

January 30, 2024

City of Worcester
Office of Planning and Regulatory Services
City Hall Room 404
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608

RE: ZBA Special Permit – 79 Pullman Street

Dear Members of the Board,

MidPoint Engineering + Construction, LLC (MidPoint), on behalf of its Client, Lacy Topaz, LLC, is pleased to submit this Special Permit Application associated with redevelopment of 79 Pullman Street in Worcester, Massachusetts. The Applicant, Lacy Topaz, LLC, is the current owner of the property and plans to redevelop the site by removing improvements on the site and constructing a new Fast Casual style restaurant with pick-up window service. Prior use of the property was office/school in a 2,500 square foot building. The parking area for the prior use had capacity for approximately 26 vehicles.

The proposed restaurant will be 2,328 square feet and will have an outdoor seating area of approximately 960 square feet. In addition to the restaurant building a new parking area with capacity of 29 vehicles is proposed as are landscaping, new utility service and lighting. A pick-up window will allow customers who pre order their meals to conveniently collect their order without needing to park their vehicle and enter the building. The pick-up window will function much differently than traditional fast-food drive through service. Customers must pre-order and pay for their meals through an application available on their phone or computer. When ordering they select a time to retrieve their order. A message is sent to the customer when the order is ready. There are no menu boards, order boards along the lane and no payment is accepted at the pick-up window. This allows much less time to process the transaction and results in minimal queueing within the pick up lane. Should a customer arrive at the pick-up window before they are notified that their order is ready they would leave the window and park in one of two designated parking spaces. Once notified their order is ready they would then reenter the pickup window lane.

This Site is located partially in the ML-0.5 zoning district and partially with the MG-0.5 zoning district. Both of these districts allow “Food Service (drive-thru)” as a special permit use. We believe that a Special Permit for this use on this site is supported as the project will meet requirements of the zoning ordinance and special permit criteria as noted on the application materials.

The Applicant is also seeking a special permit to allow modification of the dimensional requirements of pick-up window service lane and escape lane. The Applicant requests that the pick-up window queue lane be 180 lf and that the escape lane be 95 lf before vehicles would enter and exit adjacent parking spaces. The total length of the escape lane would be similar to the pick-up window lane of 180 lf. Article IV Section 7 notes that drive thru and escape lanes for “fast food/restaurant/coffee shop” must be 240 lf. We believe this modification to the dimensional requirements is supported. The proposed use of pick-up only allows for much faster transaction times lesser queues. Similar existing high-volume restaurants experience an average queue length of 3-4 vehicles during peak times of the day and a maximum recorded queue length of 5-7 vehicles. The proposed queue length of 180 lf would accommodate 9 vehicles within the designated lane.

The project will also require Parking Plan approval by the City's Planning Board and NOI review by the City Conservation Commission.

We respectfully request to be placed on the next available agenda of the City Zoning Board of Appeals to review this application. Should you have any questions or require any additional information please contact me at (508) 721-1900 or via email at pdoherty@midpointengineering.com.

Sincerely,

Midpoint Engineering + Consulting, LLC



Patrick P. Doherty, PE, LEED AP
Principal

cc Michael O'Brien, Lacy Topaz, LLC
