

City of Rochester, New Hampshire

Department of Building, Zoning and Licensing Services 31 Wakefield Street * Rochester, NH 03867 (603) 332-3508

Variance Application

	DO NOT WHITE IN THIS SPACE
TO: BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT CITY OF ROCHESTER	CASE NO 2018-12
E .	DATE FILED 10/24/18
	Julia Libby ZONING BOARD CLERK
Applicant: 717 Columbus Avenue, LLC	
E-mail: jcronin@cbzlaw.com (counsel) Phone:	603-624-4333 (counsel)
Applicant Address: 112 Gates Street, Portsr	nouth, NH 03801
Property Owner: 717 Columbus Avenue, L	LC
Property Owner Address: 112 Gates Street, Por	tsmouth, NH 03801
Variance Address: 717 Columbus Avenue	
Map Lot and Block No: Map 131, Lot 7	
Description of Property: Vacant Land	
Proposed use or existing use affected: gas station, convenience stor	re and restaurant with drive-through
The undersigned hereby requests a variance to the terms of Article terms be waived to permit the proposed use stated above in the Neigh	Section 42:5(E) and asks that said aborhood Mixed Use Zone.
	•
The undersigned alleges that the following circumstances exist which pland under the strict terms of the Zoning Ordinance and thus constitut	
Signed: Wary Both Heihert	Date: October 13, 2018

Variance Criteria

Please see attached narrative.
2) If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because: Please see attached narrative.
3) Granting the variance would do substantial justice because: Please see attached narrative.
4.) If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because: Please see attached narrative.
5.) Unnecessary Hardship: a. Owning to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in an unnecessary hardship because: i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because: Please see attached narrative.
And: ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because: Please see attached narrative.
b. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owning to the special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in the strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable reasonable use of it. Please see attached narrative.

Attachment to Variance Application 42:20 and 42:21 717 Columbus Avenue, LLC ("Applicant")
Map 131, Lot 7 ("Property")
717 Columbus Avenue, Rochester, New Hampshire

BACKGROUND

This subject property ("Site") is a vacant lot, approximately 76,666 square feet, located in the Neighborhood Mixed Use zone ("NMU"). 717 Columbus Avenue, LLC ("Owner") is the current record owner and of the Property. The Applicant seeks to obtain permit and approvals to improve the Property with a convenience store, small restaurant, and fuel dispensary. The Applicant engaged the services of Frank Monteiro, a Professional Engineer to undertake an initial feasibility analysis for the propose use. The results were positive and it appears the Property is ideally suited for the proposed use other than its zoning classification. In the past, the proposed use was allowed without the need for a variance.

The objective of the NMU zone is largely to serve adjacent residential neighborhoods. Uses allowed as a matter of right include convenience stores, cafes, restaurants and retail uses up to 5,000 square feet. Other than the fuel dispensaries, the convenience store and restaurant appear to be allowed as permitted uses. The drive through lane for the restaurant will require a conditional use permit as per the development standards applicable to the NMU. Gas stations, as defined by the ordinance, are allowed only in three zones. The zones in which gas stations are allowed include the Downtown Commercial zone ("DC"), Highway Commercial zone ("HC"), and the Granite Ridge Development zone ("GR").

Although the NMU is generally classified as residential zone, the Property fronting on Columbus Avenue is not suitable for residential development. Columbus Avenue is a busy street with high traffic counts. Neighboring uses include Advanced Auto Repair and a Restaurant. Although there is an abutting apartment property at the rear, most of the uses along Columbus Avenue are commercial in nature. The general reference to gas stations and the related definition contemplates gas stations in general. The method of sale and delivery of fuel for the driving public has changed markedly in the past several decades. In years gone by, a mechanic usually operated a service station with a small number of gas pumps and a few service bays. The operator sold fuel, but was primarily in business as a mechanic. In those times, an attendant would fill up the gas, check the oil and tire pressure, and wash windows. The next phase was dominated by self-service fuel stations that included a small payment kiosk and several pumps. The current trend is to pair fuel dispensers with convenience stores and restaurants that cater to the needs of the residents in the community and passersby. The full service convenience development as proposed here is a staple in New Hampshire and throughout the United States.

RELIEF REQUESTED

The Applicant met with the Planning Staff to discuss the Project and the required approvals. A variance to permit the proposed use is required due to the inclusion of the fuel dispensers.

1. Section 42:5(E) – To permit proposed mixed used a convenience facility, including fuel dispensers in the Neighborhood Mixed Use Zone.

