

**CITY OF NORWALK
ZONING COMMITTEE
AUGUST 13, 2009**

PRESENT: James White, Chair; Andrea Light; Karen Spencer; Bob Keyes; Larry Bentley; John Tobin; Michael Mushak; Bob Hard

STAFF: Mike Greene; Mike Wrinn; Adam Carsen

OTHERS: Atty. Barry Hawkins; Dave Coffin; Atty. John Hoffman; Gary DeWolfe; Atty. Liz Suchy; Ray Sullivan; Bruce Beinfield; Kate Throckmorton; Kim Morque; Clay Fowler; Rick Redniss; Brian Stobbie; Andy LaSala

I. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING REGULATIONS & SPECIAL PERMITS

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

Mr. Greene reiterated that the hearing had been held in June and that a vote was not needed until September.

b) #7-09R/#7-09SP - Norden Place, LLC - 8 Norden Place - Proposed amendments to Section 118-711 to permit multifamily and single family dwellings by special permit in Restricted Industrial zone and special permit for 240 multifamily units, 4 single family residences (25 units to be designated as workforce housing units) and related recreation facilities - Further review

Atty. Suchy summarized the details of the item, pointing out that it had been to Conservation Commission and that other signoffs had been submitted.

Mr. Bruce Beinfield presented a composite photo and addressed concerns with the building's visibility from I-95. He showed renderings of the buildings close-up and distributed a materials palette. He emphasized that there was variation in the roof heights, as well as both roof dormers and recesses in the balconies, all of which improved the appearance of the building.

Mr. Keyes addressed the notion of opening the road from Westport to Norwalk. Mr. Greene reiterated that the concern had been mentioned, but had not been detailed.

Ms. Kate Throckmorton showed a rendering of the new driveway and discussed it as a separate identity for the site. She discussed several other landscaping issues, including pillars, signage, plantings, a courtyard, and the pool and recreation area.

Mr. Kim Morque addressed the applicant's proposal for housing on the site. He described market issues, particularly the need for moderate and affordable housing in the area. He pointed out that housing was the least intensive land use for the site and also the least intensive from a traffic perspective. He discussed the importance of providing housing near employment centers.

Atty. Liz Suchy gave background regarding the site. She discussed the Bradley Family's ownership of the site and the role of United Technologies with regard to the property.

Mr. White asked what the town of Westport had said about the path to Hiawatha Lane. Mr.

Rick Redniss addressed the issue, pointing out the concern with maintaining Hiawatha Lane Extension as a private road.

There was a discussion of which town's fire and police departments would be responsible for calls from the property.

Ms. Light asked why the issue of deed restrictions had not arisen four years ago. Mr. Clay Fowler pointed out that there had been no access issue at that time.

Mr. Keyes asked why there were only four single-family residences planned for the site. Mr. Morque cited economic feasibility as a primary concern.

Mr. Fowler detailed the economics involved with creating affordable housing units, pointing out that 2 ½ units of regularly priced housing were needed to pay for the cost of one affordable housing unit.

Mr. Keyes asked what the estimated profits were for the single-family homes. Mr. Fowler said it was estimated at \$90,000 to \$100,000.

The Committee emphasized the importance of having written explanations of the relevant numbers.

Mr. Hard addressed the issue of the construction rate as related to the amortization rate.

Ms. Spencer asked about the breakdown of unit types, as well as the number of schoolchildren at the property. Mr. Fowler said that there were 30 studios, 108 one-bedrooms, 90 two-bedrooms, 12 three-bedrooms, and 4 single-family residences; he added that the 25 affordable units were distributed evenly throughout the various unit types. With regard to schoolchildren, Mr. Morque said that there were projected to be 28 students, 25 of whom would attend public schools.

Mr. Greene pointed out that a hearing was scheduled with the Conservation Commission in September.

Mr. Morque addressed the issue of environmental remediation. He said that there was an active remediation program overseen by the DEP.

Ms. Light asked if the site was cleaned to an Industrial or a Residential standard. Mr. Morque said that the requirement was for an Industrial-Commercial standard. He added that no buildings would be going on or near the plumes.

c) #8-09R/#8-09SP – Norwalk Board of Education – Proposed amendments to Article 121 regarding signs at public high schools in residential zones and proposed ground sign at Norwalk High School - Further review

Mr. Wrinn said that the item was ready for public hearing in September.

Mr. White asked for confirmation that this type of signage was not allowed in A-zones in surrounding towns.

d) #1-09R - Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to Articles 10 and 50 to add new definition for medical office and related technical amendments – Review of public hearing

Mr. Greene said that feedback had not yet been received concerning non-profit and for-profit

designations, but that the issue had been settled.

Ms. Light recommended a clarification concerning the designation of optometrists and ophthalmologists.

Mr. Hard asked why Norwalk Hospital had requested a change in the wording with regard to having more than one facility.

e) Zoning Commission – Cedar Street/Fairfield Avenue - Proposed Golden Hill Village District – Status report

Mr. Greene said that some signoffs had been received from property owners and that more were expected by the next meeting.

f) Comments of Commissioners

There were none tonight.

- ** MR. BENTLEY MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. SPENCER SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Charlene Smith.