

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
August 13, 2015**

PRESENT: Jill Jacobson, Chair; Emily Wilson; Nate Sumpter; Adam Blank; Mike O'Reilly; Rod Johnson (after the meeting began)

STAFF: Michael Greene; Mike Wrinn; Frank Strauch; Adam Carsen

OTHERS: Tom Petracca; Atty Bill Hennessy; Bruce Beinfeld; Atty Frank Zullo; Steve Daugherty; Jonathan Richard; Craig Yanis; Rick Benson

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

Before the meeting began, it was decided that Mike O'Reilly would be on the Plan Review Committee.

I. SPECIAL PERMITS

a) #5-15SP – Special Properties II, LLC – 78 Cranbury Rd/440 Newtown Av – 15 unit Conservation development – Final review prior to public hearing

Before the presentation began, Mr. Blank recused himself and left the room. Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by informing the commissioners that the Conservation Commission had approved the application. It would be on the Zoning Commission agenda for the following week. He also discussed an easement from Connecticut Light and Power. They are working on this issue. The commissioners would hear more about it at the public hearing. The commissioners did not have any questions at this time.

b) #19-05SP – St. George Greek Orthodox Church – 238 West Rocks Road – Community Center addition – Modification to plan (Remove, rebuild and expand by +400 sf an existing addition) – Determination if minor change

Mr. Blank returned to the room before Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He explained how the applicant would like to replace a former garage because it is not in good shape. The commissioners decided that it was a minor change.

c) #8-15SP – Miracle Temple Church of God in Christ of Norwalk, Inc. – 1 Trinity PI – Child daycare center – Final review prior to public hearing

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by showing the commissioners the site plans for the day care center. He noted that the applicant had addressed their concerns about safety. Although they were waiting for some sign-offs, the application would be on the Zoning Commission agenda for a public hearing in the following week.

d) #10-15SP - Consulting & Design, LLC – 104 Connecticut Ave – Replacement gas station – Further review

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by noting that they had received a landscaping plan from the applicant. It was on the Zoning Commission's Special Meeting agenda for August 26.

e) #17-13SP - Merritt River Partners, LLC. – 1 Glover Av - 132 unit Commercial PRD – Request to modify façade – Determination if minor change

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He then also showed the renderings to the commissioners of the new colors of bricks. It was deemed a minor change.

II. SITE PLAN REVIEWS/COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW

a) #X-15CAM – Pentecostal Church John 3:16 – 8 Woodward Ave – Replacement church – Further review

At this point, the newest commissioner, Rod Johnson, arrived. Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by explaining that the church would like to tear down the church and replace it with a new one. He then passed around the plans for the commissioners to review. He explained that the church had water damage, from Super Storm Sandy, so they wanted to raise the structure as well.

Tom Petracca, the architect on the project, continued the presentation. He explained how they would modify the layout. He showed the commissioners some of the renderings. They will be adding 2 parking spaces as well. There was a discussion about how many feet above base flood level the building would be.

There was a discussion as to when to hold the public hearing.

b) #16-15CAM – B. Beinfeld – 2 Nearwater Rd. – New single family residence, convert existing dwelling to accessory use – Preliminary review

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He mentioned that there was a previous application which had been withdrawn. He described some of the changes from the previous application. He also noted that many letters had been sent to the Zoning Department's office. Many said they would like a public hearing on the application, some said that they liked the new application but still had concerns and then others said they liked the new plans.

Atty Bill Hennessy continued the presentation by showing a larger aerial photo of the property. He described the piece of property which has a single family house on it as well as giving the commissioners a brief history of the property. He then described what the new house would look like.

Bruce Beinfeld continued the presentation by helping to explaining some of the renderings.

Atty Hennessy continued to describe the landscaping plans for the property. He said that it was a “very thin house.” There was a discussion about the house currently on the property. It would be an accessory structure. He also described how the house would sit above ground because it is in a flood zone. He noted that the storm water runoff would be improved. He asked the commissioners to consider not holding a public hearing for this application.

Mr. Blank said that since neighbors are asking for a public hearing, then one should be held. Ms. Wilson agreed with him. The commissioners decided to hold a public hearing.

c) #3-15SPR – 3 Color, LLC – 175 W. Cedar St. – Mixed use development with 8 residential units, 800 sf office, 2,600 sf vehicle storage – Preliminary review

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He noted that the applicant had made a similar application in 2014 which was denied. The contractor’s yard was not permitted. This application was the same as the previous application which had been denied. There is a violation on the property because of the non-permitted contractor’s yard. It does not comply with Zoning regulations. The applicant was not at this Plan Review meeting when Mr. Blank asked. It would be placed on the Zoning Commission agenda for an action. Mr. Strauch also stated that this was the 3rd application, the first had been withdrawn, the second the Zoning Commissioners had denied and this last application. Mr. Blank asked that the Zoning Department staff specifically ask about the contractor’s yard storage. If the use was something other than a contractor’s yard storage, the commissioners should be told.

d) #6-15SPR – Norwalk Medical Ctr. LLC – 71-75 CT. Ave – 22,400 sf medical office bldg – Preliminary review

Mr. Strauch began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He then gave hand-outs to them. He discussed the parking spaces that were required and provided by the applicant. There would also be a CEAC meeting as well as information about the applicant’s discussions with the Connecticut Department of Traffic (“DOT”).

There was a discussion about the sidewalks. John Richardson, the engineer who is working on the project, had answers about the widening of the sidewalks. He said that the DOT would be increasing the sidewalks to 7 ft.

Atty Zullo continued the presentation with a brief history of the property. He also said that the applicant had received a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. The applicant believes that since this medical building is in close proximity to the hospital, it will do well in that area.

Steve Daugherty continued the presentation by showing the elevation plans to the commissioners. He explained how the tenant floors would be developed by tenant

fit-ups. He also discussed the mechanicals that would be on the roof and how they would be screened.

There was a discussion about the parking garage on the street level as well as the lighting plan. Mr. Daugherty explained the sprinkler system. There was also a bit more discussion about the sidewalks as well as the access to the parcel. It could only be from the middle of the property.

Mr. Richard continued the presentation by discussing the storm water drainage system.

Mr. Yanis continued the presentation by discussing the traffic study. He mentioned the two projects that the DOT would be handling. He also discussed the left hand turns and the widening of Connecticut Avenue. There was a discussion about the left hand turn out of the property. Some of the commissioners were concerned about it, especially the safety of the cars. Mr. Yanis said that turning into the property, the level of service would be A or B. However, exiting the property, the level of service would be D or E.

Atty Zullo reminded the commissioners that this would be a great use for the property which needs a little attention. He thought it would be beneficial to Norwalk.

The commissioners wanted to take a closer look at the property. This meant that the application could be on the Zoning Commission's Special Meeting agenda which is set for August 26, 2015. The applicant and Atty Zullo would be notified of whether it would be on the agenda or there would be a public hearing.

e) #7-15CAM – Hickory Bluff, LLC – 31 Bluff Avenue – New SFR – Further review

Before Mr. Strauch began the presentation, Mr. Blank recused himself and left the room. Mr. Strauch then oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. The application complies with Zoning regulations. He said that the existing single family residence would be demolished. The Zoning Department staff has not heard from any of the neighbors so the commissioners did not think it warranted a public hearing. It would be on the Zoning Commission agenda in the following week.

f) #13-15CAM – 24 Valley Road-RBB, LLC – 24 Valley Road – New SFR – Further review

At this time, Mr. Blank returned to the room. Mr. Strauch then oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map as well as showed them the site plans for the application. He explained that some trees had been removed so the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("CT D.E.E.P.") had been notified. The applicant received a notice of violation. He also mentioned that the Zoning Department had received requests for a public hearing from some of the neighbors. There was a discussion about the drainage.

Rick Benson, the applicant, continued the presentation with a short introduction of his prior experience as well as a brief history of the property. He discussed the landscaping plan. He also explained that they cleaned up trees that had fallen from Superstorm Sandy which the previous owner had not done. He then explained how the new house would look on the property. He also explained that those homeowners who were complaining lived across Farm Creek.

Dean Martin, the engineer on the project, continued the presentation by explaining about the drainage system and the level spreaders.

Mr. Strauch said that the Zoning Department was satisfied with the mitigation plan as well as the Conservation Department. Mr. Blank noted that he would like to remain consistent and hold a public hearing since there are requests from the neighbors. There was a discussion as to whether a hearing should be held. It was decided that it would be on the Special Meeting agenda on August 26, 2015.

II. REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF APPROVAL TIME

a) #5-11SPR/#10-11CAM – Norwalk Land Development, LLC (GGP) – 51-63 West Av/15-25 Putnam Av - District 95/7 South - 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 - Request for 1 year extension of approval time

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He informed them that this is not a new application but one they had seen before. This was the applicant's third request for an extension. Their taxes were paid and the application was still compliant with Zoning regulations.

There was a discussion about cleaning up the site. Some of the site had been used by the City's Department of Public Works ("DPW") for training purposes. Mr. Blank requested that there be a 9 month extension because he thought a new application might be filed in the interim.

IV. REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF SURETY

a) #5-13SPR - Oakwood Ave Associates – 34 Oakwood Av – 72,180 sq ft mixed use development with 53 multifamily units and 8,330 sf office - Request for release of surety

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map as well as showing the commissioners the site plans. All improvements had been completed. They would hold onto the last 15% for another year.

b) #5-13SP/#7-13CAM – Sprite Island Yacht Club – 23 Shorehaven Road – Request for release of surety

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. All improvements had been made so staff recommended release of the remainder of the surety.

c) #4-12SPR/#24-12CAM – Dimitrios Dimitroglou – 67 Fort Point St. – 7 unit MFR - Request for release of surety

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. All improvements had been made so staff recommended release of the remainder of the surety.

V. MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE

a) #1-15MV - Midas – 377 Main Ave – Replacement repairer’s license – Preliminary review

Mr. Carsen began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. This application is a change of owner/operator.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero