



# PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

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To: Planning Commission Members  
From: Liz Fields, AICP, Planner  
Meeting Date: July 9, 2025

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## PC 25-13

## Major Site Plan – Lee’s Famous Recipe Chicken

Property Information: Location: Parcel #0426426034 (0 Commerce Center Drive)  
Zoning: C-1 “General Commercial Districts”  
Proposed Use: Quick Service Restaurant  
Current Use: Undeveloped  
Property Size: 1.634 Acres  
Proposed Building Size: 2,389 sq. ft.  
Proposed # of Parking Spaces: 20 spaces

**Project Overview:** The applicant, Alliance Engineering LLC c/o Whitney Locker, is requesting approval of a major site plan for the construction of a quick service restaurant on a vacant property on Commerce Center Drive. The proposed use will include a new 2,389 sq. ft. Lee’s Famous Recipe Chicken.

**Comments:** Site Plan: The proposed development includes the quick service restaurant located in the middle of the vacant lot with parking lining the north and southern boundaries of the parking lot. In total, 20 parking spaces, two of which are accessible, are being provided. Access to the restaurant will be provided via the existing stub located to the north of the Anderson Family Life Celebration Center. Due to site constraints, a detention basin is proposed along Commerce Center Drive.

### Landscape Plan:

**Overall:** The landscape plan proposes 43 plantings, which include deciduous trees, evergreen trees, and deciduous shrubs. The plantings are proposed to be located predominantly along the perimeter of the parking lot, as well as the northern boundary of the site.

**Perimeter Lot Landscaping:** Based on Table 1111.06-2, the appropriate buffer yard classification for this property would be “A” which requires a buffer yard of 15 feet as well as two deciduous trees and two evergreen trees per every 100 linear feet of buffer yard.

The side yard buffer area facing the Anderson Family Life Celebration Center is 331.42 feet according to the Warren County Auditor which would require a total of 7 deciduous trees and 7 evergreen trees. According to the landscaping plan, 5 evergreen trees and 4 deciduous trees are provided.

The side yard buffer area to the north of the site is 340.56 feet according to the Warren County Auditor which would also require a total of 7 deciduous trees and 7 evergreen trees. According to the landscaping plan, 4 evergreen trees and 4 deciduous trees are provided.

The rear yard buffer area facing the Walmart property is adequately screened as the property contains a row of evergreen trees which would exceed the buffering requirement and may be counted towards the applicant’s perimeter lot landscaping pursuant to Section 1111.06(g)(2)(C).

As the side yards do not meet the buffering requirements of Table 1111.06-3, Staff recommends as a condition of approval that the applicant update the submitted landscaping plan with the required trees for Staff approval.

**Screening of Trash Receptacles:** The applicant is proposing to fully enclose the proposed dumpster located at the south-west corner of the parking lot with a six-foot wooden privacy fence which meets the requirements of Section 1111.06(i).

**Lot Interior Landscaping:** Section 1111.06(k)(1) requires three deciduous trees for each 100 feet of building perimeter. Based on the submitted landscaping plan, only one tree is provided along the north-western boundary of the parking lot. The applicant has cited that the building perimeter is approximately 230 feet which would require nine total deciduous trees. As the lot interior landscaping requirement is not met, Staff recommends as a condition of approval that the applicant update the submitted landscaping plan with the required trees under Section 1111.06(k)(1) for Staff approval.

**Building Foundation Plantings:** In lieu of the building foundation planting requirement in Section 1111.06(k)(2), the applicant is proposing to place the requisite shrubs along the perimeter of the parking area in the form of 23 shrubs which is permitted in situations where site design considerations render planting within five feet of the building perimeter not feasible.

Parking:

**Parking Spaces:** a total of 20 parking spaces are proposed for the development which meets the requirement of Table 1111.07-5.

**Stacking Spaces:** A total of 7 stacking spaces are required for a “food and beverage use with a drive-thru or pick-up window” per Table 1111.07-6. While it appears that stacking spaces are provided, the applicant has not specified the total number. As such, staff recommends as a condition of approval that the applicant submit an updated site plan demonstrating compliance with Table 1111.07-6.

Building Elevation and Design:

**Overall:** The proposed building is a total of 2,389 square feet with a maximum height of 19 feet and 8 inches.

**Tripartite Configuration:** The proposed building meets the tripartite configuration requirement of Section 1115.08(h)(3)(A) as the building elevations indicate that face brick will be used as the base or foundation, EIFS and cedar texture board for the middle walls, and standing seam metal roofing for the top portion.

**Building Articulation:** Section 1115.08(h)(3)(B) requires that all building elevations be articulated in a manner to avoid an uninterrupted appearance through the use of windows, doors, offsets, or change in materials. Based on the submitted elevations, this requirement is met.

**Building Materials:** The exterior of the building is proposed to be comprised of a mix of face brick, cedar texture lap smart siding and cedar texture board and batten siding, EIFS, large windows, and a standing seam metal roof. All of the materials listed are permitted under Section 1115.08(h)(3)(C) except for exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS) which are only permitted above the pedestrian level. As such, Staff recommends as a condition of approval that the applicant remove the EIFS and replace it with a permitted material or request a variance to be approved by the BZA.

Lighting: The applicant is proposing four light poles along the border of the parking lot. Each pole is 23 feet in height and contains a full cut-off lighting fixture. The submitted photometric plan indicates that the maximum illumination level at the property line is consistent with the requirements of Table 1111.07-4.

Signs: The applicant has included a sign package that proposes a monument sign, several wall signs, menu board sign, reader board, and window sign. These signs shall not be approved as part of this Major Site Plan and will require the submittal and review of a Sign Permit at a later date.

### Major Site Plan Standards for Approval

Major Site Plans shall only be approved if Planning Commission finds that all of the following standards are met:

- 1) That it fully complies with all applicable requirements of this UDO;  
**The proposed major site plan largely conforms with the requirements of the UDO. Conditions of approval and modifications are recommended for those aspects of the development which do not meet the standards of the UDO.**
- 2) That it adequately protects other property or residential uses located on the same property from the potential effects of a non-residential use;  
**The development adequately protects other property from the potential effects of a non-residential use.**
- 3) That it is not detrimental to the use and character of the surrounding properties;  
**The proposed development is not detrimental to the use and character of the surrounding properties.**
- 4) That it provides safe conditions for pedestrians or motorists and prevents the dangerous arrangement of pedestrian and vehicular ways;  
and  
**The proposed development provides safe conditions and prevents the dangerous arrangement of pedestrian and vehicular ways.**
- 5) That it provides safe ingress and egress for emergency vehicles.  
**The proposed development provides safe ingress and egress for emergency vehicles.**

#### **Considerations:**

Should the Planning Commission approve the proposed Major Site Plan, staff recommends the following conditions be considered:

- 1) The applicant submit an updated landscaping plan for staff approval in conformance with Section 1111.06.
  - 2) The applicant submit an updated site plan demonstrating compliance with Table 1111.07-6.
  - 3) The applicant meet the building material requirements of Section 1115.08(h)(3)(C) or request a variance from the BZA.
  - 4) The applicant shall comply with the comments from the City of Franklin Engineer.
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