

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMISSION
DECEMBER 8, 2009
DRAFT MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Astrom called the meeting to order at 8:13 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Greene took the roll call.

PRESENT: Torgny Astrom, Chair; Joel Zaremby; Victor Cavallo; Don Nelson; Michael Chieffalo; Walter McLaughlin; Steve Ferguson; Fran DiMeglio

STAFF: Mike Greene; Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Tom Hamilton; Peter DeLeo; Michael Stefan; Balis Sabel; Joe Iannacone; Marie Couchea; Jackie Liljejun; Joann Iannacone

III. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Subdivision #3615 - KRPX Holdings, LLC – 282 Flax Hill Road – 3 Lots

Mr. Astrom opened the public hearing.

Mr. Peter DeLeo showed the property on a map and explained that the proposed subdivision was consistent with the area. He discussed frontage, lot size and utilities, adding that the application had approval as far as wetlands.

Mr. Cavallo asked if there were any restrictions regarding the wetlands approval. Mr. DeLeo described the bond the plantings proposed for the property. He added that all drainage issues had been resolved and that the City had signed off on the drainage report.

Mr. Astrom asked whether other neighborhood homes were two-family homes. Mr. DeLeo pointed out the other two-family homes on a map.

Mr. Astrom opened the hearing to public comment.

Mr. Michael Stefan, an adjacent property owner, stated that the utilities would go through an open watercourse and also that four families would be using one driveway. He stated that the proposed residences were too big for the area.

Mr. Balis Sabel stated that he had been prevented from building a two-family home in the area and that the same rules should apply to this applicant.

Mr. Joe Iannacone explained that he had been a resident for 52 years and that he had concerns about the proposal's impact on the area, which had a history of dangerous traffic conditions and water problems.

Ms. Marie Couchea stated that the addition of approximately eight vehicles to the area would generate even worse traffic conditions. She added that although the Inland Wetland Agency had approved the proposal, there were water problems in the area.

Ms. Jackie Liljejun discussed the Flax Hill Neighborhood Association and its concerns with the proposal. She said that the Association wanted to preserve the open land and did not want more density or more traffic. She said that residents did not want multi-family residences, pointing out that the existing two-family homes had been there for more than 50 years.

Mr. Astrom explained that the Commission was guided by Zoning principles and would require the applicant to adhere to them, as well.

Ms. Liljejun said that the Association wanted to learn how to prevent this type of zoning. Mr. Zaremby asked if Ms. Liljejun would object to the proposal, if it did not involve a two-family home. Ms. Liljejun said she would not object, if the applicant were building a home for he himself to live in.

Ms. Joann Iannacone asked the applicant to reiterate the conditions of approval. She also pointed out that there is already one empty house in the area, which cannot seem to be rented.

Mr. DeLeo discussed the wetlands guidelines, with regard to drainage and the culvert. He pointed out that the City allowed this type of project in a C-Residence Zone and that the applicant would need to abide by all rules concerning utilities. He said that the electrical utilities would in fact be going overhead, instead of underground. Mr. DeLeo added that although he currently resided in Bethel, he had lived in Norwalk for much of his life and considered himself part of the community.

Mr. Cavallo asked where the existing two-family residence was located. Mr. DeLeo pointed it out on the map and added that Flax Hill included other two-family residences.

Mr. Astrom closed the public hearing.

IV. REPORT OF SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE, Joel Zaremby, Chair

a. Subdivision #3615 - KRPX Holdings, LLC – 282 Flax Hill Road – 3 Lots - Report & recommendation

The Committee agreed to move the item back to Committee.

V. REPORT OF LAND USE COMMITTEE, Fran DiMeglio, Chair

Referrals – Report & recommendation

a. Mayor's Office – Special Capital Appropriation by the Parking Authority in the amount of \$500,000 for the Webster Street Parking Lot

Ms. DiMeglio stated that she was opposed to the project, not only because its presentation to the Committee had been incomplete, but also because it did not represent the best solution to the parking problem.

Mr. Cavallo discussed the project and how it intended to solve parking problems and generate revenue.

Mr. Ferguson pointed out the importance of the free fifteen-minute policy in attracting people to the area to use businesses.

