

## **Large Scale Indoor Agricultural Building Proposal Summary for Discussion**

- 1. Background: At the request of a Town Staffer in February: “Peter, find a property to develop a Medical Marijuana Grow Facility – the Town doesn’t want to miss out on this opportunity.” I decided along with John Matheson from J. Healy to see if the idea was achievable.**
- 2. We began discussions with a representative of a national medical marijuana company that is looking to build a large facility in Connecticut. To meet anticipated future demand, they need a site with the capability of ultimately housing 250,000 to 350,000 indoor square feet and prefer a two story design. Accordingly the “L” shaped building envelope shown on the attached preliminary Master Plan is a 150,000 square foot pad site anticipating a two story design containing 300,000 sf. The company wants to begin construction in the first half of 2021. We are operating under a Non-Disclosure Agreement at this time.**
- 3. After reviewing all the available properties in Colchester for feasibility (zoning, lot size, access to utilities, residential neighbors) we concluded that the one site meeting most of the necessary development criteria was a 17.15 acre parcel on Old Amston Rd. The property had been a junkyard since 1951 and in 2014 the vast majority of old vehicles and tires were removed by the previous owner working with Town Staff. In addition the parcel has access to the newly installed *Eversource* Natural Gas line that powers the new Fuel Cell Facility. In August we entered into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the owners.**
- 4. In September, *Reynolds Engineering* prepared a preliminary plan depicting a proposed Medical Marijuana Indoor Grow Facility on the parcel. We met Town Staff on September 22 and had a very positive meeting. Our Attorney, Harry Heller, offered to draft a Zone Change Regulation that would allow the project on the parcel which is currently in the Suburban District. The Staff strongly supported this idea. On September 24 we met 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Mary Bylone who was strongly supportive and liked the idea of turning a blighted property into a job creating enterprise that will significantly grow our tax base.**
- 5. We then hired *Eolas Environmental* to perform a Phase I ESA and Subsurface Investigation. *Eolas* recently completed the analysis and concluded that the site is more suitable for our type of project than for a residential development. We also hired *Reynolds Engineering* to perform survey, topography, and to gather any other data needed for Site Plan Development. Additionally we have begun the process of removing the remaining debris from the site.**
- 6. In November Attorney Heller presented a draft to Planner Bordeaux for a Floating Zone Regulation for Large Scale Indoor Agricultural Buildings. Attorney Heller has successfully used the Floating Zone concept in other Connecticut Towns such as *Stonington, Ledyard, East Hampton* and the *City of Groton*. He indicated that the Towns find it preferable as it allows the Zoning Commission to evaluate more complex, less traditional developments in a legislative context. We will be working with Planner Bordeaux and the Zoning Commission on the mechanics of making the project work.**

7. We have had several conference calls with executives at *Eversource* and *Doosan CT* to build a Fuel Cell to power the facility by converting natural gas into electricity. In addition to producing electricity to heat/cool and light the building the Fuel Cell will generate a CO2 by-product that can be used to add fertilizer for the plants. *Doosan-Korea* developed this system with massive greenhouses in Holland – see attached *Doosan* Literature.
8. We observed residents parking on Old Amston Rd in order to use the Airline Trail. On more than one occasion I've seen small dogs nearly run over. Since we have available land at the corner of Old Amston and the Airline Trail we will donate a handicapped accessible parking lot(shown on the plan)

As you have seen we are proposing to transform a blighted parcel in a non-residential area into a state of the art indoor agricultural enterprise– attached is a similar example of an “L” shaped grow facility recently completed in Pennsylvania. Our facility in Colchester will be the largest new medical marijuana facility in Connecticut and is expected to create up to 70 jobs. We expect it could generate over \$1,000,000 annually in property taxes from the building and its inventory, but we will have a better grip on that number as we move forward. We respectfully request that this Commission work with us and Town Staff to turn this vision into reality.