TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
FROM: JOHN KYDES, CHAIRMAN
DATE: DECEMBER 26, 2019
RE: MEETING NOTICE

The next scheduled meeting of the Planning Committee of the Common Council will be held on Thursday, January 2, 2020 at 7:00pm in Room 231 in Norwalk City Hall. Please note the time and location.

PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 2, 2020
7:00PM
AGENDA

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

I. ADMINISTRATION
   A. Approval of Minutes of the December 5, 2019 Regular Meeting

II. NEW BUSINESS
   A. Introduction of Brian Bidolli, the Executive Director of Redevelopment Agency
   B. Update on the SoNo Collection

III. OLD BUSINESS
   A. Follow up discussion on Economic Development Tools - Enterprise Zone and Tax Increment Financing District Eligibility and District Growth Potential

ADJOURNMENT
ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Tom Keegan, Tom Livingston, Lisa Shanahan, Barbara Smyth, George Tsiranidis, Darlene Young (7:10 p.m.)

STAFF: Tammy Strauss, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency Acting Executive Director, Steve Kleppin, Director of Planning and Zoning, Jessica Casey, Sabrina Church

Via telephone conferencing: Carter Shaw, The Harriman Group

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Kydes called the Public Participation portion of the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Roos said that she had participated in July and another time and was wondering what kind of input the community had with the plan. She said that East Norwalk has its own character, as does the various other areas of Norwalk like South Norwalk, Rowayton and West Norwalk.

Ms. Diane Cece, asked Mr. Kydes to introduce the new Committee members. Mr. Kydes explained that it was the next item on the agenda.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the roll. A quorum was present.

ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of Minutes

1. August 28, 2019 Special Meeting

** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED THE MINUTES OF MEETING OF AUGUST 28, 2019 SPECIAL MEETING
** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MEETING OF AUGUST 28, 2019 SPECIAL MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN
FAVOR (KYDES, LIVINGSTON, AND TSIRANIDIS) AND THREE (3) ABSTENTIONS (SMYTH, SHANAHAN, AND KEEGAN).

2. September 5, 2019 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting

** MS. SMYTH MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING.
** ** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (KYDES, LIVINGSTON, SMYTH, AND TSIRANIDIS) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTION (SHANAHAN, AND KEEGAN).

Mr. Kleppin gave a brief overview of the history of the East Norwalk TOD Plan. He said that there had been work done in South Norwalk and other parts of Norwalk, but East Norwalk had been somewhat ignored. He said that they had been working on the study with members of the Council, the Redevelopment staff and various other individuals.

Ms. Young joined the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Mr. Carter Shaw from the Harriman Group then narrated a PowerPoint presentation via a conference call. Mr. Shaw then explained that the industry standard was a 1/2 mile unit. Mr. Kleppin confirmed this and noted that the State of Connecticut will only pay for work within that 1/2 mile radius. The PowerPoint report can be found at:


At the end of the presentation, Mr. Kydes asked about the timeline. Mr. Kleppin said that the Oversight Committee had met recently to discuss feedback. Once the Oversight Committee concludes its work, it will go to the Planning Commission and they will hold two public hearings. Mr. Kleppin said that this plan will be presented as an amendment to the POCD and would likely be back on the Committee's agenda in March.

RECESS

Mr. Kydes announced a recess at 7:55 p.m. He reconvened at 8:05 p.m.

B. Review of Potential Economic Development Tools

1. Presentation by Jessica Casey/Sabrina Church

Mr. Kydes said that he and Ms. Casey had been discussing developing commerce in the Wall Street area. Ms. Casey said that they wanted to encourage development in various areas of Norwalk, such as Wall Street. This happens through the use of development
tools, some of which were the establishment of Enterprise Zones, investments, signage improvements and lighting improvements. Many of these tools were used in South Norwalk and the neighborhood is beginning to come together.

Ms. Casey said that the Wall Street/West Avenue area meets two of the three criteria. She explained that there was a TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District. She explained that there were some who felt that the City was not receiving the taxes due. However, the City receives a base tax rate and there is an increase in the taxes over base during a period of years as the property value rises.

Mr. Kydes asked about the "as of right" issue. Ms. Church gave a brief overview and pointed out that the developer has to meet the unemployment rate of at least 200% of the state's average or the developer would not be able to access the advantage of being in an Enterprise Zone.

Ms. Casey then spoke about the TIF Districts which have only been in existence since 2016. She reviewed the details listed in the information packet with Committee. There was a brief discussion regarding the determination of "blight" and how it was applied to the Wall Street/West Avenue area. The focus is more targeted than an Enterprise Zone because the Enterprise Zone encompasses an entire census zone. The TIF revenue over the base tax revenue is directed back into the community for projects such as infrastructure or other issues for the life of the TIF, which could be up to 25 years. While the TIF requires more planning, there is more flexibility in terms of the use of the fund. The Wall Street/West Avenue would be added to the POCD through the amendment process. State statute requires the amendment be approved by the City legislative process.

Ms. Smyth left the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Mr. Livingston asked about how the funding would be set aside from the TIF revenue for infrastructure. Ms. Casey said that they might be able to use earmarks. Ms. Church said that the new regulation in the TIF can be directed towards small businesses. It would have to be included in the financial plan portion along with other neighborhood programming or development.

Ms. Smyth returned to the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

Ms. Casey said that the City could use both the Enterprise Zone and the TIF District. An Enterprise Zone could be done in about a month, while the TIF would take a few months longer. While it is important to attract new businesses, it is also important to retain the existing businesses.

Mr. Kydes asked if Ms. Casey should proceed with implementing the tools. Mr. Livingston said that he would like more information about the zones. A brief discussion
followed. Mr. Kydes said that it would be helpful to have an idea of some of the projects that were coming on line in the City.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no additional old business to consider at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS.**

There was no new business to consider at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

**MS. SMYTH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services
Enterprise Zone and Tax Increment Financing District Eligibility and District Growth Potential

01/02/2020
Overview

• Snapshot of last months Planning Committee meeting
• Eligible Census Tracts for Enterprise Zone and Tax Increment Financing District
  • Eligibility criteria
  • Census tracts meeting criteria
  • Census Tract 437 (Wall Street – West Avenue)
• Central Business District zoning
• Growth potential in Wall-West
• Discussion of potential next steps
Last Months Planning Committee Meeting

- Existing Economic Development Tools
- Expanding the City of Norwalk’s Economic Development Tools, for Discussion
  - Enterprise Zone (EZ)
  - Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District
- Discussion of Possible Next Steps
Enterprise Zone Eligibility
Enterprise Zone Eligibility

Census Tracts must meet **one** of the following criteria:

1. 25% or more people below the poverty level;
2. 25% or more of the families receive public assistance or welfare income; or
3. The unemployment rate is at least two hundred percent of the state’s average.
Qualified Census Tracts

Census Tracts must meet **one** of the following criteria:

1. 25% or more people below the poverty level; *(0 out of 8 census tracts highlighted meet this criteria although 437 is close at 24.2%)*

2. 25% or more of the families receive public assistance or welfare income; or *(4 out of 8 census tracts highlighted meet this criteria)*

3. The unemployment rate is at least two hundred percent of the state’s average. *(7 out of 8 census tracts highlighted meet this criteria – unemployment is 3.6% in CT)*
Census Tract 437 - Wall St/West Ave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Meets Criteria?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of individuals below poverty level – 24.2%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of the families who receive public assistance or welfare income – 33.5%</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate – 8.6%</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tax Increment Financing District Eligibility
TIF Eligibility Criteria

1. A portion of the real property within a tax increment district shall meet at least one of the following criteria:
   a) Be a substandard, insanitary, deteriorated, deteriorating or blighted area;
   b) Be in need of rehabilitation, redevelopment or conservation work; or
   c) Be suitable for industrial, commercial, residential, mixed-use or retail uses, downtown development or transit-oriented development.

   **AND**

2. Property within the TIF district cannot be more than 10% of the total taxable property in the municipality

**NOTE:** The geography of a TIF District is determined through a planning process. The chosen geography must be strategically chosen and vetted via the eligibility criteria in order to qualify. It is not based off of census tracts like the Enterprise Zone.
## Wall Street/West Avenue Determination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Justification</th>
<th>Meets Criteria?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area is substandard, insanitary, deteriorating, or blighted</td>
<td>This was determined in the Wall/West Neighborhood Plan that was approved in May 2019</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area is in need of rehabilitation, redevelopment, or conservation work</td>
<td>Many properties on Wall Street are in need of expensive conservation work to preserve historic character. There are also many properties within the geography that are not at the highest and best use and/or are slated for redevelopment</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area is suitable for industrial, commercial, residential, mixed-used, or retail uses, downtown development, or Transit Oriented Development</td>
<td>The Wall/West Neighborhood is part of Norwalk’s urban core and is it’s historic downtown. Many uses that exist within the corridor or are planned for the corridor are mixed use, residential, or commercial in nature.</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AND**

| Area chosen cannot be more than 10% of the total taxable property in the municipality | Based on size and property values the geography is not more than 10% of the total taxable property. This will have to be confirmed by a consultant and be strategically chosen in case of another geography being considered. | TBD             |
Zoning Changes and Growth Potential
Central Business District (CBD) Zoning

• In June 2019, the Zoning Commission approved the proposed CBD zoning for the Wall Street/West Avenue Corridor
• It condensed much of zones CBDA, CBDB, and CBDC into one holistic CBD zone
• Major changes:
  • More flexibility of uses
  • Preservation incentives
  • Simplified structure
  • Lowered parking requirements
  • FAR alterations
  • Workforce housing requirements in line with SoNo TOD
Buildout Analysis for CBD

- Existing gross area for the zone is **6.1 million SF**
- The new zoning allows an approximate increase of **5 million total SF** (12.6 total), across the entire study area
- The past regulations allowed approximately **3,400 units**
- The new zoning results in an approximate **increase of 1,700 units**, across the entire study area (5,100 total)

NOTE: This is a maximum calculation. The calculation does not back out parking area, public realm or other requirements that would lower the number of units built and SF of development.
Potential Growth Sites

- **Short Term**: Loehmanns Plaza site, YMCA site, Wall Street Place, Highpointe, Norwalk Public Library
- **Medium Term**: Yankee Doodle Block, Pulse Point/Riverview Plaza, Head of the Harbor North, Smith Street
- **Long Term**: Library Block, Lillian August site, Auto Zone and medical office sites, CVS and Dunkin Donuts site
Discussion of Possible Next Steps

• Potential of expansion of the Enterprise Zone to include the Wall Street/West Avenue area to spur initial growth.

• Potential implement a TIF District in the Wall Street/West Avenue area to address infrastructure needs that will support sustainable long term growth.

• Or both