

In the 4/13/23 hearing regarding Cashman's proposed new building (now buildings, plural), Commissioner Baudro said "I would like to know, and I would like the council to know, for sure, when we look at a site plan, that we have all the pieces, that we're not going to get more tomorrow, next week, next month, next year. If you've got the whole package, we want to see the whole package at once, and maybe you have, but I would like to be sure of that." He also stressed his interest in "having all the cards on the table at once" when considering the Company's application.

Relating to those comments, we concede that our Commission is not allowed to deny a current application by reason of a hypothetical future use, and we are not asking them to do that. If, for example, we argued to the Commission something like, "What if they move the Waterford Speedbowl to the GFI site? You should deny their current application just in case they might move the Speedbowl here someday." Of course, that type of hypothetical argument would be completely unfair to the Applicant.

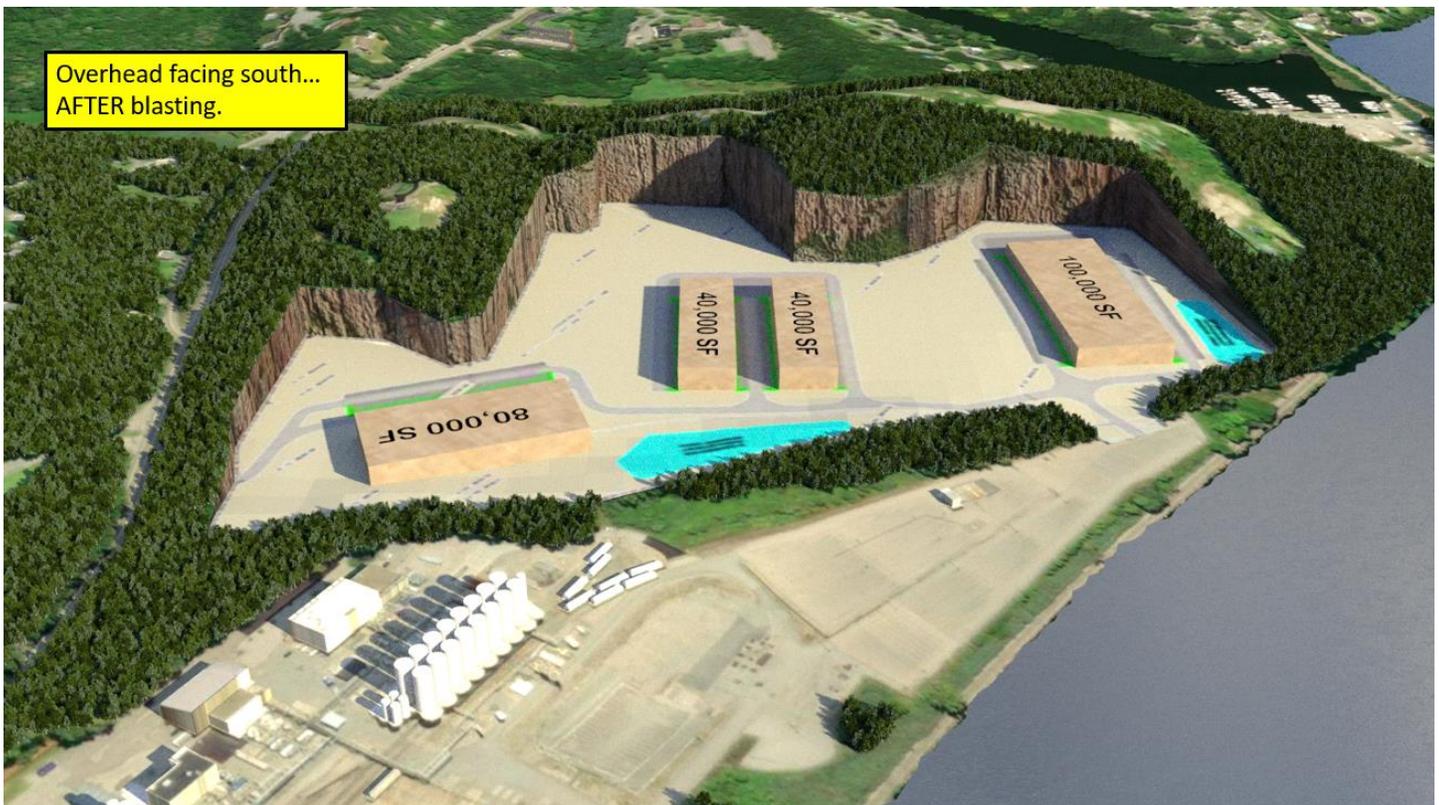
But the Applicant themselves have indicated they intend to bring two known future uses to the GFI site, both of which are already part of the public record. While we are not asking the Commission to use these two intended uses to justify denying the current application, we do want our Commission to have as good a sense as possible of the likely magnitude and intensity of the Company's known intentions, at least those we know of so far.

1) The Company intends to carve out 40 acres from Mount Decatur.

This application is currently before Wetlands. Based upon the Company's own layout drawings, this represents, for all intents and purposes, leveling the northern half of the mountain. Here is a link to a file showing "before and after" images of how this will impact Mount Decatur:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a_5PYGD4ZKO7XQBoVaR2M7ie8xaJs-M-/view?usp=share_link

Obviously, this will dramatically change the topography of Mount Decatur, not to mention impacting wetlands, possibly homeowner's wells, foundations, and certainly quality of life during what is likely to be, according to the company, at least a decade of blasting and rock crushing.



2) The Company intends to process contaminated dredge spoils on the property.

Although the Company notified the public on December 20th of last year that this aspect of their plans was being put on hold, the Company informed this very Commission that this “hold” is only temporary. This was communicated when the Company presented their conceptual plan to this Commission during the 3/9/23 P&Z meeting. Mr. Whitescarver asked about public concern over dredge spoils processing on the GFI site, and whether those plans had all changed. The Company response was that “it hasn’t changed, it’s in abeyance.”

Here is a link to a video of a site visit we made last year to a dredge spoils processing operation:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dw0KcAC7d5_n-cRrY7cjViGaXVJGNGPB/view?usp=share_link

This video will give everyone a good sense of what such an operation looks and sounds like. If you review the video, please take note that this entire site was covered in dust, and although we wouldn’t say that the odor was noxious, it certainly wasn’t clean air that we were smelling. Oh, and please also note that, in the Company’s most recent communication to the public, they intend to locate those processed dredge material stockpiles in what’s now being called the “Laydown Area”, which is VERY close to the northern neighborhood.



Even with its most recently proposed location for their new repair and maintenance building, a full two thirds of the northern preexisting landscape buffer will still be destroyed. In light of the Company’s stated intention to process dredge spoils on the site at some point in the future, and blasting away half of Mount Decatur (with that material being processed on site, generating unknown levels of noise and dust), or even that aggregate might be moved through the site as indicated by the Company during the 4/13 hearing, is it really unreasonable to ask the Company to retain the 300-foot preexisting landscape buffer that’s been there for many decades? We would argue that our request to retain that buffer is not unreasonable whatsoever.

As our Town Planner said in her 5/11/23 Memorandum for the Record, “The only chance to preserve the existing 3-acre buffer that has been there since the beginning when Dow developed the site, is now.”