

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMISSION
March 10, 2015**

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

STAFF: Michael Greene; Frank Strauch

OTHERS: Atty Marc Grenier; Sally Dodd; Bob Morgan; Amy Jones; George DiScala; Jessica Levy

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Astrom called the meeting to order at 8:20 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Greene called the roll.

Before the public hearing began, Mr. Astrom explained the rules of procedure for public hearings.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

a) Subdivision # 3635 – Marc Grenier, Esq. – 69 Aiken Street – 4 Lots

Mr. Astrom opened the public hearing.

Atty Grenier began the presentation by handing in the certified, return receipt cards for the letters that were sent to neighbors, noticing them of the public hearing. He oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on the site map. He discussed the proposed four lots and explained how the stem of the road was changed from a previous application. He also said that the Conservation Commission approved this modification. He said that the lots were oversized for this zone. An attorney for the neighboring Rolling Ridge Condominium requested additional conditions be placed on the resolution. He discussed the tree buffer that was suggested and said the only concern was committing to a certain kind of tree. They would not know until they began digging what type of tree would thrive in the soil. He said that they had all of their sign-offs. The applicant did not anticipate blasting on the site. There was a discussion of the stem of the proposed road as well as the different types of trees that could be planted as a buffer. They would be open to suggestions, especially from staff. The applicant, Mr. DiScala, had met with representatives from Rolling Ridge.

Sally Dodd, 50 Aiken Street, the president of the Rolling Ridge Condominium, said that she had spoken with Mr. DiScala who had alleviated many of their concerns. She then discussed the screening between the properties. She showed them a proposed site plan which indicated where some of the trees should be planted and asked that this be made a part of the resolution.

Bob Morgan, another homeowner at Rolling Ridge, said that he thought the minimum height of the trees should be ten ft.

Amy Jones, another homeowner at Rolling Ridge, had helped Ms. Dodd to prepare the site plan with the proposed trees. They had considered where the trees could be planted when they prepared it.

George DiScala, the applicant, said that he did not think there were enough trees and that there should be more. He reiterated what Atty Grenier said that they should wait to determine what type of trees should be planted. He also recommended fencing as part of the buffer.

Jessica Levy asked some questions since she was a potential homeowner at 67 Aiken Street.

There was no rebuttal. Mr. Astrom closed the public hearing.

IV. REPORT OF SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE, Joel Zaremby, Chair

a) Action on III. a.

i. Subdivision # 3635 – Marc Grenier, Esq. – 69 Aiken Street – 4 Lots

Before the vote, there was a discussion about whether the commissioners wanted to pass the resolution or re-write another one. There was also a misunderstanding about whether the commissioners had received the approval from the Conservation Commission.

**** MR. ZAREMBY MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** that subdivision application #3630 submitted by Marc J. Grenier Esq, for a 4 lot subdivision at 69 Aiken Street and as shown on a plan entitled "Subdivision Map Prepared for Aiken Street Development, LLC, Norwalk Connecticut, Scale 1" = 20', dated 9/5/2014" and certified "Substantially Correct" by Dennis A. Delius, Land Surveyor – Connecticut Registration No. 6396 be **APPROVED** subject to the following reasons:

1. That all required soil and sedimentation controls be in place prior to any site work;
and

2. That any additional soil erosion and sedimentation controls deemed necessary by the staff be installed at the direction of the staff; and
3. 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
4. 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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that conditions **do** warrant the installation of sidewalks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that conditions **do** warrant the installation of new street curbs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the street tree requirement **not be waived** and that street trees be installed along the extent of the subdivision 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 March 20, 2015.

Mr. Ferguson seconded.

Torgny Astrom, Frances DiMeglio; Joel Zaremb; Victor Cavallo; Bill Dunne; Walter McLaughlin; Steve Ferguson, in favor

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

b) Subdivision # 3611 – MacDow – 8 Charcoal Road – 2 Lots – Request for return of bond

**** MR. ZAREMBY MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission that the request to release the surety held on Subdivision # 3611 – MacDow – 8 Charcoal Road – 2 Lots - Release of surety be **APPROVED**, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a one (1) year, 25% maintenance surety or \$1000.00, whichever amount is greater, be submitted to guarantee satisfactory performance of the required improvements; and

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

Mr. McLaughlin seconded.

**Torgny Astrom, Frances DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Victor Cavallo; Bill Dunne; Walter McLaughlin; Steve Ferguson, in favor
No one opposed.
No one abstained.**

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

Referrals – Report & recommendation

a) Redevelopment Agency – Review of changes to the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) regarding the Reed Putnam Design District – Action Item

**** MS. DIMEGLIO MOVED: BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning Commission that the proposed amendments to the schedule of development volumes and land uses of the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) regarding Parcel 1, 2, and 4 of the Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Plan be **APPROVED**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission finds that the proposed amendments, as amended to address the above modifications, are consistent with the Plan of Conservation & Development for Norwalk and that the reason for this action is:

1. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal 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 goal 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
3. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Continue clustering large-scale development where shuttle systems and other Traffic Demand Management programs can be implemented" (A.3.1.3 p.12); and
4. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "Maintain diversity in the SoNo retail mix" (A.4.1.5 p.13); and
5. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to " Modify plans for Reed-Putnam Parcels 1, 2, and 4 as amended" (A.6.1.1. P.13); and
6. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to " Incorporate squares, plazas, and greens into redevelopment and areas of new residential growth" (A.3.1.10 p.24); and
7. To implement the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to "A.2.1.6 Encourage at least 15 percent of housing in the West Avenue, Reed Putnam, and Wall Street areas to be affordable to families with incomes at or below the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority's income limits" (A.2.1.6. p.10); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this written opinion and action be forwarded to the City's ad hoc committee (representatives of the Planning Committee of the Common Council, Redevelopment Agency, and the Planning Commission) and to the Norwalk Common Council.

Mr. McLaughlin seconded.

Torgny Astrom, Frances DiMeglio; Joel Zaremby; Victor Cavallo; Bill Dunne; Walter McLaughlin; Steve Ferguson, in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 10, 2015

Before the approval of the minutes, there was a discussion about the recording of the voting in the minutes. There was also a question about spot zoning and what it was. Mr. Greene then spent several minutes explaining it to the commissioners.

Mr. Astrom moved to approve the minutes.

Mr. Ferguson seconded.

Torgny Astrom, Frances Dimeglio; Joel Zaremby; Bill Dunne; Steve Ferguson; Victor Cavallo, in favor.

None opposed.

No one abstained.

VII. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR

There was a discussion about the Firestone signs and the American Red Cross signs that were no longer flashing.

VIII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

There was then a discussion of what was happening on Wall Street since a building was demolished but nothing else was being built. There was also a discussion of an abandoned HSBC bank. Mr. Ferguson explained that these banks were still paying their leases so landlords were not upset. There were concerns that the properties were not looking good. There was a discussion about the Housing Authority and developers. Mr. Greene said that his department would not know about this until the developer came to the office for permits. There was also a discussion about a property that was donated to the city in a settlement but later given back to the owner. Ms. DiMeglio noted that the property was now for sale. Mr. Dunne had a question about 110 Richards Avenue. Mr. Greene explained that the approval on the property would be extended in April and explained why.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McLaughlin made a Motion To Adjourn.

Mr. Ferguson seconded.

Torgny Astrom, Frances Dimeglio; Joel Zaremby; Bill Dunne; Steve Ferguson; Victor Cavallo, Walter McLaughlin in favor

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Palmentiero