



# MEMORANDUM

TO: Diane Barnes, Town Manager  
FROM: Brett Richardson, Economic & Community Development Director (ECD)  
SUBJECT: Worumbo Redevelopment Site Plan, Concept Development, Zoning review  
DATE: December 8, 2020

The Lisbon community has multiple goals for the former Worumbo Mill site, including community green space, views of the Androscoggin River, and high-quality commercial and residential development that extends the Main Street village area to the river.<sup>1</sup> Following an elevation study of the site by Little River Land Surveying and consultations with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding the practicality of redevelopment activities within the floodplain on the site, this memo proposes two actions to advance redevelopment consistent with community goals:

- 1) Prepare a Tier 2 Site Plan Review Application to obtain Planning Board approval to elevate priority areas of the parcel above the base flood elevation by adding fill, based on engineering by Olver Associates.
- 2) Issue a Request for Proposals for architectural services to develop renderings of potential development scenarios depicting a relative mix of green space and commercial/residential development for additional community input.

The purpose of these proposed actions are to **1) Eliminate regulatory uncertainty and increase the attractiveness of the Worumbo parcel for potential private sector development partners; 2) Enable the community to provide informed and relevant feedback on development scenarios; and 3) Help inform appropriate land use policy to ensure that future development reflects community priorities.**

## **1) Tier 2 Site Plan Review Application.**

To accommodate the mix of land uses desired by the community, the portion of the Worumbo parcel best suited for development is located adjacent to the railroad tracks that separate the Town-owned parcel from the abutting railroad and DOT Park & Ride. This prime development area includes the footprint of the former mill building and portions of the site recently cleared and graded by Lisbon's Public Works Department. Siting appropriate commercial and/or residential development along the railroad tracks will balance community priorities by protecting a corridor of green space adjacent to the River and maintaining river views from Main Street and the eastern gateway from Topsham.

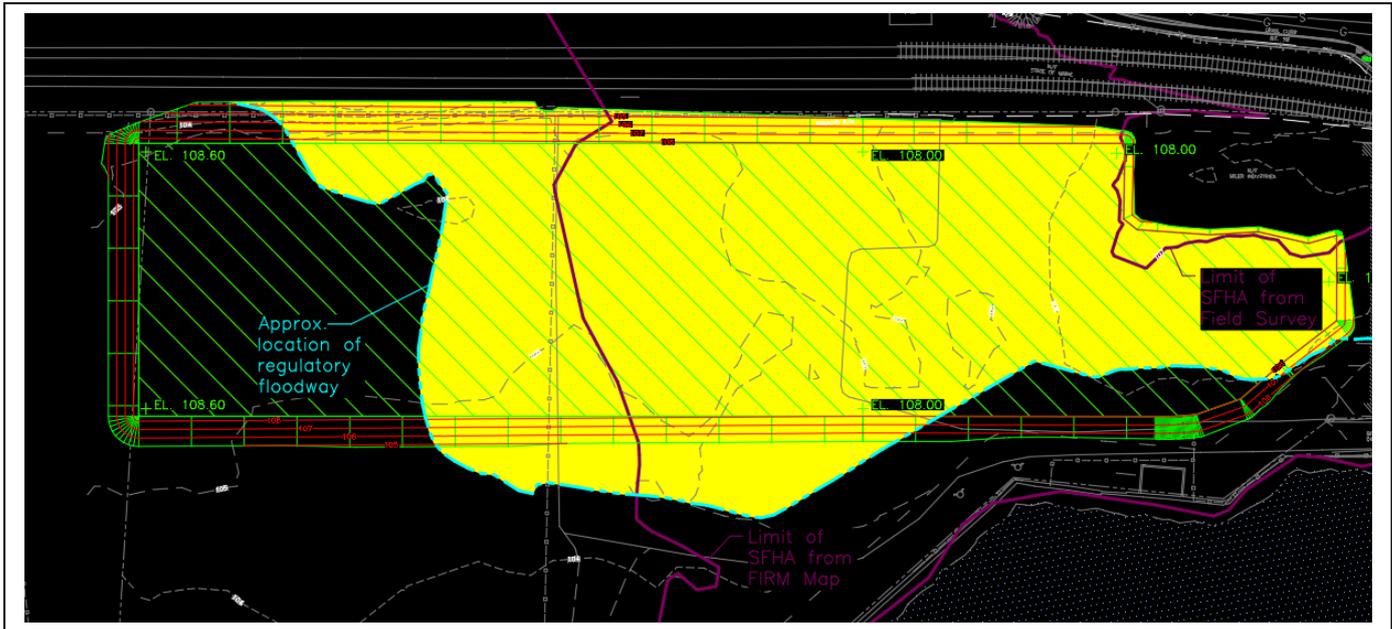
Recent consultations with FEMA have confirmed that:

- FEMA has not delineated a floodway within the designated floodplain at the Worumbo parcel. Therefore, FEMA will defer to Lisbon Planning Board approval when evaluating a future *Letter of Map Adjustment-Fill* (LOMA-F) request: Planning Board approval will lead to FEMA approval.
- With Planning Board approval, the Town can attach to the property deed the right to add fill to raise the prime development areas of Worumbo above the base flood elevation.
- Following the addition of fill, FEMA will grant a LOMA-F, which will remove the prime development areas of Worumbo from the designated flood plain and eliminate the requirement for special flood insurance and/or additional design and engineering requirements/expense.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Lisbon Town Council meeting Agenda and Minutes for October 6, 2020, item 2020-175.

To obtain Planning Board approval, Olver Associates will develop an engineered fill plan to guide a Tier 2 Site Plan Review by the Planning Board. The projected fill plan cost is \$1,500. The fill plan will include the portion of the Worumbo site floodplain equal to approximately 65,000 square feet that is highlighted in yellow below and located outside the Town ordinance-regulated floodway.



## 2) Architectural Request for Proposals

The Worumbo parcel is roughly 4.5 acres. The area that is best suited for development linearly follows the railroad tracks and is roughly 2.5 acres. This 2.5 acre development area includes the former mill site at the intersection of Routes 196 and 125, the fill area pictured in yellow above, and the area immediately to the west of the fill area between the regulatory floodway line and the western property boundary. Of that 2.5 acres, the developable area outside the floodplain is roughly 1.5 acres to host building footprints and utilities. Parking can be developed within the floodplain and roughly one acre devoted to parking will create 120 to 145 parking spaces.

Developing the 2.5-acre area described above (1.5 acres for development and 1 acre for parking) will leave roughly 2 acres for community green space adjacent to the Androscoggin River.

Within this general framework, many design possibilities are available. Different allowances for building footprints, height, and orientation to the railroad tracks and river will generate different economics, aesthetics, and viewsheds on the site. Alternative locations for access roads, pedestrian pathways, and parking lots relative to green space along the river will create different visitor experiences.

The importance of the Worumbo site to Lisbon's future warrants further exploration of various design scenarios for public review and input. To advance public input and good design principles that can be codified through a zoning amendment for the site, architectural renderings are necessary.

### **Therefore, we respectfully request that Council approve:**

- 1) Use of up to \$1,500 in Downtown TIF funds as authorized via Council item 2020-34 to engage Olver Associates to develop a fill plan for the portion of the Worumbo site floodplain that is outside the regulatory floodway in order to pursue Planning Board approval via a Tier 2 Site Plan Review
- 2) Release an RFP for architectural services to render development scenarios for public review, including a mix of development, parking, and community green space, and to retain the selected bidder using Downtown TIF funds up to \$7,500.