

Issued January 23, 2024

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**\*\*\*SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES\*\*\***  
**THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2024**  
**ROOM 407, TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT**

**Call to Order/Roll Call:** 4:30 P.M.

**DRAC ATTENDANCE:** Chair, Ray Giolitto; Members: Kimberly Parsons-Whitaker, Elizabeth Pang & Hugh Schweitzer. Alternates: David Hines & Jim Lawler

**ABSENT:** Brian Flemming, Jenna McClure

**Staff:** Todd Dumais, Town Planner; Brian Pudlik, Senior Planner

**REFERRAL FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL:**

1. Application filed on behalf of Chick-fil-A, Inc. ("CFA"), as lessee of property commonly known as 509 New Park Avenue ("CFA Premises"), to modify Special Design District #94 (SDD #94) located at 509 New Park Avenue to accommodate a reconfiguration of the existing drive-thru lane and related site improvements including landscaping and parking.

***T. Dumais – Town Planner – Provided brief introduction of the project by noting that the proposed modifications to the drive-thru are consistent with the relatively newly adopted drive-thru ordinance, despite the original design being built prior to that ordinance’s adoption.***

***A. Souchuns – Project Attorney – Also introduced the project and indicated that the intent of the project is to bring the site operations up to the standard of the current Chick-Fil-A restaurant model.***

***N. Dewhurst – Project Civil Engineer – Noted that the primary objective of the project is to increase the efficiency of the drive-thru by extending a second lane through its full length. The improvements result in a net loss of one parking space, with four being added in areas where there currently no spaces. Minor adjustments are also proposed to traffic circulation within the parking lot to improve safety.***

***L. Pang – DRAC member – Asked whether the parking spaces are required, as their proposed positions are not ideal given site circulation.***

***G. Lee – Civil Engineer – In response to Ms. Pang, noted that the landlord, Aldi, is not comfortable with the loss of any parking spaces, but acquiesced to the loss of one in the proposed plan. Any additional parking space loss would be unacceptable. Regarding the location of the spaces, suggested they could be for employees or for the Chick-Fil-A catering van so conflict with traffic movement is minimized.***

***R. Giolitto – DRAC member – Asked how often the van is there. Mr. Lee indicated it is there several days per week.***

***A. Souchuns – Project Attorney – Noted that changing the traffic pattern to one-way in the area of the added parking spaces will also help to reduce conflicts with vehicle movements.***

***D. Hines – DRAC member – Stated that the parking lot is dysfunctional and the team should look for opportunities to improve traffic circulation, even if parking spaces need to be lost to do it.***

***G. Lee – Civil Engineer – Indicated that the team did explore several options, but ultimately determined that the current plan is the most practical and the only one that is approved by landlord. Also noted that it took almost a year to get the current plan approved by the landlord.***

***R. Giolitto – DRAC member – Asked whether the second lane is an ordering lane or bypass only. Mr. Lee indicated that it would be used for both depending on the time of day and customer demand.***

***N. Dewhurst – Project Civil Engineer – Regarding landscaping, stated that minor changes are proposed to accommodate the drive-thru expansion.***

***D. Hines – DRAC member – Suggested the team review the type of concrete proposed in all areas of the project to ensure it is of equal quality. Mr. Dewhurst agreed.***

***H. Schweitzer – DRAC member – Stated that the team should review the ADA details on the plans. Mr. Dewhurst noted that no ADA improvements are proposed as part of this project, so the details would be eliminated from the plans.***

***H. Schweitzer – DRAC member – Made a motion to recommend approval of the application to the Town Council and stated the proposed project is consistent with the DRAC's Design Criteria.***

***Jim Lawler – DRACA member – Second the motion***

***Vote: 6-0***

2. Application filed on behalf of INSPIRED BY OPPORTUNITY, LLC, lessee of property commonly known as Wendy's Restaurant, to modify Special Design District #29 (SDD #29) located at 331 South Road to demolish the existing restaurant building and create a new 2,680 s.f. restaurant building with drive-through facility. Associated modifications include the reconfiguration of the parking layout and drive aisles and new landscaping, signage, and stormwater and sanitary sewer improvements.

***T. Dumais – Town Planner – Noted that the applicant's team was not available to present the project, but asked that the Committee review the plans and provide any feedback by email, so the applicant***

***team could be made aware of those comments and potentially make changes in advance of the rescheduled date for the formal referral.***

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

1.
  - a. September 7, 2023 – ***Motion; Parsons-Whitaker/Second; Lawler: Vote 5-0***
  - b. September 14, 2023 – ***Motion; Lawler/Second; Schweitzer: Vote 5-0***
  - c. September 28, 2023 – ***Motion; Schweitzer/Second; Lawler: Vote 5-0***
  - d. October 12, 2023– ***Motion; Parsons-Whitaker/Second; Lawler: Vote 5-0***
  - e. November 16, 2023 – ***Motion; Parsons-Whitaker/Second; Schweitzer: Vote 5-0***

**COMMUNICATION**

3.
  - a. None

**TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT:**

4. None

**ADJOURNMENT: 5:26 PM**

Cc: Rick Ledwith, Town Manager  
Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel

Duane Martin, Community Development Director  
Leon Davidoff, Town Clerk