PLANNING and ZONING COMMISSION
Monroe, Connecticut

MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2015

Meeting: Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
7 Fan Hill Road, Monroe, Connecticut

Present: Chairman Patrick O'Hara
Secretary Karen Martin
Commissioner Brian Quinn
Commissioner David Townson
Commissioner Jane Flader (alternate)
Commissioner Cathleen Lindstrom (alternate)
Commissioner Jeremy Hayden (alternate)

Absent: Vice-Chairman William Porter

Also Present: William Agresta, Planning and Planner
Scott Schatzlein, Land Use Group Director, Town Engineer
David McCollum, Recording Secretary

OPENING of MEETING:

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman O'Hara called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m., and invited those in attendance to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES (if required)

Commissioners were seated on a roll call.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

4. GENERAL APPOINTMENTS – None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

5. SPECIAL EXCEPTION PERMIT

SEP-2015-11, File #1562A: 285 Cutlers Farm Road (Wolfe Park) – Ball Fields Construction, Town of Monroe Parks and Recreation *(Public Hearing reconvened from 09/17/2015)*

Chairman O'Hara read the Public Hearing Notice and Rules of Conduct for the Public Hearing. Planner Agresta listed the additional Exhibits 19 through 24.

Commissioner Flader entered the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

Mr. Frank Cooper, Director of the Monroe Parks and Recreation Department, introduced himself to the Commission. He stated that he was unable to attend the previous Commission meeting, and was in attendance to address the Commission's concerns in regards to the application. He added that since the previous Commission meeting, the Commission's concerns had been researched, and that the plans had since been revised. He added that Mr. David Sacco, who spoke at the previous meeting on behalf this application, was also in attendance to continue the application presentation, address the application's changes, and answer technical questions asked by the Commission. He commented that it was the Department's wish to move this project forward, and that the Parks and Recreation Department had tried to meet and exceed any concerns that the Commission may have had. He referred to the revised plans that were prepared for the Commission meeting before introducing following speakers.

Secretary Martin entered the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Mr. David Sacco, a Civil Engineer from TPA Design Group in New Haven, Connecticut, introduced himself to the Commission as a speaker on behalf of the application. He stated that several revised drawings had been submitted. He added that specific changes on the revised drawings were made in response to the comments provided by the Commission at the previous hearing for this application.

Mr. Sacco addressed a fence along the limit of grading and disturbance at the northeast side of the proposed west field. The proposed fence would be a post and rail type of fence, which would have chain link applied to the side of the fence opposite the playing field. He said that this would be unobtrusive in appearance, while preventing balls from rolling past the fence and down the slope away from the proposed field. He stated that fence style was chosen because he believes it fits the historic nature of the property and is also aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Sacco commented on the revisions to the pedestrian path near the playscape through the woods across the wetlands. He stated that the proposed path had been widened to twelve feet, and that the cross-sectional depth was strengthened with an additional four to six inches of material to ensure that it could support heavier traffic and serve as the primary construction route for the proposed west field. He referred to a prior discussion and presentation with the Inland Wetlands Commission at their October 14, 2015 meeting.

He added that the Inland Wetlands Commission was amenable to changing the access route to use an existing path with Wolfe Park rather than using Park View Drive or Farm View Road. He added that the total impact of the proposed path would increase by approximately five to six feet, which the Inland Wetlands Commission approved.

Mr. Sacco indicate that the project now included two six-inch conduits for future water abnd electric service to the far field, these have also been approved by the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Mr. Sacco presented revisions to the typical section of the stone wall to be relocated in the practice fields immediately west of the existing tennis courts. The stone wall would be relocated to the west edge of the proposed field, and would have a more formal appearance. He added that the Inland Wetlands Commission commented that they do not want something too tidy. The Inland Wetlands Commission liked having gaps between the stones, which could provide habitat. The Inland Wetlands Commission was in support of a farm-style wall as opposed to something that looked more deteriorated in nature.

Mr. Sacco added further comment to the typical section of the proposed path, which had been revised from 8 feet to 12 feet in both cases. The portion of the proposed path within the wetlands section would have a crushed stone base to allow minor surface flow to seep through the embankment into the wetlands. The portion of the proposed path within the regulated upland review area would have a gravel base. He summarized that both "Option One" and "Option Two" would not be used. "Option Three", which was within the limits of Wolfe Park, would be depicted as the construction route for the proposed west field.

Mr. Sacco commented on the graphics of a drawing that were provided for the existing overflow parking lot. He stated that additional graphics were not included in the presentation due to the short turnaround time between the previous Commission meeting and the submission date for the current meeting. He added that there was not enough time for a surveyor to conduct a physical survey of the parking facilities. He stated that the presentation relied on publicly-available aerial and photogrammetric imagery that had been used in the past to depict the main parking lot and the overflow parking lot. The graphics that were included in the presentation were an attempt to show the 348 (three-hundred forty-eight) combined spaces within the currently existing main parking lot and overflow parking lot. He added that a typo on the main lot existing and that there is really an additional 21 (twenty-one) spaces in the main parking lot, which brought the total amount of currently existing parking spaces to 369 (three-hundred sixty-nine).

Mr. Sacco stated his belief that there was sufficient parking, per the Planning and Zoning Regulations and the experience of the Parks and Recreation Department to support the proposed facilities given that the facilities are intended to be seasonal in nature. The proposed fields would not be in use during the period which the Wolfe Park Pool was open for seasonal use. Mr. Sacco added that the parking requirement for the swimming pool is 42 (forty-two) spaces, and the requirement for the two proposed fields is 40 (forty) spaces.

Commissioner Lindstrom asked Mr. Sacco if he knew whether there is room in the future to expand the overflow parking lot, if necessary. Mr. Sacco replied that he thought there was a need for additional survey work. He commented that modifications to the overflow parking lot would have to be sensitive to the nearby area of wetlands. He added that by making the overflow lot a more orderly area to park. Parking spaces could be added within the currently existing footprint. The lot could be made more orderly by properly striping parking spaces. If there was still a need for additional space, there is green space between the overflow parking lot and main parking lot.

Commissioner Quinn asked Mr. Sacco to clarify the number of accounted parking spaces currently existing within the overflow parking lot. Mr. Sacco replied that the physical count from the main parking lot is 141 (one-hundred forty-one) spaces. The spaces within the overflow parking lot were based on laying 9' (nine foot) by 18' (eighteen foot) parking spaces with appropriate widths for vehicular traffic within the available footprint totaled to 228 (two-hundred twenty-eight) spaces. Commissioner Quinn asked Mr. Sacco if he conducted a site visit, which Mr. Sacco replied yes.

Commissioner Quinn asked if Mr. Sacco anticipated presenting a full plan that included any remediation work that could be done to the existing overflow lot to account for the field use. He commented that the application has nothing to do with the fields being seasonal . He asked Mr. Sacco if the application would be changed to indicate a seasonal field, and what would be provided for a parking document on the existing overflow lot to show that it can comply with the required amount of parking spaces.

Mr. Cooper replied that the fields will be like other fields currently existing at Wolfe Park, and would have use similar to the existing fields at Great Hollow Lake. He added that during the heart of the athletic seasons, the proposed fields would be utilized to offset the congestion on the existing fields within Wolfe Park and alleviate the associated agronomic problems. In the spring, the proposed fields would most likely be used for lacrosse. The lacrosse season closes on or about the middle of June, which is when the peak seasonal use of Wolfe Park Pool begins. There would not be a significant use of the proposed fields during the course of summer.

Commissioner Quinn replied that while that may be what is proposed, the proposal may not be carried out in actuality. He referred to the Monroe Senior Center lot as the preferred lot to accommodate the needs of the existing football fields, due to safety concerns and proximity. Mr. Cooper replied that the Senior Center lot had just become available for that use last year. Mr. Quinn replied that lot had been available for the past two years, and while it serves a great purpose, it is not by design. He added that he would like to see plans for the original lower lot, and a document from a professional that shows how the proposed athletic fields and facilities could have their parking requirements fulfilled. He added that he would like to see the traffic flow that is created at the times the facilities are in use, as well as a parking and lighting plan. Mr. Cooper replied that the intent of the presentation rendering was to show that the parking requirements could be met with the existing parking lots.

Secretary Martin asked Mr. Cooper what the plans were for toilet facilities. Mr. Cooper replied that portable units would be installed as close to the proposed fields as possible, particularly on the side nearest the proposed pedestrian paths. Secretary Martin asked how many of those units would be installed.

Mr. Cooper replied that two handicapped-accessible units would be installed. Secretary Martin asked if they could be included on the plans. Mr. Cooper replied that the practical locations would have to be established.

Secretary Martin asked if Mr. Cooper received a copy of the comments from the Planning and Zoning Department. Mr. Cooper replied that he had received them just before the start of the Commission meeting. Secretary Martin asked Mr. Cooper if he would responding to the comments, to which Mr. Cooper replied that he certainly would.

Commissioner Lindstrom asked Mr. Cooper if water would be available at the portalets for hand-washing purposes. Mr. Cooper said that the facilities would be equipped with disinfectant. Commissioner Lindstrom asked if there would be any water fountains, to which Mr. Cooper replied that water fountains would not be available.

Commissioner Townson asked when the construction work for the proposed fields would start. Mr. Cooper replied that the work would ideally start as soon as possible, but that he anticipated that a July start would be preferable. Mr. Sacco added that the access would not be used during periods of high seasonal flow.

Chairman O'Hara thanked Mr. Cooper and Mr. Sacco for their additions and their revisions. He stated that he still had a concern with the parking. He referred to the narrative included as part of the presentation that indicated that the Monroe Planning and Zoning Regulations were being followed. He referred to his question to Mr. Sacco at the previous meeting if the existing overflow parking lot had ever been permitted, and if there was anything on record that referred to a permitting process. Mr. Cooper replied that he was not aware of any formal permit for the overflow parking lot.

