

CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
July 2, 2025

PRESENT: Galen Wells, Chair; Diana Lenkowsky; Louis Schulman; Tammy Langalis; Chapin Bryce; Richard Roina (left the meeting at 7:46 pm); Ana Tabachneck; Nick Kantor; Darius Williams (arrived at 6:05 pm); Jacquen Jordan-Byron (arrived after roll call)

STAFF: Steven Kleppin; Michelle Andrzejewski

OTHERS: Morris Pitt; Kevin Coughlin; Craig Flaherty; Brian Dempsey; Vernetta and Gregory Johnson; Andrea and Noah Goldman; Ryan Henderson; Keith Baker; Alisa Grevenberg; Michael Mason; Jan Fiore; John Gorde; John Aslanidis

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Wells called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. It should be noted that this meeting was held on Zoom.com with participants calling in, separately.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Andrzejewski called the roll.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. #2025-47 SP - 186 Westport Ave LLC - 186 Westport Avenue (District 5, Block 4, Lot 151) - Special permit for existing car wash to add motor vehicle repair use - Public hearing, report & recommended action

Ms. Wells opened the public hearing. Morris Pitt spoke on behalf of the applicant by explaining that they wanted to add a brake service to the car wash but the Department of Motor Vehicles said it is a general repair use. They currently also do oil changes.

Ms. Andrzejewski said that nothing else was changing, however, there had never been a special permit for motor vehicle use. They were approving for the oil change and repairing brakes use on the property,

Ms. Wells opened the hearing for public comment.

Kevin Coughlin, Fort Walter Avenue, said that his property abutted the property. He asked for the hours of the brake service and would it coincide with the current use. He said that some employees would stay after hours to play music so he asked if this could be monitored. Mr. Schulman asked if it was an adjourning business or a residence, which he said it was.

At this point, there were no other members of the public that spoke on this matter.

Mr. Pitt said that the hours of operations would remain the same except for on Sundays when they would not do brake service. He said he would speak with the general manager about the people hanging out.

There was a discussion about whether there had been complaints about employees hanging out or were there any violations on the property. Mr. Kleppin said he was not aware of any.

**** MR. ROINA MOVED: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission that application #2025-47 SP – 186 WESTPORT AVE LLC – 186 Westport Avenue (District 5, Block 4, Lot 151) – Existing Splash carwash proposing motor vehicle repair be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. That the site shall be maintained in accordance with the following plans submitted as part of this application, as modified by the Commission:

a. Per survey entitled “Property Survey” prepared by Godfrey, Hoffman, Hodge, LLC, dated 3/26/2025; and

b. Per site plan entitled “Grading & Utility”, dated 5/15/1996; and

2. That all department sign-offs are obtained prior to issuance of any Zoning Permit; and

3. That a Special Permit certificate and mylar be filed on the Norwalk Land Records prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

4. That all motor vehicle repairs be conducted within the building; and

5. That there be no outdoor storage of parts or auto carcasses; and

6. That there shall be parking only in the designated parking spaces; and

7. That there shall be no on-street parking of repaired vehicles or vehicles pending repair; and

8. That storage of vehicles for more than 24 hours is prohibited; and

9. That any changes to the approved plans shall be submitted to the Commission's Staff for review and approval prior to implementation. If any proposed changes are determined to be substantive, Staff shall refer the changes to the Commission for their review and approval prior to implementation; and

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the effective date of this action shall be July 11th, 2025.

Mr. Schulman seconded.

At this point, Ms. Wells seated both Ms. Lenkowsky and Ms. Tabachneck so the commissioners could review the resolution. Mr. Schulman asked whether there could be language about strictly complying with business hours. Mr. Kleppin did not think this was a zoning issue, so new language was not added.

Galen Wells; Louis Schulman; Tammy Langalis; Chapin Bryce; Richard Roina; Ana Tabachneck; Nick Kantor approved.

No one opposed.

Darius Williams abstained.

B. #2025-40 SP - Mayra Garcia - 43 Bettswood Road (District 5, Block 5, Lot 70) - Special permit application for a Child Day-Care Center use - Public hearing, report & recommended action

Ms. Wells opened the public hearing.

Craig Flaherty said that he was representing the applicant and introduced the project team. He oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He said that the applicant currently has a daycare on property but is looking to increase the number of children. There would be internal improvements as well as site improvements. He then showed them the proposed site plan which included a loop system for dropoff. There would be more parking on site. He also discussed the driveway and drainage report. He said that they had received a sign off from the

Department of Public Works. Transportation, Mobility and Parking (TMP) had no objections.

Brian Dempsey, the engineer on the project, said that he had submitted a report to TMP. He also explained further about the loop driveway. There would be an increase in people arriving at the site because of the additional number of children at the facility. There would be additional traffic from the additional parents dropping off. They had done observations of the current dropoff and pickup but did not observe any issues. They did not think the additional traffic would cause any issues. The additional parking on site would prevent people from parking on the street.

