

CITY OF NORWALK, CT

South Norwalk TOD Redevelopment Plan

DRAFT AUGUST 2016



Prepared for the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
by THE CECIL GROUP • FXM ASSOCIATES

South Norwalk TOD Redevelopment Plan (Draft)

Presentation to Norwalk Redevelopment Agency on September 27, 2016



Agenda

- Required Findings
- Presenters
 - Tim Sheehan, Norwalk Redevelopment Authority
 - Emily Keys Innes, AICP, LEED AP ND, The Cecil Group



Findings

8-127(b) The redevelopment agency may approve any such redevelopment plan if, following such hearing, it finds that:

- 1 The area is a redevelopment area
- 2 The plan will results in materially improved conditions in the area
- 3 Sufficient living accommodations are available for displaced families
- 4 Site planning is satisfactory and the plan is related to the POCD
- 5 The Planning Commission has submitted a written determination of consistency with the POCD
- 6a Public benefits from the plan will outweigh private benefits
- 6b Existing use of real property cannot be feasibly integrated into the plan
- 6c Acquisition by eminent domain is reasonably necessary for the plan
- 6d The primary purpose is not to increase local tax revenues



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Findings

(1) The area in which the proposed redevelopment is to be located is a redevelopment area

- Has this finding been met? **YES**



Findings

(1) The area in which the proposed redevelopment is to be located is a redevelopment area

- A redevelopment area “is an area...that is deteriorated, deteriorating, substandard or detrimental to the safety, health, morals or welfare of the community”
- A deteriorating area “is an area within which at least twenty per cent of the buildings contain one or more building deficiencies or environmental deficiencies”

SUBAREA	TOTAL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	NUMBER OF PROPERTIES MEETING ONE OR MORE CRITERIA	PERCENTAGE OF PROPERTIES MEETING ONE OR MORE CRITERIA	MEETS STATE/FEDERAL?
TOD-District	209	161	77%	Y/Y
Lexington Avenue Neighborhood	287	212	74%	Y/Y
Total	496	373	75%	Y/Y



Findings

(1) The area in which the proposed redevelopment is to be located is a redevelopment area

REGULATORY REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	CONDITIONS
Chapter 130 Section 8-125(7)(B)	Conditions from a defect that are not correctable by normal maintenance	Pre-1978 construction (probable lead paint)
		Brownfields
Chapter 130 Section 8-125(7)(M)	Other equally significant building deficiencies or environmental deficiencies	Flood Plain and potential for flood blight
CFR 570.208(b)(1)(ii)(A) (5)	Known or suspected environmental contamination	Pre-1978 construction (probable lead paint)
		Brownfields
		Flood Plain and potential for flood blight
Chapter 130 Section 8-125(7)(J)	Detrimental land uses or conditions, such as incompatible uses	Uses incompatible with residential uses



Findings

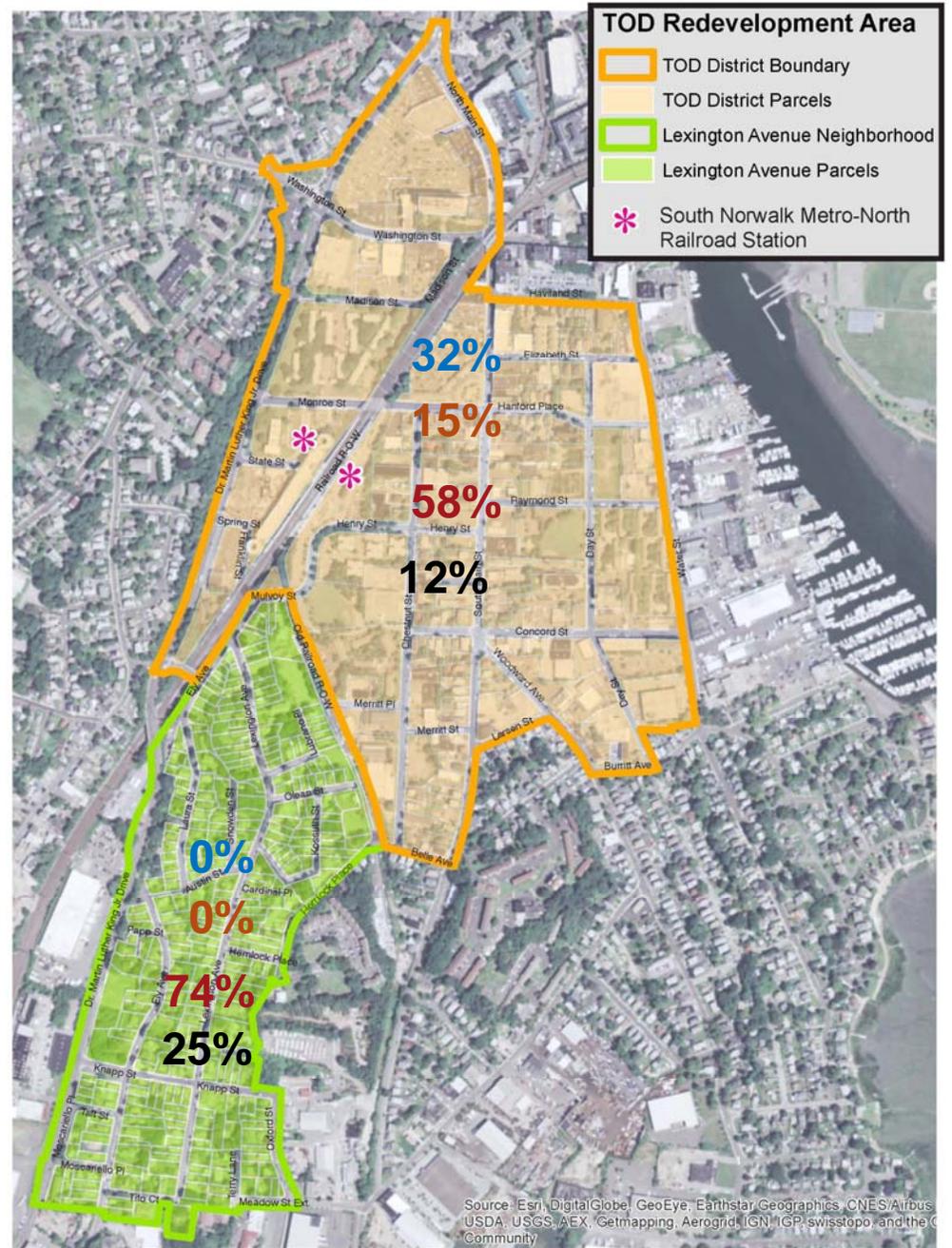
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Flooding

Brownfields

Probable Lead

Incompatible Uses



Findings

(2) the carrying out of the redevelopment plan will result in materially improving conditions in such area

- Has this finding been met? **YES**



Findings

(2) the carrying out of the redevelopment plan will result in materially improving conditions in such area

- The plan will encourage “the development of complete, compact neighborhoods that will draw new residents and businesses within a socially and economically diverse district centered on the South Norwalk Metro-North Railroad Station”
 - Revised zoning provides incentives for private developers to invest in the area in exchange for increased requirements related to the protection and provision of affordable housing
 - Design guidelines tailored to the TOD District, the Lexington Avenue Neighborhood, and public infrastructure improvements will control both the aesthetic qualities and the provision of space by developers to enhance the public realm within the overall redevelopment area



Findings

(3) sufficient living accommodations are available within a reasonable distance of such area or are provided for in the redevelopment plan for families displaced by the proposed improvement, at prices or rentals within the financial reach of such families

- Has this finding been met? **YES**



Findings

(3) sufficient living accommodations are available within a reasonable distance of such area or are provided for in the redevelopment plan for families displaced by the proposed improvement, at prices or rentals within the financial reach of such families

- Evidence suggests that existing demand for affordable housing at income levels found in South Norwalk exceeds the available supply (see page 137)
- The plan does not contain a specific project that would displace specific residents
- Private development over time will temporarily displace residents as existing housing stock is upgraded or replaced



Findings

(3) sufficient living accommodations are available within a reasonable distance of such area or are provided for in the redevelopment plan for families displaced by the proposed improvement, at prices or rentals within the financial reach of such families

- In the short-term, this plan recommends that the developer work with the City to provide priority accommodation for families within City-regulated housing inventory
- In the long-term, the proposed zoning requires the preservation of existing affordable housing and the provision of additional affordable housing by developers who meet certain criteria



Findings

(4) the redevelopment plan is satisfactory as to site planning, relation to the plan of conservation and development of the municipality adopted under section 8-23 and, except when the redevelopment agency has prepared the redevelopment plan, the construction and financial ability of the redeveloper to carry it out

- **Has this finding been met? YES**



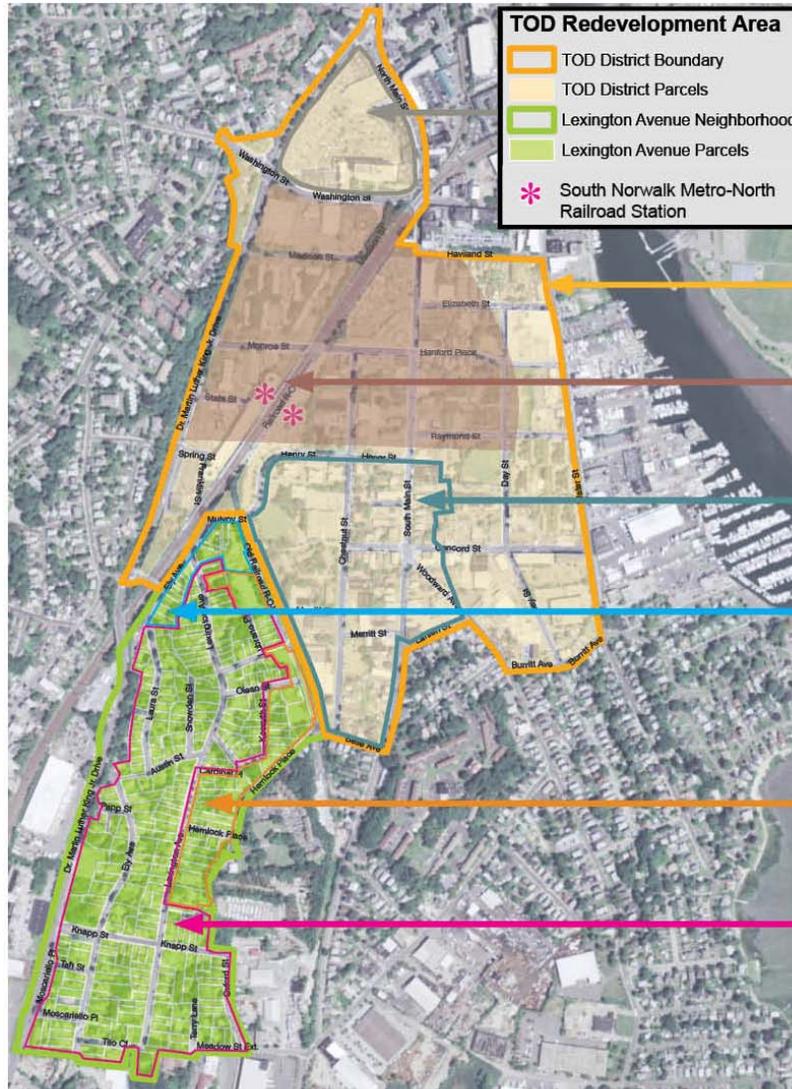
Findings

(4) the redevelopment plan is satisfactory as to site planning, relation to the plan of conservation and development of the municipality adopted under section 8-23 and, except when the redevelopment agency has prepared the redevelopment plan, the construction and financial ability of the redeveloper to carry it out

- The plan is consistent with the POCD (see #5)
- The Agency prepared the plan: requirement for construction and financial ability of redeveloper is not required
- The plan contains a Land Use Plan for the redevelopment area that addresses the conditions specific to either the TOD District or the Lexington Avenue Neighborhood and those that are common to both (page 35)



Findings



Webster Street Block includes a higher as-of-right height limit for the core of the block and lower height limits at the periphery.

Unified zoning and design guidelines for TOD District to encourage appropriate mixed-use infill development and protect historic building context and availability of affordable housing.

Higher residential density should be within 1/4 mile of the South Norwalk Rail Station.

Lower height limits requires new infill development to reflect the existing context of lower-density residential.

Subarea C: Neighborhood retail and services that support the existing residential Lexington Avenue Neighborhood.

Subarea B: Higher residential density in exchange for preservation of existing historic buildings.

Subarea A: Preserve and protect existing residential neighborhood from inappropriate development.

SPRINGWOOD-WHISTLEVILLE VILLAGE DISTRICT ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Figure 2: Land Use Plan



Findings

(5) the planning agency has issued a written opinion in accordance with subsection (a) of this section that the redevelopment plan is consistent with the plan of conservation and development of the municipality adopted under section 8-23

- **Has this finding been met? YES**



Findings

(5) the planning agency has issued a written opinion in accordance with subsection (a) of this section that the redevelopment plan is consistent with the plan of conservation and development of the municipality adopted under section 8-23

■ Letter issued August 22, 2016

- E.2.2.5 Consider designating a redevelopment area at the South Norwalk Station to help achieve goals for transit enhancements and transit-oriented development here.
- B.1.1.2 Encourage new development around transit access and allow new development which does not exceed the capacity of infrastructure systems (road, sewers, water, etc.)
- A.1.2.3 Allow a wide range of housing opportunities to ensure that the housing needs of all segments of the labor force are met.
- A.2.2.6 Encourage the expansion of the number of affordable housing units through innovative methods such as incentive programs.



Findings

(6)(A) public benefits resulting from the redevelopment plan will outweigh any private benefits

- Has this finding been met? **YES**



Findings

(6)(A) public benefits resulting from the redevelopment plan will outweigh any private benefits

■ Economic benefits

- Support for a diversified housing strategy
 - *Creation of new market rate units*
 - *Preservation of existing affordable units*
 - *Creation of new affordable units*
- Replacement of incompatible uses with ones compatible with the mixed-use district and with the residential neighborhoods
- Balance of strong neighborhoods which sustain healthy abutting commercial areas and vice versa

■ Public infrastructure

- Integration of public and private infrastructure to create walkable streets and an active public realm
- Improvements to transportation and circulation to balance pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers within the vicinity of the rail station and, over time, along improved links to the neighborhoods



Findings

(6)(B) existing use of the real property cannot be feasibly integrated into the overall redevelopment plan for the project

- Has this finding been met? **Yes**



Findings

(6)(B) existing use of the real property cannot be feasibly integrated into the overall redevelopment plan for the project

- **Redevelopment plans can be at different scales**
 - A project over several parcels
 - A plan for an entire district or neighborhood

- **At this scale, the uses that are incompatible are those that cannot be integrated into the plan for**
 - a mixed-use, walkable district (TOD District)
 - the residential/neighborhood commercial district of the Lexington Avenue neighborhood

- **These uses include the contractors' yards that are allowable under current zoning but have been encroaching into residential neighborhoods**



Findings

(6)(C) acquisition by eminent domain is reasonably necessary to successfully achieve the objectives of such redevelopment plan

- Has this finding been met? **NO**



Findings

(6)(C) acquisition by eminent domain is reasonably necessary to successfully achieve the objectives of such redevelopment plan

- While the Redevelopment Authority may use eminent domain to achieve the objectives of a redevelopment plan; this plan does not require the use of this action
- Should future initiatives require eminent domain, the use of eminent domain requires approval on a parcel-by-parcel basis from the City Council (page 8)



Findings

(6)(D) the redevelopment plan is not for the primary purpose of increasing local tax revenues

- Has this finding been met? **YES**



Findings

(6)(D) the redevelopment plan is not for the primary purpose of increasing local tax revenues

- The purpose of this Redevelopment Plan is to materially improve the conditions of the South Norwalk area by encouraging the development of complete, compact neighborhoods that draw new residents and businesses within a socially and economically diverse district centered on the South Norwalk Metro-North Railroad Station.



Findings

(6)(D) the redevelopment plan is not for the primary purpose of increasing local tax revenues

- The plan:
 - Identifies zoning changes necessary to encourage future development as part of a mixed-use, walkable district
 - Creates incentives within the proposed zoning for retaining existing affordable housing and producing new affordable units
 - Establishes design guidelines to ensure new development or redevelopment is consistent with the goals of each area (TOD District and the Lexington Avenue neighborhood)



Questions and Answers

