

Haverhill

Gets Big Box Stores

Site work is under way for Target, Lowe's and BJ's Wholesale Club in Bay State city

By Paul Fournier

Construction is going full bore on several large retail projects in Haverhill, Mass. — the kind of activity this northeastern Bay State community hasn't seen for a long time.

"This is an example of our 21st-century retail policy at work," said Haverhill Mayor James J. Fiorentini.

"Two years ago, we changed our zoning policies to adopt what I called a '21st-century retail policy' to allow for retail near highways," he said. "We eliminated the special permit requirement for retail, and made an effort to speed up permitting. As a result, we now have retail stores returning to Haverhill for the first time in decades. Lowe's, Target and BJ's Wholesale Club are the three largest retail stores ever to locate in Haverhill."

J. Masterson Construction Corporation of Danvers, Mass., has the contracts to prepare the site for the Lowe's and Target stores and a second site for BJ's Wholesale Club. The largest of these by far is the 41-acre Haverhill Commons home for the new Target and Lowe's, under development by KGI Properties, a real estate developer with offices in Boston; Providence; Woburn, Massachusetts; and Lebanon, New Hampshire.

KGI sold 20 acres to Target and leased 20.9 acres to Lowe's. The developer will deliver "prepared pads" to Target and Lowe's on Computer Drive near Route 97 in Haverhill.



Maine Drilling and Blasting uses Atlas Copco ROC 748 and Ingersoll Rand 590 drills on J. Masterson Construction Corporation's Haverhill Commons job site.



Above: CAT 330C excavator moves a blasting mat to cover the next shot.
Below: A Volvo excavator loads blasted rock into a CAT articulated off-highway truck.

As part of a pact with the city of Haverhill, state agencies and local residents, the developer agreed to install environmental buffers and other protections for area turtles and wetlands, and also spend about \$1 million on traffic improvements including installing two new traffic lights and widening Computer Drive and Route 97.

Masterson's contract calls for performing all site work including roads, parking lots, utilities, and everything else needed to prepare the project for the big-box building contractors. Specifically, it entails demolishing an existing 120,000-square-foot building, excavating 225,000 cubic yards of cut and fill, and blasting 50,000 cubic yards of ledge.

It also involves crushing a large portion of blasted rock, building 28,000 square yards of retaining walls, and constructing the access road and 58,000



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A Terex truck discharges shot rock while a CAT truck passes with another load of rock.



Nationwide Rock Rock and Recycling Corp.'s Kawasaki loads rock into a Lippman 30 X 48 jaw crusher.

square yards of parking lot. In addition, the contract requires the preparation of a 125,000-square-foot building pad for Target and a 140,000-square-foot pad for Lowe's.

According to Masterson job superintendent Jim Mullen, in order to accomplish the work the Danvers contractor has more than 25 of its own heavy construction machines on-site, as well as the equipment of a number of subcontractors. He said the job is organized into four broad operations: blasting and rock excavation; rock crushing; roads and underground utility construction; and building pad grading.

Work got under way in early fall 2006 with the clearing of land by John C. Brown and Sons of Weare, N.H. J. Barnes Electric of Lynn, Mass., brought power into the site, while Masterson's CAT D6 and D8 dozers stripped some 70,000 cubic yards of loam. A subsidiary, Masterson Loam Company, is screening the loam. And subcontractor RSG Contracting Corp. of Lowell, Mass., demolished a 120,000-square-foot building on the site.

Next, a crew of six from Maine Drilling and Blasting's Auburn, N.H., office, headed by Mark Siders, began blasting. At the time of this report, the crew was using an Atlas Copco ROC 748 drill and an Ingersoll Rand 590 drill to bore 4-inch-diameter holes. The explosive, an emulsion pumped from a truck, was designed for wet conditions such as experienced at the Haverhill site.

According to Siders, they were shooting about 4,600 pounds to 4,800 pounds of explosives at a time, shattering some 3,000 cubic yards of rock per shot. Breakage was favorable, he noted.

"It's a hard, weathered rock with no seams, so the rock's breaking well," he said.

Shot rock is loaded by a battery of four excavators – three Cat 330s and a Volvo 290 – on four articulated rock trucks. Terex, Volvo and two CAT trucks haul the material to fill areas or to a portable on-site crusher. All blasted rock is being recycled on-site, noted Bill Peach, P.E., Masterson's project engineer.

"About 30,000 cubic yards of the rock is being used to fill in low spots, while the remaining 20,000 cubic yards is being crushed to produce material suitable for road base and under building pads," said Peach.



Masterson crew works on utility system manholes.

Subcontractor Nationwide Rock and Recycling Corp. is handling rock crushing. The Uxbridge, Mass., company set up a Lippman 30 X 40 jaw crusher to produce 4-inch to 6-inch material. Nationwide's Kawasaki loader and Masterson's Volvo loader have teamed up to feed rock into the crusher and stockpile the end product.

Peach pointed out that additional material is needed to supplement crushed rock for road base, so they are using recycled concrete supplied by Benevento Sand & Stone of Wilmington, Mass., for this purpose.

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For the excavation of roads and underground utilities, Masterson's crew was employing two excavators, a John Deere 330 and a CAT 315, together with two Volvo 90 loaders. In addition to the excavation work, crews are building two Versa-Lok retaining walls in two sections along the 30-foot by 1,100-foot roadway. All together the contractor is erecting six sections of the retaining walls totaling 28,000 square feet, with one wall up to 30 feet tall. Versa-Lok of Nashua, N.H., is supplying the product and providing expertise to Masterson personnel who are erecting the structures.

Utility work is significant: about 2,000 feet of 6-inch to 8-inch PVC sewer, 5,000 feet of 10-inch ductile iron water main, and 7,000 feet of 12-inch to 30-inch HDPE drainage pipe. E.J. Prescott's Middleton, Mass., office is supplying all pipe for the job, while Concrete Systems Inc. of Hudson, N.H., is providing about 100 4-foot to 6-foot-diameter precast manholes.

Masterson has to bring the building pads up to the design elevation of the bottom of the concrete base slabs. For this grading operation, the contractor is using CAT D5 and D6 dozers and a Komatsu D68 dozer to spread base material. A Bomag vibratory roller compacts the material.

The contractor has already selected some subcontractors for future work, among them: The Green Company of Middleton, Mass., to do all landscaping and irrigation systems; Bitcon Corp. of Topsfield, Mass., to do the asphalt paving; and DeRosa Curb, a Masterson subsidiary, to install granite and precast concrete curbing.

Target is scheduled to begin initial site work in December and Lowe's will get under way next spring. Preliminary plans call for Target to open in the fall of 2007 and Lowe's soon after. ■

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One of six Versa-Lok retaining walls is erected. Walls total 28,000 square feet.

The developer agreed to install **environmental buffers** and spend about \$1 million on **traffic improvements**.



Checking out the Haverhill Commons site are Jeff Masterson, Jim Mullen and Bill Peach.