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**CITY OF NORWALK
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
JULY 7, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; David Heuvelman; Thomas Livingston;
Lisa Shanahan; Darlene Young

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development and Tourism;
Jessica Vonashek, Chief of Economic and Community
Development; Bryan Baker, Principal Planner; Steven Kleppin,
Director of Planning and Zoning

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll as indicated above.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Ms. Diane Lauricella spoke about the items related to Public Act No. 21-29. She said she did not have a problem with modifying the parking regulation; however, she has a problem with the ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) provision. Ms. Lauricella asked to put the vote on hold until the Planning and Zoning Commission has a better explanation or reason why they need to opt out of both items.

Ms. Lauricella said she implored the Common Council to read the regulations for dwelling units. She said the details are eyebrow raising. She asked to put the vote on hold until the Ad Hoc Affordable Housing Committee had a chance to look at it.

Ms. Lauricella said the restrictions are myopic. Even though the City achieved 13.5% affordability, it is not affordable.

Mr. Tanner Thompson spoke about the ADU regulation and said there is a housing crisis and ADUs are a great way to build affordable housing. He noted that reasonable arguments were made at a recent Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. He said they need to remove as many restrictions as possible.

Mr. Richard Bonenfant said he is not a big fan of ADUs or of reducing the parking requirements. He noted that a good regulation for the ADUs is that the owner must reside on the premises. He said that they need to figure out a remedy for when the owner does not live on the property.

Mr. Bonenfant said the requirement to have a 2/3 vote is confusing and they need to determine what constitutes a 2/3 vote.

Ms. Church said a letter was forwarded to the Committee members.

There were no other members of the public who wished to participate.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of the Minutes of June 2, 2022 Meeting.

- ** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**
**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MS. SHANAHAN)**

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. PLANNING AND ZONING

- ** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTATION AND/OR RESOLUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CITY OF NORWALK'S OPT OUT OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT PARKING PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC ACT NO. 21-29 (HB 6107).**

Mr. Baker referred to his memo to the Common Council dated June 29, 2022 and reviewed the item. He said they are asking the Common Council to opt out of the State of Connecticut parking provisions and noted that most communities are also opting out. He said that Norwalk has liberal parking standards.

- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTATION AND/OR RESOLUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CITY OF NORWALK'S OPT OUT OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC ACT NO. 21-29 (HB 6107).

Mr. Baker shared his screen and reviewed six new standards. He noted that the staff is in full agreement to allow detached structures. Mr. Baker said he sent the draft regulations to the Committee members. He reviewed the draft regulations. Mr. Kydes asked if they expect a lot of applications. Mr. Baker said they are not cheap to build, but overall they are a good thing.

Mr. Baker explained, they can move this forward to the Planning and Zoning Commission and then come back to the Common Council to finalize the language. The earliest this item can get put on the Planning and Zoning Commission agenda would be in September.

Mr. Heuvelman said he would support a 1,000 sq. ft. home rather than a 700 sq. ft. home. He asked about sewer tie ins. He said he feels the regulations are limiting and would like to see the finished regulations.

**** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO DEFER CONSIDERATION UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSIONS ADOPTS THEIR REGULATIONS REGARDING THE CONNECTICUT ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC ACT NO. 21-29 (HB 6107).**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The Planning and Zoning Commission will have to hold a public hearing.

**** MR. HEUVELMAN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTATION TO RATIFY AND APPROVE THE INDUSTRIAL ZONES STUDY.**

Mr. Kleppin said he sent a memo to the Committee at the end of last week. He reviewed the memo. Mr. Kydes thanked Mr. Kleppin for the meeting a few weeks ago. Mr. Livingston and Ms. Shanahan said they supported the lighter industrial zone option.

Mr. Kleppin shared his screen and highlighted the difference between two options.

Ms. Young asked what types of jobs would be provided by these different types of businesses. Mr. Kleppin said this was a hypothetical exercise and there is a potential for a significant increase in jobs per site. Ms. Young said she would like to know what that looks like. Mr. Kleppin said this is based on the available data. Mr. Kydes said it seems the concern is especially related to the Meadow Street area.

Mr. Kleppin presented the Zoning map.

Mr. Livingston asked about the new school site conforming to Industrial zone 2. Mr. Kleppin said he would have to look at the building.

Ms. Young said that the community has been living in these conditions for decades and it sounds as if the changes are limited. South Norwalk has been an industrial site for the City. Mr. Kleppin said the only other industrial area is along East Avenue, along the train tracks, but not north of I-95.

A discussion took place regarding the allowed uses in Industrial-1 and Industrial -2 zones. Mr. Kydes said it sounds like everyone is in agreement to change the Zone to

Industrial zone – 2 for all of Meadow Street and change the west side up to Wilson Avenue to Industrial zone 2. Mr. Heuvelman asked if the size of the school will be impacted if they change the zone to Industrial zone 2. Mr. Kleppin said that from a Zoning standpoint, the school might fit better in the Industrial zone 2 zone. He said he was confident that the zone would not be an obstacle for the new school.

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO ADD THAT ALL PROPERTIES SURROUNDING THE SOUTH NORWALK SCHOOL WOULD BE ZONED AS INDUSTRIAL ZONE 2.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Ms. Young said there are still issues for residents outside of this area. She said that she was concerned that not enough was looked at to make changes for the residents in South Norwalk. The impact on the residents in South Norwalk is not going to change.

Ms. Young said South Norwalk still ends up on the short end of stick. They are between a rock and a hard place. She said she understands it is a balance, but she does not know if anyone in South Norwalk will see any real impact.

III. 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 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services