

CITY OF NORWALK
ZONING COMMITTEE
October 9, 2014

PRESENT: Emily Wilson, Chair; Jill Jacobson, Joe Santo; Nora King; Nat Sumpter; Adam Blank; James White; Mike O'Reilly

STAFF: Michael Greene; Dori Wilson; Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Atty Frank Zullo; Manny Silva; Atty. Liz Suchy;

Emily Wilson called the meeting to order at 8:42 p.m.

I. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS/SITE PLAN REVIEW/SP PERMIT

a) #5-14R/#3-14SP/#11-14CAM – Maritime Village I, LLC – 17-19 Day/Raymond St – Proposed amendments to Section 118-700 to revise TOD height and density requirements and revise affordable housing requirements from 30% to 20% (with 10% at 100% of State Median Income) for selected developments and to revise multifamily residential parking requirements for Transit Oriented Developments & related technical amendments & special permit for new 68 unit multifamily development (2 bldgs) & 9,790 sf mfg (existing bldg) in TOD area – Final review prior to public hearing

Dori Wilson showed examples of the building materials to the commissioners. There were concerns about the metal cladding and whether it would hold up after 15 years. Dori Wilson said that the applicant was still waiting for CEAC approvals.

There was a discussion about parking and sidewalk connections. At this point, Atty Zullo spoke about the parking spaces as well as mentioned that the proposed sidewalks would be nine feet wide which is wider than what DPW requires. He said that the applicant was following what the committee had requested at previous meetings and had removed the compact car spaces. The discussion then turned to the applicant's proposed amendment for affordable housing.

Manny Silva continued the presentation by discussing the sidewalks. Mr. Sumpter was concerned about having granite curbs. Mr. Silva was asked to provide a price point for the cost of granite curbs in place of concrete curbs.

b) #6-14R/#1-14SPR/#10-14SPR – The Berkeley Holding, LLC & 520 West Ave, LLC – 500-520 West Av (West Block) - Proposed amendments to revise the definition for Height of Building in a Design District Development Park to measure from centerline of highest street (currently measured from centerline of West Av) and modifications to approved site plan for The Berkeley for 6 story, 177,302 sf mixed use development with 4,932 sf restaurant (formerly retail), 6,943 sf medical office, and 129 residential dwelling units (#1-14SPR) and Frost Building (#10-14SPR) – Final review prior to public hearing

Dori Wilson began the presentation by showing the commissioners the site plan for the proposed development.

Atty. Liz Suchy continued the presentation by reminding the commissioners that the public hearing was for the text amendments only. Mr. Blank had questions for Atty Suchy since he was not on the commission when the application was approved. He was concerned about the size of the building. Dori Wilson reminded the commissioners about the lights on the top of the building as well as the shuttle to the train.

c) #X-14R – Zoning Commission - Proposed amendments to reduce retail and restaurant parking requirements in Rowayton Avenue Village District – Further review of proposed draft amendment

Dori Wilson began the presentation by discussing the revised proposed amendments. She spoke of a meeting that was held with the Sixth Taxing District commissioners and several Zoning commissioners. Ms. King explained what was happening in Rowayton in connection with a meeting with the Sixth District commissioners. There was also a discussion of a building, the Soybel Building that was recently purchased in Rowayton. She said that Norwalk's parking regulations do not work for Rowayton and the Rowayton commissioners would be looking at that.

One of the Sixth Taxing District Commissioners, Michael Barbis, also spoke about meeting with the new owners of the Soybel Building, as well as the owners of a parking lot in Rowayton, for input on these issues going forward. He also gave the commissioners a brief history of the building which had been empty for about 20 years. It was decided that the public hearing would be in January.

d) Discussion of CAM exemptions

Dori Wilson showed the commissioners the state regulations and the city's regulations under coastal area management. She went over the exemptions for the commissioners. Mr. Blank suggested a change to Norwalk's regulations about a public hearing. Ms. King said that she spoke with someone on the state level who said that although Norwalk has the most coastline; it has lax regulations that do not protect the coastline.

There was a discussion about sending green cards to abutting or across the street neighbors. Mr. Greene said that the Zoning Department staff could begin to ask applicants that if they were going to ask to be exempt from a public hearing, then they should send out green cards to abutting or across the street neighbors. The commissioners asked that a proposed regulation be drafted for review at the next meeting.

e) #2-14R – Zoning Commission – Discussion of possible amendments to revise minimum lot size for indoor contractor parking facility from 12,500 sf to 10,000 sf, to allow as principal use in Bus #1 & Bus #2 zones subject to submittal of Environmental impact statement (EIS) and related technical amendments – Further review

Dori Wilson began the presentation. She said they received referrals back from other agencies and towns. She explained the proposed amendments which would be on the Zoning Commission's agenda in November.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero