

**CITY OF NORWALK
ZONING COMMISSION
September 18, 2019**

PRESENT: Nathan Sumpter, Chair; Louis Schulman; Mike Witherspoon; Richard Roina; Nicholas Kantor; Frank Mancini and Galen Wells (after the roll call)

STAFF: Mike Wrinn;

OTHERS: Atty. Al Vasko

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Sumpter called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Wrinn called the roll. Mr. Sumpter then proceeded to discuss the rules for the public hearings.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

IV. REVIEW AND ACTION ON PENDING APPLICATIONS

a. #6-18SP – MTS Enterprises LLC – 73 Aiken Street – 17 unit conservation development – Extension of approval time - Report & recommended action

Mr. Sumpter opened the public hearing. Atty. Vasko began the presentation. He gave a brief overview of the approval on this application. He said they had been working with the Zoning Department staff. Mr. Wrinn said that the staff had no issues with the extension. Atty Vasko said there were no changes

***** MR. SCHULMAN MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** that application #6-18SP – MTS Enterprises LLC – 773 Aiken Street for a 17 unit residential conservation development as shown on various plans by LandTech Engineering, Westport, CT and Beinfeld Associates, Architects, Norwalk, CT, be granted a one year extension of the approval deadline to September 14, 2020.

Mr. Witherspoon seconded.

Nathan Sumpter, Chair; Louis Schulman; Mike Witherspoon; Richard Roina; Nicholas Kantor; Frank Mancini and Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

V. REVIEW AND ACTION ON NEW APPLICATIONS

a. Discussion of brewpub/distillery definitions

Mr. Wrinn began the presentation by noting that there were issues with the definition since there were different state liquor permits. He recommended adding this use to be allowed in different zones. The staff has crafted a definition which should allow it in the various zones around the city. They had received inquiries from different businesses for use in these zones. Neighborhood Business is a difficult zone since these are predominantly residential areas. He asked the commissioners to

allow the Zoning Department to move the regulation forward. There was a discussion about the state permits. There was also a discussion about food trucks being allowed on the property and what this would entail. Many of the commissioners were fine with the draft of the regulations that they were shown. There was a discussion about various businesses that have applied in the city in the past year.

***** MR. SCHULMAN MOVED to approve that this matter be moved forward by the Zoning Department staff.**

Mr. Witherspoon seconded.

Nathan Sumpter, Chair; Louis Schulman; Mike Witherspoon; Richard Roina; Nicholas Kantor; Frank Mancini and Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

There was a discussion about the definition of “healthcare facilities” which Mr. Wrinn said was not needed because it was covered under “hospital” and “medical office.” This regulation would also be on the agenda with the brewpub definition for a public hearing, when the definitions were drafted.

***** MR. ROINA MOVED to allow the Zoning Department staff to delete the definition of “healthcare facilities” from the regulations as it was unnecessary.**

Mr. Mancini seconded.

Nathan Sumpter; Louis Schulman; Mike Witherspoon; Richard Roina; Nicholas Kantor; Frank Mancini and Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

b. Coastal buffers discussion with Planning & Zoning Staff

Mr. Wrinn noted that draft regulations had been withdrawn a few years ago. The staff had been asked to review those previous draft regulations and make suggestions. Michelle Andrzejewski, a Zoning Department staff member, began the presentation with a definition of the vegetated buffer. She also recapped the proposed amendment. She also discussed the process of the proposed regulation and was withdrawn on April 12, 2017. She gave a brief overview of what other coastal states and towns were regulating. She also discussed the current Norwalk regulations. There was a discussion about the definition of coastal included in the proposed amendment, in relation to the Five Mile River. She discussed Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island regulations. She also noted which towns around Norwalk had regulations. There was also a discussion about the research used for Ms. Andrzejewski research and the Powerpoint would be sent to the commissioners by staff. She then discussed the current Norwalk regulations. There was a discussion about why the previous regulations had been withdrawn. She then showed the commissioners a map of what the coastal buffer would look like. There was a discussion about whether how the regulations would work. Mr. Wrinn noted that it would affect owners who were coming in for permits to rehab their houses, structures, etc. She discussed the parcels with bulkheads. She then showed the commissioners 10 examples of how this would affect various parcels on the coast. There was a discussion about Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) research. There was a discussion about some islands off Norwalk shorelines in connection with sea levels rising. She then discussed the pros and cons for the regulations.

The commissioners then began to discuss the merits of the regulations. They asked Ms. Andrzejewski what are the benefits of these regulations which they would like to see before proceeding. There was also a discussion about the difference in value between Norwalk and surrounding coastal towns. They also asked for costs for the buffers. They also wanted to be advised as to what the benefits were in other towns that did have regulations. It was noted that since there were similar regulations in Westport, that research should start there. Mr. Wrinn noted that several Planning Commissioners were in favor of an amendment.

d. Discussion of zoning regulations evaluation

Mr. Wrinn advised that the consultant for this project would see the Zoning Commission. The contract would be signed shortly

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 5, 2019

**** MR. MANCINI MOVED to approve the September 5, 2019 Zoning Commission minutes, with changes.**

Mr. Roina seconded.

Nathan Sumpter; Louis Schulman; Richard Roina; Nicholas Kantor; Frank Mancini and Galen Wells voted in favor.

No one opposed.

Mike Witherspoon abstained.

VII. COMMENTS OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Mr. Wrinn had no comments.

VIII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Schulman said that he had seen the SoNo Collection electric sign on but was not happy with it. Mr. Wrinn said that since this was the first day of testing the staff would find out what more the developers would do. Some commissioners thought electric signs were distracting. It was noted that the SoNo Collection decided to only add 1 sign. Mr. Wrinn said that Zoning Department staff had walked through the whole mall. Nordstrom's would be open in 3 weeks. The parking garage had been striped. There was a discussion about the current traffic in the area which was not doing so well because of the construction.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schulman made a Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Witherspoon seconded.

Nathan Sumpter; Louis Schulman; Mike Witherspoon; Richard Roina; Nicholas Kantor; Frank Mancini and Galen Wells voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero