

Narrative Statement  
Hartford Truck Equipment  
Zone Change Application, RR to GC  
542 King Street & 45 John Fitch Boulevard  
South Windsor, Connecticut  
DPI Project No. 2482.H  
December 13, 2021

One year ago McGuire Road Associates, LLC acquired a vacant 11.43 acre parcel historically known as 542 King Street and 45 John Fitch Boulevard from Ed King. The single parcel is presently zoned General Commercial on its easterly side, fronting on Route 5, which represents 4.047 acres, or 35.385% of the tract. The westerly side of the parcel is zoned Rural Residential, which represents 7.39 acres, or 64.615% of the tract. The intent of this application is to have the entire property in the General Commercial zoning district, which will allow Hartford Truck Equipment to grow and expand its operations. McGuire Road Associates plans to permanently encumber 3.33 of the 7.39 acre zone change area, or 45% of the new General Commercial zone, in a conservation and buffer easement along King Street and behind abutting residential properties. That easement area will include an eight feet high earthen berm, spanning 1,140 lineal feet, topped with a six feet high black chain link security fence with privacy slats, providing an immediate visual screen fourteen feet in height. On either side of the berm are proposed intensive plantings of evergreen trees, which will provide an aesthetically pleasing and natural screening effect, which will only improve over time as the trees mature. McGuire Road Associates is committed to installing this landscaped buffer, fence and berm commencing upon approval of the zone change application and a separate site plan application for the buffer improvements, which is to be filed with the Planning & Zoning Commission prior to the zone change application public hearing. The landscape buffer and earthen berm has been designed by licensed landscape architects and civil engineers at Design Professionals, Inc., in consultation with neighbors and members of McGuire Road Associates, LLC, and is subject to the approval of the Planning & Zoning Commission. The applicants have gone to great lengths to reach out to their residential and commercial neighbors in order to seek their input and to afford a compatible design, including conceptual designs of the new operations area and a future low-profile building, which will further screen the future operations. This outreach has included a letter to all neighbors within 125 feet of the subject parcel, inviting them to meetings, meetings/phone calls/emails with individual neighbors, and two larger meetings with three to six neighbors who reside on King Street. The latter meeting was with immediate abutting neighbors, including those across King Street from the subject parcel's King Street frontage. We believe the earthen berm, opaque fence and buffer plantings will effectively screen residential properties on both sides of King Street from not only the existing and proposed operations of Hartford Truck Equipment, but also to provide supplemental screening of the many commercial enterprises along the west side of Route 5, including automotive operations at

Carvana, equipment dealers, a gas station, and a restaurant with drive-thru. It will also aid in screening and afford sound attenuation of these residential properties from the high traffic volumes along Route 5.

The applicants have worked to remove the parcel's existing commercial access to King Street from the subject property and other connecting parcels. The buffer and conservation easement site plan depicts such, and the other commercial user at 37 McGuire Road has also agreed to relinquish their interests in the driveway at the northerly end of the subject property. Commercial trucks will thus no longer access King Street through the area of the zone change. We take this as a positive development.

The applicants have also agreed to allow the immediate residential abutter at 542 King Street to use the extreme westerly portion of the drive for continued convenient access to their home from King Street, albeit on the King Street side of the berm.

An area encompassing 4.06 acres of the 7.39 acre GC zone change will be added to the Hartford Truck Equipment operations, for the secure storage of new equipment and new trucks and for new buildings. All operations will be enclosed by a security fence, and the facility has 24-hour security. HTE operates on weekdays from 7 to 5, although their sales and parts departments, housed in their headquarters building at 95 John Fitch Boulevard, is also open from 7 to noon on Saturdays from October through March. There are no upfitting operations on Saturdays. Truck receiving operations are only permitted between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, and thus there are no late afternoon, nighttime or weekend truck deliveries. All delivery trucks enter and depart the facility via Route 5.

Hartford Truck Equipment is a South Windsor-based, family-owned and -operated truck upfitter and equipment distributor currently operating at the adjacent 95 John Fitch Boulevard and 67 McGuire Road parcels. Truck access to their facilities is limited to Route 5, as previously requested and approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission. Historic access used to be via Burnham Street, King Street and McGuire Road, to the chagrin of the adjoining residential neighborhood. The business is the final assembly point for many types of new small commercial vehicles, and upfits trucks and other vehicles with truck beds, liftable truck beds, and truck bodies, and accessories such as snow plows, sanders and salters. The recent acquisition of 542 King Street and 45 John Fitch Boulevard provides an opportunity for the company to expand its services and workforce. All upfitting activities are conducted inside buildings.

### 8.3 Zone Change Standards and Procedures

This zone change application is subject to the Zone Change Review Criteria outlined in Section 8.3.D of the Zoning Regulations. We believe the proposed zone change from the RR Rural Residential Zone to the GC General Commercial Zone meets the review criteria, namely:

1. The goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development, which is the community's general land use guide. **The proposed 7.39 acre zone change from Rural Residential (RR) to General Commercial (GC) at the Route 5 Gateway from East Hartford and I-291 will allow for the expansion of an existing attractive and clean business along the Route 5 corridor. The Plan of Conservation and Development encourages business development that is consistent with the character and**

scale of its surroundings, builds the tax base, provides jobs and services, and improves the appearance of business zones. That is why we are proposing to develop this property with a robust buffer, lower profile buildings, and limited hours of operation and limited hours for truck deliveries. While the Business Development Plan map shows the west side of Route 5 in commercial uses, it does not include all of our 11.43 acre tract. We are voluntarily proposing to conserve over three acres of our property along King Street within the proposed zone change. We also think our approach will reduce the potential for conflict between residential and commercial uses, not only through our large buffer which protects existing homes, but also by not adding new residences between King Street and the GC zoning district, much of which is already intensively developed. We are also consistent with the goal of the Route 5 section of the POCD, in that we will be continuing to improve the corridor's appearance, as we did with the construction of our headquarters building, so that it positively reflects on South Windsor's image. We are consistent with the theme that "Route 5 will remain South Windsor's most expansive economic development corridor".

2. The purposes of zoning and of these regulations. The proposed zone change will expand upon an existing GC zone and will be consistent with the purposes of the zoning regulations.
3. Changes that have taken place in the rate and pattern of development and land use within the Town and adjoining communities. The proposed expansion of the GC zone will allow for the growth of an existing business. This business growth is consistent with the recent business growth of commercial development along Route 5 in this part of town.
4. The supply of land available in the present and proposed zone. The existing RR zone line through the parcel limits the expansion of the existing business. The zone change to GC will allow the business to grow in a successful manner and utilize more of the property. The GC zone has very limited available land for development. There continues to be a large amount of RR zoned property in South Windsor.
5. The physical suitability of the land for the proposed zone. The lot has a gently sloping grade and well drained soils which lends itself well to development. With buffers, it is suitable for commercial development.
6. The impact on the capacity of the present and proposed utilities, streets, drainage systems, and other improvements. The impacts on utilities and other improvements will be minimal. No new access drives are proposed onto King Street.
7. The general character and zoning of the neighborhood. As part of the zone change, a 3.3 acre conservation easement is proposed along King Street and abutting the adjacent residential properties. The conservation easement will include an 8' high berm, evergreen trees and a screen fence to buffer the existing residences from the proposed zone change and from other existing commercial enterprises, and from Route 5 traffic.
8. Impacts on the surrounding area. The surrounding area will not be adversely impacted as a result of the zone change due to the proposed conservation and buffer easement.
9. Traffic congestion impacts. Vehicle access for the parcel will continue to be from Route 5. No new access drives are proposed along King Street. One access drive will be eliminated.
10. The impact on surrounding property values. Existing property values will not be adversely impacted as a result of the zone change due to the proposed conservation and

buffer easement which will create a robust screen between the residences and future development on the parcel, and which will help to screen the existing residences from existing commercial activities.

11. The environmental impacts. The proposed conservation easement will include evergreen trees which enhance the environment.
12. The health and general welfare of the community. No adverse impacts are expected to the health and general welfare of the community.
13. Neighborhood acceptance weighed against community needs. The proposed conservation easement will provide a large buffer for the existing residences while also allowing for the expansion of an existing business, as encouraged in the POCD. The applicants have reached out to all neighbors in order to create a plan in the interest of all parties. The proposal also avoids the potential for conflict should additional residences be built closer to Route 5 and closer to commercial activities in their back yards.
14. The protection of historic factors. There are no known historic factors associated with this proposed zone change.