

NARRATIVE  
LaSALLE ROAD COMPANIES LLC  
620 COTTAGE GROVE ROAD, BLOOMFIELD

The Applicant, LaSalle Road Companies, LLC, proposes (1) to rezone the property located at 620 Cottage Grove Road (the “Property”) from Professional Office to Commercial (C), and (2) to amend the Commercial zone regulations.

The Planning & Zoning Commission (“Commission”) created the Commercial District in 2021. Section 4.7.A provides that “[t]he purpose of the Commercial District (C) is to provide areas suitable for commercial services, including offices, retail, restaurants, personal service establishments and other similar uses.” Those specific uses are permitted in the Commercial District subject to site plan approval. The Commercial District, therefore, was adopted to promote new retail and restaurant opportunities to service residents and the growing business community in Bloomfield. In short, it recognized the changing nature of retail in Bloomfield, particularly given the limited number of retail commercial zones in the Town. Nevertheless, there is no property currently within the Commercial District.

The market reality is that Bloomfield is surrounded by major retail centers or malls like West Farms Mall, Buckland Hills, and Blue Back Square in West Hartford. Meanwhile, Bloomfield has seen a large increase in the number apartments attracting young people and professionals. In particular, Cottage Grove Road has changed significantly in the last 10 years since the adoption of the 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development (the “POCD”). It is now the home to many new office buildings, including Corporate Crossing and the Jolley Drive Office Park. It is also home to new apartments on Jolley Drive and 40 approved units at Corporate Crossing.

Not surprisingly, residents and employees often complain about the lack of restaurants and grocery store options, especially important in an economy experiencing inflation, and the lack of retail alternatives. Many residents have also

expressed their concern that there are now too many office buildings in Bloomfield, and that the Town needs to restore some balance through new retail development.

Changing the zone of the Property to Commercial not only responds to these significant market and demographic changes, but also to the residents of Bloomfield, by providing attractive and convenient retail and restaurant alternatives to this area of Bloomfield. In addition, it will facilitate economic development by means of increased real property taxes and new employment opportunities.

The POCD recognizes that Cottage Grove Road as the most important east – west corridor in Town. This corridor has and will continue to be critical to the town's economic base. The POCD, however, also recommends being mindful that economic development should not have a negative impact on existing residential neighborhoods. That is why the Regulations Amendment Application eliminates certain Commercial District uses like a gas station and car wash. The Regulation Amendment Application also proposes to eliminate the restriction of parking within the front yard setback. This request also helps to allow development to occur further from residents, as well as to provide a greater buffer to wetland resource areas.