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TOWN OF SUTTON

PLANNING BOARD & DEPARTMENT

June 9, 2023

Rebecca Tepper, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: EEA# 16593 – Unified Parkway Industrial Development

Secretary Tepper:

The Town of Sutton Planning Board would like to provide the following commentary relative to the Project Commencement Notice (PCN) submitted for the Unified Parkway Industrial Development project to be located between Boston and Providence Roads in Sutton.

Our first concern is traffic impact. The majority of the projects 4,600+/- trips will be traveling north and south on Route 146 directly impacting the intersection of Route 146 and Boston Road. Employee trips will also impact local roads like Dudley and Central Turnpike. We are concerned that no mention of the use of rail has been made in any MEPA documents even though a rail spur exists at this property. Why is the use of rail to potentially off set truck traffic not addressed?

The second, although related, concern is environmental impact. While it is clear having warehousing much closer to Unified headquarters is a plus and will reduce greenhouse gas(GHG) emissions along and at the previous warehouse locations, the traffic study still shows 80% of truck trips using Route 146 north. Therefore, these trips are not traveling to and from the headquarters located south of the project site. These are new trips to this area with an increase in GHG emission to the Sutton and Blackstone Valley corridor area which should be mitigated in this area.

While the buildings are noted as solar ready, no commitment has been made to alternative green energy sources. Electric heating is still predominantly fueled by fossil fuels. Additionally, this phase of the project will render more than 100 acres impervious and create a significant potential for heat island effect. The use of materials, vegetation, and technology to reduce/eliminate this impact should be mandatory.

Sutton is absolutely in favor of more tax base development as well as the creation of a wide range of jobs and housing opportunities within our limited commercial and industrial districts. However, the proposed project will also have impacts in and beyond Sutton that must be thoroughly understood and mitigated.

We request the State's assistance in ensuring the effects of this project, and the cumulative effects of this and other projects being developed along the Route 146 Corridor, are mitigated. These efforts are essential to ensure the long term viability of working, living and thriving within the Blackstone Valley.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our input. Feel free to reach out to our Planning Director for any questions or clarifications.

Sincerely,

Jennifer S. Hager,
Planning & Economic Development Director

cc: Eva Vaughan, MEPA
Lauren DeVoe, VHB
Sutton Town Manager
Sutton Select Board
Barry Lorion, Director, District 3 MassDOT
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission