CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
February 3, 2022

PRESENT: Louis Schulman, Chair; Galen Wells; Richard Roina; Darius Williams; Mike Mushak; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Steve Ferguson; Tammy Langalis; Hector Pachas; Brian Baxendale

STAFF: Steve Kleppin; Bryan Baker

OTHERS: Kevin O'Brien; Thomas Wamser; Dean Martin; Justin Samuels; Angel Dorleans; Jannie Williams; Sherelle Harris; Michael Rie; Michael Galante;

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Schulman called the meeting to order at 6:06 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. #2021-42 SP –Kevin O'Brien – 7 & 9 Glenwood Avenue – Construction of six (6) dwelling units in addition to an existing nine (9) unit development

Mr. Schulman opened the public hearing and then explained the rules.

Kevin O'Brien, the real estate agent and consultant for the owners of Glenwood Avenue LLC, began the presentation with a brief history about the project. He explained that the owners had built 9 units since 2010 and would be building 6 more units on 7 Glenwood Avenue. They had received their approvals from the necessary departments, including one from the Wetlands Commission. He then introduced the project team.

Thomas Wamser, the traffic consultant on the project, began the presentation by noting that they started with existing conditions of the area. They also analyzed crashes and accidents in the area. He noted that the site would be re-configured. He noted that there was a low amount of trip generation from the site. There would be a minimal impact to the traffic in the area.

Mr. O'Brien said that the engineer was not on the call. The next speaker was Dennis Peters who continued the presentation by sharing his screen which showed the designs of the units. There was a discussion about whether they would be rentals or owner-occupied. They would be rentals as the ones at 9 Glenwood Avenue are. Mr. Peters also showed them the elevations. The new ones would look the same as the ones that are already there. There was a discussion about adding solar panels to the roofs. Mr. Peters said that it had not been discussed. Mr. Schulman hoped that in future buildings, this would be a consideration. There was a discussion about charging stations for automobiles. There was then a discussion about exits from the units. There was a discussion about the area of the recreation area. There is more green space because the properties have been combined.

Dean Martin, the engineer on the project, apologized for being late to the meeting and began his presentation by showing site plans for the property. He showed them the driveway and discussed the utilities as proposed. He also discussed the parking requirements. There is also underground parking. He also discussed the storm water management plan. He then discussed the landscape plan and the recreation areas. There was a discussion about the types of plantings and trees.

It was noted that TMP had requested a sidewalk to Connecticut Avenue. Mr.O'Brien noted that they were building sidewalks in front of their property but not all the way to Connecticut Avenue. There was also a discussion about making the sidewalk ADA accessible. Mr. Mushak said he would be in favor of having the applicant provide a sidewalk to Connecticut Avenue. Mr. Kleppin said that he was not sure they could require the owner to do that. There was a discussion about adding more shrubs as well as whether the owner would continue the sidewalk to Connecticut Avenue. It was noted that there were cars parking on the sidewalk. Mr. Martin said there would be more shrubbery. There was also a discussion about the fact that this application was not as large as some others around the city and it might not be necessary to request sidewalks to Connecticut Avenue.

There were discussions about the number of bedrooms and the parking spaces. There was also a discussion about where the units would place in the real estate market. Mr. O'Brien said that they would be moderate.

There were no other questions from the commissioners. Mr. Baker then explained how the public could speak. Mr. O'Brien thanked Mr. Baker for his help.

Justin Samuels asked the traffic engineer about the number of crashes in the last 3 years. Mr. Wamser said there had not been any fatalities or serious crashes.

Mr. Schulman closed the public hearing. He asked Ms. Byron and Mr. Pachas to serve as voting members for this application. Mr. Mushak said that he lives in this area and appreciates density. He is in full support. He also said that he would like to see sidewalks in the area. Mr. Baxendale said that he would be in full support of the application.

b. 2022-23 Capital Budget

Mr. Schulman opened the presentation and explained that Mr. Ferguson had been handling the Capital Budget process. He noted that most likely no decision would be made at this meeting. The committee would be meeting again and bring their findings back to the full Planning and Zoning Commission. He then asked if anyone from the public had questions about the Fire Department, Police Department, Finance Department, Department of Public Works or Recreation and Parks Capital Budget requests. There were none. He then asked if anyone from the public had questions about the Library's Capital Budget requests. Angel Dorleans, 2 Hanford Place, Apt. A, said she was in support of the renovation of the South Norwalk Public Library. She said that the library reflected the population of South Norwalk. She would like to see an expansion and updates to be more modern.

Ms. Jordan-Byron said that she had a question emailed to her for the Department of Public Works' Capital Budget request. Mr. Kleppin said that next time to send the email to his staff and they would disseminate it to the commissioners.

Jannie Williams, 6 Oak Street, spoke in support of the South Norwalk Library renovations.

Sherelle Harris, director of the Norwalk Public Library, said that she agreed with the members of the public who supported the South Norwalk renovations. She noted that this request was now less by $150,000 because they had secured funding for lighting and furniture.

Mr. Ferguson then asked if anyone from the public had questions about the WPCA, Economic and Community Development, Historical Commission, Art Commissions, Redevelopment Agency, Transportation, Mobility and Parking, Information Technology, Human Relations and Fair Rent, Engineering, Planning & Zoning, Building Management, and Board of Education's Capital Budget requests. There were none. Ferguson then asked if anyone from the public had questions about the 's Capital Budget requests. There were none.

Mr. Schulman closed this public hearing.

IV. REVIEW AND ACTION ON APPLICATIONS

a. Action on items III. a. and b.

I. #2021-42 SP –Kevin O'Brien – 7 & 9 Glenwood Avenue – Construction of six (6) dwelling units in addition to an existing nine (9) unit development

Mr. Mushak noted that he lived in this neighborhood and has seen it improve, especially with flooding. The state has put in new drainage and it has worked very well. The traffic flows better on Route 1. He would support this resolution.

**** MR. MUSHAK MOVED: THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission that application #2021-42 SP – Kevin O'Brien – 7 & 9 Glenwood Avenue – Construction of six (6) dwelling units in addition to an existing nine (9) unit development be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. That the building and site will be developed in accordance with the following plans:

a. Per the site plan entitled "Multi-Family Housing Site Plan" prepared by Grumman Engineering LLC dated 9/15/2021 and revised to 1/3/2022; and

b. Per the landscaping plan entitled "Multi-Family Housing Landscape Plan/Erosion Controls" prepared by Grumman Engineering LLC dated 9/15/2021 and revised to 12/29/2021; and

c. Per the architectural drawings (A-1 – A-7) entitled "Proposed Multi Family Dwellings" prepared by D. Peters Designs, LLC dated 7/5/2021 and revised to 1/1/2022; and

2. That a lot consolidation map be filed prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

3. That a certificate of special permit and mylar map of the approved site plan (as may be revised per any conditions of approval) be filed on the Norwalk Land Records prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

4. That a surety be submitted, in an amount to be determined by Staff, to guarantee the installation of the required erosion and sediment controls prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

5. That all erosion and sediment controls be installed and maintained prior to the start of any construction or site work and that additional controls be installed at the direction of the Commission's Staff, as needed; and

6. That an updated landscaping plan detailing additional trees being planted at the front of the property as well as in the recreation area between the proposed buildings and the existing buildings be provided to Staff for their approval prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

7. That traffic circulation signage and pavement markings be added to the satisfaction of Staff prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

8. That any other changes to the approved site plans must be approved by the Commission prior to implementation; and

9. That all accessory structures and signage shall comply with applicable setbacks as required in the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations; and

10. That a Connecticut licensed engineer shall certify that all the required improvements, including any required off-site improvements, were installed to City standards prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance; and

11. That should any building façade material become damaged or deteriorated, the property owner shall repair the damage and/or deterioration within thirty (30) days of notice from the City; and

12. That all conditions as required by the Norwalk Health Department shall apply to this approval; and

13. That all conditions as required by Norwalk DPW shall apply to this approval; and

14. That all conditions as required by Norwalk WPCA shall apply to this approval; and

15. That all CEAC signoffs are submitted prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

16. That this approval is subject to Section 118-1050 D. [workforce housing] of the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations; and

17. That this approval is subject to Section 118-1460 C. [violations and penalties] of the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations; and

18. That a building permit must be obtained by the applicant within one (1) year from the effective date or this approval shall become null and void, unless an extension of time is applied for and granted by the Commission; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this application complies will all applicable sections of the Norwalk Building Zone Regulations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the effective date of this action shall be February 11, 2022.

Mr. Baxendale seconded.

There was a discussion about additional plantings on the property. Mr. Mushak asked if the TMP's comments had been shared with the commissioners which Mr. Baker said that it had been. There would be sidewalks in the front of their property. There was a discussion about having a parking analysis but that it did not have to be addressed. There was a discussion about the green space. The commission should be aware about taking away that type of space. Mr. Schulman noted that these concerns should be addressed as they are now rewriting the zoning regulations.

Louis Schulman; Galen Wells; Richard Roina; Mike Mushak; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Steve Ferguson; Tammy Langalis; Hector Pachas; Brian Baxendale approved.
No one opposed.
No one abstained.

Ii. 2022-23 Capital Budget

Mr. Ferguson reminded them that they should receive the email that Ms. Byron had received which had been sent to Mr. Kleppin. Mr. Schulman explained the next steps of the Capital Budget requests and that it would not be voted on this evening.

b. #2022-04 SP – 26 Pearl Street – Proposed light manufacturing use within existing building – Preliminary review

Mr. Schulman said that a public hearing would be necessary. Justin Samuels gave a brief history of his company which had started in 2014 in Norwalk. He also gave his brief work history and said that he would be managing his project himself. He then gave a history of the building that he is purchasing.

Mr. Samuels then said that the building would not be changing but had been making interior renovations. He would make the former gym a warehouse. He has demolished walls. He explained that he needed a special permit. He also noted that the garage would be locked at night. He would have some tenants but not many. He explained how many parking spaces they would be using. He then explained what his company, SSN, sells and who his clientele is. He said that they stock computer parts that many other companies do not.

There was a discussion about the number of employees and the hours that they are open. There was also a discussion about the number of FedEx trucks and UPS trucks that come to the facility.

Mr. Schulman noted that this item would be on the February 16 Planning & Zoning Commission agenda. He asked Mr. Samuels to provide justification of why there should be no traffic study.

c. #07-09 SP – Avalon Bay Inc. – 8 Norden Place – Bond release request for parking space waiver – Report & recommended action

Michael Rie, who represented Avalon Bay, began the presentation with an introduction of the project team. He gave a brief history of the project which had been completed in 2014. He explained the bond and that the city had held it for more than 2 years. He noted that a study had been completed to show that the parking was sufficient for the property.

Michael Galante, the traffic engineer on the project, continued the presentation by explaining how the parking study had been conducted and that there was adequate parking.

**** MR. MUSHAK MOVED: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission that the bond release request for application #07-09 SP – Norden Place LLC – 8 Norden Place – Bond release request for parking waiver for 240-unit multifamily structure be **APPROVED.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the effective date of this action is February 11, 2022.

Ms. Langalis seconded.
Louis Schulman; Galen Wells; Richard Roina; Mike Mushak; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Steve Ferguson; Tammy Langalis; Darius Wiliams; Brian Baxendale approved.
No one opposed.
No one abstained.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 19, 2022

Since some of the commissioners had not received the minutes, this item would be approved at the next meeting.

VI. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR

Mr. Kleppin said that he had sent out a link about the Industrial Waterfront Study to all the commissioners.

He then explained how the Capital Budget committee would meet to review the final Capital Budget requests. He said that would be a separate meeting. There was a discussion about Mr. Dashowitz's letter about the state of the city's finances. Mr. Kleppin said that Mr. Kantor had asked questions about the Capital Budget requests.

VII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Ferguson thanked everyone since this was the first time in many years there were not many comments from the public about the Capital Budget. He believed it was through the transparency and hard work of everyone involved.

Mr. Schulman apologized for having technical problems. He also said that commissioners could make comments to presenters without the Chair's permission. Mr. Ferguson thought that it did set a tone. Mr. Schulman said he did not want to stifle conversation. There was also a discussion about opining before the appropriate time to comment on an application. There was a discussion about when to vote on a resolution, whether later in the night or right after the public hearing. The commissioners voted to vote on resolutions right after the public hearing, rather than waiting until later in the meeting to do so. The Planning and Zoning Commission agenda would reflect this change.

Mr. Williams asked about a possible training for the new commissioners on both Planning and Zoning. Mr. Schulman said that Mr. Kleppin would work on that.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Mushak made a Motion to Adjourn.
Mr. Baxendale seconded.
Louis Schulman; Galen Wells; Richard Roina; Darius Williams; Mike Mushak; Jacquen Jordan-Byron; Steve Ferguson; Brian Baxendale; Tammy Langalis; Hector Pachas approved.
No one opposed.
No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero