

CITY OF NORWALK
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ZONING COMMITTEE
August 11, 2011

PRESENT: David McCarthy, Chair; Michael O'Reilly; Joseph Santo; James White; Adam Blank; Emily Wilson; Jill Jacobson; Mike Mushak

STAFF: Michael Greene; Mike Wrinn; Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Atty. Chris Smith; Mike Galante; Ron Kellogg; Bruce Beinfield;

David McCarthy called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.

I. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BUILDING ZONE MAP & SITE PLAN REVIEW

a) #1-11M/#6-11SPR - SoNo Metro LLC – 11-15 Chestnut St – Proposed change to Building Zone Map from Ind #1 & D Residence to SoNo Station Design District & site plan for mixed use development with 11,000 sq ft office and 17 multifamily units (11 studios & 6 one bedroom) – Further review

Mr. Greene began the presentation. The applicant will be working with the Parking Authority to provide additional parking. The Parking Authority has given their approval for the project.

Mr. Galante gave an overview of the traffic issues. They did perform actual traffic counts in July but since there are two schools nearby, they will have to be done in September when the schools are open again. If the volumes are off, then the analysis will have to be re-done.

Mr. O'Reilly asked whether any of the office space would become residential space. Mr. Beinfield answered that there was no plan to do so. The owners felt that business owners would want the convenience of having an office in Norwalk as well as New York and being able to use the train to commute between the two. They would try to get an historic designation to received tax credits that are available. This would also lock them into a mixed use building for at least 5 years.

II. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS & SITE PLAN REVIEW

a) #4-11R – D. Friedman – Proposed amendment to the East Avenue Village District to permit offices of Business Service establishments as a principal use – Preliminary review

Mr. Greene began the presentation. This application was not from staff, but rather, it had come about to ask the city to allow only the office function of a limo service.

Eric Bernheim, who represented the property and the limousine service, continued the presentation. He asked that the commissioners allow the limo service in the East Avenue Village District. Flagstar Limousine, which is the current tenant, had never retained limos at the office. He has been working with staff to create an exception to the regulations. Limos are not usually at the property. The tenant has agreed to not have a stretch limo at the site. There was a discussion about storage and parking. The limos are owned by the drivers so they are usually not on site. The commissioners were asked to think about the language of the revised regulations and the staff would work with Mr. Bernheim as well. They would review it again at the September meeting.

b) #5-11R/#4-11SPR – Norwalk West, LLC - Proposed amendments to allow 1 story buildings in interior courtyards & modify outdoor dining criteria in CBDD and modifications to approved plan to add 1 story buildings to interior courtyard & to modify recreation area – Preliminary review

Mr. Greene began the presentation. He explained that this application was also a private one, and not initiated by staff.

Atty. Suchy continued the presentation. Everything on the application would remain the same but they realized that the regulations would have to be changed because (1) they did not need a 2 story building in an interior courtyard; and, (2) the outdoor dining would not work because there was no municipal parking garage. The private garage on this project would, though, be open to the public.

c) #3-11R – Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to require that windows and doors are closed when live music is playing – Further review

Mr. Greene told the commissioners that this application would be on the agenda for the September meeting. He asked the commissioners if they could let him or his staff know if they had any questions. Mr. Blank suggested that they should clarify “live music” rather than defining it again.

d) #6-11R – Zoning Commission – Proposed amendments to revise the definition for contractor’s storage yards – Further review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation. A judge has ruled that the city’s definition for contractor’s storage yards is specifically for contractors and no other businesses such as landscapers. They had not been using it this when issuing permits.

e) Comments of Commissioners

Mr. O’Reilly had comments about AMEC Carting. There was a discussion about whether the doors were open at the transfer station. Some of the commissioners had concerns about traffic, noise, and additional drawings which had not been received.

Mr. Greene discussed the timing of the traffic lights on West Ave. since it had been a concern of the commissioners. It should be completed before the Waypointe project. He also conveyed to the commissioners that the owners of the Waypointe project would be filing an application to complete the northern part of the project.

Mr. Mushak asked about the delay in voting on the 95/7 project because of the approval of the Redevelopment Agency. Mr. Greene said that everything went according to schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero