

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 20, 2020**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Tom Keegan, Barbara Smyth, Lisa Shanahan, Darlene Young

OTHERS: Bryan Baker, Land Use Planner; Steve Kleppin, Planning and Zoning Director; Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development and Tourism; Council Member David Heuvelman, Mike Harden, Parking Authority Chair, Diane Lauricella, Diane Cece

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the roll. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Kydes announced that the East Norwalk Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Public Hearing had been moved to September 10th.

Ms. Diane Lauricella greeted everyone and said that she would be speaking about two items, the Solar for All campaign and Sustainable CT.

She said that she was in favor of the Same for All campaign and has several friends involved with this program in other towns. This could reduce the carbon footprint and help the environment. This PosiGen program is only available to Eversource customers. She said that she would be working with PURA to change that so that all the Taxing Districts in Norwalk would be able to take advantage.

Ms. Lauricella said that she wanted to make sure that the public would be involved in the program. She said that it would be important to have knowledgeable neutral parties available to the public to help them understand.

Ms. Lauricella said that she was in favor of Sustainable CT and would be advocating for this. This should move into a public/private partnership and that the City takes a look at creating a more holistic approach to energy.

Ms. Diane Cece greeted everyone and said that she had heard Mr. Kydes announce that the public hearing for the East Norwalk TOD plan would be moved to September 10th. She said that she was representing the ENNA group.

She said that this was the one committee that would be advancing the TOD to the full Council. It is important to be aware of the magnitude of the plan and will impact all of the area of 06855.

Ms. Cece said that they had made it clear to Mr. Kleppin that they were requesting that the deadline be extended. She said that one of the Governor's orders does address the granting of extensions.

Ms. Cece said that they had suggested that the Public Hearing be moved to from the 3rd to the 10th. She noted that the Norwalk Public Schools had changed the opening of school to September 10th also. She asked Mr. Kydes if he would consider delaying the vote to send the TOD Plan to the first Council Meeting in October.

Ms. Cece pointed out that the TOD Plan will impact all the area, particularly the gateways.

Mr. Kydes thanked Ms. Cece for all the hard work that she had put in on this issue during the last two years.

I. ADMINISTRATION

a. Approval of the Minutes of the July 2, 2020 Regular Meeting.

**** MR. KYDES MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 2, 2020 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 2, 2020 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

II. NEW BUSINESS

a. Solar for All Campaign

1. Advance to the Common Council for its consideration, the authorization of the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute an agreement with PosiGen and the Connecticut Green Bank for the Solar for All campaign and authorize their use of the Norwalk City logo on campaign related promotional materials.

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Kleppin said that Mr. Baker would be presenting the program and would be working on environmental issues for the Department.

Mr. Baker spoke about how this would help the City reach some of its goals for green operations. He said that The CT Green Bank allows home owners to install solar panels without credit checks and down payments.

Mr. Baker said that he had checked with Susan at PosiGen and was told that Bristol had the program up and running. He then outlined the details about how the program works and said they were trying to work with PURA to allow the two Taxing Districts to join the program. He added they would only install panels on buildings where they felt that the savings would be sufficient.

Mr. Kydes said they had looked at several solar companies. He asked how PosiGen was chosen. Mr. Baker said that they had gotten positive feedback on the company and Green Bank had chosen them.

Ms. Shanahan asked if there were other projects that the City could take advantage of and she suggested that the Norwalk Housing Authority be considered. Mr. Baker said that they were looking at single or two family homes, but he would check with the company representative.

The program runs for a period of about 5 months and the company checks in with the City staff and community leaders. After 5 months, the program will expire. The company will be using the City's website and social media, along with the City seal. He said that when people pay the Eversource bill, there is a portion of the bill that goes to the program. The staff will perform energy audits for applicants.

Mr. Heuvelman asked if the home owner would actually own the panels on their homes. Mr. Baker said that it was a 20 year lease and that the home owner would be paying about \$50 a month on the panels. PosiGen is responsible for the maintenance of the panels.

Ms. Young said she felt that this was a good project and while it would include low income families. However South Norwalk would be excluded and she felt that those families should have an opportunity to participate in the program.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH POSIGEN AND THE CONNECTICUT GREEN BANK FOR THE SOLAR FOR ALL CAMPAIGN AND AUTHORIZE THEIR USE OF THE NORWALK CITY LOGO ON CAMPAIGN RELATED PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Sustainable CT

1. Discussion and update regarding Norwalk's Sustainable CT Submittal.

Mr. Baker said that the deadline for the Sustainable CT was August 25th. They had enough points for bronze certification at this time. As they continue to work on this in the future, they can qualify for more points and qualify for a higher level.

c. Plan of Conservation & Development/East Norwalk Transit Oriented Development Plan

1. Approve scheduling a public hearing at the September 3, 2020 Planning Committee Meeting to consider the proposed amendments to the Citywide Plan (POCD).

Mr. Kydes asked if the September 10th public hearing date would work for the Committee members. The Committee members agreed that September 10th would be acceptable.

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO AMEND THE DATE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SEPTEMBER 3, 2020 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITYWIDE PLAN (POCD) TO SEPTEMBER 10, 2020.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AS AMENDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Kleppin said that the consultant had a conflict on the 3rd, but would be available on the 10th. Mr. Kydes said that he would like to have a presentation at the meeting. Mr. Kleppin said that the presentation was about 45 minutes.

Mr. Kleppin said that he would prefer not to push this item past September because item has been under discussion for two years and that they have heard from the public.

Mr. Kleppin said that State deadline for completion was the end of October.

Mr. Keegan said that he had heard that there were many people asking to have this delayed and while it has been discussed over the past two years, but he was not involved. He said that he did not see asking the State for an extension as a bad thing. He would not be opposed to waiting.

Ms. Smyth asked if it was possible to get an extension. Mr. Kleppin said that they had already received an extension from the State and were at the limit now for the grant. He

said that he did not want to belabor the point, but the Committee had heard from the public. The Zoom meeting platform precludes people from shouting from the back of the room, so people can speak without interruption.

d. Norwalk Now

1. Advance to the Common Council for its consideration, the authorization of the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute a three party agreement with the Norwalk Parking Authority and Dorenborg Kallenbach Advertising to provide Citywide Marketing Communication Services in a sum not to exceed \$100,000 for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Ms. Church said that the Norwalk Now contract which was the promotion for Norwalk small businesses with the goal of increasing the use of parking assets had expired. This service has expanded since its launch to other neighborhoods in the City rather than just South Norwalk. It is a free service for all business owners for marketing and promotional services.

An RFP was issued and interviews were held. Ms. Church said that they had included an amount of money to see what the agencies would come up with. She gave a brief summary of Dorenborg Kallenbach Advertising. The \$100,000 will come from the Parking Authority budget. This is a citywide initiative.

Mr. Keegan asked about the \$100,000. Ms. Church said that the City will not be allocating any funding, but the funding will be managed by staff, which is why the three party agreement is needed.

Ms. Young asked what would happen if the Council was not happy after the first year. Ms. Church said that if they were not happy with the Agency, the City would issue another RFP and a new consultant would be selected.

In response to a question about how the program will be supervised, Ms. Church said that the Parking Authority would receive a monthly report which can be shared to the Council as requested.

There is an RFP for a Special Events Coordinators that is currently in progress that is temporarily suspended because of COVID-19.

Mr. Heuvelman asked if the new consultant is aware of the issues surrounding COVID because so many things have changed. He was told there has been a major change in reaching out and all the consultants had considered it in their presentation. There will be more signage and print media.

Mr. Kydes asked when the campaign would kick off. Ms. Church said that they were still working on the 501(c)3 and LLC issue. In the beginning, there was a need for the LLC and the 501(c)3 issue because there was sponsorships involved but that is no longer needed or required. The campaign will continue to be managed with no lapse.

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A THREE PARTY AGREEMENT WITH THE NORWALK PARKING AUTHORITY AND DORENBURG KALLENBACH ADVERTISING TO PROVIDE CITYWIDE MARKETING COMMUNICATION SERVICES IN A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

III. OLD BUSINESS

There was no additional Old Business to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services