

**CITY OF NORWALK
LAND USE COMMITTEE
MARCH 3, 2009**

PRESENT: Frances DiMiglio, Chair; Torgny Astrom; Walter Briggs; Walter McLaughlin; Victor Cavallo; Donald Nelson; Joel Zaremby; Steven Ferguson

STAFF: Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Frank D'Errcole; Tom Hamilton; Tim Sheehan; Brian Sweeney; Mike Moore

Ms. DiMiglio called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

I. REFERRALS

a) Mayor's Office—Bond Resolution (Department of Finance)—Acquisition of certain public improvements related to the West Avenue Corridor (Waypointe) Project and bond resolution of \$104 million

Mr. Hamilton distributed a packet entitled "Waypointe Project Financial Presentation to Planning Commission." He explained the main objectives of the presentation, including an estimate of the project's impact on budgets, a review of the sensitivity analysis, and a discussion of the project's impact on bond rating. He emphasized that the Common Council had held many hearings and reviewed the item thoroughly.

In his discussion of the impact on budgets, Mr. Hamilton pointed out that the builder would need to build at its own expense and also that the buildings would need to be 75% leased before the City was obligated to issue bonds. He said that the projects would be paid for by parking revenues and by an additional tax levied by a new Board.

Mr. Hamilton also discussed the question of how bonds would be issued in the future if interest rates were to increase. Mr. Sheehan pointed out that municipal rates were judged differently from other interest rates. Mr. Hamilton described the interest rate differential between this rate and a triple A bond. Mr. Sheehan answered questions from the Committee about the sensitivity analysis.

Mr. Cavallo asked who would be responsible for the maintenance and infrastructure, if the project did not succeed after Zoning's approval. Mr. Sheehan said that it would be the developer's responsibility, then the bank's; he reiterated that the project would not be City property.

Mr. McLaughlin asked Mr. D'Errcole, of Robinson & Cole, his opinion of the project. Mr. D'Errcole pointed out that there were reputable people involved and that Waypointe's experience in West Hartford had been good.

b) 8-24 Review—Department of Public Works—Proposed drainage improvements at Mary Austin Place and Silvermine Avenue

Mr. Strauch showed the property on a map and explained that funds had been allocated in the fiscal year 2008-2009 to reconstruct the existing line. He added that DPW had received bids on the project.

Mr. Sweeney pointed out that money had been appropriated in previous years.

Mr. Zaremby asked why the Cosgrove bid had been rejected. Mr. Sweeney said that there had been an error in the bid.

There was a discussion of the role of stimulus package funds to the project.

c) Zoning Commission referral-#2-09R—TRSono Partners, LLC—Proposed amendments to Washington Street Design District to increase height and stories for hotels and related parking amendments (For distribution only—Action in April)

Ms. DiMeglio requested that the Committee review the item to prepare for action on it next month.

d) Zoning Commission referral--11-09R—Zoning Commission—Proposed amendments to Articles 10, 30, 50 and 140 to add new definitions for medical office, portable storage and restaurant and related technical amendments (For distribution only—Action in April)

Ms. DiMeglio requested that the Committee review the item to prepare for action on it next month.

e) Zoning Commission referral--#3-09R—Zoning Commission—Proposed amendments to Articles 111 and 140 regarding fees for unauthorized modification to approved plans (For distribution only—Action in April)

Ms. DiMeglio requested that the Committee review the item to prepare for action on it next month.

**f) Redevelopment Agency—Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Program Year 35—Draft Annual Plan**

Mr. Moore described the action plan for the upcoming year.

Ms. DiMeglio asked if a neighborhood coordinator existed now. Mr. Moore discussed the position.

Mr. Ferguson asked if the Agency primarily assisted existing projects and facilities or new ones. Mr. Moore explained that there was a competitive process involved and that the 15 to 20 grants approved each year were mostly for existing facilities.

Ms. DiMeglio asked for details regarding the summer youth employment program. Mr. Moore explained that the funds were for job training and a job-readiness program.

g) DEP/USACE Referral—142-144 East Avenue—Construct a public access walkway

Mr. Strauch said that temporary CODs had just been attained. He discussed the East Avenue Village District, emphasizing that the City supported public accessways. He gave details about the project's design and construction.

There was a discussion about continuity and uniformity with regard to the walkway.

**II. CHANGES TO THE BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION—Discussion**

Mr. Strauch discussed the item, adding that it had been a lower priority during the Capital Budget period. He pointed out that Article V had incorrectly indicated that meetings were held on the first Wednesday on each month and had been amended to indicate that the meetings were held on the second Tuesday of each month.

Ms. DiMeglio pointed out several adjustments to the By-Laws, including the terms and dates of members, gender-neutral language, duties of the Secretary, employees' appointments, and the addition of SWRPA to the order of business.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Charlene Smith.