

Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" will need to register in advance and use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to view the meeting, but are not participating, can view a live stream on the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. This stream is delayed by approximately 20 seconds. Please find the information using the link above. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted on the City of Norwalk website within seven (7) days after the meeting.

Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Sabrina Church at schurch@norwalkct.org to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
JULY 2, 2020
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Thomas Keegan; Thomas Livingston; Lisa Shanahan; George Tsiranides; Darlene Young 8:38 p.m.

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development & Tourism; Mario Coppola, Corporation Counsel; Lamond Daniels, Chief of Community Services

OTHERS: Brian Bidolli, Executive Director, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency; David Heuvelman, Norwalk Common Council; John McClutchy, Todd McClutchy JHM Group; Deborah Brancato; William Hennessy, Carmody Law

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll as indicated above.

PUBLIC HEARING – CDBG-CV

AMENDMENT TO THE PY45 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN TO INCLUDE ALL CDBG-CV FUNDING. APPLICATIONS CAN BE FOUND HERE: [HTTPS://WWW.NORWALKCT.ORG/1412/COMMUNITY-DEVELOPMENT](https://www.norwalkct.org/1412/COMMUNITY-DEVELOPMENT) -BLOCK -GRANT

Mr. Kydes explained that this has been a collaborative effort and they were lucky enough to be able to fund all of the applicants.

Mr. Kydes opened the public hearing.

No members of the public wished to comment and no letters were received.

Mr. Kydes closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING – WALL STREET PLACE

AMENDMENT TO THE WALL STREET PLACE LAND DISPOSITION AGREEMENT AND LOAN RECOGNITION AGREEMENT (“LRA”), BY AND BETWEEN POKO-IWSR DEVELOPERS, LLC, THE CITY OF NORWALK, THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CITIBANK, N.A...., DATED NOVEMBER 14, 2007 (AS AMENDED) WHICH AMENDMENTS TO THE LDA AND LRA ARE NECESSARY TO ALLOW FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY MUNICIPAL HOLDINGS, LLC TO COMPLETE THE PHASE I CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALL STREET PLACE PROJECT

Public participation comments are not verbatim and represent a summarization of statements unless otherwise noted.

The following letter was submitted:

Dear Planning Committee Members:

My name is Jo-Anne Horvath and I reside at 1 Cobblers Lane in Norwalk, CT.

I would like to say that I am not in favor of advancing the latest Proposal of the POKO Project on Wall Street in Norwalk.

I think the best solution for this project is for Citibank to sell this asset to Jason Milligan for \$5.5 million dollars.

In addition to this I would like the City of Norwalk's Corporation Counsel's Office to stop their lawsuit against Jason Milligan. We have already spent approximately \$1 million dollars of the taxpayers money on this lawsuit already.

Let's start over and have Jason Milligan build a development in this spot that will enhance the downtown Wall Street area.

Thank you.

Mr. Todd Bryant, President Norwalk Preservation Trust explained there were concerns around the design of the building. He thanked those who worked on the new design. He said the current proposal is substantially better than the original one. He added that it was possible to go further in the design for it to fit into the historical district.

Ms. Donna Smirniotopoulos said this was a great plan for the McClutchy's and Citibank. She added that \$2.5 million dollars was lost on the unusable underground parking garage. She said it was unclear where Citibank spent \$30 million; the big winners are JHM, Citibank and the Democratic State Committee and the losers are the taxpayers.

Ms. Smirniotopoulos said that as a taxpayer this is a giant loss and government should get out of it.

Mr. Marc Alan, Chair, Norwalk Arts Commission said he was notified that the Norwalk Arts Commission will be offered 900 sq. ft. of ground floor space. He said the members of the Arts Commission are very excited about this; however, he said it will be difficult to operate without further support for the arts. He said they have not voted on this plan, but they are all optimistic.

Mr. Peter Smyth, Vice Chair, Norwalk Arts Commission said he feels this is a very unique opportunity for the City to have a real arts district. It would be a central meeting point for creative people. He said he supports this project and thanked the developer.

City of Norwalk
Planning Committee
July 2, 2020
Page 3
Via Teleconference

Mr. Patrick (did not give his last name) said it was time to move forward with this project; it has been an eyesore in the neighborhood.

Mr. Adam Bovilsky, Executive Director, Norwalk Housing Authority said there is a need for affordable housing in Norwalk. There are nine different waiting lists and they have all been closed for a number of years. He explained the difference between affordable housing and public housing. Mr. Bovilsky strongly urged support of this project.

Mr. Jason Milligan said that the Planning Committee and the Common Council were giving an ultimatum by Citibank. The ultimatum was to approve this project or Citibank would sell the asset. He said it should be a better project without government subsidy. He compared the proposed affordable housing rental costs to those in his recently rented apartments on Isaac Street.

No other members of the public wished to speak.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

ADMINISTRATION

- ** MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 4, 2020 REGULAR MEETING**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

NEW BUSINESS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – COVID 19 FUNDS

- ** MR. TSIRANIDES MOVED TO ADVANCE THE AMENDED PY45 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (AAP) AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR THE INCLUSION OF CDBG-CV FUNDS TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR ITS APPROVAL WITH THE AMENDED PY45 AAP TO HUD AND ALL DOCUMENTS CONSISTENT WITH THE AMENDED FY45 AAP**

Mr. Bidolli reviewed this item. He said they were fortunate to be able to fund all the applicants.

- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MR. LIVINGSTON; MS. SHANAHAN; MS. SMYTH; MR. KEEGAN; MR. TSIRANIDES; MR. KEEGAN)**

- ** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO ADVANCE TO THE COMMON COUNCIL PERMISSION TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT WAIVER REQUESTS RELATED TO THE CARES ACT/CDBG-CV PROGRAM TO HUD ON BEHALF OF THE AFFECTED PERSONS AS IDENTIFIED BY THE CDBG-CV PUBLIC DISCLOSURE FORMS**

- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MR. LIVINGSTON; MS. SHANAHAN; MS. SMYTH; MR. KEEGAN; MR. TSIRANIDES; MR. KEEGAN)**

WALL STREET PLACE – LAND DISPOSITION & LOAN RECOGNITION AGREEMENT FOR PHASE I IMPROVEMENTS

- ** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO ADVANCE THE AMENDED LAND DISPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT (“LDA”) BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK, THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF NORWALK AND POKO-IWSR DEVELOPERS, LLC, DATED NOVEMBER 14, 2007 (AS AMENDED), AND THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE LOAN RECOGNITION AGREEMENT (“LRA”), BY AND BETWEEN POKO-IWSR DEVELOPERS, LLC, THE CITY OF NORWALK, THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CITIBANK, N.A...., DATED NOVEMBER 14, 2007 (AS AMENDED), TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR ITS APPROVAL; AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE AMENDED LDA AND LRA AS NECESSARY TO ALLOW FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY MUNICIPAL HOLDINGS, LLC TO COMPLETE THE PHASE I CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALL STREET PLACE PROJECT**

Mr. Hennessy gave an overview of the last 16 years of the project. He presented and reviewed various renderings of the revised project. He noted that the plan, as proposed would be built in one phase.

Ms. Smyth said she toured two projects developed by JHM Group and said they were of good quality. She added there was a sense of community there. Ms. Smyth said she felt this development could be a benefit to the residents.

Mr. Hennessy discussed the architecture of the projects, the arts component and the mix of incomes. Mr. Hennessy presented the site plans.

Mr. McClutchy reviewed the architectural changes made to the original plans. He said they made sure the design fit into the neighborhood and the community. Another aspect of the project is to activate the street. He said that people living there will have disposable income that will enable them to enjoy local establishments.

Mr. McClutchy presented Wall Street Place preliminary designs. He reviewed the income level requirements. He said the big winners would be the occupants.

Mr. Livingston said he had a lot of objections last time, but said this is a great improvement. He said he was struggling with the fact that they do not have a copy of the proposed amended terms. He said there is a clause in the old amendment that amends Section 3.2.

Mr. Livingston said that his concern all along, was that he did not want to end up in a situation they are in now. He said he wants to understand where the risks are and address them.

Mr. Livingston said he felt this project was greatly improved, but expressed concern about being asked to approve the project without seeing the language. Ms. Shanahan agreed.

Mr. Coppola explained that they will forward a term sheet to the Committee, and if they approve it, the parties will engage in the process of the agreement. He said the amendments are in the final form and will be e-mailed to the committee members tomorrow morning. He added that the amended documents are similar to the documents the Committee members viewed last year.

Mr. Livingston asked about site improvements in the interim. Mr. McClutchy said they want to be sure the interior was secure. He noted they looked at different screening options to spruce up the appearance on the street.

Ms. Shanahan asked if residents have to requalify if their income levels change. Mr. McClutchy explained that residents have to verify their income every two years.

Ms. Shanahan noted that the City spent \$4.4 million. She asked if there is a schedule of what has been spent and what has to be spent. Mr. Coppola explained that the \$4.4 million is the amount that they budgeted. He said the City has not spent any money from the \$4.4 million to date. Payment to the developers will be made once the Certificate of Completion is issued for the work done.

Ms. Young joined the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Ms. Smyth said she was in support of having affording housing. She said it will provide a decent home for Norwalk residents. She added that this is an opportunity for our residents.

Mr. Heuvelman asked about public safety. Mr. McClutchy said they are looking at parallel parking in order to achieve two-way traffic on Isaac Street.

Mr. Heuvelman asked about the arts component of the project. Mr. McClutchy explained that they want to be able to grow the arts component.

Mr. Kydes said that after six years of negotiations, he feels the developer obliged and surpassed the asks.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE (MR. LIVINGSTON, MS. SHANAHAN; MS. SMYTH; MR. KEEGAN; MR. TSIRANIDES; MS. YOUNG; MR. KYDES)**

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services