

August 2, 2022

Town of Ashland
101 Main Street
Ashland, MA 01721

Attn: Peter Matchak, Town Planner / Director

**Re: Site Plan Review & Special Permit, Drive Through Service Windows
McDonald's Restaurant
225 Pond Street
Ashland, MA**

Dear Mr. Matchak,

Below please find our response to comment letters from GCG Associates, Inc. dated June 3, 2022. For clarity, the comments are in italics, while our responses are directly below in normal font.

Site Plan Comments

C-101 - Cover Sheet

Comment 1: *Chapter 282-10.0 - Parking Information Table's proposed parking space dimensions should comply with the nine by twenty feet as stated in the section 10.0 Parking Space definitions. (See additional parking space comments under Site Layout Plan below).*

Response 1: A majority of the newly striped spaces are proposed at 20'x9' where feasible and the balance of the existing parking spaces are proposed to be maintained as they currently exist.

C-102 – General Notes Sheet

Comment 1: *No comments.*

Response 1: Comment acknowledged.

C-201 – Demolition & Erosion Control Sheet

Comment 1: *Plan should clarify the type, function, and ownership of the existing masonry structure to remain at the southwesterly lot corner. The structure wall appears to be part of the dumpster enclosure brick wall. The structure's roof was added between year 2014 and 2019, (based on Google Map's historic street view images), which transformed the status of a dumpster enclosure wall to a structure. The structure is on the abutter's (Lot 1) side yard setback and within the 10' wide existing access easement. Applicant should clarify the right and zoning compliance of this structure to remain. In addition, the dumpster is in violation of Fire Code 19.2.1.4. - "Dumpsters and containers with an individual capacity of 1.5 cubic yard or more shall not be stored in buildings or placed within 10 feet of combustible walls, openings, or combustible roof eave lines."*

Response 1: The existing masonry structure is proposed to be removed and the trash enclosure reconstructed in a similar location and will contain both dumpsters on site.

Comment 2: *An existing dumpster (to remain) and a bollard is occupying a parking stall next to (north of) the dumpster pad. The bollard disqualified the stall for a valid parking space. The outside dumpster is without enclosure screening. Dumpster location is not controlled and*

potentially too close to the abutter's 2 story frame building and violating Fire Code 19.2.1.4.

Response 2: The existing trash enclosure is proposed to be reconstructed and the dumpster will be relocated to within the new enclosure. The parking space containing the bollard is proposed to be replaced with the pavement striping and is not considered towards the total parking count.

Comment 3: *The Pond Street reconstruction had installed two catch basins along the project frontage. Silt sack erosion protection should be provided.*

Response 3: Comment acknowledge, catch basins as part of the Pond Street reconstruction have been added to the plans and inlet protection is proposed.

Comment 4: *Pond Street access drive pavement between the two proposed work areas is in poor conditions with alligator crack and trench patches, applicant should consider extending the repaving area to meet the new Pond Street pavement limit.*

Response 4: Plans have been revised to extend the proposed repaving area to meet the limit of the Pond Street DOT improvements which extends into the McDonald's property.

Comment 5: *Temporary ADA compliance pedestrian access and accessible parking spaces should be maintained during construction period.*

Response 5: A note has been added to site plan sheet C-301.

C-301 – Site Layout Plan

Comment 1: *Chapter 282 Section 3.0 – Proposed existing Restaurant – fast food use requires Board of Appeals special permit approval, the Table of Principal Use Regulations also stated, “No Access via Pond Street”. The existing Pond Street Access is classified as an existing nonconforming condition, extending Pond Street access with modified landscape island as shown on the MassDOT construction plan and this site plan sheet C-201 – Demolition and Erosion Control Plan requires ZBA special permit approval.*

Response 1: Comment acknowledged, no changes to the existing access via Pond Street are proposed as part of this project.

Comment 2: *Applicant should update the existing signage at the Pond Street site access. A “No Left Turn” sign was observed in the landscape island on April 1, 2022, and the “Keep Right” sign was missing. The “Keep Right” sign should be reinstalled immediately to avoid head on collision at the site exit lane. The straightened island layout as shown on MassDOT plan and sheet C-201 requires Planning Board approval. GCG does not recommending the landscape island modification, which defeats the propose of aiding exit vehicle to prevent right turn exit onto Pond Street.*

Response 2: Plans have been updated to propose a “Keep Right” sign within the island at the Pond Street driveway. No modifications to the existing landscape island are proposed as part of this application.

Comment 3: *Chapter 282-8.8.6.4.1.a. - Zoning Analysis Table's minimum rear yard setback in PSMUOD district should be 15 feet.*

Response 3: Zoning Analysis Table has been updated to show a required 15' rear yard setback.

Comment 4: *Chapter 164-2 – A 3rd ADA accessible parking space is required. The 2 accessible spaces meet the current AAB/ADA requirements. However, 164-2 requires parking spaces more than forty (40) but not more than hundred (100), 4% of such spaces but not fewer than three (3), should be accessible spaces.*

Response 4: A third ADA accessible parking stall has been proposed as required.

Comment 5: *Chapter 282-5.1.2 requires 1 space per 4 seats for restaurant use, the required minimum 20 parking spaces calculations are based on 80 seats seating capacity. Which should be verified by the Ashland Inspectional Services Departments and match their restaurant use occupancy permit. The calculated 20 minimum parking spaces meets the PSMUOD 8.8.8.2. requirements.*

Response 5: The Ashland Inspectional Services Department provided updated information that the restaurant contains 116 seats resulting in a minimum required parking space total of 29 space which the proposed layout complies with providing 40 spaces.

Comment 6: *282-10.0 - Definitions - Parking Space requires not less than nine by twenty (9 x 20) feet, plus means of access. The current Zoning Bylaw does not have any compact parking space policy. Section 8.8.8.6 requires off-street parking facilities shall meet Section 5.1 "Off Street Parking Requirements" standards as the minimum criteria. In addition, Section 9.4.6.11 requires "The site plan shall comply with all zoning requirements of parking, loading, signage, dimensions, and environmental performance standards and all other provisions of this by-laws." Majority of the parking layout presented are existing nonconforming parking stalls. Proposed new parking spaces dimensions should comply with the current regulations. Existing nonconforming spaces to remain should be demonstrated (by providing vehicle maneuvering path) that they are physically accessible. As presented, the northeasterly parking stalls were scaled 9' x 17' with 20' maneuvering aisle at the narrowest. The northeast new 60° angled parking stalls were scaled 9' x 15.5' (length should be measured perpendicular to the parking lines for all angled parking spaces), parked vehicle will partially be encroaching the drive aisle. The east parking stalls were scaled 10' x 17.5' to 18' with 20' wide maneuvering aisle, one parking space is occupied by the existing dumpster to remain with a bollard. The south parking stalls were scaled 8' to 9' wide by 17' length (78° angled spaces), the two proposed new spaces were scaled 17' length, with 21' wide aisle. The east parking spaces were scaled 18' length (proposed new 90° spaces, including ADA accessible spaces) and 17' length (82° spaces, new and existing) with 21.5' aisle. Applicant should enhance the existing nonconforming parking layout to improve traffic safety.*

Response 6: The existing site has been operating under these non-conforming parking stall conditions and we are not aware of any issues vehicles accessing and egressing the spaces. The majority of the existing parking stalls and drive-aisle are proposed to be maintained while new spaces along the East perimeter row of parking are proposed at a 20' length.

Comment 7: *282-5.1.4.6 – "Restaurant, fast food, drug store. There should be at least four spaces provided between the pickup window and order point, at least four spaces provided in advance of the menu board, one space at the order point, and one space at the menu board." Applicant should demonstrate compliance with section 5.1.4.6. with accessibility of the northeast angled parking spaces and address Fire Department's concern with traffic backing up on to Pond Street (Route 126).*

Response 7: The proposed layout complies with Section 282-5.1.4.6 as a total of seven (7) stacking spaces are proposed to be provided between the pickup window and the order point; five (5) stacking spaces are to be provided in advance of the menu board/ order point to the property line; and the two (2) order points/menu boards provide one space each for a total of two (2) spaces.

The proposed side-by-side drive-thru layout is anticipated to provide an additional two (2) stacking spaces from existing conditions (12 existing vs 14 proposed). The proposed second lane and order point is intended to improve drive-thru operations by increasing order processing efficiency and reducing customer wait times. The second order point allows customers to continue placing orders and driving forward if in the instance there is a vehicle making a large order and taking more time.

Comment 8: 282-5.2. – Show off-street loading space or area.

Response 8: McDonald's schedules loading operations to occur at non-peak business hours. A loading area has been illustrated on site plan sheet C-301 within the rear row of parking.

Comment 9: Proposed "Yield to Pedestrians Sign" is within the driving path.

Response 9: Acknowledged. That is the typical location and intention for the proposed "Yield to Pedestrians" sign to warn vehicle.

Comment 10: MUTCD Section 3B.18.05 – Crosswalk should not be less than 6' wide.

Response 10: One crosswalk is proposed to be 6' wide while the second is only 5' as it is connected to a proposed 5' ADA parking access aisle.

Comment 11: Restore or modify Pond Street access landscape island to aid vehicle to exit right turn only. Modify and update existing and proposed traffic signage as necessary.

Response 11: Pond Street access landscape island is shown per the approved MassDOT Pond Street reconstruction plans. No changes to the Pond Street access are proposed.

Comment 12: No new lighting proposed, existing lighting to remain.

Response 12: Comment acknowledged.

Comment 13: No new sign proposed, existing signs to remain.

Response 13: Comment acknowledged.

C-401 – Grading and Drainage Plan

Comment 1: Chapters 247 and 343 - Project requires a Stormwater Management Permit through Ashland Conservation Commission. Project site as shown is subject to Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook (MSH) regulations and requires Stormwater Management Report and associated checklist. The proposed site changes as shown have a net decrease of impervious area (100+/- s.f.) and is qualified as a redevelopment project, MSH (Standard #7), which requires compliance to the MSH standards to the maximum extent practicable. The plan appears to meet MSH Standards #1, 2, 5, 6, and 7. For Redevelopment project, the stormwater management system should meet standards #3 and #4 to the maximum extent practicable. At a minimum, the plan should identify the existing drainage system on-site, for Conservation Commission to determine the site plan meeting their maximum extent practicable expectations. Standard #9 and #10 should be complied to the full extent. An Operation and Maintenance Plan, (long term and during construction period), identifying the responsible parties, sample maintenance log, annual budget, and Illicit discharge statement should be provided according to the Stormwater Management standards.

Response 1: An Notice of Intent Application and Stormwater Management Permit is being filed with the Conservation Commission to address compliance with stormwater water requirements. Ahead of this meeting an inspection and cleaning of the existing stormwater system has been completed. This inspection confirmed that stormwater is contained completely on site, consisting of two leeching catch basins, and is not connected into the system within the Pond Street right-of-way. The proposed site improvements are anticipated to result in reduction in impervious coverage of approximately 105 square-feet resulting in a reduction in stormwater runoff rates and volumes.

C-701 – Landscape Plan

Comment 1: *Chapter 282-5.4.3 and 5.4.5 – Existing nonconforming buffer and interior plantings do not meet current requirements, Board approval required.*

Response 1: Comment acknowledged, no changes to the existing landscape buffer are proposed and maintaining this nonconformity will require approval from the Board.

C-702 – Landscape Notes and Details

Comment 1: *No comments.*

Response 1: Comment acknowledged.

C-901 – Detail Sheet

Comment 1: *MUTCD Section 3B.18.05 – Crosswalk Detail, the gap between the transverse lines should not be less than 6 feet.*

Response 1: A note has been added to the crosswalk detail on sheet C-901.

Comment 2: *Typical Pavement Markings – Note: all pavement marking shall meet the latest MUTCD standards.*

Response 2: The pavement markings are proposed to meet McDonald's site requirements.

Comment 3: *Stall striping – call out minimum parking stall length, stall length for angled parking should be measured perpendicular to the side lines.*

Response 3: Existing and proposed parking stall dimensions are shown on site plan sheet C-301.

C-902 – Detail Sheet

Comment 1: *282-5.1.4.6 - Drive-Thru detail should meet 5.1.4.6 spaces requirements.*

Response 1: The proposed layout complies with Section 282-5.1.4.6 as a total of seven (7) stacking spaces are proposed to be provided between the pickup window and the order point; five (5) stacking spaces are to be provided in advance of the menu board/ order point to the property line; and the two (2) order points/menu boards provide one space each for a total of two (2) spaces.

Comment 2: *164-3 – Accessible Parking Sign detail, signs should comply with the latest MUTCD standards and bear the words “Handicapped Parking: special Plate Required. Unauthorized Vehicle May be Removed at Owners Expense”.*

Response 2: Accessible Parking Sign detail has been modified to comply with the latest MUTCD standards and include the words “Handicapped Parking: Special Plate Required. Unauthorized Vehicle May Be Removed At Owners Expense”.

Boundary & Topographic Survey


Comment: *The signage at the Pond Street access island had been altered since 09-01-2021 (field date). Updated signage should be provided on the site layout plan.*

Response: Site development plans have been updated to reflect the existing signage accordingly.

We trust the provided information is sufficient for your needs at this time. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact either of us at 508-480-9900.

Sincerely,

BOHLER



Eric G. Dubrule



Daniel Allen

CC: CGC Associates, Inc.