



City of New Bedford

Department of Planning, Housing & Community Development

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STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE

May 4, 2018

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

May 9, 2018

Case #18-19: SITE PLAN REVIEW
160 County Street
Map 30, Lots 247 & 320

**Applicant/
Owner:** Fall River Five Cents Savings
Bank d/b/a BankFive
79 N. Main Street
Fall River, MA 02720

**Applicant's
Agent:** Prime Engineering
P.O. Box 1088
350 Bedford Street
Lakeville, MA 02347

Overview

The applicant's request is for **Site Plan Approval** for the expansion of an existing bank, (Bank 5), expansion of an existing drive-thru and reconfiguration of the parking lot at the subject location. The site is located at 160 County Street (Map 30 Lots 247 & 320) in a Mixed Use Business [MUB] zoned district.

The applicant also submitted a **Special Permit** for a reduction of parking requirements as it was required in the rejection from Inspectional Services. *NOTE: This special permit is no longer required. The applicant owns a parking lot directly across County Street from the site which means the parking requirement is met for the project. The additional parking lot was not included in the original building permit application and was therefore unknown at the time of rejection.*



160 County Street
Front Entrance (west elevation)



160 County Street - Drive-thru
Looking west from Purchase Street

The subject bank site is known as BankFive. The applicant proposes to expand the existing drive-thru for the bank from two to three lanes in order to add an ATM to the drive-thru services. The project also includes new parking, site circulation, storm water management and landscaping.

Existing Conditions

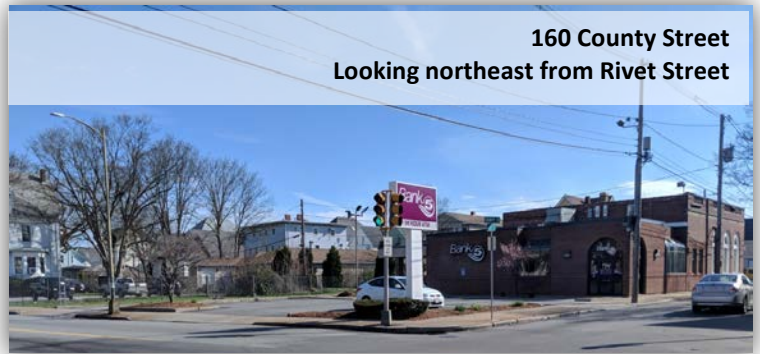
The site in question is a corner lot which fronts on three streets: County Street, Rivet Street, and Purchase Street. The lot where the bank sits is 19,567 SF and includes a 4,500 SF (bank) building. The building is positioned in the southeast corner of the site. The main entrance is on the west side of the building and existing drive-thru lanes are located on the north side of the building.

The drive-thru consists of two teller lanes with a 15' x 17.5' canopy cover. The drive-thru has a one-way circulation pattern with vehicles entering the site (curb cut) from Purchase Street and exiting (via curb cut) onto County Street.

Seven (7) substandard parking spaces, including one handicapped space, are provided in a parking lot located by the main entrance of the bank. Concrete curbing and landscaping separates the parking lot from the drive-thru lane, and therefore it is inaccessible from or to the drive-thru lanes. The parking lot is accessed via curb cuts that are distinct from the drive thru, one coming off of County Street and one off Rivet Street. Minimal landscaping/pervious area is present around the existing parking lot.

The north portion of the subject lot is currently vacant land where a multifamily residential building has been razed. A driveway, chain link fencing, and mature shrubbery remains on this portion of the site.

The site hosts existing signage including a pylon sign located on the south west corner of the site, wall signage on the west side of the building by the main entrance, two small internally illuminated signs on the east (rear) elevation and vinyl window adhesives above the main entrance. The existing pylon sign and wall signage will remain as is on-site.



Lighting on site is provided by a three headed parking lot light over the parking area, wall pack lighting on the south, east, and north sides of the building; and a flood light installed on the roof. Staff also noted a spotlight is installed on a pole in the public right-of-way and directed toward the entrance/ATM vestibule.

Directly west across the bank site on County Street is an eighteen (18) space parking lot owned by the applicant. The parking lot has eight (8) spaces designated for bank use, while the other ten (10) spaces are leased to nearby organizations.

Concrete sidewalks surround both sites on the street frontages. A traffic light is located at the County Street and Rivet Street intersection. Painted crosswalks show signs of wear across all four approaches of County and Rivet Streets. There are no ADA accessible ramps present on any of the corners of the intersection. A crosswalk runs east-west across Purchase Street at Rivet Street.

