

**SOMERSWORTH SITE REVIEW TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 10, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Sunderland, Jeff Gallant, Michelle Mears, Paul Robidas, Mark Dellner, Mike Hoage and Michael Bobinsky (10:30AM)

**EXCUSED MEMBERS:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dana Crossley, Planning Technician

The meeting was called to order at 10:01am.

**1) Approval of January 3, 2024 Minutes**

MOTION: Robidas MOVED to APPROVE the minutes.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Gallant.

The MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

**2) OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Any old business that may come before the Committee.

**3) NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. is seeking site plan approval for a 6,630 square-foot addition and site improvements on a property located at 59 Walton's Way, in the Residential/Commercial (RC) District, Assessor's Map 37 Lot 10 SITE#23-2023.**

**Greg DiBona, of Bohler Engineering** was in attendance to represent the application. DiBona reviewed the overall project indicating that Walmart is working on a program for their sites to implement phase 2 of the pick-up program site improvements. He stated the proposed addition will accommodate interior storage for the online pick-up orders. He stated there is not a proposed change to the existing retail use within the building but rather to provide the area needed for the online pick-up program. He noted the existing canopy for the pick-up parking spaces will be removed. He stated the parking lot will be re-striped including crosswalks and stop bars. There will be additional pick-up parking spaces added to the site. The online pick-up operation will remain in the same general area on the side of the building, utilizing the back corner of the lot. This portion of the parking lot is underutilized and therefore was the area for the building expansion. There will be a slight on-site parking reduction with these proposed changes. He noted the pick-up parking spaces are slightly larger than typical spaces. He noted they are seeking a waiver from the overall parking requirements, added that the current site has less than the required number at 874 spaces but would be reduced to 846 spaces.

Robidas inquired if there had been previous waivers granted to allow for less parking than required.

Mears stated that the historic files could be reviewed.

Sunderland noted that the site is not typically fully utilized.

There was a brief discussion regarding parking requirements and needs.

DiBona stated the entire parking lot is reviewed as part of these projects. Walmart will be refreshing pavement markings, resealing, and new signage as needed. He stated the pedestrian crosswalks are being reduced in size due to their determination that the existing size does not support drivers stopping within the middle of the crosswalks. No other changes to the building, loading, entrance, garden center will all stay the same.

Sunderland inquired if the pick-up area addition proposed will be open to the public.

DiBona stated no. It would be for associates only and not serve as an access to the building for customers.

Sunderland inquired if there would be a lock or key access on the entrance.

DiBona stated the area is not designed to appear as an entrance to customers, it will have sliding doors due to the large carts that need to come and go with the associates delivering orders.

Gallant inquired if there would be any roof-top-units installed on the addition.

DiBona stated he did not believe so, but this addition is also located adjacent to the fenced in HVAC system.

Gallant inquired if refrigeration units would be located within the addition.

DiBona stated he believed there would be and could provide a floor plan for this area.

Robidas noted the Planning Board has had concerns regarding the state of this site for landscaping and trash for many years. He noted that he believes this will be a topic of discussion at the meeting. Inquired if the site had been re-landscaped.

DiBona stated that the site compliance issues are handled by a different Walmart Department than the development one. Requested information regarding the site compliance issues so that they can address outstanding items.

Mears provided a brief summary of the compliance issues on site including landscaping, trash and storage containers.

DiBona noted this was not unusual but it provides opportunity to address.

Dellner stated he would assume the fire protection would be continued from the existing building into this addition.

DiBona stated yes.

Hoage stated he understand there is no proposed new utility connections but rather a re-routing of existing. He stated trench inspections will be required prior to backfill.

Mears stated the Public Works Director had a meeting conflict and was unable to attend, he did provide a memo and reviewed the items stated in the memo.

*The following summaries my (Bobinsky) comments/questions related to the agenda item to be presented at the January 10, 2024 SRTC meeting:*

***-Wal-Mart Stores, Inc, site plan approval for a 6,630 sq ft addition and site improvements at 59 Waltons Way, in the Residential/Commercial District, Assessors Map 37, Lot 10 SITE # 23-2023.***

*- The applicant is asked to complete a new water or sewer utilities user application, which will determine if there is a connection fee for the new addition.*

*-The applicant is seeking several waivers. I have comments on each one:*

*-Traffic Study- I disagree with a waiver. The entrance on Waltons Way likely will see increased traffic use from enhanced on line purchasing and pick up. Recommend a review of the internal parking and lane configurations proposed to aid in safety of vehicles coming and going into the site and pedestrians within the parking lot. Any changes needed for entrance to Walton Way due to projected traffic growth with this addition.*

*-Drainage Study. I disagree with a waiver; request drainage report affirming no new drainage volume from new addition; and require applicant to enter drainage calculations within the on line PTAP drainage reporting tool for the City of Somersworth; require applicant to submit annual O & M report on their existing drainage structures to ensure maintained and functional. Reports to be submitted to the Planning and Development Department.*

*-ID and Classification of the extent and type of soils. Agree this can be waived if this data is contained in the separate drainage report.*

*-Solid Waste disposal systems-I am ok with this waiver request.*

*-Landscape Plan -I disagree with this waiver request and recommend a landscape plan be included for review and consideration.*

*Request that the applicant describe the remodeling plans for the interior of the store and the front façade entrance area of the store.*

Mears stated the truck route goes directly through this pick up area where the workers would be walking, inquired if that can be adjusted to direct truck traffic away from this area.

DiBona stated it may cause them to lose more parking areas and landscape islands. He stated they could review moving it over one row. He noted that the vendor trucks have a more variable delivery schedule compared to the Walmart trucks.

There was a brief discussion pertaining to the drainage waiver. It was noted that the City does not receive yearly stormwater maintenance reports for this site. Mears acknowledged that they were not increasing the impervious foot print.

Robidas inquired when the last drainage report was provided for this site. It was noted that staff could research this.

Mears stated she appreciated receiving the information on the parking updates. She understands there are a lot of accidents at this site and seems that many of the proposed changes would look to address this but recommend that they be able to talk to this when they are before the PB.

DiBona stated that the proposed changes they are implementing including the pick-up area changes typically will help with the flow on the site. He stated it is not normal for them to put together a traffic/accident analysis but if there are an abundance of police reports for accidents they could review those for any next steps.

Mears noted that comments from the City Engineer were also provided and reviewed the following:

*Walmart Major Site Plan (M37, L10)*

- *Provide a summary of pre development conditions (land cover, areas, etc.) and post development conditions and summarize the change in runoff as a result of the development. Is there an overall increase in impervious area?*
- *Applicant to provide annual inspection reports for the stormwater system to be compliant with the City's MS4 permit.*
- *Summarize changes in traffic as a result of expanded online pickup area.*
- *Describe/show how the roof drainage is connected to the drainage system.*

DiBona noted that the roof drain information will be provided in the architecture plans. Mears noted those will need to be submitted the Planning Board will want to see those.

Crossley requested the lighting plan to be submitted and inquired if there would be new lighting.

DiBona stated Walmart has a vendor who puts those plans together, they would analyze the site to determine if new lighting is needed.

Crossley asked that the cover sheet to be updated to be consistent with the plan sheets submitted and to confirm if there is an existing bicycle rack on site. Inquired if they are considering to install any EV Charging infrastructure.

DiBona stated Walmart has a different team that is looking into EV charging and back-up generators for sites. He stated it is not part of this program but would anticipate that something may come back in about a year.

Crossley noted the essential directional signage there are a few that are over the allowable 4SF. Clarified that the sidewalk details would be included in the architectural plans.

DiBona stated yes.

Crossley stated truck turning movements in this area would be good information to have. Inquired how many total designated pick-up spaces would be installed and that the project was re-striping all spaces.

DiBona stated 27 and yes.

Crossley noted that a landscape plan waiver was submitted but also a landscape plan was submitted.

DiBona note that it was because they only did a plan for this subject area.

Mears stated the waiver would not be required.

Crossley noted that as mentioned there has been compliance issues with this site for the landscaping, as part of the process to come back into compliance staff had required an asbuilt of the existing landscaping be submitted. This project will require an As-Built to be submitted and they will want to see all of the landscaping installed on site be included in that information. She noted that Honey Locust is on the plan, recommended they change that as it would be requested at the Planning Board level for it to be modified. Requested that the Demo plan reflect all of the trees that will be removed.

Crossley stated there is note on UTIL-1 that references night work, the applicant should be aware of the Noise Ordinance and that for any night work this may require City Council approval to work outside the designated hours. Inquired what the building was being constructed of.

DiBona stated concrete block.

Robidas noted that the Planning Board will likely have significant concerns to discuss regarding the property maintenance.

Gallant stated there was only one roof drain shown on the canopy, will there be others.

DiBona stated that would be determined in the architecture plan.

Bobinsky joined the meeting at 10:30AM.

Bobinsky reviewed his comments. He requested a traffic memo at least be submitted to show impact to Walton's Way and High Street intersection. Requested the applicant submit a study showing the pre and post development for drainage in lieu of a full report. He would like to see how the roof drains are connected into the drainage system. Provided information on the MS4 permit the City is responsible for and how stormwater reports help with this reporting and the PTAP reporting process.

DiBona stated they could provide those reports and that there are maintenance reports that could be requested. He clarified the area of reporting into the PTAP system.

Bobinsky stated they would be looking for the numbers reflecting the impacted area.

Sunderland inquired how much this expansion would increase the use of the online service pickup.

DiBona stated those statistics are not provided to them, the alterations are to support a 10 year build and employee needs.

There was a brief discussion on accident reports. Sunderland stated he could provide a few years worth of reports from the Police Department.

Mears clarified if the fire lane was proposed to be altered.

DiBona stated just re-striped along the front.

Mears noted the applicant would be provided a summary of comments from today's meeting.

**MOTION:** Robidas MOVED to ADJOURN.

The MOTION was SECONDED by Bobinsky.

The MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52am.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Crossley, Planning Technician