

# Two Family Dollar stores get preliminary approval

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The Reading Planning Commission, at a special meeting Wednesday evening, gave preliminary approval to plans for two Family Dollar stores.

The plans were tabled at the planner's regular meeting Oct. 27 because written zoning and Historical Architectural Review Board approval had not been received. The zoning permit and HARB conditional approval are now in hand, Craig Pieffer, division manager of zoning, planning and preservation, told the commission.

The plans call for a 9,180-square-foot store with 29 off-street parking spaces at 400 and 401 S. Sixth St., the former South Reading Market House, and an 8,320-square-foot store with 27 parking spaces at 231 and 229 Lancaster Ave.

The South Sixth Street store is in the historic district and requires HARB approval. It will have a herringbone pattern brick exterior with columns, goosenecked lighting fixtures and faux windows. The Lancaster Avenue store will be a more typical Family Dollar in appearance.

The special meeting was called to accommodate the developer's time line, so work on the projects can begin this year, planners Chairman Ermete Raffaelli said.

"A lot of people in this community went to bat for this project," developer George A. Hutchinson said.

Speaking of the special meeting, he said, "I want to thank everybody. It is unusual to do what you did.

"Preliminary plan approval allows demolition and site work to begin. The plan will be before the commission for final approval Nov. 24. The stores will probably be open by April or May, Hutchinson said.