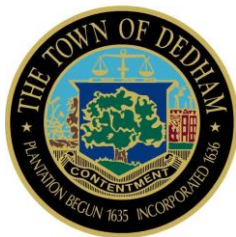


PLANNING BOARD

John R. Bethoney, Chair
Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Vice-Chair
James E. O'Brien IV, Clerk
Jessica L. Porter
James McGrail, Esq.
Andrew Pepoli Associate

Planning Director
Jeremy Rosenberger



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Office Manager
Jennifer Doherty

Senior Planner
Michelle Tinger

**TOWN OF DEDHAM
450 WASHINGTON STREET
DEDHAM, MA**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD MEETING
VIA ZOOM
OCTOBER 1, 2020, 7:00 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

John R. Bethoney	Chair
Michael A. Podolski, Esq.	Vice-Chair
James E. O'Brien IV	Member
Jessica L. Porter	Member
James F. McGrail	Member

PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Jeremy Rosenberger	Planning Director
Michelle Tinger	Senior Planner
Jennifer Doherty	Office Manager

GUESTS:

Steven Findlen	Senior Project Manager, McMahon and Associates
Jonathan Eichman	Solicitor, KP Law, Counsel for the Town of Dedham
Frederick Johnson	Assistant Building Commissioner, Town of Dedham

Minutes prepared by Angela Fracassi of Minutes Solutions Inc. from an audio recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bethoney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and explained the meeting procedures to the public.

**2. PUBLIC MEETING
480 SPRAGUE STREET – AMAZON, INC., MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW**

Guests:	
Peter A. Zhaka, Esq.	Attorney, Applicant's Representative
Brad Griggs	Senior Manager of Economic Development, Amazon
Michael Kelleher	Senior Program Manager, Amazon

Katie Toakes	Station Operations Manager, Amazon
Christopher Reevey	Construction Manager
Suzanne King	Civil Engineer, BL Companies
Michael Dion	Senior Project Manager and Traffic Engineer, BL Companies
Katie Close	Road Safety Specialist, BL Companies
Mossi Lowner	Griffiths Properties
Donna Panino	Griffiths Properties

The Chair stated that the primary focus of the meeting was to discuss the Applicant's traffic study, conducted in March 2020, and prepared by BL Companies. He requested that the Applicant respond to the Board's requests from the previous meeting before the traffic study is presented.

Peter A. Zhaka stated that the Applicant's proposal was peer-reviewed by McMahon and Associates on behalf of the Town of Dedham. In this initial review, 25 issues were identified. The Applicant responded to all 25 issues. McMahon and Associates indicated that the Applicant had successfully resolved 18 issues and that seven issues remained.

Mr. Zhaka responded to the Board's request for Amazon's real estate taxes over a three-year period. Amazon paid \$358,615 in 2018, \$357,970 in 2019, and \$354,703 in 2020. Personal property taxes were between \$1400 to \$1500. He also estimated that the proposal will result in over \$100,000 in excise taxes for the Town of Dedham.

Mr. Zhaka and Mr. Briggs elaborated on Amazon's various charitable donations. The distribution center has donated to the local food bank, women's shelter, Dedham Police Department, Dedham High School, Toys for Tots, and a backpack program. Amazon plans for these donations to become more centralized and formalized, through the Good Neighbor program. He also stated that Amazon owns Whole Foods and the Amazon Bookstore, which are both very active in the Town of Dedham. Amazon also donates to charity through the Amazon Smile program. Ms. Porter noted that Amazon Smile is not a local program, and her understanding is that many of Whole Food's charitable donations ceased once it was acquired by Amazon. The Chair noted that he has not seen any local youth, senior, or sporting event or team sponsored by Amazon and expressed concern that small businesses contribute more to the community than the largest corporation. Mr. Zhaka responded that the Good Neighbor program would have a dedicated Neighborhood Ambassador who would ensure that Amazon contributes to the local community.

Mr. Zhaka elaborated on trash pickup. The site is walked every two hours for the purposes of litter cleanup which includes pickup on Sprague Street in the front of the property.

Db02-escalations@amazon.com is the dedicated e-mail address for communication between members of the public and Amazon. Amazon will work with the Planning Board to determine the most effective way to disseminate this information. The Chair suggested that the email address should be changed to make it easier to remember. Ms. Porter suggested that Amazon should further publicize the Amazon Smile program while publicizing the e-mail address.

The Board has requested tractor-trailer routes. Trucks come from East Street Rotary and Sprague Street in order to enter the facility and are no longer driving on Whiting Avenue. Mr. O'Brien reported that he witnessed an Amazon tractor-trailer driving near Milton and Sprague, which is not permitted, and Ms. Porter reported that she witnessed a tractor-trailer on Whiting Avenue. Mr. Zhaka stated that Amazon will investigate these reports.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from members of the public.

Karen Palumbo stated that she tried unsuccessfully to send an email complaint to the distributed address several times since the last meeting.

Kerry Hawkins inquired if Amazon would consider not operating 24 hours per day, how to meet the Amazon Ambassador, and whether the traffic engineers have driven the truck routes.

Mr. Griggs answered that the Neighborhood Ambassador will begin at the end of October 2020 and will set up meetings with the local community.

Mr. Deon responded that he and his team drove the tractor-trailer routes.

Christine Fisher inquired about corrective actions against drivers who do not follow the correct truck route.

