



**CITY OF NORWALK**  
**Industrial Zones Oversight Committee**  
**March 10, 2021**

**\*MINUTES\***

**AGENDA**

- I. INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISCUSSION**
- II. PUBLIC MEETINGS**
- III. NEXT STEPS**
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- V. ADJOURNMENT**

**PRESENT:** Tammy Langalis (was on for parts but had technical issues), Richard Roina, Darlene Young, Louis Schulman (left at 3:45 pm) John Kydes

**STAFF:** Steve Kleppin, Bryan Baker

**OTHERS:** Maggie Tsang; Tim Love; Kevin Hively; Sabrina Church; Darlene Young; Diane Lauricella; Scott Goodwin;

The meeting began at 2:36 PM. It should be noted that this meeting was held on Zoom.

**I. INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

Ms. Tsang began by reviewing the agenda of what the consultants would discuss. Industrial uses are supporting employment and economic growth in Norwalk. She noted that the 21st industry has changed from the earlier Industrial Revolution. Mr. Love suggested changing the name from industrial zoning. Within the regulations, Norwalk currently has 3 industrial zones. She showed everyone the areas within these zones. She explained what the current industrial uses are, including light manufacturing. Some uses are for the region. One issue was contractor's yards. Offices, artist's areas, etc. are also within these industrial zones. Mr. Love said that since some of these uses are mixed within industrial zones, it can be problematic. Ms. Tsang noted that not all industrial uses are the same. Some are light, some are less intensive and some are heavily manufacturing. They are boutique, light and heavy industrial. Mr. Love explained that the industrial zones should be clarified, both for zoning and economic purposes.



They suggested simplifying the industrial zones since they are allowed in non-residential zones. Multifamily allowed by right in the same areas where industrial uses are allowed. Ms. Tsang then showed them a chart to reclassify and simplify industrial zones. She also showed them a map of this simplified zoning and explained the various areas. She noted where multifamily developments would be allowed. She also discussed the different TOD plans which they had reviewed. She then discussed the central business district. She noted the changes they were suggesting for different zones. Mr. Love explained why they were recommending changes for multifamily development. He then explained the mixed use commercial/industrial building type. He noted that it could fit well in the Connecticut economy. He showed them some examples, including the Brooklyn Navy yard. He also explained how the parking would work.

There was a discussion about the possibility of lawsuits from developers over these changes to the industrial zones. Mr. Love explained that most would be positive changes. They had had discussions with Mr. Kleppin about the legalities of these changes. Mr. Kleppin said that the changes would have to be amended in the various city plans, in order to remain legal. He also noted that there could be changes to state regulations.

Ms. Tsang then discussed the adjusted maximum building heights. Mr. Love explained further about why various heights are useful. Ms. Tsang explained why contractors yards are useful and where they should be permitted. She explained the challenges with contractors yards. She then explained three areas where contractors yards could be located. One was in Business Zone 1, in areas where big box stores are located currently. Some committee members were not convinced and Mr. Love explained why it could be a good strategy. He noted that these areas are not a good location for residential. It would also be good to get contractors yards out of South Norwalk.

Ms. Tsang noted that two areas, Norden and the waterfront, should have separate plans developed. Mr. Love also explained the challenges of having separate exits at the Norden location. Ms. Tsang explained why they were recommending that there be an update to the Harbor Management Plan, which had not been updated for a long time.

## **II. PUBLIC MEETINGS**

There was a discussion about a follow-up with industrial businesses and three more neighborhood outreach sessions. Mr. Kleppin noted in which areas to have these sessions. There was a discussion about which businesses to reach out to, as well as how to reach out to them. The committee members did not have any other thoughts about the outreach.

## **III. NEXT STEPS**

There was a discussion about the changes to be made to Industrial Zone 1 and whether there was research to back up the recommendations. Mr. Hively was asked to provide this information. Ms. Church was also asked to provide information for businesses that were



requesting locations in the city. She also noted the size of the locations as well the fact that green infrastructure was important. She would work with Ms. Tsang to provide the committee with the types of requests she was receiving.

Mr. Schulman explained that he would have to leave the meeting soon. He noted that the garbage dump on one of the maps should be noted as a “recycling center”. He also expressed that the contractors yards should be moved out of South Norwalk. He was concerned, however, about where the consultants recommended they should be moved.

Mr. Kleppin had comments about the height requirements that were suggested in East Norwalk. There was also a discussion about amenity requirements and how to incentivize.

Mr. Kydes asked whether there would be separate studies for Norden and the waterfront. Mr. Kleppin said that the market may help with the Norden site. He also noted that the waterfront had started to be discussed over the last month. Mr. Love said that their recommendations could help the Norden site. He also noted that the Norwalk waterfront should be addressed but that they did not have specific recommendations. Mr. Kydes did not want there to be overlapping plans.

Ms. Young asked about the number of contractors yards in South Norwalk which Mr. Kleppin said he could provide.

#### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Diane Lauricella asked whether the slides would be available on the city’s website for review. She also explained her concerns about the timing for plans for the Norden site and the waterfront. She was concerned about possible applications on these sites. She was also concerned about the contractors yards and believed illegal ones should be removed. She also asked that Norwalk have more green infrastructure and walkability.

Sea level rise was noted on several maps that the consultants provided.

Scott Goodwin asked about the timing and next steps for this project. Mr. Kleppin said that he would speak with Ms. Tsang about the timing. They would like to have some public meetings but would look at dates for that. Mr. Kleppin suggested late April. Ms. Tsang said they would incorporate the comments from this meeting. Mr. Love suggested meeting with the public first and then advising the committee after those meetings. There was a discussion about when the meetings would be held.



**V. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero