



DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

City Hall – 3rd Floor, Room 309
869 Park Avenue – Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

MINUTES CITY HALL – 3rd FLOOR, COUNCIL CHAMBER 9:30AM – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2024

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jason Pezzullo called the Development Plan Review Committee meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. in the City Council chamber.

The following members were in attendance for the meeting: Jason M. Pezzullo, Justin Mateus, Stephen Mulcahy, David Rodio, Franklin Paulino, and Jim Woyciechowski.

The following Planning Department staff members were in attendance for the meeting: Kenneth R. Kirkland, Asst. Planning Director.

2. Approval of Minutes

(vote taken)

- 1.17.24 DPRC Meeting

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy, and seconded by Mr. Rodio, the Development Plan Review Committee unanimously voted (5-0) to approve the minutes of the 1/17/24 meeting.

3. “Achievement First Illuminar School” Preliminary Plan

(vote taken)

Continued from January 17 Meeting

<i>Location:</i>	85 Garfield Avenue AP 7/2, Lot 91
<i>Zoning District:</i>	C-4 (Highway Business)
<i>Applicant:</i>	Achievement First Rhode Island, Inc.
<i>Owner:</i>	CP Associates
<i>Proposal:</i>	Expansion of the existing Achievement First Illuminar School and to rework certain areas of the parking area.

John Mancini, Esq. on behalf of the applicant, provided context of the site and the application thus far.

Eric Roise, Associate of Kaestle Boos Architects, provided a revised circulation pattern of the site made possible by the Illuminar School's acquisition under lease of the south lot, providing the applicant with expanded space for parking and circulation. Mr. Roise provided an overview of the revised traffic plan for student pick-up and drop-off.

Mr. Mulcahy stated that he did not have any specific questions for the applicant at this time.

Mr. Mancini provided clarification of the timeline of the application and the materials provided. Mr. Mancini stated that the applicant will provide an operation manual with respect to the individuals to be monitoring the pick-up and drop-off sites. Chairman Pezzullo stated that the Committee shared concern about the operation manual not being included in the initial traffic report. Mr. Pezzullo stated that the report would need to be submitted with the overall traffic report, stamped and verified for submittal. Mr. Mulcahy agreed.

Chairman Pezzullo inquired when the report would be made available. Mr. Mancini stated that the report would be made available within the next 30 days. Mr. Kirkland stated that the report would be submitted as part of a final plan submission, following pending preliminary approval by the Committee. Mr. Pezzullo stated that the report would be reviewed internally, by planning staff.

Chairman Pezzullo inquired if other members of the Committee had further comments for the applicant.

Jim Woyciechowski, Fire Department had no comments. Justin Mateus, DPW had no concerns regarding the revised traffic pattern. David Rodio, Building Department had no objections or comments for the applicant. Stephen Mulcahy, Traffic Safety had no further comments. Franklin Paulino, Economic Development had no comments.

Mr. Kirkland itemized the proposed conditions of approval.

Seeing no further discussion, Chairman Pezzullo accepted a motion on the matter.

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy, and seconded by Mr. Mateus, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the Preliminary Plan application subject to the associated conditions.

4. "Brewed Awakenings"

Pre-Application Conference

(no vote taken)

<i>Location:</i>	1234 Oaklawn Avenue AP 15/1, Lot 1015
<i>Zoning District:</i>	C-4 (Highway Business)
<i>Applicant / Owner:</i>	Chaychen, LLC
<i>Proposal:</i>	Construction of a two-story, 3,000 square foot, sixty-one (61) seat restaurant with a drive-thru.

Justin Mateus excused himself from the meeting for another engagement. The DPRC maintained a quorum.

Atty. Robert Murray representing the applicant provided context of the application and associated proposal.

Chairman Pezzullo stated that this application would be considered through unified development. All recommendations and conditions proposed by the Development Plan Review Committee will be considered by the Plan Commission.

Chairman Pezzullo inquired about the location of the speaker box on the building.

David Levesque; owner, CEO, and President of Brewed Awakenings addressed the Committee to respond to Mr. Pezzullo's inquiry.

Mr. Levesque stated that the speaker box would be located approximately 27 ft. from the property line, which would require a variance under City zoning code. Mr. Pezzullo asked Mr. Levesque how he plans to mitigate the issue. Mr. Levesque stated that the applicant's team would construct a new fence where an existing fence stands, if allowed by the abutting property owner. The applicant intends on planting evergreen trees along the fence line to mitigate the sound, designed by a certified landscape architect. Mr. Levesque further stated that the applicant's team would be a concession on the drive-thru hours of operation, to close no later than 6:00pm.

Chairman Pezzullo stated that the applicant would need to provide, at a minimum, an 8-foot solid fence in the rear with landscaping.

Mr. Levesque stated that the site design includes drive-thru technology with an outer lane for pick-up orders to expand efficiency and allow for expanded circulation of traffic.

Mr. Levesque stated that each parking space excluding the rear six (6) are oversized for expanded circulation of traffic and access of emergency services.

Mr. Pezzullo stated that the proposed building should be constructed closer to the street, as opposed to the abutting residential neighborhood. Mr. Levesque stated that the site is constrained by the proposed traffic and circulation pattern and City parking requirements.

Mr. Pezzullo stated that he would like to see an alternative site proposal in which the proposed building is not directly abutting the surrounding residential neighborhood, but is located closer to the street with rear parking. Mr. Levesque argued that the other Brewed Awakenings' locations currently have 30-32 cars stacked in the drive-thru queue, rendering a building location alteration impossible under local and state regulations. Mr. Levesque stated that the cost of altering the plans and obtaining a traffic study of the site would be an exuberant cost.

Mr. Pezzullo stated this application is at the Preliminary Plan stage, in which the DPR provides feedback to the applicant and discusses alternatives.

Mr. Pezzullo inquired if there was two-way traffic on the site. A member of the applicant's team verified that there is not two-way traffic on-site. Mr. Kirkland inquired if the traffic loop would be continued, to which the applicant confirmed.

Mr. Pezzullo asked Mr. Murray if this proposal would be considering for unified development or as a zoning variance. Atty. Murray stated that he is not certain how the proposal should be reviewed, based on the minimal proposed change of use. Mr. Pezzullo stated that this proposal seemingly fits the process of unified development, to be reviewed by the Plan Commission. Mr. Pezzullo suggested the proposal be reviewed under unified development.

Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Rodio, and Mr. Paulino did not have immediate concerns for discussion.

Mr. Woyciechowski inquired about the weight capacity of the bridge. A member of the applicant's team stated that there was not a pending concern with the bridge capacity.

Mr. Murray stated that the applicant's goal is to retain the road network as it exists. Mr. Pezzullo stated that an enhancement or expansion of the roadway would not be necessary unless required by DOT. A discussion about the process of unified development would be had offline between Planning Staff and the applicant.

No members of the public were present to comment on the application.

As this was a Pre-Application discussion, no vote was taken.

6. Adjournment (Next Meeting | February 21, 2024)

(vote taken)

Upon motion made by Mr. Mulcahy, and seconded by Mr. Rodio, the Development Plan Review Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m.