



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Office of Community Planning and Development

To: Simsbury Zoning Commission

From: George K. McGregor, AICP, Planning Director

Date: December 5, 2022

RE: Application ZC #22-38 of J. & P. McKenna Owner/Applicant, T.J. Donohoe, Agent, for a Special Exception pursuant to Section 4.5 of the Simsbury Zoning Regulations to permit a private driving school at the property located at 571 Hopmeadow St. (Assessor's Map G12 Block 103 Lot 038). Zone PO.

Summary of Request

The Applicant proposes to establish a private driving school at 571 Hopmeadow St. "Church, School, Library" is listed as a use permitted upon Special Exception approval in the Professional Office (PO) zoning district.



571 Hopmeadow is a 4,138 sq.ft. commercial building, currently home to McKenna Orthodontics. The Avon Driving School will occupy a 1,950 sq.ft. on the second floor. ADS is relocating from West St. and is a long serving member of the business community.

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8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Thursday
8:30 - 1:00 Friday



The site contains a 4,138 sq.ft. building and parking area with 18 parking spaces, based on a professional office parking designation. This arrangement was depicted on a site plan from 1986; however, included a total square footage of 3,730 sq.ft. and 19 total spaces (it appears a staircase has removed one space). The Applicant proposes minor site adjustments including the placement of new dumpster pad on the south end of the parking lot. Staff is reviewing the location.

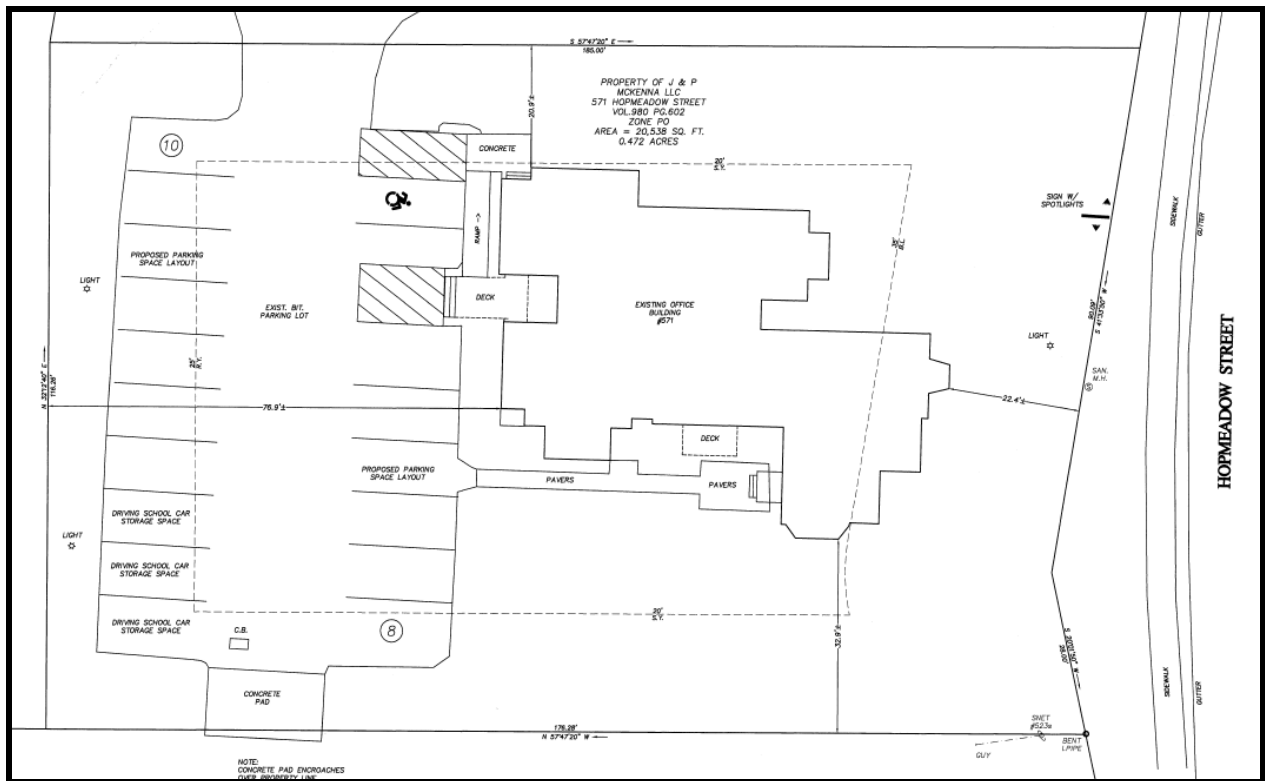
The driving school owns four vehicles for instruction use.

There is no specific parking ratio for a private school; the current location on West St. appears to be more constrained than this location. Parking ratios for unspecified uses are determined by the Zoning Commission, according to Section 10.1.4.

Nonetheless, based on the Applicant's narrative, the parking situation appears adequate as the driving school will have hours of operation (12 pm to 8 pm) which will not conflict significantly with the dental practice (the dental practice is open from 8:45 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Wednesday-Friday).

The driving school maintains four instructors in a staggered arrangement during the day. There are no on-site group classes.

The Applicant has submitted a revised site plan, prepared by Denno Surveying:



Staff Analysis

Private School is defined in the Town regulations as “a school that is established, conducted, and primarily supported by a non-governmental agency or organization.” Therefore, the Special Exception review is appropriate.

The addition of a driving school to this commercial property may increase its value. This portion of Hopmeadow contains a variety of commercial uses and the proposed driving school is compatible with other uses in the corridor.

Parking is adequate especially due to the staggered business hours for the two uses on site.

Staff finds that the specific considerations for special exceptions, as found in Section 12 of the Town of Simsbury Zoning Regulations, have been substantially met or satisfied. Those considerations include:

Orderly Development—This corridor contains a variety of commercial uses. The site contains a 4,138 square foot commercial office building.

Property Values—There is no indication the special exception request would affect property values.

Public Safety—There are no extraordinary public safety considerations.

Traffic Considerations—This is a commercial corridor. The site is served by a shared, two-way, private, commercial entrance in existence at this time.

Landscaping and Buffers—No new landscaping proposed

Relationship to Utility Systems, Drainage Systems, and Impact on Community

Facilities—The site has been developed; there are no additional impacts on infrastructure or utilities.

Draft Motion

A draft motion in the affirmative has been prepared for the commission for discussion purposes. Please refer to attachment “A” for the draft language.

**Attachment “A”
Monday, December 5, 2022
Simsbury Zoning Commission**

MOVED, The Zoning Commission Approves Application ZC #22-38 of J. & P. McKenna Owner/Applicant, T.J. Donohoe, Agent, for a Special Exception pursuant to Section 4.5 of the Simsbury Zoning Regulations to permit a private driving school at the property located at 571 Hopmeadow St. (Assessor’s Map G12 Block 103 Lot 038). Zone PO.

The Commission finds that the application for a Special Exception has met the standards set in Section 12 (Special Exception Requirements) of the Simsbury Zoning regulations, subject to the following conditions:

1. The property shall be developed in substantial conformance with the plan titled “Parking Plan for J & P McKenna LLC” dated 11-19-22, prepared by Denno Land Surveying.
2. An administrative zoning permit is required for construction.
3. Prior to the issuance of a zoning permit, the Applicant shall submit 2 sets of Mylars for signature and recordation.