

Ref: 8948

April 13, 2021

Ms. Emily Wentworth
Senior Planner: Zoning/Special Projects
Town of Hingham
210 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043

Re: Traffic Engineering Peer Review
Derby Street Shoppes Modification – 100 Derby Street
Hingham, Massachusetts

Dear Emily:

Vanasse & Associates, Inc. (VAI) has completed a review of the materials that have been submitted by W/S/M Hingham Properties LLC (the “Applicant”) in support of the modifications to Building 5 located within the Derby Street Shoppes at 100 Derby Street in Hingham, Massachusetts (hereafter referred to as the “Project”). Specifically, the Applicant is requesting amendments to the prior approvals granting Site Plan Approval and Special Permits A2 and A3 with Parking Determination that allowed for the demolition of the existing Rite Aid Building adjacent to Kohl’s and the construction of a 13,000± square foot (sf) retail building that was to be demised to accommodate eight to nine tenants. The current proposal and the subject of the modification request is to allow for the renovation and expansion of the Rite Aid building to accommodate a fast-casual restaurant with a small outdoor seating area and a retail tenant with a home furnishing focus. The proposed addition would add 2,400 sf to the existing 13,000± sf Rite Aid building along the west façade where the drive-up window is located. When complete, the expanded building will encompass 15,400± sf. The Applicant has indicated that the fast-casual restaurant will provide a total of 90 seats, including both indoor and outdoor seating.

In order to accommodate the building expansion, the parking area to the north of subject building will be modified and will result in a net reduction of 17 parking spaces, reducing the overall parking supply for the Derby Street Shoppes from 2,020 to 2,003. In addition, the Applicant proposes to make pedestrian circulation improvements that include the addition of a raised crosswalk between Building 1 (Chipotle) and Building 5, and a crosswalk will be installed between Building 5 and the gravel parking area to the west of Kohl’s.

Our review of the materials that have been submitted by the Applicant in support of the Project focus on three specific areas: Traffic Impacts, Parking, and Access and Circulation; a summary of which follows.

Traffic Impacts

VAI completed a review of the original proposal for the former Rite Aid building in 2018, which included a *Traffic Impact and Access Study* dated May 23, 2017 prepared by Ron Müller & Associates, Inc. (the “May 2017 TIAS”).¹ This study documented the incremental increase in traffic that would result from the addition of 12,830 sf of retail space to the Derby Street Shoppes, and concluded that sufficient capacity was afforded along Derby Street to accommodate the then proposed expansion. The current proposal will expand the existing Rite Aid Building by 2,400± sf, significantly less than the prior proposal; however, the mix of uses will change from retail to a 90-seat fast-casual restaurant and a retail use.

Comment: **The inclusion of a fast-casual restaurant as a part of the current development program will result in higher traffic volumes and increased parking demands than a comparable size retail use. We expect that any increase in traffic and parking that may be associated with the change in use will be off-set by the reduction in the size of the expansion and, therefore, the findings of the May 2017 TIAS, which concluded adequate capacity on the transportation infrastructure to accommodate the then proposed modification, remain valid for the current development proposal.**

Parking

The prior proposal for Building 5 entailed modifications to the parking lot to the north of the Rite Aid building and the construction of a 69 space parking lot to the west of the Kohl’s building, resulting in a net increase in the overall parking supply for the Derby Street Shoppes from 2,020 parking spaces to 2,083 parking spaces. The current development proposal will reduce the overall parking supply from 2,020 parking spaces to 2,003 parking spaces, or a net reduction of 17 parking spaces.

The Applicant provided a shared parking analysis using the shared parking model that was approved as a part of the August 13, 2020 Special Permit A3 that was granted for the Derby Street Shoppes. The shared parking model was updated to reflect the current tenant mix and the revisions to Building 5, and indicates that the peak parking demand on a weekday will occur at 1:00 PM in December with a predicted demand of 1,737 parking spaces. The peak parking demand on a Saturday will occur at 2:00 PM in December with a predicted demand of 2,000 parking spaces, or three (3) parking spaces below the parking supply that is available under non-peak season conditions. During the peak holiday shopping season (defined as Thanksgiving through New Year’s Day), a parking management plan is required for the Derby Street Shoppes and acknowledged as a part of the August 13, 2020 Special Permit A3. The parking management plan includes the use of defined unpaved parking areas, including the parking lot to the west of the Kohl’s building, and increases the available parking supply during the peak holiday shopping season.

Comment: **The shared parking model has demonstrated that sufficient parking will be available to accommodate the parking demands of the uses that will be located within the Derby Street Shoppes with the proposed modifications to Building 5. That being said, the Applicant should provide a summary of the current tenancy of the Derby Street Shoppes by use category as defined in the shared parking model pursuant to the requirements of the August 13, 2020 Special Permit A3 Decision.**

¹*Traffic Impact and Access Study*, Derby Street Shoppes Expansion, 100 Derby Street, Hingham, Massachusetts; Ron Müller & Associates, Inc.; May 23, 2017.



Access and Circulation

VAI provided preliminary comments to the Applicant pertaining to access, circulation and parking, which have been incorporated into the plans that were prepared by BSC Group as revised through April 6, 2021. The requested revisions included the addition of dimensions to the plans and the elimination of parking proximate to the driveway to the ring-road to the west of the Kohl's building. In addition, it was requested that the Applicant provide truck turning analyses for a delivery truck and the Hingham Fire Department design vehicle. Based on our review of the revised plans, we are satisfied that the Applicant has addressed our comments and that the parking layout, pedestrian accommodations and circulation within the impacted parking field allow for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians. We note that the Applicant will be constructing a raised crosswalk between Building 1 (Chipotle) and Building 5, which is appropriate and will serve to address the concerns that have been raised about the pedestrian connection between these buildings and the speed of traffic along the internal drive.

- Comment 1:** The Applicant should confirm with the Fire Department that the design vehicle that was used in the fire truck turning analysis reflects the current design vehicle. It appears that the template reflects a smaller design vehicle.
- Comment 2:** The Applicant should verify that loading and delivery activities for both the retail store and the restaurant will occur from the designated loading area in the southwest corner of Building 5; loading and deliveries should not occur curbside.
- Comment 3:** The Applicant should confirm that the sight distance improvements have been completed at the Old Derby Street intersection with the internal drive. These improvements were identified as a part of the prior review of the Building 5 modifications.
- Comment 4:** Pedestrian crossing warning signs should be added for the raised crossing so that motorists are aware of the change in vertical profile. In addition, the vehicle ramps to the flush crossing should be detailed and should be designed to meet MassDOT and Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) standards for a raised crosswalk, and include the required pavement markings. The current ramps appear to be shorter than required to provide an appropriate transition to and from the crossing, and should be reviewed.

If you should have any questions regarding our review, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

VANASSE & ASSOCIATES, INC.



Jeffrey S. Dirk, P.E., PTOE, FITE
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JSD/jsd

