

Supplemental Submission in Support of Application of First Hartford Realty for Special Exceptions in connection with Gasoline Station and Convenience Store – File No. 13-97-S – 47 Dayton Street, 1122, 1130, 1138, 1144, 1146, 1150 Whalley Avenue (the “Property”)

The applicant makes this supplemental submission in support of the above-referenced application in connection with the Cumberland Farms gasoline station and convenience store proposed for the Property. In this submission, the applicant addresses certain comments and questions set forth in the City Plan Department Advisory Report, and describes modifications that have been made to the application in response to these and other comments. Also submitted herewith are responses from the applicant’s traffic engineer, Fuss & O’Neill, to traffic related comments set forth in the City Plan Department Advisory Report.

Neighborhood Outreach

Prior to initiating the application process, the development team began engaging in a series of meetings with the residents of the immediate neighborhood, the Ward Alderperson, and neighborhood representatives in order to develop an understanding of neighborhood concerns with the existing condition of the properties and potential concerns with the proposed development. Meetings were conducted in the evening in June 2013, September 2013, November 2013 and February 2014. The meetings were well attended by residents of the neighborhood (15-25 residents per meeting), and they were appreciative of the opportunity to express their thoughts on both the existing condition as well as the proposed development.

General concerns and comments regarding the existing condition of the subject properties and general area included:

Security issues in and around the existing properties, including poor lighting and the lack of a deterrent to illegal activity in and around the subject properties. The properties are considered to be in generally poor condition and do not add to the appearance of the neighborhood. The properties provide very limited opportunity for redevelopment or job creation for the benefit of the neighborhood.

General concerns and comments regarding the proposed development of the Cumberland Farms convenience store and gasoline station included:

Potential traffic impacts of the development. Questions as to 24 hour operation and sale of items potentially conducive to use in connection with illegal drugs. Potential for increasing and enhancing security including through cameras and lighting.

Cumberland Farms and its development team have continued to work to address the concerns and comments expressed at the neighborhood meetings as well as the comments of city staff set forth in the advisory report.

Responses/Modifications

Cumberland Farms has agreed to substantially reduce the hours of operation of the convenience store and gas station from the originally proposed 24 hour operations, which required a special exception to allow operations during the period from 11:00 pm to 6:00 am. The proposed modified hours of operation are from 5:00 am to 12:00 am, which require a special exception for just two extended hours (one in the morning - from 5:00 am to 6:00 am, and one in the evening - from 11:00 pm to 12:00 am) as compared to the 6:00 am to 11:00 pm hours that are allowed as-of-right. These limited extended hours will provide enhanced and convenient access for the community and immediate neighborhood at a single store to fuel, over the counter health products, and food and other products.

In response to the security concerns expressed, the number of continuous on site cameras monitoring both the interior of the store and exterior of the store will be increased. In addition, even though the store hours will be limited to 5:00 am to midnight, security lighting and security camera coverage on site will be maintained 24 hours a day for the benefit of police patrols and the neighborhood.

Convenience store sales of smoking related items will be limited to traditional tobacco products (such as cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, etc.). The store will not sell rolling papers, glass paraphernalia, or other materials that have the potential to be used in connection with the consumption of illegal drugs.

The design of the site amenities takes into account the residences in the area, and includes landscaping in the area adjacent to the existing residential uses intended to provide a buffer from noise and light while simultaneously enhancing security within the neighborhood. The areas adjacent to the residential uses also will be provided with ornamental fencing (six feet tall) as a further buffer. These buffers will limit light at the property line in the area of the adjacent properties to less than one foot candle. The proposed development will also eliminate certain existing conditions in the rear of the site, including poor lighting, that currently present security concerns for the neighborhood. Potential impacts to area residential properties will also be minimized by the reduction in the proposed hours of operation. In addition, the outdoor seating area that was included on the original plan will be eliminated. We also note, in connection with comments regarding the removal of the existing buildings on the site, that these buildings could be removed for purposes of redevelopment with any number of uses that are permitted as-of-right in the BA district.

As noted in the advisory report, the 2003 Comprehensive Plan of Development recognizes that the successful redevelopment of the Whalley Avenue corridor as a neighborhood business district will require a mix of uses, properly operated, generating sufficient customer traffic. The proposed Cumberland Farms Store is a neighborhood store that will provide high quality products and high levels of convenience and service. As addressed in the Fuss & O'Neill traffic

engineering submissions, the proposed development will not create traffic conflicts with other business uses in the area, and will not have a significant impact on traffic operations in the area. The proposed additional lane on Dayton Street at the intersection of Whalley Avenue will improve existing traffic conditions. In addition, the proposed use will generate fewer new vehicle trips than a number of other business uses that are permitted as-of-right on the property. The applicant submits that the redevelopment and improvement of the site from its present condition will not impair and rather will be conducive to present and future development in the area. The proposed development will represent a significant and long-term positive investment in the neighborhood. In addition, the proposed development may encourage other businesses in the area to upgrade their facilities.

Attached are the responses of Fuss & O'Neill to comments regarding traffic and traffic operations in the Whalley Avenue and Dayton Street area expressed by members of the public and staff.