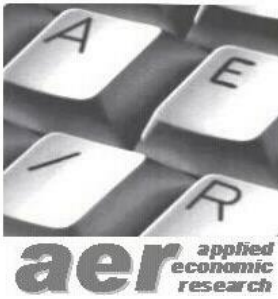


***Hudson Logistics Center
Fiscal Impact Peer Review
August 4, 2020***

***Applied Economic Research
Laconia, New Hampshire***





***Economic and
Real Estate
Advisory
Services***

21 Mistwood Lane
Laconia, NH 03246
russ@aernh.com

Tel 603 630 9080

August 4, 2020

Brian Groth
Town Planner
Town of Hudson
Town Offices
Hudson, NH

PRELIMINARY DRAFT--Peer Review Hudson Logistics Center Fiscal Impact Analysis

Dear Mr. Groth:

I am pleased to offer this *preliminary draft* review of the June 2020 report (the report) prepared by Judi Barrett of the Barrett Group addressing the fiscal impact of the proposed Hudson Logistics Center on town finances.

This review is preliminary, pending the town's peer review analysis of other impact studies funded by the developer (particularly the real estate—I am in process of reviewing-- traffic and noise impact studies), public comments, planning board observations and final comments from department heads regarding their updated perception of impacts on their staffing, facilities and budget. Additionally, it is customary to allow an analyst to respond to peer review comments.

I reserve the opportunity to revise these draft comments in light of the above caveats, including any response from the report's author.

Fiscal Impact Report's Conclusions

The major conclusions of the Barret Analysis are:

- The 2.6 million square foot facility will carry an assessed value of \$221.8 million;
- The facility will generate annual local municipal and school property taxes of \$4.2 million at Hudson's current tax rate;
- The facility will generate annual local costs of \$240,800 including \$168,600 for police, fire and inspection services; \$24,100 for Public Works (roads, drainage, Plowing, Maintenance) and \$48,100 for Administration, Assessing, Other;
- The facility will generate annual net revenues after allowing for these expenses of \$4,002,700, including town and school impacts;
- The facility will provide 1,400 direct jobs, generating \$81,536,000 in direct wages;
- The facility will support approximately 833 construction jobs.

Review Observations

The report estimates that the facility will generate a \$4,002,700 annual surplus of combined revenues after deducting costs to the town and school district. This surplus, if realized, could support a combination of improved community facilities and services, or lower the property tax rate in Hudson.

The report was prepared in June, before the developer's various impact studies (traffic, noise, air quality, real estate values, etc.) and the peer review analyses were presented. It is advisable that Ms. Barrett update her analysis in light of these studies, (particularly the assessor's comments) as well as taking into account recent impact reports prepared by town department heads including the assessor, engineer, etc.

It would be helpful if the analyst provided the town with the impact of this surplus on the town's tax rate...how much will the tax rate drop if the impact is as anticipated and what would be the annual dollar savings for an average residential taxpayer?

It has been customary for fiscal impact studies to combine the revenues and expenses for municipal and school functions. However, it would be helpful to the town if the analyst disaggregated the relative impacts for municipal and school functions.

I note that much of the estimated \$81.5 million in direct wages will not accrue to town residents.

Estimated Revenues

I believe the report's methodology for estimating property tax revenues is generally reasonable. The analyst examined assessed valuations for comparable properties in Londonderry (FW Webb, UPS Logistics, FedEx Ground Facility), derived a square foot assessment and applied that to the Logistics square footage.

Because Londonderry and Hudson have different ratios of assessed value to market value (equalization rates) it would have been more appropriate to equalize the assessments in Londonderry to market value utilizing the Londonderry equalization rate, and then equalized the resulting market value per square foot utilizing Hudson's equalization rate. Doing so would probably result in a minor difference in revenues.

The projected assessed valuation and related items should be coordinated with the Hudson assessor, who submitted a written report (July 27, 2020) subsequent to the preparation of the fiscal impact analysis.

The report does not address whether some or all of the trucks serving the facility will be registered in Hudson, which could generate significant revenues if they were registered in Hudson.

The report does not estimate one-time revenues for items such as impact fees, as well as sewer and water fees to tie into the Hudson facilities. This might be useful information for the planning board as it considers the impact of the facility.

The report presumes that there will be no negative impact on the value of abutting residential properties or a diminution in value on a broader geography in the town, as a result of issues such as traffic, noise, air quality, etc. Perhaps those assumptions will remain appropriate after Ms. Barret considers relevant subsequent studies, but that is not clear at this point. It would be helpful if the analyst revisited this issue after consideration of the peer review studies.

Also, it is conventional to subtract the existing revenues a site is generating, from the projected revenues emanating from the new development. This calculation is missing in this report.

Estimated Costs

The report utilizes an average (proportional) cost methodology, the calculations of which are set forth on page 10 of the report. In general, this is one of the accepted methodologies for estimating fiscal impact of proposed developments.

The report estimates that total municipal costs for serving the development will be \$240,800 per year under current expenditure patterns (Item U on page 10). This is in contrast to a cited total municipal budget of \$33,131,300 (Item A on page 10).

The average cost methodology has as its fundamental premise that the proposed development will have a *proportionate* cost impact relative to other non-residential developments in the community. It is not clear this is the case in this instance given the large size of the proposal in both absolute terms and relative to Hudson's existing non-residential tax base. As note in Item R on page 10, the valuation of the Logistics Center represents a sizable 58% increase in the town's exiting \$384 million nonresidential tax base.

The analysis of costs is set forth on page 10 of the report. I am concerned that the analysis may understate cost impacts. The creditability of the report would be enhanced if the analyst provided additional statistical and narrative support for the assumption incorporated on page 10 including, for example, items J, R, T, M,N,O,S,W,X,Y. It is not clear to me how the concluded values relate to the town's line item spending. It would be helpful to see, for example, how the concluded \$168,600 in public safety costs relate to the town's total public safety spending for police, fire, EMT and inspection services. The "Other" category is too broad, including apparently all other town functions, to evaluate the reliability of the 20% allocation.

The precise source total spending of \$33,131,300 is not identified, nor is the portion funded by property taxes.

Most fiscal impact studies begin with a reporting and analysis of a municipality's expenditures by function (police, fire, etc.) This analysis does not. Therefore, it is difficult to relate the concluded cost estimate of \$240,800 to actual town expenditures by function. As noted on page 9 *"It is important to note that \$240,800 is an estimate of total service costs derived from proportional valuation. The allocation of those dollars to various service categories is a judgement call, and is far less formulaic than the process used to arrive at the total."* Additional discussion and support for the "judgement call" would be helpful.

8/4/2020

Page 4

At your direction and that of the planning board, I will prepare a final report pending Ms. Barrett's response to these comments. I welcome her contacting me to discuss my observations, unless you or the planning board ask me to refrain from doing so.

Conclusions

I believe there is adequate support for the revenue estimate, although some tweaking of the revenue estimate is probably appropriate. Calculating additional indicators (impact on residential taxpayers, for example) would also be helpful to the town and planning board deliberations.

The estimate of imposed costs requires additional support and documentation.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve the town and the planning board.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. W. Thibeault". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Russell W. Thibeault
President

AER Experience and Background



About Applied Economic Research

Applied Economic Research provides comprehensive economic and development consulting services to public and private clients. Since 1976 Applied Economic Research has developed a reputation for objective research and seasoned judgment. We take special pride in our high level of repeat clients and referrals--the best indicators of a job well done. Typical assignments include:

Feasibility Studies including market studies of new residential, commercial and industrial developments; financial pro formas; rehabilitation/reinvestment projects; and highest/best use studies of vacant land.

Development Strategies including target market/product definition analysis, market penetration, buyer preference surveys, problem loan work-outs, and site selection studies.

Valuation/Appraisal of real estate and businesses in financing, acquisition/disposition, tax and litigation settings.

Public Policy Analysis including downtown redevelopment, affordable housing, capital improvement programming, economic development strategies, growth impact studies and neighborhood revitalization.

Impact Studies including school and community facilities impacts, shopping center impact studies, and economic impact analysis of new public investments including highways.



Our Assets

AER brings to each assignment critical resources:

Objectivity. AER's research is thorough, objective and honest. Our studies may not say what the client was hoping to hear - but they report the truth and our unbiased, seasoned advice. As a result, our clients entrust us with their most important and difficult decisions.

"When we can't afford to miss, I call Applied Economic Research. I trust AER to give us the information, the insight and the advice we need to make tough real estate decisions. You get what you pay for. The information and guidance they provide have helped us avoid costly pitfalls."

New Hampshire Banker

Unmatched Information Resources. AER maintains an exclusive database of New England economic and real estate information. Our systems analyst maintains current population, income and housing, production and sales information. Our computer modeling capabilities are comprehensive, flexible and sophisticated.

Seasoned Judgment. Our studies get results. They extend beyond a compilation of data. We interpret the information and recommend strategies that are realistic and effective.

"AER has been extraordinarily accurate in predicting market trends. But they do more than give us good numbers. Just discussing project ideas with them can be invaluable--because of their experience and understanding of the market."

Southern New Hampshire Developer

Credibility. AER enjoys outstanding credibility with lenders, investors and public agencies recommending optimal strategies based on solid research.

"Their work throughout the region gives AER great credibility. The AER team is great to work with. They're personal and very professional."

State Government Official

Confidentiality. Our office has a written policy of confidentiality. We do not disclose our research or findings to anyone but our client.

Top Level Contacts. AER has an extensive network of business and professional contacts throughout New England. We go beyond published market data to the community leaders and business decision makers who influence public policy and investment decisions.



Diverse Experience

AER has completed over 3,000 assignments for a balanced mix of public and private clients. Our public clients find our intimate understanding of the developer's world especially useful. Our private clients benefit from our working knowledge of public policy and development issues.

Private assignments include market and development strategies for award-winning ventures such as Windward Harbor, which received Builder magazine's *Project of the Year* award; Wildwood Village, winner of Professional Builder magazine's *Homes for Better Living* award; and the Villages at Granite Hill, winner of 11 New Hampshire Home Builder's Association awards, including *Project of the Year*. Our retail experience ranges from small specialty centers to regional malls. Our office and industrial assignments address both reuse and new construction proposals.

Our public clients range from metropolitan areas to islands off the Maine coast to the region's largest communities and state agencies.

Extensive Exposure

Russ Thibeault, president of AER, is frequently quoted in the state and national media. He has been a frequent commentator on National Public Radio's *Marketplace*, heard nationally by over 3 million listeners a week. He has appeared on ABC World News, *The McNeil-Lehrer News Hour*, BBC World Television and Japan Public Television. He has been quoted in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Russ is a frequent public speaker addressing economic and development issues before the state's business and government leaders.

Our clients include most of the area's financial institutions, government agencies, developers and municipalities. They provide AER with a high degree of repeat assignments—the best measure of a successful assignment.



*RUSSELL W. THIBEAULT
PRESIDENT
APPLIED ECONOMIC RESEARCH, INC.*

Russell W. Thibeault is a real estate and economic consultant and appraiser providing services to public and private clients. He founded Applied Economic Research in 1976 and has completed assignments in approximately 30 states.

Expertise

Mr. Thibeault's expertise falls into a variety of economic and real estate topics:

Market Value Appraisals of undeveloped land, industrial, commercial, and investment real estate for government bodies, corporations, financial institutions, estates and private investors.

Economic Development Studies for states, regions and municipalities concerned about job, investment or income displacement.

Market and Financial Feasibility Analysis of shopping centers, office buildings, apartments, condominiums, industrial and land developments.

Highest and Best Use Studies of undeveloped land, industrial, commercial, and investment real estate for government bodies, corporations, financial institutions, estates and private investors.

Economic Loss Calculations for businesses and individuals.

Business Valuations and economic loss estimates of closely held businesses for estate planning, family interest transfers and court testimony.

Real Estate Investment Strategies for corporations, institutions, syndicates and individuals including: acquisition studies, market strategies, after tax cash flow studies, and financing strategies.

Site Location Studies for banks, retail stores, and industrial firms.



Downtown Revitalization Studies for corporations, private investors and government bodies, including market penetration estimates, revitalization strategies, and financing strategies.

Economic Impact Studies including retail sales impact of proposed shopping centers and cost-revenue impacts of proposed shopping centers, residential, commercial or industrial developments.

Housing Market Studies for state, regional and local governments, including the evaluation of existing housing markets and identification of housing needs.

Public Finance Studies for local governments including revenue and cost projections, capital improvement programs and tax base analysis.

Between 1972 and 1976, Mr. Thibeault was employed by Hammer, Siler, George Associates, a Washington-based national economic and real estate consulting firm with field offices in Atlanta and Denver. In 1976, he resigned his senior associate position with the Hammer firm to establish Applied Economic Research, an independent consulting practice.

Private real estate investments analyzed by Mr. Thibeault represent a combined investment of over \$1 billion. His public and private experience has taken him to more than 30 states. Between his Applied Economic Research practice and his Washington position, clients include:

- American Institute of Architects
- National Association of Home Builders
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Commission on Water Quality
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Greater Baltimore Committee
- PPG Industries (Pittsburgh)
- MONDEV, International (Montreal)
- Town of Scarborough, Maine
- Haywood Properties (South Carolina)
- Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corp. (Washington, DC)
- Travelers Insurance
- New York State Urban Development Corporation
- Public Service Company of New Hampshire
- Appalachian Power Company (Virginia)
- Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (Vt.)
- Piedmont Environmental Council (Virginia)
- City of New Orleans
- Lakes Region Planning Commission (New Hampshire)
- International Paper Company (New York)



Town of Plymouth, Massachusetts
Town of Franklin, Massachusetts
City of Burlington, Vermont
City of Concord, New Hampshire
City of Laconia, New Hampshire
City of Baltimore, Maryland
State of Delaware
State of Rhode Island
New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
Dartmouth College
Boston Redevelopment Authority

Education/Affiliations

Russell W. Thibeault holds a master's degree in urban and regional planning with an emphasis in economic analysis from the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill). While attending the University, he was elected president of Planner's Forum, the graduate student organization. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of New Hampshire and has taken advanced real estate courses in the Graduate School of Business at American University (Washington, D.C.). He has successfully completed courses leading to the MAI designation offered by the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers. He has successfully completed residential and income property appraisal course examinations offered by the Society of Real Estate Appraisers and the Appraisal Institute. He is presently a practicing affiliate of the Appraisal Institute. He has completed course work and examinations leading to the Certified Business Appraiser designation offered by the Institute of Business Appraisers.

Mr. Thibeault is a Certified General Appraiser licensed by the New Hampshire Real Estate Appraiser Board, License #NHCG-4. He has served as the Certified General Real Estate Appraiser on the New Hampshire Real Estate Appraiser Board. He provides an annual briefing of the economy and real estate markets to the NH/VT Chapters of the Appraisal Institute. He is a practicing affiliate of the Appraisal Institute.

He was the recipient of a National Science Foundation research assistantship for research on consumer housing preferences and placed first in the Southern Regional Science Association research competition. He has authored several papers published in professional journals, including The Review of Regional Studies and Traffic Quarterly. He was a contributor to the President's Report on National Growth and Development issued to the U.S. Congress in 1974 and has authored several research papers distributed by the National Association of Home Builders. He has served as a course instructor in economics at New Hampshire College and has lectured in urban planning at Plymouth State College.



Appearances

Mr. Thibeault has appeared as an economist/real estate expert on *Nightline*, *ABC World News*, the *MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour*, *CNN the Japanese Broadcasting Network* and *BBC World Television News*. He has been interviewed by the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, *Fortune* magazine, the *Kiplinger Letter*, the *Irish Times*, *USA Today*, *Bloomberg News Service* and *U.S. News and World Report*.

Mr. Thibeault has served on the Board of Directors and as President of the *New Hampshire Planners Association*. He was elected to the Executive Committee of the *North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Planners*.

He currently serves on the board of *Bank of New Hampshire*. Mr. Thibeault served on the Board of Directors of the *Indian Head National Bank of Laconia*, until such time as that institution merged with the *Indian Head National Bank of Nashua*. He has served on the Board of Directors and Finance Committee of the *Lakes Region General Hospital* and as a director of *First NH Bank*, and *Citizens Bank (NH)*. He is past-president of the *Laconia Industrial Development Corporation* and also of *Plan NH*. Mr. Thibeault has served on the *NH Governor's Revenue Advisory Panel*. He serves on the advisory board of *Granite State College* and has served on the board of *Southern NH University*.

His economic commentaries have been heard nationally over *National Public Radio* affiliates on programs including *Marketplace*, *The Savvy Traveler* and *Living on Earth*

He is a frequent public speaker. He has presented before the *NH Bar Association's Continuing Legal Education series (CLE)*, the *NH Chapter of the Appraisal Institute*, the *NH Bankers Association*, the *NH Association of School Superintendents*, the *NH Assessors Association*, and the *National Conference of the National Association of Home Builders*.

He has been qualified as an expert witness in the *US District Court*, the *US Bankruptcy Court*, the *NH Board of Tax and Land Appeals* and most of the *Superior courts in New Hampshire*.

12/2019

! russ three page