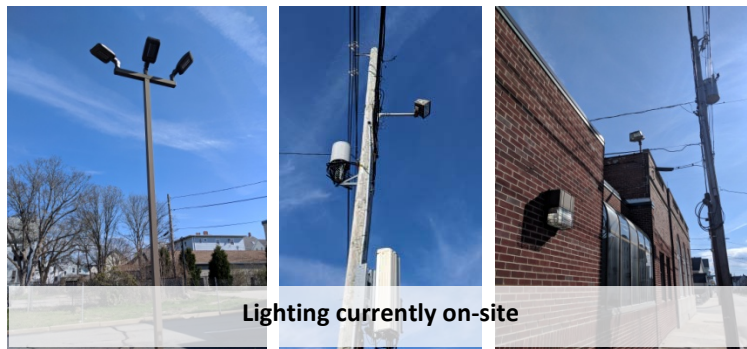
The site does not have any existing on-site stormwater management.

The surrounding neighborhood features a mix of commercial, religious, and multi-unit residential properties. Directly across Rivet Street is St. Martin's Episcopal Church. Diagonally across the intersection is a convenience store. Abutting properties to the north include a parking lot for a multifamily residential dwelling and a property with storage garages. Directly across Purchase Street is a parking lot and multi-family dwelling. Directly across County Street is the parking lot (Map 30, Lot 237), previously noted, that the applicant owns.

Proposed Conditions

The applicant proposes to expand the existing drive-thru and increase the number of parking spaces on site by utilizing the currently vacant northern portion of the site. The drive-thru would increase the number of lanes from two to three. The lane closest to the building would include an ATM, while the other two lanes would continue to offer drive-up teller services. The parking available on-site would increase from the seven (7) current spaces to eighteen (18) spaces proposed. The project also includes reconfiguring site circulation, installing new stormwater management systems, and additional landscaping on-site.

Parking. Based on the standard for bank uses within the city's zoning ordinance¹, this particular site requires twenty-three (23) off-street parking spaces. The proposal depicts eighteen (18) on-site parking spaces and proposes five (5) spaces in the applicant's parking lot across County Street, thus meeting the required 23 spaces. Chapter 9, Section 3142 of the city ordinance specifies that parking may be located on a lot held in the same ownership within two hundred (200) feet of the lot they are intended to serve.



¹ One space per each 200SF of gross floor area but not less than two spaces for each business unit intended to occupy the premises. After 10,000SF of gross floor area, one space for every 1,000SF of gross floor area.

The proposal reconfigures the on-site parking to include two parking areas. The first area is a reconfiguration of the existing parking lot by the front entrance such that it would have eight (8) spaces, and one (1) ADA accessible space. A second area with nine (9) parking spaces is proposed in the northeast corner of the site. All parking spaces proposed will be 9'x20' except for the ADA space which will be 8'x20' with an 8' access aisle. The remaining five (5) required parking spaces would be provided in the existing parking lot located directly across County Street all of which would continue to be designated for bank employee use only.

Circulation. Internal circulation is to be controlled by pavement markings and signage along with curbed, landscaped areas. A proposed curved landscaped bed/traffic island near the County Street curb cut would direct traffic into the parking area and away from the ATM aisle. Proposed signage and pavement markings are shown to discourage turning conflicts near the drive-thru aisles exit.

The site plan proposal also changes the curb cuts to improve egress and ingress access to the roadways. Along County Street, the proposal closes the curb cut closest to the intersection in favor of one wider 28' curb cut in the northwest corner of the site, away from the intersection. This curb cut will have a divided entrance/exit with traffic channeled by pavement stripping, curbed landscaped beds, and signage. Along Rivet Street the curb cut will be moved further away from the building and widened to 22'. Along Purchase Street the existing curb cut for the residential driveway will be closed. The curb cut on Purchase Street for the existing drive-thru will move 5' away from the building and be widened to 24'. Any such proposed curb cut changes must receive approval from the Traffic Commission.

Staff noted a SRTA bus stop and bus stop sign located near the proposed County Street curb cut. The applicant should alert SRTA as to its proposed curb cut changes as SRTA may need to explore the possibility of moving its existing stop further from the curb cut.

Landscaping. The landscaped areas will primarily be grassed areas with trees. The proposed plantings include (A) heritage river clump birch trees, (B) elm trees, (C) pin oak trees, (D) red sunset swamp maple trees, (E) yashino cherry trees, (F) a locust tree, (G) a zelkova serrata village green tree, and (H) juniper. In addition, the existing arborvitae along the north property line will be preserved (I).

Snow/Trash Removal. Snow disposal is not indicated on the site plan. Staff recommends the Board discuss these plans with the applicant and request relevant information be added to the final plan set.

An identified area for waste/recycling is not shown on proposed plans. Additionally, upon visiting the site, staff found no dumpsters or trash receptacles on-site. The board may wish to confirm with the applicant, that outdoor waste facilities are not



needed for the expanded use. If they are needed, the location and any proposed screening for the dumpsters/receptacles should be included on the final plan set.

Stormwater. The project proposes the addition of a Stormceptor brand stormwater treatment system with recharge chambers to handle the storm water from the new parking area. The board should note that the proposed system ties into an existing catch basin in the municipal layout, which would not be permissible according to comments submitted from DPI. The board may wish to condition any approval contingent upon DPI's approval for drainage.

Lighting. Proposed plans illustrate two new light poles within the new parking area along the north property line. No other lighting is shown on the plans submitted. The board may wish to inquire about lighting in the parking area by the front entrance; it is unclear if the existing light pole is to remain. Lighting specification and photometric information have not been provided with the application. The applicant may consider providing lighting specifications for the board for review.

Signage. The application indicates that new directional signage is proposed for placement in the landscaped islands near the County Street entrance and drive-thru. Information about their size, height and sign type has not been provided. The board may wish to inquire about the specifications of the directional signage and have the City Planner sign-off on its behalf prior to any issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Review Comments

As required under city ordinance, the case submittal documents were distributed to City Clerk, City Solicitor, Health Department, Inspectional Services, Engineering, Public Infrastructure, Conservation Commission, Fire Department and School Department.

The Department of Public Infrastructure (DPI) has provided comments for the Board's review, dated April 27, 2018. The DPI comments include the following: City driveway design requirements include a cement ribbon sidewalk with street trees on the Rivet Street sidewalk, and a new ADA ramp at the northeast corner of County Street and Rivet Street. Additionally, DPI noted that the proposed drainage system could not be tied into an existing catch basin located in the public layout (as previously referenced in the "Stormwater" section).

No other comments were received by staff prior to this reports publication. Any additional comments received will be made available at the public meeting.

Master Plan Goal

Insofar as this proposal would support the continued and expanded operation of an existing business within the city, staff finds that this proposal is consistent with the master plan's goal to foster sustainable developments that have the ability to catalyze economic growth within targeted neighborhood, commercial, and development districts through both job creation during construction and the creation of permanent jobs for New Bedford citizens. The project expands a neighborhood financial institution along the County Street commercial corridor. The project is an improvement for the neighborhood, and the development helps to attract emerging businesses and commercial enterprise to this section of the city.

Materials for Consideration

The engineered plan submittal is shown as the "Proposed Parking Lot/Drive Thru Improvements Bank Five, 160 County Street New Bedford, Massachusetts; Owner/Developer: Fall River Five Cent Savings," dated April 3, 2018. Plans were prepared by Prime Engineering, in Lakeville, MA and stamped by Richard Rheume. The plan set consists of the following sheets:

- Cover Cover Sheet
- Sheet 1 Existing Conditions Plan
- Sheet 2 Site Layout
- Sheet 3 Grading & Drainage Plan
- Sheet 4 Landscape & Lighting Plan
- Sheet 5 Erosion Control Plan
- Sheet 6 Details 1
- Sheet 7 Details 2

The following additional architectural plan set materials - unstamped—were also provided, titled as “County Street Branch, 160 County Street New Bedford, Massachusetts,” dated February 5, 2018 prepared by Civitects Architecture Planning & Landscaping Professional Corporation, in Fall River. The plan set consists of the following sheets:

- Sheet A1.01 Existing Conditions
- Sheet A2.01 Proposed

In addition to the foregoing submitted materials, the Planning Board may also wish to consider:

- **Waivers**
The applicant has not submitted any waiver petitions for consideration by the Planning Board.
- **Development Impact Statement (DIS)**
The applicant has provided a DIS for the proposed development.
- **Traffic Impact & Access Study**
The applicant has not provided a traffic analysis for the proposed development. Traffic Impact & Access Studies not required unless requested by the Board.

