

BIG Y & O'CONNELL RETAIL SUMMARY Feb 14, 2012

PROPOSED CONDITIONS FOR THE SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PLANNING BOARD

In accordance with Ordinance 10.1.7, it is respectfully requested that the Planning Board give consideration to these recommendations and include them as conditions to any site plan approval for this project as appropriate.

- 1) ENTRANCE AND EXIT ON TO LOWER WESTFIELD ROAD: IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WOULD BE THE MAIN ENTRANCE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROJECT

DESIGN DRIVEWAY AND SET UP LIGHT TO ENCOURAGE ENTRANCE AND EXIT FROM THIS DRIVEWAY RATHER THAN HOMESTEAD AVE (RESIDENTIAL SIDE)

SHOULD THE DOT APPROVAL REQUIRE SIGNIFICANT REVISION TO THE SITE PLAN, A PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD

- 2) THE PROPOSED DRIVEWAY & TRAFFIC LIGHT ON HOMESTEAD AVE. ACROSS FROM SEIDEL'S FARM WILL CAUSE EXCESSIVE LIGHT FROM TRUCKS AND CARS TO SHINE INTO THEIR HOME AS DRIVEWAY IS DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET FROM THEIR HOME.

RECOMMENDED RELIEF IS TO MOVE THE DRIVEWAY FURTHER SOUTH OR NORTH (ACROSS FROM THE DRIVEWAY TO THE HOME) SO THAT THE LIGHTS FROM TRUCKS AND CARS WILL NOT SHINE INTO THE HOME ACROSS THE STREET OR BUILD A RETAINING WALL ON SLOPE TO BLOCK TRUCK AND CAR LIGHTS ALSO A "DO NOT BLOCK THE DRIVEWAY BOX" APPROVAL MAY NEED TO BE OBTAINED TO ALLOW VEHICLES TO EXIT DRIVEWAY OF THE HOME DEPENDING ON THE LOCATION OF THE DRIVEWAY

- 3) LOCATION AND SIGNAGE OF RETAIL PORTION OF PROJECT IS NOT IN HARMONY WITH FARM/RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF NEIGHBOR HOOD AS IT IS TOO CLOSE TO THE ROAD, TOO LARGE AND SHOWS SIGNAGE ON HOMESTEAD AVE

LOCATE MORE OF THE RETAIL WITH THE BIG Y STORE (AT LEAST 10,000 SQ FT) REDUCE THE RETAIL FOOTPRINT ON HOMESTEAD TO 40,000 FROM 50,000. NO SIGNAGE ON BACK OF BUILDINGS ON HOMESTEAD (THE CHARACTER OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS NOT SIMILAR TO BARNES AND NOBLE PROJECT)

- 4) IMPROVED BUFFER PLAN NEEDED TO SHIELD RESIDENTIAL FROM COMMERCIAL

PLANT 6FT ARBOR VITAE WHERE SLOPE IS SMALL-REPLACE JUNIPERS WITH ARBOR VITAE

5) ROOFTOP MECHANICAL UNITS

PROVIDE SHIELDING TO REDUCE NOISE AND IMPROVE APPEARANCE OF ALL ROOFTOP MECHANICAL UNITS

6) FLOODING ISSUE ON HOMESTEAD AVE WITH ADDITION OF LIGHT. THE LIGHT WILL REQUIRE CARS TO STOP IN DEEP WATER ON HOMESTEAD AVE. CARS CAN NOW DRIVE AROUND THE AREA.

THE DEVELOPER CAN MITIGATE BY PAYING TO HAVE A CATCH BASIN INSTALLED OR CARS WILL BE STOPPED IN DEEP PUDDLES DURING RAIN STORMS

7) NOISE FROM TRUCK DELIVERIES ETC: TRUCKS WILL IDLE FOR NO MORE THAN 5 MINUTES AT HOMESTEAD AVE.

DELIVERIES WILL TAKE PLACE BETWEEN 7AM & 8PM

** REMINDER: NO TRUCKS ON HOMESTEAD AVE FROM 8PM TO 6AM

8) DUMPSTERS:

NO DUMPSTERS ON THE HOMESTEAD AVE SIDE OF THE PROJECT UNLESS INSET INTO RETAINING WALL IF DUMPSTERS ARE VISIBLE, THEN WILL BE SHIELDED WITH MATERIALS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE FARM/RESIDENTIAL AREA.

PICK UP AND CLEANING OF DUMPSTERS WILL BE WITHIN ORDINANCES AND NO EARLIER THAN 8AM OR LATER THAN 7PM

9) DESIGN OF REAR OF RETAIL (HOMESTEAD) PORTION SHALL BE IN HARMONY WITH THE RESIDENTIAL/FARM CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD (SUCH AS SOUTH HADLEY/SHUTTERS ETC)

10) SNOW:

NO DUMPING OF SNOW FROM OTHER SITES ON THIS PROJECT SITE

SIGNAGE: TALL OR LARGE SIGNS ARE NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF HOMESTAD ROAD. PLEASE LOCATE SIGNAGE ON LOWER WESTFIELD ROAD AS IT IS THE COMMERCIAL ROAD.

SOME QUESTIONS REMAINING:

HOW TALL WILL THE BIG Y BUILDING BE?

