

S.L. Williamson Company –Replacement Asphalt Plant at Red Hill Quarry

A. PROPOSAL:

S.L. Williamson is a third-generation asphalt paving and road construction company. It produces plant mix asphalt in three asphalt plants located near Charlottesville, two of which are located in Albemarle County. One location is at the Luck Stone Quarry in Shadwell, and the other is at the Martin Marietta quarry at Red Hill off of Red Hill Road.

The Red Hill plant is located on tax map parcel 88-18, on a 4.4-acre portion of the larger 579-acre parcel (the “Property”), pursuant to a lease with Martin Marietta Materials, Inc., the owner of the Property that comprises the Red Hill Quarry. The 4.4 acre area that is subject to the SUP is part of a larger lease area that also includes a 1.2-acre portion of tax map parcel 88-13B, which is also owned by Martin Marietta Materials, Inc. The precise boundaries of the Property is shown in detail on the enclosed Concept Plan prepared by Roudabush, Gale & Associates dated August 19, 2019, last revised March 3, 2021 (the “Concept Plan”). The Property is zoned Rural Areas and Natural Resource Overlay District, and within Rural Area 4 of the Comprehensive Plan. The property also has areas that are zoned Flood Hazard Overlay District.

The existing plant has been in the current location since 1969 and has reached the end of its useful life and must be replaced. The existing plant will be removed, and a new drum mix plant will be installed in its place, in the same location. The existing use is a legal non-conforming use, but after several meetings with the Applicant, Community Development Staff have determined that a Special Use Permit is necessary to replace the existing plant in the same location.

The proposed new drum mix plant will be similar to the S.L. Williamson operation at the Shadwell Luck Stone Quarry. By replacing the existing plant with a modern facility, it will enable this long-time thriving local business to continue serving its customers in the Charlottesville/Albemarle County region, including the Virginia Department of Transportation, in addition to its numerous private sector customers. This will support and enhance economic development in the County, and have immeasurable benefits to all of the Company’s public and private sector customers in the County, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

B. CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Property is located in the Rural Areas 4 of the Comprehensive Plan. Among the goals of the Rural Areas is protected natural resources. An Objective of the Natural Resources plan is to recognize the economic value of the County’s mineral resources, will giving due consideration to potential harm on human health and property values. By locating the replacement plant in the same location as the existing plant, no adverse impacts on adjacent properties or property values will be created, nor will the use change the character of the area. The proposal will also further the Comprehensive Plan goals in the Natural Resources Plan to protect air and water quality by utilizing more modern equipment.

As such, the proposed SUP and replacement asphalt plant will enable the Applicant to recognize the economic value of the County’s mineral resources, support its existing business, better serve its customers, and avoid any impact on adjacent properties or environmental resources. This is

consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including the Land Use Plan, the Natural Resources Plan, and the Economic Development Plan.

Specifically, the project will further the following objectives of the Natural Resources Plan:

Objective 1: Ensure clean and abundant water resources for public health, business, healthy ecosystems and personal employment by preventing shortages and contamination.

The travelway and settling basins have been reconfigured to be within the landward side of the 50 foot stream buffer, and the project is not creating any impacts to the stream or other environmental features of the property. The new plant will be substantially more protective of water resources than the existing plant that is over 51 years old, thus substantially reducing any risk of water contamination. The new plant will not have any impact on water capacity or availability.

Objective 2: Protect air quality

The new plant will be substantially more protective of air quality than the existing plant that is over 50 years old and that leaks dust because the metal is thin and patched. And the new plant is designed as a closed system drum plan to contain the dust.

Objective 3: Recognize the economic value of the County's mineral resources while giving due consideration to the potential harm mineral extraction activities and byproducts can have on human health and property values.

This SUP application successfully balances these two goals, in that it would enable the existing plant to be replaced with new and more modern equipment, which will support the existing business activity of producing the asphalt from the existing mineral resources, without creating any harm or byproducts that would impact human health or property values. In fact, the proposed replacement plant will significantly reduce risks to human health and property values by replacing old, noisy, and dust-generating equipment with new equipment that is quieter, newer, cleaner, energy-efficient, and far more protective of environmental resources.

Objective 4: Protect the biological diversity and ecological integrity of the County in both the Rural Area and Development Areas.

This SUP application will enable the existing plant to be replaced with new and more modern equipment, In addition, because the plant is not proposing to materially expand the footprint of its over 51-year operations, the application will not have any impact on any new areas, including those with any significant biological diversity. The project merely proposes to replace old equipment with new and more modern equipment in the exact same location, and the new plan will substantially improve air and water quality protections as compared to the existing plant.

Objective 6: Retain and improve land cover near rivers and streams and protect wetlands

The proposal does not involve clearing any additional land area at all, nor will it have an impact on any wetlands areas. It is merely proposing to replace old, outdated equipment

with more modern and environmentally protective equipment in the exact same location where it has existed for over 51 years.

Objective 7: Protect residents and properties from damage that can be prevented when natural hazards are present.

This proposal will protect residents and properties by replacing old outdated equipment with new equipment that will result in less noise and dust than the existing equipment, and will not create any impacts on air or water quality.

C. IMPACTS ON PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE:

The proposed project will not have any negative impacts on public facilities or public infrastructure. The Property is currently used for an asphalt mixing plant, and the proposed new plant will be the exact same use, but with more modern equipment that will increase public safety, minimize noise, and have a reduced environmental impact. No additional vehicular trips are proposed, and no additional land disturbance are proposed. Furthermore, no additional traffic changes are proposed.

D. IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

The proposed project will not have any negative impacts on environmental features. The Property is currently used for an asphalt mixing plant, and the proposed new plant will be the exact same use, in the same location, but with more modern equipment that will increase public safety, minimize noise, and have a reduced environmental impact. No additional vehicular trips are proposed, and no additional land disturbance is proposed.

The new plant will provide substantially better protections for air and water quality, consistent with the objectives in Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly Objective 1 – “Ensure clean and abundant water resources for public health, business, healthy ecosystems, and personal enjoyment by preventing shortages and contamination,” and Objective 2 – “Protect Air Quality.”

- The existing plant is over 51 years old, and is a batch plant, which is not designed as a closed system, which results in the dust not being entirely contained.
- The existing plant has been retrofitted over the years to comply with changing regulations, and because of the age of the metal, it is thin and although it has been repeatedly patched over the years, it still leaks dust.
- The proposed replacement plant will be subject to DEQ air and water annual permits for total suspended solids.
- The proposed replacement plant is more fuel efficient, safer, and quieter, and overall more efficient
- The proposed replacement plant is a “closed system” drum plant that functions as a continuous process and will contain the materials, which by definition will result in improved protections for water and air quality.

- The existing plant was not designed or manufactured to comply with the current more stringent environmental regulations. By contrast, the proposed replacement plant is designed to comply with current standards, and thus will enable the plant to much more effectively comply, and thus protect the community's air and water far more effectively compared to existing conditions.

The existing plant is located within the 100-year floodplain per the FEMA 100-year from FIRM panel 51003C0405D. Roudabush, Gale & Associates, the project engineers, has performed a floodplain study using HEC-RAS to determine the extent of the 100-year Floodplain in the area of the creek that is located to the west of the existing plant. Pursuant to the updated floodplain study, the existing plant and associated buildings are located outside of the floodplain. Representatives of Roudabush Gale & Associates, following consultation with the County Engineer, has secured an amendment to the floodplain maps in the form of a Letter of Map Revision ("LOMR"), copies of which are enclosed. As such, the new plant will be outside of the floodplain. This further demonstrates the application's consistency with Strategy 7a of Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan – "through continued application of the Flood Hazard Overlay District, protect floodplains from uses that impair the function of the floodplains."

While a certified engineers report was requested to be submitted with the SUP application, we request that this be an item that can be submitted as a condition of site plan approval, or with the initial site plan application. That was a condition of approval of the SUP for the replacement plant at SL Williamson's facility at the Luck Stone Quarry in Shadwell (SP 2006-0023).