

MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
LISBON TOWN HALL
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2019
6:30 P.M.

The Planning and Zoning Commission held the continuation of the following Public Hearing in the Lisbon Town Hall, 1 Newent Road, Lisbon, Connecticut beginning at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, December 3, 2019:

6:30 P.M. - Application by Wal-Mart Real Estate Business Trust, c/o John W. Knuff, Esq., for special permit approval in accordance with section 6.4.20 and section 11 of the zoning regulations for exterior renovations, site enhancements and a 2,254 square feet addition and associated canopy shelter for providing online grocery pickup on 76.2 acre +/- parcels at 160-180 River Road (Lisbon Landing, Lot C), Lisbon CT 06351, map/block/lot 20/015/0000, 20/014/0000, and 20/016/0000 in the IP-1 zoning district.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Adams, Ron Giroux, Kim Sperry, Sharon Gabiga, Cheryl Blanchard, Trevor Danburg, Timothy Minor, Jason Lebel, Randy Brown, Ben Hull, III, John Dempsey, Cheryl Blanchard (ALT), Gary Ritacco (ALT)
STAFF PRESENT: Michael J. Murphy, AICP, Consultant Planner-SCCOG, Lisbon Town Planner

The following Public Hearing was called to order by Chairman Robert Adams at 6:30 PM:

Application by Wal-Mart Real Estate Business Trust, c/o John W. Knuff, Esq., for special permit approval in accordance with section 6.4.20 and section 11 of the zoning regulations for exterior renovations, site enhancements and a 2,254 square feet addition and associated canopy shelter for providing online grocery pickup on 76.2 acre +/- parcels at 160-180 River Road (Lisbon Landing, Lot C), Lisbon CT 06351, map/block/lot 20/015/0000, 20/014/0000, and 20/016/0000 in the IP-1 zoning district.

Chairman Adams noted for the record that the new member, Randy Brown, has been sworn in, as have both alternates, Cheryl Blanchard and Gary Ritacco.

Attorney John Knuff, of 147 Broad Street, Milford, Connecticut was present to represent the applicant. He submitted certified mail receipts for the record, noting that Walmart sent a notice to everyone that abuts Lisbon Landing. He also noted for the record that Jim Cranston, the project engineer from Bohler Engineering, 352 Turnpike Road, Southborough, Massachusetts, and Brad Curn, the project architect from Massa Media Architecture, 3297 Route 66, Neptune, New Jersey, were present.

Ben Hull, III, entered at 6:33 PM.

Attorney Knuff gave a brief description of the project. The addition is to benefit the "Online Grocery Pick-Up". Included with the addition are changes to the entire store façade; a new canopy at the pick-up location; and updated signage. He also explained that there will be two pick-up opportunities – the new addition for grocery pick-up, and in-store for electronics and other products.

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Jim Cranston of Bowler Engineering presented the overall site plan. A small building expansion is planned within the existing garden center. The proposed canopy (fabric over pipe) will cover six parking spaces, with three additional parking spaces outside the canopy. He showed the Commission where they have added proposed stop signs and stop bars and updated crosswalks on the plans. Directional signs will be added to direct customers to the pick-up area. Associates will use existing sidewalk to bring the goods to the customer. Each customer will be assigned a space and time slot. The associates will be alerted through an app or by phone call that the customer has arrived. With this plan, 8 parking spaces will be lost. He also stated that there are 18 spaces currently occupied by cart corrals and will still have more than 50 parking spaces above what is required by Zoning.

Architect Brad Curn stated that the corporate colors are changing to a neutral gray, which will refresh and modernize the look of the façade. Accent colors are to be blue and orange. The proposed addition is to have an accent area in orange as well as the canopy, which will tie into the on-line grocery pickup area. Most signage will be replaced "like-for-like, some will be changing out completely. The Walmart sign will remain lit internally, and they are keeping the same number of signs. He then presented the canopy elevations to the Commission.

Chairman Adams asked if there were other existing On-line pick-ups in operation, to which Attorney Knuff answered "yes, a number of stores". Michael Murphy, Town Planner, responded that this activity is projected to be normal activity and that no backlog is expected.

Randy Brown commented that the orange proposed on the left side of the face for pick-up is confusing, as the grocery pick-up is to the right. Attorney Knuff responded that they represent two different types of pick-up. Ron Giroux stated that he had the same question and feels this is going to be very confusing. Attorney Knuff responded that the customer will eventually learn the difference between the two pick-ups and doesn't foresee an issue.

Mr. Murphy noted for the record that he submitted a report to the Commission. Any expansion in an industrial zone requires a Special Permt. He also noted for the record that a legal add was placed; signage at the street were installed, noticing the public hearing; a referral to the Town of Griswold was sent, due to the proximity of the location to the Town line; the entire shopping center was notified (not just abutters) and that a request for comment was sent to the Building Official, Fire Marshal and Town Engineer, who has not yet responded. Mr. Murphy noted that he will be reviewing the notices to the abutters to be sure everyone was included. He then entered the Staff Comment Sheet into the record, dated November 27, 2019.

Mr. Murphy noted that a 40-scale plan is required by the regulations. The applicant has provided one at 50 scale to facilitate recording but it requires a waiver. The Planner has no concerns with this request. Mr. Murphy also noted that in the Town's regulations, section 6.4.20, the 50' set back requirement is not needed.

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The Planner requested the applicant to reconcile the questions in his Staff Report including loss of parking, traffic/way-finding signage in the parking lot, the justification for the large orange painted area with the pick-up logo, and validity of existing signage. He also withdrew his original concerns about the impervious coverage and the building exterior treatment at the southwest corner of the building.

Mr. Curn noted that traffic circulation will be one-way direction, existing in the right area rather than back into the main traffic flow. Crosswalks will be repainted. Walmart is rebranding and changing their existing beige/green color scheme to neutral gray. The applicant will be adhering to the signage conditions of the original approval; the new bank sign will remain as is. Mr. Murphy noted that in 2013, existing signage was approved to reduce the original signage. Supplemental plans were taken in for the record.

Mr. Danburg asked what the life expectancy of the fabric canopy is? Mr. Curn said that the structural engineer reviews and submits a report to the Building Official; Walmart is implementing this canopy nation wide and it has proven to be very durable. The Planner said he would refer the question regarding the fabric to the Building Official.

Mr. Hull asked if cars will be parking under the canopy, to which the answer was "yes, there will be six parking spots". Mr. Giroux asked if the canopy tubing is from the ground up, to which the answer was "yes, it is 6-inch tubing". Ms. Blanchard questioned if the other Walmart stores also have separate entrances for general merchandise pick-up, and which was more active – general merchandise or grocery pick-up? The answer was, "it changes site to site", and they did not have an answer regarding activity. Attorney Knuff stated he will come back with an answer to that question. It was noted by Mr. Murphy that other stores were putting these pick-up areas near the main traffic flow with little conflict. Mr. Lebel asked what the expected traffic volume increase is? He is concerned people will zig-ag through the parking lot because they don't read signs. Mr. Brown thinks the grocery pick up should be at the left of the store.

Mr. Giroux asked if there will be any additional signage to the monument signs, to which Attorney Knuff replied "no". Mr. Giroux then responded that with the original approval, the Commission did not want the usual Walmart colors. He also does not think that people will have a hard time knowing where the grocery pick-up is. He also asked for clarification to the work that needs to be done to correct puddling at the garden center, which had been alluded to by the Town Planner. Mr. Murphy noted that during heavy rain, the area puddles, and it should be addressed.

Chairman Adams asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of or opposition to the application, to which there was none.

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This public hearing was continued to January 7, 2020 at 6:30 PM and was out at 7:28 PM.



Elaine Joseph, clerk

Approved: _____

Robert Adams, Chairman

RECEIVED FOR RECORD AT LISBON
CT ON 12/10/2019 AT 11:20am
ATTEST. LAURIE TIROCCHI, TOWN CLERK
Margaret Wakely, Asst