#18-11 Site Plan Approval

In considering Site Plan Approval for the proposed project, the Board must find the plan to meet a number of objectives identified in Section 5470 of the City’s (c.9) Zoning Ordinance including:

- **Adequate access to each structure for fire and service equipment;**
- **Adequate provision for utilities and stormwater drainage;**
- **Site alteration shall be designed after considering the qualities of the specific location, proposed land use, the design of building form, grading, egress points and other aspects of the development so as to:**
 - Minimize cut/fill volumes, removal of 6” caliper trees and larger, removal of stone walls , displacement of wetland vegetation, extent of stormwater flow increase from the site, soil erosion and the threat of air/water pollution;
 - Maximize pedestrian/vehicular safety to/from the site;
 - Minimize the obstruction of scenic views from publicly accessible locations;
 - Minimize visual intrusion by controlling layout/visibility of parking, storage and outdoor service areas viewed from public ways and residential areas;
 - Minimize glare from vehicle headlights and lighting fixtures;
 - Minimize unreasonable departure from the character, materials and scale of buildings in the vicinity;
 - Minimize contamination of groundwater from on-site wastewater disposal systems or operations on the premises involving the use, storage, handling or containment of solid/liquid wastes and hazardous substances;
 - Ensure compliance with the Zoning Ordinance;
 - Minimize damage to existing adjacent public ways;
 - Promote orderly and reasonable internal circulation within the site so as to protect public safety.

The proposed expansion improves vehicular circulation through the site, as well as access to the site. The project improves vehicular and pedestrian safety around the site by consolidating curb cuts, increasing sight distances, and adding a grass ribbon on the County Street sidewalk. It makes improvements to the stormwater management and landscaping over the existing conditions on-site. Lastly, the project fits within the existing character of the mixed use neighborhood. In light of the aforementioned observations, staff finds that with the conditions presented under “staff recommendations” the project proposal satisfies these objectives.

Staff Recommendations



Site Plan Approval. Having reviewed the submitted materials, planning staff offers the following recommendations for conditions to the Planning Board should it act favorably on the requested site plan approval for the project:

- ☐ That the following specific conditions be applied to this decision:
 - A note be added on the Site Plan that the additional five (5) parking spaces required for the project are provided on NW Rivet Street (map 30 lot 237) less than 200' from the site, which is allowed under zoning ordinance.
 - That the applicant provides evidence of Traffic Commission approval of its proposed curb cut changes to the City Planner prior to any project sign off.
 - That lighting specification be provided to the satisfaction of the City Planner for the parking lot and drive-thru areas.
 - The applicant shall present the City Planner with evidence that they have notified SRTA regarding their proposal for curb cut changes that may affect the location of the existing bus stop.
 - Any change in directional signage be limited and presented to the City Planner for his/her sign off prior to project approval.
 - Information about snow disposal and trash location shall be added to the final plan and shall be to the City Planner's satisfaction.
 - The applicant shall satisfy any conditions of the Department of Public Infrastructure memo dated April 27, 2018.
 - The drainage system/plan be brought into compliance with City requirements, and be approved by DPI prior to the City Planner's final project sign-off.
- ☐ That the following general conditions also be applied to this decision:
 - The project shall be completed according to the plans, notes, reports, and specifications submitted for consideration and final approval by the Planning Board.
 - The project shall be undertaken in a manner consistent with the (forthcoming) Memorandum from the Department of Public Infrastructure received and placed on file and the Planning Board incorporates the DPI memo as part of these conditions.
 - The applicant shall submit final plan revisions to the Planning Division in the following formats: one (1) -11" x 17" Plan Set and one (1) CD or USB with Plan Set in PDF format and shall ensure that these same plans are properly submitted to the Department of Inspectional Services.
 - The applicant shall ensure that a copy of the Notice of Decision, bearing the certification of the New Bedford City Clerk signifying no appeal has been made against the project's approval, be provided for the Planning Division Case file folder.
 - The applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the City Planner for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this Board for further review.
 - The rights authorized by the granted approval must be exercised by issuance of a Building Permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from the date the decision was granted or they will lapse.



Special Permit. It is recommended that the Planning Board allow the applicant to withdraw the Special Permit application.

Materials Provided by the Applicant are available at: <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/planning/planning-board/planning-board-agenda-info-2018/>

160 County Street Map: 247, Lot(s): 247 & 320

NOTE: Property line is approximate; for discussion purposes, only. Aerial map is oriented north.

