

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 6, 2014**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chair
Andy Kidd, Vice Chair
Horace Brown, Secretary
Michael Stebe
Susan Shanbaum

Alternates: Julian Stoppelman
Teresa Ike

Absent: Donald Palmer

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Ginger MacHattie, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:03 p.m. The Secretary read the legal notice for the application when the call was made.

TMC NEW ENGLAND 2 LLC – Request a special exception under Article II Section 9.14.02(b) for a use that requires more than 60 parking spaces for construction of a retail pharmacy with a drive-through and a business establishment with a drive-through at 1229 Main Street, 27 Charter Oak Street, and 31 Charter Oak Street – Special Exception (2014-069)

Attorney Barry Botticello spoke on behalf of the applicant, TMC New England 2, LLC. Attorney Botticello said the applicant is requesting a special exception for a use which requires more than 60 parking spaces as well as design and erosion and sedimentation control approvals. He said the subject site is composed of three parcels: 1229 Main Street and 29 and 31 Charter Oak Street. These parcels occupy the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Charter Oak Streets and are 2.74 acres in total, he said. Attorney Botticello said there is 240' of frontage on Main Street and 369' of frontage on Charter Oak Street. He said the property is bounded on the north by Wells Street, on the east by multi-family homes, on the south by Charter Oak Street and on the west by Main Street. Public water and sewer are available to the site, he said. The site is currently zoned Business III and has no wetlands or watercourses; it is currently occupied by Carter Chevrolet, Attorney Botticello said. Attorney Botticello listed the commercial trade uses permitted in the Business III zone and said the proposed use, a CVS Pharmacy, is permitted as a special exception use. Because the application includes a second building to be built in the future, the two uses combined require more than 60 parking spaces, which requires special exception approval, he said. The site is located in the Design Overlay zone. Attorney Botticello said the Plan of Conservation and Development characterizes this area as mixed use. Main and Charter Oak Streets are arterial roadways. Traffic counts taken in September 2012 show that Charter Oak Street carries 9,460 vehicles per day and Main Street carries 13,848 vehicles per day, Attorney Botticello said.

The proposed project would mean the two automotive structures will be removed and replaced with a 14,600 square foot pharmacy with a drive through, Attorney Botticello said. In addition, a 3,500 square foot building with a drive through would be placed on the site at a later date, he said. Site improvements include landscaping. The contemplated hours for CVS are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week, Attorney Botticello said. It is anticipated that there will be 10 employees on site at a given time, he said.

Jason Mirkut, Senior Project Engineer, explained that the 14,600 square foot CVS building will be located on the west end of the site and the 3,500 square foot building will be located on the east side of the site for a future use. He said access to the site will be from two full access curb cuts on Wells and Charter Oak Streets. The Charter Oak curb cut requires approval from the Department of Transportation and is currently under review, Mr. Mirkut said.

The majority of the parking will be for the CVS building with 75 spaces near the front of the building, Mr. Mirkut said. A load area will be located at the southeast corner of the building. CVS receives one to two large deliveries per week, he said. The drive-through will be located in the northeast corner. The refuse area will be enclosed with a cedar fence, Mr. Mirkut said. The site is zoning compliant with setbacks and open space. The site is fairly flat but the grade does change along the eastern property line and will require a retaining wall, he said.

Landscaping will improve the aesthetics, Mr. Mirkut said. The focus will be on Main Street. There will be two plaza areas with landscaping around stamped brick pavement, with fencing and benches, he said. Thirty-three trees and more than 1,000 shrubs and ground cover will be placed on the site, he said. The site will have 30,000 square feet less impervious area than the existing site, Mr. Mirkut said. There will be a significant decrease in stormwater and no increase in peak discharge rates, he said. Three water quality units are proposed; one near Wells Street and two near Charter Oak Street. Public water and sewer are available to the site and there is adequate electric, phone and gas service available, he said. Light poles will be 23' maximum height with full cut off fixtures.

The erosion and sediment control plan includes an anti-tracking pad at the construction entrance on Charter Oak Street, Mr. Mirkut said. Silt fence and straw bales will be used, he said. Silt sacks will be placed in the catch basins and erosion and sediment control blankets will be used on any slopes steeper than 3:1, Mr. Mirkut said.

Charlie Baker, Traffic Engineer, said he evaluated the conditions and the proposed driveways and the impact of traffic on the area. Two full access driveways are proposed and there are adequate site distances at both driveways he said. Mr. Baker said he obtained peak traffic counts at the existing driveway as well as the intersections of Main and Charter Oak Streets, and Main and Wells Streets. He said he projected one year out and included a 1% increase. A capacity analysis was conducted and it was concluded that the intersection of Main and Wells Streets and both of the proposed site driveways will operate at a level "C" or better, Mr. Baker said. He said the intersection of Main and Charter Oak Streets currently operates at a level "E". With the proposed development this intersection will reduce to operation at a level "F", which is a 10-12% increase in delay, he said. To mitigate this change, he said signal timing improvements can be made to improve the level of service to a "D", which is an improvement over the current conditions. The proposed construction will not have a negative impact on the surrounding traffic operations, Mr. Baker said.

Bryce Hillman, Architect, submitted copies of elevations to the Commission members. He displayed renderings which showed a brick building with jogs for interest and a mansard roof.

The Main and Wells Street intersection side of the building provides a clipped corner simulating an entrance, Mr. Hillman said. He said various treatments were provided to create architectural interest. The view from Wells Street showed the 6' drive-through window with a canopy incorporated into the roof, he said. The view from Charter Oak Street showed the compactor enclosure, the loading area and the egress door, Mr. Hillman said. He said he broke up the rhythm of the building with areas for signage, wall sconces, and cornices to accent the top of the building.

Mr. Brown said this property is on one of the most important parcels of land in terms of view because it is the first thing people see when getting off I-384. It is adjacent to the Cheney National Landmark District, he said. Mr. Brown said South Methodist Church is truly a gem; a three-story elevator was just approved and will be built of stone to match the building. A major effort was made with aesthetics, he said. Just to the north is Bennet Academy. The community spent money and effort to restore and enhance this building, he said. The old high school was saved and made into senior housing. Going down Hartford Road, one comes to the Cheney Mansions. Mr. Brown asked the applicant to explain the various efforts made on the subject parcel to make it a very special building.

Mr. Hillman said he has gone through a lot of effort to bring a lot of brick and mansard roofs. He broke up the building using architectural pediments.

In response to questions from Mr. Stoppelman, Mr. Hillman said the entrance to the building is roughly 20' from the parking lot. The handicap parking is in front of the entrance with flush curbs, he said.

In response to a question from Mr. Stoppelman, Mr. Mirkut explained that the sidewalk in the area will be maintained. He said there is pedestrian access off of Main, Wells, and Charter Oak Streets.

Mr. Stebe asked why the building is facing in the direction proposed. Downtown is to the north so he said he would expect the building to face the north. Walking traffic comes from the north as well. He said he likes the fact that there will be curbing along Charter Oak Street but wondered why the layout is such that the entrance is farther from the walking traffic.

Mr. Mirkut explained that to improve the aesthetics a faux entrance was provided for the corner of Wells and Main Streets. He said the door is placed where it is as an operational issue; it is for security purposes.

In response to a question from Mr. Kidd, Mr. Hillman said the freestanding sign is 25' to 27' high; about the same as the building itself.

Ms. Bertotti said the maximum height for a freestanding sign is 18'.

Mr. Kidd commented that there is a lot of white proposed. The signs all around the building are not consistent with what he would like to see there. There is over 1,000 square feet of signage; this detracts from the look, he said. The free standing sign has no brick at all and that will be the focal point when turning off the highway, Mr. Kidd said. He said he agreed with Mr. Stebe's comments about the entrance not being on Main Street but rather around the corner.

Ms. Shanbaum said this application is for a parcel located at the gateway to Manchester. She

said she appreciates what the applicant has done, but thinks some improvements can be made. This building will be on historic Main Street. The renderings make it look like a box with a lot of white and signage, she said. She is totally opposed to a freestanding sign because it is unnecessary; people will know this is a CVS. An entrance on Main Street is possible on the corner of the building, she said. Ms. Shanbaum wondered if the sconces could be more architecturally fitting for a historic building. She wondered if the windows could be given more of an older look providing more architectural appeal.

In response to questions from Mr. Prause, Mr. Mirkut said a tenant has not been chosen for the second building. When a tenant is selected, site plan modifications will come before the Commission, he said.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Baker explained that if a vehicle were stopped on Charter Oak Street to make a left into CVS, there is enough room for another vehicle to pass by on the right.

In response to a question from Mr. Stebe, Attorney Botticello said the area where the second building is proposed will be green until the applicant comes back for the second structure.

Mr. Pellegrini said the applicant and the town staff did discuss the orientation of CVS on the lot. The building will be to the north of the site in alignment with the church, he said. With any corner lot there is a question of where the entrance should be. Mr. Pellegrini said the intent of the design review is to put in a building that is compatible and in keeping with the surrounding buildings.

The Planning and Zoning Commission took a brief recess at 8:14 p.m. and returned at 8:24 p.m.

Attorney Botticello asked that the public hearing be left open to allow the applicant to respond to design concerns expressed by Commission members.

Ms. Bertotti said town staff reviewed the application and the outstanding comments are minor and technical in nature.

Chairman Prause asked if any member of the public wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to this application. No member of the public came forward at this time.

Ms. Bertotti said the Town received a letter from "Concerned Resident" on October 6, 2014 addressed to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The writer was not in favor of the proposed CVS and wondered how many pharmacies are needed in Manchester. There seems to be one on every corner, the writer said. They are a magnet for robberies. If the application is approved, the writer requested that the business not be open 24 hours.

Mr. Kidd moved to continue the public hearing on this application. Ms. Shanbaum seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.