



**SPECIAL MEETING – LAND USE & BUILDING MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
AGENDA
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025, 7:30 PM
BY HYBRID VIA ZOOM**

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email JoAnn Acquarulo, Buildings and Facilities Manager at jacquarulo@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Barbara Smyth, Chair; Nicole' Eaddy; Nicol Ayers; James Frayer; Darlene Young; Jalin Sead

OTHERS: Alan Lo, Building and Facilities Manager; JoAnn Acquarulo, Buildings and Facilities Manager; Mark Conte, Asst. Fire Chief James Giuliano, Construction Solutions Group

Ms. Smyth called a moment of silence for Councilmember Greg Burnett, who she said has been an integral part of this committee for eight years.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

A. HEARING TO ENTERTAIN PUBLIC INPUT ON THE NAMING OF THE NEW SOUTH NORWALK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN HONOR OF DR. RUBY SHAW, A BOARD OF EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL IN THE NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR 24 YEARS.

Ms. Smyth opened the public hearing at 7:33 PM.

Ms. Smyth noted that there will be no vote on this item this evening, and discussions will continue between the Common Council and the Board of Education following the public hearing.

Shanna Reed- 31 Ferris Avenue

Ms. Reed said she stands before the committee not just as an educator, a community member, and a parent, but also as someone who was born and raised in South Norwalk. Every stage of her upbringing was connected to South Norwalk, and the neighborhood shaped who she is today. She expressed her deepest respect for Dr. Ruby Shaw as she was a remarkable figure in the community and deserves to be remembered and honored. However, she believes that Dr. Shaw herself would want the school to be named in a way that uplifts the entire community she served and be named the neighborhood where it stands, South Norwalk. This is about more than just a name; it's about identity, pride, and a sense of belonging. This naming pattern has long created a sense of community and pride across our city. Our children deserve the same connection. It tells every child who attends that they matter, their neighborhood matter, and their story matters. She respectfully urged the committee to retain the name "South Norwalk School."

Principal Randall Austin-10 Arbor Drive

Principal Austin said he was able to engage their community in a discussion regarding the potential name change. He shared the results of the survey and said that 58 of the community members were surveyed in SONO, with the options of agreeing with the

change, being neutral, or being opposed, so overall, there were 46.4% who were opposed, 33.9% who were neutral, and 19.6% who were open to the name change. He shared some of the comments from the responses. He said he shared this with the committee to engage the community in the conversation and asked the committee to continue doing so throughout this process.

Salieu Bolivar- 98 Lexington Avenue

Ms. Bolivar said she is a parent of twins who attend the SONO School and removing the name paints over history rather than teaching from it. In her opinion, the school's name is a powerful statement that reflects its identity and brand. She has lived in South Norwalk for 30 years and wants to keep the SONO School name, opposing any changes to it.

Councilmember Nicol Ayers

Ms. Ayers thanked Principal Austin for lifting up his community conversation with the current students that are housed in that building but she thinks the council has done a disservice to the community because there is always this narrative that public building belongs to certain departments, and that is just not true, and the ordinance and charter outline the procedures by which this body handles public buildings. In addition, the South Norwalk community has undergone significant changes, including whitewashing and gentrification, and numerous conversations have been held about these developments. She does not think any of those persons who were on that council or who are sitting on the council now ever thought that anything they did was not going to honor the historical neighborhood of South Norwalk. It is hurting her because that is a vibrant community, but it has always been vibrant. However, the City, in its entirety, has done a poor job of teaching the correct history of that community. The naming of the school is a way to teach history. She knows this will not be voted on this evening, and the committee wants to eagerly listen to the perspective of our constituents, but she hopes they understand that there is a generation of people who have been waiting for this school and have given up too much in order to have a neighborhood school. It is hard for her to hear individuals saying that we need to keep the name of the Sono School because that is what we are accustomed to, but we should be accustomed to our history and to calling the names of people who have sacrificed. This is not a political move, but rather an acknowledgment of the historical significance of this school to that neighborhood. In closing, she said she wants the committee to caution against not honoring people who had given their sweat equity to make sure this building came into fruition, even if they are no longer with us.

Aniela Savana- 1 Columbine Lane

Ms. Savana said she was a preschool teacher at the school and a former staff member at Columbus Magnet School. She said that Ruby Shaw was an incredible person, as was one of the people who helped pave the way for the new South Norwalk School. There is a history of people who made that building happen on Meadow Street, and Ruby Shaw was a huge part of that.

Councilmember Darlene Young

Ms. Young said she is deeply disappointed. Back in October of last year, she reached out to the Mayor and the Superintendent about the possibility of naming the school, sharing significant information about Dr. Ruby Shaw's accomplishments. She also had the pleasure of working with her from time to time, and she was a phenomenal woman. She said the conversation was that there would be community discussions with parents about naming the school, and she finds this disappointing. To bring this up at a time when a name has already been chosen seems disingenuous, and to say that there will be a community meeting with parents, which won't happen until after the school is named, is also disingenuous. This process was not done the right way. She thinks we are at a point in time we need to be diligent about making sure we identify and continue to lift people in our community who have been instrumental in moving us forward as a community and as people and Ms. Shaw has done that and represented what this community was for a very long time, and she thinks naming the school after her would only be appropriate. The fact that money was spent on signs without going through this process, as she was told it would, speaks volumes, and she is disappointed.

Ms. Smyth closed the public hearing at 8:08 PM.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Smyth called the meeting to order at 8:09 PM. There was a quorum present.

III. ROLL CALL

Ms. Smyth called the roll, and all those listed in the attendance were present.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: August 6, 2025

**** MS. EADDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation this evening.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 1. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH ANTINOZZI ASSOCIATES, PC. FOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE WESTPORT AVENUE FIRE STATION (STATION #4) RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$311,200. ACCT# 09263110-5777-C0728

Mr. Lo said during the capital budget process two years ago, the Common Council had many discussions regarding Station #4, the Westport Avenue Fire Station, and its condition. There has always been a concern regarding coverage, as the closest fire department is located in the Cranbury area. There is a programming need in terms of servicing the community for that part of town, as well as the condition of the building. Recently, as part of the capital budget process, the city allocated \$4 million for the construction, renovation, and expansion of the facility. The RFP for architects was advertised to perform design services, and Antinozzi Associations had previously provided some conceptual design ideas. In April, they received a cost estimate. Mr.

Lo said they went through the RFP process, shortlisted three firms, conducted interviews, and determined that Antinozzi would be the preferred architectural firm for this project, as they already have the necessary knowledge for this project and had recently completed the Jefferson School and Cranbury School.

Assistant Chief Conte said that Mr. Lo mentioned they had developed a conceptual drawing and cost analysis with Antinozzi, and believe they have come up with a very good cost-effective design, and they are very excited to get the project moving so they can ultimately relocate the truck companies throughout the city to double the coverage and response time and relocate the rescue to Station One.

Ms. Smyth asked when shovels in the ground could be expected. Mr. Lo said the next step in the process is to put out an RFP for a Construction Manager. They anticipate the design services will take approximately six months, so he thinks the project will go out to bid in the spring of next year. He anticipates that the construction will begin in September and should take approximately nine to twelve months to complete.

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. AUTHORIZE DESIGN CONTINGENCY WITH ANTINOZZI ASSOCIATES, PC FOR THE STATION #4 RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$31,120.00- ACCOUNT# 06263110-5777-C0728

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VIII. DISCUSSION

A. NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Phillips provided an update on the school construction projects, stating that the South Norwalk School project had received a conditional certificate of compliance from the Building Department on August 13, 2025. This was what was needed to occupy the school at the beginning of the school year. On August 25, 2025, the school welcomed the new students for the 2025-26 school year. There is still some activity at the school, primarily focused on landscaping and site finishes, which are substantially complete and will contribute to the fall planting season. The project team is still visiting the site, scheduling, addressing punch list items, and providing new training for the Board of

Education. They are also compiling turnover documentation to close out the project and provide the Board of Education Facilities with the necessary information to operate the new building.

Mr. Lo said that a week ago, the Board of Education held an event for kids and parents to tour the facilities, which was well attended. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for Monday, September 15, 2025, at 10:30 AM.

Mr. Phillips provided an update on Norwalk High School, stating that the utility work on the Calvin Murphy driveway was completed over the summer break and reopened for the start of the school year. The structural steel erection for the main building has been completed, and a topping-off ceremony was held on August 14, 2025. The large crane has been demobilized and is no longer on site. The building envelope is progressing in the early building areas, and the building is scheduled to be completed for the fall 2027 semester. The total project completion is expected in the fall of 2028 and includes the demolition of the existing building, as well as site development for the football field, tennis courts, fieldhouse, main parking lot, and other site-specific items.

Mr. Phillips provided an update on the HVAC upgrades, stating that the three new RTUs at Brookside School have been installed. They are now preparing for the installation of the remaining RTUs, which are expected to be operational by September 23, 2025.

Mr. Phillips said the next steps at Rowayton Elementary School are to install controls in the boiler room and paint. The boiler equipment has been delivered to the school and is expected to be operational by the beginning of October.

Mr. Phillips stated that the new chiller piping at Brien McMahon High School was completed over the summer. They are currently coordinating the installation of temporary fuel tanks, as the existing underground tank will be removed as part of this project.

Mr. Phillips stated that the boiler room abatement and cleanout at Silvermine School were completed over the summer, and the boiler room is now set to be painted. The new boiler is expected to be operational by the beginning of October.

Mr. Phillips said that some preliminary investigation and planning are underway at Naramake School so they can coordinate with the existing conditions.

Mr. Lo said the project for Marvin School will be rebid in approximately two weeks because the number initially received when it was bid out earlier this year was quite high. They anticipate better results due to the time of year and expect to install it next summer.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. EADDY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd