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In the News

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Council approves plan for BJ's gas station

By Jeff Gubala
Assistant Editor

Members of BJ's Wholesale Club and people who attended Tuesday's Town Council meeting approved of a retail auto refueling station for 507 New Park Ave.

According to Deborah Buckley, BJ's would be open from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Sunday, with extended holiday hours.

The proposed location for BJ's is among other gas stations, but BJ's would sell gas for less to its members. A BJ's station in Waterford sells regular unleaded gas for \$1.49 per gallon, according to Brian Earley, assistant vice president of BJ's petroleum division.

BJ's Wholesale Club spokeswoman Julie Somers said members responded to a survey and favored having

a refueling station.

"When we hear from our members," she said, "this is an area where they want to save money."

Robin Pearson, an attorney representing BJ's Wholesale Club, said at least 5,000 West Hartford residents are BJ's members.

She said a refueling station in West Hartford would benefit small businesses in addition to members.

Also, the area is zoned to allow for gas stations.

Buckley said use of the refueling station should be limited to BJ's members.

The council discussed the possibility of the station opening at 6 a.m. Monday through Saturday.

Councilor Elizabeth Gillette said people living near the proposed site are concerned about truck traffic and noise in the morning.

But residents do not seem to object to noise from Home Depot, Councilor

John Shulansky said. It is open at 6 a.m. and trucks load on its site.

Councilor Andrew Schoolnik suggested that restricting tanker trucks to set hours would alleviate noise.

The refueling station could save consumers 12 cents on fuel fill-ups, but Councilor Alfred Turco said he disapproved of the proposal.

He said two retail outlets exist in the area and adding a service station would impede development.

Gillette said she agreed that an added service station would improve the area.

Councilor James O'Brien, however, said gas prices are changing and BJ's should serve as an economic boost.

With two votes against the proposal and six votes in favor of it, the proposal for BJ's refueling station passed.