

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
January 3, 2013**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Liza Kilcoyne (Chairwoman); Diane Clemens, Nick Meyer, Aaron Martin, David Nistico, John Alden, Andrew Boutin.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Robin Pierce, Development Director.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Paul O'Leary, Tony Silva.

**AGENDA:**

1. Call to Order
2. Audience for Visitors
3. Additions/Amendments to the Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Public Meeting
  - Site Plan, Drive-Thru, Dunkin Donuts, 120 Pearl Street, Silva
6. Other Planning Commission Items
7. Adjournment

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Liza Kilcoyne called the meeting to order at 6 PM.

**2. AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS**

There were no comments from the public at this time.

**3. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

Add under "Other Business": Request from VTrans for a Letter of Support re: Grant Application for Multiuse Path.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*December 6, 2012 – Regular Meeting*

**MOTION by John Alden, SECOND by Nick Meyer, to approve the minutes of 12/6/12 with the following correction(s)/clarification(s):**

**Page 3, Rubman, Applicant Comments, paragraph beginning "Bill Nedde....", 1<sup>st</sup> bullet, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence – rewrite to read: "There is an existing 6" water line on Old Colchester Road down Thasha Lane.", and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence – insert the word "site" after "project" and delete "and tied into the 6" line";**

**Page 8, Rubman, Deliberation/Decision, Motion, 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet – insert "of the additional parking" after the words "build out".**

**VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.**

**5. PUBLIC MEETING**

**Site Plan review to add a proposed drive-thru at the rear of the existing Dunkin Donuts building at 120 Pearl Street in the TOD District by Tony Silva, owner**

Paul O'Leary, engineer, and Tony Silva, property owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

## APPLICANT COMMENTS

Paul O'Leary reviewed the project, noting the following:

- Existing conditions include .7 acre parcel with an existing Dunkin Donuts building plus a second building with retail space (currently vacant).
- The proposed drive-thru will add 107 s.f. (12'x 9') to the back of the existing Dunkin Donuts building. The access drive to the drive-thru will be 12' wide and allow for six car stacking. The drive-thru includes a menu board, pull-up window, and semi-circle drive.
- Three parking spaces on the site will be eliminated, but the parking requirement is still met.
- Impervious surface will be removed and replaced with an island of topsoil, grass, and street trees. Lot coverage will decrease from 81% to 77%.
- The existing shed in the back of the site will be removed. The concrete dumpster pad will be relocated to the other side and still be accessible by the trucks.
- Diagonal parking in the back of the lot is for employees. The accessible parking space at the front of the building will be better defined.
- There is a bike rack at the front of the building.
- No changes are proposed to the two main entrances (curb cuts) off Route 15.
- The parking lot will have an LED light by the menu board which will also illuminate the back portion of the lot. There will be a new light by the pick-up area (most likely within the canopy).
- The drive-thru addition is not visible from Pearl Street. The dumpster is also hidden from view.
- The curb cuts off Pearl Street are not 24' wide per the Code requirement. The preexisting entrances are approximately 22' wide, but can be widened to meet the Code if the landscape island is reduced in size.
- Comments from the Village Engineer have been addressed.
- A contractor through Dunkin Donuts will do the construction work with a team that will complete the job in two to three days.
- The corporate office of Dunkin Donuts does the layout and design of the building and drive-thru per their standard.
- The existing sign will advertise the drive-thru service.

There was discussion of traffic circulation on the site presently and anticipated congestion with the drive-thru configuration. Drivers presently roll over the curb when entering/exiting to Route 15. Tony Silva noted the time a customer takes to park, go into the business for donuts and leave is approximately eight minutes. With the drive-thru that time is estimated to be four minutes. John Alden urged further review of the drive-thru traffic loop with consideration of perhaps using pavement striping to prevent people from parking or blocking the travel lane. Mr. Alden expressed concern about gridlock being created by too many cars trying to enter/exit the drive-thru and parking on the site. Paul O'Leary stated there have not been conflicts with parking on the site for both businesses in the past and the owner would prefer not changing the parking layout.

David Nistico noted the employee parking should be marked.

Nick Meyer suggested directional signs at the entrance/exit off Route 15 to potentially help the traffic flow.

Andrew Boutin mentioned ensuring the turn into the drive-thru has adequate space to handle large pick-up trucks. Paul O'Leary assured the drive-thru is adequately sized. Mr. Boutin asked about noise from the outside speaker for the drive-thru. Mr. Silva said the device is digital and should not be noisy. Paul O'Leary added there is more noise from traffic on Pearl Street than the speaker will create.

There was mention of deliveries and snow removal. Tony Silva stated delivery trucks arrive in the morning, but that schedule can be altered if necessary. Large trucks (tractor trailers) can access the site. Regarding snow removal, snow is cleared in the early morning and when business is slow during the day. There is space at the back of the lot by the railroad tracks to pile snow.

There was discussion of the island between the curb cuts off Route 15. Diane Clemens suggested the island be striped to discourage parking there. Tony Silva stated people drive over the curb and park on the grass even when parking is available. There was mention of using large rocks, a split rail fence, and/or shrubbery to prohibit parking on the island by Route 15.

Liza Kilcoyne commented positively on the better lighting in the back of the building and the parking being better organized to provide options to customers rather than all trying to park as close to the front door of the business as possible.

Nick Meyer asked about 'skinning' the cooler. Mr. Silva said this is possible. John Alden said he would like to see what the building will look like with the addition. Nick Meyer asked for a description of the proposed landscaping. Mr. O'Leary explained the plan is to add three new trees (autumn blaze and red maples), two in the island by the drive-thru and one behind the menu board. The island is 36' x 20'. Ground cover will be grass which is also on the front and side of both buildings. Liza Kilcoyne mentioned there is potential for a picnic table on the island in the future.

There was further discussion of defining one entry and one exit to the site. The applicant noted how traffic flows on Route 15 drives how the curb cuts are used. A better solution is to help move traffic off Route 15 to alternate routes.

#### STAFF REPORT

The Planning Commission received a written staff report on the application, dated 1/3/13.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public on the application.

**MOTION by Liza Kilcoyne, SECOND by Aaron Martin, to close the public portion of the application for 120 Pearl Street (Dunkin Donuts). VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.**

## DELIBERATION/DECISION

Site Plan, Drive-Thru, Dunkin Donuts, 120 Pearl Street, Silva

**MOTION by John Alden, SECOND by Diane Clemens, to grant site plan approval to Tony Silva for a drive-thru at Dunkin Donuts at 120 Pearl Street in the TOD District as presented and with the following recommendations:**

1. The bike rack located in the front of the building is acceptable.
2. Landscaping species as proposed are acceptable including grass ground cover.
3. The application shall comply with the Land Development Code including any construction which shall be reviewed and approved by staff to ensure the material of the bump-out (drive-thru) matches the shape, material, and color of the existing building and that the cladding of the walk-in cooler also matches the building.
4. The applicant shall address all comments from village staff and the Village Engineer.
5. The entrance/exit off Route 15 shall remain as is, but the island adjacent to Route 15 shall have some treatment, such as a fence, large rocks, newly built curbing, to discourage parking.
6. The drive lane in front of the new drive-thru entrance/exit shall be striped.
7. The parking space on the northwest side of the front of the adjacent building (former location of Upper Crust) shall be eliminated to aid in traffic flow on the site and make the turning radius symmetrical with the other side of the parking lot.
8. The space shall be striped to prohibit parking.

**VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.**

**6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS**

*Letter of Support for Multiuse Path from North Street to Central Street*

Robin Pierce reported the following:

- The railroad is willing to work with the village on the path because photos were shown of students walking on the tracks to get to the high school.
- The village is applying for a grant through VTrans and needs a letter of support for the project from the Planning Commission.
- The path is 1175' and will connect the street network from the high school to the village center. The path will have lights and will be an easy, desirable way to get from the village center to the high school.
- There will be a chain link fence between the path and the tracks.

Liza Kilcoyne spoke in support of formalizing the shortcut that is now being used by many. Andrew Boutin suggested protecting the lights from damage from thrown rocks and vandalism. John Alden suggested a transportation overlay be drawn to show the network of various forms of transportation in the village and how the village network ties into the larger network with surrounding towns. Robin Pierce noted there is a map of non-motorized routes in the village comprehensive plan.

**MOTION by Aaron Martin, SECOND by John Alden, to authorize the Planning Commission Chairwoman, Liza Kilcoyne, to sign the letter of support on behalf of the Planning Commission for the multiuse path along the railroad tracks from North Street to Central Street as presented. VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.**

*Bike/Sidewalk Route from I-89 in Winooski to Susie Wilson Road*

Robin Pierce noted Local Motion will be presenting the regional planning alternate transportation project that involves Colchester, Essex, and Essex Jct. to the Trustees on 1/8/13. The project was approved for funding. Bike lanes from West Street Extension to Susie Wilson Road are also being considered.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Liza Kilcoyne, SECOND by Andrew Boutin, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

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