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**Downtown Smart Growth District (DSGD) Plan Review**  
**Major Plan Change – Parking**  
**M.G.L. Chapter 40R**  
**DECISION**

Project: 136 Haven Street & 8 Sanborn Street – ‘The Postmark’  
Applicant: 136 Haven Street, LLC

*To the Town Clerk:*

*This is to certify that, at a public meeting of the Community Planning and Development Commission opened and closed on April 11, 2022, by a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted:*

“We, the Reading Community Planning and Development Commission, upon the application and/or request from 136 Haven Street LLC, under Section 10.5.13 of the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Reading (the “Bylaw”), and MGL Chapter 40R, as required by the Town of Reading, to consider the application for a Major Plan Change to the Approved 40R decision dated 9/11/2017 (hereinafter “Original Decision”) that proposes modifications to the garage layout, striping/dimensions of parking spaces and a reduction to the number of parking spaces on-site as shown on the Modified Plan– do hereby vote 5-0-0, to approve the Major Plan Changes to the Approved 40R Development Plan as depicted on the Modified Plan, inclusive of the requested waivers, and subject to the Findings and Conditions below.”

**Materials Submitted:**

The following materials were submitted into the public record:

- a) Application and Summary of Proposal to Community Development Director, dated 3/28/22;
- b) CPDC Approved Floor Plan, prepared by O’Sullivan Architects, Inc., most recently dated 4/26/17;
- c) CPDC Approved Floor Plan with Interior Parking Space Dimensions, prepared by O’Sullivan Architects, Inc., received 4/11/22;
- d) Postmark Garage Modification Plan, prepared by O’Sullivan Architects, Inc., dated 3/15/22, and most recently revised 4/11/22 (hereinafter “Modified Plan”);
- e) Vehicle Turning Analysis, Postmark Square Parking Garage, Parking Spaces #10 and #11, prepared by Vanasse and Associates, Inc., dated 4/6/22, and most recently revised 4/7/22;
- f) Postmark Concrete Casing Example Photos, received 4/11/22;
- g) Postmark Prism Awards Press Release, dated 11/12/21, received 4/11/22;

- h) Postmark Recorded Video of Parking Space #11 Turning Movement, received 4/11/22;
- i) Resident Feedback:
  - a. Triglione Email, dated 3/29/22;
- j) Draft Decision, dated 4/11/22.

### **Findings:**

- 1) **Overview:** The project was approved by the CPDC on September 11, 2017 as stated in the Original Decision. The approved plans included a parking count of 72 parking spaces. 50 parking spaces were within the on-site garage, including 2 handicap accessible parking spaces. The remaining 22 spaces were located outside at ground level, including 1 handicap accessible parking space.

The Original Decision allowed 24 parking spaces to be sized as compact (defined as either 8' x 18' OR 9' x 16'), 17 of which were to be located in the onsite garage and 7 located outside. The remaining 45 parking spaces (not including the 3 handicap accessible spaces) were to be 9' x 18', which exceeded the minimum requirement under Section 9.0 of the Bylaw.

After construction, it was determined that **26** of the parking spaces within the onsite garage measured in compact size or smaller, an increase of **9** parking spaces than what was allowed pursuant to the Original Decision. This was due to a number of unanticipated building and construction practices and constraints that occurred during construction and were related to the restoration and preservation of the historic building. In some cases, the undersized compact parking spaces resulted in challenges for some residents attempting to park, or open their doors, within the onsite garage.

After occupancy it was discovered that 19 out of 22 outside parking spaces measured standard size and 3 measured in compact size, resulting in a net reduction of **4** compact parking spaces outdoors.

Thus, the total of 29 compact parking spaces was **5** more than allowed in the Original Decision. The onsite garage entry width is as shown on the Modified Plan, and drive aisle widths within the onsite garage also remain as approved in the Original Decision.

Therefore, the proposed changes as shown on the Modified Plan result in a decrease of **2** parking spaces at The Postmark, bringing the total number of parking spaces down from **72** as contemplated in the Original Decision **to 70**. This results in a 1.40 parking space per unit ratio, which still exceeds the 1.25 parking space per unit requirement. Both parking spaces removed were located within the onsite garage structure, reducing total onsite garage parking spaces from **50 to 48**.

- 2) **Zoning:** The site is located within a Business-B Zoning District and the Downtown Smart Growth District (DSGD) 40R Overlay District.

Section 9.0 of the Bylaw requires standard spaces within an accessory structure (i.e. garage) to be at least 8'6" x 17'. Those located outside of accessory structures are required to measure 9' x 18'.

Commercial uses on-site are exempt from providing off-street parking under Section 10.5.8.1 of the Bylaw.

3) Issues and Solutions as stated below and as shown on the Modified Plan:

<b>Spaces #10 and #11:</b>	
<b>Issues:</b> Parking spaces #10 and #11 measured at 7'10" and 7'11.5" wide respectively. [The Town did not receive complaints about these spaces from the residents who use them.]	
<b>Solution:</b> Approve these parking spaces to remain at a 7'-10" wide minimum.	
<b>Space #35:</b>	
<b>Issue:</b> Parking space #35 measured at 7'11" wide.	
<b>Solution:</b> By restriping adjacent parking space #36 from 8'3" to 8'2" it allows for parking space #35 to be increased to 8' wide.	
<b>Spaces #38 and #39:</b>	
<b>Issue:</b> Parking space #39 located next to elevator shaft measured at 7'3" wide.	
<b>Solution:</b> Completely remove parking space #39. This allows for parking space #38 to be restriped at 9' wide.	
<b>Spaces #47 and #48:</b>	
<b>Issues:</b> Parking spaces #47 and #48 measured at 7'10" wide each. [The Town received complaints from the resident who owns and uses space #47.]	
<b>Solution:</b> Approve these parking spaces to remain at a 7'10" wide minimum, with solution noted below for owner of space #47.	
<b>Spaces #49 and #50:</b>	
<b>Issue:</b> Parking space #49 measured at 7'6" wide.	
<b>Solution:</b> Completely remove parking space #50. This allows for parking space #49 to be restriped at 9' wide.	

4) New Parking Counts: After modification to The Postmark, as shown on the Modified Plan, the following parking counts are hereby allowed and/or approved:

a. Within Onsite Garage:

- Standard parking spaces (minimum of 8'6" x 17'): 24 parking spaces (**9 less than provided for in the Original Decision**)

- Compact parking spaces:
    - 8' x 18' OR 9' x 16': 18 parking spaces (**1 more than provided for in the Original Decision**)
    - 7'10": 4 parking spaces (**4 more than provided for in the Original Decision**)
      - Waiver requested herein.
    - Results in 45.8% of garage parking spaces to be compact size.
  - Handicap accessible parking spaces: 2 parking spaces (**compliant with Original Decision**)
  - Garage Total: 48 parking spaces (**2 less than provided for in the Original Decision**)
- b. Outside:
- Standard parking spaces (minimum of 9' wide): 18 parking spaces (**4 more than provided for in the Original Decision**)
  - Compact parking spaces (less than 9' wide): 3 parking spaces (**4 less than provided for in the Original Decision**)
    - Results in 13.6% of outside parking spaces to be compact size;
  - Handicap accessible parking spaces: 1 parking space (**compliant with Original Decision**)
  - Outdoor Total: 22 parking spaces (**compliant with Original Decision**)
- c. Total:
- i. Standard parking spaces: 42 parking spaces;
  - ii. Compact parking spaces: 25 spaces;
    1. Results in 35.7% of total parking spaces to be compact size;
  - iii. Handicap accessible parking Spaces: 3 parking spaces
  - iv. Total: 70 parking spaces

**Waivers pursuant to Section 10.5.12 and DSGD Design Standards & Guidelines:**

Upon request of the Applicant, the Commission, in the interests of design flexibility and overall project quality, and upon a finding of consistency of such variation with the overall purpose and objectives of the DSGD and the Reading Master Plan, or if it finds that such waiver will allow the project to achieve the density, affordability, mix of uses and/or physical character allowed. The Commission shall take into consideration the following items when considering a waiver:

1. High performance energy efficient buildings and construction methods.
2. Projects with publicly accessible open space.
3. Projects that include retail and restaurants located on street level.

4. A demonstrated shared parking initiative that makes efficient use of land and existing parking supply.
5. The preservation or rehabilitation of historic properties or other buildings considered significant to the Town.

The Applicant has requested the following waivers:

1. **Parking Space Dimensions:** The Applicant has requested that four (4) parking spaces be less than 8' in width and to allow the parking spaces as shown on the Modified Plan.

*The CPDC voted 5-0-0 to approve the requested waiver.*

**Conditions:**

- 1) **Limitations / Future Uses:** The 40R Development Plan Decision herein does not include approval for any future uses or site renovations that may – on their own merits and design – trigger the requirements of 40R plan review, or site plan review, and/or require a special permit. Pursuant to Section 10.5 of the Zoning Bylaw the following uses are permitted by right within the proposed commercial spaces: office, retail, restaurant, institutional and consumer services.
- 2) **Shared Parking Agreements:** The Applicant is encouraged to engage in conversations with nearby property owners regarding shared parking, and to partner with Zip Car and other shared services if possible. If and when progress on shared parking is made, the Applicant shall provide more information about these amenities, and indicate which area(s) of the garage are intended for them and how they will be managed. Documentation of any shared parking arrangements for off-site parking spaces shall be provided to the Community Development Director.
- 3) **Condo Documents Amendment:** The Applicant or Condo Association shall amend its Master Deed including the condominium plans to be consistent with this decision, and the Modified Plan. A recorded copy shall be submitted to the Community Development Director.
- 4) **Approval of ADA Space Use for Current Owner of Space #47:** As contemplated and allowed for in the Original Decision, the Applicant or the Condo Association shall provide the current unit owner of Unit #1011 and parking space #47 (the “Current Owner”) on Condo Association letterhead approval to utilize handicap accessible parking space #20 until that parking space is required for use by another unit owner at The Postmark with an handicap accessible parking permit, in which case the Current Owner shall no longer have the right to use handicap parking space #20 and in which case, as an alternative, the Current Owner shall be provided with the right to use an outdoor parking space. This condition shall be void and have no further force or effect upon the transfer of ownership of Unit #1011 by the Current Owner. So long as the Current Owner is provided an alternative parking space as required herein, said Current Owner shall have no right to use parking space #47.
- 5) **Parking Signage:** All compact spaces, spaces less than 8'6” wide, on-site shall be indicated as such through signage or pavement markings.
- 6) **Garage Lighting:** The Applicant shall consider whether any additional lighting or bright paint could assist drivers as they make tight turning movements.
- 7) **Sight Lines:** Adequate sight lines for vehicles turning out of the Haven Street exit shall be maintained at all times.

**Plan Changes after Approval by the Commission:**

Contemplated future changes to the plan approved herein shall be presented to the Community Development Director and the Building Inspector, or other relevant Town staff, for review prior to implementation of proposed changes.

**10.5.13.1 Minor Plan Changes:** After Plan Approval, an Applicant may apply to make minor changes in a Development Project involving minor utility or building orientation adjustments, or minor adjustments to parking or other site details that do not affect the overall build out or building envelope of the site, or provision of open space, number of housing units, or housing need or affordability features. Such minor changes must be submitted to the Commission on redlined prints of the approved plan, reflecting the proposed change, and on application forms provided by the Commission. The Commission may authorize such changes at any regularly scheduled meeting, without the need to hold a public hearing. The Commission shall set forth any decision to approve or deny such minor change by motion and written decision, and provide a copy to the Applicant for filing with the Town Clerk.

**10.5.13.2 Major Plan Changes:** Those changes deemed by the Commission to constitute a major change in a Development Project because of the nature of the change in relation to the prior approved plan, or because such change cannot be appropriately characterized as a minor change as described above, shall be processed by the Commission as a new application for Plan Approval pursuant to Section 10.5.

**Appeal:**

Any person aggrieved by this Decision of the CPDC may appeal to the appropriate court in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A Section 17, pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 40R Section 11, within twenty (20) days after the date of filing of this Decision with the Town Clerk. Notice of any appeal with a copy of the complaint must also be filed with the Town Clerk within such twenty (20) days as provided in M.G.L. Ch. 40A Section 17.

*Signed as to the accuracy of the vote as reflected in the minutes:*

  
Andrew MacNichol, Staff Planner

5/12/22  
Date

*Cc: Applicant, Town Clerk, DRT Staff, planning file*