

**CITY OF NORWALK  
ZONING COMMITTEE  
MAY 14, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Bob Keyes, Chair; Jackie Lightfield; Andrea Light; Karen Spencer; Larry Bentley; Michael Mushak; John Tobin

**STAFF:** Mike Wrinn; Dori Wilson; Frank Strauch

**I. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING REGULATIONS & SPECIAL PERMITS**

a) #6-09R/#6-09SP – Norwalk Emergency Shelter, Inc. – 2 Merritt Pl/Chestnut St- Proposed amendments to permit a transient residence facility by special permit in Industrial#1 zone and special permit for a transient residence facility with 106 beds, 9 family units & 9 efficiency apartments and related facilities

Ms. Wilson addressed the project's connection to the Plan of Conservation and Development. She showed the tax map with relation to zoning. She said that the item included a slightly revised version of the amendment involving the number of sites in an Industrial 1 zone.

Atty. David Waters, representing the Norwalk Emergency Shelter, Inc., discussed Industrial 1 zones and how to limit the number of sites. He pointed out that the facility's location near the train station was helpful, because many of its users and staff use mass transit. He pointed out that the facility differed from a residential one, in that most residents did not have cars. Atty. Waters also discussed the proposed location at 2 Merritt Place, which was a dead-end street. He said that there was a perpetual easement with regard to accessway. He added that the project would help alleviate grievances regarding the current location of the property.

There was a discussion of the issue of limiting the number of sites affected by the proposed amendments.

b) #1-09R - Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to Articles 10, 30, 50 & 140 to add new definitions for medical office, portable storage & restaurant, clarify appeal period procedures & related technical amendments -Final review prior to public hearing

Ms. Wilson discussed concerns regarding medical office use and physician offices. She said that a public hearing would be held next week to get feedback about the issue.

c) #X-09R- Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to increase fee for Village District applications to \$1,500

Ms. Wilson said that the village district consultant believed that a \$1500 fee would be more appropriate than the current \$1,000 fee.

d) Establish new Golden Hill Village District–Cedar Street/Fairfield Avenue –Review & discussion

Ms. Wilson discussed the project's goal of creating an ambience for the district over time, noting also that the DPW was working on street and landscape improvements.

Mr. White stated his opposition to the proposal, saying that it would infringe on the rights of property owners. He said that the existing regulations were sufficient and that one city

should deal with one set of rules.

Mr. Mushak pointed out that the neighborhood had the potential to be a walkable area.

Ms. Wilson discussed the Silvermine neighborhood and the notion of tailoring the regulations to reflect the character of the district.

Mr. Mushak addressed the concept of Village Districts, emphasizing that the residents do not seek to control other people's property.

Ms. Lightfield pointed out that if improvements were to take place, it needed to be consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Tobin asked about the existing zoning. Ms. Wilson said that it is currently zoned as Neighborhood Business.

Mr. Mushak pointed out that the residents wanted consistency and that this was a grass-roots effort.

Mr. Tobin added that the regulations allow for the Village District.

Mr. Mushak left the meeting.

e) Modify application forms to require resumes for expert testimony submitted a minimum of 10 days prior to public hearing

Ms. Lightfield said that the requirement would prevent resumes from coming to the Commissioners at the public hearings and would alleviate disruption.

f) Comments of Commissioners

There were none tonight.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Charlene Smith.