

P5005-004
August 14, 2020

Mr. Richard Harris
Director of Planning & Conservation
116 Main Street
South Hadley, MA 01075

Re: **Response to Technical Comments**
PeoplesBank Branch Banking Center

Dear Richard and Members of the Board:

Tighe & Bond has been retained by PeoplesBank to provide a response to the Planning Boards comments on the Special Permit and Site Plan Review application for the PeoplesBank Branch Banking Center. Below are the Planning Board's comments in italics and our responses in bold lettering:

Special Permit

1. Applicant needs to provide decibel levels associated with the drive-thru and compare to the DEP noise standard.

The ITM decibel levels are as follows: 65 dB when idle, 68 dB when operating, and 78 dB with AC running. The ITM is located approximately 20'-0" from the property line and as a result, the decibel level at the property line ranges from 38.5 dB to 51.5 db. According to M.G.L. Chapter 111, Section 142A-M (MassDEP Noise Policy), the ordinance for exterior noise states a noise source will be in violation, if it increases the sound level by more than 10db above ambient levels at the property line. Ambient background noise in metropolitan, urbanized areas typically varies from 60 to 70 dB (can be as high at 80db or greater), while quiet suburban neighborhoods experience ambient noise levels of approximately 45-50 dB. For our site, we are assuming an average ambient level of 55dB. Therefore, any noise pollution caused by the ITM would be below the ambient noise levels, essentially imperceptible off-site and not considered a violation in any way.

Site Plan Review

1. Reconsideration of the necessity of the Newton Street curb cut and, if deemed necessary, consideration for it being entrance only.

The Newton Street curb cut has been modified to be entrance only. All other entrances/exits remain unchanged.

2. Consider increased planting along Newton Street (particularly in front of the building).

Additional plantings have been provided along newton street, particularly in the area adjacent to the building. See revised Sheet C-500 – Landscaping Plan for additional details.



3. Reconsider the species selection in the bioretention area per Conservation Administrator's comments.

The plantings in the bioretention area have been updated as per the Conservation Administrator's suggestion.

4. *Reconsider the use of White Pine Trees along the perimeter of the site.*

The white pine at the perimeter has been replaced.

5. *Utilize NOAA Atlas-14 rainfall figures in instances where the data shows more significant storms than that of TP-40 rainfall data and demonstrate that the stormwater management systems could accommodate the load.*

The rainfall data has been updated to utilize both Atlas-14 and TP-40. The larger rain event for each storm, from each dataset, was used in the design. The stormwater design still complies with MassDEP Stormwater Standards and no changes were required to accommodate the new rainfall data.

6. *Consideration for 'green infrastructure' as detailed on Liz Austin's comments (raingarden, pollinator garden, increased tree planting) and member O'Brien's comments (solar roofing, electric car charging stations/ hookups for future consideration).*

All the trees currently proposed are designated as pollinator friendly by the Arbor Day Foundation. The bioretention basin is planted with native, pollinator-friendly species including a section that will be planted with a wildflower seed mix to provide a habitat area for pollinators.

The proponent has considered the board's request for inclusion of green technologies, such as solar panels and an electric car charging station. However due to the scale of construction and the average short visit times, they will not be incorporating these technologies, at this time.

7. *Consideration for installation of speed bumps.*

Traffic control devices have been added and are shown on Sheet C-200 Site Layout Plan. Speed humps will be placed in the parking lot.

8. *Confirmation of dumpster pickup hours*

Dumpster pick-up is planned for once per week, in the morning, no earlier than 8am.

9. *Verification that the components of the site plan requiring Fire and Building Department approval (ex: egress, 'bobble head logo' at the drive-thru) satisfy those departments requirements.*

Tecton Architects will meet with the Building Commissioner and Fire Marshal to confirm building code compliance and signage bylaw compliance. Any required changes will be communicated to the Planning Board throughout all remaining phases of the project.