Mr. Flaherty explained that dropoff and pickup is staggered. The morning cycle starts at 7:30 am to 9:30 am and the evening pickup starts at 3:30 through 5:30 pm. He said that they had received one letter in opposition from a neighbor at 9 Overlook Drive, which he showed on an aerial map. He noted what the concerns were. He also described the fencing around the play area.

Ms. Wells said that Ms. Jordan-Bryon had arrived at the beginning of this presentation.

There was a discussion about the number of children allowed under a special permit in a daycare in a residential zone. There was a discussion about the current number of staff and how that would increase. Mayra Garcia, the owner of the property and the applicant, said she currently had 4 employees and that would increase to six. The staff worked in shifts. There was a discussion about the students and what the age range was. Ms. Garcia explained how the play area was used depending on age. She could not have them all together.

There was also a discussion about whether she would have families with more than one child. There was a discussion about whether she had state approval for 18 children. Ms. Garcia said she needed approvals from zoning, the fire department and the building department first. There was a discussion about whether Ms. Garcia planned on staying in the house, which she said she did. There was also a discussion about how long it took for dropoffs which Ms. Garcia said it was about 10 minutes. There was also a discussion about whether any of the children were transported by a van to another facility. Ms. Garcia said that sometimes she would take the children for walks in the neighborhood.

At this point, Ms. Wells opened the hearing to members of the public for comment.

Vernetta and Gregory Johnson, 45 Bettswood Road, said that they lived right next door to the property. Mr. Johnson said that they were nice neighbors. He said that he would previously support her but was not aware that they had the potential for 18 children and more staff. He thought it was a bit much for this. He said that there were no sidewalks in the area. He had concerns about the noise. He said that this was not the largest piece of property. He also said that it was a narrow road. He had talked to other neighbors who agreed as to what he said.

Andrea and Noah Goldman, 40 Bettswood Road, said that she had promoted the business when it was smaller. She was not aware of the increase to 18 children. She had concerns about the increase in the number of children. She had concerns about the drive out of the property. She was concerned about the traffic coming from the property, especially since there were no sidewalks. She did not realize that the age of the students would be up to 5 years.

Noah Goldman, Ms. Goldman's husband, then spoke, had concerns about the additional cars as well as the new layout which would make it look bigger.

Ryan Henderson, 20 Walnut Avenue, said that he had a positive experience with Ms. Garcia's day care center.

Keith Baker, 34 Bettswood Road, diagonally across from the daycare center, explained how his children walked near the daycare. He was concerned that it would become commercial and had concerns about the street, especially when buses come down it.

Alisa Grevenberg said that she was in favor of the application because she had trouble finding daycare. She said that the applicant cares about the children. She thought it would be a good thing if she could walk to the daycare. She understood that there were concerns about parking but that most will use the driveway. She did not think that the daycare parents were parking on the street or blocking the traffic. She thought it was a lot more quiet than anyone realized. She had also gone on walks with the children in the neighborhood. She said that the playground is on the backside of the property. It is also kept very neat.

Michael Mason, 85 George Avenue, said that George Avenue was a busy road. He had concerns also because there are no sidewalks to walk on. He had concerns about it being a daycare center.

Jan Fiore, 41 Bettswood Road, said that they had a good personal relationship with them. However, she said that she has now found out that the children would be up

to 5 years old. They were previously told that the children would not be over 3 years old. She was concerned about the size of the property. She said that this is a tiny road to get 2 vehicles to go past one another. She also noted that others did not see how long it would take for others to drop off their children.

John Gorde, 38 Bettswood Road, said that the parents are not coming out in 5 minutes. It is a very narrow road with no sidewalks. He had concerns about adding more cars which created more exhaust. He was also concerned that the neighborhood would become more commercial. He said he was against this application.

At this point, there were no other speakers.

Mr. Flaherty continued the presentation by addressing the comments from the public. He noted that the hours of operation had not changed from 7:30 pm - 5:30 pm. He also explained why some property owners had not received notice of the meeting. He showed them the site plan which included the driveway and 7 parking spaces, which would take cars off the road. He also discussed the time that the children used the outdoor play area, which was 10 am - 2 pm. Mr. Dempsey said that they had observed the site for traffic during the dropoff and pickup.

Ms. Garcia said that this was the only daycare that she had. She also said that she did not have children that were over 3 years old. She also clarified the number of staff that she had and the maximum staff at one time. She also explained how the children would come at different times during the morning and leave at different times in the afternoon. There would be more staff if there were 18 children. There was also a discussion about how the arrival times were staggered. Ms. Garcia said it was contracted.

There was a discussion about the driveway. Ms. Garcia said that she would require parents to only park there and not in the street. Mr. Flaherty said that Ms. Garcia had requested the looped driveway to help facilitate the dropoff and pickup. She also said that her daughter was also an employee and that there would not be more than 6 employees.

Ms. Wells closed the public hearing.

**** MR. WILLIAMS MOVED: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission that application #2025-40 SP – Mayra Garcia – 43 Bettswood Road (District 5, Block 5, Lot 70) – Proposed Child Daycare Center be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. That the site shall be developed in accordance with the following plans submitted as part of this application, as modified by the Commission:

a. Per site plans entitled "Zoning site Plan" prepared by Redniss & Mead, dated 5/21/2025 revised to 6/17/2025; and

b. Per design drawings entitled "Baby Beluga Group Home Daycare", dated 5/6/2025; and

2. That all department sign-offs are obtained prior to issuance of any Zoning Permit; and

3. That a Special Permit certificate and mylar be filed on the Norwalk Land Records prior to the issuance of a zoning permit; and

4. That the Property and Use shall be owner occupied and operated with a permitted Residential Use; and

5. That an affidavit is filed on the Norwalk Land Records indicating the Child Daycare Center is owner occupied; and

6. That any changes to the approved plans shall be submitted to the Commission's Staff for review and approval prior to implementation. If any proposed changes are determined to be substantive, Staff shall refer the changes to the Commission for their review and approval prior to implementation; and

7. That any sign for the Child Daycare Center would be modest and comply with the City's Regulations advertising the business; and

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the effective date of this action shall be July 11th, 2025.

Mr. Bryce seconded.

There was a discussion about whether there was a sign on the property for the business, and whether signs were allowed in this zone. Ms. Lenkowsky was seated for this vote.

Galen Wells; Louis Schulman; Tammy Langalis; Chapin Bryce; Darius Williams; Diana Lenkowsky; Nick Kantor approved.

Richard Roina opposed.
Jacquen Jordan-Byron abstained.

At this point, Mr. Roina said that he was leaving the meeting.

IV. REVIEW AND ACTION ON APPLICATIONS

A. #2025-52 SP Modification - St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 238 West Rocks Road (District 5, Block 23, Lot 10) - Request to modify existing special permit to add new pavilion building for storage and outdoor kitchen - Report & recommended action

John Aslanidis, the representative for the applicant, began by describing the project. He then showed them the exterior of the building. He explained that the festival had been running for many years except during Covid. He then showed them the site plan and noted where they keep the equipment for the festivals. He said that the structures would allow for the removal of containers on the property. He said that they complied with zoning regulations. He explained that the structure would sit on a concrete slab. They would like to have it built by September but he did not think it would happen. Mr. Aslanidis also oriented the commissioners as to the location of the new structure on the site plan. He noted that there is a residence behind the proposed structure. There was a discussion about whether the neighbors had been notified. There was a discussion about the fence around the property. There were also fir trees in some areas.

Mr. Kleppin said that the commission had to decide whether a public hearing would be necessary. He said that there was no resolution if they decided that this was a minor change. There was a discussion about screening. There was a discussion about how the storage shed would be used. At this point, they reviewed the aerial of the property. The structure would mostly be used for the festival. Mr. Aslanidis said that there could be another festival during the year that it would be used again. The equipment would not have to be stored in containers which they believed was unsightly. There was also a discussion about whether the community center was completed. There was a discussion about the materials that would be used for the proposed structure.

**** MR. KANTOR MOVED: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission that application #2025-52 SP Modification - St. George Greek Orthodox Church - 238 West Rocks Road (District 5, Block 23, Lot 10) - A request to modify existing special permit to add a new pavilion building for storage and

outdoor kitchen was a minor change which did not require a public hearing, and could be handled administratively.

Mr. Bryce seconded.

Galen Wells; Diana Lenkowsky; Louis Schulman; Tammy Langalis; Chapin Bryce; Darius Williams; Nick Kantor; Jacquen Jordan-Byron approved.

Ana Tabachneck opposed.

No one abstained.

V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: June 18, 2025

**** MS. LANGALIS MOVED to approve the June 18, 2025 minutes.**

Mr. Schulman seconded.

Galen Wells; Diana Lenkowsky; Louis Schulman; Ana Tabachneck; Tammy Langalis; Chapin Bryce; Darius Williams approved.

No one opposed.

Nick Kantor and Jacquen Jordan-Byron abstained.

VI. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR

Mr. Kleppin asked if everyone was doing well with their city emails. Some commissioners said that they had to make an appointment with someone in IT. Others wanted to come into the office to meet with IT to have issues resolved.

VII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

There was a conversation about the opening of Wegmann's supermarket in Norwalk, in July.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schulman made a Motion to Adjourn.

Ms. Tabachneck seconded.

Galen Wells; Diana Lenkowsky; Louis Schulman; Tammy Langalis; Chapin Bryce; Darius Williams; Nick Kantor; Ana Tabachneck approved.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero