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## Metacomet Noise Studies

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From Joshua Berlinsky <jberlinsky@darroweverett.com>

Date Thu 10/17/2024 11:02 AM

To Ray Lavey <rlavey@eastprovidenceri.gov>; William Fazioli <wfazio988@msn.com>

Cc Keith Brynes <kbrynes@eastprovidenceri.gov>; Stephen Amoroso <samoroso@sja-design.com>; Amy Goins <amygoins@utrlaw.com>

Dears Messrs. Lavey and Fazioli:

Pursuant to your request, we forwarded Mr. Baudouin's comments to our noise consultant, David Coate. His responses are highlighted below, please forward them as you see fit, we will be prepared to discuss them tonight. As a threshold matter, we wanted to point out a few items for your consideration:

First, as we have been saying for months, the previous Vanasse study used a Covid-adjusted factor for its counts well in excess of the updated counts referenced in the Crossman study for instance. As a result, the projected trip generation in the Vanasse report is higher since it worked from a corresponding higher baseline. Mr. Baudoin requested that the noise report take into account the Crossman numbers, which had a lower projected trip count as noted below. We thank Mr. Baudoin for the opportunity to point this out.

Second, as you can see below, Mr. Coate confirms that the amount of truck traffic along Veterans Memorial Parkway attributable to the proposed development would cause a negligible impact on the noise contours. Put simply, there is no adverse noise impact attributable to truck traffic.

Finally, as it relates to Mr. Baudoin's comment below regarding the noise standards, Mr. Coate correctly points out that that standard is not applicable to traffic.

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Hi Bill and Ray.

As we discussed at the last waterfront commission meeting, here are some comments on the latest noise analysis. Could you please distribute to members of the Commission and the Design Review Committee? Just let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss. Thank you.

A. Noise projections are based on the traffic counts that are underestimated for the following reasons:

1. The noise report uses data prepared by the preliminary traffic impact study by the Vanasse Traffic Study in March 2023. While this was the only available traffic data, the study is based on 122,500 square feet of commercial space, not 153,000 sq. ft. Thus, it underestimates the commercial square footage by 30,500 ft.<sup>2</sup> The noise study estimates noise levels which do not include the square footage.

*Response: See response to item 3.*

2. The Vanasse study does not use the most reliable traffic counts and thus may underestimate existing traffic

and, thus, noise levels. According to Pare Corporation in their April 15, 2024 peer review, "the development uses and sizes have changed since the Vanasse study was completed. The Vanasse study counts were taken during the Covid epidemic back in 2020. Pare recommends renewed analysis of city, intersections, utilizing new counts." The noise analysis should reflect any new, updated traffic information that may result from Pare's peer review and Marshall's response to it.

*Response: The updated traffic data actually has lower Future AADT volumes and speeds. The updated Fort Street AADT is 2,755, Lyon Avenue AADT is 4,290 at a lower speed of 30 mph, and Veteran's Memorial AADT is 22,590 with a lower speed of 40 mph. All of these reduced values result in lower future traffic noise levels along these roadways (see Table 5.1, Noise Analysis Report). In addition, as discussed in the Noise report, future traffic noise levels are below RIDOT traffic noise thresholds, which are only presented for informational purposes since they only apply to Type I Federal highway projects.*

3. The noise projections on truck traffic includes only the trucks generated by the 90,000 sq.ft. grocery store. It does not include truck traffic that will be generated by the additional 62,500 ft.<sup>2</sup> of commercial space.

*Response: The grocery trucks analyzed fall into the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) heavy truck category. Only light duty vehicles (i.e., not heavy trucks) are expected to service the commercial space.*

4. The projections do not include any construction vehicles that will serve the development over the ten year build out of the project.

*Response: Construction details including number, type, and location of construction vehicles is not known at this time.*

5. The projections also do not include any delivery trucks that will serve the 890 residential units on the site.

*Response: See response to item 3. No heavy trucks are expected to service the residential units.*

B. In addition to the underestimation of vehicle and truck traffic, there should be more analysis on the noise that will be generated by truck traffic. The stated truck route will be on Veterans Memorial Parkway between I-195 and Lyon Avenue. The report says that the projected number of trucks serving the grocery store is a small number compared to total traffic on the parkway, and there should be no noise level increase on the parkway. However, along Veterans Memorial Parkway, from I195 to the Metacomet Executive Office Park, there are many houses and an abutting residential neighborhood. With the introduction of many large trucks on the Parkway on a daily basis, the noise levels will increase and the quality of life may decrease. These residents and homeowners have experienced a car only parkway for many years. With the introduction of trucks, the effect on these residences and the neighborhood needs to be analyzed. The noise impact of many trucks, some of which may have a 90 dBA level ( Noise study Figure 4-1), passing close to their neighborhood, and in some cases close to front doors and backyards, needs to be determined.

*Response: As stated in the Noise Report, because of the large volume of traffic on Veterans Memorial Parkway, the additional 30 trucks per day will cause a negligible difference (<< 1 dB) in the 65 DNL contours shown in Figure 5.1. To put this in perspective, the number of additional trucks would have to be a significant fraction of the overall AADT value to make a difference in the noise contour.*

The Waterfront District Plan, and the Design Guidelines for Veterans Memorial Parkway District and the Metacomet District all state that "increased truck traffic would adversely affect the neighborhoods adjoining the parkway". In the light of these statements, the Commission needs to determine the effect on this neighborhood based on more accurate traffic and noise analysis.

C. The report discusses construction noise and lists potential techniques for mitigating the noise. However, the report states that no mitigation measures have been developed since detailed construction equipment and scenarios are not available at this phase of the project. However, Marshall could provide specific information on construction equipment and scenarios so that specific mitigation measures can be recommended.

D. On page 14 of the noise study, it states the following: "the City of East Providence Noise Ordinance most stringent residential noise limit of 50 dBA." There should be a discussion about how this relates to the projected noise levels on Lyon Avenue, Fort Street and the residential section of the Parkway discussed in "B" above.

*Response: Town/City Noise Ordinances do not apply to vehicular traffic.*

E. While there is no traffic projection for Mercer Street and thus no noise impact analysis, it should be remembered that the Vanasse study recommended access control measures to restrict through traffic on the street. Without these control measures, there could be adverse traffic and noise effects on the school, the park and the residences on the street.

*Response: Comment noted.*

## Josh Berlinsky, Esq.

Senior Partner



Office (401) 453-1200

Fax (401) 453-1201

Email [jberlinsky@darroweverett.com](mailto:jberlinsky@darroweverett.com)

Website [darroweverett.com](http://darroweverett.com)

Address 1 Turks Head Pl, Suite #1200  
Providence, RI 02903

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