10. How does the lighting plan relate to the Town's General Bylaws with respect to residential uses adjacent and across the street from the development? Has anyone reviewed Chapter 171 of the Town's General Bylaws to assess how the lighting plan conforms to the requirements? The photometric analysis cuts off at the curb line - it does not show the foot candles at the property line

The proposed light fixtures are all flat-lens products that are rated Nighttime Friendly by being "consistent with LEED goals and Green Globes criteria for light pollution reduction." While there is some light spillage onto the adjacent properties, the foot-candle levels shown on the photometric plan do not consider the large arborvitae hedge that separates the residential abutter on Dayton Street, or the mature height or canopy sizes of the trees along the perimeter of the site. An updated photometric plan has been provided on Sheet C-700 Photometric Plan.

Conservation Commission

1. Consider using NOAA Atlas 14 precipitation and storm frequency data which is now being promoted as the "new" TP-40 to see if there are any differences in sizing of the system designed, and require the system to be sized based on current science and data.

The rainfall data has been updated to utilize both Atlas-14 and TP-40. The larger rain event for each storm, from each dataset, was used in the design. The stormwater design still complies with MassDEP Stormwater Standards and no changes were required to accommodate the new rainfall data.

2. Bioretention Area - One of the plants is inappropriate for the system and will likely not survive past one year. Cardinal flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*, is a wetland plant (FACW+) and is proposed as the dominant herbaceous forb. This plant should be replaced with more upland tolerant species e.g. New England Aster, Smooth Blue Aster, *Liatris*, Wild Bergamot, or similar.

The bioretention basin plantings have been revised to include Wild Bergamot rather than Cardinal Flower.

Board of Health

1. The Board of Health is requiring any stormwater control structures to be free of standing water within 72 hours. Test pits, soil logs, and stormwater calculations are to be included. Test pits are to be witnessed by a Board of Health staff member.

Test pits were performed and observed by a Massachusetts Certified Title V Soil Evaluator. Additional test pits can be performed during site construction and will be coordinated with the Board of Health to confirm initial findings.

2. Water should be made available during construction and a tracking pad present to mitigate potential nuisances.

A construction entrance tracking pad is shown on Sheet C-100 – Existing Conditions and Demolition Site Plan. Sheet G-002 – Standard Legend and Abbreviations note 7 under Erosion Control and Resource Area Protection Notes has been updated to include the following Provide adequate water on site during construction for dust control.

Additional Comments

1. First, I request that in the plans for landscaping, PeoplesBank avoid creating a 'hot spot' due to heat captured by required paving and mitigate the heat by planting as many shade trees as possible. This is critically important as we expect to experience increased climate change and global warming. I also request that water runoff from pavement be captured by 'rain gardens' to prevent adding pollution to our waterways. Finally, please include a pollinator garden in the landscaping. Bees and other insects are on the decline and we should do all we can to help their survival. We need them!

Shade trees are proposed wherever possible to mitigate the potential heat island effect from the project. Upon maturation, a significant portion of the pavement will be shaded by the tree canopies throughout the day. Much of the stormwater runoff on-site will be captured, treated, and infiltrated by the proposed sediment forebays and bioretention basin. A pollinator habitat is provided within the bioretention basin.

2. Oak Trees along the streets could be problematic for storm drain systems and the sidewalks due to acorns.

Oak Trees have been revised to Hackberry trees.

3. Lack of fencing around employee parking area.

The dumpster enclosure adjacent to the employee parking will be enclosed with fencing. Plantings and site trees have been provided for additional shielding of the parking area. An existing hedgerow is also located to the west of the parking area protecting the parking area from the adjoining parcels. We believe that the parking area will be adequately shielded without the need for additional fencing.

We trust this additional information will be satisfactory for the Planning Board to complete review of the Special Permit and Site Plan Review application. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me (413.572.3281 or JPViamari@tighebond.com) or Matt Wzorek (413.572.3274 or MPWzorek@tighebond.com).

Very truly yours,

TIGHE & BOND, INC.



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