

May 26, 2023

**To:** Kathleen Colwell  
Planning Division Director  
City of Methuen  
41 Pleasant Street  
Methuen, MA 01844

**A&M Project #:** 3115-01A  
**Re:** Peer Review #1  
Taco John's  
436 Broadway  
Methuen, MA 01844

**Copy:**

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Dear Ms. Colwell,

Allen & Major's (A&M) is in receipt of review comments provided by the City's review engineer, TEC, Inc., dated April 27, 2023. Please find A&M's responses to these comments below. The initial comments from TEC are provided, along with A&M's responses in **bold**.

On-Site Traffic & Parking Comments:

1. The entrance lane for the Taco John's portion of the site is very close to Route 28. TEC recommends shifting the proposed curb cuts into the site further from the intersection with Route 28. Preferably, the new entrance to the proposed restaurant would be located across from the existing building.

**A&M Response: The site design has been revised in such a way to shift the proposed restaurant's access point to the south, along the main entrance drive aisle, further into the site and away from the intersection with Route 28, as requested.**

2. TEC recommends that the Applicant propose additional improvements along the main drive aisle for the plaza. The current layout for the parking area south of the main driveway fails to provide adequate definition for travel ways and parking areas. TEC recommends the installation of curbing along the south side of the main aisle and creating a dead-ended parking with a striped turnaround area at the end. This section of parking could be signed for employee use.

**A&M Response: Additional curbing has been added to the design along the south side of the main entrance drive aisle, as requested. The requested striping has been added to this area as well.**

3. The proposed sidewalks should be widened to 7 feet in areas of head-in parking due to the impacts associated with vehicle overhang, particularly in areas where accessible stalls are proposed.

**A&M Response: Sidewalks adjacent to head in parking stalls have been increased to 7 feet in width, as requested.**

4. The current site plan depicts a crosswalk in the middle of the drive-thru lane and just in front of order board where motorists may be distracted. TEC recommends introducing a low-set ornamental fence along the westerly parking aisle and sidewalk to better direct patrons to the crosswalk near the southwest corner of the building. TEC also recommends that this area be reconfigured to provide the crosswalk in front of the stop bar and stop sign rather than in the middle of potentially queued vehicles.

**A&M Response: Due to the revisions to the site design mentioned above, this comment no longer applies.**

5. The Applicant provided a reasonable depiction of fire truck access that may bypass the restaurant building on its east side. TEC defers to Methuen Fire Department on the sample fire truck used for the truck turning analysis. The turning analysis should depict access/egress throughout the site, including to the existing storefronts.

**A&M Response: The Truck Turning Plan has been revised to depict access throughout the site, as requested.**

#### Off-Site Traffic Impacts & Parking Assessment

6. The traffic study supplied by the Applicant does not conform to industry (or MassDOT) guidelines for the preparation of a traffic study. Route 28 is owned and controlled by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). The Applicant will be required to submit an Application for Access to State Highway to document the traffic impacts associated with the expansion of the existing plaza. The Applicant's team should provide an update regarding any initial scoping discussions with MassDOT that may affect the proposed site plan layout under review by the CD Board.

**A&M Response: The applicant's traffic engineer will respond to this comment under separate cover.**

7. Consistent with MassDOT's requirements, the Applicant's traffic engineer should provide any data for the existing traffic conditions of the site. TEC recommends that the Applicant collect traffic data during the weekday midday (11 AM to 1 PM), weekday evening (4 PM to 6 PM), and Saturday midday (11 AM to 2 PM) and provide an assessment of the intersection capacity under Existing, No-Build, Build, and Build-with-Mitigation scenarios.

**A&M Response: The applicant's traffic engineer will respond to this comment under separate cover.**

8. This segment of Route 28 has been identified as a Top 200 high-crash location in the Commonwealth by MassDOT. The current study establishes a considerable number of angle and personal injury crashes since 2016. The updated traffic study should include an expanded discussion of the crash trends at the site driveway and any adjacent intersections that may be affected by the increased queuing associated with the expansion of the plaza. MassDOT is likely to require a formal Road Safety Audit (RSA) for this intersection given that the last RSA was performed in October 2014.

**A&M Response: The applicant's traffic engineer will respond to this comment under separate cover.**

9. TEC recommends that the Applicant collect parking occupancy data for the existing plaza during the general time frame of the traffic counts listed above to provide documentation to establish the existing parking operations, impacts, and needs associated with the proposed fast food restaurant.

**A&M Response: The applicant's traffic engineer will respond to this comment under separate cover.**

Site Plan Comments:

10. Section 6 of Methuen's Rules and Regulations Governing for Special Permit and Site Plan Approval Application Procedures, calls for Locus Map showing the project site, adjacent areas, critical intersections, and zoning boundaries. Furthermore, Section 6 calls for a lighting plan as well. Applicant should review the mentioned document and revise the Site Plans in accordance with Section 6.

**A&M Response: The locus map on the site plan set cover sheet has been revised to depict the information requested. The applicant will request a waiver from the lighting plan requirement because the site lighting will remain generally unchanged. One light pole is proposed to be relocated, to a point that is further from the abutting property line and Route 28 right-of-way.**

11. TEC defers to the Methuen Building Department to confirm if adequate parking exists at the site.

**No response required.**

12. TEC recommends adding the limit of work to the Grading & Drainage Plan.

**A&M Response: The proposed saw cut line has been added to the Grading & Drainage Plan. This line, when combined with the proposed contours, illustrates the limits of work. The limit of work line is shown on the Site Preparation Plan.**

13. The inverts for the grease trap (1,000 GAL) detail appear to not match what is shown on the Utilities Plan.

**A&M Response: The grease trap detail is a standard detail which does not call out the inverts. The contractor must reference the Utilities Plan for the required inverts.**

14. For the SMH-1 (Drop Sewer Manhole), the detail calls that the pipe inlet to have a minimum of 5 feet of cover. The plans show that the invert in elevation for SMH-1 is higher than the minimum cover.

**A&M Response: The drop manhole detail has been revised to require insulation where a minimum of 5 feet of cover cannot be maintained.**

15. There are no invert elevations for the existing drainage structures. The Applicant should provide evidence that the existing drainage system is functional and in working condition. TEC recommends that the Operations & Maintenance Records for the site be submitted to the Board.

**A&M Response: The Existing Conditions Plan has been updated to include the rim and invert information for the existing drainage structures. The Site Preparation Plan has been updated to include cleaning of drainage structures that are clogged or full of debris.**

Stormwater Comments:

16. Flow paths should be shown on the existing and proposed drainage maps.

**A&M Response: Time of concentration flow paths have been added to the watershed plans. See revised sheets EWS-1 & PWS-1.**

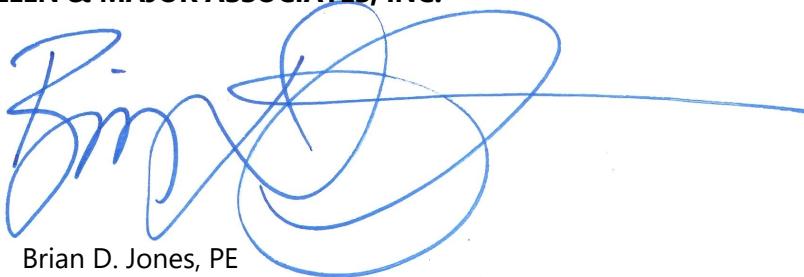
17. TEC recommends the Applicant to revise their HydroCAD calculations using National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Atlas 14 data.

**A&M Response: The HydroCAD calculations have been revised to use the NOAA Atlas 14 data. See a copy of the design values used within the drainage summary.**

18. An Operation and Maintenance Plan (O&M Plan) and a Construction Period Pollution Prevention Plan (CPPP Plan) should be provided with this submittal.

**A&M Response: An Operation and Maintenance Plan and Construction Period Pollution Prevention Plan have been included within the drainage summary.**

Very Truly Yours,  
**ALLEN & MAJOR ASSOCIATES, INC.**



Brian D. Jones, PE  
Senior Project Manager

Attachments:

1. Site Development Plans, revised as of May 26, 2023
2. Drainage Report, revised as of May 26, 2023