Chairman O'Hara stated that the overflow parking lot has been existence for a long time. He said that the proposed facilities would be an intensifier to the existing facilities. He added that allowing the overflow parking lot to exist without being formalized would be something the Commission is not allowed to do, and that the Town of Monroe is subject to same regulations as everyone and anyone else. He added that while the overview is appreciated, officially recognized plans of topography, landscaping, and handicap available spaces did not exist for the overflow parking lot. He commented on the outdoor storage, and stated how that was not allowed per the Monroe Zoning Regulations. He added that the Inland Wetlands Commission would also have to process the formal recognition of the lot, due to the overflow lot’s location and draining into wetlands. Mr. Cooper replied that the Inland Wetlands Commission had previously requested the applicant to address the issues of formal permitting. Chairman O'Hara said that he did not see a way to proceed forward without a solution to obtain the proper permits. The permits would be a formal verification, showing a legal cut of the overflow parking lot into Cutler's Farm Road, handicapped accessibly spots within the overflow parking lot, and other issues of interest.

Mr. Cooper commented that the overflow parking lot has been in existence for almost 30 (thirty) years, and that the Town of Monroe has known about it. He added that he does not know how the overflow parking lot attained its current state, and that he was told that it has always served the park and the community as an overflow facility. He believed that the lot, whether it was identified as an official parking lot, or just an overflow lot, was just semantics.

He believed that there had to be a way to find mutual ground on the issue, given the fact that the Parks and Recreation Department wants to serve the community. He had no intent to subvert the permitting process, and expressed his desire to want to work with the Commission. He said that based on the longevity and service of the overflow parking lot, he believed that it needed to be recognized.

Chairman O'Hara replied that he and the members of the Planning and Zoning Commission were bound by the Planning and Zoning Regulations. He commented how the applicants were candid in their presentation narrative to follow Inland Wetlands Regulations, and how they also looked to follow the Planning and Zoning Regulations. He stated that he could no more accept the overflow parking lot than he could accept someone proposing a restaurant or any other development in Town.

Commissioner Quinn added the concerns regarding safety issues. He said that he recognized the lot, and that the community uses the lot every day, but that the overflow parking lot was a peril. Commissioner Quinn also commented on the lack of lighting in the overflow parking lot. Mr. Cooper replied that there was lighting in the overflow parking lot. Mr. Quinn replied that the lighting was not adequate, and that there was no permit for the overflow parking lot to be lit.

Chairman O'Hara added that there was also the concern of having legal issues. He said that the permitting process allows the abutters of Wolfe Park to have due process. He commented on how the residences adjacent to the overflow parking lot did not receive due process for the overflow parking lot's lights, and whether or not the lights are adequately protecting their use and enjoyment. He added that he understood how the overflow parking lot had been established a long time ago, but that the duration of the lot's current existence was beyond his control. The application is an intensification of the Park's current use. He said that it was not practical to put a Condition of Approval on the application regarding field usage. He added that the Town would be in trouble if the parking demand overflowed onto streets near Wolfe Park.

Planner Agresta said that there was an issue regarding the overflow parking lot not having a standing permit, and added that it had been there a for long time. He asked the Commission if they would consider permitting the parking lot as part of the application, where any specifications regarding improvements could be addressed, if necessary. He added that a portion of the overflow parking lot would be needed to fulfill the parking requirements of the current application.

Chairman O'Hara asked if the main parking lot currently had 141 (one-hundred forty-one) parking spaces, which Planner Agresta confirmed. Chairman O'Hara asked how many additional spaces were needed to fulfill the requirements of the application. Planner Agresta replied that the calculation for all the usage came to 302 (three-hundred two) parking spaces. If the 141 (one-hundred forty-one) was subtracted, 161 (one-hundred sixty-one) spaces would still be needed.

Commissioner Quinn commented that the additional amount was too large to ignore landscaping and lighting requirements. He added that they could be incorporated into the plan, but that he would not consider putting it forth without more detail. Planner Agresta replied that decision based on the level of improvements would be made by the Commission.

Chairman O'Hara asked about the remaining timeframe for the application. Planner Agresta replied that the applicant had 18 (eighteen) days remaining of extension to grant for the hearing which would be spent before the next Commission meeting on November 5th, 2015, adding that a special meeting would have to take place.

Commissioner Quinn asked how the issues regarding the formal permitting would be addressed. Chairman O'Hara added that the formal permitting would also have to be addressed by the Inland Wetlands Commission. Planner Agresta commented that processing the permit through the Inland Wetlands Commission would exceed the number of extension days available.

Chairman O'Hara commented on the allowances for unpaved parking. He said that the overflow parking lot needed to be permitted regardless of the allowances. He said that there was a need to include drawings, which were standard requirements in applications. He added that the abutters had to be notified to speak for or against the application, commenting that the application was for a lot was within a residential zone.

Mr. Sacco asked if the issuance of zoning permit could be conditioned on a new application for the parking facilities. He did not want to repeat the process of submitting an application for the overflow parking lot, and asked if it was possible to put a condition on granting the zoning permit to hold off construction while additional application was processed with the Commission. Chairman O'Hara replied that could be a possibility. He stated that there would be a need for an application for a parking lot, which would need to be reviewed and approved by the Inland Wetlands Commission before it was reviewed and approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. He believed that this approach could work because the two applications would be completely separate. Commissioner Quinn added his concerns about the precedence that this process would set for future applicants.

Planner Agresta asked the applicants what they were saving. Chairman O'Hara asked about the costs that were involved for the application to be submitted and presented. Mr. Cooper replied that there were costs associated with issuing abutters notices. Chairman O'Hara said that needed to be done regardless for the overflow parking lot. Planner Agresta commented that the consultant's time would be the biggest expense.

Chairman O'Hara stated that desire for the Commission to not establish precedence on certain things. He referred to Planner Agresta's comment, and that it may be in the applicant's interest to withdraw the application.

Commissioner Quinn commented that the parking lot at the Monroe Senior Center could be incorporated into a future application to fulfill the parking lot requirements. Mr. Cooper replied that the Parks and Recreation Department coordinated with the Monroe Senior Center relative to their programs. The Commission discussed the issues of formally recognizing the overflow parking lot with Mr. Cooper.

Planner Agresta added that there was a need to memorializing something on paper that would verify the overflow parking lot's usability, design, wetlands remediation, and lighting requirements. Chairman O'Hara added that details, including the addition of lighting, the naming and signage of fields, and the potential for future structures such as scoreboards should be notarized on a plan.

Commissioner Quinn commented that Wolfe Park was laden with things that were not planned, referring to the overflow parking lot and the scoreboard at Dom Quinto Field. He wanted the application to be well-thought and safe.

Chairman O'Hara asked the applicants if they would like to close the application for the Commission's vote, or withdraw the application and submit another application as soon as possible. Mr. Cooper replied that a lot of work would need to be done for the applicants to present an engineered plan for the overflow parking lot. Chairman O'Hara commented that any other potential concerns or future plans could be included on a future application. Commissioner Quinn said that addressing any future plans on the application would be a benefit, so that would not have to be rehashed on a subsequent application in the future.

Mr. Cooper stated that he would withdraw the application.

Commissioner Lindstrom asked the applicants about the accessibility from Park View Drive. She wanted to make sure she understood that the construction vehicles would access the proposed site through Wolfe Park. Mr. Sacco replied that the base of the proposed path would be built to allow construction traffic, and would be paved upon the construction's completion.

Town Engineer Schatzlein asked the Commission's expectations for a future application for the overflow parking lot, specifically whether or not it would need to be paved. Chairman O'Hara replied that the Commission was not making any specific expectation.

End of application, applicant withdrew.

SEP-2015-17, File #1568: 455 Main Street & 10 Hattertown Road – Retail Convenience Store and Gas Station w/Canopy, Cumberland Farms

Chairman O'Hara read the Notice of Public Hearing. Planner Agresta listed Exhibits 1 through 21.

Mr. Joseph P. Williams, Esq. a licensed attorney in the State of Connecticut of Shipman & Goodwin, LLP in New Haven, Connecticut, introduced himself to the Commission as a speaker on behalf of the application. He also introduced Mr. Mark Grocki, Project Engineer with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. in Wethersfield, Connecticut; Mr. Peter Yeske, Real Estate Manager with First Hartford Realty Corporation in Manchester, Connecticut; and Michael Lukaszewski, Regional Sales Manager with Cumberland Farms in Framingham, Massachusetts as fellow speakers on behalf of the application. He gave a background of the Cumberland Farms business to the Commission and the business' desire to build a safe and attractive site, referring the safe the safe track record of successful sites the business owns throughout Connecticut. He added that he had submitted materials in association with mailings for the project proposal, which Planner Agresta accepted as Exhibit 23 (twenty-three).

Attorney Williams gave an overview of the existing site to the Commission, and its address at 10 Hattertown Road and 455 Main Street, on Connecticut Route 25. The proposed lot would have a combined area of 1.9 acres. Cumberland Farms would lease the property. The site is currently vacant, previously developed as an auto body repair and service facility until 2010.

The parcels for the proposed project are within the B-2 Zone, in which a retail store is permitted by right, and a gas-fueling operation is permitted through a special exception permit. Location approval is also requested for the sale of gasoline, per the Monroe Planning and Zoning Regulations and Connecticut State General Statutes. The site is surrounded on three sides by commercial uses: the Clock Tower Plaza Shopping Center, the Monro Muffler Service shop, and the Hill 'n' Dale Auto Service facility & Exxon Gas station. Residences are located behind the site across Hattertown Road, whose sensitivity was addressed with on-site screening and buffering. The proposed plan is to develop an approximately 4,700 square foot retail convenience store building, six gas pumps with overhead canopy, install two 20,000 gallon underground storage tanks, stormwater system, septic system, sidewalks, parking, landscaping, signage, and lighting.

Attorney Williams added a brief overview of the site layout, driveways, parking, rain garden system for stormwater management, site landscaping, traffic study, and other engineering details, and commented that further details would be provided by Mr. Grocki. He commented on the input received from Town Staff in regards to the application, and the number of improvements that were subsequently incorporated in the submitted revised plans. He referred to previously submitted materials regarding the application.

Attorney Williams presented the Commission with a rendering of the proposed site in its completed structure. He gave an overview of the proposed building specifications, and the building's architectural design elements. He summarized a meeting of the proposed site's representatives with the Monroe Architectural Review Board. He stated that he believed the proposed building and associated plans as amended complied with the Zoning Regulations, without any need for waivers or variances. He commented that he believed that the site had an excellent proposed design that was safe, attractive, and would not cause a traffic hazard.

Mr. Grocki introduced himself to the Commission as the Project Engineer. He gave a technical engineering overview of the proposed site explaining the site's current conditions, the proposed site's layout plan, the proposed holding tanks, and the proposed parking space layout. He commented on the differences between the old and new proposed plan, referring to the changes in the loading and dumping zones, the location of the proposed parking spaces, site access off of Route 25, and changes in the landscaping plan.

Mr. Grocki explained the opportunities on the site for Low Impact Development, and gave an overview of the proposed rain garden features. He explained his belief that these systems are superior to underground stormwater retention systems. The rain gardens would be great for water quality treatment, groundwater discharge, and would preserve and reduce the impervious area. He addressed the comments made by the Land Use staff in regards to the application.

Mr. Grocki gave an overview of water quality treatment measures and the associated best management practices. He also gave an overview of the site signage and lighting, addressing the revisions that were made to the proposal for the signage and lighting. He presented a second rendering of the proposed site as it would be seen from Hattertown Road.

Attorney Williams addressed the memos the applicants received on the evening of the meeting from Planner Agresta and Town Engineer Schatzlein.

Chairman O'Hara asked if the public hearing presentation would carry over into a second hearing. Attorney Williams said that a second hearing would be held unless all the Commissions questions and comments could be answered during the current meeting. Chairman O'Hara added that there was a lot of material, and gave his comments regarding feedback and conversation to the applicants.

Commissioner Flader asked what about the lifespan of the proposed underground storage tanks and how they would be maintained. Mr. Grocki replied that each tank would have a 30 year warranty life span, and that each tank would be double-walled and have an interior brine-salt solution for an alarm system.

Commissioner Flader asked how many fuel deliveries per week would be anticipated. Attorney Williams replied that an estimated 2 to 4 deliveries per week would be made. Commissioner Flader asked what where the proposed hours of operation. Attorney Williams replied that there would be 24 hours of operation.

Commissioner Flader asked if the proposed building had a second floor, and if that floor would be used for storage. Attorney Williams replied that there was no proposed second floor, and clarified to Commissioner Flader that the building would have a single ground floor with a high ceiling.

Commissioner Lindstrom expressed her concerns are with traffic. She asked if incorporating the driveways with Clock Tower Plaza or Monro Muffler had been explored or considered. Attorney Williams said that had been given consideration. Mr. Grocki further explained that a traffic study had been submitted. He referred to the current traffic situation on Route 25, and how the traffic study verified that level of service would remain the same between the 5 new developments that would be proposed within the next year, and that the Cumberland Farms gas station would not exacerbate the current traffic situation. He addressed the drainage, landscaping, and grading issues that were associated with connecting the proposed site to the surrounding commercial sites.

Commissioner Lindstrom referenced the new shopping center that the Commission had recently approved almost across the street. She asked if a car could travel between two cars that were refueling at separate stations that were adjacent to each other. Mr. Grocki referred to the proposed plans, and showed that the distance between the two pump stations to be 35 feet, and that a travel lane 11 feet wide would accommodate vehicles trying to pass through the middle.

Commissioner Lindstrom asked if extra long hoses had been proposed to allow for refueling of vehicles when the gas tank filler neck is on the opposite side of the gas pump.
propose long hoses. Attorney Williams said that had not been included in the proposal for this site.

Mr. Lukaszewski introduced himself to the Commission as the Cumberland Farms Regional Sales Manager. He stated that the reason why the pull-cord was not being implemented on the gasoline hoses was because there would not be a traffic pattern that would be limited to one direction. He added that the pull-cord hoses could be an option, if the Commission requested them.

Commissioner Lindstrom asked if a one direction traffic pattern was considered. Mr. Grocki replied that option had been considered by the Land Use staff, and referred to their respective comment on the matter. The suggestion was to rotate the fueling operations by 45 degrees so that they would be on an angle. The applicants addressed the comment by presenting three conceptual designs that showed what happens when the fueling operations were built on an angle. He explained that angling of the fueling operations would result in a compromise of green space within the proposed plan, and also addressed other constraints an angled fueling operation would cause. Mr. Grocki believed the proposed design would be more efficient, and would minimize conflict of pump islands and pumping spaces.

Planner Agresta clarified that he did not recommend any specific angle for the fueling operations, or for the traffic pattern to be one-way. He was recommending that a one-directional flow be encouraged, without eliminating the two-way aisles around the pumps. Planner Agresta agreed that the proposed plan is a more efficient use of space. He added that he was evaluating those options to minimize the number of curb cuts down to one, and he was trying to reduce the conflict of the pump islands and the parking spaces that are desired by the applicant in front of the building.

Commissioner Lindstrom expressed her concern is about the traffic exiting and entering from and onto Hattertown Road from gas station, and asked why the proposal included an entrance and exit onto and from Hattertown Road. Mr. Grocki replied that a traffic study had proved that there would be no significant ingress or egress onto and from Hattertown Road, and that the entrance and exit were for the purposes of convenience.

Commissioner Lindstrom expressed her belief that the proposed free-standing sign on Main Street would be overwhelmingly tall in relation to other existing and proposed structures within the area on Main Street.

Commissioner Quinn asked for clarification on the proposed three shared parking spaces to be located on the site. Mr. Grocki explained the calculations used and why they were used for this application.

Secretary Martin asked if an invasive species had been included on the list of plantings. Mr. Grocki replied that there were no proposed invasive species on the site. Secretary Martin stated that she agreed with Commissioner Lindstrom in regards to the length of the hoses.

Commissioner Flader asked if the filling operations would be self-serve. Attorney Williams replied that all filling operations would be self-serve. Mr. Grocki added that disability assistance would be available, as shown in the proposed plan set.

Secretary Martin asked if music would be played at the gas pumps. Mr. Grocki replied that the pumps do have that option, and that option is being included in the proposed design. Secretary Martin asked if the applicants would consider not playing no music at the gas pumps. Mr. Grocki replied that the decibel level could be reduced. Attorney Williams added that a small screen with a small speaker was used at each gas pump, and that only those using a gas pump would be able to hear the music being played at the gas pump.

Secretary Martin asked if there was or would ever be an intent to place "winged signs" around the gas pumps. Attorney Williams referred to the Monroe Zoning Regulations, which do not allow additional signage at the pump, which was a change the applicant made to stay in compliance.

Secretary Martin asked about the cooking arrangements, and what kinds of food would be made on-site. not proposing anything different, prepared heated food on site. Mr. Lukaszewski said that only pre-prepared food items that only required heating would be sold on-site, which a consumer could consume on-site at the proposed outdoor tables. Secretary Martin clarified that there would be no cooking, and only reheating, on site. Mr. Lukaszewski confirmed that there only be heating of pre-prepared food.

Secretary Martin asked where a ice merchandiser would be located. Mr. Lukaszewski replied that ice would be located within the store, and would be a single door that would be part of the freezer section. Secretary Martin asked if the outside front of the building would be used for retail purposes. Mr. Lukaszewski replied that there would be no sale of items on the outside front of the building, per the Monroe Zoning Regulations.

Secretary Martin asked if there would be garbage cans located on the outside of the building. garbage cans at each island. Mr. Lukaszewski replied that one garbage can is normally located at each island between the gas filling operation dispensers, which would accommodate a combination garbage can and window wash squeegee unit that would be handicapped accessible. Garbage cans would also be located at each entrance and at the air pump for pedestrian usage. Secretary Martin asked if there would garbage cans where people would be eating, which Mr. Lukaszewski confirmed.

Secretary Martin referenced a previous comment about putting up signs inside the windows. Chairman O'Hara clarified that the windows would not be able to accommodate signs.

Secretary Martin asked if there would be any neon lights. No neon lights, Mr. Lukaszewski confirmed. Secretary Martin asked about the marked directional arrows proposed at the site driveway exit on Route 25. She stated her concerns about going out to the left, referring to the large amount of traffic and congestion on Main Street. Commissioner Lindstrom clarified that Secretary Martin was seeking one-directional flow for egress onto Main Street, which Secretary Martin confirmed. Mr. Grocki replied that only one curb cut would allow "left-outs", which is required for the site. He added that the Connecticut Department of Transportation has final jurisdiction over driveway access along state roads. He added that there is a need to use the proposed layout for the driveways. Commissioner Hayden asked for further clarification on the importance of the proposed driveway layout. Mr. Grocki replied that the proposed layout would be superior for convenience. He added that the plans included proposed lane striping modifications on Main Street to alleviate the concerns associated with left-turns.

Commissioner Townson asked if there would be signage reinforcing the right-turn only exit on Hattertown Road. Mr. Grocki replied that there would be "No Left Turn" signage at that exit, and more signage could be added if requested.

Chairman O'Hara asked where the proposed white spruce plantings would be located. Mr. Grocki replied that the majority of the white spruce would be placed along the residential edge of the proposed site to provide a screen and buffering. Chairman O'Hara asked for clarification of plant names on the planting schedule. He asked if the project's landscape was comfortable with the survivability of the proposed plants. Mr. Grocki replied that grasses were originally proposed on site. Most of the grasses had since been replaced with flowering shrubs, as was requested in the comments. Attorney Williams added that photos and descriptions of the proposed plants could be submitted.

Chairman O'Hara addressed the issue of music at the gas pumps, and that the proposed site directly abuts a residential zone. He requested that music would not be included at the gas pumps. Attorney Williams said that modification could be made addressed at the continuation of the public hearing. Commissioner Quinn asked about the screens that would be located at each gas pump, and if they would be used to advertise products. Attorney Williams replied that the screens would be advertising Cumberland Farms. Commissioner Quinn asked if the screens would emit a great deal of light. Attorney Williams replied that they would not emit a lot of light. Planner Agresta asked for further clarification on the screens. Attorney Williams clarified that the screens would display in color. Mr. Lukaszewski added that the screens are dual-purposed to be used as a directional access to the soft keys on either sides of the screen and launch advertisements while the gas pump is pumping gasoline. The screen returns to a usage screen upon the completion of filling use. Chairman O'Hara asked if the advertisements would be silent, which Mr. Lukaszewski confirmed. Planner Agresta asked how big the screens would be. Mr. Lukaszewski replied that the screens would be 8 inches, and squared. Commissioner Quinn asked if the proposed screens would be seen from the road. Mr. Lukaszewski replied that they would not be seen from the road.

Chairman O'Hara asked if the proposed free-standing sign could be made shorter. Attorney Williams replied that it would be difficult to do so. Chairman O'Hara commented that the applicant needed to review the existing and proposed elevations for the site. Attorney Williams explained that a street-level photograph which shows the proposed structure from a perspective going southbound along Route 25 shows that the existing trees, vegetation, and existing highway signs would make the sign difficult to see if it was built to a lower height. This could potentially promote drivers to make bad decisions should they be looking to access the site from that direction. Planner Agresta asked if the majority of potential patrons would drive by the proposed site daily. He stated that he believed a majority would know and remember the location of the proposed site regardless of the proposed free-standing sign's height. He referred to the traffic report which indicated roughly 60 percent passing by trips. Attorney Williams replied that he had not seen any data indicating that the drivers that passed by would be the same persons each time.

Chairman O'Hara asked if the applicants could agree with him on the superior sight-line of the proposed free-standing sign going northbound on Route 25, which the applicants confirmed. Chairman O'Hara asked the applicants to consider lowering the proposed free-standing sign to be brought below the height of the trees and other growth. Attorney Williams discussed the relation of the proposed shade trees relative to the height of the proposed free-standing sign.

Chairman O'Hara asked for clarification on the proposed shared parking spaces. Chairman O'Hara, Planner Agresta, and Attorney Williams discussed the use of the regulations associated with the shared parking spaces, the mechanics of the associated calculations and the requirements of legal documents. Attorney Williams also explained the sharing between a predominant use and an accessory use in relation to the proposed site. Chairman O'Hara asked if parking spaces had been traded to give more space for landscaping, which Attorney Williams confirmed. Planner Agresta added that there are separate parking standards for the retail and gas uses. He commented that the combination of these uses would likely have a smaller parking demand than if the two uses had their parking requirements added together.

Chairman O'Hara said that Commissioner Martin has asked him to inquire about plans to install a generator. Attorney Williams replied that a generator would not be installed permanently, but that portable generators could be brought in for emergency purposes on a temporary basis. Mr. Lukaszewski added that the proposed Cumberland Farms store would have external plugs on the rear of the building. A trail-able generator or fire engine that interfaced with the building could be used to proved emergency, temporary power on an as-need basis.

Commissioner Quinn asked for data on peak hours of business for Cumberland Farms retail and food service. Attorney Williams replied that the peak of hours for business would be the same as those identified as the peak hours in the traffic study. He added that the majority of potential customers would be those that already drive by the proposed site.

Commissioner Quinn commented on his reading of Cumberland Farm's intent to compete with Dunkin Donuts and Starbucks. Attorney Williams replied that he believed the afternoon traffic peak was higher than the morning traffic peak. Otherwise, there was nothing different from the ordinary.

Commissioner Hayden asked if car maintenance fluids would be sold on the premises, which Attorney Williams confirmed. He added that the use of the purchased products on-site would not be encouraged, and would also be prohibited. He added that there were controls on-site that would ensure any spill would be contained.

Chairman O'Hara asked Attorney Williams to address his questions to the Commission. Attorney Williams commented on some of the feedback the Commission gave in relation to the site proposal. He and Mr. Grocki discussed the contents of Planner Agresta's memo with the Commission and Planner Agresta. After a period of extended discussion with regard to Planner Agresta's memo and comments, Chairman O'Hara opened the hearing to public comment.

Mr. Lee Hossler, of 272 Stanley Road, asked about the proposed driveway exit onto Hattertown Road. He commented that the proposed signage would potentially be ignored by some drivers. He would like to see the design modified so that people would be forced to turn right onto Hattertown Road. He also added a question about the plantings to be proposed along the residential edge of the site. He also asked about the availability of diesel fuel. Attorney Williams replied that Mr. Hossler's concerns for the driveway exit onto Hattertown Road would be considered with the same regard held for the southern driveway exit onto Main Street. He commented on the existing plantings and vegetation along the roadside that would remain untouched. The proposed plantings would be inside the currently existing vegetation.

He added that diesel fuel would be available but that they would not be high-flow to be used for tractor trailers.

Chairman O'Hara clarified that the hearing would be continued in two weeks, which Attorney Williams confirmed. Chairman O'Hara concluded by saying that the application would be adjourned and presented again on November 5th, 2015.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

6. SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SDP-2015-05, File #117: 440 Main Street – Building addition and handicap access, Thai Berry Kitchen

Chairman O'Hara noted that the applicant has requested an extension and has granted the Commission an extension accordingly via a letter to November 19, 2015. Planner Agresta commented that the letter is granting an extension of time to consider the application up to and including November 19, 2015. Chairman O'Hara asked if there was a meeting still taking place on November 5, 2015, which Planner Agresta confirmed that he plan would be to have it on that agenda with the ability to get to the subsequent November 19, 2015 meeting if needed.

DELIBERATIONS AND DETERMINATIONS:

7. PERMIT AMENDMENTS / MODIFICATIONS / EXTENSIONS

5-07-S-A1, File #1457A: 241 Roosevelt Drive – SEP Amendment to add a generator

OWNER: **Hendels Monroe, LLC**
APPLICANT: **Hendels Monroe, LLC**
MOTION: **Quinn** – To approve Special Exception Permit Amendment Modification for the installation of an above ground generator to be located to the rear of the dumpster enclosure in the rear parking area, subject to modifications as set forth in Planner Agresta and Town Engineer Schatzlein staff comments.
SECOND: **Martin**
DISCUSSION: Chairman O'Hara clarified that a standard Generac was being installed at the Henny Penny gas station on Route 34. Planner Agresta commented that an island was the original location for a generator to be installed. He added that he advised the applicant to place the proposed generator on the rear of the existing dumpster, off the back corner of the existing building. The dumpster could hide the proposed generator, and the plans had been revised to address the generator's new proposed location.
VOTE: **5-0-0 – Approved**
Ayes O'Hara, Martin, Quinn, Townson, Flader
Nays None
Abstain None

SDP-2015-01, File #113: 75 Main Street – 90 (ninety) day extension request

OWNER: **J & J Enterprises, LLC**
APPLICANT: **John Petrie, Enterprise Rent A Car, ELRAC, LLC**
MOTION: **Quinn** – To grant a 90 (ninety) day extension to complete the conditions of approval for signature of final plans.
SECOND: **Martin**
DISCUSSION None
VOTE: **5-0-0 – Approved**
Ayes O'Hara, Martin, Quinn, Townson, Flader
Nays None
Abstain None

8. BOND RELEASES OR REDUCTIONS – None

9. MEETING MINUTES

09/17/15 Meeting Minutes – MONROE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

MOTION: **Quinn –** Approve 9/17/15 meetings as drafted.
SECOND: **Townson**
DISCUSSION None
VOTE: **4-0-1 – Approved**
Ayes Quinn, O'Hara, Martin, Townson
Nays None
Abstain Flader

10. APPLICATION DELIBERATIONS / DETERMINATIONS

SEP-2015-16, File #1567A: 482-484 Pepper Street – CrossFit / Kids on the Moon

OWNER: **Pepper Street Partners LLC**
APPLICANT: **Kevin Quinlan (CrossFit)**
MOTION: **Martin** – To approve SEP-2015-16, #482-484 Pepper Street, as drafted.
SECOND: **Lindstrom**
DISCUSSION: Chairman O'Hara summarized the two meetings held for Public Hearing for this Application, the Applicant's confirmation of the correctness of the first approval, and the public participation. Planner Agresta added that the approval includes a use-specific parking standard.
VOTE: **4-0-0 – Approved**
Ayes O'Hara, Martin, Townson, Lindstrom
Nays None
Abstain None

OTHER BUSINESS:

11. REGULATIONS REVIEW / AMENDMENT WORKSESSION – None

12. CORRESPONDENCE / OTHER RECEIVED

Donelle Toner, Grandma Josie's – Signage inquiry

Chairman O'Hara asked if Zoning Enforcement Officer Chapman had been informed of the letter, and that the letter should be referred to him. Chairman O'Hara discussed the contents of the letter with Planner Agresta and the Commission.

13. COMMISSION REPORTS

Chairman's Report: None

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Lindstrom had concerns for applicants and attendees of the Commission meeting who had to wait until the end of the meeting to hear the results of deliberations they were interested in. She asked if there was any the meeting agenda could be changed to address quicker items towards the beginning of Commission Meetings. Chairman O'Hara said that he could set the Meeting Agenda up as he saw fit. He referred to the Subcommittee Meeting where the Regulations would allow for things, such as generators, to be permitted administratively. He also provided other examples where an Administrative Permit could be appropriately used.

Secretary Martin referred to the Commission's meeting on September 3rd, 2015 when the Commission requested her to write a letter to First Selectman Vavrek requesting speadsheet information regarding issues that have been handled by Town Counsel Fracassini, and the contents of the outstanding lists for Zoning Enforcement Officer Chapman. The Commission, Planner Agresta, and Town Engineer Schatzlein discussed previous issues and concerns that were related to the issuance of the aforementioned correspondence.

Land Use Staff Reports: None

14. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

With no objections, Chairman O'Hara adjourned the meeting at 10:39 p.m.