



August 19, 2021

Elizabeth A.B. Suchy, Esq.  
Carmody, Torrance, Sandak & Hennessey  
707 Summer Street  
Stamford, Connecticut 06901

**RE: #2021-32 SP – The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc. – 283 Richards Avenue – Construction of a two (2) story Sikh Religious Center**

District: 5      Block: 63      Lot: 72                      Zone: AAA Residence

Dear Atty. Suchy,

This office is in receipt of the above referenced application, which is tentatively set for a preliminary review and action on the agenda of the Zoning Commission at its meeting of Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at 6:00pm via Zoom. Provided herewith is a preliminary review sheet that outlines additional requests for information and items that need clarification or modification. It is very important that you respond to these items in a timely manner.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me directly either by phone at 203-854-7705 or by email at [bbaker@norwalkct.org](mailto:bbaker@norwalkct.org).

Sincerely,

Bryan Baker  
Principal Planner

Enc: Preliminary Review Sheet

Cc: File

## PRELIMINARY REVIEW SHEET FOR LATEST SUBMISSION

#2021-32 SP – The Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Foundation, Inc. – 283 Richards Avenue – Construction of a two (2) story Sikh Religious Center

1. The Zoning Commission will require a sign off from each applicable Code Enforcement Administrative Committee (CEAC) Agency. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain these sign offs and arrange any and all meetings with the Departments, if required. Applicable agencies include the following:

Department	Contact
Building Department	Bill Ireland, 203-854-7760, <a href="mailto:wireland@norwalkct.org">wireland@norwalkct.org</a>
Public Works	Wilber Giron, <a href="mailto:wgiron@norwalkct.org">wgiron@norwalkct.org</a>
Fire Marshal	Broderick Sawyer, 203-854-0248, <a href="mailto:bsawyer@norwalkct.org">bsawyer@norwalkct.org</a>
Health Department	Bill Mooney, 203-854-7992, <a href="mailto:wmooney@norwalkct.org">wmooney@norwalkct.org</a>
Transportation, Mobility & Parking	Jim Travers, 203-854-7260, <a href="mailto:jtravers@norwalkct.org">jtravers@norwalkct.org</a>  Garrett Bolella, 203-854-7260 <a href="mailto:gbolella@norwalkct.org">gbolella@norwalkct.org</a>

*A CEAC meeting has been scheduled for September 8, 2021 at 9:00am via Zoom.*

2. The application was received by Staff on **August 9, 2021**. Per the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations, abutters and property owners across the street from the property must be notified that an application has been submitted within 10 days of the above listed date. **Please provide proof that the abutters have been notified by certified mail by August 19, 2021.**
  - a. Staff note: Abutter notifications received on 8/11/2021.
3. Your project has been referred to the Zoning Enforcement Officer in this office for zoning compliance. If there are any outstanding issues regarding compliance, other comments may be forthcoming.
4. Your application has been referred to the Senior Conservation Officer/Assistant Director of Planning & Zoning to review for Norwalk Inland Wetlands or conservation issues. Other comments may be forthcoming by this department.
5. **Narrative of uses**
  - a. Please provide additional detail on how the uses of the property will take place in conjunction with one another, and how the property will be used on any given week.

- i. Will there be classes occurring at the same time as religious gatherings? Do classes occur throughout the week?
- ii. Day care services are often provided with religious institutions, are there any plans to provide day care at the site?
- iii. How does the kitchen operation function? Are meals provided during gatherings or throughout the week? Are meals only provided to congregants or to all? Etc.

**6. Height and bulk standards:**

- a. The propane tank, transformer and generator do not comply with accessory structure setbacks in a residential zone, please revise their location. See section 118-910 and the “Schedule Limiting Height and Bulk of Buildings – Residential” for accessory structure setbacks.

**7. Parking and driveway**

- a. The parking standards as noted on the plans are 1 parking space per 5 seats, but no seating plan is provided. Some sort of seating plan showing a general layout of the worship hall must be provided to verify that the number of parking spaces provided will meet the minimum parking standards.
  - i. As noted, the parking is based on a maximum of 200 congregants, but the anticipation would be that constructing a new center that is more than three times the size of the existing location would attract new congregants. The current parking calculation would mean that this facility could not have more than 200 congregants which is something that the city cannot enforce.
    1. Please note that for the existing site at 622 West Avenue and for the Mosque located on Union Square, the parking is based on the square footage of the prayer area divided by 7 to determine the capacity, then divided by 5. Per this requirement and the square footage of the worship hall, 135 parking spaces would be required. See section 118-1220 A.(1) for the specific zoning regulation.
  - ii. Certain holy days may result in an increase in congregants beyond what on-site parking is available, what are the plans for these days?
- b. The northern driveway accommodates two-way traffic, having that driveway as an entrance-only driveway may be safer for pedestrians and prevent any confusion when exiting the site.
- c. The proposed sidewalk along Richards Avenue is 4’ wide, however, per section 118-1450 C.(1)(c) sidewalks must be 5’ wide without obstructions. The existing sidewalk should also be improved and widened to satisfy this requirement.

**8. Landscaping, lighting and buffering**

- a. The proposed chain link fence around the perimeter of the property should be replaced with a wood or vinyl fence. This will increase privacy for both the religious center and for the abutting property owners.
- b. There is an opportunity to increase the amount of landscaping at the front of the property which should be taken advantage of as the City looks to increase the tree canopy.
- c. Consider replacing the proposed exterior wall lights with architecturally appropriate light posts, assuming walkways can maintain adequate ADA access.
- d. The retaining wall that runs along the rear and side of the property directly abuts the property line making maintenance of the wall difficult without accessing the neighboring properties. Can the wall be pulled away from the neighbors in order to provide easier maintenance access as well as the opportunity for more landscaping?