

**Town of Boscawen
Planning Board – 2023 Technical Review Committee
Boscawen Municipal Complex
Final Meeting Minutes
Friday July 14, 2023 at 9:00 am**

Members Present: Kellee Jo Easler—Planning and Community Development Director; Barbara Randall—Planning Board Vice Chair; Charles Bodien, Jr.—Building Inspector; Alan Hardy—Code Enforcement Officer; Katherine Phelps—Town Administrator; Tim Kenney—Fire Chief; Jason Killary—Police Chief

Staff Present: Kearsten O’Brien—Deputy Planning and Community Development Director

Excused: Dean Hollins—Public Works Director

Others Present: Steve Brown—President of Ross Express, LLC.

Chair Easler called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Deputy PCD Director O’Brien completed roll call. Fire Chief Kenney arrived at 9:05 a.m. and Police Chief Killary arrived at 9:24 a.m.

Minutes:

Code Enforcement Officer Hardy motioned to approve the 11/18/22 draft minutes as presented. Seconded by Building Inspector Bodien. Town Administrator Katie Phelps and Planning Board Vice Chair Barbara Randall abstained. The motion passed.

New Business:

Lot Merger Map 81B Lot 54 & Lot 56 Sublot A: Chair Easler introduced Mr. Steve Brown, President of Ross Express, LLC, and asked him to tell the TRC about his proposal. Mr. Brown explained that the Ross Express location in Boscawen is the corporate office and there were five other facilities within New England. The largest of which was constructed last December. It is 100ft wide, 145ft long, 80-door terminal in Auburn, MA. The company was recently given a prestigious award for being a small trucking company that has received national recognition. Ross Express was created 76 years ago, is still family owned, employs 355 people, has 220 power units (trucks), 250 trailers, and 6 locations. Mr. Brown provided a map showing the locations of the Ross Express family terminals. Mr. Brown was approached by Pitt Ohio three times in 2014, 2017 and 2018, about investing in Ross Express. The interest was that Ross Express was already doing all the work for Pitt Ohio within New England, including deliveries, pick-ups, and loading their trailers to go back to their facilities in Pittsburg, Ohio. In 2018, Mr. Brown agreed to sell 75% of the company to Pitt Ohio. His concern at that time was there was no one who expressed interest in taking over the company to bring it to the next level. That business deal gave Ross Express a reason to expand, so the company recently purchased the land next to them. Their current building was never designed to serve such a successful business. Mr. Brown would like to construct a brand

new 100ft wide, 300ft long, 60-door terminal on the newly acquired property, as well as a new 10,000 sq. ft., 8-door maintenance facility. He would like the town to be involved in the planning process, including the landscaping. They haven't started the architectural plan process yet, and he would like the facility to be as far to the back on the property as possible, as to not disturb their neighbors. Mr. Brown would like to merge the two lots together to create one lot to place the new terminal on. The parcel where the business currently sits is Map 81B, Lot 54 with a location of 195 North Main Street and has 7.28 acres. The lot that was recently purchased is Map 81B, Lot 56, Sublot A with a location of 193 North Main Street and has 57.83 acres. The existing driveway where the trucks exit through the gate would remain the same, but the current parking lot would be moved. They would be willing to put up a vegetative buffer along the road as well. Mr. Brown would prefer the facility not be visible from the road, if possible. Chair Easler asked if Ross Express would be required to amend their site plan through a Planning Board meeting. Code Enforcement Officer Hardy said if the only change to the site would be to replace the old facility with a new one, that could be done in a TRC meeting. Chair Easler reviewed the application. She said both pieces of land were now owned by Ross Express, and there were no mortgages. Lot 56 Sublot A was in the Village District zone and Lot 54 was in an Industrial zone. She asked for input from the TRC about which lot number would remain. The main lot was Lot 54, and she recommended merging the newly acquired lot into Lot 54. Both parcels would then be known as Map 81B, Lot 54 and would be zoned Industrial. All concurred. PB Vice Chair Randall asked if a vegetative buffer or fence would be placed along the Boscawen Elementary School's property line. Mr. Brown responded that they typically prefer to fence in their facilities so they would be sure to do so. There was already an existing tree line and they don't plan to touch it unless the town asked them to. The existing building would remain and be utilized as a warehouse and distribution center. Building Inspector Bodien asked what would happen to the existing administrative offices. Mr. Brown said those would likely be leased out, and the new building would include new offices. The existing maintenance facility would also revert to a warehouse. Ross Express also has a brokerage operation, which is a different division that holds a license to arrange freight. That is called Ross Logistics. The reason Mr. Brown started it was for their "Mom & Pop" accounts. Ross Express was then able to help these customers freight to national locations. He said this division has been growing rapidly. They will likely leave Ross Logistics in the existing building. Mr. Brown asked if it would be possible to get preapproval for an addition or if he would have to come back to the TRC. Code Enforcement Officer Hardy said if the architectural plans presented were for a larger terminal than what was going to be built then yes. During the building permit process, approvals could be done in phases. Fire Chief Kenney asked if it would be possible to put in an access road to the Boscawen Elementary School lot to ensure a secondary means of access to both properties for emergencies. Mr. Brown agreed that would be a good idea. Town Administrator Phelps asked if there were currently any issues with traffic on North Main Street, and if there would be any need for a traffic light there at any point. Mr. Brown said no. Building Inspector Bodien asked if the land had been evaluated to see if there was enough buildable area with respect to wetlands, etc. Mr. Brown said they just received the engineering, and there is a wetland crossing, but there will be plenty of buildable area for the new building. No further discussion.

Town Administrator Phelps motioned to approve the lot merger for Map 81B Lot 54 and Lot 56 Sublot A. Seconded by Planning Board Vice Chair Randall. All in favor. None opposed.

Other Business:

Chair Easler informed the Committee of pending Planning Board applications. Discussion ensued about development in town.

Motion to adjourn made by Planning Board Vice Chair Randall. Seconded by Town Administrator Phelps. All in favor. None opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Kara Gallagher.