

**Memo To:** RPC Development of Regional Impact Subcommittee  
**From:** Rockingham Planning Commission Staff  
**Date:** January 9, 2024  
**Subject:** 13 & 15 Stoneybrook Lane Variance Application - Stratham Regional Impact Declaration

Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) was notified on December 20, 2023 that a variance application before the Stratham Zoning Board of Adjustment was declared a development of regional impact under RSA 36:36-57. The proposal was submitted by Green & Company on behalf of the applicant Boulders Realty Corporation. This proposal includes 59 single-family dwellings on a single property under a condominium form of ownership. At the direction of the RPC Regional Impact Committee chair, RPC staff was requested to write a memo regarding potential regional impacts.

The proposal is to be located on Stoneybrook Lane near Portsmouth Ave (NH-108), NH-101, and NH-88 near the Stratham/Exeter town boundary. The proposal is located on two parcels (Tax Map 4, Lots 1 & 7), totaling 77 acres in size. The proposal is within Stratham's Special Commercial Zone and is abutting Exeter's C2 Commercial District. The municipality with potential impacts as identified by the Stratham Zoning Board of Adjustments from the proposal is limited to Exeter.

Given the available information with this application, RPC's comments are limited. If a formal application is submitted to the Stratham Planning Board for its approval, additional proposal information would be supplied at that time. If the Stratham Planning Board declares that application a Development of Regional Impact, RPC would be able to provide a more detailed review of potential impacts.

The following comments are the proposal's potential regional impacts as identified under RSA 36:55 that can reasonably be expected to impact on a neighboring municipality, because of factors such as, but not limited to, the following:

**I. Relative size or number of dwelling units as compared with existing stock.**

The proposal includes the development of 59 residential units, all being single-family homes. According to Rockingham Planning Commission's [2023 Regional Housing Needs Assessment](#), as of 2020 Stratham had 3,017 housing units, which accounts for 3.4% of the region's housing stock. If approved, this proposal would increase Stratham's housing stock by 1.9%.

Stratham, like the rest of the region and state, lacks sufficient affordable housing and overall housing availability. The overall addition of housing is generally considered a positive regional impact. Based on the *2023 Regional Housing Needs Assessment*, by 2040 Stratham is projected to need 557 more housing units (a mixture of market rate and affordable housing) to meet needs based on population growth and employment projections. The proposal does not explicitly call for the creation of workforce housing with applicable income limitations.

**II. Proximity to the borders of a neighboring community.**

The proposal is located fully within Stratham but is located immediately southwest of the Exeter/Stratham town boundary. As noted above, the proposal is located within Stratham's Commercial District; the area is surrounded by a mixture of residential and commercial uses along NH 108.

### **III. Transportation networks.**

**Traffic Impact Assessment:** The proposal lacks a formal traffic impact analysis. Due to the proximity of the proposed site to a signalized intersection, NH-108 (Portsmouth Ave), and NH-101, further analysis may provide more detailed insight. However, given the anticipated relatively low volume of peak hours (projected to be fewer than 100), a comprehensive formal Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) may not be deemed necessary in its entirety. I

**Traffic volume:** NHDOT data for 2022 indicates that Average Annualized Daily Traffic on the on-ramp for NH 101 Eastbound was 2,547 approximately 0.1 miles from the proposed site. At the off-ramp for NH 101 Eastbound, the Average Annualized Daily Traffic for the same year was 3,814. Slightly farther from the proposed site to the east and west on NH-108 (Portsmouth Ave), the Average Annualized Daily Traffic was 17,979 (2022). Holland Way (NH-88) is approximately 0.1 miles from the proposed site and has an AADT of 5,348 (2022).

**Trip Generation:** Despite the absence of a formal Traffic Impact Assessment for the proposal, data from the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition, under land use code "210 – Single Family," estimates that 59 single-family dwelling units could introduce an average of 621 trips per day, and 46 trips during the weekday AM peak period and an average of 61 trips during the weekday PM peak period.

**Safety:** An accurate assessment of potential safety impacts would be derived from a TIA. However, the minimal additional traffic accessing NH-108 (Portsmouth Ave) and NH-101 should not have a substantive impact on the safety of the surrounding road network.

**Intersection Operations:** An accurate assessment of the intersection operations would also be derived from a TIA. However, the minimal additional traffic accessing NH-108 (Portsmouth Ave) and NH-101 should not have a substantive impact on intersection operations.

**RECOMMENDATION:** ITE Trip Generation values provide the basic overall impact of adding 59 residential units in this location, but more detailed analysis would be necessary to better understand trip distribution and impact on intersection operations. Specifically, a capacity analysis of the intersection of Stoneybrook Lane and Route 108 would provide the detail necessary to understand the current and expected future functionality of that intersection inclusive of the development.

### **IV. Anticipated emissions such as light, noise, smoke, odors, or particles.**

Anticipated emissions are expected to be primarily limited to those related to transportation associated with residential traffic and may include noise and air emissions from vehicles. To understand impact of any lighting, it is recommended that at such time an application is submitted to the Stratham Planning Board that the Board require detail on any lighting proposed with the development to ensure no light spillage occurs onto neighboring properties, roadways, or sensitive wildlife habitat. It is recommended that Stratham ensure its outdoor lighting regulations are followed to alleviate any lighting impacts.

The greatest impact from emissions such as light, noise, smoke, odors, or particles, is likely to occur during the construction phase of the project. To mitigate any existing noise from construction of the project, it is recommended that the Planning Board consider adjustments to construction if an application is submitted for Planning Board review.

Once constructed, residential uses will have a minimal impact on emissions and be limited to noise and air emissions from personal vehicles.

### **V. Proximity to aquifers or surface waters which transcend municipal boundaries.**

The proposal is located partially within the NHDES Protected Shoreland. The Exeter-Squamscott River plays an essential role in maintaining the overall health of the Great Bay National Estuarine Reserve. The rivers have been recognized not only by the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP), but also as part of the New Hampshire Resource Protection Project. Specific

development standards need to be met to ensure protection of groundwater resources. The proposal will also require NHDES approval for the two proposed public water supply wells.

Receipt of all state permits would be a recommended condition of approval for the Stratham Zoning Board of Adjustments and for any application submitted to the Planning Board.

**VI. Shared facilities such as schools and solid waste disposal facilities.**

The proposal does not appear to rely on any shared municipal facilities, however, there is potential to required shared municipal emergency services. Given that the access to the property is through a local roadway in Exeter, it is recommended that the Board seek input from the Stratham and Exeter Fire and Police Departments.

Stratham is a member municipality to the SAU16 school district that includes 5 other municipalities. It is recommended that Towns in the SAU are Brentwood, East Kingston, Exeter, Kensington, Newfields, and Stratham. If a formal application is submitted to the Stratham Planning Board, that Board may wish to request an estimate as to the number of school aged children that may reside from the development.

Finally, it should be noted that the above comments and recommendations are considered advisory only. The RPC, nor the impacted municipalities, have any authority under the regional impact statute to interfere with the decision-making power held by the Stratham Zoning Board of Adjustments.

Cc via email:

Town of Stratham Zoning Board of Adjustments  
Town of Exeter