

May 27, 2022

City of Methuen
Community Development Board
41 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844

Re: Site Plan Approval & Special Permit Applications
McDonald's Restaurant
170 Haverhill Street
Methuen, MA
Attn: Kathleen Colwell

Dear Ms. Colwell and Board Members:

On behalf of McDonald's USA, LLC, please find the enclosed Site Plan Approval & two (2) Special Permit Applications for the proposed site improvements at the McDonald's Restaurant located at 170 Haverhill Street. In support of this application, please find enclosed the following documents:

- Sixteen (16) copies of the signed Site Plan Approval application;
- Sixteen (16) copies of the signed Special Permit application;
- Sixteen (16) copies of the Cover Letter dated 5/27/22;
- Nine (9) 24"x36" copies of "Site Development Plans", prepared by Bohler Engineering, dated 4/28/2022;
- Eight (8) 11"x17" copies of "Site Development Plans", prepared by Bohler Engineering, dated 4/28/2022;
- One (1) copy of the Certified Abutters List;
- One (1) copy of the Owner's Authorization Letter (Under Separate Cover);
- Check in the amount of \$1,623.75 made payable to "City of Methuen" for Application Fee; and
- Check in the amount of \$5,000.00 made payable to "City of Methuen" for Project Review Fee

McDonald's is proposing a substantial investment into the property to remodel the existing McDonald's restaurant, reconfigure the existing drive-thru layout, and site work required to bring the site into compliance with ADA/AAB regulations. Under existing conditions, the site features a ±4,780 SF restaurant and single order drive-thru with a parking layout containing 37 parking stalls. The site has a total of two (2) full access drives to the existing shopping plaza drives.

Based on discussions with Kathleen Colwell, Town Planner, and per sections XII-B.5. and XII-C.12.b of the City of Methuen Zoning Ordinance the project requires Site Plan Approval and a Special Permit for changes to the existing drive-thru use per as well as a Special Permit to permit 24-hour drive-thru operations from the Community Development Board. We are still awaiting receipt of the building denial to confirm if any additional permits may be needed.

The proposed building improvements will include a remodel of the interior and exterior of the building and will feature a ±45 square foot building addition to relocate the drive-thru payment window resulting in a total building footprint of ±4,825 square-feet. The exterior building work is intended to bring the building up to McDonald's current architectural standard and will also include a new wall signage.

The proposed drive-thru improvements will reconfigure the existing single order point and single lane drive-thru to a dual order point with two (2) lanes and two (2) order points. The dual order point drive-thru layout is intended to better manage existing drive-thru operations more efficiently. The order taking process is improved by providing an additional order point to process orders and is anticipated to improve

drive-thru queuing and reduce customer wait times resulting in better drive-thru operations and a better customer experience. To accommodate the proposed layout, the parking count will be reduced by three (7) spaces (37 existing; 30 proposed; minimum 24 required).

As part of the proposed drive-thru improvements a total of two (2) digital menu boards and two (2) digital pre-browse board are proposed where there is only a single menu board and single pre-browse board existing today. The proposed boards are approximately 20 sq. ft. (menu board) and 10 sq. ft. (pre-browse) each and are internally illuminated. The digital technology allows the operations team to modify the menu board items (i.e. breakfast vs. lunch menu items) from within the restaurant and not have to go out into drive-thru traffic to manually change the boards providing an improvement to employee safety.

To bring the site into compliance with ADA/AAB requirements, the existing ADA parking stalls at the Southwest corner of the site will be relocated along the East side of the building and a new accessible connection is proposed to the public sidewalk along Haverhill Street. No changes to site access, circulation, utilities or surface water drainage are proposed as part of the project.

In reviewing Section XI-B.2., we believe the proposed site improvements are in line with the required Special Permit Criteria as outlined below:

- a) *Social, economic, or community needs which are served by the proposal;*

The proposed McDonald's site improvements and 24-hour operations will provide continued employment opportunities and tax revenue to the City, and will also provide an enhanced customer experience to patrons in the community. As such, we believe that social, economic, and community need will only benefit from the proposed redevelopment.

- b) *Traffic flow and safety, including parking and loading;*

The dual order point drive-thru improvements are proposed to manage existing drive-thru operations more efficiently resulting in shorter queuing and reduced customer wait times. To accommodate the proposed layout the parking count will be reduced by 7 parking spaces but maintain compliance with parking requirements in the district. (37 existing and 24 min. required). No changes to the existing curb cuts are proposed.

- c) *Adequacy of utilities and other public services;*

The site currently operates successfully as a fast-food restaurant with a drive-thru. We do not anticipate an increase in utility demands as result of the proposed redevelopment and no changes to the existing utilities are proposed.

- d) *Neighborhood character and social structures;*

The proposed redevelopment maintains the existing fast-food drive-thru use. As such, we do not believe there will be any adverse effects to the neighborhood character or social structure.

- e) *Impacts on the natural environment; and*

The proposed work is limited to within the previously developed parcel and significant impacts to the natural environment are not anticipated.

- f) *Potential fiscal impact, including impact on City services, tax base, and employment. Said analysis shall conform to with the Rules and Regulations of the SPGA.*

The proposed McDonald's redevelopment will provide continued employment opportunities and tax revenue to the City, and will also provide an enhanced customer experience to patrons in the community.

g) *Consistency with the most recent City of Methuen Master Plan*

The proposed McDonald's redevelopment is consistent with the most recent City of Methuen Master Plan. The proposed work is considered an improvement to the existing conditions and will benefit the social, economic, and community needs of the City while limiting impact to the natural environment and neighborhood characteristics.

In reviewing Section XI-D.12.d., we believe the proposed site improvements are in line with the required Special Permit Specific Regulations for Drive-Through Restaurants requirements as outlined below:

- i. A Drive-up Retail, Business or Service Establishment shall not constitute a nuisance of any type;

The site currently operates successfully as a fast-food restaurant with a drive-thru. The dual order point drive-thru improvements are proposed to manage existing drive-thru operations more efficiently resulting in shorter queueing and reduced customer wait times. Nuisances resulting from the proposed site improvements are not anticipated.

- ii. Access to such drive-up service shall conform to Section VI-B-5 Yard Requirements, for all Districts;

The proposed drive-through configuration provides access to the drive-up service in conformation with section VI-B-5 Yard Requirements. Access to the drive-through service will remain outside of the front, side, and rear yard setbacks.

- iii. Drive-up Retail, Business or Service Establishment shall not operate after Midnight without an additional special permit from the Community Development Board;

The site currently operates after midnight and is open 24 hours, and has been operating this way for over 10 years. No change to the existing hours of operation are proposed.

- iv. Drive-up Retail, Business or Service Establishment must comply with Methuen Municipal Code, Article VI, Section 9-61 Regulation of Loudspeakers, Amplifiers, and Paging Systems.

We are requesting a Special Permit to permit 24-hour drive-thru operations outside which the restaurant has been operating under for at least the past ten years. The newly proposed order speakers are designed with technology that adjusts sound levels based on the time of day and surrounding ambient noise to mitigate any potential noise pollution.

