

TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES

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SEPTEMBER 24, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Frank Bonzani, Stephanie Dexter, Kevin Greer, Bill Flagg, Steve Wagner

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Paul Bernstein, Kenny Young

STAFF PRESENT: Michele Lipe, Director of Planning; Jeff Doolittle, Town Engineer; Lauren Zarambo, Recording Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC HEARING / COUNCIL CHAMBERS 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Acting Chairman Frank Bonzani called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

Acting Secretary Commissioner Stephanie Dexter read the legal notice as it was published in the Journal Inquirer on Thursday, September 12, 2019 and Thursday, September 19, 2019.

Acting Chairman Bonzani seated Alternate Commissioner Bernstein for Commissioner Pacekonis and Alternate Commissioner Young for Commissioner Foley.

1. **Appl. 19-39P, Aldi** – request for a site plan of development for the construction of a 19,209 sf grocery store, on property located at 200 Gateway Boulevard (formerly 190 Buckland Road), Buckland Road Gateway Development zone

Mr. Benjamin Wheeler of Design Professionals, Inc. presented a power point presentation with developers of the project, Mr. Geoffrey Sager and Mr. Ben Tripp of Metro Realty, Mr. Bruno Lourenco, regional real estate developer for Aldi, and Mr. Kwesi Brown, traffic engineer for the project from Milone and MacBroom.

Mr. Wheeler described the proposed Aldi retail store to be located east of the recently approved Chase Bank to be located just south of M&R Liquor. Aldi's parking lot will have two access points from the existing signal on Buckland Road and on Gateway Boulevard from one of the Chase Bank entrances. Gateway Boulevard and Enterprise Drive are being constructed as part of the Chase Bank approval. Ninety seven parking spaces are proposed. Pedestrian access to the store will be provided via a sidewalk along the south side of Enterprise Drive connecting into Buckland Road. The intersection's equipment, curb, and crosswalks will be redone by the developer. Staff has requested a crosswalk between M&R Liquors and Chase Bank.

Aldi's main entrance will be in the southwest corner of the building facing Buckland Road. A recessed loading dock and dumpster area will be to the rear of the building. Typically one truck delivery is made daily. Some days may have two and others none. The cart management plan has been submitted per the recently approved zoning text amendment. Carts are effectively managed by a quarter deposit system, and stored outdoors under canopies behind a three foot high brick wall.

The storm water quality system will have a detention basin located to the north of the parking lot. All utilities will be underground.

The traffic impact statement summarized that the surrounding roadway network will accommodate the traffic generated by the Aldi store. There appears to be no significant safety concerns at the site driveway or on existing roadways. The southbound left turn lane on Buckland Road has been re-evaluated and the stacking is proposed to be lengthened 150' to accommodate about seven cars.

The landscape plan includes low evergreen shrubs and ornamental grasses for screening along the Gateway Boulevard side of the parking lot along with two low retaining walls. The color of the wall

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was selected to match the color palette of the building at the ADRC meeting, at which time evergreen trees were requested to be added to the north side of the building.

IWA/CC approval was received on September 4, 2019.

The property abuts a residential zone to the east. An interplanted buffer of evergreen shrubs, rhododendron, and mountain laurel will be installed. Aldi will be almost 500 feet to the property line where the existing trees start. The back side of the nearest house on Gilbert Lane is about 1,000 feet away from the back side of the Aldi store, with 100 feet of grade change between the two buildings.

A monument sign is proposed near the main entrance coming from Buckland Road with logo and lettering to be illuminated at night. There will also be two building signs on the west and south faces. All signs will meet zoning regulations. Site lighting will include five pole fixtures within the parking lot and several building mounted lights. All are full cut off high efficiency LED lights meeting regulations.

ADRC gave a favorable review and approval on September 5, 2019. Elevations were shown.

Mr. Wheeler stated hours of operation will be 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week.

Director of Planning Michele Lipe gave staff comments:

1. Request for a modification to a site plan approval to construct an 19,209 sf grocery store on property on the easterly side of Buckland Road, to be known as 205 Gateway Boulevard, Buckland Road Gateway Development zone.
2. This proposal is the second building on the 12 + acres where the Chase Bank has been previously approved. Construction of the road network has been started.
3. Maximum impervious coverage allowed is 60%. Frontage is 270 feet; minimum required is 200 feet. Front yard setback is over 1000 feet from Buckland Road. The parking area is in the front and side of the building.
4. The applicant has provided a narrative for the Shopping Cart Management on site. The purpose of the plan is to prevent the accumulation of carts around the site. The applicant is providing two storage areas outside, screened by a concrete masonry wall that has carts stored and require a quarter deposit for each use. This has been proven to be an effective strategy for keeping carts out of the parking areas.
5. The loading dock area is located to the rear of the building. The applicant has indicated there will be very few trucks visiting the site on a daily basis: two Aldi vehicles and maybe one other vendor. The regulations restrict loading, trash removal, and truck deliveries between 10 PM and 7 AM.
6. The required parking spaces for this use are 89 spaces; 99 are provided.
7. Pedestrian access is provided with the inclusion of a sidewalk along the Gateway Boulevard frontage connecting up to the building with a crosswalk across the shared driveway. There is a four foot sidewalk shown along the new roadway. Staff would recommend that a stamped concrete or other treatment be added to crosswalks throughout the development (similar to what we see in Evergreen Walk). Also, Section 6.7.3 requires that a bike rack be added with new retail establishments in excess of 15,000 sf.
8. A traffic study has been submitted with the application. The applicant is proposing to extend the southbound left-turn lane at the intersection of Hemlock Avenue and Buckland Road from 65 feet to 150 feet. Although this extension is not required to accommodate anticipated traffic for this application, it is anticipated to be needed with the full build out of the site.

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9. Access management provisions are being handled in several ways. The drive for this building will be coming off the new street, Gateway Boulevard, currently under construction. This will create a three-way stop controlled intersection. The applicant is leaving access easements that will allow the roadway to extend the south when/if future sites are developed. An easements chart has been provided.
10. The Architectural and Design Review Committee reviewed this application on September 5, 2019. They requested additional landscaping be added to the northern building elevation to provide some breakup of the blank façade; otherwise they provided a favorable recommendation on the site.
11. There is no rooftop mechanical equipment showing above the roofline on the architectural elevations submitted with the application. The photograph also shows no rooftop equipment. Staff want to be sure the applicant understands that rooftop units need to be screened so they are not visible from the road.
12. All lighting has full cutoff fixtures. The light poles are 14' poles with house shields on fixtures at the back of the site; and the same design as previously approved.
13. Parking lot landscaping requirements have been addressed with a minimum of 10% interior landscaping.
14. There is a required buffer along the east property boundary where the site abuts residentially zoned land. The buffer has been shown on the landscaping plan for the property to the east and a cross section of the buffer at planting, 5-years and maturity has been provided.
15. There is a free standing sign proposed; both a free standing and building signage are allowed and subject to PZC approval.
16. There are regulated wetlands on the site. IWA/CC approved this application on September 6, 2019. A bond shall be collected in the amount of \$20,000 for the erosion and sediment controls; \$15,000 to ensure proper installation of the stormwater system; and \$50,000 to ensure the installation and establishment of the mitigation area on the site, to be held for five growing seasons during which time the area will be monitored.
17. Public water and sewer are available. Water Pollution Control Authority approval is required.
18. Proposed dumpsters are located behind the building, on concrete pad and screened.
19. If this application is approved, Planning Department requests no additional approval modifications except as already noted.

Town Engineer Jeff Doolittle gave staff comments stating all engineering comments have been addressed, except for the nine (9) parking spaces located immediately to the right of the Gateway Boulevard entrance where most traffic will enter. The spaces are less desirable since traffic entering the parking lot will make them difficult to enter and exit. It has been suggested they be relocated or marked for employee use only.

Acting Chairman Bonzani asked for comments from the public in support of the application.

Mr. Dickinson of 19 Birch Road spoke in favor of the application stating Aldi Supermarkets come with a good reputation, and are ahead of the curve with no plastic bags and a cart system that works. Sidewalks should be at least 5 feet wide and bicycle racks provided. Alternatives to a bike rack are loop racks attached to a brick wall used in Europe that work well.

The Acting Chairman asked for comments from the public in opposition to the application.

No one from the public spoke in opposition to the application.

Acting Chairman asked for comments from commissioners.

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Commissioner Bernstein discussed the Buckland Road left turn lane for southbound traffic into the site with Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Brown who indicated equipment is being upgraded and redesigned as part of the Chase approval. Timing of the light is under review by the State.

Commissioner Wagner discussed Aldi's monument sign located at their parking lot entrance at Enterprise Drive. Director Lipe noted the development sign at Buckland Road will be come before the commission on the next agenda and Mr. Wheeler stated tenants have the right to their own monument and building signs at their location per zoning regulations.

Commissioner Dexter asked if the applicant has agreed that the nine parking spaces will be designated for employees. Mr. Wheeler noted Aldi's does not typically have 9 employees per shift and feels they should be left as normal parking spaces. Director Lipe noted customers may be accessing parking at the bank and M&R Liquor and walking to the store as well.

Commissioner Flagg confirmed the traffic light will have a pedestrian control button and recommended sidewalks be 5 feet wide from Buckland Road noting Evergreen Walk's senior residential projects currently under construction.

Commissioner Young asked about the stamped concrete being used for the crosswalk. Mr. Wheeler stated it is the painted stamped asphalt used throughout Evergreen Walk.

Acting Chairman Bonzani confirmed with Mr. Wheeler that a bike rack will be included and encouraged 5 foot wide sidewalks. The applicant agreed to the 5 foot width for sidewalks from Buckland Road to the site. Bonzani asked if the loading dock could be seen from the residential properties and about the lighting. Mr. Wheeler stated there is a 7 acre undeveloped interior lot that is entirely wooded between the store and Gilbert Lane with 100 feet of elevation change. Parking lot lights are turned off when the last employee leaves and only the required safety lighting will remain lit at night.

Commissioner Wagner asked if a future expansion plan would meet requirements for permeable areas. Mr. Wheeler stated requirements would be met and would come back before the commission with a site plan modification should they choose to expand to the north.

Commissioner Bernstein noted the 5 foot wide walkways will benefit those in wheelchairs and verified with Mr. Wheeler that transit vehicles and small buses from the surrounding assisted living facilities can be accommodated.

The Acting Chairman closed the public hearing at 7:47 p.m. and called for a five minute recess.

REGULAR MEETING / COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting was called to order at 7:52 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion/Decision/Action regarding the following:

1. Mannarino Builders, Inc. - request for a pre-application conference in accordance with Section 7.14.3 to determine the potential for an open space subdivision at 248 Maskel Road and R024 and R025 Abbe Road, A-30 and RR zones

Postponed by requestee.

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- 2. Appl. 19-39P, Aldi** – request for a site plan of development for the construction of a 19,209 sf grocery store, on property located at 200 Gateway Boulevard (formerly 190 Buckland Road), Buckland Road Gateway Development zone

Commissioner Wagner made a motion to approve with the following conditions:

1. Prior to commencement of any site work, a meeting must be held with Town Staff.
2. No building permit will be issued until the final mylars have been filed in the Town Clerk's office.
3. A bond shall be collected in the amount of \$20,000 for the erosion and sediment control; \$15,000 to ensure proper installation of the stormwater system; \$50,000 to ensure the installation and establishment of the mitigation area on the site to be held for five growing seasons during which time the area will be monitored.
4. A landscape bond in the amount of \$5,000 is required and must be submitted prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.
5. All bonds must be in one of the forms described in the enclosed Bond Policy.
6. An as-built plan is required prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy per Section 8.1.11 of the Zoning Regulations.
7. All plans used in the field by the developer must bear the stamp and authorized signature of the Town of South Windsor.
8. This approval does not constitute approval of the sanitary sewer, which can only be granted by the Water Pollution Control Authority.
9. No building permits will be issued until the State Traffic Commission certificate has been issued (per CGS §14-311).
10. The building street number must be included on the final plan.
11. Pavement markings must be maintained in good condition throughout the site drives and parking areas.
12. All free standing signs and/or building signs require the issuance of a sign permit before they are erected.
13. Engineering comments dated 9/5/19 must be incorporated into the final plans.
14. A bicycle rack, as required in Section 6.7.3, shall be included on the plans.
15. Shopping Cart management plan is approved as submitted.
16. Sidewalks on the southern side of Enterprise Drive up to the proposed store shall be 5 feet wide.

Commissioner Dexter seconded the motion and made a friendly amendment for rooftop screening.
Seconded by Commissioner Wagner.

17. Rooftop screening shall be required per Section 4.2.10.C.5 of the zoning regulations.

The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

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BONDS: Callings/Reductions/Settings

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OLD BUSINESS: *see page 2*

APPLICATIONS OFFICIALLY RECEIVED:

1. **Appl. 19-47P, Design Professionals, Inc.** – request for a Zoning Text Amendment to add new Article 4, Section 4.1.9 Sullivan Avenue Mixed-Use Development which includes Purpose, Site Design requirements, and General Standards to allow for compatible residential and commercial mixed-use developments to revitalize properties fronting on Sullivan Avenue; Modify Section 4.4.4A Permitted Commercial and Industrial Uses to allow for Mixed-Use Developments by Special Exception; Modify Table 4.1.6A Commercial and Industrial Area to add a 5 acre minimum and other bulk requirements

OTHER BUSINESS:

Director Lipe announced a Special Meeting will be scheduled for an Executive Session with the Town Attorney about pending litigation concerning Educational Playcare. Their attorney and traffic engineer have been invited to attend on behalf of Educational Playcare.

Commissioner Dexter encouraged commissioners to consider attending the Land Use Academy Advanced Training to be held on October 26th. A reminder email will be sent to commissioners.

CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Wagner at 8 p.m.

Commissioner Flagg seconded.

The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren L. Zarambo

Recording Secretary