



# PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

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To: Planning Commission Members  
From: Liz Fields, AICP, Planner  
Meeting Date: March 8, 2023

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## PC 23-02 Conditional Use – Sheetz – Gas Station

Property Information: Location: Parcel #08362000560 (corner of Watkins Glen Dr. & Rt. 123)  
Zoning: C-1  
Property Size: 2.49 acres  
Proposed Building Size: 61,039 sq. ft.  
Proposed # of Parking Spaces: 56 spaces

Project Overview: Silken Gold Real Estate Development is requesting approval of a conditional use for a new Sheetz gas station to be located on Rt. 123 between Watkins Glen Drive and Spring Drive. Gas stations are conditionally permitted uses in the C-1 zoning district.

Comments: Conditional Use General Standards for Approval:

1. The proposed use is a Conditional use in the zoning district for which it is proposed. **Gasoline service stations are an identified conditional use in the C-1 zoning district.**
2. The proposed Conditional Use will be in accordance with the general objectives, or with any specific objective, of the City's Comprehensive Development Plan or this UDO. **Yes.**
3. The proposed Conditional Use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and that such use will not change the essential character of the neighborhood. **The proposed use will elevate and improve the visual appearance of this area of the City due to the high quality building materials and**

project landscaping. The character of the neighborhood should not change as there is an existing gas station next to this parcel and across the street.

4. The proposed Conditional Use will not be hazardous or unreasonably disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses. **It is not expected that this use will be hazardous or unreasonably disturbing to adjacent residential uses.**
5. The proposed Conditional Use will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services such as streets, police and fire protection, drainage, water and sewer, or the persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the proposed use shall be able to adequately provide any such services. **Yes.**
6. The proposed Conditional Use will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community. **No, subject to the applicant constructing the necessary public improvements that are identified in the Traffic Impact Study.**
7. The proposed Conditional Use will not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment and conditions or operations that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors. **Yes.**
8. The proposed Conditional Use will have vehicular approaches to the property that are designed so as not to interfere with traffic on surrounding public thoroughfares. **Yes, subject to the approaches being constructed as recommended in the Traffic Impact Study and per the City of Franklin's standards.**
9. The proposed Conditional Use will not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of a natural, scenic, or historic features of major importance. **The proposed lot is a vacant grass lot. The existing landscaping along Spring Drive will be preserved as much as possible, as identified on the Landscape Plan.**

Specific Standards for Gasoline Service Stations: The proposed use meets the use-specific conditional use standards with the following comment:

1. If there are holes in the existing landscape buffer along Spring Dr., existing or due to construction, new evergreen plants shall be installed in order to maintain a 6 ft. tall opaque buffer.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed conditional use permit for a gas station use in the C-1 zoning district per the following condition:

1. Plant new evergreen landscaping in any holes in the existing landscaping buffer along Spring Dr. to ensure a continuous 6 ft. tall opaque buffer.

## PC 23-03

## Conditional Use – Sheetz – Drive-Through

**Property Information:** Location: Parcel #08362000560 (corner of Watkins Glen Dr. & Rt. 123)

Zoning: C-1

Property Size: 2.49 acres

Proposed Building Size: 61,039 sq. ft.

Proposed # of Parking Spaces: 56 spaces

**Project Overview:** Silken Gold Real Estate Development is requesting approval of a conditional use for a drive-through at the proposed Sheetz gas station to be located on Rt. 123 between Watkins Glen Drive and Spring Drive. Drive-throughs are conditionally permitted uses in the C-1 zoning district.

**Comments:** Conditional Use General Standards for Approval:

1. The proposed use is a Conditional use in the zoning district for which it is proposed. **Yes.**
2. The proposed Conditional Use will be in accordance with the general objectives, or with any specific objective, of the City's Comprehensive Development Plan or this UDO. **Yes.**
3. The proposed Conditional Use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and that such use will not change the essential character of the neighborhood. **Yes. The drive-through is a touch-pad ordering system, so the noise produced by the drive-through will be very minimal.**
4. The proposed Conditional Use will not be hazardous or unreasonably disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses. **It is not expected that this use will be hazardous or unreasonably disturbing to adjacent residential uses.**
5. The proposed Conditional Use will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services such as streets, police and fire protection, drainage, water and sewer, or the persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the proposed use shall be able to adequately provide any such services. **Yes.**
6. The proposed Conditional Use will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community. **No, subject to the applicant constructing the necessary public improvements that are identified in the Traffic Impact Study.**
7. The proposed Conditional Use will not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment and conditions or operations that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors. **Yes.**

8. The proposed Conditional Use will have vehicular approaches to the property that are designed so as not to interfere with traffic on surrounding public thoroughfares. **Yes, subject to the approaches being constructed as recommended in the Traffic Impact Study and per the City of Franklin’s standards.**
9. The proposed Conditional Use will not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of a natural, scenic, or historic features of major importance. **The proposed lot is a vacant grass lot. The existing landscaping along Spring Drive will be preserved as much as possible, as identified on the Landscape Plan.**