WHAT MATERIALS WILL BE USED IN THE RETAIL BUILDINGS ON HOMESTEAD?

WHAT MATERIALS WILL BE USED TO BUILD THE BIG Y?

PLEASE BE SURE BUILDING MATERIALS ARE IN HARMONY WITH THE FARM/RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THIS IS NOT AN AREA SIMILAR TO THE BARNES AND NOBLE PROJECT BUT AN AREA LOCATED NEXT TO A RESIDENTIAL/FARM AREA.

April 2011

- 1) Francesca Maltese from O'Connell Development Group joined the Ward 5 Citizens Forum Meeting to give an update on the Atlas Copco site. She let the group know that they are seeking a zone change for retail at the site as they did a few years ago. In contrast to the first proposal, where the anchor tenant could not be identified, Francesca was pleased to announce that her anchor tenant was in attendance tonight. Francesca then introduced Frank Horacek, Vice President Real Estate & Development for Big Y, their anchor store for the project. Mr. Horacek gave a brief history of the D'Amour family, that they were originally Holyoker's and attended school here and have 60 stores in MA and CT. They have a long history as a local business and a good neighbor where they do business. Mr. Horacek described the project as a store geared to the neighborhood, less than 50,000 sq. feet (as a reference, the Wilbraham store is 63,000) that would employ 150-175 people with 25% full time. They will be investing approximately 12M in the site, would plan to begin construction in 2012 and open in late 2012 or early 2013. A question was raised as to how large the entire project would be. Francesca noted that the current building is 140,000 sq. feet. The new project while not exactly known at this time is estimated to be up to 100,000 sq. ft. Linda thanked Francesca Maltese and Frank Horacek for being forthcoming with their proposal and thanked them for attending the Ward 5 meeting.
- 2) Following a public hearing where more residents favored the project than opposed it, the City Council voted unanimously to approve the requested zone change for the project on June 7, 2011.
- 3) In November 2011, approximately 18 residents attended a Ward 5 meeting at Mrs. Mitchell's Restaurant for an update held by Andrew Crystal and Frank Horacek, Vice President Real Estate & Development for Big Y.

Andrew reviewed the proposed plan and layout of approximately 100,000 sq. ft. of proposed development. Frank addressed the market study that was done to determine the size of the Big Y. In response to a question he clarified that the store will have a few tables and serve food. Andrew explained that they have positioned the Big Y with the back of the store to the wetlands to diminish noise from the deliveries and the view of the back of the store. He also said there will be a retaining wall on the residential side with plantings done after the road is widened. The land for the additional road lane will come from the development site, not the residents.

The remaining stores (about 50,000 sq. ft.) on the design have the back of the store visible to the neighbors and there was much discussion about the placement and if it could be offset. Andrew did state that there would be a buffer of plantings, and that the building would be visible but not outside mechanical works or dumpsters etc. At the end of the meeting he agreed to re evaluate the design to see if there could be an adjustment made.

There was much discussion about the traffic, the flow with the addition of a free right turn lane and the likelihood of a traffic light at Homestead at the back driveway exit from the old Atlas Copco site, and the anticipated results that might occur. It was noted that the lights will need to be synchronized or there will be more backups. The group was informed that there will be a public meeting. It is expected to occur on Tuesday, December 13th. It was requested that the meeting can be held at McMahan School

and that the traffic engineer be present along with the developers so that questions can be answered at the meeting. Linda said she would check with Kathy Anderson to see if that is possible.

The other major issue was concerns about the effect on local businesses in the immediate area with the Big Y offering eat in food and the possibility of other food service businesses going into the development. Linda asked if the O'Connell Group and Big Y, if faced with a choice of more than one possible business would please consider the impact on the businesses in the immediate neighborhood, the two plazas here at Homestead and 202, and if possible, not duplicate those already in existence.

A question was raised about an old water well that is on the property. The concern is that the pipe could be broken during construction and then the aquifer could get contaminated. Andrew stated there is no plan to use it and he would be sure the pipe is capped and that it would be checked to ensure that no problem develops.

4. January 2012

Big Y: A public hearing took place in December, first at the City Hall Council Chambers and then at the McMahon School in January.

I held a citizens forum on January 23rd to hear concerns and inform residents about the hearing the next evening.

There was a great deal of discussion from those present about the remaining stores and the design with the back of the store visible to the neighbors and there was much discussion about the placement and if it could be offset. It was noted that there had been no revisions from the first plan.

There was much discussion about the traffic, the flow with the addition of a free right turn lane and the likelihood of a traffic light at Homestead at the back driveway exit from the old Atlas Copco site, and the anticipated results that might occur. It is feared that there will be more backups and great difficulty getting out of side streets on to Homestead.

Great objections were also expressed about a fast food drive through restaurant on the site. The general sense of the group was that this was not in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. It was noted that no drive through can go in without special approval by the City Council.

I followed up with O'Connell's on January 24th, at the hearing where approximately 100 people attended, to see if any modifications can be made.

The hearing was continued until February 7th at the City Hall Annex 4th Floor at 6PM. I attended until shortly before 7PM and left to attend the City Council meeting at 7PM.

The hearing was continued to February 14th at the City Hall Annex 4th Floor at 6PM.