



ALBEMARLE COUNTY PLANNING
STAFF REPORT SUMMARY

Project Name: SP201700017 Greenmont Hopworks Processing Facility	Staff: Scott Clark, Senior Planner
Planning Commission Public Hearing: December 19, 2017	Board of Supervisors Hearing: TBA
Owner(s): Murray, James B Jr & David W Kudravetz Trs; Keene Land Trust	Applicant(s): Murray, James B Jr & David W Kudravetz Trs; Keene Land Trust
Acreage: 5.75 acres	Special Use Permit for: Commercial fruit or agricultural produce packing plant under section 10.2.2.23 of the Zoning Ordinance
TMP: Tax Map Parcel 12100-00-00-09200 Location: 1463 Plank Road	By-right use: RA Rural Areas - agricultural, forestal, and fishery uses; residential density (0.5 unit/acre in development lots)
Magisterial District: Samuel Miller	Proffers/Conditions: Yes
School District: Scottsville Elementary – Walton Middle – Monticello High School	
Requested # of Dwelling Units/Lots: none	DA - RA - X
Proposal: Construct a hops-processing facility, including a 10,000-square-foot structure.	Comp. Plan Designation: Rural Area – preserve and protect agricultural, forestal, open space, and natural, historic and scenic resources; residential (0.5 unit/ acre in development lots)
Character of Property: The property is partially open and partially wooded, and slopes gradually away from Plank Road.	Use of Surrounding Properties: Properties to the east and northeast include a post office, a veterinary office, and a convenience store. The remainder of the surrounding properties are large forest parcels.
Factors Favorable: 1. The proposed use is supportive of the County’s goals for maintaining and protecting agriculture in the Rural Areas. 2. The impacts of the use on the surrounding area are minimal and can be managed through design limitations.	Factors Unfavorable: None.
Recommendation: Staff recommends approval with conditions.	

STAFF CONTACT:
PLANNING COMMISSION:
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:
PROJECT:

Scott Clark, Senior Planner
December 19, 2017
TBD
SP201700017 Greenmont Hopworks Processing Facility

PETITION:

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT: Samuel Miller
TAX MAP/PARCEL(S): 12100-00-00-09200
LOCATION: 1463 Plank Road

PROPOSAL: Construct a hops-processing facility, including a 10,000-square-foot structure.

PETITION: Commercial fruit or agricultural produce packing plant under section 10.2.2.23 of the Zoning Ordinance on a 5.75-acre parcel. No dwelling units proposed.

ZONING: RA Rural Area - agricultural, forestal, and fishery uses; residential density (0.5 unit/acre in development lots)

OVERLAY DISTRICT(S): Entrance Corridor

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Rural Area – preserve and protect agricultural, forestal, open space, and natural, historic and scenic resources; residential (0.5 unit/ acre in development lots)

CHARACTER OF THE AREA:

The site is located on the western edge of the small rural community of Keene, set in an area of large farm and forest parcels. See Attachment A for an area map, and Attachment B for a map of the site.

PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY:

None.

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL:

The proposed use is for an agricultural processing facility located in a structure of up to 10,000 square feet. The purpose of the facility is to process fresh hops from Albemarle County and surrounding localities. Fresh hops, which are extremely perishable, would be converted into dried hops that have a much longer shelf life. The facility would also include cold storage for the hops. The operation could either dry hops and return them to the original growers, or purchase the hops, process them, and then store them on-site until they were needed.

The facility would include equipment for removing hop flowers from freshly-picked vines; drying equipment; milling and pelletizing equipment; packaging equipment; and other machinery such as an air compressor. All processing activities would take place within the 10,000-square-foot building.

The processing portion of the proposed use is highly seasonal and would operate up to 24 hours a day from approximately July through September. The applicants have proposed to do no outdoor work (such as transportation and unloading of goods) from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. During the remainder of the year, this would be a low-intensity use involving mainly office work and the occasional transportation of small shipments of dried hops to specific destinations.

See Attachment C for the conceptual plan.

COMMUNITY MEETING:

The community meeting was held on an adjacent property under the same ownership on September 25, 2017. Approximately ten members of the public attended the meeting. The attendees asked about traffic generation and other characteristics of the proposed use, but did not express major concerns.

ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST

Section 33.8 of the Zoning Ordinance states that the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors shall reasonably consider the following factors when reviewing and acting upon an application for a special use permit:

No substantial detriment. The proposed special use will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent lots.

The primary concerns regarding impacts on adjacent lots with this use relate to noise. The use would rely on processing equipment that generates noise in order to process and package the hops. However, as all the processing equipment would be located indoors, noise impacts are expected to be minimal. The processing building will have air-conditioning equipment that will generate a small amount of noise, but that equipment will allow the use to operate at night with the doors closed, thus reducing the chance of noise impacts on adjacent properties. To further decrease noise impacts, the applicants have agreed to not use refrigerated trailers parked on the site for storage. All cold storage will be contained within the building.

Furthermore, the applicants have included a minimum 50-foot setback for the use to increase the distance between the processing facility and adjacent properties. (Given the layout of the property, the distance is likely to be significantly greater than 50 feet.)

At the moment, the nearest residence is approximately 600 feet from the expected location of the processing facility, on the opposite side of Route 20.

Character of district unchanged. The character of the district will not be changed by the proposed special use.

Agricultural processing facilities, if appropriately scaled, are a part of the rural landscape and do not change the overall character of the RA zoning district.

Harmony. The proposed special use will be in harmony with the purpose and intent of this chapter,

One of the purposes of the RA Rural Areas zoning district is the “[p]reservation of agricultural and forestal lands and activities.” This use would support that purpose by providing a local processing option for local produce, increasing the viability of the hops crop in our area.

...with the uses permitted by right in the district

Agricultural processing uses are supportive of by-right agricultural uses. They provide opportunities for local agricultural products to reach necessary markets. The proposed use is similar to more traditional processing uses, such as fruit-packing operations, that are also highly seasonal.

...with the regulations provided in section 5 as applicable,

There are no supplemental regulations in section 5 for this use category.

...and with the public health, safety and general welfare.

The applicants estimate that about 6 loads of hop vines (typically on trailers behind pickup trucks or other farm trucks) would arrive at the site per day during the six to eight weeks of peak activity per year. Approximately four employees would be on the site. The Virginia Department of Transportation has reviewed this proposal and had no objections to the use or its impacts on the public road system. Details of the required entrance design will be worked out during the review of the site development plan for this use.

The proposed processing use has minimal impacts on water quality, as little or no water is used. Stormwater impacts of the development of the site will be managed during the review of the site development plan. The County Engineer has no objection to the proposed use.

The 100-foot stream buffer required by the Water Protection Ordinance is shown as a “Wooded Area to Remain,” on the conceptual plan.

The Fire/Rescue department had no objection to the proposed use.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The use will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Strategy 1d of the Rural Area Plan states that the County should “[c]ontinue to assist Rural Area property owners to diversify agricultural activities, including helping to connect local farms with local consumers.” The proposed facility would help to make a perishable crop more viable for local growers by providing a nearby packaging and storage facility, removing the need to either use the crop immediately or quickly transport it long distances.

Portions of the property are located within 500 feet of Route 20, a designated Entrance Corridor. To avoid impacts on the scenic character of the corridor, the applicant has agreed to locate the processing structure at least 500 feet from Route 20. Existing vegetation on other parcels currently blocks any view of the site, but this limitation would protect against visibility impacts caused by the removal of that vegetation.

SUMMARY:

Staff has identified the following factors favorable to this proposal:

1. The proposed use is supportive of the County’s goals for maintaining and protecting agriculture in the Rural Areas.
2. The impacts of the use on the surrounding area are minimal and can be managed through design limitations.

Staff has identified no factors unfavorable to this proposal.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Based on the findings contained in this staff report, staff recommends approval of SP201700017 Greenmont Hopworks Processing Facility with the following conditions:

1. Development and use shall be in general accord with the conceptual plan titled “Special Use Concept Plan for Greenmont Hopworks,” prepared by Shimp Engineering, and dated 11/22/2017 (hereafter “Conceptual Plan”), as determined by the Director of Planning and the Zoning Administrator. To be in accord with the Conceptual Plan, development and use shall reflect the following major elements within the development essential to the design of the development, as shown on the Conceptual Plan:
 - All uses associated with the Special Use Permit are conducted within the boundary of the Conceptual Plan labeled “Limits of SP”
 - All trees located within the area of the Conceptual Plan labeled as “Wooded Area to Remain” shall remain undisturbed unless approval for removal is obtained from the Zoning Administrator.

Minor modifications to the plan which do not conflict with the elements above may be made to ensure compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

2. The agricultural-processing operation shall be contained within a single structure whose footprint shall not exceed 10,000 square feet.
3. The agricultural-processing structure shall be located at least 500 feet from the Route 20 Entrance Corridor.
4. Agricultural processing activities shall be contained within the structure between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
5. Refrigerated storage of agricultural goods shall only occur within the agricultural-processing structure.
6. All outdoor lighting shall be only full cut off fixtures and shielded to reflect light away from all abutting properties. A lighting plan limiting light levels at all property lines to no greater than 0.3 foot candles shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator or their designee for approval.
7. If the use, structure, or activity for which this special use permit is issued is not commenced by [date two years from Board approval], the permit shall be deemed abandoned and the authority granted thereunder shall thereupon terminate.

Motions:

- A. Should the Planning Commission **choose to recommend approval** of this special use permit:

I move to recommend approval of SP201700017 Greenmont Hopworks Processing Facility with the conditions outlined in the staff report.

- B. Should the Planning Commission **choose to recommend denial** of this special use permit:

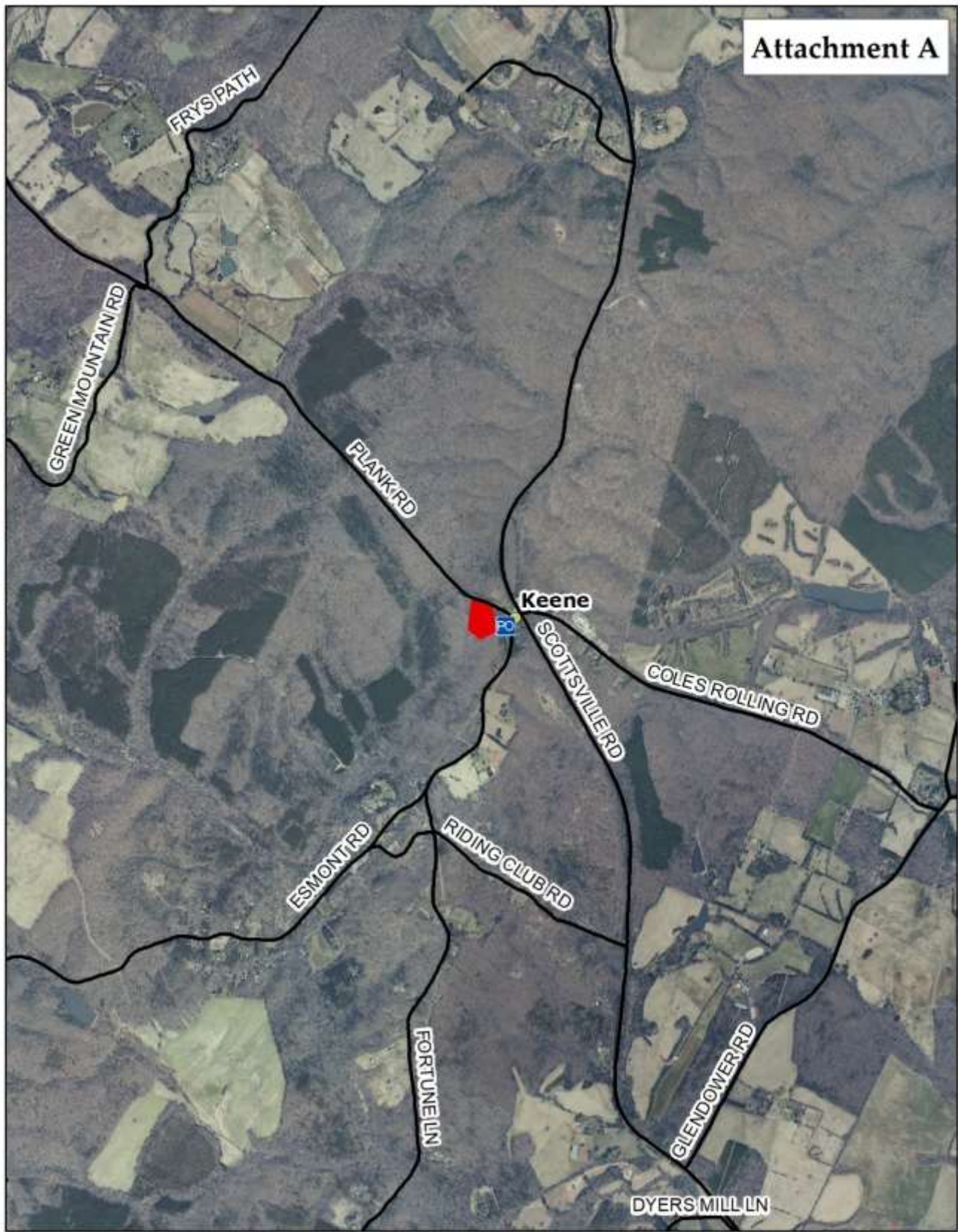
I move to recommend denial of SP201700017 Greenmont Hopworks Processing Facility. (*Planning Commission needs to give a reason for denial*)

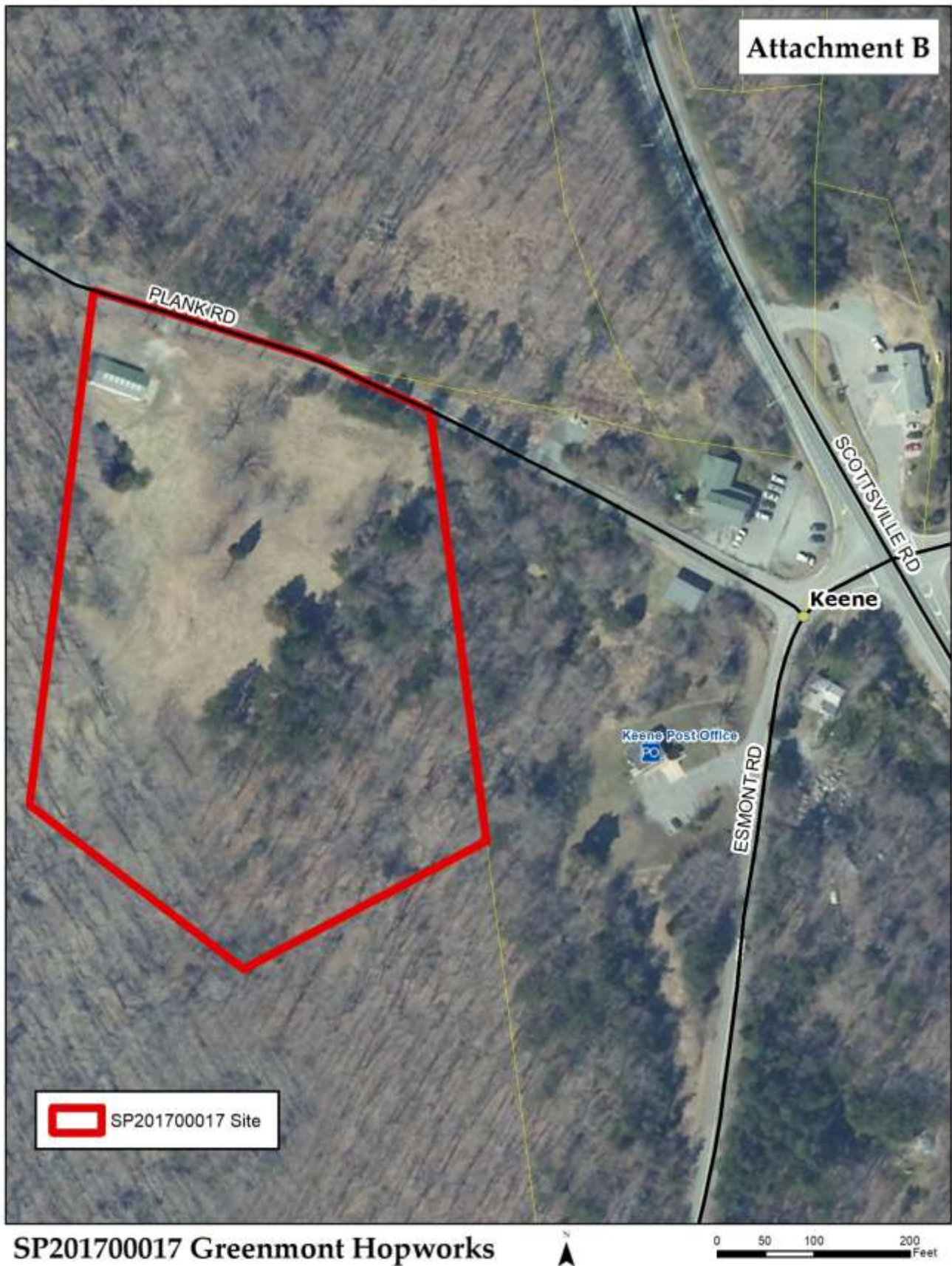
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Area Map

Attachment B – Site Map

Attachment C – Conceptual Plan





SHIMP ENGINEERING, P.C.
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GENERAL CONDITIONS
OF DEVELOPMENT

No.	Date	Description
1	11/22/2017	County Comments
2	11/22/2017	County Comments

SPECIAL USE CONCEPT PLAN FOR:

Greenmont Hopworks
ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Date	11/22/2017
Scale	AS SHOWN
Sheet No.	2 OF 2
File No.	17.022

Limits of Special Use Permit:

- The special use permit application is limited to the 2.75 (+/-) acres delineated on this sheet as the proposed SP area on Parcel 121-92, which totals 5.75 acres.
- Accessory uses of a well and septic system may be constructed outside of the limits of the SP as shown.
- Grading and/or required sediment control and storm water management measures associated with improvements may occur outside of the designated SP limits.
- The northern limits of the SP align with the property boundary to allow for the construction of an entrance to serve the agricultural processing facility.

Buildings:

- The maximum square footage (footprint) for the proposed agricultural processing facility is 10,000 sf. A building of this size can accommodate interior cold storage space and is sufficient for future growth.
- The proposed structure will not be located within 500ft of the edge of pavement of Route 20, a designated Entrance Corridor.

