

CITY OF TORRINGTON



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To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Jeremy Leifert, AICP, City Planner JL
Date: August 24, 2022
RE: Site Plan #1419, 800 Charles Street (Torrington School) – new driveway for student drop-off and pickup; correct existing entrance to drive

In reviewing the application, plans and documents submitted, I have the following comments:

BL Companies, on behalf of the City of Torrington, has filed an application for the Torrington School property at 800 Charles Street, Tax Assessor's Map 137 Block 001 Lot 005 to permit a new driveway from Charles Street into the School property for student drop-off and pickup and corrections to an existing driveway entrance.

The property is owned by the City of Torrington, is 10.8 acres in area and is located in an R10s residential zone. The current use of this property is as an elementary school and is a conforming use by special exception and site plan approval under zoning regulations section 3.1, Table of Permitted Uses, subsection 2.05. This application is to correct and permit a driveway that was installed without prior approvals in the fall of 2021. This activity is allowed under site plan approval as there is no proposed change in use on the property. No new special exception or public hearing is required for this application. Plans submitted are titled, "Land Development Plans for Proposed Driveway, 800 Charles Street, Torrington, Connecticut, 06790" by BL Companies, Meriden, Connecticut. Revised to August 23, 2022. 8 Sheets. City Hall Staff has met previously with the school facilities staff, the school superintendent and the design engineer to discuss the project prior to this meeting.

Other Items of note:

1. Concerns regarding the initial driveway entrance point within the one-way exit for the bus traffic necessitated the modification to the site in addition to the overall approval for the driveway.
2. Initial re-construction of the sidewalk near the driveway entry point presented issues for ADA access and is required to be addressed by these plans

Other Staff Comments:

Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Assistant City Planner, in an email to me dated August 23, 2022, offered the following comment on the plans:

Wetlands – There are no regulated wetlands or watercourses on or in the vicinity of the subject property that would require wetlands review for this proposal. Therefore, no wetlands permits are required prior to this application. This constitutes a favorable wetlands report for this application.

Landscaping – Plan describes removal of an existing zelkova tree and the planting of a replacement adjacent to the new driveway entrance. I recommend choosing a native tree species for that location with a similar growth habit such as American redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), American hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) or river birch (*Betula nigra*).

Lighting – No lighting additions or removals are proposed or recommended as a part of this application.

Signage – There are no new signs proposed as part of this application, although existing directional signage will be relocated to the new location. A sign permit shall be required before installing any other signage in accordance with section 5.15 of the zoning regulations.

Conservation – This application was not referred to the conservation commission for review and comment.

Architectural Review Committee: This project was not referred to the ARC for comment.

Engineering: Paul Kundzins, City Engineer, in an email to me dated August 24, 2022 offered the following comments on the submitted plans:

Based on the revised submission dated 8-23-22, my only comment is since the pickup truck turning template does off track the entrance and second turn, the width of the entrance and driveway through the inner left turn should be made wider.

Per City regulations, the max width for one-way driveway can be up to 15' or as required for the largest design vehicle. As such I suggest making the driveway at least 15' wide for both turns or as needed for no off tracking of the pickup truck.

Police Traffic: Police Traffic Sergeant Dustin Baldis, in email to me dated August 18, 2022, offered the following comments:

I have reviewed these plans and it appears to have solved the issue of entry into a one way, the intersecting entrance, and has now squared it up with the parking lot driveway across the street. It appears that site distance should not be an issue as it is entrance only. It appears they lost only a couple spaces that could be made up in the across the way parking lot if at all necessary. Just want to be certain the signage is MUTCD compliant and clearly marks that it is a one way on Charles Street for drop off and pick up only. Will this area need to be gated now or can it be left open now that it will be compliant? Other than that, as far as traffic I have no further comment

Fire: Fire Marshal Edward Bascetta offered no comments on the plans

WPCA: Mary Perotti, WPCA Administrative Assistant, indicated in an email to me on August 23, 2022 that WPCA has no comments on this application

Building: Building Official Kevin Gillette, in an email to me dated August 18, 2022, offered the following comments:

Driveways, which are not part of an accessible route, are exempt from permit requirements in accordance with IBC Section 105.2

Conclusion: I recommend approval of Site Plan #1419, 800 Charles Street (Torrington School) for a new driveway for student drop-off and pickup and to correct the existing entrance, with the following conditions and recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the applicant follow the advice of Assistant City Planner Nate Nardi-Cyrus in his August 23, 2022 email to the City Planner with regard to landscape plantings
2. The applicant shall follow comments of Paul Kundzins, City Engineer, with respect to driveway width in his August 24, 2022 email to the City Planner
3. The applicant shall follow all requirements of Police Traffic Sergeant Dustin Baldis for signage in accordance with his August 18, 2022 email to the City Planner
4. In accordance with section 8.4.3 and 8.4.6 of the zoning regulations, the following shall be submitted to the City Planner:
 - a. Two paper copies of the full approved plans including the engineer's stamp and chairman's signature box on the title page.
 - b. One mylar copy of the following plan sheets for filing with the City Clerk in accordance with section 8.4.3.P of the zoning regulations:
 - Site Plan
 - Grading and Drainage PlanEach mylar sheet shall bear a chairman's signature box, a copy of the approval letter from the commission, an engineers' seal and live ink stamp.
 - c. Final copies of paper and mylar plans shall include modifications required in items 1-3 above.
 - d. Mylar sheets shall be filed by the applicant with the City Clerk after the signature of the Chairman and prior to the approval of zoning permits to begin construction.

END OF MEMO

Cc: John Barlow, City of Torrington Public Schools
BL Companies