

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MEETING M I N U T E S**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
WATERFORD, CT

2026 MAR -4 | P 1:51

ATTEST: *David L. Camp*
TOWN CLERK
February 24, 2026
4:00 PM

Design Review Board
Remote Access Only

Members Present: Chairman -John O'Neill, Michael Elbaum, Joy Merrill, Robert Nye and Ed Pellegrini
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Mark Wujtewicz, Planning Director and Katrina Kotfer

ITEM #1 CALL TO ORDER AND APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Chairman, John O'Neill called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

ITEM #2 PLAN REVIEWS

#PL-26-3 Request of Larry Cohen, Applicant and WS Asset Management owner for site plan approval for Restaurant Depot for property located at 161 Waterford Parkway North, C-R Zone, in accordance with sections 9.1.2 and 22 of the Zoning Regulations and as shown on plans entitled "Site Development Plans for Proposed Restaurant Depot, 161 Waterford Pkwy North, New London County, Waterford, CT Map & Lot: 105-8981 Last revised December 10, 2025".

ACTION REQUIRED BY:

4/2/2026

Chas Evans, PE of Bohler Engineering, Larry Cohen, representing Restaurant Depot, and Heather Mize, of ADA Architects were available for the presentation.

C. Evans reviewed with the Board the proposed Restaurant Depot. He noted that it will be a 45,000 square foot building on an existing building pad. The property is adjacent to the WalMart and Lowe's properties. The proposed use and building are compliant with the existing parking and the zoning setback requirements. The applicant is proposing additional landscaping for screening and trees in the parking islands.

H. Mize reviewed the design of the building with the Board. She stated that the design of the building as proposed is a simplistic blue and white color scheme which is typical for Restaurant Depot. The building will have loading docks with recessed overhead doors. The proposed compactor will be fully enclosed. There will be an 8' tall fence with white vinyl slats to provide screening for the refrigeration equipment and generator. There is one main entry door and a pallet door on the front of the building for customers purchasing large quantities of product and equipment purchases. She also presented the interior layout of the building.

J. O'Neil asked for consideration regarding options to break up the mass of the walls that would make it more visually interesting. There is a lot of traffic that utilizes the roads and

driveways around the building and his concern is that the appearance of the building does not make a good presentation to the public.

H. Mize stated that Restaurant Depot has utilized other design options at other locations to address the massing concern. L. Cohen asked H. Mize whether they can consider some elements around the front door to help break up the visual mass.

H. Mize presented an optional architectural elevation drawings with additional color elements that they have used at other locations in order to lessen the visual impact of the wall mass. J. O'Neil noted that the option presents a much more visually interesting façade. H. Mize noted that the vertical striping are painted on vertical concrete panels.

B. Nye stated that he felt the vertical does not add a lot to the breakup of the mass. Maybe a different color to the vertical might work.

J. Merrill asked for a planting plan. C. Evans reviewed the existing landscaping along the buffer at Waterford Pkwy North. He stated that while the existing landscaping provides screening they propose to supplement the existing buffer landscaping with additional screening. They will also enhance the parking islands with more trees and replace those trees that are in need of replacing.

E. Pellegrini noted that another big box store in town has lattice on their building to help break up the massing. He asked if the HVAC equipment will be visible. C. Evans noted that a sightline plan was generated that showed the HVAC rooftop units would not be visible from the ground.

The Board discussed options on breaking up the massing either by textures or with paint for the front entrance area and the

MOTION: Motion made by B. Nye, seconded by E. Pellegrini to request that the applicant submit an optional rendering that would provide a more visually appealing appearance on the building in order that Board provide a positive recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission for Restaurant Depot for a new building located at 161 Waterford Parkway North application PL-26-3.

VOTE: 5-0

#PL-26-4 Request of James Waldron, Applicant and John P. Casey, Esq., Agent for Site Plan and Special Permit. approval for Crystal Mall Adaptive Reuse for property located at 850 Hartford Turnpike, C-R Zone, in accordance with sections 9.1.3, 9.1.13, 22 and 23 of the Zoning Regulations and as shown on plans entitled "General Dynamics, Electric Boat, Crystal Mall Adaptive Reuse 850 Hartford Turnpike, Waterford, CT 06385 Last revised January 26, 2026".

PUBLIC HEARING REQUIRED BY:

4/2/2026

John Casey, Attorney, Robinson + Cole, Chad Frost, RLA and partner with Kent+Frost Landscape Architects, Chris Bocksteal, AIA FCA Architects, Kyle Haubert, PE, CLA

Engineers, Ross Gionfriddo, and Jim Waldron representing the applicant were available for the presentation.

John Casey, reviewed with the Board an overview of the project noting that it is a redevelopment of an underused shopping area. There are no new buildings proposed. There will be significant changes to the parking and planting plans.

Chris Bocksteal, FCA Architects, reviewed with the Board that most of the work proposed is interior changes. The exterior of the building will have minor renovations near the entrances. The glass entrances will be modified. There will be repairs to the edifice and brick and the building will be power washed. All store signage will be removed and a new wayfinding signage package will be installed.

Chad Frost, reviewed with the Board, proposed significant landscape improvements and the existing and proposed renderings. New sidewalks are to be installed. New center island in the ring roadway with a two lane roundabout. There will be two lanes turning right from the main entrance heading south on Route 85. They will be adding a solid evergreen buffer along the Home Depot side of the campus. No guard shack or fencing will be installed. A new roundabout will be installed near Olive Garden. Significant screening plantings will be installed along Route 85.

E. Pellegrini asked if the parking counts are using the existing parking associated with Longhorn and Olive Garden. C. Frost those parking spaces are counted separately.

J. O'Neil asked if the modification to the building entrances will be done with similar materials to what is existing. C. Frost noted it will be of similar materials.

MOTION: Motion made by J. Merrill, seconded by M. Elbaum to provide a positive recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Crystal Mall Adaptive Reuse for property located at 850 Hartford Turnpike application PL-26-4.

VOTE: 5-0

ITEM #3 APPROVAL OF THE July 22, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Motion made by E. Pellegrini, seconded by M. Elbaum, to approve the July 22, 2025 meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: 5-0

ITEM #4 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion made by R. Nye, seconded by E. Pellegrini, to adjourn the meeting at 5:16 pm.

VOTE: 5-0

Respectfully Submitted,


Katrina Kotfer