

The Telegraph

Hudson officials plan hearing for logistics center



HUDSON – What could become the state’s largest logistics center may be up and running as soon as fall 2021 if all goes as planned, officials said.

The proposed center could become Hudson’s largest employer by nearly three times, bringing 2,500 direct and indirect jobs to the town once operational. It also would be more than double the size of what is currently the state’s largest logistics center.

The town will host a public hearing on the project at 7 p.m. May 27. Details on the meeting are available on the town website.

“The largest logistics center that I’m aware of is the Walmart center in Raymond, which is just about one million square feet,” founder and president of Montagne Communications Scott Tranchemontagne said.

The proposal submitted by Hillwood Investment Properties, a Dallas-based development firm, seeks to construct three high-tech distribution facilities

on the Green Meadow Golf Club property, creating roughly 2.6 million square feet of warehouse space.

“We are projected to put over \$300 million of investment into the property,” said Justin Dunn, Hillwood vice president for development.

Dunn said Hillwood has begun a fiscal impact study to help determine the job counts. The study also will help determine the tax revenue base. While millions are being invested into the project, Dunn said the \$300 million is mostly for construction costs.

“When we start getting into site work, and utilities and traffic mitigation and things of that nature that we’re continuing to investigate and work through, it’s going to be substantially more,” Dunn said.

The proposal would divide the site into three lots, each with its own distribution building, including loading docks and parking. The site will be accessed by one public and one private roadway. Dunn said Hillwood is working with the state and the town on mitigation and traffic impacts created by the project. A traffic study has been submitted with the application, which recommends several mitigation measures.

Tranchemontagne said that some of these traffic improvements that are on the table is potential lane realignments and optimization of traffic signals. Dunn also said that typically how Hillwood goes into design and preparation of these types of logistics centers is to have the potential to partition off buildings, either with two tenants or even three tenants.

The site is zoned for this purpose and offers an ideal location for a logistics center given its close proximity to major highways, which allows access to nearby cities and beyond.

The proposal seeks to preserve 230 of the site’s 374 acres as green space, including natural buffers between the Merrimack River and adjoining neighborhoods. The plans include minimizing the impacts of potential noise and light for those neighboring the site on Fairway Drive and Eagle Drive by creating a 200-foot buffer that includes screening, trees, bushes and other landscaping and buffering features.

One of the things Montagne Communications does is to help the logistics center communicate with the community, and Tranchemontagne said they have received a ton of support. Tranchemontagne added that they are already in discussions with several of the neighbors to the site who have reached out through the website. He said they are having good conversations with them and that it is great to hear directly from them in terms of what their concerns are.

Tranchemontagne said that economically, this is exactly what the community needs.

“It’s purely coincidental that the pandemic is happening, but with such high unemployment with so many people looking for work – these are good jobs, these are good paying jobs with benefits,” Tranchemontagne said. *“It’s coming together at the right time.”*

With more people shopping online, logistics centers could bring faster delivery of purchases.

The proposal must be reviewed by the Hudson Planning Board and Conservation Commission. The proposal also will be reviewed independently by third party peer review engineering consultants selected by town officials.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services will review the plan as will the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“We always try to be as confident as possible in these types of developments, and we hope to gain support as we continue through the process,” Dunn said.

Hillwood has set a goal of beginning construction this fall and opening the center in fall 2021.

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