

**CITY OF NORWAK
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 4, 2021**

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

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency Jessica Casey, Norwalk Community and Economic Development Chief; Steve Kleppin, Planning and Zoning Director; Brian Bidolli, Norwalk Redevelopment Executive Director; James Travers, Director Transportation, Parking & Mobility; Garrett Bolella, Assistant Director Transportation Services

;
OTHERS: David Heuvelman, Common Council; Diane Cece

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the roll.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Diane Cece talked about the Peer Consultant for Professional Consulting. She said there could be an issue concerning one of the consultants WSP which could create a conflict of interest. She said WSP is also a consultant on the Walk Bridge Project is not just the Walk Bridge and touches a number of neighborhoods and includes the widening and lowering project on East Avenue and replacement of multiple bridges. She said they represent the interests of the DOT and could be called upon for Peer Review and were most recently called on for the Norden warehouse project. Ms. Cece said for example regarding Norden the applicant for that development wanted to change the width of a street for their tractor trailers and she that could have an unintended benefit for the Walk Bridge Project or they could come back and say a traffic plan is not appropriate and say there is a negative impact on the project. Ms. Cece said if WSP is approved please insist that the review is handled by the alternate Peer Review Company regarding the Walk Bridge Project.

Ms. Young thanked her for the comments and for looking out for South Norwalk.

ADMINISTRATION

**** MR. KYDES MADE A MOTION TO TABLE APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2021 TO THE NEXT MEETING.**

**** MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute separate Master Services Agreements with WSP USA and AKFR for on call professional consulting services to be performed on an as-needed basis related to peer traffic review. The Scope of Work will be performed pursuant to individual Letters of Agreement detailing the scope of the work for each Project. Services will be paid for my individual applicants with the Department.

- b. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to executed execute separate Master Services Agreements with Decarlo & Doll, BFJ Planning and Andriopoulos Design Associates for on call professional consulting services to be performed on an as-needed basis related to peer architectural/planning review. The Scope of Work will be performed pursuant to individual Letters of Agreement detailing the scope of the work for each Project. Services will be paid for my individual applicants with the Department.

- c. Authorize the Director of Planning and Zoning to execute the Letters of Agreement for both traffic peer review services and architectural/planning peer review services for individual projects on an as-needed basis to authorize the work to be done.

**** MR. LIVINSTON MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Kleppin said the purpose for this is traffic review and architectural services. He said it is good to have a second look at these applications. He said the peer review architect will drill down into specifics. He said he does not see any issues with WSP doing work in East Norwalk. He said DOT is not an applicant. Mr. Kleppin said we want to have an additional firm on board to farm out work if needed and move things along.

Mr. Livingston said would this have happened to prevent the problem with Chick-Fil-A. Mr. Kleppin said he was not there when they project was approved, but it may have

helped. Mr. Livingston asked when they will be brought it. Mr. Kleppin explained it will be on a project-by-project basis.

Mr. Keegan said Ms. Cece brings up a valid point. He said there were options other than the two who were chosen. Mr. Kleppin said three were interviewed and said these are the two that were chosen. Mr. Keegan said he would like to table the motion until we get more information from the two groups.

Mr. Kleppin said it could slow the process down.

**** MR. KEEGAN MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THE MOTION TO THE NEXT PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION WAS DENIED 6-1 (MR. KEEGAN VOTED IN FAVOR).**

Mr. Kydes called for a vote on the item.

**** THE ITEM 1A PASSED 6-1 (MR. KEEGAN VOTED AGAINST).**

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED THE ITEM.**

Regarding item 1b, Mr. Kleppin said we do not have an architect on staff. He said the goal is to have an attractive design and without causing too much expense to applicant and he would like to have another look at the project.

**** THE ITEM 1B PASSED UNANAMIOUSLY.**

**** MR. TSIRANIDES MOVED THE THIRD ITEM.**

**** ITEM 1C PASSED UNANAMOUSLY.**

REDVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mr. Bidolli provided an update on the South Norwalk Transit study. He said they are 3 months into a 9-month planning study. Mr. Bidolli said they held a public outreach meeting and presented with District B. Mr. Bidolli said the next step is to come up with a plan for transportation and development. He said there is an opportunity to develop the western side of the site. The next step will be to test feasibility and to create balance between economic opportunity and maximize public good. Then the next step will be to do an implementation plan.

Ms. Smyth asked if there were any surprises from public. He said there was a lot of feedback and people are interested in green spaces and also green infrastructure.

Mr. Livingston asked what the next step is. Mr. Bidolli said we are looking toward a public outreach meeting in April or May and wrapping up in June.

Mr. Heuvelman asked about balance and about being careful about not just creating pockets in one place and setting up one cohesive unit. Mr. Bidolli said they are trying to be cognizant of that goal.

TRANSPORTATION, PARKING & MOBILITY

Mr. James Travers said this was a chance to meet the committee and now would like to walk the streets. He said he started the Transportation, Traffic and Parking Department under New Haven Mayor John DeStefano. He then went to Stamford and worked for Mayor Martin. He said Mr. Bolella was his assistant in Stamford and is super talented. He is a Professional Engineer and is testing for a Road Safety Professional and will be only one of only 7 in the state and the only one at a Municipality.

Mr. Bolella said he is excited to be working in Norwalk and he and Mr. Travers had great success in Stamford. He said they able to lowest crash rates in Stamford history and did well lowering pedestrian fatalities.

Mr. Livingston said he enjoyed meeting with Mr. Travers and Mr. Bolella and walking around Rowayton. Ms. Shanahan said it was a wonderful opportunity and she loved hearing their ideas. Ms. Smyth said she is excited to walk around with the two of them in the future and the city is anxious to put together plans to improve bikeability and walkability.

Mr. Kydes said the next meeting will deal with capital budgets and will be a longer meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SHANAHAN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.
** MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED UNANAMOUSLY.**

The meeting ended at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

G. Venuto
Telesco Secretarial Services