



May 5, 2023

Mr. Jean Krack, Borough Manager
Borough of Phoenixville
351 Bridge Street, 2nd Floor
Phoenixville, PA 19460

RE: Traffic Engineering Evaluation
Bluebird Distilling Expansion
Borough of Phoenixville, Chester County
McMahon Project No. 313466

Dear Mr. Krack:

As requested, McMahon, a Bowman Company, has prepared a traffic evaluation for the proposed expansion of Bluebird Distilling, located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Bridge Street and Starr Street (S.R. 0029). Currently, the site contains a 3,000 square-foot distillery with a tasting room, and it is our understanding that there are currently no on-site food sales associated with the site. It is proposed to expand the existing building space by 4,000 square feet (to include a total 7,000 square feet of space in the expanded building), which will include a kitchen for on-site food sales and a private event space. In addition, there is no direct vehicular access to the current site or expanded site, and as such employees and patrons park elsewhere in the Borough and walk to the building.

The purpose of this traffic evaluation is to provide a trip generation and traffic operational analysis of the expanded site, as well as an evaluation of the pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the site, and provide recommendations for any traffic and pedestrian operational improvements. This evaluation is based on the Preliminary/Final Land Development plan of 100 Bridge Street, prepared by Hopkins and Scott, Inc., last revised February 14, 2023.

It is noted that a memorandum provided by the Borough Engineer (RVE) dated April 5, 2023 indicated that based on a preliminary trip generation analysis prepared by their office that the expected additional traffic would require a traffic impact study for the project. We note that due to the location of the project in the downtown area, patrons will park throughout the downtown area since there will be no specific parking area for the site where vehicles will travel to/from, thereby making it difficult to assess traffic impacts in a traditional traffic impact study. Further, the expected trip generation for the distillery in the future may be less than projected by the Township Engineer based on additional details provided by the applicant, as discussed below. As such, a limited scope traffic evaluation has been completed and our findings follow herein.

835 Springdale Drive, Suite 200, Exton, PA 19341
P: 610.594.9995

mcmahonassociates.com | bowman.com

Existing Setting & Operations

The site is located on the corner of Bridge Street and Starr Street (S.R. 0029). Both roadways serve as arterial routes through the region, connecting northern Chester and central Montgomery Counties. This section of Bridge Street is a local road; however, just to the west, Bridge Street is a State roadway (S.R. 0113). Further, Bridge Street is the “main street” for the Borough’s downtown district. Recent available PennDOT data indicates an Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volume of approximately 9,000 vehicles (nearly 8 % of that total is trucks) as measured in 2020. It is noted that the AADT appears to be lower than previous AADT data points (about 11,500 AADT in 2019) possibly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent PennDOT data for Starr Street indicates an AADT of approximately 12,000 vehicles (of which approximately 4% is trucks) based on 2022 counts.

Based on these AADT traffic volumes, the Bridge Street/Starr Street intersection is a heavily traveled junction. Observations of peak hour traffic confirm that delays and congestion at this intersection during the weekday afternoon commuter (and early evening) peak hours occur when commuter and downtown traffic combine. Moderate traffic conditions are typical at this intersection during the weekday morning commuter peak hour and the Saturday midday peak hour. It is noted that the traffic signal provides an advance left-turn phase along westbound Bridge Street and pedestrian crosswalks are provided across the western Bridge Street leg and the Starr Street approach along with pedestrian crossing signals and push button activation.

Recent available intersection vehicular count data for the weekday morning and afternoon peak hours is illustrated in the attached Figure 1.

In the vicinity of the site and this adjacent intersection, sidewalk is currently provided along both sides of Bridge Street west of Starr Street and along the north side of Bridge Street east of Starr Street. Sidewalk is provided along both sides of Starr Street. Overall, the sidewalks and pedestrian accommodations provide for a high level of walkability and connectivity throughout the downtown, to residential neighborhoods and buildings, and to nearby parking.

In addition to the on-street parking provided throughout the borough (although there are permit parking areas near the site), there are several municipal parking lots throughout the downtown area. The nearest lot is located on the opposite side of Bridge Street at the Ashland Street Lot. It is our understanding that the Holy Ghost Church, across Starr Street from the site, also provides public parking at times for a fee.

Crash Evaluation

According to PennDOT’s crash reports between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2022, there have been three reported crashes at the Bridge Street/Starr Street intersection. For PennDOT to consider a crash as a reportable crash, there needs to be either an injury to someone involved in the crash or a vehicle that was required to be towed away due to the crash. Of these reported crashes, all three took place in 2019. These crashes were of varying type (i.e., one angle, one head-on, and one pedestrian) and severity (i.e., one injury, one property damage, and one of unknown severity). The limited reportable crash history does not reveal any particular crash trends.

Site Trip Generation

Traffic volumes generated by the existing site and the proposed expanded site were prepared based on trip generation data compiled from numerous studies contained in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) publication, *Trip Generation, 11th Edition*. Since ITE does not have trip generation data for a distillery/tasting room, our office used the trip generation rates for Brewery Tap Room (ITE Land Use Code 971) to calculate the trip generation for the existing site and the proposed expansion. According to ITE, this land use has the following characteristics:

A brewery tap room is a designated area found in conjunction with a brewery in which customers can try samples of a brewery's products. These rooms are typically located on-site and can be used as a way to sell beer or related products directly to the customer. Depending on its size, a tap room can also be used to house social gatherings. A brewery tap room may also be used to facilitate complimentary tours of the brewery.

Table 1 presents the anticipated vehicular trip generation for the existing and expanded site. The projected net increase in daily vehicular trips is anticipated to be less than 300 trips, the trip threshold for the requirement of a comprehensive traffic impact study per Municipal Code Section 22-602. It is noted that the proposed expansion does not meet the other criteria of this Code section.

Table 1. Vehicular Trip Generation ⁽¹⁾

Land Use	Size	Daily	Weekday Morning Peak Hour			Weekday Afternoon Peak Hour			Saturday Midday Peak Hour		
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing Site ⁽²⁾	3,000 s.f.	185	2	0	2	17	12	29	39	30	69
Proposed Site ⁽²⁾	7,000 s.f.	432	4	1	5	41	28	69	90	71	161
Difference	4,000 s.f.	+247	+2	+1	+3	+24	+16	+40	+51	+41	+92

(1) Based on the ITE publication, *Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*. Site data is limited (two sites).

(2) ITE Land Use Code 971 for Brewery Tap Room.

It is noted that in the Borough Engineer's preliminary trip generation estimates indicate a higher amount of traffic to be generated by the proposed expansion than shown in Table 1. Their evaluation utilized ITE data for High-Turnover Sit-Down restaurants (ITE Land Use Code 932) based on the fact that food service would be provided typical of a national chain restaurant like Applebee's or Chili's, as they acknowledge in their letter. Based on information provided to our office subsequent to the Borough Engineer's evaluation, the full expansion space will not be utilized entirely for food service and that a portion of the additional space will be utilized more for special events on a limited basis. However, if these assumptions change, then our trip generation assumptions (Table 1 above) may increase and the more conservative estimates provided by the Borough Engineer may be more accurate.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the foregoing considerations, it is anticipated the additional vehicular site traffic generated by the proposed expansion will be distributed throughout the downtown roadway network and patrons utilize available public parking lots (municipal and private) and on-street parking. As such, there will not be confluence of traffic at the site, common with suburban land developments with on-site parking, or along any one roadway or at any one intersection. As such, it would be difficult to assess the dispersed traffic impacts of the proposed development with a traditional traffic impact study.

We do note that there will likely be an increase in pedestrian traffic along the adjacent roadways and at nearby intersections, including most notably the Bridge Street/Starr Street intersection, as patrons make their way from parking lots to the site. At this time, we do not believe that the increased pedestrian traffic will adversely impact the operations of the nearby roadways and intersections. However, we do recommend the following:

- The applicant and Borough should review the surrounding sidewalk and crosswalks to determine any upgrades that may be necessary from a maintenance or a gap perspective and provide any necessary improvements to serve the increased patron's pedestrian trips particularly between the site and nearby parking lots.
- The applicant should confirm its anticipated delivery operations and coordinate with the Borough to ensure that deliveries will not create any adverse impacts to the transportation network for vehicles and pedestrian travel.
- The applicant should confirm its anticipated operations in terms of breakdown of the size (seating capacity and square footage) of dining area for regular patrons and special event space; anticipated type of food service; and the frequency/schedule of special events.
- At this time, the projected increase in site trips associated with the expansion is less than 300 daily trips (e.g., the Ordinance threshold requiring a traffic impact study), as shown in Table 1. However, the projected trip generation contained herein may increase based on changes to the operational assumptions utilized in our evaluation.
- Special consideration may be needed to mitigate the impact of parking during special events, especially considering limited parking in the downtown area.

If there are any questions or if additional clarification is required regarding the findings and recommendations of this traffic engineering evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,



John J. Yurick, P.E., PTOE, PTP
Senior Project Manager

JJY/JDG/ab

cc: Owen Hyne, P.E., CEA, Borough Engineer, Remington & Vernick Engineers
David Boelker, Director of Planning and Code Enforcement
Scott Denlinger, Esquire, Borough Solicitor, Wisler Pearlstine, LLP

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