there are dozens of options within 10 minutes of Exit 17 in either direction. More development here seems redundant. Just because people stop there doesn't mean they're necessary – truckers and drivers go where it's convenient, but it's not like they can't wait ten minutes for a different option at a place that's already sacrificed its land.

Sure, we may have high taxes in Penacook. My husband and I don't like paying taxes and seeing the tax rate rise any more than anyone else, and we're all for Penacook having a strong tax base. But far more development would be needed to really make a difference in Penacook - \$100,000,000 in new assessed value to make our tax rate consistent with Concord's. Exit 17 development would make a small dent in our tax base, and it's not worth the cost. We need solutions that benefit existing businesses, encourage downtown investment as the tannery site develop, and sustain the area's natural resources and rural character.

At a minimum, I request that the Planning Board recommend the entire area – including the proposed Whitney Rd. extension – be studied for long-term master planning before any covenants are lifted or zoning changed.

I'd be happy to talk about this further with Planning Board members or staff if you'd like to discuss. Thanks for your attention.

Sincerely,



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