

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
July 14, 2011**

PRESENT: James White, Chair; Michael O'Reilly; Joseph Santo; David McCarthy; Adam Blank; Emily Wilson; Jill Jacobson; Mike Mushak (arrived after the meeting was called to order)

STAFF: Michael Greene; Mike Wrinn; Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Atty. Chris Smith; Guy Mazzola, Jr.; Atty. Liz Suchy; Paxton Knowles; Bruce Beinfeld; Mr. Kim Morque; David Chute; Tom Jones; Atty. Frank Zullo; Jason Mikrut; Atty. Ron Kellogg; Jim Quinn; Kevin Conroy; Ryan Hughes; Eric Glynn, Stuart Lax;

James White called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

I. SITE PLAN REVIEWS & COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS

a) #13-11CAM/5-11SP – AMEC Carting – 1 Crescent St – Modify existing transfer station by adding tonnage, additional haulers – Further review

Mr. Santo left the room prior to this presentation. Mr. Wrinn presented the application. AMEC wanted to modify the terms of their permit from 200 tons to 600 tons and allow haulers other than AMEC Carting to use their facility. One of AMEC's neighbors, Mr. Scalfani, has been concerned about the project and left a letter with staff late in the afternoon. There was not enough time to copy it for the commissioners' packets but they would be given a copy of it.

Atty. Chris Smith continued the presentation by discussing some supplemental materials that the commission had asked to see. He began with the traffic report which now included the Waypointe development traffic as the commission had requested and the increased tonnage which was proposed to be 600 tons. It showed there would be no adverse traffic delays with the increase of activity. The applicant also provided a narrative of how the operation would work on a daily basis to accommodate the additional haulers. They provided a response memorandum to Mr. Catani's letters. There have been no complaints from the City of Norwalk or from the State of CT. Lastly they provided a form contract that new haulers will sign in order to learn the procedures. Atty. Smith stated that the facility could handle 600 tons of debris per day but they could not go over as per state regulations. The facility has to operate efficiently especially by collecting the recyclables from the construction debris and then getting it quickly onto other trucks to take it off-site.

Mr. Guy Mazzola, a principal of AMEC, continued the presentation by discussing how his facility can handle three trucks in the bays every 10 min. One way is that they use a high-speed vinyl door rather than a steel door. This door is quicker than the

others. It goes up and down in seconds as opposed to minutes for the steel doors. He discussed other features of the facility that make it much more efficient than others.

Atty. Smith reminded the commissioners that when AMEC was first seeking a permit for their business, they were told to ask for less than 600 tons and establish a track record for which they could always come back for more. That is what they are seeking now. He also reminded the commissioners that AMEC had no violations with the EPA.

Mr. Blank asked whether they could cart debris out on the railroad. Mr. Mazzola said they could not because it was mostly used for commuters. Mr. White asked whether the Stepping Stones Museum and Mathews Mansion had any comments. Mr. Mazzola said that they told him that they had no complaints as neighbors but could not put that in writing.

Mr. Wrinn read a letter from Mr. Scalfani into the record. The letter included photos of AMEC being in violation of City of Norwalk regulations. Mr. Mazzola stated that the photos could have been taken at a time when the doors had been opened to let a truck come in or go out. Although the doors close quickly, someone needs to push a button to operate them. Mr. Mushak asked whether they were the only facility to recycle. He said that he was not sure but that many facilities were volume reduction facilities.

Mr. McCarthy said that he had been to the facility and had seen the doors open while material was being worked on. He wanted to understand the dimensions to make sure that there would not be a traffic back-up in the neighborhood. Mr. Mazzola told him and the other commissioners that they could always come into the facility to understand it better. Mr. McCarthy also requested a better diagram that was more to scale.

Mr. Mushak asked whether they kept a truck near the cemetery. It was not. He was also concerned about how AMEC was going to make sure that trucks that were not theirs, had covers on it. A traffic coordinator would be hired to check the trucks. Also, they would have these outside companies sign a contract agreeing to cover their trucks. A form was given to the commissioners.

The committee would review the application in August.

b) #X-XXSPR – Toys R’Us – Connecticut Ave – Modification to allow additional office space – Determination if minor change

Mr. Greene presented the application. Toys-R-Us would be making changes to its interior for additional office space. The commissioners decided it was a minor change.

c) #12-11CAM – Cove Marina – 48 Calf Pasture Beach Rd – New high bay 10,800 sq ft boat storage building – Final review prior to public hearing

Mr. Wrinn presented the application. The file is complete so they are ready to go to the public hearing in the following week.

d) #4-11SPR/#11-11CAM – Norwalk West/Belray Development LLC – 525 West Av/Orchard/Merwin Sts – Waypointe Phase 1: 469,839 sf mixed use development w/325 units, 33,654 sf retail, 11,550 sf restaurant & 626 sp garage in a design district development park – Final review prior to public hrg

Mr. Greene presented the application. It is ready to go to the public hearing in the following week. He gave them a set of site plans. Atty. Suchy continued the presentation. She discussed some architectural design changes. She also told the committee that all sign-offs had been received. Mr. Knowles told the committee that he had closed on all the necessary properties for this project and paid all back taxes. As owners of the property, they would exercise control over awning designs. Some of the commissioners had concerns about the timing of the lights.

e) #5-11SPR/#10-11CAM – 95/7 Ventures LLC – 51-63 West Av/15-25 Putnam Av - District 95/7South - 265,283 sf mixed use development w/232 multifamily units, 16,500 sf retail, 7,200 sf office & 321 sp garage in a design district development park – Final review prior to public hrg

Mr. Greene presented the application. The applicant brought in a model for the commissioners to view. Bruce Beinfeld, the architect on the project, went over the materials to be used on the buildings. He said that they have met all the requirements from the CEAC meetings. Mr. O'Reilly asked to see the materials that would be used on the buildings as well as what the cost of bricks would be. Bricks are 2-2.5 times more expensive than what is being used. Mr. Morque told the commissioners that they are going through the design process with the Redevelopment Agency. He also discussed their plan for affordable housing.

f) #16-11CAM – Chute – 43 Rowayton Av – Proposed single family residence – Preliminary review

Mr. Strauch presented the application. The applicant was replacing a single family residence with a new single family house. Although it is in a flood zone, there is no impact on coastal resources. A sea wall remains as is. The patio was constructed near it but after the staff's suggestion, it has now been moved back. The architect, David Chute, said that the house is 1 ft. past the original footprint of the house and touches a setback line. Although Mr. White was requested by the Rowayton Beach Association to hold a public hearing, he did not feel that the application warranted one. The other commissioners agreed. The neighbor at 45 Rowayton Ave. asked the commissioners if the wall could be moved without a review by City depts. The commissioners said that it could not. If there are any changes, then the applicant would have to come before the commissioners again.

g) #15-11CAM – Hey 19, LLC – 41 N. Main St – New restaurant with live entertainment – Preliminary review

Mr. Strauch began the presentation. The applicant would like to open a new restaurant in the basement of the old City Hall which also houses the Norwalk Museum. The applicant will have to for sign-offs from the Historical Society as well as the Redevelopment Agency. There would be seasonal outdoor dining and live music. They are still waiting for sign-offs. Atty. Liz Suchy continued the presentation. The outdoor area would be sunken into the sidewalk. Mr. Jones did not know what type of restaurant would be in the space. Mr. O'Reilly asked how much space was available outside for tables. They would be able to accommodate 32 patrons outside which would be within the applicant's property lines. Mr. Mushak wanted to put a condition in about the time that dumpsters would be allowed to pick up garbage. The commissioners decided that the application would not need a public hearing.

h) #18-11CAM – Crystal LLC (Grasso) – 314 Wilson Av – Indoor/outdoor Flea Market/Farmers market- Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation. This application consisted of an indoor/outdoor flea market and a farmer's market. The farmer's market would be seasonal. Mr. Kellogg continued the presentation. The commissioners voiced their concerns about the amount of parking. Since there are many vendors, the commissioners did not believe there was enough parking for both vendors and customers. Mr. Blank suggested that the owners of the property only start out with 50 vendors to see if the parking lot could handle that amount of vendors. There would be no public hearing but they would still put conditions on the application.

i) #1-10SPR – Dr. Syed Reza – 346 Main Av – 38,000 sf bldg – Request for 50% reduction in surety

Mr. Greene presented the application. Since the building seems to be in good shape, the commissioners agreed to it.

