

**DRAFT
CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMISSION
April 17, 2018**

PRESENT: Frances DiMeglio; David Davidson; Mary Peniston; Nora King;
Tammy Langalis; Steven Ferguson; Mike Mushak (after roll call)

STAFF: Steven Kleppin; Mike Wrinn

OTHERS: Atty Al Vasco; Pete Romano; Paul Sotnick

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. DiMeglio called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Kleppin called the roll. He noted that Ms. Peniston had not been sworn in but would sit in the meeting but not vote. Ms. DiMeglio welcomed her and noted that it was now a full commission with 8 commissioners.

III. DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

**a) Subdivision #3648 – MTS Enterprises – 139 West Rocks Road – 2
Lots – Preliminary review**

Ms. DiMeglio opened the application. Mr. Wrinn said that Atty Al Vasco would begin the presentation. He oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on a site plan. He noted that this was the All Saints property. He explained that there would be 17-18 single family homes on a conservation development. Mr. Wrinn explained previous developments. He explained how large the property was which would be six acres. No zone change would be necessary for this development. Pete Romano then explained the subdivision on an aerial map. There was a discussion about whether there would be condos but it is not zoned for that at this time. Mr. Romano showed them a change in topography which would remain. He explained where there would be open space. He also explained where the zone line was. He noted that they had been before the Conservation Commission previous to this evening. There has not been any response from the neighbors. He discussed the size of the houses, which would be between 2,500 – 3,000 sq. ft. The concept of the conservation development is to cluster houses and have some open space. The developer discussed commercial properties that he had done in Norwalk as well as residential properties in Fairfield. There was a discussion about the Chestnut St. conservation development which had previously done. Mr. Mushak said that he would encourage the developer to have a trail

open to the public. There was then a discussion about having the Planning and Zoning Commissions meet together. The developer did say that they would agree to have the open space for the public. There was a question about the density in this area. Mr. Romano then went over the topographic map and acknowledged that there is probably ledge on the property. There was a discussion as to whether the school had enough room if necessary, but it does still have room.

b) Action item on 8-24 Review - Land Use & Building Management Committee of the Common Council – New Columbus School at Ely Site – Open space land swap

Mr. Wrinn asked that they go to Item III d. until Mr. Lo arrived.

Later in the meeting, Ms. DiMeglio asked for a presentation when Mr. Lo had not arrived. Mr. Wrinn said that it was open space being swapped for open space. There is open space behind the Norwalk Community College which would be dedicated as open space. It is equal in value to open space that will be taken over for the new Columbus School. Because of this, there are not losing any open space.

There was a discussion about what parcels were part of the swap. Most of the commissioners were in favor of the swap but Mr. Ferguson did not think that the city was very transparent on this matter. Ms. King said that if the properties had been disclosed then it would drive the price up. There was a discussion about the use of the property at Norwalk Community College and the Columbus School.

***** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission in accordance with Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the referral made by the City's Buildings and Facilities Manager, on behalf of Land Use & Building Management Committee of the Common Council for an 8-24 Review by the Planning Commission the recommendation of a 8-24 Review - New Columbus School at Ely Site – Open space land swap be **APPROVED** with the following comments:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED 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 "Provide and maintain an attractive open space system for the enjoyment of all residents. (C.1.3. p. 24); and
3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Allow for the future needs of Norwalk to be met as identified in this plan (i.e. housing, economic growth, community facilities, etc.)." (F.1.1.6. p. 42); and

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

Mr. Davidson seconded.

Frances DiMeglio; David Davidson; Nora King; Tammy Langalis; Mike Mushak voted in favor.

Steven Ferguson opposed.

No one abstained.

c) Action item on 8-24 Review - Land Use & Building Management Committee of the Common Council – Designation of City open space funds for the acquisition of White Barn Property

Mr. Wrinn asked that they go to Item d. until Mr. Lo arrived.

Later in the meeting, Mr. Wrinn began the presentation without Mr. Lo and showed the commissioners the conservation development. He explained how the developer was requesting open space funds to help with the acquisition of the White Barn property. The applicant was not present. Ms. DiMeglio asked why this had not been thought about prior to the application. There was an explanation of the Friends of the Quaker school that had owned it in 2007. Mr. Mushak said that he supported the request for funds. There was a discussion about the Norwalk Land Trust and how they had gotten involved. There was a provision for contingency added in the resolution.

***** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission in accordance with Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the referral made by the City's Buildings and Facilities Manager, on behalf of Land Use & Building Management Committee of the Common Council for an 8-24 Review by the Planning Commission for the recommendation of a 8-24 Review - Designation of City open space funds for the acquisition of White Barn Property swap be **APPROVED** with the following comments:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED 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 "Provide and maintain an attractive open space system for the enjoyment of all residents. (C.1.3. p. 24); and
3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Allow for the future needs of Norwalk to be met as identified in this plan (i.e. housing, economic growth, community facilities, etc.)." (F.1.1.6. p. 42); and

4. That if the purchase does not go through, that the \$200,000 City contribution be returned to the open space fund; and

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

Mr. Davidson seconded.

Frances DiMeglio; David Davidson; Nora King; Tammy Langalis; Steven Ferguson; Mike Mushak voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

d) Action item on 8-24 Review – Department of Public Works – Walk Bridge easements at 61 Crescent Street

Paul Sotnick began the presentation and noted that they had seen another application last month for the Yankee Doodle Bridge. He then oriented the commissioners as to the location of the easement on an aerial map which would be used for the Walk Bridge project. He said that there was a temporary easement but not they were an offer of \$100,000 for the easement for 3 years. It was for the storage of materials. This matter is on the Common Council's agenda later this month. The city would receive this money after this was all approved. It is common for the state to pay for an easement.

***** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission that the 8-24 Review submitted by the Department of Public Works – Walk Bridge easements at 61 Crescent Street 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 "Provide an efficient and effect system of transportation." (E.1.1. p.36); and

2. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Bridges and roadways over navigable waterways should be maintained, operated, repaired, built to avoid or reduce potential for any significant adverse impacts on navigation, safety, environmental quality." (E.4.1.4. p.38); and

3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Allow for the future needs of Norwalk to be met as identified in this plan (i.e. housing, economic growth, community facilities, etc.)." (F.1.1.6. p. 42); and

4. 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. Mushak seconded.

Frances DiMeglio; David Davidson; Nora King; Tammy Langalis; Steven Ferguson; Mike Mushak voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

e) Redevelopment Plan Updates – Wall Street, West Avenue, and Washington Street – Report and recommended action

There was a discussion about the Redevelopment Plan. Ms. King and Mr. Ferguson said that they have not been notified of a meeting since February. There was a discussion about why substantial changes have been made. Now the hospital has been included. Mr. Kleppin said he would ask the Redevelopment Agency to be at the next meeting. Mr. Davidson wanted a full presentation because of the magnitude of changes. Mr. Ferguson said that they could update the Commission after they have met with the committee. Mr. Mushak began a discussion about the transportation portion and noted that Norwalk does not have a transportation planner. He also noted that after spending money on traffic reports by consultants that Norwalk does not use these reports to the fullest extent possible. Mr. Kleppin said that he did not think that the Redevelopment Agency had a completed report yet. There was a process that had not been done yet. He thought it would be better to speak with them before this happened. Ms. King and Mr. Ferguson said that they would meet with Redevelopment and then attend a meeting on May 11, 2018 to have a discussion at the next Planning Commission meeting. She also suggested that the Planning Department should have a traffic/transportation planner. There was a discussion about how the Department of Public Works plans for the vehicle traffic and not walkability.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 20, 2018 and March 20, 2018

There was a discussion of the February 20, 2018 minutes about whether the Capital Budget would be reviewed for 1 year or for the 5 years. Ms. DiMeglio said that she believed most of the commissioners agreed not to review the 5 year cycle. Mr. Davidson noted that there were 3 discussions about this. Mr. Davidson also noted that he would not vote on the Capital Budget if it did not include a review of the 5 years.

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED** to approve the Planning Commission minutes of February 20, 2018, as amended by Mr. Davidson.

Ms. Langalis seconded.

Frances DiMeglio, Chair; David Davidson; Nora King; Tammy Langalis; Steven Ferguson; Mike Mushak voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

Ms. DiMeglio had changes to the March 20, 2018 minutes which Mr. Kleppin said he would revise and send to her for review. She suggested that the minutes would not be voted on until after the revisions could be made and reviewed for the next meeting.

There was a discussion about naming rights with Corporation Counsel.

V. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR

a. Citywide Plan (POCD)

Mr. Kleppin noted that the next meeting is on May 2 from 5:30 – 7:30 at the South Norwalk Library. He explained that there were no rooms available at City Hall. He discussed the main items on the agenda. There would be additional public meetings addressing further topics. Ms. King said that it was taking a long time. She thought that many people were not available in July and August. The timing to do this was in the spring. Mr. Kleppin said that he had spoken with Larissa about that and that is why they are holding it at the beginning of June. There was a discussion about further drilling down these topics. Mr. Kleppin explained that these would be evening meetings. He also noted that there would be a youth outreach meeting on May 1, for 16 – 21 year olds. He noted that they were also trying to reach to the Hispanic community. Several names were suggested to him.

b. East Avenue Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Grant

Mr. Kleppin said that he was waiting for the Mayor to sign the letter for the grant. He has to also get the scope of work firmed up. The study will map the geographic area. He has no other grants in mind at this time.

VI. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

There was a discussion about the CNNA letter. Mr. Davidson said that he had not received the response to it from Mr. Kleppin. It would be sent again to him.

Mr. Ferguson asked Ms. DiMeglio if she was feeling better.

Ms. Peniston said that she would not be available for the next meeting and that she could call in to the meeting. Ms. DiMeglio said that she should be sworn in first.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

**Ms. Langalis made a Motion to Adjourn
Mr. Ferguson seconded.**

**Fran DiMeglio; Steve Ferguson; Nora King; Mike Mushak; Tammy Langalis; David Davidson voted to approve.
No one opposed.
No one abstained.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero