



1811 4 Mile Road NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
phone 616.361.2664
fax 616.361.1493
progressiveae.com

April 28, 2017

David Meister, Township Supervisor
Onekama Township
5435 Main Street
PO Box 458
Onekama, MI 49675

Re: Onekama Township—Portage Point Review
Site Plan and Traffic Review

Dear Mr. Meister:

Progressive AE has completed the review of the proposed site plans, dated June 2016, submitted for the proposed redevelopment of the Portage Point Inn site on Portage Point Drive in Onekama Township. Comments and concerns as they relate to the traffic and circulation aspects of the proposed redevelopment are outlined in the following sections

INTRODUCTION

There are plans for the redevelopment and expansion of the existing Portage Point Inn site elements located on Portage Point Drive in Onekama Township. Our understanding is that expansion plans are focused primarily on the marina and hotel uses within the site, and at the off-site “boat barn” on Seymour Avenue. Concerns have been expressed that the redevelopment may create additional traffic issues, particularly during the busier summer peak season. To help address those concerns, Onekama Township has asked that a review of existing and projected traffic generation and related tasks be completed to assist with the plan review process.

GENERAL TRAFFIC REVIEW

Portage Point Drive, under the jurisdiction of the Manistee County Road Commission (MCRC), is the main roadway that site patrons use to get to and from the Inn site, and as such, is the primary focus of this review. The portion of Portage Point Drive from M-22 to the Inn site is designated a county primary road, and generally has a 22-foot cross section plus 3-foot to 4-foot paved shoulders and a 35 mile per hour speed limit. Portage Point Drive becomes a county local road adjacent to the Inn site and to the south where its cross section becomes narrower— generally in the 15-foot to 19-foot width range.

Available traffic count data the MCRC has on file for Portage Point Drive was not current (2010) although our understanding is that newer counts have been, or will be, taken by either MCRC or Michigan Department of Transportation on their behalf. Count data from 2010 indicated a 24-hour volume of approximately 820 vehicles on Portage Point Drive at a location approximately one mile west of M-22. The time of year that count was completed is unknown.

Site-Related Traffic

Multiple elements are proposed in the redevelopment/expansion of the Portage Point Inn project. Per information provided, those include:

1. Convert the existing 39 inn rooms to 26 “hotel-miniums”
2. Renovate existing cottages and dollhouse cottages*
3. Renovate and expand the restaurant kitchen*
4. Expand the capacity of the restaurant by 113 seats
5. Remodel the condominium pool area*
6. Add a new boathouse*
7. Add a new boat ramp*
8. Add a new hotel-minium building entrance and canopy*
9. Expand the marina to 80 slips from the current +/- 40 slips*

Our understanding is that the existing inn rooms could house approximately 118 patrons for sleeping (“pillow count”); the proposed hotel-minium renovation would increase the inn occupancy by about 12—up to 130 total patrons. We also understand that approximately 73 of the 80 marina slips will be designated for use by on-site condominium owners or nearby slip leasers, with the remaining 7 slips set aside for transient boat users. The boat ramp will only be available for use by slip owners/leasers on an intermittent basis.

Trip Generation

Trip generation analyses are often used to identify how much traffic a proposed set of uses can be expected to generate upon completion and opening/occupancy. Most often projections are completed for the peak hour(s) of the day, but also can include a daily trip generation projection.

Trip Generation, Ninth Edition, by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) was used to calculate the projected additional vehicular traffic from the proposed redevelopment. This nationally recognized manual is the standard by which traffic engineers and others identify traffic projections for proposed developments and is based upon hundreds of surveys of completed and occupied land uses of all types. Calculated trips are measured individually for inbound and outbound movements, therefore, a visit to the site by a patron, for instance, generates two trips, one inbound and one outbound. Please note that trip generation is not based upon, or directly related to, how much parking may be required or provided.

One of the key aspects of this proposed redevelopment is that there appears to be very little expansion of uses that will actually generate additional traffic. Proposed redevelopment items noted above with an asterisk are not expected to generate additional traffic, either due to their nature or since they are replacing an existing like use. Although there is a laundry list of building and site renovations, additions, and expansions proposed, the only revisions to the Inn site that can be reasonably expected to generate more traffic than the existing approved facility (when it was a busy entity) are the inn/hotel-miniums and the expansion of the restaurant seating. Expanded restaurant seating will have significant use by on-site patrons that would not be adding traffic to the roadway system. Table 1 summarizes the potential additional traffic that may be generated by the redeveloped Inn site during the peak hour.

**Table 1
Projected Peak-Hour Trip Generation**

Land Use (added)	ITE Code	Size	Weekend ⁽¹⁾ Peak Hour	
			In	Out
Restaurant	931	113 seats	22	15
Resort hotel	330	12 beds ⁽²⁾	4	3
Total new trips:			26	18

Notes:

1. Weekend (Saturday) peak hour of generator are higher/worst case rates than weekday peak for these uses.
2. Assumes full occupancy and average two beds per hotel-minium.

It should be recognized that even this resulting projected low level of new traffic should be considered a conservative (high) estimate of traffic over what the current site's uses and sizes could generate. That is due in part to the plans for shuttling approximately 90% of employees to/from the "boat barn" site, a portion of traffic that is incorporated into standard trip generation rates used above but that will actually occur at a much lesser rate for this site. Further, Table 1 assumes that the peak hour for both land uses occurs during the same hour of the day.

Portage Point Drive

As noted earlier, Portage Point Drive is designated as a primary roadway between M-22 and the Portage Point Inn site. Primary roads, unlike local roads/streets, have a variety of functions that they provide as part of an overall road system. Those functions include acting as secondary arterials or primary collector roads that provide connectivity between lesser local streets and major roadways, such as M-22 in this case. Considering the current speed limit and horizontal curves, a primary roadway such as this has the empirical capacity to carry up to 10,000 to 11,000 vehicles a day, or approximately +/-1,000 vehicles (total of both directions) during a peak hour per Highway Capacity Manual criteria. Although current summer season traffic counts are not available, it seems safe to suggest that the primary road section of Portage Point Drive is likely not anywhere close to its empirical capacity even during peak periods.

Site Plan Review

Design of a site can also directly affect its impact to the surrounding street network, particularly at a location such as this adjacent to the Inn site where there currently are some "interesting" roadway geometry elements, varied cross sections, and seasonal use variations. Based upon our review, and like comments from the planning review, we have the following concerns and suggestions regarding the proposed site access, circulation, and parking.

Main site

1. The small traffic circle proposed at the transition point between the primary and local sections of Portage Point Drive, at 9th Street, will help calm traffic and result in slower speeds. However, the current offset of the center of the circle may result in some drivers not circulating counterclockwise as is typical and expected. This could result in driver confusion and safety issues. Efforts should be made to shift the center of this circle +/-10 feet westward to provide a more efficient and safer layout. Such efforts should include close coordination with the MCRC as their approval is required.
2. Proposed 90-degree on-street parking on the south side of the Inn should be relocated given the limited sight distance in this area. We agree with the planning review suggestion that perhaps that parking could be incorporated within a revised layout of the southern parking lot just south of the boathouse.
3. Spacing between the two proposed site driveways to Portage Point Drive on the west side of the Inn is poor given the horizontal curvature and related acute angle that exiting drivers would have to use to look for oncoming traffic. Even though traffic speeds may be low in this section, consideration should be given to combining these two driveways into one driveway.
4. The parking lot adjacent to the dollhouse cottages is not large enough to warrant two driveways. Given the need to simplify operations along Portage Point Drive, the proposed northern driveway should be eliminated.

Boat Barn Site

1. Sight distance looking north from the proposed dollhouse cottages driveway may be borderline acceptable. This should be checked and confirmed as meeting MCRC standards before any type of approval.
2. Information as to the rationale for the width of the proposed boat barn driveway on Seymour Avenue should be submitted if not done so already. Such wide driveways can lead to vehicles entering and exiting at a wide variety of angles and locations that can lead to safety issues both on-site and within the public road right-of-way.

SUMMARY

Based upon our review of the allowed existing uses and proposed redevelopment elements, we do not see any significant issues from a traffic standpoint if the noted design issues are addressed. If approved and completed, there will certainly be more traffic in the area of the Inn than has become the norm over the last few years, but not significantly more than if the Inn had continued to be used as it was capable of doing given past approvals.

Please let us know if you or others have questions regarding the findings and conclusions outlined in this review letter.

Sincerely,

Progressive AE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter C. LaMourie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "L".

Peter C. LaMourie, PE, PTOE
Lead Civil Engineer