

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Avon held a virtual *GoToMeeting* on Tuesday, June 13, 2023. Present were Peter Mahoney, Chair, Lisa Levin, Vice Chair, Dean Hamilton, Mary Harrop, Robin Baran, Joseph Gentile, Chet Bukowski, and Alternates Elaine Primeau (did not sit) and Julie Rousey (did not sit). Also present was Hiram Peck, Director of Planning and Community Development.

Mr. Mahoney called the meeting to order at 7pm.

PUBLIC HEARING

App. #5006 - Avon Village Marketplace, owner, Beanz & Co./NE Pasta Co., applicant, request for Special Exception under Section VI.D.3.a. of Avon Zoning Regulations to permit Class III restaurant, 1 East Main Street, Parcel 2140001, in a CS zone

Also heard at this time but not part of the public hearing.

App. #5005 - Avon Village Marketplace, owner, Beanz & Co./NE Pasta Co., applicant, request for Site Plan Approval to permit Class III restaurant, 1 East Main Street, Parcel 2140001, in a CS zone.

Present was Kim Morrison, applicant.

Ms. Morrison indicated that the proposal is to move NE Pasta Co and Beanz and Co from 300 West Main Street to Old Avon Village, at 11 East Main Street.

In response to Ms. Levin, Mr. Peck confirmed that Special Exception approval is required for the proposed Class III restaurant and the accompanying site plan for the building itself.

Ms. Levin noted that there are roughly 90 parking spaces shown and the restaurant has capacity for 46 patrons. Ms. Morrison confirmed this information. Ms. Levin asked for information on the other businesses in the area that will be sharing the parking and if there is any type of parking agreement.

Ms. Morrison said that there is a community parking arrangement at 300 West Main involving three of the buildings in the area and there are 50 parking spaces available near the building. There are approximately 90 parking spaces available at 11 East Main Street. She has spoken with all the business owners who seem excited for their business to be there adding that her business hours have been adjusted (7am to 5pm) to be sensitive to existing nearby businesses. NE Pasta is a quick in and out business; parking spaces are not taken up for more than 10 minutes.

In response to Ms. Levin, Mel (owner of Village Garage) indicated that he has spoken to people at the antique store and Da Capo; there is plenty of parking all the way around the building. He noted that parking will not be a problem with the hours being proposed adding that they will be a total asset to the Village.

Mrs. Harrop noted her approval for these applications adding that she can't see any problem.

In response to Mrs. Harrop, Ms. Morrison said that at this time no thought has been given to an outdoor dining area.

In response to Mr. Bukowski, Ms. Morrison said that she's looking to move around the first week of July. She noted that she has talked to every department and everyone is just waiting for something to approve.

In response to Ms. Levin, Ms. Morrison said that she has no problem submitting a plan to comply with all the conditions of the FVHD.

The hearing was opened for public comment; there were none.

There being no further comments the public hearing for App. #5006 was closed, as well as the public hearing portion of the meeting.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

Ms. Baran motioned to approve Apps #5005-06 subject to the following conditions:

1. Applicant shall submit adequate and proper plans for the layout of the proposed use of the structure to be found satisfactory and approved by the following Town Officials/Departments: the Fire Marshal/Fire Department; the Engineering Department and the AWPCA; the Farmington Valley Health District; and the Building Official/Building Department.
2. Any tenant parking issues shall be worked out between the applicant and the property owner unless a dangerous or safety-oriented situation arises where the Town Zoning Enforcement Officer is required.

The motion seconded by Mrs. Harrop received unanimous approval.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Star Development Group – 60 Security Drive – Self Storage Use Discussion

Present was Matt Parrinello, General Counsel, Star Development Group. He indicated that his Company does indoor, climate controlled, self storage and have about 30 facilities in the eastern part of the Country in various stages of development. They develop industrial or commercial spaces into self storage then hire a management company. All self storage is contained within the facility. The proposal at the subject site is for 3 levels/floors of self storage; an elevator and a drive through are also proposed. The intent is to use the existing footprint of the building. The entire brick building would remain and because it is in pretty good shape not a lot is proposed to be done to the outside except for cleaning up. The size of the units would be anywhere from 5 x 5 to 10 x 30; the total number of units may be between 750 and 900. The Commission indicated they would like to see a rendering or sketch of the proposed changes to the building before anything moves forward; light pollution and style of the building is a concern. Mr. Parrinello indicated that his closest facility is in Syracuse NY.

Mr. Peck indicated that if the Commission is ok with the use, he will look at the Regulations to make sure no revisions are needed. The next step would be to get a sketch of what the building would look like as well as information relative to site lighting and signage.

OTHER BUSINESS

Zoning Regulations Revision Process - Update

Mr. Peck reported that the consultant is working on a detailed list of the proposed revisions; this should be available sometime next week. Information will also be posted on the Town's website.

Request for 1 Year Extension – Orafol Expansion (120/140 Darling Drive - PZC App #4971)

Mr. Peck reported that Orafol is now ready to move forward with their building addition and are asking for a one-year extension; he noted his recommendation for approval.

Mr. Bukowski motioned to approve a one-year extension for App #4971. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gentile and received unanimous approval.

Housing Task Force (possible appointment of members)

Mr. Peck reported that a housing task force was one of the suggestions/recommendations of the recently adopted Affordable Housing Plan. He recommended that other members of the community be contacted for input (e.g. leaders of local church groups, etc). He added his understanding that three members of this Commission can be on the task force; there will be a total of five members. Mr. Bukowski and Ms. Baran expressed their interest.

Avon Regulatory/Business Climate

Mr. Peck reported that things work generally pretty well relative to businesses in Avon; however, Town Staff works very hard to try to reduce the number of temporary signs around Town.

Mr. Gentile asked whether businesses can be fined for taking down trees. Mr. Peck explained that businesses that cut down trees that are part of an approved landscape plan is a violation of their site plan approval. He pointed out that changes are proposed for the rewrite of the Zoning Regulations such that while applicants are responsible for installing landscaping initially they are also responsible for maintaining the landscaping over time. In addition, the topic of fines will be addressed/included in the rewrite of the Regulations to allow the Town to take firm action but noted that an Ordinance may be required. Enforcement is a very long, cumbersome process.

Ms. Levin asked if anyone was aware that Avon denied tax exempt status to Goodwill Industries (Hartford Courant article). She asked for more information but has not yet received it. Mr. Mahoney noted his understanding that no proof of tax exempt status was provided. Mr. Bukowski noted that there is a standard form that needs to be completed in order to qualify but nothing was submitted.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8pm.

Linda Sadlon

Avon Planning and Community Development