

**CITY OF NORWALK  
ZONING COMMITTEE  
November 12, 2015**

**PRESENT:** Jill Jacobson, Chair; Linda Kruk; Adam Blank; Nate Sumpter; Rod Johnson

**STAFF:** Michael Greene; Mike Wrinn; Dori Wilson; Adam Carsen

**OTHERS:** Atty. Bill Hennessey; Tim Gooding; Kwesi Brown; Craig Flaherty

Nathan Sumpter called the meeting to order at 8:35 p.m.

**I. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS**

**a) #3-15M/#11-15R/#7-15SPR/#8-15SPR/#20-15CAM - Highpointe Holding LLC – 8 North Av/37 - 48 High St Proposed zone change from Neighborhood Business to CBDD Subarea A (7 lots); proposed amendments to CBDD Subarea A regulations to increase FAR from 2.0 to 2.25 and increase residential density from 1 unit per 800 sf to 1 unit per 500 sf of lot area & to add wider sidewalks as new amenity throughout CBDD and site plans for two new 6 story mixed use developments: Highpointe West 74-88 Main St; 6-8 North Av; 37- 45 High St: 214 units & 16,800 sf retail and Highpointe East 42-48 High St: 68 units & 5,300 sf retail – Further review**

Ms. Wilson said that this was the 2<sup>nd</sup> time that the commissioners were reviewing this application. She discussed the zoning map changes. The Planning Commission had approved the map changes and the proposed zoning amendments at their meeting. She explained minor changes to the application in the reduction of the number of units. She also showed them the revised renderings of the buildings. There was a discussion of the changes. She explained that they were working hard to address traffic issues because it is a narrow part of Route 1.

Atty. Hennessey continued the presentation by discussing the commissioners' concerns about the architecture and traffic. He discussed the CBDD regulations which addressed the architecture. Mr. Sumpter had concerns about the people that were living in the current buildings that would be displaced. Mr. Blank suggested to Atty. Hennessey that, perhaps, the applicant could give a preference to those tenants that were being displaced in the workforce housing units.

Mr. Gooding, the architect on the project, continued the presentation by explaining the overall design of the buildings. He explained what they added, and changed, including the materials. He also explained that some streets would have a more retail feel and others would have a more residential feel. He discussed other changes as well, including varying roof lines. There was a discussion about the applicant giving renderings of different views.

Kwesi Brown, the traffic engineer, continued the presentation by handing out aerial maps to the commissioners. He discussed the how the traffic study, which was done in September, was completed. He also explained the roadway improvements including those the applicant was proposing for Route 1. He also said that the shoulders would be wider for bikes. The DPW has signed off on the traffic improvements and the state Department of Transportation has been working with them. They have not applied to OSTA as of this meeting.

Craig Flaherty, the civil engineer on the project, continued the presentation by explaining about the width of the sidewalks. There was a discussion about the applicant giving some of their land to make room for the road improvements. He also described High Street.

There was a discussion about the shared amenities of the buildings. There was also a discussion about signage in the parking lot.

Ms. Wilson said that the applicant would likely be on the January Zoning Commission agenda and that they had not submitted an application to OSTA which was required. They were also beginning a design review by the Redevelopment Agency.

## **II. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS**

### **a) #12-15R/#17-15SP – United Parcel Service – 254 MLK Jr. Dr - Proposed amendment to Section 118-711 Restricted Industrial to permit expansion of existing package distribution facility with off-site parking on lots within 500 feet of facility and related technical amendments and special permit for 190 sp off-site parking lot – Preliminary review**

Ms. Wilson began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. She explained that UPS had a 2 year special exception for off-site parking at another site across the street. They would like to stay in Norwalk but in order to do that, they must shift employee parking off-site so that they can fully utilize the parking for package delivery during the holiday season.

Atty. Liz Suchy continued the presentation by describing the property that they would like to use for more parking. She then described how they arrived at the proposed amendment. There was a discussion about “No through trucks” which means that trucks cannot cut through certain roadways south of the site unless they were making deliveries there. There was also a discussion about adding some additional trees south of the driveway entrance to the parking lot to soften the look of it.

Philip Katz, the engineer on the project, continued the presentation. There was a discussion about new lights on 14 ft. poles. The lights would be bright and stay within the property. It was decided that if the applicant had all of its approvals, the application could be on the December Zoning Commission agenda.

### **b) #10-15R - Zoning Commission – Proposed amendment to Section 118-1220 regarding the use of municipal parking lots in Norwalk Center and South Norwalk and technical amendments – Final review prior to public hearing**

Ms. Wilson reminded the commissioners that this amendment would be on their agenda in the following week. Although it was due to sunset this year, since there were a lot of vacancies, it was recommended that they renew it for another 2 years.

### **c) Notification of neighbors – Informal discussion**

Mr. Blank had suggested that this item be placed on the agenda. He said that at a Zoning Task Force meeting, there were some concerns that neighbors were being notified about large projects when it was too late. The developer could send a notice to neighbors, notifying them of the project. It would apply to any applications that might require a public hearing. It would also encourage people to come to the public hearing. Some towns already require it.

### **d) Parking in front setback – Informal discussion**

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by explaining that the Zoning Department had received a letter from Mr. Mushak. Mr. Greene explained that many people complained about neighbors who parked their vehicles in the front setback. There was a clarification of the front setback. Mr. Wrinn explained what was allowed and not allowed. There was a discussion of many issues, including environmental, aesthetics, etc.

Mr. Blank said that if any of the commissioners had any issues that they would like to discuss, they should inform Mr. Blank so he could put it on the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero