



TOWN OF WEST BOYLSTON PLANNING BOARD planningboard@westboylston-ma.gov
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PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES
Cumberland Farms
(184-186 West Boylston Street)
December 9, 2015

Chairman: Marc Frieden

Members Present: Vincent Vignaly, Christopher Olson, Cheryl Carlson, Barur Rajeshkumar

Members Absent: None

Others Present: See Attached Sign-In Sheet

All documents referenced in these Minutes are stored and available for public inspection in the Planning Board Office located at 140 Worcester Street.

The Chair opened the continued Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Olson read into record the Notice of Public Hearing which was published in the Telegram & Gazette on November 25th and December 2nd. The applicant provided green card abutter notification.

The hearing is to consider a Site Plan Review application for the proposed construction of a 4,738 square foot retail convenience store with automobile fueling stations. Present were Tom Reidy (Bacon Wilson, PC), Luke DiStefano (Bohler Engineering), Tracey Roll (TMC-CF New England) and Colleen Mederios (McMahon Associates).

Mr. Reidy recapped that they were before the board in October for a Preliminary Site Plan, listened to board's concerns/suggestions and incorporated on the plan. Luke DiStefano explained the proposed improvements. It is a small portion of the Wachusett Plaza, they will raise and rebuild 37,000 square feet of the area, there will be six gas dispensers, canopy overhead, pumps serviced by the underground storage tanks, access will be through a curb cut off of the entrance way into the plaza, a second entrance only curb cut is proposed off of West Boylston Street on the northern piece of the property, there will be 14 dedicated spaces in the front with 8 shared spaces behind the building, and 8,000 square feet of new landscaping is proposed. Test pits were done; the grade has to be raised slightly for the stormwater detention system; it will not change the dimensions. The utilities will be underground; lighting will be under the canopy; no significant light to abutters; it will be modified near the trash to comply with the bylaw of 0.5 foot candles. There are improvements to be made to the stormwater system; there will be two treatment units that will collect and treat any runoff before it is directed to the underground stormwater management system. Mr. Frieden read into record the reports/approvals from the Municipal Light Department, Water District, Police Department and Fire Department.

The shopping plaza sign will be relocated to the median. The digital display will not be flashing; it will not change more than once per minute. They are requesting waivers from certain parts of the sign bylaw relative to the gasoline pump requirements. Mr. Vignaly showed the Northborough Cumberland Farms on Main Street and would like the signs to look similar to that. Mr. DiStefano said Northborough has a different dynamic; West Boylston is a more “commercial” section. Mr. Vignaly respectfully disagreed. He said it is basically the same size lot; is on the corner of an intersection; the speed limit is 30 mph in Northborough while the speed limit on Route 12 is 35 mph. The town does not want a large number of signs like Route 9 in Shrewsbury. He would rather see something smaller; less intrusive. The maximum area allowed is 40 square feet; they are proposing 122 square feet, which is more than three times what is allowed under the Zoning Bylaw. The Zoning Bylaw allows one free standing sign; they are requesting two. Mr. Olson said the sign bylaw states that “fuel price signs shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height, shall not exceed 32 square feet in sign area per face”, making it more restrictive than the free standing sign. Mr. DiStefano said he would bring back the comments to the company. The board would like to see a comparison with the existing signs at the BP and Shell stations.

The Graves Engineering report dated December 7, 2015 was discussed. Snow storage will be added to the site plan; they will either remove it off site or work with the landlord to find a suitable spot. The signature block will be put on the cover sheet and site plan sheet. Landscaping will include grass, plantings, shrubs and ornamental trees. Mr. DiStefano said they calculated drainage needs based on what the site is today. Mr. Vignaly said when it was originally proposed as a liquor store, the drainage proposed then was never put in place. An assessment needs to be done of the drainage; they were supposed to contact Mr. Surabian to get the plan to see what was proposed; we do not want flooding as currently exists. They are no longer proposing to treat the drainage from the southern front lot area. Pavement will be done according to the Geotech report. They are asking for sign waivers for the canopy and the side of building; they can’t have both. They are also requesting Special Permits from the ZBA for 24-hour operation and parking in the front yard.

Mr. Vignaly asked if sidewalks and a crosswalk were proposed for people to get across Route 12 as requested in October. Mr. DiStefano said there were no sidewalks on either side. Colleen Mederios (McMahon Associates) conducted the traffic study and said they did not see the need for a sidewalk; there was not much foot traffic during their counting period; one pedestrian was observed in the morning and two in the afternoon in mid-October. Mr. Vignaly said there is a motel across the street and we should be planning for foot/pedestrian access, especially since there were serious accidents, and he seemed to remember a fatal pedestrian accident less than 200’ north of this location. She said the study was based on existing conditions. The traffic count was done in October at peak times of 7AM-9AM and 4PM-6PM which is standard practice; she also looked at historical traffic counts. Crash history was researched; only four accidents in a three-year period. Mr. Vignaly noted that he sees groups of students from Salter School trying to get across the street at lunch time. Since they did not observe this time period, they should reconsider the need. Based on conversations with the town regarding future projects, they assumed a 1% per year growth in all the traffic volume on Route 12. Based on ITE data (Institute of Transportation Engineering), trip generation calculations are broken into two categories; “pass by” and “new trips”; 66% of the people that go to the site are considered “pass bys”. The level of service for the traffic signal is C (20-35 seconds). Mr. Reidy said to require a

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crosswalk would be overly burdensome. The board asked them to do an assessment and come back with the cost of a crosswalk and sidewalks. Mr. DiStefano said promoting pedestrian access could be more of a danger and create problems. Members agreed that the final decision should come from the Police Chief. The town's Master Plan has encouraged creation/maintenance of sidewalks for the last fifteen years and the town does not require abutting property owners to maintain them.

Mr. Olson asked about the circulation on the site. Ms. Mederios showed the graphics and said there are twelve pumps; they do not see a queuing problem. Refueling will be at off peak hours. A documented parking agreement is needed for the shared spaces; they will provide a letter stating that it is shared parking. Dave Femia said the traffic is heavy on Saturdays, it is a long light coming out of the plaza, and it will cause congestion. Mr. DiStefano said adding a crosswalk could be a deal breaker based on the cost. Drainage improvements were never done for the liquor store proposal. Action items required: (1) check with Police Chief about his concerns over pedestrian access, (2) provide an estimated cost of a crosswalk and sidewalk along Route 12, (3) provide drainage changes, and (4) provide a sign comparison to the BP and Shell gas stations.

Mr. Vignaly made a motion to continue the public hearing to January 13, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.; Mr. Olson seconded the motion; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Date Accepted: _____

By: _____
Christopher E. Olson, Clerk

Submitted by: _____
Melanie Rich