

# Lynn Starbucks plan now a full-service cafe

By Chris Stevens / The Daily Item | Posted: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 3:00 am

LYNN — Before it's even opened, Starbucks Coffee Company has upgraded its plan for a simple drive-thru on the Lynnway to a full-service store.

"This is another feather in the cap of development," said Waterfront Zone Site Plan Review Committee member Charles Gaeta. "It's a small piece but a great piece."

In May, the Zoning Board of Appeals approved a plan that allowed for a 630-square-foot Starbucks drive-thru at 821 Lynnway in the defunct Lynnway Health Club building. Ward 6 Councilor Peter Capano said Tuesday that after some discussion Starbucks and developer Andrew Rose reconsidered the plan.

"And the bottom line is a proposal has been drawn up for a full-service Starbucks," he said.

It took less than five minutes for the board to approve the plan that Rose said would include building on the existing footprint of the defunct health club building.

Gaeta asked about a possible timeline. Rose said he would like to see the project start in late fall, but it's up to Starbucks. The project must be built to the company's specs, but everything has been approved internally.

"We're in the queue," he said. "There are others waiting to be built, but we're in line."

The approval by the waterfront committee means the proposal heads to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

When the drive-thru plan came through the ZBA, member Ron Mendes questioned why Rose wasn't building a full-scale cafe and, ironically, Rose said the size of the site. He said it was too small, but Tuesday he said they would reuse the building that is on-site, which would give them enough room.

Not everyone was pleased with the plan. David Zweller, who lives and works on the waterfront, called it appalling. Zweller missed the brief hearing but said putting a drive-thru anything on the Lynnway contradicts the master plan and opens the door for like businesses.

"How can they stop a CVS or a bank from coming in?" he said.

Capano disagreed.

"The other plan was for a drive-thru but this is full-service, and I think it fits in perfectly," he said.

Initially the plan was to open a small-scale Starbucks to show the company that Lynn is a viable community and hope it would open a full-scale cafe somewhere down the road. Capano said he's pleased to see Starbucks is going to skip that stage. He said there is no reason to think the upscale

coffee house wouldn't fit into the waterfront plans.

"Starbucks is right in keeping with what we're trying to do," he said.

Gaeta said it was only five years ago that they kidded about Starbucks opening in Lynn.

"This is terrific," he said. "It's taking off, slowly but surely the waterfront development is taking off."