



Town of Haymarket
15000 Washington Street, #100
Haymarket, VA 20169
703-753-2600

STAFF REPORT

PC Meeting Date: September 10, 2024
Agenda Title: Special Use Permit Application #2024-001, Chick Fil A Drive Through
Zoning District: B-2 Business Commercial
Requested Action: Recommendation of Denial of Special Use Permit #2024-001
Staff Lead: Thomas Britt, Town Planner



The applicant is requesting to alter the drive through lanes currently serving the Chick Fil A site to allow for more efficient delivery of orders via the drive through area of the business.

The property is part of the Quarles property parcel, located on the western end of the corporate limits of Haymarket, near the intersection of Washington Street and James Madison Highway. The address for this site is 15186 Washington Street.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend denial of the Special Use Permit SUP#2024-001, Chick Fil A Drive Through.

BACKGROUND

Request: The applicant has requested to extend the second drive through lane (right most lane) out to the right, onto the current bank property and along the current row of landscaping. The drive through lane will then reconvene with the existing lane (left lane) at the exit/pedestrian crossing. This expansion is proposed to function as a bypass to the pickup window and an additional order pickup point.

Site Location: 15186 Washington Street, near the northeast corner of the intersection of Washington Street and James Madison Highway.

Zoning: This site is zoned B-2, Business Commercial.

Surrounding Land Uses: The site is surrounded by B-2 zoned properties, with I-1 Light Industrial zoning to the south of the site across Washington Street. To the northeast of the site is a townhouse neighborhood that was rezoned from B-2 to R-2 in 2018.

Background and Context: The Chick Fil A has operated a drive through service area and pickup location that was initially approved by Special Use Permit in December 2015. The drive-through section currently has two lanes for staff to take orders, then merges into one lane for order pickup after the menu boards. The applicant has requested to extend the second drive through lane (right most lane) out to the right, onto the current bank property and along the current row of landscaping. The drive through lane will then merge back with the existing lane (left lane) at the exit/pedestrian crossing. This expansion is proposed to function as a bypass to the pickup window and an additional order pickup point.

The expansion of the drive lane will reduce the travel lanes on the bank property to a single lane, one direction. The expansion will also narrow the entry point into the parking lot of the Haymarket Lifetime Smiles dentist office that is currently under construction at 15234 Washington Street. As part of general site improvements associated with the drive through expansion, the applicant is proposing to alter the back entry/exit point from Chick Fil A onto Crossroads Village Boulevard to a one-way exit onto Crossroads Village Boulevard with the curbed island expanded into the entry/exit point to reduce the right of way. With the proposed expansion of the drive through lane the applicant will remove the existing landscaping and replace the removed landscaping buffer on the islands at the end of the drive through lanes and the expanded curb on the property line between Chick Fil A and Crossroads Village Boulevard. See excerpt below for the Zoning Ordinance reference for the landscaping requirements in the parking lot.

Zoning Ordinance Reference Section 58-19.13 Parking Lot Landscaping (d)

(d) Parking lots adjacent to other parking lots.

(1) Landscape area requirements. A continuous landscape strip at least five feet in width shall be located between the property owner's parking lot and the property line.

(2) Number of trees and shrubs. There will be two trees and six shrubs for every 30 linear feet of landscape parking strip.

(3) Species of vegetation. All trees and shrubs planted to meet the requirements of this section shall be identified in sections 58-19.12.

Additional Analysis for Matters to be Considered in Special Use Permit Application Review follows.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Matters to be Considered in Application Review (per Section 58-4.28 of the Zoning Ordinance)

- (1) The nature of the proposed use, including factors such as traffic, noise, light, hours of operation, and number of employees involved.

As previously stated, the expansion of the drive through is intended to expedite mobile order pickup for existing customers and provide a more efficient service through the drive through lanes. The applicant has stated that in the short term the expanded lane will function as a bypass, but in the long term it will serve as a pick-up point for mobile orders, termed “mobile-through” by the applicant.

The applicant has provided a traffic impact study which shows the resulting net increase of traffic flow to be zero, with the same number of trips generated with the new design as before. The desire for more efficient pickup is shown via the proposed lane expansion, but there is no accounting for the change in traffic volume despite the proposal and the traffic study.

The applicant has stated that the hours of operation and the number of employees will not change with the expansion of the drive through.

In the last Planning Commission meeting, Town Staff asked the applicant to provide potential wayfinding options on Chick Fil A’s site and on adjacent sites in the hopes that pedestrians and drivers using the facilities will be less confused about the altered traffic patterns. The applicant has provided an additional exhibit proposing additional wayfinding options on site to direct pedestrian and car traffic. The proposed options include directional signage at the entry

and exit points to Haymarket Lifetime Smiles and Virginia National Bank and the exit point onto Crossroads Village Boulevard, wayfinding drive through signage indicators at the Washington Street entrance into Chick Fil A, and directional signage, pedestrian crossing indicators, and a do not enter sign at the exit point of the drive through space. These proposed options are thorough in providing more visibility of the proposed new traffic patterns on site.

(2) The character of the existing area, including existing structures and structures under construction, existing public facilities, and public facilities under construction, and private, commercial and/or service facilities available within the existing area.

The applicant is proposing to remove the landscaping buffer between the drive through lane and the Virginia National Bank parking lot to accommodate the expansion. The applicant has proposed to replace the removed landscaping buffer on the islands at the end of the drive through lanes and the expanded curb on the property line between Chick Fil A and Crossroads Village Boulevard

The applicant discussed with Town Staff that installation of a curbed island in place of the landscaping buffer would reduce the Virginia National Bank parking lot depth from 24ft to 21 ft. Even if the parking arrangement of the VNB lot is switched to angled parking, the front façade of Virginia National Bank would be significantly altered to accommodate for ADA regulations on the angled parking.

To mitigate the effects of this proposed alteration on Virginia National Bank, while also improving the drive through traffic for existing customers, the applicant is proposing to install delineators between the two properties in the place of a hardscape curbed island. These delineators can be vertical, 3"-5" high speed humps, or a combination of the two. While the delineators will act as a passive barrier and allow for flexibility when maneuvering the site, the hardscape buffer will no longer provide protection to the vehicles in the drive through lanes, the employees working the drive through lanes or the vehicle on the bank site utilizing the parking lot. The lack of permanent buffer causes concern for increased accidents within the drive through vicinity.

The removal of the hardscape and expansion of the drive through lane will require the Virginia National Bank parking lot traffic pattern to be rerouted to a one-way counterclockwise traffic flow to accommodate for Chick Fil A's bypass lane. While the bank has fewer trips per day on site there is concern for the long-term impacts to the site and the customer accessibility. The parking area will remain the same for the bank lot. However, the area to back up will be reduced from 24 feet to 21 feet depending on the type of delineator/curb installed, requiring drivers to utilize multi-point turns to avoid backing into the delineators and thus the vehicles in

the drive through lanes. The vehicle maneuvers for the bank parking lot are depicted on the third page of the site plan. Town Staff recommend a curb be installed versus delineators to separate the drive through area from Virginia National Bank's Parking.

There is a stormwater drain at the corner of the Chick Fil A parcel and the Lifetime Smiles parcel that will require the appropriate measures to ensure that it is not impacted by the expansion of the drive through. The applicant will be required to update the site plan, detailing the stormwater infrastructure in this area, along with the impacts and any proposed modifications to the system. If there is no direct or indirect impact to the stormwater system, the applicant shall properly state such determination on the site plan.

The Haymarket Lifetime Smiles dentist office's main entry to the site will be significantly narrowed to one travel lane into the parking lot. The applicant failed to depict the entire Haymarket Lifetime Smiles site and parking lot on the site plan, therefore the Staff is unable to fully determine the impacts on the site. The applicant shall fully depict the site on the site plan further showing the travel lanes into and out of the parking lot, the proposed exit area for the site and the full extent of the parking.

Lastly, traffic circulation between Crossroads Village Boulevard and Chick Fil A will be significantly affected by the reduction of the existing entry/exit point into a one-way exit. The reduction of entry points into Chick Fil A will force any and all potential customers of Chick Fil A—which includes nearby residents, users of the future daycare facility and adjacent businesses—and any other users or customers of the multitenant structures along Washington street, to circle around Crossroads Village Boulevard and access the already Chick Fil A drive through via the Washington Street and VNB entrance to the facility. The proposed alteration in the traffic pattern would worsen the existing traffic issues at this entrance point onto the property.

