

Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, Connecticut



MEMORANDUM

July 1, 2022

TO: Planning & Zoning Commission - Louis Schulman, Chairman
FROM: Bryan Baker, Principal Planner
RE: [#2022-31 R/SP/CAM – BPC Capital Management I, LLC – 3 Park Street – Building zone regulation text amendment to Article 50 to reduce the minimum lot size for historic preservation developments in conjunction with a proposed 11-unit historic preservation development](#)

APPLICANT/OWNERS NAME: BPC Capital Management LLC.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The property currently is occupied by a 2 ½ story historic building that is used as a real estate office. The lot is approximately 20,373sf in size and is in the East Avenue Village District.



PROPOSED CONDITIONS: The application consists of three separate components: a zoning regulation text amendment, special permit application and a coastal site plan review application.

- **Zoning regulation text amendment:** One regulation amendment has been proposed which would lower the minimum lot size required for a historic preservation development in the East Avenue Village District from 30,000sf to 20,000sf. Should the text amendment be approved, 3 Park Street would then be eligible to construct a historic preservation development. For those Commission

members that were either on the Planning Commission or Zoning Commission may remember, the historic preservation development use was added as a special permit use in the East Avenue Village District effective March 29, 2021, per the text amendment application made by the developers for the [3 East Wall Street](#) project. Staff recommends that the Commission determine whether removing the minimum lot size requirement altogether for historic preservation developments in the East Avenue Village District should be considered in their review of this application. Below is a map of the East Avenue Village District, shown in red:



- **Special Permit for a historic preservation development:** The applicant is proposing to renovate the existing historic structure and construct two structures to the rear for a total of 11 dwelling units on the site with a small commercial component to be on the first floor of the existing historic building. A total of 17 surface parking spaces are proposed to be provided.
- **Coastal Site Plan Review for new construction within the Coastal Zone:** 3 Park Street is located within the Coastal Zone and the proposed work is not included as being an exempt use and/or structure. Therefore, the applicant is subject to the [Coastal Zone regulations](#) and must comply with the coastal site plan review requirements in [Sections 22a-105 through 22a-109](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (Coastal Management Act).

STAFF COMMENTS:

The following comments are in relation to additional documents required from the applicant:

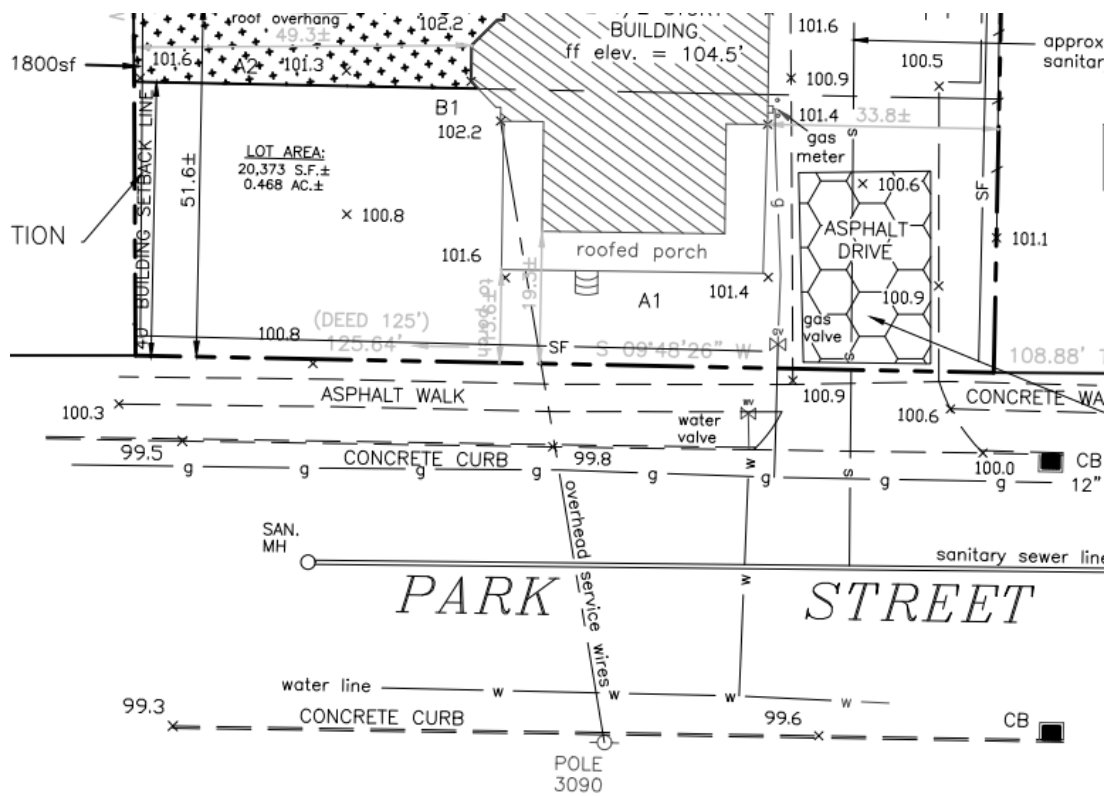
1. As part of the historic preservation development requirements, a narrative prepared by a Historic Architect is required to be submitted which details the proposed work to be done to the exterior of the historic structure. The Historic Architect must submit their resume for review to confirm that they are qualified for historic architecture as listed under 36 CFR Part 61 of the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. As of the writing of this memo, such a narrative has not been submitted to our office.
2. As part of the historic preservation development requirements, this application must be referred from the Planning & Zoning Commission to the Historical Commission for their review and recommendation. If the Historical Commission does not make a recommendation in favor of the project, a 2/3 majority vote of the Planning & Zoning Commission is required to approve the special permit application.
3. A village district review is required to be done by a Village District Consultant. The report of the consult shall be entered into the public hearing record and considered by the Commission in making its decision.
4. The text amendment application has been referred to both the Harbor Commission as well as the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for their recommendation on consistency with the Harbor Management Plan and the Coastal Management Act. The coastal site plan review application was also referred to DEEP for their recommendation on consistency with the Coastal Management Act.
5. Information regarding compliance with the Workforce Housing regulations has not been provided as of the writing of this memo. Per Section 118-1050 D.(2)a., b., and c of the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations, for developments of 10 dwelling units or more, a minimum of 10% of the total number of units are required to be workforce units.
 - a. In addition to the above, should the application ultimately be approved, a workforce housing plan shall be required that shows the total number of workforce units, deed restriction documents, and architectural floor plans to be filed on the Norwalk Land Records that demonstrate that the workforce units be deed restricted in perpetuity.

The following comments are in relation to P&Z Staff's preliminary review of the application and subject to change based on further review, comments and questions from the Commission and additional documents submitted:

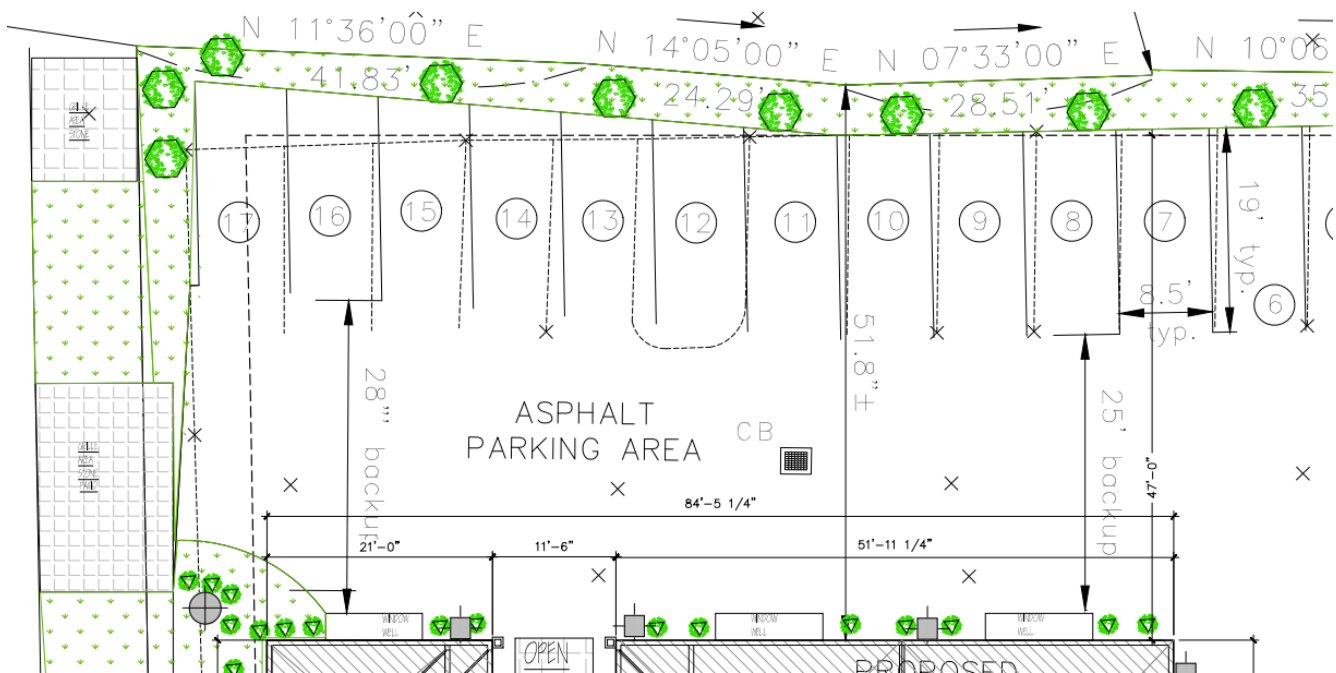
1. More details regarding the landscaping plan should be submitted.
 - a. There are three large trees located between the sidewalk and the street, the landscaping plan should clarify that those trees are remaining as part of this application.
 - b. The landscaping plan should detail which trees that exist today are proposed to be removed. It appears that the existing landscaping between 3 Park Street and 2 Park Street (the property to the south) will be removed as part of this application.



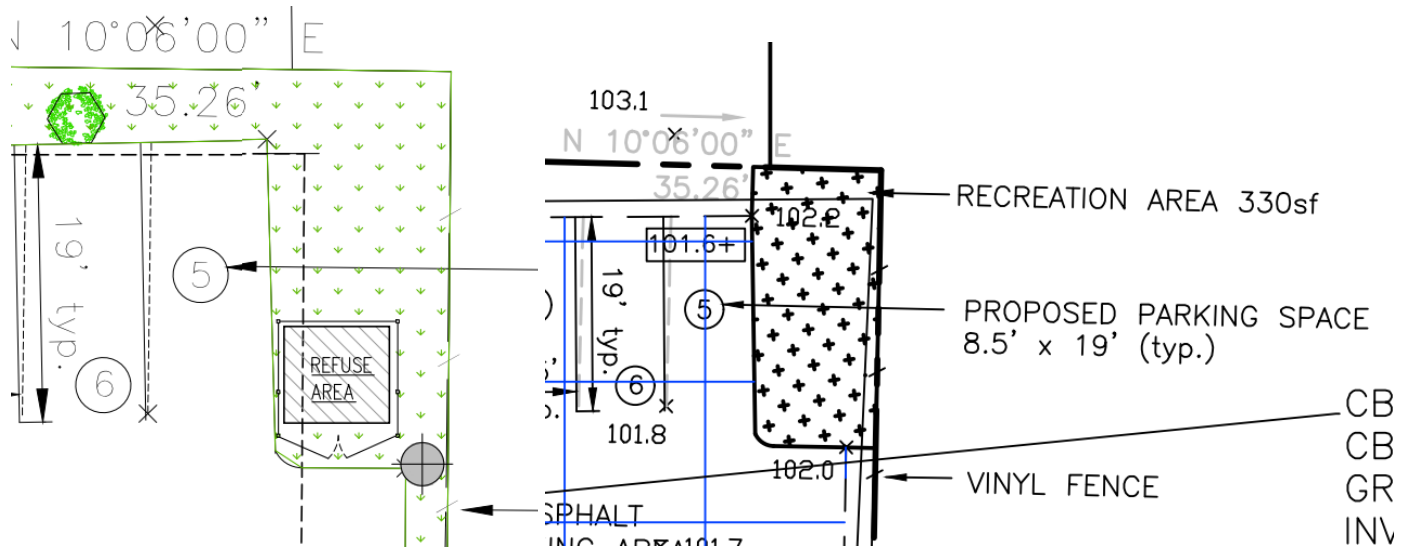
- c. The property located directly behind 3 Park Street is a funeral home and therefore should be provided with additional privacy for the sensitivity of the use. Therefore, Staff recommends that the landscaping along the rear property line be substantially increased with plantings that would provide adequate visual and sound screening.
2. Revisions to the site plan.
- a. The existing site plan shows that the overhead electrical wires that exist today are proposed to remain. Staff recommends that these wires be buried underground which would add to the visual appearance of the area as well as hazard mitigation during storms. Similarly, as part of the 3 East Wall Street project, the overhead wires were buried underground.
 - b. The existing site plan also shows that the existing asphalt sidewalk is to remain. Staff recommends that the sidewalk be replaced to meet the current City of Norwalk standards and any other recommendations/requirements provided by DPW and TMP. In keeping with this, the existing walkway from the sidewalk to the front entrance of the historic building is also asphalt, Staff recommends that the asphalt be replaced with a more architecturally appealing material such as brick, stone or stamped concrete.



c. At the rear of the property, it appears that there is excess backup space being provide for the parking spaces, ranging from 25' of backup space to 28' of backup space. Staff recommends that the parking spaces be moved as close to the buildings as possible, lowering the backup space to the 24' minimum requirement which would allow the applicant to add more landscaping and buffer area along the rear property line. In doing so, this would reduce the overall amount of impervious surface on the lot which as proposed is currently at the 70% maximum allowed.



- d. Details should be provided on whether the three stone patios that are located along the southern property line area pervious or not. If these patios are impervious, despite the Building Zone Regulations not necessarily counting patios towards coverage calculations, the property would likely exceed the 70% maximum threshold for coverage.
- e. The recreation area in the northwest corner of the lot, adjacent to the parking area, is also shown to be the location of the dumpster. Staff recommends that the dumpster be moved to a different location on the site so as not to interfere with the recreation area.



3. Additional traffic information.

- a. The traffic study that was submitted considers only the development located at 3 Park Street and not the overall traffic implications that the text amendment may have. Staff recommends that additional traffic information be provided that evaluates the traffic impacts that lowering the minimum lot size for historic preservation developments from 30,000sf to 20,000sf may have on the area.

NEXT STEPS: The Commission should refer the application to the Historical Commission for their review and recommendation. For the Historical Commission to have the ability to fully review the application, the applicant must submit the historical narrative. After the Historical Commission has provided a recommendation, other regulatory bodies/Commissions/agencies have provided their recommendations, the Village District Consultant has concluded their peer review and the applicant has had time to review, revise and respond, we can schedule a public hearing for the applications.

Bryan Baker
Principal Planner

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