

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ACTION

RE: 115 PEAT MEADOW ROAD. Certificate of Approval of Location (CAL) for New and Used Car Dealer with Repairer's license in a BB zone. (Owner: Joseph Blichfeldt for Sonata 22, LLC; Applicant: Jeffrey Brandfon for Brandfon Imports, LLC d/b/a Brandfon Hyundai; Agent: Mark Sklarz for Green & Sklarz, LLC)

REPORT: 1520-01

ACTION: Approval with Conditions

Submission:

CAL application (received July 1, 2016); \$180 application fee; Existing Conditions Property Map (2 sheets), drawing date June 27, 2016. K-7 form.

Previous City Actions:

CPC 1461-01, February 15, 2012: Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment, change zone from BA to BB.

CPC 1474-02, February 20, 2013: CAL for new car dealership in a BB zone.

CPC 1474-05, February 20, 2013: Inland Wetlands Review and Site Plan Review for conversion of former federal facility to new car dealer in a BB zone.

CPC 1483A, October 16, 2013: Administrative Site Plan Review for new driveway from Frontage Road.

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Approval of Location for a Used Car Dealer, New Car Dealer, and Repairer Licenses for an existing business on this property. This property has been a car dealership since 2013, when Quality Hyundai moved to the site from Branford. The proposed project would maintain the existing use as a new and used car dealer, with few changes to existing conditions proposed. Certificates of Approval of Location run with the operator and with the exception of close family members, require reapplication at each change of ownership, which is why this application is being heard by the Commission.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The submitted site plan shows a central showroom surrounded by large asphalt lots with a total of 176 marked parking spaces. Of these, 21 spaces are for customers, 20 are for employees, and 205 are for vehicles for sale, a portion of which will presumably be in unmarked spaces along the western side of the property. The site can be accessed from Frontage Road, which runs alongside I-95 northbound, Peat Meadow Road, or an access easement that leads to the neighboring CarMax property and another entrance from Frontage Road in East Haven. Hours of operation are proposed to be 7:30 AM-7:00 PM Monday through Thursday, 7:30 AM-5:00 PM Friday, and 7:30 AM-4:00 PM Saturday. All proposed uses are allowed by right in the BB zone, which is designated for automotive sales.

Nature of the Proposed Site: The site is bordered by Peat Meadow Road and predominantly residential properties to the west, US 1 and I-95 to the south, a mix of park (Peat Meadow Park) and industrial uses (New Haven Terminal) to the north, and the East Haven town line and a large used auto sales center (CarMax) to the east. The site has a 24,000 SF existing showroom, parking spaces, and lighting that will be maintained. The site can be accessed from Frontage Road, which runs alongside I-95 northbound, Peat Meadow Road, or an access easement that leads to the neighboring CarMax property and another entrance from Frontage Road in East Haven. To the east is a vegetated swale that accepts some surface runoff from the site and the adjacent CarMax site.

Resulting Traffic Patterns: No changes are proposed to the existing use or intensity of the business, and no significant changes to existing traffic patterns are expected.

Nature of the Surrounding Area: Much of the surrounding area is characterized by heavy auto usage. The property immediately to the east, in East Haven, is another large car dealership, while Frontage Road and six lanes of I-95

lie to the south. Another large car dealership, Lexus of New Haven, is situated opposite the site across I-95. The properties to the west, across Peat Meadow Road, are largely single-family homes.

Proximity to Public Buildings: None are in proximity.

The Comprehensive Plan: The 2015 Plan of Development calls for institutional use for the area, but this is likely a holdover from the site's previous use as a US. Postal Service facility. Much of the surrounding neighborhood is targeted for general commercial mixed use, including the Lexus dealership across the street. Maintaining the property as an auto dealership would be in line with these surrounding uses.

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

As the proposed uses are allowed by right, and are in fact the primary uses intended, within the BB zone, are continuations of existing uses that are accordance with the character of the neighborhood and the 2015 Comprehensive Plan of Development, and are not expected to have any detrimental impact upon surrounding uses or traffic, the Commission finds the location appropriate for the continuation of the existing use with the new owner and approves the application with the following conditions:

- Commercial traffic shall not use Peat Meadow Road to exit the site.

ADOPTED: July 20, 2016
Adam Marchand
Acting Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director