

Unanswered Questions

Laidlaw has failed to provide sufficient information to the ZBA in order to allow the ZBA to make a determination on whether the variance criteria have been met. The Henniker Conservation Commission “felt that more detailed information on the design and anticipated nature of the project’s impacts is needed.” The Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission likewise felt additional information was necessary including a traffic study, information on the effect of aquifers and discharge. REACH also feels that, if the variance is not denied outright, that Laidlaw should be required to provide additional information including but not limited to the following:

1. Laidlaw has failed to provide specifications regarding the proposed plant other than that the boiler house will be 80 feet in height. What other buildings will be necessitated by the proposed use? How high above the building will the smoke stack rise? In Hinsdale, a different company proposed a 90 foot boiler building with a 150 foot smoke stack. Will Laidlaw’s smoke stack be 140 or 150 feet high? Laidlaw should be required to provide detailed specifications of the proposed use.
2. At what distance will the smoke stack be visible? What effect will this smoke stack have on residential property values? What effect will this have on the Town’s ability to collect a view tax from residents whose views will now be obstructed by the smoke stack? What effect will the loss of the view tax have on the overall tax rate? Laidlaw should be required to float test balloons for a period not less than 1 week to demonstrate the height of the boiler building, the height of the top of the smoke stack and the expected height of the plumes of smoke that will be emitted from the top of the smoke stack. While the test balloons are in place, Laidlaw should be required to obtain an appraiser’s opinion on the effect on the proposed power plant on the properties from which the balloons are visible and submit evidence to the ZBA.
3. Laidlaw has failed to address how much additional traffic will be generated by its proposed use or when this additional traffic will occur. Although Laidlaw states that the neighboring Cousineau Forest Products processing plant will be the “primary supplier”, Laidlaw has not addressed how much additional raw wood will come into Cousineau as a result of the Laidlaw plant. Laidlaw has estimated that it will need approximately 200,000 tons of waste wood in order to power its 20 megawatt plant. Laidlaw has not addressed how many trucks of raw wood will need to come into Cousineau to provide Laidlaw with its 200,000 tons of waste wood to power its plant. Laidlaw has not addressed how many trucks of wood will need to come from other suppliers to supplement the amount Cousineau will be able to supply. Laidlaw has not addressed what hours these trucks will be coming onto Old Concord Road. Furthermore Laidlaw has not addressed other additional traffic impacts such as the trucks leaving with ash, the traffic generated by the employees and the traffic generated by the contractors and suppliers of

ammonia, equipment and other material. Laidlaw should be required to provide the ZBA detailed information on the amount of traffic generated by Laidlaw's proposal including the amount of traffic going to Cousineau as a result of Laidlaw's proposal.

4. Laidlaw has failed to address where it will obtain water for its steam turbines. Will Laidlaw draw out of an existing well? How much water will be utilized? Will such use have an effect on the existing aquifer? Laidlaw should be required to submit an analysis of the proposed draw on Henniker water supplies and whether this draw will have a negative impact on the surrounding water supplies.
5. Laidlaw has failed to address whether there will be any water discharge from its power plant operation. Although Laidlaw states that it will obtain a site specific alteration of terrain permit from DES to have state approval of its stormwater, stormwater is only the rain water that will run off Laidlaw's buildings and paved surfaces. Laidlaw has not addressed the environmental impacts of the discharge of water from its steam plant itself. Laidlaw should be required to provide analysis of its water discharge.
6. Laidlaw has failed to address the emissions in the context of the topography of the area. Where will the emissions go? Will certain surrounding hills be affected more than others? Will the effect be concentrated due to the topography and weather patterns or more dispersed. Laidlaw should be required to provide detailed modeling of the effect of their proposed emissions on the effected areas.
7. Laidlaw has failed to fully address the environmental impacts of the emissions from its proposed plant. The ZBA requested additional information regarding "public health and natural resources impacts in the region of the proposed use." (See May 22, 2008 Memorandum from Laura Scott to Raymond Kusche.) Laidlaw provided only vague assertions such as it will "install advanced combustion technology." Laidlaw should be required to provide the ZBA with detailed information regarding the emissions as compared to the existing permitted uses.