



**STAFF REPORT  
WEST ALLIS PLAN COMMISSION  
Wednesday, August 26, 2020  
6:00 PM**

- 2A. Special Use Permit for Festival Foods, a proposed large retail development grocery store, to be located at 11111 W. Greenfield Ave.**
  
- 2B. Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plans for Festival Foods, a proposed large retail development grocery store, to be located at 11111 W. Greenfield Ave., submitted by Aaron Aspenson on behalf of Festival Foods. (Tax Key No. 448-9993-0006 and 448-9993-009)**

**Overview & Zoning**

Festival Foods has applied for a Special Use Permit and a Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plan review for a proposed Large Retail Development grocery store, to be located at 11111 W. Greenfield Ave. The property is currently zoned C-3 Community Commercial District, with a PDD overlay. Under the City's Zoning Code, facilities 50,000 square feet or larger are considered Large Retail Developments, which require a Special Use Permit. A Public Hearing regarding the Special Use Permit application is scheduled for September 1<sup>st</sup>.



Festival Foods, which originated in Onalaska in 1946, owns and operates 32 stores in Wisconsin. Here in West Allis, Festival Foods is proposing to revitalize the 73,000 sq. ft. facility that was once home to a Pick 'n Save. In addition to a comprehensive façade update, Festival Foods is also proposing improvements to the secondary tenant space, parking lot, lighting, and the site's landscaping.



Festival Foods will offer natural and organic foods, fresh sushi, healthy-choices salad and hot food bar, deli, bakery, meat and seafood selections, a variety of take-home meal options, and catering services. A wine and spirits section of the store will have a separate entrance (along with common access), and will include staffed check-out lanes.

Festival Foods is also proposing several unique community-oriented services and amenities.

A proposed “brat barn” space would be made available, free of charge, to local community groups to grill and sell food for fundraising purposes. At most Festival Food locations, the brat barn is operated by local groups every Saturday and Sunday, from April through October. Discounted and complimentary products are typically made available to community groups, as well.

In addition to the brat barn, a community conference room and a Hometown Café are proposed. Local organizations would be able to reserve the community conference room free of charge. The Hometown Café is part of the American Heroes Café Program, where area veterans and community members are invited to gather to share a meal.

Festival Foods is proposing two seasonal merchandise events in the parking lot, a Mother’s Day Plant Blowout in May and a Pumpkin Blowout in October. Additionally, Click ‘n Go online ordering with store pick-up (and possibly a delivery option) is proposed.

Festival Foods anticipates the job creation of 175 part-time positions and 75 full-time positions at the West Allis store. Hiring of employees is expected to begin approximately 6 months prior to the store opening. Proposed store hours are 5am to midnight, 364 days a year (closed on Christmas Day), with more limited hours in the wine and spirits section.

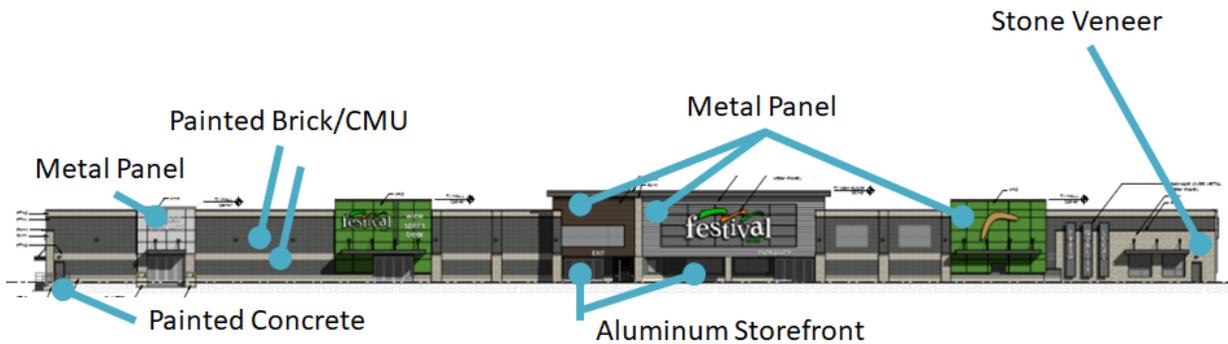
### **Architectural Plans**

Festival Foods is proposing a full façade rehabilitation, which includes a mix of high-quality and modern looking materials, such as stone, brick, and metal paneling. The Festival Foods team has been working with staff to bring forth a strong proposal and staff has been impressed by their efforts and responsiveness. Staff believes these updates will serve to effectively transform the space and bring a renewed energy to this section of Greenfield Ave.



Staff does have several architectural recommendations, which primarily revolve around the inclusion of additional transparency on both the first and second levels of the proposed Festival Foods building.

Starting with the east elevation, which faces the parking lot and serves as the front/main entrance, significant improvements are proposed. Existing brick will be painted, more modern awnings, windows, and lighting are to be added, a mix of high-quality materials will be incorporated with the façade, and the secondary tenant space entrance will be completely redesigned. Combined, these improvements will greatly improve the overall design aesthetic, create a greater sense interest, and add a pop of color to the building.



However, staff would like to work with the applicant to incorporate additional windows on the east elevation. Given the proposed location of the building's restrooms, staff is recommending second story windows be added to mid-section of the east elevation. The Festival Foods team has agreed that this would add balance to the building and will amend plans accordingly.



Additionally, to create more continuity and to bring a greater sense of connection to the second tenant space on site, staff recommends the inclusion of ground floor windows towards the south end. Internally, this area of the store is proposed to be used for Click 'n Go services, which may necessitate the use of internal shades. The applicant is concerned about the conflict with internal functions and staff would like to continue to work with the applicant to determine the best solution to allow for windows here.



Shifting to the north elevation, which will act as the side of the building and which faces Greenfield Ave., staff is generally pleased with the proposed design. The proposal includes a mix of materials (to break up what would otherwise be a blank wall), new awnings, and a new refuse enclosure to match building materials. Staff's only recommendation for the north elevation is, again, the inclusion of more windows, one in the café area and the other on the green paneled portion the building.

Due to the location of utilities, it is not possible to have a full window on the lower portion of the building's north elevation, as shown in the Hales Corners example below. However, the Festival Foods team has indicated that they will look into the possibility of

adding a more narrow window in this location, which may go well rhythmically with the narrow metal panels and stone veneer columns along this elevation. Staff would like the opportunity to continue exploring possible options with the applicant. Staff does recommend the inclusion of windows on the second story of the green paneled area, in order to further enhance the portion of the building facing Greenfield Ave.



The remaining elevations, the west and the south, are intended to be more back-of-house/loading areas, and will receive a more minimal facelift. Improvements here include painting existing brick and concrete, adding stone veneer to the corner features, and adding a new awning over the entrance on the south elevation.

West Elevation



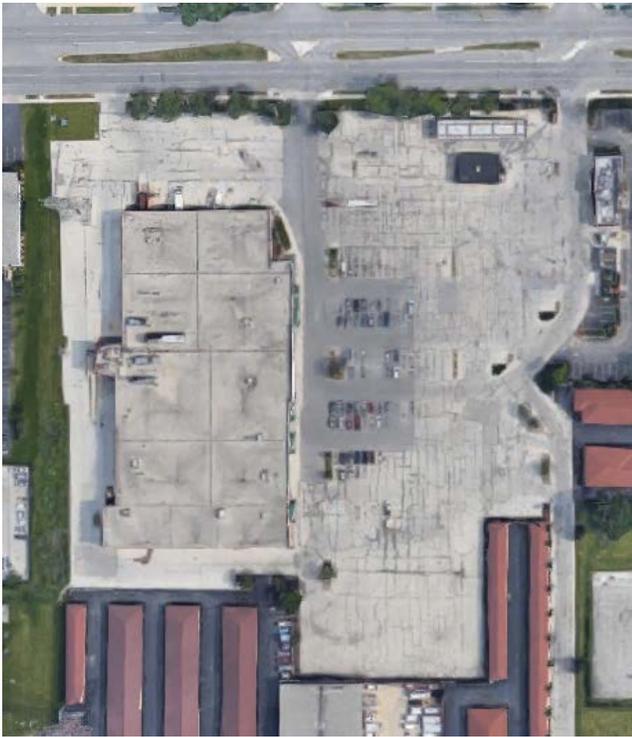
South Elevation



**Site and Landscape Plans**

Looking at the overall site plan, Festival Foods is proposing to:

- Maintain the general site configuration and access locations
- Pulverize and repave the existing parking lot
- Increase landscaping from 5.4% (existing) to 10%
- Add new endcap and channelizing landscape islands
- Update existing sidewalks and storefront concrete around the building
- Add a pedestrian connection to Greenfield Ave.
- Update lighting to full cut-off LED fixtures, while maintaining existing poles
- Add a refuse enclosure at the rear of the building to match façade updates



These improvements will have a significant positive impact on the look and feel of this site. Staff is particularly supportive of enhanced pedestrian connection to Greenfield Ave. and of the landscaping improvements along Greenfield Ave., which will improve the aesthetics of the site along one of our city's busiest streets. However, staff also has several recommendations for how to further enhance the site plan to meet the standards set by similarly approved projects within the city.

#### *Additional Pedestrian Connections*

The standard set for large retail development sites is that pedestrian connections will be provided into the site, throughout the site, and to adjacent sites. This standard is further supported by the Common Council's recent adoption of the Hwy. 100 Corridor Plan, which highlights the importance of pedestrian connections for improving long-term area success (this site is within the Hwy. 100 study area). The applicant has, commendably, added a pedestrian connection to Greenfield Ave. However, in a sizable parking lot, there remains a lack of pedestrian connection throughout the site and to adjacent sites.

Two recent Pick 'n Save projects showcase Plan Commission's expectation for site improvements of this type. Both approved site plans include a pedestrian connection within the site, as well as pedestrian connections to neighboring sites and uses.



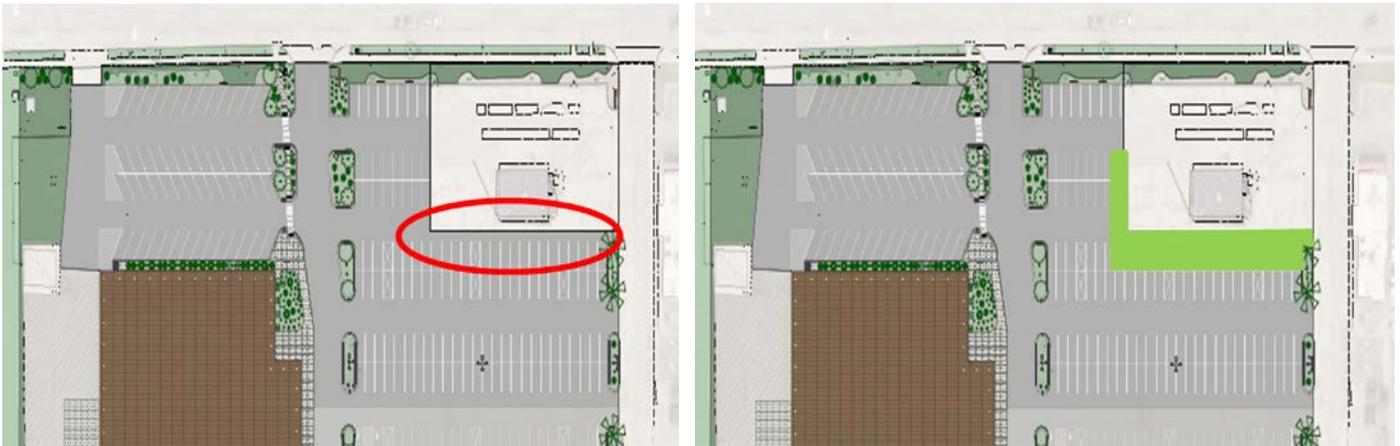
Staff recommends a similar pedestrian connection be included within the Festival Foods parking area (to include a raised sidewalk, pedestrian lighting, landscaping, signage, and accessible ramps), including extending that connection towards the neighboring restaurant use and to the currently vacant outlot parcel (which in the future could create a second Greenfield Ave. access point). The image to the right is one example of how an improved pedestrian connection might look on this site. Staff is open to exploring other options with the applicant, as well.



*More Closely Address Interaction with Secondary Parcel*

There is a second parcel adjacent to the northeast section of the proposed Festival Foods parcel (with no physical separation), which Festival Foods also owns. While this second parcel is not currently under review, staff has comments and recommendations related to how the proposed Festival Foods parcel interacts with this second parcel. As

can be seen circled in red in the image below (left), the proposed parking isle adjacent to the existing outlot building lacks adequate space for a full drive isle, which does not meet our standards. Staff recommends revised plans be submitted to more fully address this area. One staff suggestion is to use this space for additional landscaping and/or a creative stormwater management solution.



At this time, the applicant is requesting the pedestrian connection and the delineation between the two parcels be addressed as part of a Phase 2 plan. Staff is supportive of this approach, given that the applicant update their plans to reflect what will happen now (Phase 1), provide a date by which staff and Plan Commission can expect to see Phase 2 plans (maximum 2 year timeframe), and provide a contingency plan stating that, should Phase 2 plans not be in place by the specified date, the applicant will install the pedestrian connections as recommended by staff.

#### *Specific Plans Related to Seasonal Sales*

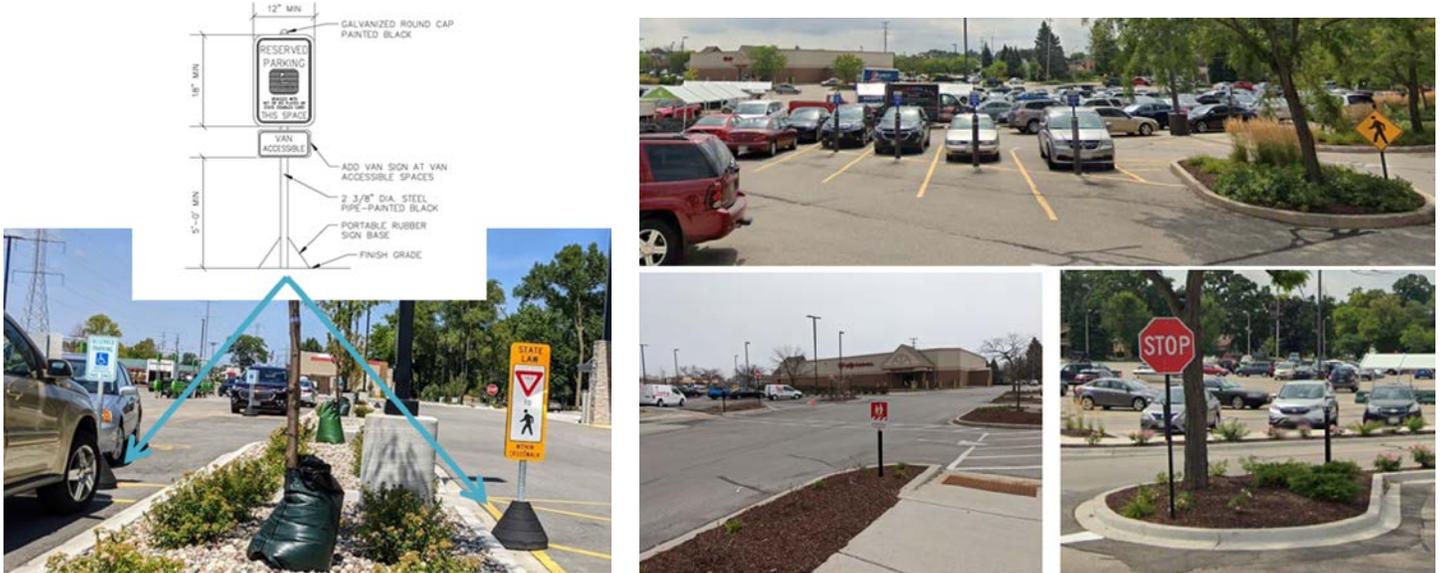
Within their application, Festival Foods indicated that proposed operations include “seasonal merchandise in the parking lot and along the front walks of the grocery store. In addition, Festival conducts two popular seasonal events, a Mother’s Day Plant Blowout in May, and in early October, a Pumpkin Blowout.” Within the C-3 Zoning District, day-to-day outdoor merchandise displays are not permitted. Meaning, the applicant cannot have general sale item displays in the parking lot or along the sidewalk of the store. Staff recommends the plans be revised to include a note stating no outdoor sale will take place, with the following exception:

Temporary, seasonal sales have been approved by Plan Commission in the past. This approval requires the submittal of a seasonal site plan, which identifies the exact size and location of the outdoor sales area, as well as the timeframe during which the seasonal sales will be conducted and details on how the area will be delineated/screened. Staff recommends the applicant submit a seasonal sales site plan to allow for the Plan Blowout and Pumpkin Blowout events.

#### *More Permanent Signage / Incorporate Signage into Landscape Areas*

Festival Foods is proposing to use portable rubber sign bases for the accessible parking stall signage. The image below (left) is an example of this type of signage from the Hales Corners Festival Foods location. Staff recommends a more permanent solution for

accessible parking signage (top right as example). Further, staff recommends that traffic control and pedestrian crossing signage be incorporated into existing and proposed landscape areas (lower right examples), and that the location of these signs be indicated on revised plans.



*Other Site & Landscape Recommendations*

Other site and landscape recommendations, to be reviewed and approved by staff, include:

- Inclusion of bike racks on the plan
- Details on seating to be located near the brat barn space
- Cart corral details
- Use of bark mulch rather than stone mulch (along with any additional recommendations from the City Forester, which are currently pending)

**Parking**

The proposed site plan includes 417 parking stalls, 14 of which are accessible stalls. City Code calls for 311 parking stalls which includes both the Festival Foods space, as well as the secondary tenant space. Staff finds that the amount of excess parking on site further supports recommendations for additional pedestrian connections within the site and added landscape features surrounding the outlot, as these elements would increase pedestrian-friendliness, reduce impervious surfaces, and serve to walk back previous/outdated development patterns that led to over-parking in many suburban communities, including West Allis.

**Signage**

Festival Foods will submit a separate application for their Master Sign Plan, which will come back before Plan Commission for approval. While the signage shown on these plans is not under consideration at this time, it is worth noting that the conceptual signage is, in staff’s opinion, of a high quality design and well placed.

One signage issue that does need to be addressed as part of this Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plan approval is the non-conforming sign currently on the property. All non-conforming elements must be removed from plans to receive approval. The timeframe during which the non-conforming signage is to be removed is typically no longer than two years. Staff recommends the applicant update to their plans to note the removal of the non-conforming freestanding sign and the date of removal, which should be within in a two years of approval.



### **Zoning - Removal of PDD Overlay**

The current zoning of the property includes a PDD Overlay. At this time, there is no need for this overlay and staff recommends the removal of the PDD overlay. This process can be initiated by City staff, and the applicant is supportive of this request.

### **Recommendation**

Recommend approval of the Special Use Permit for Festival Foods, a proposed large retail development grocery store, to be located at 11111 W. Greenfield Ave., and approval of the Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plans for Festival Foods, a proposed large retail development grocery store, to be located at 11111 W. Greenfield Ave., submitted by Aaron Aspenson on behalf of Festival Foods. (Tax Key No. 448-9993-0006 and 448-9993-009), subject to the following conditions:

(Items 1 through 6 are required to be satisfied prior to the issuance of building permits associated with the proposed work reviewed by Plan Commission. Contractors applying for permits should be advised accordingly.)

1. Revised Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans being submitted to the Department of Development to show the following: (a) additional windows on the east and north elevations, as approved by staff; (b) a contingency plan to show a pedestrian connection through parking area (to include a raised sidewalk, pedestrian lighting, landscaping, signage, and accessible ramps), as approved by staff; (c) the date by which a Phase 2 plan, which will address the outlot and the pedestrian connection will be submitted for Plan Commission review; (d) revised travel lane near outlot building during Phase 1 period (e) removal of outdoor sales displays from plans, with the exception of two seasonal events; (f) seasonal site plan with specifications related to size, location, time period, and screening; (g) revised plan for accessible parking signage to be more permanently installed; (f) detailed plans for location of traffic and pedestrian-oriented signage, to be incorporated into landscape beds; (g) inclusion of bike racks; (h) details on seating options to be located near brat barn space; (i) cart corral details; (j) use of bark mulch rather than stone mulch; (k) City Forester approval of landscaping species and number; (l) removal of non-conforming pole sign from plans.

2. An estimated cost of landscaping and screening (Phase 1 and Contingency Plan) being submitted to the Department of Development for approval.
  3. A surety bond or other form of security as required under Sec. 12.13(14) of the Revised Municipal Code in the amount of 125% of the estimated cost of landscaping and screening (Phase 1 and Contingency Plan) shall be executed by the applicant prior to the issuing of a building permit.
  4. Common Council approval of the special use (scheduled for September 1, 2020) and applicant's acknowledgement of the special use resolution.
  5. Documentation and approval showing compliance with the City of West Allis Stormwater Management Ordinance, to be submitted to the Building Inspections and Neighborhood Services Department by a registered Civil Engineer. A stormwater permit must be obtained from the City.
  6. A signed statement from the property owner that the non-conforming freestanding sign will be removed within 2 years from the date of Plan Commission approval.
- (Remaining conditions of approval to be satisfied by the property owner within one year of Plan Commission approval)
7. Master Signage Plan being submitted to Plan Commission for review.
  8. Removal of Planned Development District (PDD) overlay zoning.