Mr. Astrom stated that the current system was archaic and did not generate either flow or revenue.

Mr. McLaughlin agreed, stating that the new system would be an improvement.

Mr. Ferguson emphasized the need to recoup the money spent on the new system.

****MR. MCLAUGHLIN MOVED: RESOLVED** by the Planning Commission that the Special Appropriation request by the Parking Authority in the amount of \$500,000 to pay for a change in the method of operation at the Webster Street Parking Lot be **APPROVED**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the appropriate agencies.

**** MR. CAVALLO SECONDED.**

**** MOTION CARRIED, 7-1, (DIMEGLIO OPPOSING).**

b. Zoning Commission referral - #10-09R - Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to establish a new Golden Hill Village District

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: RESOLVED** that the proposed amendments to the Building Zone Regulations as shown on a certain document entitled "#10-09R – Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to the Building Zone Regulations to create a new Section 118-532 entitled Golden Hill Village District and related technical amendments” and dated November 12, 2009, be approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the reasons for this action are:

- 1) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Examine and modify existing zoning where necessary to achieve the goals of this plan" and to "create new *Village Districts*, Conservation Districts, and Historic Districts where appropriate" (F.2.1 and F.2.1 .1, p. 42); and
- 2) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Maintain & expand Village Districts to preserve the character of the districts, to improve the design of buildings and their relationship to the streetscape, and to protect resources of historical and architectural significance; establish Village Districts in Cranbury (Gregory’s Store), *Golden Hill (Cedar Street area)*, Silvermine Tavern area, and Liberty Square area" (F.4.1.5 p.43); and
- 3) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development objective to "Encourage context-sensitive design by requiring consistent setbacks and providing bonuses for desired architectural features (such as porches, bay windows, and pergolas) and to establish design guidelines that improve the appearance of residential, commercial, and industrial areas" (F.4.1.6 and F.4.1.7, p.44); and

4) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development objective to "Design streets for people as well as vehicles" and to "enhance the pedestrian experience to support related economic revitalization and encourage transit use" (F.4.2 and F.4.2.1, p.44); and

5) To retain the unique character of the Golden Hill commercial district and to ensure that future development is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Norwalk Zoning Commission.

#1-09M – Golden Hill Village District map change

BE IT RESOLVED that the proposed changes to the Building Zone Map as shown on a certain document entitled “#1-09M – Zoning Commission – 57-87 & 70-76 Cedar Street & 100 Fairfield Avenue – Proposed change to the Building Zone Map from Neighborhood Business to Golden Hill Village District” and dated April 30, 2009, be approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the reasons for this action are:

1) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Examine and modify existing zoning where necessary to achieve the goals of this plan" and to "create new *Village Districts*, Conservation Districts, and Historic Districts where appropriate" (F.2.1 and F.2.1 .1, p. 42); and

2) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Maintain & expand Village Districts to preserve the character of the districts, to improve the design of buildings and their relationship to the streetscape, and to protect resources of historical and architectural significance; establish Village Districts

in Cranbury (Gregory's Store), *Golden Hill (Cedar Street area)*, Silvermine Tavern area, and Liberty Square area" (F.4.1.5 p.43); and

3) To retain the unique character of the Golden Hill commercial district and to ensure that future development is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood; and

4) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Minimize variance requests to the Zoning Board of Appeals (F.2.1.7 p.42); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Norwalk Zoning Commission.

**** MR. FERGUSON SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c. Zoning Commission referral - #1-09M - Zoning Commission – 59 – 87 Cedar Street/100 Fairfield Avenue-- Proposed changes to the Building Zone Map from Neighborhood Business to Golden Hill Village District

This item was considered together with Item b.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 4, 2009

**** MR. ZAREMBY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

**** MR. MCLAUGHLIN SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VII. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR

Mr. Greene informed the Commission of a referral from the Redevelopment Agency to be considered at the next meeting.

Mr. Greene described a proposal to make adjustments to the Averick Building.

VIII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

The Commission discussed the public hearing regarding KPRX.

IX. COMMENTS FROM SWRPA

Mr. Cavallo discussed SWRPA's plans to clarify its purpose.

X. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. MCLAUGHLIN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.
** MR. NELSON SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Charlene Smith.