

9/25/06 - (6)

TOWN OF ACTON

Building Department

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

To: Board of Selectmen **Date:** September 19, 2006
From: Garry A. Rhodes, Building Commissioner
Subject: Site Plan Special Permit # 07/06/06-408
124 Main Street Frank Chen (Rosenzweig)

The Petitioner is proposing to construct a parking lot to be used by the existing building. The existing parking lot is gravel and not well defined and this will be an improvement. The property is located in the Historic District so this work is also under their jurisdiction. It is my understanding the Historic District Commission may have a draft decision prior to the hearing.

The Plan has been revised to address most but not all staff concerns. I have spoken with the Engineering Department and they are satisfied. I have also spoken with the Town Planner and we still have some concerns.

There is a shed straddling the property line. The Historic District Commission wants the shed to remain however the shed is partially located on Town Property and partially on this site. The shed was located there when the town purchased the property in 2000. According to the deed any buildings or structures affixed thereto were included in the taking. It appears Mr. Chen is still using the shed.

The Board will also note the Town of Acton owns a portion of the property to the east and south of the building. The town took the property around 1906 when the original bridge was built. The concern is a portion of the building is owned by the Town. I should note yesterday a vehicle drove into the front porch damaging several supports.

The Petitioner has indicated the access driveway is 22 feet wide however, there is only 18 feet between the westerly side of the access driveway and the parking space located adjacent to the building. I am recommending the access driveway be reconfigured to provide a minimum of 20 feet between the parking space and the westerly side of the entrance so as to comply with the Zoning Bylaw § 6.9.4.6. In addition the plan is incomplete as to the location of the berm on the easterly side of the access driveway.

The plan provides for a pea stone path with benches adjacent to the town sidewalk. Loose pea stone would not be handicap accessible. The town sidewalk is not shown on the plan and should be. It should be noted the Town sidewalk has excessive cross-slope and does not comply with CMR 521. Rather than construct this path to a non-complying sidewalk, I would recommend the sidewalk be reconstructed using the existing vertical granite curb as a control point.

The Town Planner was concerned the 5 feet wide planter on the south side of the parking lot was not protected from vehicle damage as required by Acton Zoning § 6.9.4.7b. It does not appear the plan has been revised to correct this problem.

I reviewed with the Town Planner if it was feasible to include a sidewalk to the MBTA parking lot in the rear. It would appear, based on the differential in the grade, it may not be feasible to include a ramp connection without losing the rear planter.

I have included all staff comments and the revised plans for your consideration.

TOWN OF ACTON
472 Main Street
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720
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Engineering Department

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

To: Don P. Johnson, Town Manager

Date: August 4, 2006

From: Engineering Department

07

Subject: Site Plan Special Permit #07/06/06-408 – Frank Chen - 124 Main Street

We have reviewed the site plan for 124 Main Street Acton dated June 28, 2006 and have the following comments.

1. The contractor will be required to apply for a Permit to Construct within a Public Way for any work shown in the right of way for Railroad Street such as the new driveway or utility service connections such as water, sewer, etc...
2. If there are no existing survey markers located at the property corners, we recommend that the applicant show some monumentation such as iron rebar or PK nails in the pavement to clearly mark the site due to the close proximity of the work to the lot lines.
3. There seems to be an extra line drawn on the plans within the existing building that should be removed.
4. The plans show a shed partially located on the Town sewer pump station parcel (Town Map H-2A Parcel 43-1). We recommend that the shed be relocated so that it does not encroach onto Town property.
5. The existing deck and stairs on the southerly side of the building are located partially on the Town owned parcel (Town Map H-2A Parcel 81).
6. If the applicant intends to have a sign identifying the businesses on Railroad Street, the engineer should show the location of this sign on the plans.
7. The applicant has not proposed any sidewalks in conjunction with this project. There is already an existing sidewalk along their frontage on Main Street.
8. The Fire Chief will need to review the plans to ensure they can safely maneuver within the site.

