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July 10, 2021

To: Zoning Commission

From: Hiram Peck, AICP, CFM

Re: #2021-18 R/SPR/CAM – 25 Van Zant Street Condominium – 25 Van Zant Street

This information is submitted in response to Steve Kleppin’s memo of May 14, 2021 on the referenced matter. The responses follow the staff memo sequence.

1. Addition to the submitted definition: The applicant agrees to add the following definition to the application as recommended by your staff. The recommended addition is as follows:

ADD: TRADE OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL: A post-secondary, public or private institution, designed to give students the technical skills to prepare them for a specific occupation. Examples of the program offerings include but are not limited to: medical programs like nursing, dental hygiene or medical assisting, automotive technician services, welding, plumbing, electrical, film study and HVAC.

2. Proposed Use: In order to help clarify the question of square footage allocation the following is submitted.

a. Building floor plans for all building levels are submitted. Previously original floor plans for the building signed and sealed by architect Resnick were submitted. In order to clarify and simplify the matter, building floor plans including the designation for each unit and its current and proposed use are indicated on the plans.

b. The plans show the square footages as follows:

Building Level	Workforce Training Center sf.	Total Level Square Footage
Lower level	46,600	71,300
1 st floor	73,400	95,825
2 nd floor	0	28,725
3 rd floor	30,000	30,000
4 th floor	0	27,500
TOTAL	150,000 sq. ft.	253,350 sq. ft.

It is necessary to also understand that there are areas of the building that are occupied by other non-rentable spaces. These spaces are occupied by: the building powerhouse, loading docks, hallways elevator shafts and the like.

c. The application is for a maximum of 150,000 square feet of the building to be used for the Workforce Training Center activities as indicated on the submitted floor plans. The remainder of the building will continue to be occupied by tenants as is currently the case. See attached building floor plans. Large scale plans also submitted.

3. Site Plan Issues:

a. Landscape plan. The owner has contracted to have a suitable landscape plan submitted by a qualified landscape architect. This plan is in progress and will be submitted as soon as it is completed. It will meet the staff and Commission's approval.

b. Lighting Plan: This plan has been created as requested and is submitted at this time at a scale that is acceptable to the Commission. The lighting plan provides for proper site lighting without adversely impacting any abutting residential uses. In addition the lighting plan also provides information so that when implemented the parking lot will be safely accessible in the evening hours.

c. Site drainage: The letter from a professional engineer from Land Tech Consulting indicates that no full blown drainage plan is required at this time due to the fact that no site changes with regard to impervious area are proposed to change. The applicant anticipates that Norwalk DPW will concur with this recommendation.

d. Exterior building changes: The exterior of the building is being significantly up graded at this time. This work is presently ongoing and will be completed as soon as possible. It should be noted that the building repairs will not increase the total building square footage or the rentable area as shown above.

e. HVAC screening: Staff recommendation to screen any newly placed, visible HVAC equipment is noted and would be accomplished if such equipment is required and proposed for installation in a visible location.

4. Traffic and Parking: The traffic and parking associated with this application are addressed by the Report submitted by Mark Vertucci of Fuss & O'Neill. The traffic volumes in the report as well as the parking analysis are done in a conservative manner as explained by the traffic engineer. The applicant believes the Norwalk Traffic, Mobility and Parking Department will agree with the report.

It is also important to acknowledge that the parking analysis is based on a maximum of 300 students and staff attending the WTC at this site at one time.

5. We have discussed the staff concern regarding the number of curb cuts on Osborne Street with City staff. It is the applicant's understanding that the curb cuts may remain in their present locations. It is

understood that sidewalk work may well be required as part of this application approval. The current curb cuts provide adequate access to and egress from the site along this section of Osborne Street. Any reduction of existing curb cuts may adversely affect the required parking for this side of the building. The applicant's proposal is to leave the existing curb cuts in the location and in the present number as existing.

6. Proposed Workforce Training Center (WTC) operations: Staff has asked for potential operation regarding WTC hours of operation. While the specifics of the WTC operations would depend on the requirements of the specific tenants who would provide these services at this location, there are certainly guidelines that clearly fit the present application.

Of the approximately 13 institutions the applicant has had discussions with the hours of operation are generally Monday through Friday from 7 am to 8 pm. The exact enrollment of each institution would depend on the available student space in each program. Thus, for example, if an institution rents 5,000 square feet of space, the number of students permitted for that institution would be limited to that area. Each institution, when entering into an agreement with the owner would know in advance how many students it could accommodate in the rented space.

The space required for each of the WTC institutions depends significantly on the type of training provided and the space per student needs of the tenant. Research for the type of tenants we have discussed leasing space to include the following per student ranges:

- Standard educational lecture space: 20 – 40 square feet per student
- Sports training facility: 900 – 1,333 square feet per student
- Standard upper level classroom facility: 112 square feet per student
- Specialty arts training facility: 80 – 100 square feet per student
- Technical training institute: 200 – 400 square feet per student
- Metal (welding) training: 333 – 400 square feet per student
- CT Std. for upper level classroom activity, science etc. 175 – 200 square feet per

It is clear to see from the above examples that the space requirements vary widely depending on the specific institution's educational program and training facility equipment needs for their students. The owner of the building will allocate tenant space according to the tenant's needs and space requirements.

The building owner is applying for a maximum of 150,000 square feet of space for the WTC use. This use will be permitted to occupy only 59% of the space of the building. The remainder of the space in the building will be occupied by small offices and other uses that will serve the existing tenants of the building who are already there for the work day. Such uses are the day care and restaurant areas. The balance of the space is already used for storage, cleaning supplies and other maintenance operations.

The WTC operation would very likely operate within the above stated hours of operation. Just like any other educational institution, there may be an occasional Saturday class or testing situation, but these would be infrequent and short duration. It should be noted that there are no hourly restrictions on typical office work on any other office use. We fully expect the same deference at this location for the typical office tenants.

Finally, staff has asked about the placement and location of a garage door on the Osborne Street side of the building. The applicant has secured verification that the garage door placement will not adversely affect any access to the parking aisle or the abutting parking spaces. The written verification of this is also attached for your review to confirm this matter.

The above information is presented to address all known staff comments to date. If there are any additional comments or questions, please let me know. We look forward to being able to present the above information responses to the Commission at the next Zoning Commission meeting.

Respectfully submitted.

Attachments:

- Letter from Gill & Gill
- Building floor plans