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March 23, 2020

Mr. Jeremy B. Ginsberg, AICP
Planning and Zoning Director
Town of Darien
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, Connecticut 06820

Subject: **Peer Review of Parking Assessment
Darien Place LLC – 1077 Boston Post Road
Darien, CT**

Dear Mr. Ginsberg:

In accordance with your request, we have undertaken a Peer Review of the Parking Assessment associated with the change in use for the Darien Playhouse property located at 1077 Boston Post Road. The subject application is for re-purposing the rear portion of the existing building to convert the approximately 5,800 S.F. theater to approximately 4,350 S.F. of first floor retail space and four second floor one-bedrooms, relocate the trash enclosure and power transformer, perform minor modifications to the existing parking lot, and related site improvements. 1077 Boston Post Road is subject to an existing shared parking agreement with 1101 and 1127 Boston Post Road. The applicant proposes to increase the shared parking count by four spaces.

We have received a copy of the following documents from your office pertaining to our peer review:

- Parking Assessment, prepared by Milone & MacBroom, dated February 17, 2020.
- Site Development Plans, prepared by LandTech, dated February 4, 2020.

CDM Smith completed the following tasks as part of the peer review:

- Review parking assessment prepared for the planned project as submitted to the Town of Darien.
- Assess the planned site access and on-site circulation relative to parking.
- Ensure that the parking analysis is prepared in accord with, and using procedures generally accepted by, the engineering profession; and,
- Assist the town in understanding the implications of the findings presented.





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Project Understanding

The subject application is for re-purposing the rear portion of the existing building to convert the approximately 5,800 S.F. theater to approximately 4,350 S.F. of first floor retail space and four second floor one-bedrooms, relocate the trash enclosure and power transformer, perform minor modifications to the existing parking lot, and related site improvements. 1077 Boston Post Road is subject to an existing shared parking agreement with 1101 and 1127 Boston Post Road. The applicant proposes to increase the shared parking count by four spaces.

Parking Assessment Methodology

The analysis and documentation submitted by the applicant's parking consultant are generally in accordance with accepted industry procedures and standards.

Peer Review

We have reviewed the Parking Assessment Study, and have the following comments:

Parking Supply

The applicant's parking consultant states that there are 183 parking spaces in the Playhouse lot which are shared between the subject property and adjacent buildings located at 1101, and 1127 Boston Post Road. This includes the Darien Sport Shop, Webster Bank, Inner Light, Darien Playhouse, Scena Restaurant, Caffé Nero, and Posh Nails and Spa. Parking is also available on other adjacent municipal parking lots such as the Grove Street lot. On-street parking is also provided along Grove Street, Brook Street, and Day Street.

The applicant's parking consultant provided a map depicting the location of the 183 shared parking spaces. Based on our review of the map, the three (3) parking spaces located at the back of the Darien Sport Shop should not be considered in the total as they are hard to find spaces and can only be used by an employee at the Darien Sport Shop.

In addition, the parking assessment report states the use of the seven (7) parking spaces near the Kennedy's All-American Barber Club. These parking spaces are dedicated to the use of the barber shop and therefore, should not be included in the parking supply.

Also, the site plan indicates a total of 196 shared parking spaces (191 existing + 33 eliminated + 38 new) which does not match the parking supply used in the parking assessment report. The applicant should clarify the total number of shared parking spaces based on the above comments.

Parking Accumulation

The applicant's parking accumulation study was done on Thursday, January 23, 2020; Friday, January 24, 2020; and Saturday, January 25, 2020. Based on the parking counts, the peak utilization is between 12:00 Noon to 2:00 P.M. on a Thursday (150 parking spaces) and the same time period



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on Friday (162 parking spaces). On a Saturday, the peak utilization is around 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. with 147 parking spaces. Based on our review of the seasonal variation in parking activities for retail/shopping areas, the month of January is about 13 percent lower than an average month as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1
 Recommended Monthly Adjustment Factors for Customer/Visitor Parking
 at Shopping Centers**

Month	Monthly Adjustment Factor
January	56%
February	57%
March	64%
April	63%
May	66%
June	67%
July	64%
August	69%
September	64%
October	66%
November	72%
December	100%
Late December	80%
Average (Jan-Nov)	64%

Source: Table 2-3 in Shared Parking, Urban Land Institute, 2nd Edition, 2005.

The applicant’s parking consultant indicated that they compared the parking lot data collected at the Grove Street lot in January 2020 to the parking lot data in the Nelson Nygaard study in spring 2015 and found that the parking counts were consistent to one another. However, in our opinion, based on the locations of these lots the Grove Street lot has different usage than the Playhouse lot. The peaking characteristics could differ based on the abutting land uses. The applicant’s parking consultant should explain why the parking counts at the Playhouse lot weren’t adjusted to meet an average condition.

Shared Parking Analysis

The shared parking analysis methodology appears reasonable. We concur with the applicant’s parking consultant’s assessment that the Institute of Transportation Engineer’s (ITE’s) parking estimates are more reasonable than Town regulations which tend to be more conservative.





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The shared parking analysis results based on existing parking counts (no seasonal adjustment) and the proposed use with ITE and the Town regulations are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Future Estimated Shared Parking Demand – Playhouse Lot

Time of Day	ITE			Darien Regulations		
	Weekday	Friday	Saturday	Weekday	Friday	Saturday
Mid-morning	149	151	126	158	159	135
Lunch	161	176	123	176	188	133
Mid-afternoon	139	134	164	153	145	176
Evening	142	127	139	155	137	148

Source: Based on MMI’s parking analysis.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate time periods where parking demand exceeds peak capacity of 156 parking spaces. Based on an 85 percent utilization per ITE methodologies, the peak capacity is $0.85 \times 184 = 156$ parking spaces.

Based on our review of the parking supply, we note a total of 180 existing parking spaces. It is our understanding that the proposed application will result in an additional 4 parking spaces in the Playhouse lot. Therefore, the total future parking supply is anticipated to be **184** parking spaces. Per ITE methodologies and guidelines, a parking facility reaches its peak somewhere between 80-90 percent of utilization. Assuming the peak at 85 percent, this results in a peak capacity of about **156** parking spaces.

Based on a peak capacity of 156 parking spaces, the parking demand during weekday lunch time, Friday lunch time, and Saturday mid-afternoon periods will be at or above the peak capacity (by ITE or Darien regulations) as shown in Table 2.

Further, if the seasonal adjustment factors are applied to the future estimated shared parking demand, five (5) additional time periods exceed the capacity using the ITE numbers. The applicant’s parking consultant should provide an explanation of the anticipated short fall in parking supply during these periods. We recognize that there is available supply of parking in adjacent lots i.e. Grove Street and other municipal lots as well as on-street parking.

Board of Education Lot

The applicant’s parking consultant states the use of the Board of Education (BOE) lot at 35 Leroy Avenue for the employees of the tenants to park during weekends in busy times of the year. The applicant should clarify if an agreement is in place for this type of an arrangement.





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Residential Parking

The applicant should confirm if the residents in the apartments will have dedicated reserved spaces in the Playhouse lot. It should be noted that reserving parking spaces would not fall under a "shared" parking agreement.

Summary

Based on our review of the Parking Assessment analysis and the Site Plan prepared for this development, we find that the study has been prepared in general accordance with accepted industry standards and procedures. Specifically, we recommend the following issues be addressed:

- Address existing parking supply in the Playhouse lot
- Consideration of seasonal adjustment factors
- Address short fall in shared parking supply based on peak capacity per ITE
- Address parking arrangement with the Board of Education
- Dedicated reserved parking for residents in the new apartments

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions relative to our review of the parking assessment associated with the proposed redevelopment associated with this project. We are prepared to discuss our report and associated findings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharat" with a horizontal line underneath it.

Sharat K. Kalluri, P.E., P.T.O.E.
Project Manager
CDM Smith Inc.

