

From: [Gary W. Fogg](#)
To: [Rod Melanson](#); [Andrew Deci](#)
Subject: Crooker Resolution
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 8:31:54 AM

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Rod and Andrew:

I can understand your concern about developing the requirements for the new zoning district before the Planning Board votes on the issue of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. You have stated that the process gives the Planning Board more leverage over the standards for the new district as opposed to other options available to the landowner. This is a good argument if the objective is to suppress neighborhood dissent while the standards are being developed.

On the other hand, perhaps enough is known already about the Crooker Proposal to vote on the issue now. How much difference will the new standards make? A robust debate about the question of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan could be beneficial given the politics of the situation. Indeed, one could argue that the process you have outlined allows the Planning Board to create the appearance of neutrality while in substance acting in the interest of the developer instead of the neighborhoods.

One never knows for sure what is best in situations of this kind and I know that you are doing the best you can.

Gary

Gary W. Fogg
20 Coville Road
Topsham, ME 04086
Email: gwfogg@comcast.net
Phone: (207) 837-5546

From: [Patricia Maloney](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Cc: [Daniel Flaig](#)
Subject: Crooker Proposal
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 1:03:36 PM

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Hello,

I plan to join the "workshop" this evening, 7/21, and request that a slide be shown to scale of the **affected neighborhood and the area that Crooker is proposing** to build out.

Thank you, Pat Maloney

From: [Jim Temple](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker rezoning
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 8:14:54 PM

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I would like to express my opposition to the rezoning. I agree with the comments submitted by Dorothy Bowie and Terry Porter. They have expressed many of the issues very well and much better than I can. This would seriously impact the area around this new Cooker Plant. It is bad enough that my house shakes every time they blast in there pit. I have to wonder if that contributed to the cracks in my foundation and that for the first 15 years I lived here I had no water in my basement now it is often an issue. Many houses in the Ivanhoe neighborhood have pumps running all year round. Traffic will be even more congested then it is already. Another question would be what affect will this plant and associated pollution have on the town water supply that is located near this rezoned plant.

James Temple
14 Coville Rd
Topsham, Me

From: [Susan Lohnes](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker proposal to rezone
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 7:52:50 PM

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Memo

To: The Topsham Planning Board
and Rod Melanson, Planning Director

Re: Crooker Proposal to rezone property
from Residential to Industrial use on land
near the intersection of White House Crossing Road and Lewiston Road/ Route 196

We, Susan and Barry Lohnes, Topsham homeowners/residents at 3 Alan Street since 1977, oppose the Crooker proposal for rezoning which would allow moving its asphalt "batch plant" to the intersection of Route 196, White House Crossing Road and Meadow Cross Road.

We believe that in doing so, the character of abutting neighborhoods and quality of life of abutting taxpaying residents would be adversely affected by unwanted noise and air pollution at a minimum while negatively impacting the health of the natural environment as well.

We believe rezoning violates the spirit of the Topsham Comprehensive Plan.

We urge you to consider the rights of the residential taxpayers going forward in this David and Goliath scenario with the only appropriate action to deny Crooker's rezoning request.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Michele V](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker Construction LLC's Rezoning Proposal
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 6:57:52 PM

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7/20/2020

Planning Board
Town of Topsham
100 Main Street
Topsham, ME 04086

Dear Chairman Spann and Planning Board Members,

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to Crooker's proposal to rezone the area at the intersection of Rt. 196 and White House Crossing Road for Industrial use.

I respectfully ask that you consider this proposal from the perspective of the residents of the nearby neighborhoods.

While it is convenient to study the maps and renderings provided in Crooker's presentation, I appeal to you to actually drive through the Ivanhoe, Birch Ridge, River Road and Pejepscot Village neighborhoods to fully grasp how close the proposed batch plant actually would be to these neighborhoods and to gain a better understanding of the far reaching negative implications of this proposal.

All of these areas are quiet residential and rural settings. Many people bought their properties in this part of Topsham due to this appeal. Now picture what is currently a wooded natural area with trails and farmland completely clear cut and replaced by the existing Crooker Batch Plant. A vast paved facility with massive, towering "stacks", mountain after mountain of sand, earth, and gravel populated by dump trucks, heavy machinery, repair facilities and numerous outbuildings. From dawn to dusk these noisy, heavy Crooker and contractor trucks will be operating to procure materials from the batch plant.

These trucks will run in "a continuous loop" from their primary crushing facility on a newly constructed private access road through a tunnel under the River Road and up to the batch plant to be made into asphalt.

Now, what was once an appealing, quiet rural/residential area to live in will be changed. The residents of these neighborhoods will now be living next to an industrial facility. The quiet sounds of nature and children playing will be replaced by the continuous sounds of heavy trucks and equipment, shifting gears, piercing backup signals and clanging tail gates. Add to this the emissions from all of these vehicles and the sand/soot dispersing through the air onto these neighborhoods. What about the impact on traffic on Rt. 196 with all of these trucks entering and exiting on a dangerous portion of the road?

I attended a Planning Board Workshop when Crooker first presented this proposal. They indicated at the time that they had several options to move their batch plant facility to other properties they own, or they might remain in their current location. The option they are proposing is the most fiscally beneficial for them. However, it is also the most negatively impactful to the quality of life for surrounding residents. This proposal does not align in any way with the spirit of Topsham's Comprehensive Plan Update of 2019.

As indicated by the 43 page opposition petition signed by Topsham residents when this was first proposed, this zoning change is opposed by local residents. I appeal to you, The Planning Board, to act in the best interests of the citizens of Topsham and deny this request.

Sincerely,

Michele C. Vermette
60 Ivanhoe Drive

From: [Donald Pickard](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 4:00:42 PM

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I am against rezoning my neighborhood into a industrial zone, it will destroy our neighborhood and hurt the property value for many residents.

From: [Shelly Garrett](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Rezoning
Date: Monday, July 20, 2020 8:49:42 AM

WARNING: This is an external email that originated outside of our email system. DO NOT CLICK links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe!

We moved to 8 Big Pine drive this December from Nebraska. We really like it here in Topsham Maine. Our home and property are wonderful. We invested a great of money in a large home with an area that can be used as a separate suite for my mom. She is on hospice because of cancer. This way I can be there for her and she can still feel independent. However, we just found out, from our neighbor, that the land behind our property could be rezoned. If it was rezoned a huge gravel pit would go in. This would incredibly decrease the value of our house and property. It would be incredibly stressful to my mom which could impact her health. We are not even telling her because of that, but if it started going in we could not hide it. It would create noise, dust and our house would shake from the blasts. This already happens from the quarry that is many blocks away, I can't even imagine how bad it will be when so close. There undoubtedly more negative consequences that we are not even aware of.

We we going to attend the zoom meeting tomorrow and do everything else we can to stop it. I just do not understand why it has to be built close to peoples homes which will steal money from hard working families because of lower property value. The company owns property that is further away where they could build.

Thank you for your time,
Shelly Garrett

From: [CA C](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Oppose new plan of Crooker
Date: Sunday, July 19, 2020 9:46:27 PM

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TOPSHAM PLANNING BOARD:

ITS TIME TOPSHAM PLANNING BOARD AND CROOKER LISTEN TO THE RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS AS WELL OF TOPSHAM. " NO TO THE CROOKER REQUEST TO REZONE". THE RESIDENTS OF TOPSHAM MADE IT CLEAR EACH TIME THE TOPIC IS BROUGHT FOR DISCUSSION. " NO REZONING TO THE AREA AND NO TO CHANGING THE COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE BEEN BUILT IN THE PROPOSED AREA.

NO TO REZONING, MAINTAIN THE ZONE, KEEP THE INDUSTRIAL WERE IT IS AND MAINTAIN THE FAIR MALL CROCKER AREA IN ITS CURRENT LOCATION. RESIDENTIAL AREA DO NOT WANT THE NOISE, THE SMELL OR INCREASED TRAFFIC TO THE PLANNED AREA, OR CROOKERS PLAN TO BUY PEOPLE OUT WITHIN THE AREA.

MANY FAMILIES WANT AND LIKE THE AREAS THEY HAVE DECIDED TO CALL HOME (many generations) AND THE VOICE OF THE RESIDENTS SHOULD BE VALUED AND SUPPORTED OVER THIS PROPOSAL ONCE AGAIN BEING DELIVERED.

SAY NO AND END THIS REZONE PLAN FROM DISCUSSION GOING FORWARD AND STAND FOR THE RESIDENTS VOICES.

LETS BUILD A "COMMUNITY THAT IS HEALTHY AND REFLECTS THE RESIDENTS NOT CORPORATIONS THAT ONLY ARE LOOKING OUT FOR THEMSELVES AND PROFITS!"

C. A. COUTURE
TOPSHAM RESIDENT/TAXPAYER

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TOPSHAM DEVELOPMENT, INC - STATEMENT RE PROPOSED CROOKER REZONING REQUEST

2020-06-16 Adopted by unanimous vote of TDI directors present & voting

The directors of Topsham Development, Inc. (TDI) respectfully support the proposed review process for the Crooker Construction, LLC rezoning request, as outlined at the 2020-06-02 Topsham Planning Board workshop. At that workshop, Crooker Construction requested the Planning Board to engage in a review process in order to “work with the developer to create a new zoning district in the Topsham ordinance that would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Update for submission to a future Town Meeting.”

Crooker Construction has been a successful and respected business in Topsham for 85 years. It is one of our community’s highest taxpayers, and one of our largest employers, providing more than 200 jobs, with an annual payroll over 16 million dollars. Additionally, Crooker Construction has been a consistent supporter of numerous community organizations and a generous leader in local philanthropic campaigns. This legacy of outstanding corporate citizenship certainly merits the Town’s willingness to provide Crooker Construction with an opportunity to participate in a fair, objective, and public process to consider their request.

Very appropriately, neither Crooker Construction’s request, nor the Planning Board’s potential agreement to the request, presumes the outcome of this process, but instead requests only that the Planning Board work to develop a new zoning district with the specific requirement that such a zoning district must be “*consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Update*” and, of course, submitted for approval at a future Town Meeting.

In fact, the request identifies the first step in the process, which would be a prerequisite to any further action, to be the Planning Board’s determination of whether: “the proposed zoning change is, *with proper performance standards*, [is] consistent with the 2019 Topsham Comprehensive Plan Update.” And the request further acknowledges that only if the Planning Board makes that determination, will Crooker Construction proceed to propose a zoning change to the Planning Board for its acceptance or revision.

For these reasons, Topsham Development, Inc. respectfully supports this approach as appropriate, reasonable, and transparent, especially since the process requires frequent opportunities for public input and can only result in new zoning with the consent of Topsham’s citizens at a Town Meeting.