(3) The area's designation on the town's comprehensive plan, and relevant text provisions of the plan.

Town Comprehensive Plan. 1.2.9 Community Design Policy

Industrial/Retail, West of Fayette Street

This section of town has experienced the most rapid growth over the last 10 years. Primarily a light industrial zone, retail shops and services have recently been added to create an almost even split between the two. Zoning regulations and architectural design have created a sense of age to the town as one travels from Route 15 to the center of town. As development has progressed, styles of new buildings show a regression of architectural styles from modern

(Sheetz), to neo-colonial (Leaberry and Quarles shopping centers), to late-1800s urban (second Bloom building) and finally to colonial (Giuseppe's Restaurant and Remax Realtors). One historic structure has been saved, Winterham, albeit in the midst of a new shopping and professional complex. This regression is in concert with the overall goal of maintaining the feel of the town center as the oldest portion of Haymarket. Only one property of this part of town is undeveloped, the land between Quarles and Giuseppe's Restaurant. The overall design of a retail or professional complex on this site must flow into this age progression. Accordingly, the style and size of structures here should fit between mid-1800 and early 1900. Locations in this part of town should be accessible by foot traffic. Parking will generally be available on site.

The proposed expansion of the drive-through lane will cause an increase in vehicle traffic, which will also promote further reliance on vehicle trips to this site and in this retail area. The heightened intensity of use of the land use as vehicle traffic increases will also discourage pedestrian movement on this site and when accessing other sites. Approval of this design may set a precedent for future developments to also include or apply for more high volume, vehicle-centered modes of pickup or use, which would discourage pedestrian walkability and decrease foot traffic in this area of Town.

(4) The minimum off-street parking area required, and the amount of space needed for the loading and unloading of trucks.

Does not apply, as no cars are parked in this section of Chick Fil A and no unloading of trucks takes place either. Loading and unloading of trucks may be affected at the proposed one way exit point at the rear of Chick Fil A and the adjacent VNB and Haymarket Lifetime Smiles lots due to this alteration.

(5) Whether the public health, safety and welfare will be preserved, and any reasonable conditions necessary for such preservation.

The increases in vehicle traffic caused by the alteration of the drive through space will increase the chances of vehicle accidents involving pedestrians using the proposed crosswalk to access adjacent properties. The lack of a solid barrier between the drive through-space and VNB and Haymarket Lifetime Smiles parking lot increases the risk of vehicles driving into or out of the space, damaging property and vehicles, and injuring pedestrians or employees of Chick Fil A, VNB, and Haymarket Lifetime Smiles.

(6) Any other factors relating to the purposes of zoning that the planning commission and/or Haymarket Town Council, in its legislative discretion, shall consider as relevant.

As referenced in the above sections, the proposed drive through may have the following negative effects on the site and the surrounding area: increase of traffic, decrease in driver access to the site and to adjacent businesses, inconsistent safety hazards associated with the drive through design, potential detrimental effects to the operations of adjacent businesses, and inconsistency with the standards set for this section of Town in the Haymarket Comprehensive Plan. With these effects considered, Town Staff recommend denial of SUP #2024-001 for the Chick Fil A drive through expansion.

Public Notice and Input

The Town posted notice of public hearing for the SUP application for all residents of the Town in the Prince William Times on June 27th and July 3rd, 2024.

Timing

The Planning Commission has until October 13, 2024, which is 90 days from the first public hearing date, to act on the proposed Special Use Permit (SUP) proposal. A recommendation to approve or deny the requests would meet the 90-day requirement.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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ATTACHMENTS

- A—Special Use Permit Application
- B—Applicant Narrative
- C—Revised Special Use Permit Plan—includes delineator options
- D—Proposed Landscaping Relocation
- E—Submitted Traffic Impact Study
- F—Proposed Signage and Wayfinding Installations on CFA and Adjacent Properties
- G—Written approval from landlord of Quarles Property for traffic rerouting