

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Avon held a virtual *GoToMeeting* on Tuesday, June 27, 2023. Present were Peter Mahoney, Chair, Lisa Levin, Vice Chair, Dean Hamilton, Mary Harrop, Joseph Gentile, Robin Baran, Chet Bukowski and Alternate Julie Rousey (did not sit). Alternate Elaine Primeau was absent. Also present was Hiram Peck, Director of Planning and Community Development.

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

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

NEW APPLICATION

App. #5008 - Michael and Joan Gould, owners, 182-186 West Main Street Avon, LLC, applicant, request for Site Plan Approval to permit 2,000 SF bank and 4,500 SF commercial building, 182 and 186 West Main Street, Parcels 4540182 and 4540186, in a CR Zone

Present were Robert M. Meyers, representing the applicant; Richard Korris, applicant; Jeff Bord, PE, Bohler Engineering; and Chris Milliard, architect, Phase Zero Design.

Jeff Bord displayed maps showing existing conditions of the sites at 182 and 186 West Main Street. One 4,500-square-foot building is proposed (three 1,500 SF tenants) with an outdoor pergola seating area. One 2,000-square-foot bank is also proposed with a drive through. There are two existing homes on the site with existing curb cuts onto West Main Street; the proposal is to close two of the three curb cuts. A 24-foot two way drive aisle is proposed to the east of the site; the existing driveway to the west of the site will be reutilized with shared access to the adjacent property owner. Parking is required at 98 spaces, which are provided. Twenty four (24) spaces are shown on the northeast corner of the site that could be built in the future, if needed (Regulations allow for a waiver of 25% of parking). A berm with plantings is proposed in the front of the site, as there is a 4-5 foot grade change from the road. Stormwater management meets the CT Stormwater Quality Manual. Dark Sky compliant LED directional lighting is proposed; shields will be installed to prevent light spillage. An erosion and sedimentation control plan has been provided. All utilities are provided along West Main Street.

Chris Milliard reviewed the floor plan of the proposed 4,500 SF building noting that it has potential for three tenants; the building has three separate front entrances and three separate rear entrances (service). There are canopies over each doorway and accent lighting around the building. The proposed berm will hide the parking lot from Route 44. Sustainable materials (stone base, asphalt roofing, PVC trim, aluminum storefront) are proposed so as to be durable as well as compatible with surrounding architecture. Materials to be used for the proposed bank are similar except for a metal roof.

In response to Mr. Mahoney, Mr. Bord indicated that the site is fairly balanced but a bit of fill is needed to the rear (proposed retaining wall).

In response to Ms. Levin, Mr. Peck explained that the proposed retail/restaurant building should fit on the property very well and he added that he would like to continue to work with the applicant on some minor details in connection with the proposed bank building, should the application be approved.

In response to Mr. Gentile, Mr. Meyers explained that there is an existing detached sign on Route 44 and Lawrence Avenue that will have the proposed bank's name on it.

In response to Mr. Mahoney, Mr. Peck explained that the rear access to the proposed new buildings (from behind the existing building at 192 West Main) is proposed to eliminate the potential for stopped traffic on West Main Street. The owners have all agreed to this rear access.

In response to Ms. Levin, Mr. Korris (applicant) explained that should he receive an approval his intent is to close on the property within the next 30-60 days.

In response to Mr. Bukowski, Mr. Bord explained that if an approval is granted an encroachment permit is needed from the State (access, utilities/connections, and curb cuts). This will be done as part of the traffic review by the State. He explained that adequate construction entrances are proposed such that there would be no traffic disruption on Route 44.

Mr. Bukowski motioned to approve App #5008 subject to the following conditions:

1. Compliance shall be demonstrated for all requirements/standards of the Farmington Valley Health District.
2. Compliance shall be demonstrated for all requirements/standards of the AWPCA.
3. Applicant shall provide detailed plan information relative to site grading and drainage and site construction details, satisfying all the requirements/standards of the Avon Engineering Department.
4. Landscaping, as shown on the plans, shall be installed at the proper time to ensure the best viability for all trees, plants, and shrubs. The landscaping shall be permanently maintained in good health/condition. Any landscaping that needs to be replaced and/or repaired that is not done so within a reasonable time period may result in an enforcement action by the Town Zoning Enforcement Officer.
5. The applicant shall work with the Planning Director on the details of the proposed bank building.
6. All signage (wall signs, directional signs, and freestanding) shall be reviewed and approved by Town Staff prior to any signs being erected/installed.
7. The outdoor dining area shown on the plans to the west of the commercial building is an approved accessory use, as permitted by State law. The trellis shown is encouraged as a design element and also provides cover for patrons. The outdoor dining area shall be reviewed and approved by the Fire Marshal.
8. Complete construction plans shall be prepared and submitted to the Town Building Official for review and approval, as part of the permitting process. Prior to the commencement of any construction activities, any security (bonding) that may be required by any Town Department shall be provided in a form acceptable to the Town Attorney and in an amount acceptable to the Town Engineer.
9. The applicant shall schedule a preconstruction meeting with Town Staff at least two weeks prior to beginning any site work.

Mr. Gentile seconded the motion that received unanimous approval.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

AR Building Company – 135 Darling Drive

Jason Kamitsis (President, AR Development) explained that they build and manage all their properties. The focus is high end, four-story apartment buildings with elevators that feel like condos. Every unit has a balcony, in-unit laundry, stainless steel appliances, and walk in closets. The buildings are all brick; there would be a fitness center and pool. The subject site contains 9 acres and has a one-story office building; the proposal is to construct a total of 151 units (51 units in 3 buildings). All parking is surface/outside (no charge) at 1½ spaces per unit (no underground

parking). He indicated that they are a market-rate developer but are happy to consider/discuss affordable units. Normal market rates are \$1,700-\$1,800 for one bedroom units and \$2,000-\$2,200 for two bedroom units. He noted that they built a three-story project (three buildings with 44 units each) in Groton CT (Pleasant Valley Apartments).

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Peck explained that revisions to the Regulations would be needed relative to building height (allow four stories) and use in the Industrial Park Zone, before a formal application could be made. In addition, wetlands would need to be considered. He also noted that he is not sure if Avon has fire apparatus that can reach four stories.

The Commission was generally agreeable to the overall project concept as long as an affordable component is included/considered.

OTHER BUSINESS

Zoning Regulations Revision Process - Update

Mr. Peck reported that he has received a 15-page outline of all the sections of the Regulations that the consultant would like to work on/clean up. The outline/baseline analysis will be shared with the Commission as soon as possible.

Housing Task Force (possible appointment of members)

Mr. Mahoney noted that he has reached out to a few people but has not heard back yet.

Ms. Levin also noted that she is waiting for responses from people.

Ms. Baran asked if it would be a good idea to reach out to renters in Town and not just homeowners to get a more diversified viewpoint.

In response to Ms. Baran, Mr. Mahoney commented that he would prefer the Commission vetted people on their own to ensure that they are truly interested in being on the task force. Ms. Levin noted her agreement.

Mr. Peck noted that the Department of Social Services has provided him with a few community contacts that he will be following up with in the next week or so. He indicated that it would be helpful if names for the task force are available for discussion at the Commission's September meeting. He added his agreement that reaching out to more diverse groups will result in different perspectives, which is valuable.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Linda Sadlon
Avon Planning and Community Development