9. The maneuvering aisle for the proposed parking space at the rear of the property scales to be about 36 feet +/- feet wide. The Zoning Bylaws only requires that the maneuvering aisle for a standard parking cell to be 24 feet wide. The engineer might be able to reduce the width of the maneuvering aisle and minimize the amount of new impervious cover on the site. This would also increase the amount of space available on-site for snow storage.
10. There should be a note on the plans requiring the sidewalk ramps at the reconstructed driveway access on Railroad Street to comply with AAB standards.
11. The engineer needs to remove the symbol for the proposed curb at Railroad Street. This curb is shown to obstruct the existing handicap sidewalk ramp at the driveway.
12. The engineer has not shown an AAB compliant sidewalk ramp for the new walkway between the building and the parking area.
13. The engineer should label the dimensions of the 90-degree and parallel parking spaces to demonstrate compliance with the Zoning Bylaw. These plans do not show any reserved spaces for handicapped persons.
14. The engineer should show a curb along the backside of the parking area in order to direct the pavement runoff into the proposed Stormceptor and minimize the amount of dirt that would erode from the edge of the parking area into the drainage system.
15. The engineer needs to revise the Drainage System Operation and Maintenance Schedule to remove the Town of Acton as the party responsible for the ownership and maintenance of the private drainage system.
16. The engineer should include some additional descriptions in the Drainage System Operation and Maintenance Notes so that future owners clearly understand how to inspect and maintain the proposed infiltration chambers. The description should explain how/when to determine if the chambers are clogged and need some maintenance.
17. Drainage System Operation and Maintenance Note #2 refers to a Routine Maintenance Section that is not included in these documents.
18. The engineer should add details on the plans to specify the construction requirements for items such as but not limited to a typical drainage pipe trench cross section, walkways, etc...
19. If there is a septic system that still exists on the site, the engineer needs to show the approximate location of the septic system on the plans along with some notes regarding the removal consistent with the Board of Health requirements.
20. The engineer has not shown the approximate locations of the existing utilities such as water, gas, telephone, electric, sewer stub or cable TV on the plans.
21. The engineer has labeled one of the guy wires for the existing utility pole on MBTA property to be removed in order to construct the new parking area. The applicant will need to obtain approval from the utility companies in order to ensure that the structural stability of this pole is not compromised when the guy wire is removed. It is my understanding that this pole

was installed in the parking area temporarily when the South Acton Bridge was built so that the overhead wires could be redirected during construction. Our office has tried, unsuccessfully, in the past to have the existing overhead telephone wire relocated back onto the poles along Main Street so that this pole could be removed.

22. The engineer should add the plan notes as specified in Section 3.9.10 of the Site Plan Special Permit Rules & Regulations.
23. We recommend that the limits of work be staked in the field by a land surveyor instead of the contractor. Our concern is that the proposed work is shown very close to the property lines and we want to be sure that the contractor does not accidentally encroach onto abutting property or Railroad Street.
24. We recommend that the engineer add the erosion control and sedimentation summary in the Stormwater Report to the plans so that the contractor can easily locate these notes.
25. There should be an erosion & sedimentation control note that states the contractor is responsible to clean-up any sand, dirt or debris which erodes from the site onto Railroad Street or private property, and to remove silt or debris that enters any existing drainage system immediately upon discovery.
26. General Note #14 should be revised to require the silt fence to be installed prior to the start of construction.
27. The engineer has stated that the existing method of trash removal will be used on site. The applicant should explain how/where the waste is currently stored on site. If the waste storage facilities are located outside, the engineer will need to show the location along with the required screening on the plans.
28. The engineer should show the existing gravel area that extends onto the Town parcel next to Main Street (Town Map H-2A Parcel 81) to be loamed and seeded. The plans already show some minor regarding taking place on the Town parcel at this location.
29. The 1000-gallon grease trap detail label the access manhole riser on top of the structure to be a maximum allowable height of 3 feet. Based on the approximate pavement grade at this location, it is our opinion that the 3 foot riser height will be below the pavement surface. The engineer may need to resize the riser to allow the access manhole to be set at the finish grade of the proposed parking area.
30. Construction Key Note #12 should be revised to state the pipe will outlet into the infiltration chambers; not the Stormceptor.
31. Construction Key Note #7 should be revised to show the correct invert elevation from the catch basin (CB-2).
32. The detail for the infiltration chambers should be revised so that the 30.5" dimension relates to the recharge unit and not the depth of the crushed stone. According to the elevations labeled on the detail, the depth of the crushed stone is 3.53 feet.

33. The engineer should show the drainage pipes from the catch basin and the Stormceptor to connect directly into the infiltration chambers to allow a free flowing condition from these drainage structures. If these pipes are not connected directly into the chambers, the pipe will be very susceptible to clogging and it will also limit the flow of runoff to the recharge system. This could potentially cause a backup in the drainage system and possibly result in flooding on the pavement. It could also allow floatable debris to flow over the weir in the inlet Stormceptor and potentially increase the problem with clogging the chambers.
34. According to the drainage report, the water level in the infiltration chambers will be higher than the baffle in the Stormceptor during a 10-year design storm event. As a result, this will allow floatable debris to enter the infiltration chambers and reduce the lifespan of these chambers. We recommend that the chambers or the Stormceptor inverts be revised to prevent this from happening for, at least, all storms up to and including the 10-year design storm.
35. I need some clarification in the drainage reports submitted with the site plan. The drainage summary states that the 4" overflow pipe will only be utilized during a 100-year storm. Based on the elevations determined in the drainage reports, the water level will be higher than the overflow pipes during a 25-year storm event.
36. The storage capacity calculated in the drainage report uses a 4 foot height of crushed stone in the infiltration trench. The detail on the plans only specifies 3.5 feet depth of crushed stone. The engineer might need to re-evaluate the system to ensure that the infiltration chamber still has sufficient capacity to handle the intended volume of runoff.
37. The elevations of the infiltration chambers and the storage capacity of the Stormceptor and the catch basin sump used in the drainage reports don't relate to the dimensions labeled on the typical details shown on the plans. These items need to be corrected so that the information is consistently shown on the calculations as well as the plans.
38. The labels for the Stormceptor and the catch basin as shown on the plans seem to be mislabeled on the title of the individual printouts of the drainage reports.
39. The engineer should add a note to the catch basin detail requiring the hood on the outlet pipe to be watertight so that it prevents gas & oils from discharging into the infiltration chambers.
40. The engineer has shown the access cover on top of the infiltration basin to be a catch basin frame and grate. Typically, we utilize a solid manhole cover to prevent debris and untreated runoff from ponding on top of these chambers.
41. The engineer might need to add some notes to the plan stating the protective measures to be taken during construction in order to protect the root system of the existing cucumber magnolia tree.
42. The snow storage area is relatively small given the size of the new parking lot.

Cc: Garry Rhodes, Building Commissioner



Planning Department

TOWN OF ACTON
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planning@acton-ma.gov

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

To: Don P. Johnson, Town Manager **Date:** July 12, 2006
From: Roland Bartl, AICP, Town Planner *R. B.*
Subject: Site Plan Application #07/06/06-408, 124 Main Street

The proposal calls for the improvement and enlargement of an existing gravel parking lot. No changes are proposed for the building. The parking lot standards for the South and West Acton Village Districts apply (zoning bylaw section 6.9.4). Existing conditions enjoy some zoning protection, but the Board of Selectmen may require that the parking lot be brought into compliance with existing zoning requirements to the extent practicable "in light of the existing site configuration and the cost of compliance compared to the increase in public safety or convenience achieved thereby". (zoning bylaw, section 10.4.6).

