

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
October 12, 2017**

PRESENT: Joe Passero, Chair; Nate Sumpter; Mike Witherspoon; Louis Schulman; Doug Stern; Galen Wells; Richard Roina

STAFF: Steve Kleppin; Mike Wrinn

OTHERS: Craig Flaherty; Colin Green; Atty. Liz Suchy; Frank Brill; Frank D'Arno; Atty. Al Vasko

Nate Sumpter called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

I. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF APPROVAL TIME

a) #15-15SP – 150/166/170 Glover LLC – 166 Glover Av (now 200 Glover Av) – Grist Mill Village Bldg B - 230 unit Commercial PRD – Request for 1 year extension of approval time and b) #16-15SP – 150/166/170 Glover LLC – 174 Glover Ave (now 200 Glover Av) – Grist Mill Village Bldg C - 250 unit Commercial PRD – Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Mr. Wrinn asked that both a) and b) be handled together which was agreed. He discussed why the applicant was requesting an extension. Construction had been ongoing. The commissioners agreed.

II. REQUEST FOR RETURN OF SURETY

a) #8-13SP/#10-13CAM – G. Ely & Sons Inc. 71-75 Rowayton Ave – 8 unit multifamily development – Request for release of maintenance surety

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation and explained that the applicant had maintained the property. Staff recommended release of the surety.

III. SITE PLAN REVIEWS & COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS

a) #5-17SPR – CP IV Waypointe BP I, LLC (Carmel Partners) – 515 West Ave/Orchard St & 11 Merwin St – New exterior sign manual for Waypointe Midblock and Waypointe North Block – Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn explained that the applicant would explain further the sign manual.

Craig Flaherty continued the presentation with an introduction of the applicant. He showed them the proposed signage for the commercial spaces, improvements to the area, including murals. They worked with the Redevelopment Agency as well as the Zoning Department staff before and after they filed their application. He explained why the applicant was creating the streetscape plan. He noted that they were finding that the businesses were not getting the business that they had hoped. They wanted to create a sense of neighborhood. He listed all the different types of signs that they were proposing. There was a discussion about whether some of these signs would be similar. There was also a discussion about whether this was a problem created by the applicant. It was noted that the developer had

Colin Green, StreetSense, began by explaining his background. He explained what the goals of Carmel Partners' were. He also explained how the streetscapes would be enlivened. There was a discussion about the consistency of the signs throughout the development. This process had been ongoing for about 8 months with different city departments. The commissioners requested that the signage be consistent throughout the development, although there are different owners. Mr. Kleppin noted that the commissioners could speak to the owners of some of the other projects to confirm that they were all in agreement with the sign manual. Mr. Flaherty showed the commissioners some banner signs which could include business owners' names on it. He also discussed murals which were planned for electrical rooms, etc. There was a discussion about why the application had been filed. It was noted that the tenants had requested these changes to help their businesses become more successful. About half of the space is occupied. Mr. Green explained one of the projects that he had worked on in Bethesda and why it had happened. There was also some discussion about doing these projects in cities that are cold a few months of the year.

There was a discussion about whether this application should go to a public hearing. The commissioners agreed that it would go to a public hearing.

b) #4-88CAM – The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk – 10 North Water St – Removal & reconstruction of IMAX theater & other site improvements – Determine if minor change

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by explaining the application and explained that it would require city review because the property is owned by the city.

Atty. Suchy continued the presentation by discussing a history of the Maritime Aquarium which will be 30 years old in 2018. She explained how the structure would be affected by the Walk Bridge project. Some of the land near the Aquarium would be used for the replacement of the bridge. She explained what parts of it would be impacted which including the IMAX theater and the meerkats' exhibit. The Aquarium decided to renovate the Aquarium by moving these parts of the Aquarium to the north side of the building. There was a discussion as to whether this should be considered a minor change. Atty Suchy explained that her client had prepared the application for a public hearing. She would like the application to be on the Zoning Commission agenda in November.

Frank Brill, architect on the project, continued the presentation by explaining how the project would work on the site plans. He showed existing views of the IMAX and what the projected view would look like. He also noted that the new IMAX would also have 4D. He showed them floor plans of the inside of the building as well as mechanicals on the roof. He also discussed the materials that would be used on the building. There was a discussion about how long construction would be which Mr. Brill thought it would be 1 ½ years.

c) #10-15SPR – Chick-Fil-A – 467 Connecticut Av – Modification to add additional parking on land leased from the State - Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation with an explanation of the modification.

Atty. Suchy continued the presentation by showing the commissioners the site plan which included the modification. She explained that the applicant had signed a lease to use state lands in the back for parking for customers only, not construction vehicles. A furniture store is supposed to be constructed on the site but had not as of yet.

IV. SPECIAL PERMITS & COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS

a) #5-17SP/#21-17CAM – Dimitrogou – 198-200 East Av – 14 unit multifamily development – Final review prior to public hearing

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation with a brief history of the property.

Frank D'Arno, the architect, continued the presentation by explaining that he had met with staff to address the commission's concerns about the look of the proposed buildings. There is an existing 1 family and an existing 2 family on the property. He showed the commissioners a perspective of the property. He explained the changes that he had added to the buildings. He showed them the difference between the plans from September and what he was showing them at this time. He also showed them the materials board. He also showed the commissioners some pictures of another development so they could see some of the same materials.

The application would be on the Zoning Commission meeting later in the month.

c) #X-17SP – Workforce Partners – 204 Flax Hill Rd – Add 1 additional unit to 35 unit multifamily development – Determine if minor change

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by explaining the additional change which would be creating 2 units from 1. The commissioners decided that it was a minor change.

b) #28-96SP – Norwalk Hospital/Western CT. Health Network– 34 Maple St – Proposed modifications to Exterior Signage Manual to revise Hospital logo, add new illuminated sign to main roof, update ground signs & related changes – Determine if minor change

Mr. Wrinn explained the sign manual which was similar to sign manuals on other projects such as the mall.

Atty. Albert Vasko continued the presentation with an explanation of the Exterior Signage Manual because the hospital is now part of a new hospital group. They would like to include this new logo on the signs. The new signs will be lit. The commissioners discussed whether this was a minor change. The hospital was close to neighbors. There was a discussion about the signage and how it should be clarified because some of it was confusing. The commissioners decided it would not be a minor change. There was a discussion as to how high the sign would be. The application would be on the November Zoning Commission agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero