



**TOWN OF NEWTOWN**  
**DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD**

MINUTES

Special Meeting

Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Lower Meeting Room, Edmond Town Hall, 45 Main Street, Newtown CT

**Board members:** Peter Cloudas and Frank Caico

**Presenters:** Russ Cyr, Solli Engineering and Valerie White, White Architects

**Staff:** Christine O'Neill, Clerk

In Chairman Clark's absence, Mr. Cloudas chaired the meeting. Mr. Cloudas called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Application

*Application by Solli Engineering, LLC, for a property located at 282 South Main Street, regarding a 1,291 square foot addition to the existing building, as shown in a set of plans titled, "Patty's Pantry, Newtown, 282 South Main Street, Newtown, Connecticut" dated 10/18/19.*

Russ Cyr of Solli Engineering spoke on behalf of the application. He displayed a photograph of the Botsford Drive-In as it currently stands. He explained that the building would be expanded by 1,291 square feet to the south. The site will be completely redone, including tearing up and repaving the parking lot, installing new drainage systems, and adding landscaping.

Mr. Cyr stated that although drive-throughs are not currently allowed in Newtown, the use has been grandfathered in for this property. The existing setup has a speaker system for ordering but no window through which to deliver the food, so an employee would use the back door to run the food out to the customer. The proposed new establishment, Patty's Pantry, is going to have a proper drive-through setup. Patty's Pantry has an existing facility in Southbury, which sells fried chicken and packaged food products.

Mr. Caico asked if Patty's Pantry was a casual fast-food restaurant. Mr. Cyr confirmed this, adding that there is no indoor seating except a few stools at the counter. There will be six picnic tables outside.

Mr. Cyr displayed a photometric plan which is dark-sky compliant. He then introduced the project's architect, Valerie White of White Architects.

Ms. White displayed a rendering of the front of the building. There will be a charcoal asphalt roof with corrugated metal siding and a five-foot overhang for the pickup window. She explained that the client is looking for a rustic aesthetic.

Mr. Caico asked if she would be using board and batten, which she confirmed. She said the color scheme would be grays and browns. She passed out samples of some of the materials and commented that there would be stone veneers underneath the pickup window and in the front entry area. Mr. Cloudas commented that the building seemed to espouse a horse barn motif, which Ms. White confirmed.

Ms. White went over the interior plan, which contains a one-story flat-roof service area in the back of the building, while the front has refrigerators and shelving for pre-packaged items. Mr. Cloudas asked about the attic space, which Ms. White described as a pop-up with mechanicals inside, adding that it would not be used for storage.

Mr. Caico asked about the sign displayed on the rendering and inquired if it was internally lit. Ms. White responded that she hadn't indicated anything on the plans, but the client would probably want uplighting. She said the lighting would be simple and traditional, likely with a galvanized metal finish.

Mr. Caico asked Mr. Cyr to demonstrate where the lighting on the building would be located. Mr. Caico noticed that the lighting above the pickup window did not seem to complement the rest of the design. Mr. Cloudas pointed out that the lighting fixture would be hidden from view since it would be underneath the canopy. The Board recommended adding a fixture, and Mr. Caico maintained that the fixture itself was not in character. Ms. White explained the fixture is innocuous. Mr. Caico asked to see a photo of it.

Mr. Caico asked about the free-standing light poles in the parking lot. In this iteration of the plan, there is a two-foot concrete foundation that is above-ground. The Board recommended either making that foundation flush with the ground or adding a stone veneer to the foundation.

Mr. Cloudas and Mr. Caico recommended using more decorative, rustic-looking lighting fixtures for the parking lot. Mr. Caico pointed out his goal was to have the lighting on site match the barn aesthetic of the building.

Mr. Caico asked if there was imagery of the order board display that would accompany the drive-through feature. Mr. Cloudas said that if it was out of the view of the road, he was not concerned with it. Mr. Cyr explained that the order boards had not been flushed out yet.

Ms. White brought up an image on her phone of the wall-mounted floodlights in the rear of the building.

Mr. Caico asked about the free-standing sign that would be near the road. Mr. Cyr showed it on the site plan and commented that while it is noncompliant in size, it is smaller than the existing grandfathered sign so it is considered acceptable. Mr. Caico and Mr. Cloudas thought the sign could be more creative, though Mr. Cyr and Ms. White commented that the signs had not been discussed at length with the client yet.

Mr. Cloudas explained that the task of the Board is to ensure that applicants maintain the New England feel, and the signage is an important component of that. He added that he had faith Ms. White would create a tasteful sign.

Mr. Caico and Mr. Cloudas recommended sprucing up a small mulch-filled island at the front of the parking lot, but Mr. Cyr said that it was in the Town right-of-way. The Board spent some more time examining the parking lot plan, including curbage and painting. Several of the parking spaces are not compliant with the setbacks, but are pre-existing nonconformities. Mr. Cyr commented that the reason he cannot create an island around the building is that they are keeping the elevation of the existing building and they would need to change the grade in order to do so.

Mr. Caico asked about the fencing that would be used to hide the dumpster and mechanical units. Mr. Cyr explained it would be a wooden fence, and Mr. Cloudas suggested it be brown.

Mr. Caico recommended doing some plantings on a small island to call attention to the crosswalk between the building and the picnic table area. Mr. Cloudas suggested a flower pot and Mr. Caico added that a sign should alert drivers and pedestrians.

Mr. Caico was concerned that the two openings from the property to the road were both entrance/exit. Mr. Cloudas pointed out that a few features of the site made the entrance/exit necessary at both sides. Mr. Caico agreed, and stressed that this made it even more vital to use planters and signs as visual and physical barriers to call attention to the crosswalk. Mr. Cloudas suggested changing the texture of the crosswalk, such as with Belgian blocks or cobblestone. Mr. Caico asked if they could stamp the asphalt with a brick pattern.

Mr. Cloudas pointed out that the picnic area is very close to the highway, which he thought would seem noisy and unpleasant to the diners. He recommended softening the area with bushes or a split-rail or paddock fence.

Mr. Caico suggested taking the strip of concrete by the back three parking spaces and turning it into a planting area; however, looking at the scale, the Board determined the area was only three inches and probably not large enough for landscaping.

Mr. Cloudas thanked Ms. White and Mr. Cyr for their efforts on the project and the job they did echoing New England architecture. Ms. White and Mr. Cyr responded that the Board's comments were well-received.

Mr. Cloudas's largest concern was the free-standing sign. He initially asked them to return to the Board with a detailed rendering that showed the colors, material, and content of the sign, but after some consideration the Board decided to recommend administrative approval and simply advise that the sign be in keeping with the character of the building.

**Mr. Caico moved that the Board recommend the approval of this application to the Land Use Agency, and advised that the applicant make the following adjustments before presenting the plans for administrative approval:**

- **Either make the light pole foundation flush with the ground or add a stone veneer.**

- **Move the wall-mounted light on the drive-through side wall to the northwest corner.**
- **Add a linear LED strip underneath the pickup window canopy.**
- **Design the free-standing sign to match the architectural aesthetic of the building.**
- **Add planters on the southeast side of the building on what is shown as a proposed painted island in the site plan.**
- **Add texturing to the crosswalk from the building to the picnic area.**
- **Utilize New England or country style light poles in the parking lot.**

**Mr. Cloudas seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Select Meeting Dates for 2020

Although in past years the Design Advisory Board has only met for Special Meetings when there was business, Ms. O’Neill suggested setting monthly meeting dates to ensure consistent attendance without putting a strain of the Board members’ schedules. She suggested the following as a 2020 schedule:

The Design Advisory Board will meet the second Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m., unless otherwise noticed on the agenda. Locations TBD, and will be posted on each agenda. Meetings will be canceled if there is no business.

- Wednesday, January 8, 2020
- Wednesday, February 12, 2020
- Wednesday, March 11, 2020
- Wednesday, April 8, 2020
- Wednesday, May 13, 2020
- Wednesday, June 10, 2020
- Wednesday, July 8, 2020
- Wednesday, August 12, 2020
- Wednesday, September 9, 2020
- Wednesday, October 14, 2020
- Wednesday, November 11, 2020
- Wednesday, December 9, 2020
- Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Ms. O’Neill said she is in communication with the Community Center to secure a regular meeting space; if that space is not available, she will continue to schedule the meetings at Edmond Town Hall. She commented that although Phil Clark and Agni Kyprianou were not present at the meeting, they had stated they were okay with the potential dates.

Mr. Cloudas made a motion to approve the above meeting dates for 2020. Mr. Caico seconded. All were in favor and the meeting dates for 2020 were approved.

Development of a DAB Application, Application Documents Requirements, and Application Process

Mr. Caico motioned to table discussion on the DAB application until the next meeting with a full Board. Mr. Cloudas seconded. All were in favor and the item was tabled.

### Minutes

Since neither Mr. Caico nor Mr. Cloudas attended the last meeting, they could not approve the minutes.

### Adjournment

Mr. Caico made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cloudas seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Christine O'Neill, Clerk*