VARANCE CRITERIA

1. Granting the variance will not be contrary to the public interest:

According to the Supreme Court, the public interest and spirit and intent prongs of the variance test are essentially the same and should be considered together. Farrar v. City of Keene, 158 N.H. 684 (2009). The commercial uses proposed are consistent with the essential character of the neighborhood and there will be no harm to the public interest. The convenience store and restaurant fit the express goals of the Ordinance. The fuel dispensers are a convenience to neighbors and the public in general. It is rare to find a convenience store today that does not provide fuel to meet the demand of its customers. The location is proper for the retail sale of fuel as it is located on a busy street with significant traffic. Although not expressed, fuel dispensers could be considered an accessory use for a modern convenience store. Moreover, the public interest will be enhanced as the Property will provide greater convenience and utility for the public in general, and customers in particular.

2. If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:

When the uses proposed are consistent with the essential character of the neighborhood, there will be no harm to the public interest. Here, the project is consistent with the zoning objectives and is in harmony the goals of providing services to the neighborhood. Moreover, the public interest will be enhanced as the Site will provide greater convenience and utility for the public in general, and customers in particular. The spirit and intent of the ordinance is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. A review of the Zoning Ordinance is in order to determine whether the proposed variances, if granted, are consistent with the spirit and intent of the ordinance. Chester Rod and Gun Club v. Town of Chester, 152 N.H. 577 (2005). The ordinance contemplates retail; restaurant and service uses in this area and the proposed use will not cause harm or injury to the public interest. To be contrary to the spirit and intent of the ordinance or injurious to the public rights of others, the variances must unduly, and in a marked degree, conflict with the ordinance's basic zoning objectives. Id. at 581, citing, Coderre v. Zoning Board of Review of City of Pawtucket, 105 R.I. 266 (1969). In New Hampshire, an applicant may satisfy this prong, and the related public interest prong, by

showing the variances, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. Id.; see also, <u>Harrington v. Town of Warner</u>, 152 N.H. 74 (2005); and, K. Young, Anderson's American Law of Zoning, Section 20.43. A variance will also not be contrary to the spirit of the ordinance if it does not threaten the public health, safety, or welfare.

Here, the relief requested will in no way harm or impact the essential character of the neighborhood. The area will be essentially the same before and after the proposed improvements. The Property, however, will be improved and the curb appeal and functional utility of the Property will be enhanced consistent with the public interest.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

The substantial justice prong is subjective and requires a showing that the harm to the Applicant if the variance is denied is greater to the harm to the public if the variance is granted. The Applicant contends there will be no harm to the public if the variance is granted. The variance, if granted, will allow this mixed use to proceed and provide services to the neighbors and the community. If the variance is denied, the Applicant will not move forward to improve the property and the opportunity to improve the tax base with a new, efficient and properly designed service facility will be lost.

4. <u>If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be</u> diminished because:

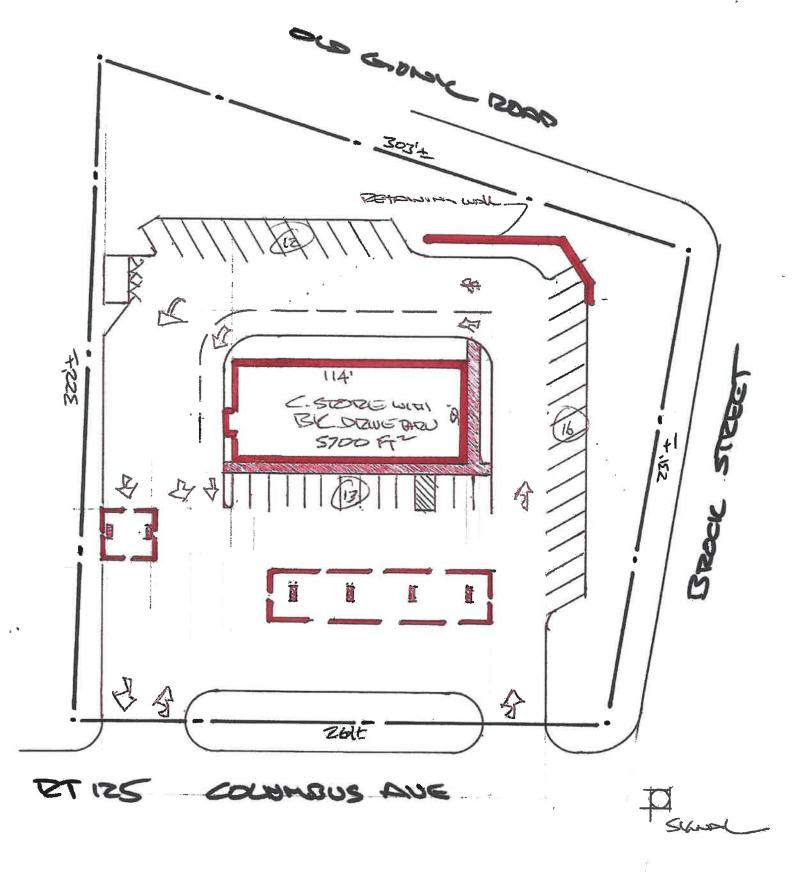
The neighborhood is commercial in nature and the Property is located in the area of diversified commercial uses. The Property maintains frontage on Columbus Avenue, a busy street with commercial uses. The daily traffic counts are substantial and consistent with meaningful and successful commercial uses. The variance requested, if granted, will have no impact on the surrounding properties and will not diminish their value. See, Daniels v. Town of Londonderry, 157 N.H. 519 (2008). The proposed variances will provide for improvement of the Property to meet the service needs of the community. The proposed use will not have the stigma attached to historical gas stations. The tanks and safety systems are state of the art and will be installed under close supervision and best practices. Similarly, there will be no outside storage of cars in disrepair waiting repair. The facility will dispense fuel only and vehicle service will not be available.

5. Literal Enforcement of the ordinance will result in an unnecessary hardship.

A. Owing to special conditions of the property, there is no fair and substantial relationship between the general purposes of the relevant ordinances and their application to the Property. The Property has special conditions such as a corner lot location and its existence among other commercial properties. The terms of the ordinance that lump gas stations into one class and do not distinguish for fuels dispensaries incident to a convenience store suggest the drafter did not include such a

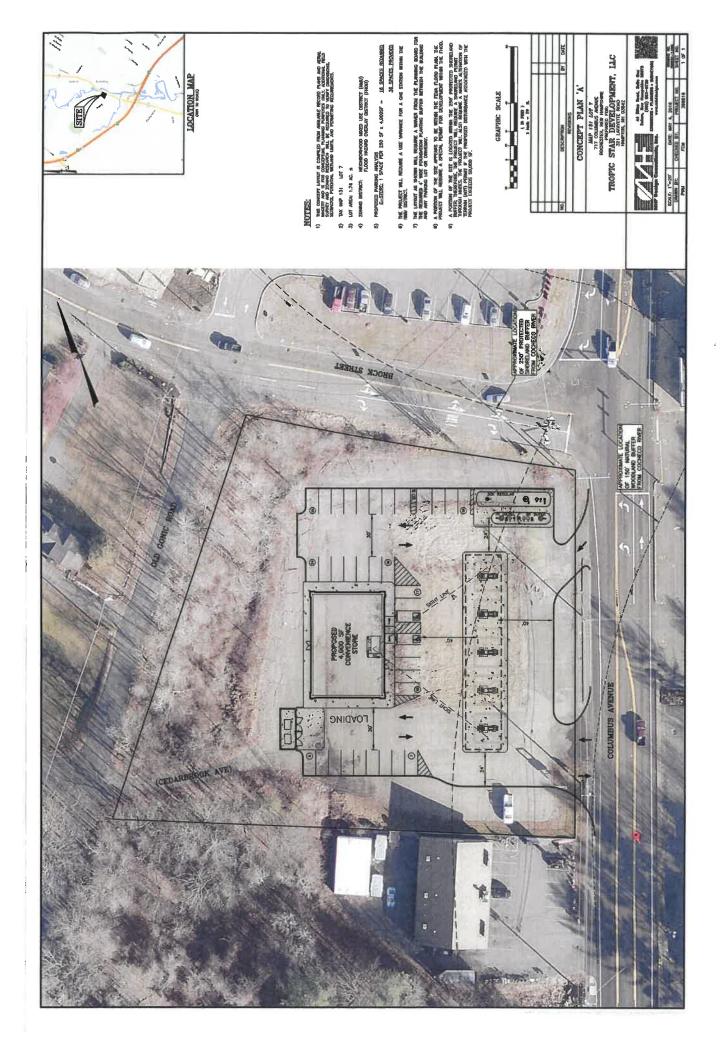
use as a prohibition in their consideration. The proposed facility fits the goals of the zone for providing services to the neighboring residences. Traffic for residences in the area flow to the intersection. A convenience store with mixed uses is typical for the current state of our society and such a use is not expressly defined in the ordinance.

B. The proposed use is reasonable. The use proposed is reasonable as it is consistent with similar successful facilities throughout the region. The project engineer is very experienced completing the design and approval of over one hundred similar facilities.



