

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
March 13, 2014**

PRESENT: Jill Jacobson, Chair; Joseph Santo; James White; Nathan Sumpter; Nora King; Linda Kruk; Michael Mushak (arrived late)

STAFF: Michael Wrinn; Dori Wilson; Adam Carsen

OTHERS: Atty. Liz Suchy; Tim Gooding; Paxton Kinol; Stan Fitch; Atty. Al Vasko; Ron Kellogg; Ken Olson

Jill Jacobson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

I. SITE PLAN REVIEWS & COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS

a) #1-14SPR – The Berkeley Holding/Belpointe Capital – 500-520 West Avenue – 6 story, 150,000 sq. ft. mixed use development with 127 units – Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on West Ave and Maple St.

Atty. Suchy said that there was a previous approval for this property with a similar use in 2008. However, the application proposes to add more residential units, office space and retail. The parking structure in this proposed building would be in the center and the building itself would be around it, basically hiding the parking. The application has received some of its approvals; however, the applicant is waiting for a sign-off from the Department of Public Works (“DPW”).

Atty. Suchy showed the plans of the first project as well as the current application. Mr. Gooding answered questions about the architectural design. He discussed the interior and exterior layout of the residential units. There was a discussion about the workforce housing units. Mr. White asked when they expected to begin construction. Mr. Kinol said they would like to start in September. There was a discussion about a waiver for a public hearing on this matter. Mr. Mushak questioned the way the buildings across the street looked as compared to their initial renderings. He asked for assurances that it would not happen to this building. Mr. Kinol did not think that it was happening with the Waypointe buildings. He also said that they would be using a stone around the windows that was thicker than what was being used at Waypointe. There was then a discussion about whether the Zoning Commission had architectural review. Atty. Suchy reminded them that architectural design review is handled by the Redevelopment Agency.

There was a discussion as to whether there would be a public hearing. Mr. Kinol explained that the building was similar to the previous approval. He noted, however, that they moved the parking into the center of the building. It would be hidden from view. Mr. Mushak made a motion to waive the public hearing. Ms. King and Ms. Jacobson agreed.

b) #X-14SPR – Marcus Partners – 101 Merritt 7 – Installation of emergency generator – Determine if minor change

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners to the location of the emergency generator on the building. It would be hidden from sight. The noise level meets Norwalk sound ordinances. The commissioners agreed this was a minor change.

c) #1-14CAM – Muse Paint Bar – 55 North Main St – Reuse as painting studio serving alcohol – Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the business and describing the concept of it. The applicant filed a CAM application to obtain approval for the new use which would increase their parking requirement. The available parking is located in the adjacent Webster Street municipal parking lot.

The applicant Stan Fitch continued the presentation. He stated that they would be serving light fare, along with alcohol. He explained how the art studio would work. They wished him luck. The commissioners decided not to hold a public hearing. It would be on the Zoning Commission's agenda in the following week.

II. SPECIAL PERMIT

a) #X-14SP – ASW Management, LLC – 352 Main Ave – Jerry's Artarama Retail center – Request to add 10 parking spaces to site – Determine if minor change

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on some aerial maps. He said that the applicant wanted to add parking spaces to the property where there were currently plantings. Ms. King asked what the purpose would be to add parking spaces. Atty. Vasko explained that it would be easier to find a tenant for the other unoccupied retail space, if there were more parking spaces. Mr. Wrinn said that a curb cut would be closed and that staff would advise as to landscaping and street trees. The commissioners agreed that it was a minor change.

b) #1-14SP – 15 Arch St. Assoc., LLC - 15 Arch St & Lynes Place – 16 unit multifamily development – Preliminary review

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property. He said that the applicant had acquired additional property so that this is now a new application, different from the one that was approved last year. There would be 16 residential units, an increase from the 12 units that were approved previously.

Mr. Kellogg continued the presentation by showing the commissioners some photos from around the property. He explained that they would have the traffic study done over. He also mentioned that the Fire Marshall would not review the project again because it was not necessary as it was so similar to the previous one. Mr. Wrinn noted that the application would need a public hearing as well as the sign-offs. Mr. Mushak had questions about salvaging some parts of the house before the project started. He also

said that he thought it would be best if the head of the Historical Commission looked at what could be salvaged. The commissioners agreed that there would be a public hearing.

c) #X-14SP – K. Rava – 126 Connecticut Av – Conversion of 3 service bays to retail - Determine if minor change

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation. He explained that a service station would take out some of their service bays and put in a Dunkin Donuts/variety store. Additional parking would be added. The building would be the same as the current one. The commissioners requested that some street trees be added. They agreed it was a minor change.

III. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF APPROVAL TIME

a) #2-03SP/#6-03CAM - City of Norwalk - Calf Pasture Beach Rd – Restaurant – Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Ms. Wilson began the presentation. She said that the Rec & Parks Department would like to extend the permit for another year. They have plans to fix the roof and add outdoor dining sometime next year. Mr. White asked why it had not been started and Ms. Wilson said there was no money for it. Ms. Wilson said that this represents the eleventh request for an extension of time. This application would be on the Zoning Commission agenda the following week.

b) #2-08SPR/#2-08CAM – Norwalk Land Development (formerly 95/7 Ventures LLC) - West Av/Putnam Av & Reed St – North of Reed St – ±605,000 sf mixed use development in a Design District Development Park (park includes #5-11SPR – South of Reed St) - Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Ms. Wilson began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property. She explained that new owners had acquired the property at the end of 2013. They were reviewing the approvals. She briefly discussed what buildings would be on the parcels. Mr. Santo mentioned that the new owners may request a change on what would be on the property. This is the applicant's sixth extension. It would be on the Zoning Commission agenda in the following week. Ms. Wilson reminded them that if the new owners do change the application, they would then have to come back to the Zoning Commission.

c) #6-10SP/#9 -10CAM – Cedar Hammocks, LLC - Cedar Hammock Island – Single family residence - Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property. He explained there was a variance on the property that the property was granted an approval in 2010 and then there was an appeal of the decision. It has been resolved. This would be their first extension.

d) #6-08SPR/#16-08CAM - POKO IWSR Developers – Wall St/Isaacs St - Wall St Place mixed use development – Extension of time granted until June 20, 2014 - Review of follow up status report dated Jan 23, 2014

Ms. Wilson began the presentation. She explained how the applicant had provided a packet of information about the grants that they had requested as well as estimated dates of completion of drawings, etc.

Atty. Suchy continued the presentation. She said that all the documents that were requested were timely submitted. There was some confusion as to what incomes would be required under the low incoming housing tax credit which the applicant will provide. Atty. Suchy said that they would provide further documents on March 20 and May 22, 2014.

Mr. Mushak had some questions for the applicant about parking requirements and the parking credits for mixed use. He asked Mr. Olson whether he would like to take advantage of these credits. Mr. Olson said that he would like to build as little parking as possible since it was expensive to build. Ms. King asked if they still had the automated garage which they did. This item will be added to the Zoning Commission agenda for action at next week's meeting.

IV. REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF SURETY

a) #7-08SP - Sono Field House – 350 Ely Ave/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr – Commercial recreation facility – Request for release of maintenance bond

Ms. Wilson began the presentation by explaining that all of the improvements had been installed and are in satisfactory condition. Staff recommended releasing the bond. Ms. King had some questions about the parking. It was noted that they lease some parking on an adjacent property. Ms. Wilson explained that there is sometimes an overlap as new participants arrive at the facility before the existing ones have left. This item will be added to the Zoning Commission agenda for action at next week's meeting.

b) #8-07SPR – Fortis Property Group – 10 Norden Place – 168,000 sf data center facility – Request for 50% reduction in surety

Ms. Wilson explained that the applicant is requesting a reduction of the amount of surety that is held. Although they are not done with their improvements, a substantial amount had been completed. Staff has agreed to this reduction. Mr. Mushak had some comments about the fence around the property. This item will be added to the Zoning Commission agenda for action at next week's meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero