

September 18, 2024

Mr. Doug Mclean
Director of Planning & Economic Development
1670 Flat River Road
Coventry, RI 02816

Re: **Centre of New England-Master Plan
Traffic Engineering Review Services
Coventry, Rhode Island**
(Pare Project No.: 24181.00)

Dear Mr. Mclean:

Pare Corporation (Pare) has completed our review of the traffic study and the accompanying documents for the Centre of New England – Parcels 2, 3 & 4 Development Project. As part of our review, the following documents were provided by the Town or obtained from the Town website:

- *Centre of New England -Parcels 2, 3 & 4 Plans for the Master Plan Submission* dated July 30, 2024 prepared by DiPrete Engineering (9 sheets)
- *Project Narrative- Centre of New England -Parcels 2, 3 & 4* dated July 30, 2024 prepared by DiPrete Engineering
- *Traffic Impact Study for Proposed Residential Development* dated August 2024 prepared by Crossman Engineering
- *Zoning Board of Review Application Dimensional Variance* dated August 1, 2024 prepared by Starr Capital LLC
- *Transportation Master Plan* dated November 23, 2004 prepared by Rizzo Associates

Pare offers the following comments regarding this submission:

August 2024 Traffic Impact Study

1. *Introduction:* I would recommend revising the primary access to the highway is “Arnold Road to New London Turnpike.”

Based on field reviews and access to/from I-95, Pare was to recommend also analyzing the New London Turnpike/Centre of New England Boulevard intersection. Based on our staff meeting on September 16, 2024, the applicant agreed to include in the study to be performed at the preliminary phase this intersection after the Centre of New England Boulevard is connected to Hopkins Hill Road. It is felt that there will be better information as far as traffic redistribution and the impacts to this intersection once the roadway is connected and opened.

The intersections analyzed were done during the weekday morning and afternoon peak hours. With the amount of retail in the Centre of New England (Walmart, Home Depot, BJ’s, hotels, restaurants, etc.), I recommend at the preliminary phase study to collect and analyze weekend midday counts

at the study area intersections.

2. *Project Area:* It is recommended to include a better plan within the report depicting the actual development being proposed and the connections to the existing roadways.

As stated in the report, upon completion of the connection of the Centre of New England Boulevard, and as the development proceeds, future analyses of the traffic need to be performed at the Preliminary phase.

As previously stated, the limits of analysis should include at the Preliminary phase New London Turnpike between Arnold Road to I-95.

Pare is in agreement with the statement that the analyses will need to be performed as the roadway connections and the development continues to evolve.

3. *Existing Conditions:* I-95 to Centre of New England Entrance revise to state there is concrete sidewalk from Mishnock Road to the Centre of New England Entrance.

Arnold Road- revise sidewalk and utility corridor to read on the west side of the road.

As previously noted, New London Turnpike should be included as part of study.

Hopkins Hill Road/Centre of New England Boulevard intersection -installation of crosswalks and ADA ramps along with stop lines and stop bars need to be installed as part of the roadway connection.

Hopkins Hill Road/Centre of New England Boulevard intersection - it is noted that a signal should be installed when warranted through MUTCD. A warrant analysis is not included in the study to confirm the status of the need of a signal. There is a significant concern of the safety of the intersection when the road is connected, in particular with safety. With the alignment and layout of Hopkins Hill Road, the volume of traffic and the speeds on Hopkins Hill Road, safety measures should be put in place when the roadway is connected and opened. Measures include installing a temporary traffic signal, reduction of approach lanes, and advanced signage to make it safer.

As previously noted, New London Turnpike/Centre New England Boulevard should be included in the study. It was agreed that this stretch of roadway will be included when the study is updated once better data is available with the road connection and before the Preliminary phase.

4. *Traffic Data:* To reiterate the above, Pare is of the opinion that due to the commercial uses in the area, Saturday peak hour counts should be performed and analyzed. Also, we are of the opinion that at a minimum, the Centre of New England Boulevard/New London Turnpike intersection should also be included.

On Figure 3b, the traffic volumes for the New London Turnpike movement from west right turn movement should be revised. Figure indicates 84 vehicles while the count data indicates 34 trips.

5. *Safety Analysis:* Please confirm limits of crash data requested. Report states the study area is

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Hopkins Hill Road from I-95 to King Street and Arnold Road between Harrington Road and New London Turnpike. As previously stated, it is our opinion that New London Turnpike between Arnold Road and I-95 should also be reviewed.

Please confirm that the crash data for Hopkins Hill Road and Arnold Road limits matches the study area described. Also, confirm that, there were no reported crashes in the study area for 2023.

6. *Future Traffic Conditions*: The future growth rate based on count data from the 2004 Transportation Master Plan and historic population growth is acceptable. The study includes a conservative 1% annual growth rate.

Redistribution of future traffic volumes for other developments will be necessary after better existing conditions are known with the road connection to Hopkins Hill Road.

The Willow Lakes Senior Housing Project and the *Crompton Meadows* residential development were included in the Future conditions analyses. For future conditions projecting 5 years out, projected traffic volumes for future residential uses and proposed traffic for other development parcels within Centre of New England should be included. Also, other developments including the residential *New London Preserve*, the residential development *Village at Tiogue* should be considered. Also, in East Greenwich there is a significant residential development being proposed on Division Street. Impacts due to all of these developments should be reviewed and included as appropriate.

7. *Operational Analysis*: As previously noted, with the retail development in the area, Saturday peak hour should be included in the report. Also, the study intersections should be expanded.

The plans provided indicate a roundabout at the proposed site entrance/Crestwood Drive/Arnold Road intersection. It is our understanding that this has not been finalized at this Master Plan Phase. This needs to be finalized with appropriate analyses performed at the preliminary stage. That being stated, the existing analyses indicate that the level of service pulling out of the proposed site driveway and Crestwood Drive will be at a Level of Service (LOS) F. The queuing of traffic is not significant, but the delay is.

Also, the LOS for Future Build conditions indicate a LOS F movement for the movement from Centre of New England Boulevard to Hopkins Hill Road. Mitigation to improve this intersection will need to be considered and implemented.

8. *Conclusions and Recommendations*: Signage or other measurements to limit thru traffic onto Dante Boulevard should be included in the future design going forward.

Future designs of the roadways/intersections should be performed to maximize safety.

Miscellaneous Comments

1. As previously noted, that once the roadway connection is made between Centre of New England Boulevard and Hopkins Hill Road, the redistribution of traffic within the development and on the surrounding roadways will be better understood. At the Preliminary phase an updated study is to

be provided with the new traffic patterns. Expansion of the intersections, in particular the Centre of New England Boulevard/New London Turnpike intersection should be studied as concerns for traffic queuing from Centre of New England Boulevard to Arnold Road has been noted. Also, the I-95 ramps with New London Turnpike and Hopkins Hill Road should also be considered.

2. The plans indicate a potential connection between Lots 3 and 4. The intent of this roadway (connector road, emergency road) needs to be clarified. The analyses reviewed did not anticipate a connection.
3. At the Preliminary phase when roadway geometry is better defined, turning radii needs to ensure accommodations to turning movements for all vehicles are provided.
4. Parking is being provided for 1.5 spaces per unit. The Town requires 2 spaces per unit. Back-up data has been provided by the applicant to support the 1.5 spaces per unit. Pare concurs that 1.5 spaces per unit is acceptable.
5. The *Transportation Master Plan* identifies mitigation that is anticipated as the development proceeds. The potential mitigation includes:
 - I-95 ramp/New London Turnpike signalization improvements and widening for a two-lane right turn off-ramp
 - I-95 northbound ramp/New London Turnpike signalization and coordination
 - Hopkins Hill Road/Centre of New England Boulevard signalization and widening for southbound left turn movements
 - New London Turnpike/Centre of New England Boulevard widening for southbound right turn lane

These proposed should be further investigated for if and when they may need need to be implemented.

In summary, Pare is of the opinion that for the Master Plan traffic study, the methodology and the data and analyses provided is acceptable. However, the applicant is aware that a more detailed study needs to be provided at the Preliminary phase as better information will be known regarding traffic flow and distribution will be better understood once the Centre of New England Boulevard with Hopkins Hill Road connection is made and will be taken into account when proceeding through the approval process.

As far as the immediate concerns is the safety at the Hopkins Hill Road/Centre of New England Boulevard with the connection of the Centre of New England Boulevard with Hopkins Hill Road. Safety measures including signage and potentially the installation of a temporary traffic signal should be considered until a permanent signal is to be installed.

For the Preliminary Phase study the following is anticipated:

- Expand limits of study
- Analyze weekend peak hour conditions
- Address safety issue concerns at Hopkins Hill Road/Centre of New England Boulevard intersection. Provide solutions and timeframes for implementation
- New study is to be provided with Preliminary Phase submission



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- Preliminary phase submission will need to finalize the proposed design at study intersections, final layout of internal roadways and back-up for parking ratios.

It is anticipated that the applicant will provide a response at the September 25, 2024 Planning Commission to address the comments above. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 401-334-4100 or jshevlin@parecorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JPS', written over a faint, larger version of the signature.

John P. Shevlin, P.E.
Chief Executive Officer

JPS/

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