



March 8, 2026

**BY EMAIL**

Mr. John F. Trefethen  
Chairman, Ashland Zoning Board of Appeals  
Town of Ashland, MA  
101 Main Street  
Ashland, MA 01721

Re: **ZBA Application For: 55 West Union Street, Ashland, MA**

Dear Chairperson Trefethen:

I am submitting the information on behalf of the Applicant 55 West Union LLC. At the last Ashland Zoning Board of Appeals hearing on February 24, 2026, we mentioned matters that the development team has had difficulty responding to relative to the comments and requests from Haley and Ward on water and sewer

1. **CCTV Inspections:** EST Associates has been engaged since December and due to the cold temperatures, they have been unable to utilize cameras to document the condition of the sewer/drain lines. This is due to not only the inability of the equipment to function properly in cold temperatures, but also due to the need for Police Details and difficulty due to narrower roadways due to snowbanks. It is my understanding that this work was finally able to be performed on March 4, 2025, and a report should be delivered this week.
2. **Rainfall Monitoring:** There has been little to no rainfall since December as it has all been snow, therefore, there has been little flow into the sewers. The request from Haley and Ward was for a six-hour rain event resulting in 1.75 inches of rain. We were informed that this is a relatively rare event that may occur in the summer months during a thunderstorm. The standard our contractor is more familiar with is two, ½ inch rainstorms. We respectfully request that Haley and Ward allow for the two ½ inch rainstorms as that is more likely to occur during the remaining hearing period, that we have already extended once.
3. **Sewer Relocation:** This matter has been discussed a few times at the hearings. The Applicant was asked to move the sewer line from what is shown on the submitted site plans, to the other site of Memorial Drive and to prove that it was costly to do this by providing cost estimates etc. Based on exchange with our lawyers, we are not looking to go into weeks of an in-depth financial analysis about this request making the project

uneconomic. Furthermore, we have not been able to get through the hearings due to items 1 and 2 above and therefore do not know how the board plans to condition this matter. We thought it would be helpful for the board to understand why the Applicants engineer located the line on site.

**Option 1: On-site Cross Country Sewer as shown on current site plans:** The decision was made based on practicality and construction feasibility, limiting blasting that is also rooted in economics. The cross-country sewer option would be located entirely on-site and within the limit of work to be disturbed as part of the site work and foundation excavation. This would reduce the overall limit of disturbance and reduce crossings and potential ledge removal in proximity to other utilities and maintain unrestricted access along Memorial Drive during the construction process. From a construction feasibility standpoint, the cross-country sewer option would provide increased construction access and staging areas, and would allow for open cuts reducing some of the need for extensive sheeting and shoring. Some blasting may be necessary for the building foundations, and it makes sense to place the sewer lines in these areas that will already be disturbed. It is not practical (or economical) to undertake additional blasting and excavation in areas that could otherwise remain undisturbed. Accordingly, the most practical (and least impactful) course of action is to place the sewer line around the edge of the building rather than require blasting and excavation into otherwise undisturbed areas. Our Engineer has stated that the line will be deep at a depth of approximately 30 feet, but will function well even with the turns as designed in the system. The bends at each manhole are within those typically allowed under standard engineering practice, with a maximum 90-degree bend at any given manhole. Formed brick invert channels would be provided per DPW standards to prevent energy loss through the structure.

**Option 2: To put the sewer line on site and parallel to Memorial Drive.** This would be significantly more disruptive to anyone traveling to and from the Ashland MBTA commuter rail, Cirrus apartments, Dunkin Donuts or any other vehicle that counts on Memorial drive to be open and accessible. Aligning the sewer along Memorial also creates a potentially dangerous digging/excavation project as this would be very close to existing underground utility lines including gas, electrical, telephone/data and stormwater pipes. And as portions of the potential line would need to be trenched close to 30 feet deep, this would be extremely costly.

**Option 3: was requested by Haley and Ward to consider putting the line on the other side of Memorial Drive within the westbound lane.** This would most likely be even more disruptive and costly than option 2. The limited available work area contained within the roadway would require trench depths of approximately 30 feet having extensive sheeting and shoring for trench safety, potential ledge removal/blasting within the right of way, daily temporary pavement patching or plating of the trench, temporary road closures, and police details. The alignment would also require crossing of the

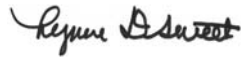
existing gas, water, and electric utilities located along the southerly side of Memorial Drive.

The Applicant has received quotes of up to \$100,000 just to do testing, analysis, design, and quoting from utility/site contracting firms in the three locations (not doing the actual sitework). The Applicant believes this exercise will result in the same answers as we have laid out herein. The Applicant is comfortable with the plan and solution that has been submitted and does not believe there is justification for requiring it to spend the significant amount of money necessary to fully investigate these options.

We look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,  
LDS Consulting Group, LLC



By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lynne D. Sweet, Managing Member

cc: Attorney Paul Haverty  
John Dudley  
Attorney Brian Winer  
Bethany Ordnung