Mr. Griggs stated corrective action includes losing routes and eventually if not corrected, termination.

Louis Martin, 338 Whiting Avenue, stated that trucks often speed past his house at 2:00 a.m., which is very disruptive, and that trucks are not presently permitted on East Street.

Mr. Zhaka explained that a truck ban only includes thru trucking and not destination trucking and added third-party vendors may use a different GPS that may deviate from Amazon's preferred routes.

Laurel Conrad, 884 East Street, stated that Amazon trucks often drive over the rotary and sidewalk in front of her home, they are loud, and often in the middle of the night, and they have destroyed her trash cans and recycling, and have cracked the sidewalk.

Amit Choudhry inquired when trucks would arrive on-site in the new proposal.

Mr. Griggs responded that the tractor-trailers would start arriving at 8:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. with one to two trucks in the daytime.

Debbie Leech, 366 Sprague Street, stated that four or five trucks passed her house between 1:00 am and 4:00 am. The house often shakes and there are cracks in her foundation. Up to twenty overnight tractor-trailer deliveries are unacceptable in a residential neighborhood.

Lisa LaProd, 114 East Street, stated that she cannot open her windows at night anymore because of the constant sound of trucks.

Traffic Analysis

Michael Dion presented the traffic analysis. He summarized the Applicant's proposal and stated that his job was to analyze how these operational and site changes will affect traffic in the surrounding area. The traffic study considers existing patterns, the proposed changes, and background conditions that may affect traffic (such as two apartment buildings that were under construction), and projects traffic patterns for seven years. The proposed changes will eliminate the trips between Hyde Park and the Sprague Street site and would not change the number of vans entering the facility. It will reduce the number of total trips on the local roadways, particularly during the morning and evening commuting peaks. The Applicant presented the number of average daily trips. The Board requested more detailed information regarding the average timing and number of vehicle departures. All vehicles, including personal vehicles, were included in the

traffic study. The study projected that the proposed changes reduce the total number of daily trips to the site when compared to the site having three tenants rather than solely Amazon.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from the Board.

The Board asserted that the tractor-trailer traffic has been higher than anticipated. Amazon representatives initially projected 10-20 trucks would arrive daily, however, the average has been 18 daily trucks, which translates to 36 tractor-trailer trips through Dedham streets. The majority of trucks arrive between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., which many residents find disruptive. The Board noted that many of the complaints were regarding noise, and that sound mitigation should be discussed at a later meeting.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from the public.

Jim Maher, 22 Sherman Road, noted that Amazon Smile and Good Neighbor are excellent ideas, but that the email address should be simplified. He stated that he has not observed electronic nor in-person traffic monitoring on Sprague Street. He also suggested that neighborhood meetings take place monthly.

Mr. Dion stated that the traffic study was performed using surveillance cameras on utility poles in March 2020.

Karen Palumbo, 380 Sprague Street, suggested that a noise study be conducted.

Joanne Keaney, 88 Turner Street, suggested that the traffic study take place over a one-month period rather than two weeks, and should include significantly more streets. She advised that many of the neighbors intend to purchase their own equipment and collect their own data.

Kerry Hawkins, 347 Sprague Street, stated that there is a noise ordinance in the town of Dedham, which includes no loud construction noises from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. She also stated that she feels that Amazon has not been listening to neighbors regarding their complaints of late-night noise.

Michael Marks, 814 East Street, asked if there are plans to electrify Dedham's fleet and asked if there has been any thought to expanding the University Avenue site to Sprague Street.

Mr. Briggs responded that there has been an electrification pilot project in San Diego, and their expectation is the first 10,000 electric vehicles may arrive by late 2022.

Ms. King stated that expanding the University Avenue operation is outside of the scope of the project, however, it would disrupt sensitive wetlands.

The Chair asked that all Board Members carefully review McMahon and Associates report related to the traffic study. He noted that Mr. Findlen will present the report at the next meeting. The Chair asserted that he does not believe that the issues at hand will be resolved through the public meeting process. He requested that the Board support the formation of a negotiation task force to work with the Applicant. The task force will include one member of the Planning Board, one member of the Select Board, one member of the Zoning Board of Appeal, Mr. Steven Findlen of McMahon and Associates, town planner Jeremy Rosenberger, and two members of the public. The Board voiced their support for the task force. The Chair presented this idea to the Applicant's representative prior to the meeting, and the Applicant indicated they are willing to work with the task force to rectify the community's issues.

On a motion made by Ms. Porter, seconded by Mr. Podolski, it was resolved to form a negotiation task force. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Zhaka and Mr. Rosenberger reminded community members that documents can be found at bit.ly/480spraguestreet.

3. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to review the traffic review response was scheduled for October 28, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

4. DEDHAM SQUARE PLANNING STUDY UPDATE

Ms. Porter stated that the Dedham Square Planning committee will present their ideas at a separate meeting with the Planning Board at a later date. There have been some personnel changes within the committee and some appointments were required.

On a motion made by Ms. Porter, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, it was resolved to appoint Nick Garolick to the Precinct 3 Representative position, to appoint Amy Hailson to Member at Large, and to eliminate the Developer at Large Position. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried unanimously.

5. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Podolski, seconded by Mr. McGrail, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m. The motion was second by Ms. Porter. A roll call vote was taken:

John R. Bethoney	Yes
Michael A. Podolski	Yes
James E. O'Brien	Yes
Jessica L. Porter	Yes
James F. McGrail	Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.