

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
April 10, 2014**

PRESENT: Jill Jacobson, Chair (arrived after the meeting began); Nora King; Emily Wilson; Joseph Santo; Michael Mushak; Mike O'Reilly; Linda Kruk; Nathan Sumpter; James White

STAFF: Michael Wrinn; Dori Wilson; Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Atty. Liz Suchy; Chris DeAngelis; Fire Chief Dennis McCarthy; William Suchy; Tony Phillips; Phil Clark; Atty. Al Vasko; Chris Handrinos; Jozsef Solta

Nora King called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

I. SITE PLAN REVIEWS & COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS

a) #9-11SPR/#22-11CAM – North Water, LLC - 20 N. Water St – 5 story, 133,035 sf mixed use development with 108 units, 7,700 sf retail, 6,000 sf office, 7,200 sf restaurant & related site amenities – Request to modify pedestrian plaza amenity to reduce size and seating provided and discussion of proposed retail tenants – Preliminary review

Dori Wilson began the presentation by showing the commissioners the proposed site plan of the project. She explained the original approvals and the proposed modification since the developer does have a restaurant tenant. There would be a reduction in the outdoor plaza due to the plaza being used by the restaurant for outdoor seating which will be seasonal. There was a discussion about parking. Dori Wilson also explained that the developer was also requesting a kiosk to be used by one of the restaurant tenants. The plaza modification would have to be approved by the full Zoning Commission at the next meeting.

Dori Wilson then discussed a modification to the retail space which had been previously approved. Since the Committee had agreed to allow a portion of the retail to be changed to office space, the developer was now able to find two tenants more consistent with the retail use. One tenant was a yoga studio with retail sales and the other was "ThinQ Mac," a computer store, repair and education store. ThinQ Mac has agreed to keep the windows transparent and also to stay open late on Thursday nights. There was a discussion about cars that ThinQ Mac would "wrap" to advertise the brand. At this point, they had one car that was wrapped. There was a discussion about keeping these stores lit at night to keep the street safer as well as the public parking. This was considered as a minor change.

b) #4-14CAM – Shorehaven Golf Course – 14 Canfield Av – Additions & alterations to main clubhouse – Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by handing out aerial photos of the property. He explained that the applicant would like to renovate the main clubhouse.

Atty. Suchy continued the presentation by explaining the previous application that had been made. She also explained the latest renovations that would be made to the clubhouse by locating them on the site plan. She said the renovations would be about 3,000 sq. ft. and that there would be no increase in membership. The only modification that would be made was to a second driveway. The other modifications were interior to the clubhouse. There would be no increase in parking. She also showed the commissioners the proposed exterior changes. She also said that the applicant had received all of the necessary sign-offs.

Mr. Mushak asked whether the impervious surfaces would be increased. Mr. DeAngelis said that there would be and discussed the drainage report.

The commissioners considered this a minor change.

c) #6-14SPR – Norwalk Fire Dept – 180 Westport Ave – 1,975 sq ft addition to existing firehouse – Prelim review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by explaining that this application had been approved by the permit expired. He said that everything would remain as the original application.

Chief McCarthy confirmed what Mr. Wrinn said. He explained that this had been deferred due to the construction of the Fire Department headquarters.

e) #2-14SP – Swim Seventy LLC – 8 Willard Rd – Aquatic facility in existing bldg – Preliminary review and f) #5-14SPR – Swim Seventy LLC – 11 Willard Rd – Off street parking facility, 116 spaces for #4-14SPR – Preliminary review

These two items were taken as one item. Mr. Wrinn noted that they are separate applications because they are on different properties.

Atty. Suchy continued the presentation by introducing the other consultants on the application. She then explained about the number of pools at the facility plus the other amenities including parking. She also said that the building itself would remain almost the same.

William Suchy, Atty. Suchy's son, continued the presentation with an explanation of competitive swimming.

The commissioners asked if this facility would be used for meets but Atty. Suchy said that it was a training facility. There was not enough room for stands or more parking at this time. The hours of operation could be as early as 5 a.m. through 9 or 10 p.m. There was a membership program for the pools. They were not open to the public. There was a discussion of how the applicant decided that there was a need for a swimming training facility in Norwalk. Ms. Tony Phillips of Swim Seventy answered the

commissioners' questions. Mr. Wrinn said that there would have to be a public hearing since this was a special permit.

Phil Clark, the architect on the project, continued the presentation, by explaining how the pool and the building would be heated with geothermal heating. They were attempting to have the building become LEED certified. He said they would like to be ready for the season in August. There was a discussion as to where water from the pool would go if it ever needed to be drained. Mr. Clark was not sure but it would be researched.

Mr. Mushak had questions about the drainage which Mr. DeAngelis answered. The application would be on the Zoning Commission's May agenda.

b) #3-14SPR – Kingsway Senior Hsg – 152 Westport Av – Off street parking facility for 29 spaces – Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by explaining how the facility needed more parking because they were receiving more guests than expected. Mr. Mushak wondered if they could request that the applicant use pervious asphalt paving. Mr. Wrinn recommended that this request be added as a condition to the approval. Mr. Santo questioned the fact that the applicant had not shown up to the meeting. Mr. Mushak asked that standards be written for future projects of this type.

II. SPECIAL PERMITS

a) #1-14SP – 15 Arch St. Assoc., LLC - 15 Arch St & Lynes Place – 16 unit multifamily development – Final review prior to public hearing

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by explaining that the applicant was ready to go to the public hearing if there were no further questions from the commissioners. There were none.

b) #8-11SP – Norwalk Hospital – 34 Maple St - Outpatient addition – Request to modify approved sign manual with new cornice sign for outpatient addition & to relocate Whittingham Cancer Center, Main entrance & Emergency Dept. wall signs – Preliminary review

Dori Wilson began the presentation by explaining the zone in which the hospital was located and the sign manual which was adopted in 1992. Whenever there is a modification to the Hospital's signs, they must come before the Commission. She then explained where the new signs were being proposed as well as showing the commissioners photos that she had taken. She explained that the new signs would not be illuminated except for the emergency sign, since the hospital was adjacent to a residence zone.

Atty. Vasko continued the presentation. He explained the new sign had the names of the major donors on it. There was a lengthy discussion about having the names of the donors on the sign. Atty. Vasko explained that it was in their contract with the hospital

since they donated funds for the expansion. There was a discussion about whether those that spoke a second language would be able to get to the correct area of the hospital. There was also a discussion as to why the front doors are not automatic as well as whether to use the words “ambulatory entrance.” Mr. Mushak asked whether the wayfaring signs had been changed recently. Dori Wilson responded that they had been a few years ago. This item would be on the Zoning Commission’s agenda in the upcoming week.

c) #8-10SP – Norwalk Inn – 99 East Ave – Modify approved plans to remove storage trailers and replace with proposed 3 story addition to rear of existing hotel – Determine if minor change

Dori Wilson began the presentation by informing the commissioners of the original approval as well as the current modifications being proposed.

Mr. Handrinos, the applicant, continued the presentation by stating that he had invited all the neighbors along the Morgan Ave side of the property to meet with him to discuss the modifications. He said that only one of the neighbors had been attended the meeting. He explained that he had walked the property to show them what would be done.

Dori Wilson explained how the storage trailers in the back would be removed to allow for the modifications to be made. Mr. Solta, the architect on the project, further explained the modifications which would include a pool and exercise room. He showed the commissioners plans of what the hotel currently looks like and what it would look like when it was complete.

There was a discussion as to whether there should be a public hearing for this matter. Ms. King had concerns about the noise from the construction. Mr. Handrinos said it would be quiet because they have hotel guests. It was decided that it would be a minor change and that this item would be on the Zoning Commission’s agenda in the upcoming week.

III. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF APPROVAL TIME

a) #1-09SP/#1-09CAM - SoNo Hotel/TR SoNo Partners, LLC – 43 - 47 South Main St – 121 room hotel with 7,764 sf office & 70 space indoor valet parking in automated garage – Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Dori Wilson began the presentation by explaining why the applicant was requesting an extension. They were using this property as temporary parking lot while another one of their projects, The Pearl, was being completed. She indicated that this was the fifth extension of time requested. The Committee thought that it was necessary for them to complete the Pearl and recommended approval of the extension.

b) #9-06SP – 110 Richards Ave LLC – 110 Richards Avenue – Third story, 13,056 sq. ft office addition - Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Dori Wilson explained that this was the eighth extension for the applicant. Mr. Mushak indicated that there was no sidewalk in this area. Atty. Vasko said that this was

not a condition of the Commission's approval. The Committee recommended approval of the extension.

c) #2-09SPR – Tilly – 25 - 29 Bouton Street – 12 unit multifamily development – Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by explaining that the applicant is asking for a fifth extension. It has not been affected by any zoning regulation changes.

Atty. Vasko said that they were looking for another developer to work with them.

d) #4-13SP – Shelter Development, LLC – 162 New Canaan Ave & 9 Wood Acres Road – 90 unit congregate housing and assisted living facility - Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by explaining that the applicant is asking for its first extension. He explained that a consolidation map had to be on the land records but a house on the property had to be demolished before that could happen.

e) #5-13CAM – B. Beinfield – 280 Wilson Ave – Single family residence – Request for 1 yr ext of approval time

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by mentioning to the commissioners' that this was Mr. Beinfield's own house for which he was seeking an extension.

f) #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 status report submitted March 20, 2014

Dori Wilson began the presentation by telling the commissioners that POKO had received a financial award for the project.

Atty. Suchy confirmed that the funding had been received. Another outstanding item as the posting of a bond which she believed would be completed in the following days. She also hoped that her client would not need to return in June for the last status report but Dori Wilson suggested that her client should return, even in zoning permits had been issued. Mr. Mushak discussed the need for bike lanes on Wall Street. He asked Atty. Suchy to have the applicant ask for bike lanes on that street.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero