

**CITY OF NORWALK
ZONING COMMITTEE
August 11, 2016**

PRESENT: Doug Stern, acting as Chair; Adam Blank; Nate Sumpter; Rod Johnson; Louis Schulman; Galen Wright-Wells

STAFF: Mike Wrinn; Dori Wilson

OTHERS: Atty. Mark Stern; Mike DiScala; Atty. Jackie Kaufman; Paul Madden; Doug McAdams

Before the meeting began, Mr. Blank appointed Mr. Sumpter as Chair of the Zoning Committee and Mr. Schulman and Mr. Stern as committee members. The meeting was called to order at 7:37 p.m. Mr. Wrinn asked if the agenda could be taken out of order because he realized that the application for sign by the SoNo Collection would take longer. The committee agreed.

I. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS/SPECIAL PERMITS

b) 8-24 Review – Land Use & Building Management and Public Works Committees of the Common Council – Street Abandonment under section 95-35 of the City Code of a portion of Bates Court

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He also showed them the site plans. Bates Court is to be abandoned. It was an odd shape and configured. There was a discussion of who owns the street and the property in the area.

Atty Mark Stern began to speak for his client, the adjacent property owner, but was told that he could not speak because this was not a public hearing. His client, continued to speak about Bates Court. He was continually told that it was not appropriate to speak as well as told that if they had any questions, they could speak to the Zoning Department staff after the meeting was adjourned.

The applicant, Mike DiScala, continued the public hearing by explaining that he would like to build 40 apartments on the property.

Atty Stern then asked that the record reflect that his question had not been addressed.

a) #6-16R/#6-16SPR/#7-16SPR/#20-16CAM/#21-16CAM - Norwalk Land Development LLC - 1 Putnam Av (North parcel) & 63 West Ave (South parcel) – Proposed amendments to Article 121 regarding Mixed use retail shopping center signs in Reed Putnam Design District Subarea A and site plan review of The SoNo Collection Exterior Signage Manual and proposed signs for The SoNo Collection property – Preliminary review

Ms. Wilson began the presentation by explaining to the new commissioners that the SoNo Collection applications had been approved at the June meeting. Then she oriented them as to the location of the property on an aerial map as well as showing them the site plans. She explained that the sign manual was modeled after the hospital regulations and Waypointe DDDP sign regulations. There was a discussion of the changeable signs that the applicant was requesting. She said the issues were the timing of the changes as well as the brightness at night.

Atty. Kaufman continued the presentation by explaining how large the project was which was why the applicant was requesting so many and larger ones as well. The signs would help with wayfinding because of the scale of the project. She explained that the text change had been placed in the signage regulations with the other sign regulations. She explained that they had just provided staff with further changes to the application and Ms. Wilson asked that the presentation should cover what the commissioners had received. The Zoning Department staff had not had a chance to review the changes. She discussed how the manual was broken down into 10 different categories. She also discussed how the larger retailers would have larger and more signage than smaller retailers. There would also be electronic video signs ("EVS") that would be used for advertising, although no dollar amounts would be listed. No animation would be used either. There was a discussion about the timing of changeable copy on these signs. The state of Connecticut allows 8 seconds. There was a discussion of the upper level and ground floor signage for tenants.

There was then a discussion about the signage in the northwest corner in the sculpture garden as well as the enforcement of the signage. Another additional to the manual was the Art Mural Signscape which would be used around the holidays, not direct advertising. Another component would be directional signage to local attractions, not currently included in the count for the number of signs. Mr. Blank asked that the city be able to direct the content of these signs. There was a discussion of the street front tenant signage. There was then a discussion of the interior tenants whose signs would be visible from the street.

There was a discussion of the projecting screens and whether it goes well with the streetscape of where it is located. There was a discussion of the projecting screens and whether it goes well with the streetscape of where it is located. There was a discussion of the shape of the signs. There was also a discussion about other developers later wanting similar regulations as the SoNo Collection. The applicant wanted to have the definitions in the manual, rather than the regulations. Ms. Wilson thought it would be beneficial to have them in the regulations when working with others on permits. There was a discussion about how often the changeable copy would flash and possibly affect drivers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero