

**DRAFT
CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMISSION
November 10, 2015**

PRESENT: Torgny Astrom, Chair; Joel Zaremby; Frances DiMeglio; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; Bill Dunne; David Davidson

STAFF: Michael Greene; Frank Strauch

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Astrom called the meeting to order at 8:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Greene called the roll.

III. REPORT OF SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE, Joel Zaremby, Chair

a) Action on Subdivision # 3637 – 35 Meeker Court, LLC – 35 Meeker Court – 4 Lots

**** MR. ZAREMBY MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** that subdivision application #3627 submitted by Meeker Court, LLC for a 4 lot subdivision at 35 Meeker Court as shown on a plan entitled "Preliminary Subdivision Map Of Property Prepared for 35 Meeker Court, LLC, 35 Meeker Court, Norwalk Connecticut," Scale 1" = 20', dated 10/16/2012 and certified "Substantially Correct" by Arcamone Land Surveyors, LLC, Wayne Arcamone Land Surveyor – Connecticut Registration No. 15773 be **APPROVED** subject to the following reasons:

1. That all required CEAC sign-offs be submitted; and
2. That all required soil and sedimentation controls be in place prior to any site work; and
3. That any additional soil erosion and sedimentation controls deemed necessary by the staff be installed at the direction of the staff; and
4. That a financial guarantee, in an amount to be determined by staff, be submitted to guarantee the installation of all erosion and sedimentation controls; and

5. That a financial guarantee, in an amount to be determined by staff, be submitted to guarantee the installation of the required public improvements prior to the certificate of occupancy being issued on the construction of any new dwelling; and
6. That any structures / accessory structures be removed from the newly created lot prior to the filing of the final resubdivision map; and
7. That the proposed drainage system, when installed, be maintained to work at full capacity; and
8. That the maintenance of the proposed drainage system be noted on the final subdivision map; and
9. That the maintenance of the proposed drainage system be noted on all zoning permits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that conditions do not warrant the installation of sidewalks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that conditions do not warrant the installation of new street curbs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the street tree requirement not be waived and that five (5) street trees be installed and that where practical, any existing street trees which meet the street tree requirements, be retained and utilized towards the street tree requirement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the effective date of this approval shall be November 20, 2015.

Mr. McLaughlin seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

IV. REPORT OF LAND USE COMMITTEE, Fran DiMeglio, Chair

Referrals – Report & recommendation

a) 8-24 Review – Request by the Department of Public Works and the Norwalk Parking Authority to review and approve site improvements at 50 Washington Street and 38-48 North Main Street in the adjacent to the Webster Street Lot

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission that the 8-24 Review – Request by the Department of Public Works and the Norwalk Parking Authority to review and approve site improvements at 50 Washington Street and 38-48 North Main Street in the adjacent to the Webster Street Lot be **APPROVED**, and that the Commission finds that the proposed 8-24 request is consistent with the Plan of Conservation & Development for Norwalk and that the reasons for this action are:

1. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Protect property values.” (A.1.1.5. p. 10); and
2. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Encourage development that seeks to provide maximum returns to the City in the Grand List tax revenue consistent with public purpose.” (A.1.1.9. p. 10); and
3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Maintain diversity in the SoNo retail mix.” (A.4.1.5. p. 13); and
4. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Expand retail mix in SoNo.” (D.5.3.1. p. 32); and
5. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Continue providing an organized approach to parking management.” (E.5.2. p. 39); and
6. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Provide stability in land use and zoning.” (F.2.1.2. p 42); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Common Council

Mr. Dunne seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

b) 8-24 Review – Request by 50 Washington Street to review and approve an easement agreement with the City to allow for an encroachment of a proposed rotating doorway entrance onto the City owned plaza

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission that the 8-24 Review – Request by 50 Washington Street to review and approve an easement agreement with the City to allow for an encroachment of a proposed rotating doorway entrance onto the City owned plaza be **APPROVED**, and that the Commission finds that the proposed 8-24 request is consistent with the Plan of Conservation & Development for Norwalk and that the reasons for this action are:

1. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Protect property values.” (A.1.1.5. p. 10); and
2. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Encourage

development that seeks to provide maximum returns to the City in the Grand List tax revenue consistent with public purpose.” (A.1.1.9. p. 10); and

3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Maintain diversity in the SoNo retail mix.” (A.4.1.5. p. 13); and
4. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Incorporate squares, plazas, and greens into redevelopment and areas of new residential growth.” (C.1.3.10. p. 24); and
5. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to “Expand retail mix in SoNo.” (D.5.3.1. p. 32); and
6. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Provide stability in land use and zoning.” (F.2.1.2. p 42); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Common Council.

Mr. Zaremby seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

c) Zoning Commission referral - #3-15M/#11-15R – Highpointe Holding LLC – 37, 41, 42, 44, 45 &48 High St/8 North Ave - Proposed zone change from Neighborhood Business to CBDD Subarea A (7 lots) and proposed amendments to Central Business Design District (CBDD) Subarea A regulations to increase FAR from 2.0 to 2.25; to increase residential density from 1 unit per 800 sf to 1 unit per 500 sf of lot area and to allow wider sidewalks throughout CBDD

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** that the proposed changes to the Building Zone Map as shown on a certain document entitled "**#3-15M– Highpointe Holding LLC - 37, 41, 42, 44, 45 & 48 High St/8 North Av - Proposed zone change from Neighborhood Business to Central Business Design District (7 lots)**" and dated September 17, 2015 affecting property located in the First Taxing District, Block 66, Lots 6, 34, 35 and 36 and Block 67, Lots 7, 8 and 9 including property now part of the North Ave ROW and High Street ROW, all of which is now zoned Neighborhood Business and is proposed for change to Central Business Design District Subarea A, be **APPROVED.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the reasons for this action are:

1. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development to “Strengthen the revitalization of the West Avenue, Wall Street, and Reed Putnam areas by encouraging mixed-use development (i.e. offices, stores, services, restaurants and theaters together with housing, parks and cultural facilities)” (A.3.1.2, p.12); and

2. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development to “Continue to provide budget funding to redevelop the West Avenue, Wall Street, and Reed Putnam areas with new housing and mixed use developments” (A.2.1.4, p. 11); and
3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development to “Encourage retail activity in the West Avenue/Wall Street and Reed Putnam areas and place emphasis on pedestrian-oriented environment” (A.4.1.1, p.13)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Norwalk Zoning Commission.

Mr. Zarembly seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zarembly; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** that the proposed amendment to the Building Zone Regulations as shown on a certain document entitled “**#11-15R** – Highpointe Holding, LLC – Proposed amendments to Section 118-504 Central Business Design District (CBDD) to revise amenity provisions to allow wider sidewalk bonuses throughout the CBDD and to revise schedule for Subarea A to increase base floor area ratio from 2.0 to 2.25 and to increase residential density from one dwelling unit per 800 sf of lot area to one dwelling unit per 500 sf of lot area " and dated October 14, 2015 be **APPROVED**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the reasons for this action are:

- 1) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development to “Strengthen the revitalization of the West Avenue, Wall Street, and Reed Putnam areas by encouraging mixed-use development (i.e. offices, stores, services, restaurants and theaters together with housing, parks and cultural facilities). (A.3.1.2, p. 12,); and
- 2) To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development to “To encourage retail activity in the West Avenue/Wall Street and Reed Putnam areas and place emphasis on pedestrian-oriented environment (A.4.1.1, p. 12); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Norwalk Zoning Commission.

Mr. Zarembly seconded.

Mr. Davidson felt that the degree of density for this district would be too high with the passage of this amendment.

**Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; William Dunne voted in favor.
David Davidson opposed.
No one abstained.**

d) Zoning Commission referral - #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

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** that the proposed amendment to the Building Zone Regulations as shown on a certain document entitled “#10-15R - Zoning Commission - Proposed amendments to Section 118-1220 regarding the use of municipal pkg. lots in Norwalk Center and South Norwalk and technical amendments ” and dated September 17, 2015, be **APPROVED**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the reason for this action is:

- 1) To implement the Plan of Conservation & Development to "Encourage centralized parking in the Norwalk and South Norwalk downtowns which allows shared parking by uses with complementary demands in both daytime and evenings" (E.5.1.3 p.39)
- 2) To implement the Plan of Conservation & Development to "Support economic growth in the city with appropriate parking strategies" (E.5.1, p.39)
- 3) To promote new businesses to locate in existing vacant space in Norwalk Center and South Norwalk; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Norwalk Zoning Commission.

Mr. Davidson seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

V. ADOPTION OF ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE: 2016 Meeting schedule

**** MR. ASTROM MOVED** to adopt the proposed 2016 meeting schedule which would change the Subdivision and Land Use Committee meetings and Planning Commissions meetings to the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Mr. Ferguson seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 13, 2015

Mr. Ferguson had a clarification for the Planning Commission minutes under the public hearing for Subdivision #3637, on page 4.

Mr. Astrom moved to approve the minutes, as revised.

Mr. Zaremby seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

VII. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR

Mr. Greene said that he had a meeting with GGP soon regarding the schedule for the application for the proposed mall. The application would include a zoning change to allow more retail in the zone. This amendment would be referred to the Planning Commission. He thought they would apply at the end of the year or the beginning of 2016.

VIII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Zaremby asked if Mr. Greene knew when the Starbucks would open up. Mr. Greene said he was not sure. He also asked about the land that was for sale near Swanky Franks' on Connecticut Ave. He said the state did a great job on the repairs at Exit 14.

There was a discussion about easements. Mr. Davidson thought that the city was giving property up, in some cases, in perpetuity. Since the commissioners had a role to play, Mr. Davidson thought it prudent that Corporation Counsel gave them some guidance to exercise this responsibility. There was a discussion on how the properties are valued. The city does not often give out easements. There was a discussion about whether the city was also getting something from an easement, although it did not have a specific dollar amount applied to it.

Ms. DiMeglio asked if anyone had seen the renovated Stamford Hospital which had added many new floors to it.

Mr. Astrom began a discussion about the Plan of Conservation and Development (“POCD”) which would have to be completed by 2018. He told the commissioners that he thought they should begin working on it in March of 2016, after the budget season was completed. Mr. Greene said that he would put an item in the budget to hire a consultant to work on it. Mr. Astrom asked that the staff continue reviewing the current POCD to see what projects had been completed. Mr. Greene said that he had asked other departments to review it, as well, for completed projects. There was a discussion about the public meetings with neighbors, in various neighborhoods, that were held for the current POCD. Ms. DiMeglio described the meetings with the neighborhood associations. She said there was a lot of neighborhood involvement.

There was a discussion about a possible sale of the armory. Mr. Greene said that no one has purchased it yet.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McLaughlin made a Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Dunne seconded.

Torgny Astrom; Fran DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Walter McLaughlin; Steven Ferguson; David Davidson; William Dunne voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero