



500 West Big Beaver
Troy, MI 48084
troymi.gov

P-02a

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

Date: February 27, 2019
To: Mark F. Miller, City Manager
From: R. Brent Savidant, Planning Director
Subject: Restaurant Drive-Throughs in the BB Big Beaver Zoning District

The City has been contacted by a company desiring to open a restaurant with a drive-through in the BB Big Beaver Zoning District. The BB zoning district is generally located on both sides of Big Beaver between Coolidge and Rochester Road. Until the adoption of the comprehensively updated Zoning Ordinance in 2011, most of this section of Big Beaver Road was designated as some form of office zoning. The Land Use Plan at the time intended to accommodate large office buildings with restricted retail and service establishments. For example, the OSC Office Service Commercial District only permitted restaurant uses if attached to an office use; drive-through uses were expressly prohibited.

In 2006, the City adopted the Big Beaver Corridor Study, which defined a vision for Big Beaver Road as a “World Class Boulevard.” Principles of the Study included the following:

- Establish Big Beaver as a world-class corridor of high-quality design
- Encourage mixed-use development with a focus on providing more housing opportunities
- Boast pedestrian activity and walkability along the corridor by providing for new residential, mixed use development, and density
- Designate the area as the city’s entertainment and culture center
- Create public spaces that are pedestrian magnets, brimming with life and activity
- Create a building street wall with buildings set close to the street with parking in rear

The vision established in the Study was incorporated into the comprehensive update to the Master Plan in 2008. To codify the vision and intent of the 2006 Big Beaver Corridor Study and the 2008 Master Plan, the 2011 Zoning Ordinance update established the Big Beaver Zoning District, which expressly prohibited drive-through uses. Permitting drive-through uses for food users is contrary and impedes the implementation of the vision of what the City set out to achieve along Big Beaver Road.

There are some existing restaurant drive-throughs on Big Beaver between Coolidge and Rochester Road that are inconsistent with the vision for Big Beaver Road:

- Tim Horton’s (located on the north side of Big Beaver, east of Kilmer) – This was approved as part of a PUD prior to the adoption of the Master Plan in 2008.
- Burger King (located at the SW corner of Big Beaver and Rochester) – This was constructed in 2000 when the property was zoned HS Highway Service.
- McDonald’s (located at the NW corner of Big Beaver and Rochester) – This property is controlled by a Consent Order and Judgment that was approved decades ago when the property was zoned B-3 General Business.



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As evidenced by recent developments including Season's 52, Yard House, Mr. Kebob, First Watch, Shake Shack, MOD Pizza, Mission BBQ, Sedona Taphouse, Stoney River Steakhouse and many others, Big Beaver is still the prime location for new restaurants in southeast Michigan. Clearly drive-throughs are not a requirement for a successful restaurant on Big Beaver.

While food drive-through users are not appropriate for the area zoned Big Beaver form-based district, there are numerous zoning districts in Troy that permit food drive-throughs as a special use. These districts include CB Commercial Business, GB General Business, O Office, OM Office Mixed Use, Maple Road form-based districts, and some NN Neighborhood Node form-based districts.

When considering zoning amendments or rezoning, the City must consider the precedent of any decision. If the City were to allow restaurant drive-through uses in the BB district, they cannot be selective in which restaurant drive-through users or developers are acceptable. Rezoning to allow one drive-through user would open the door to permit all other restaurant drive-through users.

For these reasons we do not advise the city to consider amending the provisions of the BB district to permit restaurant drive-through users in the BB Big Beaver district or rezone property to permit such uses.