

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
July 20, 2022**

PRESENT: Louis Schulman, Chair; Mike Mushak; Nick Kantor; Tammy Langalis; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Darius Williams; Galen Wells (arrived after the roll call)

STAFF: Steve Kleppin; Bryan Baker

OTHERS: Atty Jay Klein; Atty Adam Blank; Matt Edvardsen; Colin Grotheer; Alan Lo; Atty Liz Suchy

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Schulman called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. It should be noted that this meeting was held on Zoom.com with all participants calling in, separately.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Kleppin called the roll.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. #2022-16 SP – Schoolhouse Academy Inc – 32 Weed Avenue – Proposed prekindergarten through grade 12 private school – Continuation of public hearing

Mr. Schulman re-opened this public hearing from the previous Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Mr. Kleppin gave a brief background to the commissioners and the public. He then asked that this item be moved to the August 4 meeting.

**** MS. LANGALIS MOVED TO HAVE THIS APPLICATION MOVED TO THE AUGUST 4 MEETING OF THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION.**

Ms. Wells seconded.

Louis Schulman; Mike Mushak; Nick Kantor; Tammy Langalis; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Darius Williams; Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

b. #2022-19 R/SP/SPR - Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. – 47 Richards Avenue and 677, 667 and 651 Connecticut Avenue – Zoning text amendment, special permit and site plan review applications for a Wegmans grocery store, parking structure and two additional retail buildings – Continuation of public hearing

Mr. Schulman re-opened this public hearing from the previous Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Mr. Kleppin noted that the applicant is working on traffic issues with the Planning and Zoning Department staff and asked that this item be moved to the August 17 Planning and Zoning Commission agenda.

**** MS. JORDAN-BYRON MOVED TO HAVE THIS APPLICATION MOVED TO THE AUGUST 17 MEETING OF THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION.**

Mr. Kantor seconded.

Atty Jay Klein asked for confirmation that this hearing would be on August 17 at 6 pm on Zoom.

Louis Schulman; Mike Mushak; Nick Kantor; Tammy Langalis; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Darius Williams; Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

IV. REVIEW & ACTION ON APPLICATIONS

a. #2022-24 SP/CAM – Mill Pond Holdings, LLC – 1 Cemetery Street – Construction of 77-unit mixed-use development – Continued preliminary review

Atty Adam Blank said they were not ready for a public hearing but wanted to update the commissioners as to the status of the application. He oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. There was a discussion as to where the property abuts the water. Atty Blank said that the applicant is working with the city's Law Department as to an easement to grant access to the public. Matt Edvardsen spoke briefly about the landscape plan.

Atty Blank continued with a description of the proposed project. It was a mixed use development with housing as well as retail, and parking. He noted that the traffic engineers were not available for this meeting. He then noted that there are some wetlands on the property. The report should be available later in the week and would be sent to the Inland Wetlands Agency for review before the Planning and Zoning Commission could review. They would also meet with the Harbor Commission. They had also received feedback from the Department of Public Works (DPW). He then discussed the traffic review, especially the intersection by Gregory and Cemetery. He thought that the traffic study would be done in the next 2 weeks. He addressed some questions that the commissioners had at a prior meeting.

Colin Grotheer, the architect on the project, said they had been working with the city's architectural peer review. He showed them the elevations. He then showed them photos of similar structures in Norwalk, including one in Rowayton.

There was a discussion about the property that the city owns. Atty Blank explained further how it would be an asset to the city. He noted that there would be a courtyard on the city property, but explained that the applicant would not build it out. He also explained that the pond was in the back of the site. Matthew Edvardson noted that there would be walkways, etc. The commissioners did not think it would be unreasonable to have the developer build this out as part of the project. Mr. Edvardson thought that this might delay the application process. It was noted that the walkway was required since this piece is waterfront.

There was a discussion about the reduction of the massing of the building. There was also a discussion about an ecological restoration for the Mill Pond which attracts bird watchers.

b. #2022-25 R – Board of Education – Zoning regulation text amendment to revise Articles 80, 90, 120 and 140 for regulations pertaining to maximum allowable height, setbacks for structures and parking and minimum parking requirements for public school and municipal uses and structures – Preliminary review

Mr. Schulman opened the discussion and noted that this application would require a public hearing.

Atty Blank began the presentation by noting that the text amendment would help to streamline the regulations for school and municipal projects. He then introduced the project team. He then explained the text amendments would reduce the need for variances and text amendments on future projects. He then discussed the changes which included height, setbacks, accessory structures, parking spaces, etc. He also noted that these were special permit applications. He did a comparison of sight lines between the maximum height of the school as compared to a house.

There was a discussion about whether these proposed regulations would affect any of the current projects. Atty Blank said that it would not affect projects that had approvals, but would affect the new high school as well as a new neighborhood school.

Alan Lo said that there was a project that the city would be reimbursed at a 60% rate. He explained why these regulations would help the city construct school projects.

It would be placed on the Planning and Zoning Commission agenda on August 4.

c. #2022-37 SPR – 83 East Avenue LLC – 83 East Avenue – Exterior renovation to existing structure – Report & recommended action

Atty Liz Suchy began the presentation by introducing the project team. She then gave a brief background of the property. She then described the current property. She explained that due to the age of the building, the applicant would like to renovate it. She then noted that the applicant would like to change the exterior color of the building. The applicant had discussed

with the East Avenue Village consultant the proposed colors. She said that the applicant would like two different colors but would also abide by the recommendations of the village consultant.

There was then a discussion about keeping the color white, as it currently is. Atty Suchy noted that the window trim would be a new color, and they wanted to give the building more interest. Several of the commissioners did not not agree that the exterior color that was proposed was attractive. They preferred that there should be a lighter color on the building and that the color should be used on the whole building, not just the towers. Atty Suchy asked whether the applicant would have to come before the commissioners again, but Mr. Schulman said that staff would be able to work with the applicant.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 7, 2022

**** MS. LANGALIS MOVED to approve the July 7, 2022 meeting minutes.**

Mr. Mushak seconded with changes to page 13.

Louis Schulman; Mike Mushak; Nick Kantor; Tammy Langalis; Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

Jacquen Jordan-Byron and Darius Williams abstained.

At this point, Mr. Baker noted that the commissioners had not voted on the resolution for 83 East Avenue after the presentation ended.

**** MS. WELLS MOVED: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission that application #2022-37 SPR – 83 East Avenue LLC – 83 East Avenue – Exterior renovation to existing structure be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. That the selected color scheme for the stair and elevator towers shall be in keeping with the color of the existing building, subject to the submission of a new plan by the applicant to Staff.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this application complies with Section 118-500 and all other applicable sections of the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the effective date of this action is July 29, 2022.

Mr. Williams seconded.

Louis Schulman; Mike Mushak; Nick Kantor; Tammy Langalis; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Darius Williams; Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

VI. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR

Mr. Kleppin showed the commissioners about the next few meetings and when to hold public hearings. He asked if they could have a special meeting on August 24 since the public

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hearings could be lengthy. He said he would send out an email once the commissioners had checked their calendars to determine who was available.

There was a discussion about the Wegman's project.

There was a discussion about there being a public hearing for 2 items on the earlier agenda, but these items had been continued to the next meeting. It did not seem that the language was clear.

VII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Ms. Langalis asked the commissioners if they could change the meeting schedule to 1st Wednesday and 3rd Wednesday next year. Mr. Schulman asked Mr. Kleppin to send out an email to all the commissioners about what they would prefer.

Mr. Mushak noted that waterfront access was added to the regulations in several zones in the city. However, he noted that he did not think this regulation was in the East Norwalk Village District. He asked Mr. Kleppin to clarify it. Mr. Kleppin said that he knew it was not because most of the district does not touch the water.

Mr. Kantor asked about the status of the zoning regulation re-write. He also asked about a new program the state was providing for first time home buyers. Mr. Kleppin said that he had not heard about this and asked Mr. Kantor to forward it to him.

Ms. Langalis had questions about some sub-committees that she was a part of.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Langalis made a Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Mushak seconded.

Louis Schulman; Mike Mushak; Nick Kantor; Tammy Langalis; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Darius Williams; Galen Wells approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero