

ZONING COMMISSION
125 EAST AVENUE
P.O. BOX 5125
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT 06856-5125

SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION

A. APPLICATION INFORMATION (11 copies required)

1. Owner* of record and owner's address

The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc.
622 West Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06850

2. Applicant's Name and Address

The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc.
622 West Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06850

3. Address of Property

283 Richards Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06850

4. Assessor's Map No.

6SW

5. District, Block, Lot

5/63/72

6. Zoning District

AAA Residence

7. Master Plan Designation (2020)

AAA Residence

8. Land Record Map No.

3342, 3974, 4453, 5950, 6461, 10893, 13098

9. List of adjoining property owners and those directly across the street

See Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.

10. Existing Use(s)

The parcel is vacant.

11. Proposed Use(s)

See Schedule B attached hereto and made a part hereof.

*Letter of consent from owner is attached hereto and made a part hereof.

12. Written legal description of the subject property
See Schedule C attached hereto and made a part hereof.

13. Confirmation of Tax Status
Submitted herewith.

14. Filing Fee
\$410.00 fee submitted herewith.

B. SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION INFORMATION (4 copies required)

1. Aerial Photograph/Photogrammetry (1" = 100' or 1" = 200') one copy required.
Submitted herewith.

2. Site Survey (1" = 30' or 1" = 20') four copies required.
Refer to "Improvement Location Map 283 Richards Avenue Zone: AAA Norwalk, Connecticut Prepared For Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation" dated March 3, 2021, revised to 7-13-21 prepared by Stalker Land Surveying, Inc. Four (4) copies submitted herewith.

3. Project Site and Utility Plans (1" = 30' or 1" = 20') four copies required.
Refer to "Ex. Conditions Removals and Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Plan (Dwg. No.: C-1);" "Site Plan (Dwg.No.: C-2);" "Grading & Drainage Plan (Dwg. No.: C-3);" "Subsurface Sanitary Sewer Disposal Plan (Dwg.No.: C-4);" "Sanitary Leaching System Sections & Details (Dwg.No.:C-5);" "Typical Site Details (Dwg.No. C-6);" "Typical Drainage Utility & City Details (Dwg.No.: C-7);" "Site Sections & Wall Profiles (Dwg.No.: C-8)" all dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Cabezas-DeAngelis, LLC; "Planting Plan (L-1)" and "Lighting Plan (L-2)" both dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Aris Land Studio, LLC. Four (4) copies of each submitted herewith.

4. Building Plans, Elevations & Sections (1/8" = 1'0" or larger) four copies required.
Refer to "Basement Floor Plan (A-1);" "First Floor Community Hall Plan (A-2);" "Second Floor Worship Hall Plan (A-3);" "Roof Plan (A-4);" "Front & Left Side Elevation Plan (A-5);" "Rear & Right Side Elevation Plan (A-6)" all dated 3-16-21, revised to 7-20-21 prepared by Guedes Associates, Inc. Four (4) copies of each attached hereto.

5. Additional Information

a. Lot coverage and parking space computations
Refer to "Zoning Table of Bulk Requirements" set forth on "Site Plan (Dwg.No.: C-2)" dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Cabezas-DeAngelis, LLC. Four (4) copies submitted herewith.

- b. Detailed soil erosion and sediment control plan per Article 112**
Refer to “Ex. Conditions, Removals and Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Plan (Dwg.No.: C-1)” dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Cabezas-DeAngelis, LLC. Four (4) copies submitted herewith.
- c. Gross building area computations by floor (and unit if applicable)**
Refer to “Basement Floor Plan (A-1);” “First Floor Community Hall Plan (A-2);” “Second Floor Worship Hall Plan (A-3)” all dated 3-16-21, revised to 7-20-21 prepared by Guedes Associates, Inc. Four (4) copies submitted herewith.
- d. Storm drainage computations**
Refer to “Drainage Study” dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Cabezas-DeAngelis, LLC. Eleven (11) copies submitted herewith.
- 6. Signs**
Refer to “Ground Sign” detail set forth on “Lighting Plan (L-2)” dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Aris Land Studio, LLC. The sign fully complies with the zoning requirements for a ground sign for a special permit use in a residential zone.
- 7. Traffic Report (11 copies required)**
Refer to “Traffic Impact Study” dated August 2, 2021 prepared by SLR International. Eleven (11) copies submitted herewith.

Respectfully submitted this the 9th day of August 2021.

The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc.

By Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey, LLP
Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey LLP
Elizabeth A.B. Suchy, Esq.
707 Summer Street – 3rd floor
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 425-4200
Fax: (203) 325-8608
Counsel for the Applicant

**THE GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI FOUNDATION
283 RICHARDS AVENUE, NORWALK, CT
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL PERMIT
SCHEDULE A**

LIST OF ABUTTING PROPERTY OWNERS & THOSE DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET

1. 5/63/16

Catharine Sanderson
287 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

2. 5/63/34

Kenneth & Jennifer Copeland
26 Betmarlea Rd.
Norwalk, CT 06850

3. 5/63/35

Marcia Wilkes
24 Betmarlea Rd.
Norwalk, CT 06850

4. 5/63/186

Sharon & Adam Kuta
22C Betmarlea Rd.
Norwalk, CT 06850

5. 5/63/17A

United Church of Christ
275 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

6. 5/63/17

Randall & Katherine Weeks
279 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

7. 5/64/168

Jane Mattson
286 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

Mailing:

10 Top Gallant Rd.
Stamford, CT 06902

8. 5/64/169

Barbara Garelick
280 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

9. 5/64/418

Jeffrey & Kellyann Danziger
282 Richards Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06850

THE GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI FOUNDATION, INC.
283 RICHARDS AVENUE - NORWALK, CT
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL PERMIT
NARRATIVE
SCHEDULE B

I. OVERVIEW

The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc. (hereinafter the “Applicant”) is the owner of vacant real property totaling 1.0144± acres (44,190+/- sq.ft), located at 283 Richards Avenue in Norwalk, CT [District 5, Block 63, Lot 72] (the “Property”). Generally bounded by Richards Avenue to the east, residentially developed properties to the north, west, and south, the Property is zoned AAA Residence and is currently vacant. The Applicant has been an active and vibrant member of the Norwalk community for more than 20 years.

II. PROPOSAL

The Applicant proposes to develop the Property with a Sikh Religious Center - *Gurudwara* – a place of worship and assembly which is central to the Sikh religion. Currently, congregants gather in the Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation’s headquarters on West Avenue in Norwalk for services, worship and community activities. The congregation seeks to provide a place for its members that will enable them to gather for services, fellowship, instruction in the faith and ethics, share customs and traditions and other activities. There are currently about 200 members in the congregation, who come from Norwalk, Fairfield, Trumbull, Westport, Wilton, Stamford, Greenwich and Westchester County for services, spiritual guidance, activities and religious instruction.

The proposed gurudwara will have various component parts. In the main hall, called the *darbar*, devotees assemble to pray, sing hymns and worship. The gurudwara will also have a *langar*, space with a kitchen where vegetarian food is served by volunteers to all, regardless of race or religion. Vegetarian food is served so that all people - congregants and visitors alike - regardless of dietary restrictions, may participate in the fellowship of the gurudwara. Often, gurudwaras also have libraries, areas for instruction and spiritual guidance, space for the congregants to organize charitable works and living quarters for resident and visiting priests. In Connecticut, there are gurudwaras in Hamden, Windsor and Southington.

Generally, prayer services are held on Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. In addition, religious instruction is offered on Sundays from 10 a.m. to noon.

The site will be improved with two (2) driveways: the northern driveway will be full service, and the southern driveway will serve as an egress drive only. Sightlines from both driveways are sufficient. To serve the congregation, there will be 53 parking spaces including three (3) handicap, provided on site. A sidewalk will be constructed along Richards Avenue, and has been designed in accordance with DPW standards.

Currently, the lot is vacant and there is no formal drainage system on the site and stormwater drains overland to the west/southwest toward neighboring residential properties. Since there will be an increase in impervious surface as a result of site development and the construction of the gurudwara, parking spaces and driveways, a stormwater management system is proposed, consisting of drywell basins in the parking lot which will overflow into a new stormwater infiltration system containing Cultec chambers to capture and treat “first flush” stormwater runoff from the site’s parking lot and roof drains. The system has been designed to address the 2, 10, 25, 50 and 100-year storm events, in accordance with the City of Norwalk Stormwater Manual (June 2017). (Refer to “Drainage Study” dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Cabezas-DeAngelis, LLC, attached hereto and made a part hereof). Accordingly, “. . .the inclusion of a stormwater infiltration system, in compliance with the 2017 City of Norwalk Drainage Manual, is sufficient to “capture and treat” the “first flush” of run-off

(WQV) and also reduce off-site discharge to less than predevelopment levels. Therefore, it is concluded that the project will not result in any adverse impacts to existing downstream properties or City-owned drainage facilities.” (Drainage Report p. 3-3).

This application is submitted pursuant to §118-310B2(b) and §118-1450 of the Building Zone Regulations of the City of Norwalk (“zoning regulations”). In connection therewith, the Applicant submits that the application complies with the standard for special permit site plan review set forth in §118-1450 as follows:

- (a) Density of use and bulk of buildings. The density of use of the existing building and proposed addition, as well as the bulk of the building will comply with city zoning regulations. The proposed Gurudwara (worship center) will comply with all height and bulk requirements and special permit requirements for a place of worship in an AAA residence zone including building height and number of stories. Per Sec. 118-810J, the domes are exempt from the zoning regulations relating to height as they are architectural features similar to church spires.
- (b) Stable Traffic Flow. The Applicant submits that site generated traffic shall not adversely affect pedestrian or vehicular safety, conflict with the pattern of highway circulation or increase traffic congestion to a level of service (LOS) considered unacceptable by the commission. “The analysis showed that the site driveways and study intersections will operate at acceptable LOS (LOS C or better) with no perceptible impacts. Most functions will occur off peak on Friday evening and Sunday morning/midday. Sight distance was found to be sufficient at both driveways. Any landscape planting along the property frontage must be regularly maintained to allow sufficient motorist visibility.” (Refer to p. 9 of “Traffic Impact Study” prepared by SLR International Corporation).
- (c) Availability of mass transit facilities. Wheels bus Routes 11 and 13, and the Connecticut Avenue Shuttle travel within ½ mile of the Property.
- (d) Availability and compatibility of utilities. The Property is not served by city water or sewer. The Property will be improved with a sanitary system consisting of a 1,500-gallon septic tank, forced main, pump station and Geomatrix leaching system. Well water will be provided. (Refer to “Subsurface Sanitary Sewer Disposal Plan (Dwg.No.: C-4);” “Sanitary Leaching System Sections & Details (Dwg.No.:C-5);” all dated July 21, 2021 prepared by Cabezas-DeAngelis, LLC.)
- (e) Adverse impact from noise, odor, fumes, dust and artificial lighting. The proposed use is consistent with other residential and educational uses along with other places of worship directly adjacent to or in immediate vicinity of the Property, and therefore will not result in adverse impacts from noise, odor, fumes, dust and artificial lighting. Lighting proposed is the minimal amount necessary for safety on the site. All light poles are limited to 15’ in height and fixtures are full cut-off. (Refer to “Lighting Plan (L-2)” dated July 19, 2021 prepared by Aris Land Studio, LLC).
- (f) Signs of size and design that are in harmony with the neighborhood. A limited identification sign compliant with city zoning regulations is proposed at the entrance to the Property and on the building where the education hall will be located. (Refer to “Lighting Plan (L-2)” dated July 19 2021 prepared by Aris Land Studio).
- (g) Adequacy of yards and open space, screening and buffering. Yards and open space, screening and buffering comply with city zoning regulations for business zones. Approximately 16 new

trees are proposed to be added to the site including elm, white oak and sourwood, among other species, and more than 90 shrubs such as rhododendron, inkberry and other species. (Refer to “Landscape Plan (L-1)” dated July 19, 2021 prepared by Aris Land Studio, LLC).

- (h) Impact on neighborhood properties, as compared to uses and structures permitted as a matter of right. The proposed religious (worship) center’s impact on the neighborhood will be similar to the impact by other houses of worship in the vicinity, including St. Matthew’s Church on Scribner Avenue, United Congregational Church and Temple Shalom on Richards Avenue.
- (i) Existing land use in the area. The area surrounding the property is generally developed with single-family residences, but Fox Run Elementary School, Norwalk Community College, two (2) cemeteries and three (3) other houses of worship are located within walking distance to the Property.
- (j) Proximity of community facilities. Ballfields at Fox Run School are located within less than one-quarter mile of the site. Norwalk Community College is located within one half-mile to the south of the site. Retail and other commercial uses are located within walking distance to the site.
- (k) Compliance with the Zoning Code and Plan of Development. The proposed use complies with the advisory Plan of Conservation and Development.
- (l) Conservation of wetlands, watercourses and other ecologically viable lands. The property does not contain any wetlands, watercourses or other ecologically viable lands. William Kenny, soil scientist and principal of William Kenny Associates, LLC, evaluated the property and concluded on May 26, 2021 that no wetlands or watercourses were observed on the property. (Refer to attached letter).
- (m) No zoning violation exists on the property. There are no known zoning violations on the property.

Additional Special Standards for non-residential uses in residence zones (Sec. 118-1450D)

1. Minimum lot size. Not applicable since property is zoned AAA Residence and not B, C, or D Residence.
2. Building Setbacks. The proposed worship center complies with the additional building setback dimensions set forth in Sec. 118-1450D(2).
3. Parking Setbacks. A ten (10’) foot side and rear setback between parking spaces and the property lines have been created in accordance with Sec. 118-1450D(4).
4. Status of nonresidential use or structure and destruction of same. Not applicable since Property is vacant and Applicant proposes the construction of a new structure.
5. Existing special permit structure expansion. Not applicable since Property is vacant and new structure is proposed.

SCHEDULE C

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

ALL THAT certain tract, piece or parcel of land, with the buildings erected thereon, situated in the City of Norwalk, County of Fairfield and State of Connecticut, shown and designated as Lot "18" on a certain map entitled "Map of Lots 1A and 1B in Norwalk, Conn., Prepared for Frederick G. Filow, Scale 1" = 60', Jan. 15, 1917", which map is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk of said Norwalk, Conn. as Map No. 4453. Said Lot is in area 1.013 acres, more or less and is more particularly bounded as follows:

- NORTHERLY: 285.24 feet by Lot 1A as shown on said map;
- EASTERLY: 150 feet by Richards Avenue;
- SOUTHERLY: 315.88 feet in part by land now or formerly of Kathryn L. Fowler and William Fowler and in part by land now or formerly of Paul C. Filow; and
- WESTERLY: 147.13 feet by land now or formerly of Edward T. and Natalie I. Mayky.

EXCEPTING therefrom, so much of the above described premises as was taken by the City of Norwalk by a Certificate of Taking dated October 13, 1962 and recorded in the Norwalk Land Records in Volume 588 at Page 32. Said portion is shown and designated on a certain map entitled, "Map Establishing Street Lines and Grades on a portion of Richards Ave. from Conn. Ave. Northerly to Filow St. Norwalk, Conn. Scale 1" = 40' July, 1981" and filed in the Norwalk Town Clerk's Office as Map No. 3950.

SAID premises are conveyed subject to:

1. Real property taxes to the City of Norwalk hereafter due and payable.
2. Sewer and water use charges hereafter due and payable.
3. Easement from Frederick G. Filow to The Connecticut Light and Power Company dated August 16, 1950 and recorded in Volume 316 at Page 2 as partially assigned to Yankee Gas Services Company by assignment dated June 30, 1989 and recorded in Volume 2311 at Page 225 of the Norwalk Land Records.
4. Building setback line as shown on Map No. 4453 of the Norwalk Land Records.



Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation (GTBF)
622 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850. Tel: (203) 857-4460
501(c)(3) Tax Exempt ID: 06-1393039
FB: <https://www.facebook.com/gtbjf>
Web: www.gtbj.org Email: gtbjfSevadar@gmail.com

August 1, 2021

Louis Schulman, chairman
City of Norwalk
Zoning Commission
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06851

**Re: *The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc. 283 Richards Avenue – Norwalk, CT
Application for special permit – Sikh religious center - Gurudwara***

Dear Chairman Schulman:

Please be advised that The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc. (the "Foundation") is the owner of the above-referenced, vacant property. This letter is to advise you that the Foundation consents to the preparation, submission and presentation of an application for special permit by the law firm of *Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey LLP*, in connection with its proposed religious center and associated site improvements.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,

The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc.

By: Purshotam S Gulati

Its President, duly authorized



TABULAR VERIFICATION & TAX CLEARANCE FORM

IN ORDER TO BE APPROVED FOR YOUR BUILDING PERMIT, PLEASE CONFIRM WITH THE ASSessor'S OFFICE, ROOM 086, THE CORRECT OWNER, PROPERTY LOCATION, AND DISTRICT, BLOCK, LOT, AND UNIT NUMBER.

SUBSEQUENTLY, BRING THIS FORM TO THE TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, ROOM 086, TO VERIFY PAYMENT OF TAXES. THANK YOU.

**CITY OF NORWALK
OFFICE OF THE ASSESSOR**

DISTRICT, BLOCK, LOT/UNIT: 540710
(ORIG. LOT OR OTHER LOT#) - TO USE FOR TAX CLEARANCE
DISTRICT, BLOCK, LOT/UNIT: _____
(OR DIVIDED LOT/NEW LOT) - TO USE FOR BLDG DEPT PERMIT

281 RICHARD AVE

PROPERTY LOCATION (Please check to be done)

GURE TECHNOLOGY II FOUNDATION

NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER

412 WEST AVE., NORWALK, CT 06858

MAILING ADDRESS (incl. City, St., Zip)

T.A. INTVER

SAM

**CITY OF NORWALK
OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR**

THE REAL ESTATE TAXES FOR THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED ON THIS FORM HAVE BEEN PAID TO DATE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH PUBLIC ACT NO. 9-2004

A BUILDING PERMIT MAY BE ISSUED FOR THIS PROPERTY

Jillie Page
TAX COLLECTOR REPRESENTATIVE

PROPERTY TAXES
PAID THRU

DEC 31 2005

PROPERTY
DATE PAID

TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE
CITY OF NORWALK