- The proposed reduction in driveway width to ± 32 feet at Railroad Street is a move towards compliance from existing conditions as shown on the plan. The zoning bylaw standard is 20 feet. The goal here could be to match the driveway opening to the width of the curb cut in the sidewalk along Railroad Street. There is space for another planting area between the existing sidewalk and the proposed single parking space at the rear of the building. Sufficient maneuvering area for this space would remain in the proposed parking lot.
- At a glance, the plan appears to meet the requirements for 5% landscaped area and tree coverage. The proposed bench area is a nice feature. I defer to the Tree Warden for comments on the specifics, especially the selection of tree species and their suitability for the site.
- In areas where the perimeter landscaping is only 5 feet wide, the proposed 6" high curb does not meet the bylaw specifications. Narrow planting strips must be protected from "vehicular damage through the use of planting beds that are raised above the surface of the parking lot at least 12", or through the use of bollards or balustrades" (zoning bylaw, 6.9.4.7.b)). On the west side of the parking lot the proposed wooden guardrail (-I note that the site plan sheet calls for wooden guard rail, whereas the detail sheet calls for wood-beam guardrail -) serves a similar purpose, but is visually perhaps less attractive.

Cc: Planning Board
Engineering
Historic District Commissions
Building Commissioner

Garry Rhodes

From: Brian Bendig
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2006 4:30 PM
To: Frank Chen; Board of Selectmen; Garry Rhodes; Historic District Commission
Subject: 124 Main Street/SPSP Application and HDC Certificate of Appropriateness Application

Please note the following comments from the Historic District Commission ("HDC") regarding the Site Plan Special Permit application and requests to Mr. Chen, the owner-applicant, to provide certain revisions, details and information to the HDC respecting his concurrent application for a certificate of appropriateness number 0616 concerning proposed parking lot improvements at 124 Main Street. These items were discussed with Mr. Chen most recently at the HDC meeting on August 21, 2006, and are based on the comments made at that meeting.

1. The HDC believes the proposed parking lot opening along Railroad Street should be reduced from 33' to 20' in order to minimize the impact of the new lot and the project design features on the historic character of the property.
2. Related to 1, the HDC believes screening plantings at either side of a 20' lot opening would assist in minimizing the lot's impact. We believe that, if consistent with zoning, it would be appropriate to eliminate the unhistorical raised landscape planter projected for the western side of the parking lot opening. The plantings in this area should be at grade from an historical standpoint. The applicant indicated his engineer believed a raised planter was required, but this is unclear. The HDC also does not support the irregular brickwork in the planter design.
3. The HDC prefers a stone wall or even poured concrete wall design for the projected retaining wall along the MBTA side of the property. The proposed versi-lok wall system lacks historic appropriateness, in that versi-lok is a material of recent development that at best has a faux-historical appearance in those versions that attempt to mimic traditional stone designs. At the last meeting of the HDC with Mr. Chen on August 21, 2006, the HDC requested a reworked retaining wall design. Substantial screening plants in front of the wall and ivy on the wall itself are very desirable elements of the final design.
4. The HDC prefers a simple wooden guardrail to the projected 3'-high picket fence atop the retaining wall. The former would have less visual impact and the latter would be "open" at either end, fulfilling no traditional enclosure purpose and posing no benefit over a wooden guardrail. At our last meeting, we requested a new design for the wood structure atop the retaining wall.
5. The HDC prefers the trash receptacle to remain where it is now positioned.
6. The HDC believes the shed should remain in its present location.
7. The HDC expects to receive updated plans reflecting changes to the design resulting from the SPSP review process and our meetings with the applicant. If received in time, the HDC hopes to be able to vote on application number 616 at its meeting on September 5, 2006. This application is currently open to and including September 21, 2006. The HDC is scheduled to meet for a second time this coming month on September 18th.

Brian Bendig
Chair
Acton Historic District Commission

Garry Rhodes

From: Ms JIM SUZI YARIN [ssyarin@verizon.net]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2006 1:03 PM
To: Garry Rhodes
Cc: Manager Department; Board of Selectmen; Transportation Advisory Committee
Subject: Special Permit 07-06-06-408 Frank Chen - 124 Main St.

MEMORANDUM

To: Garry Rhodes, Building Commissioner
From: Transportation Advisory Committee
Date: August 10, 2006
Cc: Don Johnson, Town Manager
Board of Selectman
Subject: Site Plan Special Permit 07/06/06-408 – Frank Chen – 124 Main Street

As requested by memorandum from the Town Manager, TAC considered the referenced site plan special permit at its August 8 meeting and decided that:

1. The plan does not appear to present any significant transportation issues; and
2. The Applicant might be requested to create, or reserve for future use, space dedicated for cyclists.

The above conclusion was reached in light of the current use in the area of cyclists and the future use of the immediate area as terminus for the Assebet River bike path.

The Transportation Advisory Committee did not consider issues related to regulatory compliance of the application. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application. Please contact TAC if you have any questions.

Transportation Advisory Committee
Jim Yarin, Chair

ACTON MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES DEPARTMENT

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

To: Garry Rhodes, Building Commissioner **Date:** 7/6/06
REV 7/26/06

From: Dean A. Charter, Municipal Properties Director 

Subject: 124 Main Street parking lot review (Site Plan # 7/6/06-408)

I have reviewed the plans submitted and visited the site of the above proposed parking lot improvement; my comments are as follows:

1. The existing site badly needs work, and the fact that any sort of plan has been submitted is a step in the right direction, however, I find the plans submitted to be very hard to interpret.
2. The applicant should submit a detailed plan of the proposed "5 foot wide landscape area". This plan should show compliance with Section 6.9.4.7 of the Zoning Bylaw, and include details on plantings and protection of the plants by use of a raised planting bed.
3. This property is the site of the largest Cucumber Magnolia (*Magnolia acuminata*) in Acton (to the best of my knowledge). I am pleased to see that the proposed plan would save this tree. Great care should be taken to assure that any construction activity does not inadvertently impact this tree.
4. The plan includes a "proposed tree filter". I am unfamiliar with the design, function, or purpose of this structure. It would be helpful to have some information about this structure.
5. A detailed, dimensioned plan of the landscape planter should be submitted.
6. Section 6.9.4.7 requires a ratio of shade trees to square feet of pavement. The applicant should provide calculations and a planting schedule showing compliance

7/26/06 REVISION: The plans submitted with the full site plan packet address all the points noted above.

cc.: Historic District Commission

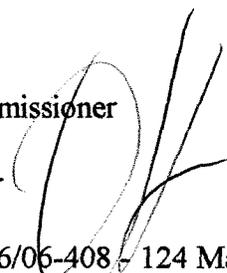


INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

Acton Board of Health - Telephone 978-264-9634 - Fax 978-264-9630

July 18, 2006

TO: Garry Rhodes, Building Commissioner

FROM: Doug Halley, Health Director 

SUBJECT: Site Plan Special Permit 07/06/06-408 - 124 Main Street

The Health Department has reviewed the application Frank Chen has submitted for a Site Plan Special Permit for the construction of parking lot improvements at 124 Main Street and has the following comments:

1. The plans show the location of the sewer line on the property and the proposed connection. However, the Health Department will require a Manhole where the sanitary waste sewer line connects just beyond the proposed grease tank.
2. The applicant proposes an external grease tank to allow an increase of food handling operations within the building. This is consistent with the Health Department recommendations.

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: DON P. JOHNSON, TOWN MANAGER
FROM: FIRE CHIEF *A. Tracy*
SUBJECT: SITE PLAN SPECIAL PERMIT 07/06/06-408-FRANK CHEN-124 MAIN STREET
DATE: 8/11/2006
CC: GARRY RHODES, BUILDING COMMISSIONER

Please be advised that I have reviewed the above named application and have no comment or objections.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

TO: Building, Planning, Engineering, Conservation, Municipal Properties, Fire, Health, Water District, Recreation, TAC, EDC

FROM: Don P. Johnson, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Site Plan Special Permit 07/06/06-408 - Frank Chen - 124 Main Street

Enclosed please find Site Plan application of Frank Chen, under Section 10.4 of the zoning bylaw for approval of a Site Plan Special Permit for the construction of a new ten vehicle parking lot located at 124 Main Street, Acton. Please return any plans not used.

Please send your comment, with copies to Garry Rhodes by August 10, 2006.

Don P. Johnson
Don P. Johnson, Town Manager 

Garry,

No wetlands protection Act issues associated with this proposal.

Tom.