

Mr. Tom Derlinga

August 29, 2022

Chairman, East Granby P&Z Commission

Subject

RE: 8/16/22 Email from Town Planner

Request by Silverman Group for Zoning Regulation Amendment August 2022

Summary

The East Granby Economic Development Commission (EDC) on 8/22/2022 voted, at the regular monthly meeting, to reject the proposed amendment change to the Commerce Park Transition Zone by the Silverman Group. The vote was six (6) for rejection and one (1) for acceptance.

Having said this, it is important to clearly state that the EDC is unanimously in favor of this owner development of this property in the manner previously proposed. Our feeling is that the previous concept with multiple large commercial buildings, residential area and public spaces fits well within the consensus that drove the Plan of Conservation and Development to create this "Transition Zone" adjacent to the Village Center and residential zones.

Discussion

The proposed amendment to the Transition Zone is to:

Paragraph 2.d&e

- Increase the maximum building size from the current 400,000 square feet to 800,000 square feet. This is following a previous request and approval for a change from 300,000 square feet to the current 400,000 square feet.

Paragraph 4.a

- Trailer parking to 0.50 spots per 1,000 square feet (total proposed 400)
- Auto parking to 0.80 vehicles per 1,000 square feet (total proposed 640)
- Total number of dock doors to 0.60 per 1,000 square feet (total proposed 480)

The EDC discussed the benefits and drawbacks of this proposed change and agreed by a 6 to 1 margin that the drawbacks are more significant than the benefits.

Points of Concern

1. **Not consistent with the vision for the Zone** – The stated purpose of the Commerce Park transition Zone is – "A mixed-use zone that provides a variety of uses that promote an ideal transition between the Commerce Park areas and the residential zones and Village Center. Uses should be less intensive in nature and scale to better protect the quality of life and character of the surrounding residential zones and Village Center." We believe that an 800,000 square foot building would not be consistent with this zone stated purpose of limited scale and intensity.
 - a. All dock doors would need to be facing adjacent properties vs. the flexibility of "internal" building-facing-building docks. Noise could become a factor.
 - b. A large building likely means a large national company that will require a 24 hr. X 7 day/wk. activity profile.

- c. Warehouses by nature contribute fewer tax dollars per square feet than other uses. While it is true that this property by location is advantageous for warehouse use, an 800,000 square foot facility will seal its fate as a warehouse. Smaller buildings may attract other occupants that include a higher concentration of personal property and thus more taxable items and less intense use.
- 2. **Reduced Flexibility of Use** – The town of East Granby should be motivated to promote development of this property as a means of increasing our grand list and providing good paying jobs for our residents.
 - a. We believe that a single 800,000 square foot facility is less flexible for multiple uses and tenants than the previously suggested 400,000, 237,510 & 163,085 square foot facilities provide. While the sum total of the two configurations is similar, the single 800,000 square foot option is an all or nothing proposition. Either it is occupied or not. The previous multiple building configuration is more likely to have at least partial occupation over time.
- 3. **Impact on Other Like Zoned Properties** – The property discussed here is not the only large parcel located in the Commerce Park Transitional Zone. Zoning amendments accepted for this parcel would be applicable to those others which, due to their size, could be even more invasive.
 - a. The alternative is a Special Exception which puts into question the strategy and consistency in zoning regulation. Also note that previous requests for Special Exception have been rejected multiple times for a property on Seymour Road.

Sincerely,

Paul Thulen

Chairman, East Granby Economic Development Commission