



MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN PLANNING OFFICE

245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 304

WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601

PHONE: 315-785-7730 – FAX: 315-782-9014

TO: Planning Board Members

FROM: Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Waiver of Site Plan Approval – 146 Arsenal Street, Suite 11, Carthage S&L

DATE: January 31, 2012

Request: Waiver of Site Plan Approval for the 427 square foot expansion of a drive through canopy at 146 Arsenal Street, Suite 11, parcel 7-02-102

Applicant: Mari L. Cecil, AIA, CSI, Bernier, Carr & Associates (for Carthage Federal Savings & Loan)

Proposed Use: Bank

Property Owner: GEJ Watertown LLC

Submitted:

Property Survey: No	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: Yes
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: No
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: No	Construction Time Schedule: Yes
Landscaping and Grading Plan: No	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: Yes

SEQRA: Type II Action	County Planning Board Review Required: No*
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Zoning Information:

District: PDD #5	Maximum Lot Coverage: N/A
Setback Requirements: N/A	Buffer Zone Required: None

Project Overview: The applicant plans to rebuild and expand the existing drive through teller canopy on the northeast corner of the multi-tenant commercial building at 146 Arsenal Street. Corollary to this plan, the applicant also wishes to shift the nearby Court Street curb cut approximately 86 feet northwest. The canopy will be cantilevered, and therefore the new support pillars will be located in roughly the same location as the existing ones.

Parking: A plan showing the circulation and parking for the entire lot was not submitted, nor was one on file in City records. Based on site observations, it appears that 5 to 7 existing parking spaces will be eliminated by the new traffic pattern and curb cut. The area in front of the abandoned curb cut may be restriped to regain 2 or 3 spaces.

As part of the City's Downtown Core Overlay, this property is exempt from minimum parking requirements.

It is unclear if there is sufficient space for a drive aisle between the canopy and the eastern edge of the parking lot. The measurement from canopy to curb is approximately 34 feet. However, perpendicular parking occurs in this area despite an apparent lack of marked spaces. The applicant must take measures to prevent parking in the area between the canopy and the curb, or otherwise maintain a two-way drive aisle connecting the two lobes of the parking lot. This may include modifying the curbing, installing signage, and restriping.

The proposed exit to Court Street is 18' wide. It is assumed that this will be a one-way cut—the applicant will need to install signage to meet MUTCD standards.

Lighting: No lighting plan was submitted. Presumably, some lighting will be installed underneath the canopy. Given the canopy height, and distance to neighboring properties, spillage across property lines is unlikely.

Landscaping: No landscaping plan was submitted. The Site Plan indicated two streetside plantings will be removed for the new curb cut, and one added at the abandoned curb cut.

The applicant proposes a curbed apron with a visual barrier between the canopy and the dumpster area. Depending on the subsurface conditions, this may be an ideal place to plant 1-3 shade tolerant trees.

The existing parking lot has no interior shade trees, which are recommended by the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.

The proposed striped area just north of the canopy would be more attractive and durable as a curbed island with landscaping.

Drainage and Grading: An existing manhole and catch basin are located near proposed new curb cut—these must be depicted on the plans. We would prefer shifting the proposed cut westward to avoid having traffic over these structures (this would also prevent the removal of a tree).

The sidewalk near the proposed cut is about 10' wide. This affords sufficient space to keep the back 5' of the sidewalk at a 2% cross slope, and ramp down the front 5' to meet the Court Street asphalt. A detail depicting this driveway layout shall be submitted to the City Engineer. (A separate curb cut permit will also be required.)

The applicant must depict the existing grading and storm sewer layout on the plans. Ponded water is present near the proposed curb cut, so drainage and topography will need to be evaluated to prevent runoff from crossing the sidewalk. Installation of a new drainage structure may be necessary.

The plans must also depict the fate of the catch basin in the area of the existing curb cut. Will this basin remain if that area is returned to grassy margin? How does it tie into the storm sewer network?

Other Comments: Since the proposed construction and expansion of the facility involves less than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area and the action does not involve a change in zoning or a use variance and is consistent with local land use controls, the project is considered a Type II Action as defined by SEQR. Type II Actions do not require SEQR review, and the Short Environmental Assessment Form does not need to be completed by the Planning Board for this project.

Any proposed signage for the project will be handled as a separate matter through the Bureau of Code Enforcement.

Summary: The following lists several key issues that should be addressed:

- 1) The applicant shall stripe the asphalt, and install “no parking” signage, between the proposed canopy and the eastern edge of the parking lot (in order to maintain a two-way drive aisle between the two sections of the parking lot).
- 2) The applicant shall install a “one-way” sign, or others in accordance with MUTCD standards, at the proposed exit to Court Street.
- 3) The existing sidewalks shall be called out for replacement at both the proposed and existing curb cuts.
- 4) The applicant shall plant 1 to 3 shade tolerant trees in the proposed curbed apron between the drive-through and the dumpster area.
- 5) The applicant shall shift the proposed curb cut approximately 5’ to 10’ westward in order to avoid the destruction of the easterly street tree currently slated for removal, and the disturbance of the storm sewer hardware in this area.
- 6) The applicant shall provide grading and drainage plans and reports related to the catch basins and storm sewer system in the vicinity of the new and existing curb cuts. These plans must show topography, any existing sewer network, and any proposed changes. The drainage and grading must be approved by the City Engineer prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

cc: Planning Board Members
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II
Mari Cecil, BC&A, 327 Mullin St, Watertown 13601