II. SPECIAL PERMITS

a) #14-09SP – Norwalk Hospital – Maple Street – 326 space parking garage – Proposed modifications to relocate Maple St driveway and revise Stevens St landscaping – Determination if minor change

Mr. Greene, who was presenting the application, said that it was actually two applications. One application for the relocation of the Maple St. driveway was approved by the Dept. of Public Works. Atty. Zullo continued the presentation regarding both applications. Since a pole for electricity has to be moved, this would cause problems for the hospital and surrounding area during the construction. In order to not move the

pole, they would move the driveway 20 ft. on a temporary basis. The second part of the application was what to do with the Stevens St. landscaping. There was one particular beech tree that was the topic of discussion about what to do with it. Mr. Mushak, although not an arborist, did not think the tree was healthy and would not be surprised if it had to be removed. The commissioners decided that the first application was a minor change but that the applicant would work with staff to decide about the landscaping and the tree.

b) #6-11SP – Club Italia – 3 Brook Street – Proposed club use – Preliminary review

Mr. Strauch presented the application by starting with the background of the property. The private club that is planned would have 20 members. Atty. Kellogg continued the presentation. The applicants would use the building on weekends. There is parking on site. It would be on the agenda in August.

c) #3-10SP – Maplewood at Strawberry Hill – 73 Strawberry Hill Av – Relocate emergency generator –Determination if minor change

Mr. Strauch presented the application. There was an emergency generator that was supposed to be located on the roof. The applicant went before the ZBA for a variance which was granted on July 7, 2011. The sound report showed that the noise from the emergency generator was under the City of Norwalk's levels. The commissioners decided that it was a minor change.

d) #7-08SP – SoNo Field House – 350 Ely Ave – Proposed modifications to approved plans to allow trade shows, concerts & corporate/political events – Determination if minor change

Mr. Greene presented the application. He noted that there were some problems with parking when a home show was held at the Sono Field house. Jim Quinn, the owner of the Sono Field house, continued the presentation. He acknowledged that he did not foresee the problems with parking at that time. He has handshake agreements with businesses in the area to help with parking. The commissioners asked that Mr. Quinn obtain written agreements with his neighbors for the parking. Mr. White asked that Mr. Quinn work with staff to determine what would be a timely notification process about large scale events like the home show. Mr. Greene said that they could work with Mr. Quinn about these events.

e) #11-89SP – Ben Franklin Gardens – 135 Flax Hill Rd – Proposed modifications to lights, dumpsters, landscaping – Determination if minor change

Mr. Wrinn presented the application. They have recently added spotlights on top of their down lights because of security issues. This is a problem because light is shining outside of the property. Mr. Mushak said that he had heard from some neighbors in Golden Hill that the lighting was too much at night and they could not sleep.

**f) #7-11SP/#17-11CAM – 300 Wilson Av LLC – 310 Wilson Av – Ice rink facility
– Preliminary review**

Mr. Wrinn presented the application. Buildings will be demolished to make room for a parking lot. Mr. Conroy, one of the owners of the property, continued the presentation. Two of the three buildings are in such disrepair that they will be torn down to create a parking lot. He is working with prospective tenants for the third building, one of them being a hockey group. Mr. Beinfield, the architect on the project, continued the presentation. They would create a landscaped parking lot. He then described the amenities that would be at the facility such as dining, a gym, party room, etc. The parking lot would have more spaces than required. Mr. White asked whether the exterior would remain metal and he was told it would.

Mr. Blank thought that the building should have some branding and/or graphics on it. It could be used for identification purposes as well.

Mr. Hughes, the tenant running the hockey school at the ice rink, continued the presentation. His partner, Eric Glynn, a native Norwalker, also spoke about the programs at the ice rink.

At this point in the meeting, Jim White made a motion to suspend the rules and add the following item to the agenda: **#07-09SP; Norden Place LLC; 240 units at 8 Norden Place – request to modify plans/ consideration of minor change.** Emily Wilson seconded and the vote of the committee was 3-0 to approve.

g) #07-09SP; Norden Place LLC; 240 units at 8 Norden Place – request to modify plans/consideration of minor change.

Mr. Greene presented the application. A developer is buying the property from another developer who no longer wanted it. Mr. Lax, the architect for the new developer, continued the presentation. The projects were similar; however, the living rooms would be 1 ft. bigger. There were some other slight changes to the original plans. For example, now every unit has a balcony. Mr. Lax was asked when they anticipated construction would begin. He said late fall but definitely within the year. It would probably be an 18 month build-out.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero

