

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 11, 2010**

PRESENT: Jackie Lightfield; Bob Keyes; Michael Mushak; Adam Blank; Michael O'Reilly; Bob Hard; Andrea Light

STAFF: Mike Greene; Dori Wilson; Adam Carsen

OTHERS: Jim Lancaster; Nick Overall; Atty. Tom Vetter; Matthew Popp; Atty. Frank Zullo; Pat O'Leary; Terry Wilson

I. SITE PLAN REVIEWS & COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS

a) #10-09SPR/#25-09CAM – Curran – 9 Leonard St – 6 unit multifamily development – Final review prior to hrg

Mr. Carsen showed the site plan for a property in the Central Business Design District. He said that the applicant had all the required signoffs. The Committee agreed that the application was ready for a public hearing.

b) #1-10CAM – K. Dimitrov – 82 Gregory Blvd – Convert SFR to two-family residence – Preliminary review

Mr. Carsen showed the site plan for a property in the C Residence zone. He said that minor interior modifications were planned, but that the exterior would still look like a single-family residence.

Mr. Mushak asked about control over the paving on the property. Mr. Greene confirmed that the applicant was required to follow the plan provided to the Commission, including paving requirements.

The Committee agreed to waive the public hearing.

c) #2-10CAM – B. Cherner - 3 Outer Rd – Construction of single family residence – Preliminary review

Mr. Carsen showed the site plan for a property located within 100 feet of the water. He described the building, pointing out that it contained a lot of screened space.

Mr. Mushak addressed the modern style of the home and the unique neighborhood. Ms. Lightfield pointed out that the property was part of the Village Creek Neighborhood Association.

The Committee agreed to waive the public hearing.

d) #X-09SPR – Merritt 7 Bldg 201 – Main Ave - 847 sq ft fitness center expansion – Determination if minor change

Mr. Greene described the location in Merritt 7.

The Committee agreed that the item was a minor change.

e) #1-10SPR – Dr. Syed Reza – 346 Main Avenue – 38,000 sq ft medical & general office – Preliminary review

Mr. Greene explained that the property was the site of The Hour building and that it would be used for medical office space. He said that the proposal also included parking and general

office space upstairs.

Mr. Jim Lancaster, the architect, discussed the plan to convert the three buildings on the site to medical and general office space. He added that the parking area would accommodate 178 cars and would balance the square footage of the building. He described the materials intended for the building.

Ms. Lightfield emphasized that the Committee needed to see a rendering. She addressed the need to improve the appearance of the building.

Mr. Blank pointed out that the front of the building would be improved with more landscaping, but that the current parking configuration limited the landscaping choices.

Mr. Nick Overall, a landscape architect, described the landscaping plans, which would include a low ground cover evergreen.

Mr. Mushak suggested that street trees be added to the plans.

Ms. Lightfield stated that the two curb cuts should be consolidated. The applicant's traffic engineer discussed peak times and sight lines at the property.

Ms. Lightfield said that DOT guidelines and City regulations asked for a reduction in the number of curb cuts and that the Committee wanted to see these two curb cuts consolidated into one.

Mr. Mushak addressed the need to reduce curb cuts as well, pointing out that an excess can generate chaos in traffic.

f) #3-10CAM – Vona – 37 High St – Contractor's yard – Request to modify approvals to increase size of yard & combine 2 lots – Preliminary review

Ms. Wilson showed the site plan and a map of the area, noting that both sites had been used as contractor's yards. She addressed the combining of the two lots, stating that this was due to insufficient buffer areas.

Ms. Lightfield commented that the applicant was trying to circumvent the need for proper buffers by combining the two lots.

Ms. Wilson said that one contractor had been in violation. She described the area and showed photos of the property. Mr. Keyes noted that the property was very close to the adjacent condominiums.

Atty. Tom Vetter said that violations on the property had been rectified. He described the prior owners of the property.

Ms. Lightfield stated that the applicant needed to review the plan with staff before presenting it to the Committee.

Atty. Vetter described the plans for the parking area. Mr. Greene pointed out that the trucks would be larger than Atty. Vetter had indicated.

Atty. Vetter said that the applicant had also proposed cleaning up the area. He showed photos of the fencing and discussed landscaping at the site.

Ms. Wilson reiterated that the applicant needed to confirm its proposal with a full site plan.

II. SPECIAL PERMITS

a) #11-09SP – Silvermine Homes, LLC – 241 & 249 Silvermine Avenue – 11 unit conservation development – Final review prior to public hearing

Ms. Wilson showed the map and gave background about the project. She said that the Conservation Commission was continuing its hearing until its next meeting. She said that the applicant had a new site plan with modifications indicated, noting that one significant change involved the removal of a secondary egress. She said that the Fire Marshal had approved of the removal of the egress area, which would instead be landscaped.

Mr. Blank asked if the Commission could vote on the item, if Conservation had not yet done so. Ms. Wilson confirmed that the Commission did not need to vote on the item at the hearing.

Mr. Hard asked if Commissioners could take new information about the item. Mr. Greene said that they could consider other City agencies' information.

Atty. Liz Suchy described the modifications to the plan, including the addition of nine rain gardens. She addressed the issue of how to delineate the conservation easement.

Mr. Matthew Popp discussed plantings at the property, pointing out the landscaping intended for the former spot of the secondary egress. He also addressed the functionality of rain gardens.

b) #14-09SP – Norwalk Hospital Association – 34 Maple St/Stevens St - Replace existing 427 space parking garage with new 628 space parking garage – Further review

Ms. Wilson discussed the proposal to replace the parking garage and the modifications that had occurred since the last presentation.

Atty. Frank Zullo discussed the need for repairs and maintenance at the garage, as well as the need for additional parking for the hospital addition planned on the north side of the facility. He added that the use of valet parking would allow for more cars to remain on-site during construction. He also pointed out the location of off-site facilities to accommodate staff parking during construction. He discussed the parking analysis provided by Kathryn Hebert of the Parking Authority. Atty. Zullo submitted a letter from Edward Musante of the Chamber of Commerce who indicated that area merchants would benefit from the added traffic near the site.

Ms. Lightfield asked if any Norwalk Hospital representative had met with merchants regarding parking. Atty. Zullo said no, but pointed out that the downtown area would benefit from more activity.

Ms. Lightfield stated that the Parking Authority's letter needed to be submitted to the Committee and that the applicant needed to provide more specific data about peak hours and impact of traffic.

Mr. Terry Wilson, the architect, discussed the plans to replace the existing parking deck with a larger one. He pointed out the shift in the curb cut and addressed the greenway planned for the site. He discussed safety concerns for the garage, indicating plans to maximize safety through lighting. He also addressed the need to minimize the light thrown off the building and the need to keep lighting from spread horizontally or across the street.

Mr. Pat O'Leary addressed the change in the location of driveways on the site, noting that the plans before the Committee tonight reflected changes recommended by staff and DPW. He said that landscaping plans would need some adjustments. He also addressed temporary parking opportunities for construction workers.

Ms. Lightfield asked about the intended pickup locations at the off-site parking lots. Mr. O'Leary agreed to give specific information about the spots at the public hearing.

c) #4-96SPR – Stop & Shop – 399 CT Av – Modify exterior façade for signage – Determination if minor change

Ms. Wilson said that the modification involved a change from a tan band to a purple band on the signage.

The Committee agreed that the item was a minor change on CT. Ave. Additional information would be required for the Main Ave site

III. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF APPROVAL TIME

a) #1-09SP/#1-09CAM – TR SoNo Partners – 43 South Main St – 121 room hotel with 7,764 sq ft office and 70 space indoor valet parking garage – Request for 1 yr extension of time

The Committee agreed to extend the approval time.

b) #3-07SPR – American Cancer Society – 38 Richards Av – 13,350 sq ft office - Request for 1 yr extension of time

The Committee agreed to extend the approval time.

c) #19-05SP – St. George Greek Orthodox Church – 238 W. Rocks Rd. – Parish hall Request for 1 yr extension of time

The Committee agreed to extend the approval time.

d) #9-06SP – 110 Richards Ave LLC – 110 Richards Av – 17,600 sf office addition - Request for 1 yr extension of time

The Committee agreed to extend the approval time.

IV. REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF SURETY

a) #7-90SP – Rogowsky – Tower Plaza – 120 New Canaan Ave – Request for release of maintenance surety

Mr. Carsen explained the request for surety. The Committee granted the release.

V. REVOCATION OF PERMITS

a) #1-09MV/#13-09CAM – Hollywood Restorations – 115 Woodward Av – Auto body repair – Status report

Mr. Greene said that the applicant had cleaned up the site, but that it still owed a \$1000 fee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Charlene Smith.