TROCHESTER NH (2)







43°17'22.31" N 70°58'33.73" V

TABLE 18-C FOOD-LODGING-PUBLIC RECREATION USES 8/7/2014

FOOD-LONG-PUBLIC RECREATION LISES		Residentia	dential Districts	S		Commercial Districts	1 Districts		Industrial Districts	Districts	S.	Special	Critoria/Conditions
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Café		•	Ь	O	۵	۵	۵	۵				۵	Section 42.24
Campground	,	,	u	ш	1	1	1	1	,	ш		٠	Section 42.22
Caterer	i	-4	Д	V.t.	۵	а		a	۵	۵	,		
Club			O		۵	۵		4		ı			Section 42.21
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Conference Center		(p)	ပ	100	۵	D.	۵.	۵			۵	۵	Section 42.21
Country Club		1	(0)	ပ			۵	ш		O			Section 42.21
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Function hall	,		×		Д	۵	۵	۵	101	9		•	
Golf Course	1			۵		1	۵	ı	,	۵			Section 42.22
Health Club	,	-	ပ	ပ	۵	۵	₾	۵					Section 42.21
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Lodging, Hotel	•		၁		۵	O	۵	۵		1	O	O	Section 42.21
Lodging, Motel	,					1	4	۵	,		,	U	Sections 42.20 & 42.21
Nightclub		(.		1.	ш	•	۵	Д		•		4	
Recreation, Indoor	٠	,	O	1	O	ပ	۵	۵		O		r	Section 42.21
Recreation, Outdoor		1		ပ		ပ	۵	۵	ı	υ	,		Section 42.21
Recreation, Park	۵	Ь	Ф	С	О	۵		۵		O	9(6))	(*)	Section 42.21
Restaurant	1		۵		۵	ပ	۵	۵	1	,		۵.	Section 42.21
Restaurant, Dive-through			P		۵	•3	O.	۵					
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Theater/Cinema (5,000 s.f. or less)	٠	1	d.	1	۵	۵	O.	۵		1		-	Section 42.21
Theater/Cinema (over 5,000 s.f.)	•	-		,	ပ	-	۵	п		,			Section 42.21

*LEGEND. P = Permitted Use, C = Conditional Use, E = Use Allowed by Special Exception

SALES-SERVICE-DEFICE-INSTITUTIONAL LISES		Kesidential Districts	al Distric	2		COMITTE	Commercial Districts		IIIONSIII	Industrial Districts	208	Specia	Criteria/Conditions
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Adult Day Care Home	•	ш	ш	Ш	۵	۵	,	۵			a.		Section 42.22
Adult Oriented Establishment	**						Ť			o			Section 42.22
Agricultural Building, Reuse of Existing	O	O	1	U		۵	,						Section 42.22
Antique Shop		O	۵		Ь	Ь	۵.	0			•		Section 42.21
Artist Studio	,	O	a.	•	۵	۵	,	<u>a</u>					Section 42 21
Bank		٠	o	200	d	۵	۵	а					Section 42.21
Convenience Store		O	۵.		۵	ш	۵	4					Section 42 21
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Day Care - 2 (Day Care - Family)	-	ш	۵	ш	۵	۵		4			۵		Sections 42.20 & 42.21
Day Care - 3 (Day Care Center)		-	ш	ш	۵	۵		. В	Э		ш		Section 42.22
Florist	,	1	n.	1	۵	,	۵	4	ı	1	,		
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Gas Station	٠				d	***	٥	۵					Sections 42.20 & 42.21
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	No Alt No Direction 717 COLUMBUS AVE, 1 OWNERSHIP Owner 1: 777 COLUMBUS AVENUE LLC Owner 2:	Owner 3: Street 1: 112 GATES ST	Street 2:	St/Prov. NH Postal: 03801-4608	PREVIOUS OWNER Owner 1: MCMANUS LAWRENCE P JR REVOC	Owner 2: TRUST % TRUSTEES	Twi/City: PORTSMOUTH	Postal: 03801-4608	NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION	This Parcel contains 1.76 AC of land mainly classified as COM	DEV LAND			RA	Code			PERTY FA	Item Code Descip	OMINI	u	Census:	D RO ROCHESTER	so .	I AND SECTION (Elect	S C	_	325 RETAIL/SVC

Total: 178,704 Spl Credit Total: Database: AssessPro Parcel LUC: 390 | COM DEV LAND | Prime NB Desc | COMMERCIAL Disclaimer: This Information is believed to be correct but is subject to change and is not warranteed.

Total SF/SM: 76665.60

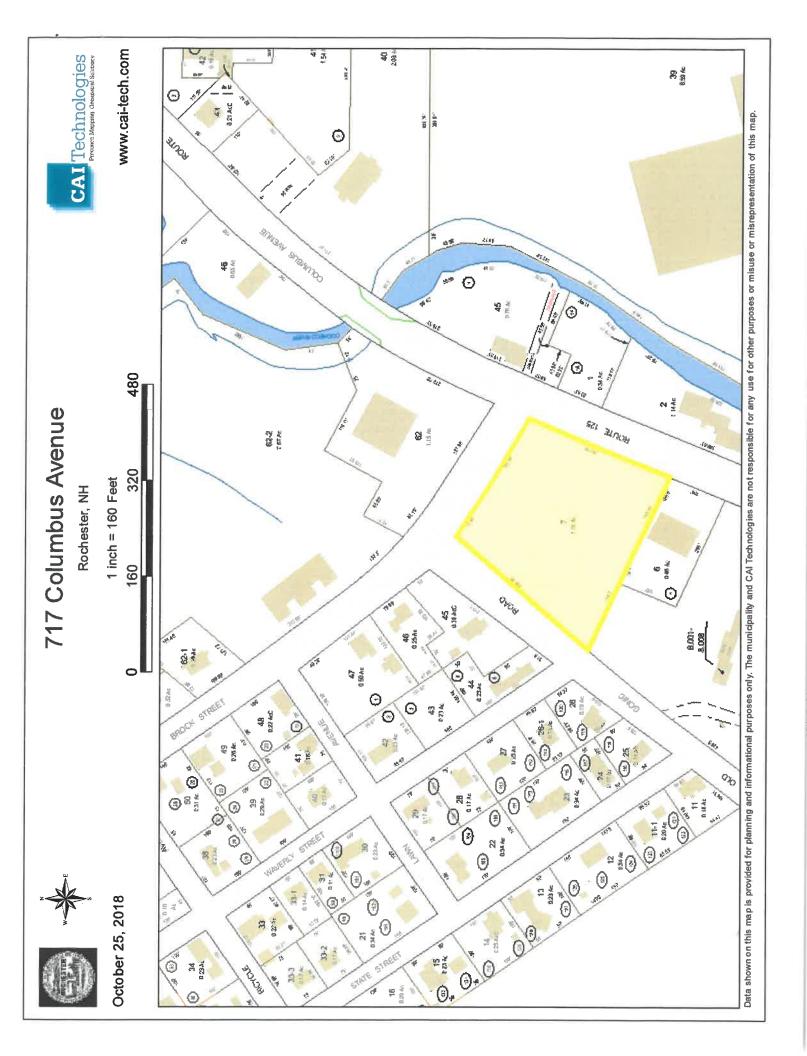
Total AC/HA: 1.76000

2019

178,700

717 Columbus Avenue





Abutters List Variance Application 717 Columbus Avenue, Rochester, NH

ABUTTERS:

Map/Lot 0131-0001-0000 Haley & Richard Partners 724 Columbus Avenue Rochester, NH 03867

Map/Lot 0131-0002-0000 Haley & Richard Partners 724 Columbus Avenue Rochester, NH 03867

Map/Lot 0131-0006-0000 George & Diane Frisbee Quick Cash 725 Columbus Avenue Rochester, NH 03867-3926

Map/Lot 0131-0008-0000
Amanda York, President
Cedarbrook Village Condominium Association
14A Cedarbrook Village
Rochester, NH 03867

and

Lisa Kimball, Secretary & Treasurer Cedarbrook Village Condominium Association 14A Cedarbrook Village Rochester, NH 03867

Map/Lot 0131-0026-0000 Gayden Lambert & Jennifer Martin PO Box 646 Barrington, NH 03825

Map/Lot 0131-0044-0000 James W. Thibodeau 22 Waverly Street Rochester, NH 03867-4430

Map/Lot 0131-0045-0000 Marilyn Cilley 3 Old Gonic Road Rochester, NH 03867-4416 Map/Lot 0131-0062-0000 Brookvillage West Partnership 56 Kearney Road Needham, MA 02494-2507

Map/Lot 0131-0062-0002 Marsh View Housing, LP 77 Olde Farm Lane Rochester, NH 03867

Map/Lot 0132-0045-0000 710 Columbus Avenue, LLC 112 Gates Street Portsmouth, NH 03802-1240

SUBJECT LOT:

Map/Lot 0131-0007-0000
717 Columbus Avenue, LLC
112 Gates Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801-4608

COUNSEL: John G. Cronin, Esquire Cronin, Bisson & Zalinsky, P.C. 722 Chestnut Street Manchester, NH 03104

ENGINEER: Frank C. Monteiro, PE MHF Design Consultants, Inc. 44 Stiles Road, Suite One Salem, NH 03079