Specific Standards for Drive-Throughs: The proposed use meets the use-specific conditional use standards with the following comments:

1. It appears that the drive-through lane will be at least 100 feet from the residential that exists on the other side of Spring Drive. This should be confirmed by the applicant.
2. A lighting plan was not provided. Cut-off lighting fixtures shall be used in parking areas to minimize impact to neighboring residentially zoned properties.
3. Two access drives are permitted per facility. The proposed use includes three access points. These access points have been evaluated in the Traffic Impact Study (TIS). Staff supports the proposed plan subject to the implementation of the recommendations of the TIS.
4. The hours of operation are proposed to be 24 hours. The Planning Commission may restrict the hours of operation if desired.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of the proposed conditional use application for a drive-through use in the C-1 zoning district per the following conditions:

1. Confirm the distance between the drive-through lane and the closest residential property line.

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## PC 23-04

## Major Site Plan – Sheetz – New 61,039 sq. ft. Building

**Property Information:** Location: Parcel #08362000560 (corner of Watkins Glen Dr. & Rt. 123)  
Zoning: C-1  
Property Size: 2.49 acres  
Proposed Building Size: 61,039 sq. ft.  
Proposed # of Parking Spaces: 56 spaces

**Project Overview:** Silken Gold Real Estate Development is requesting approval of a major site plan for a new Sheetz gas station to be located on Rt. 123 between Watkins Glen Drive and Spring Drive. The proposed use will include a new 61,039 sq. ft. building for a convenience store and restaurant, 6 new double-sided gas pumps, a drive-through for the restaurant, 56 parking spaces, and access from Rt. 123 and Watkins Glen Dr.

**Comments:**

Site Plan: The proposed development includes the gas pumps at the front of the property, facing Rt. 123 with the building located behind them. The drive-through is located on the western side of the property, near Spring Drive. A dumpster enclosure is proposed in the rear corner of the site, adjacent to the drive-through lane. No information was provided regarding the height and materials of the dumpster enclosure. The exterior materials should be masonry and complementary with the primary building.

Landscape Plan: The proposed landscape plan includes perimeter buffering landscaping along Rt. 123 and along the rear property line. The interior parking lot landscaping is generally located on the exterior edges of the parking lot. The applicant calculated the required interior parking lot landscaping based on the property size, but it should be calculated based on the square footage of the parking and circulation area. Per Section 1111.06(j)(2), 10% of the interior parking lot shall consist of landscaping for lots larger than 30,000 square feet.

Parking: 56 parking space are proposed, and 50 parking spaces are required. The proposal meets the required number of parking spaces.

Building Elevations: The proposed building is 26 ft. in height and the exterior is to be comprised of a mix of brick and stone. The front entrance includes an accentuated building entrance with large storefront windows and a red metal pitched roof. All facades of the building include the same materials and an appropriate amount of articulation. The proposed elevations conform with the exterior façade design standards in Section 1115.08(h). The gas canopy includes a red roof with pillars that have a 6 ft. tall stone foundation and a brown column wrap for the area above the stone. The gas canopy complements the proposed building in terms of color and material.

Floor Plan: The interior of the building will include the convenience store and restaurant area.

Lighting: The applicant has submitted a lighting plan for the development which conforms to the requirements of the UDO.

Signs: The applicant has submitted a master sign plan for the development. Signs are proposed throughout the site including a building wall sign on the left side of the building, a monument sign near the corner of Watkins Glen Dr. and Rt. 123, fuel type and price signs at the gas pumps, a sign on the front of the gas canopy facing towards Rt. 123, and a menu board and order point for the drive thru. Due to the nature of the uses proposed on this site, staff supports the proposed sign plan. Any temporary signs proposed on site

(including the portable sign, banners, etc.) shall be in conformance with Section 1111.08(h).

Public Improvements: A Traffic Impact Study has been completed to evaluate the necessary public improvements that will be required for this use.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of the Major Site Plan per the following conditions:

1. Resubmit the landscape plan in conformance with Section 1111.06(j)(2) to the City Planner for review and approval.
  2. Provide information regarding the dumpster enclosure's height and exterior building materials for review and approval by city staff.
  3. Incorporate comments from the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) and incorporate any improvements to the public roadways deemed necessary by the TIS, including traffic signals and/or turn lanes to the satisfaction of city staff. New curb and gutter along SR 123 shall be installed with back of curb located at 32.5 feet from the centerline of SR 123 as per the TIS.
  4. The proposed stormwater detention system, inclusive of all storm sewer, basins, and other devices, shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the standards and regulations of the City of Franklin. A signed Stormwater Management/BMP Facilities Maintenance Agreement must be submitted to the City for approval. (City will supply agreement)
  5. An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan shall be submitted and approved by the Warren County Soil & Water Department prior to earth moving activities.
  6. Work with City Engineer on locations of proposed service laterals.
  7. The proposed directional signs will need to meet the zoning regulations or a variance will need to be requested for the signs as proposed.
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