

**COMMISSION ON THE CITY PLAN
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2018 - 7:00 P.M.
100 BROADWAY, RM #335 - THIRD FLOOR
NORWICH, CT
REGULAR MEETING**

A. CALL TO ORDER: Art Sharon called at the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

B. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

Present: Chairman Art Sharon, Vice Chairman Frank Manfredi, Les King, Michael Lahan and Kathy Warzecha. Alternate Swarnjit Singh Bhatia and Daniel Daniska. A quorum was present, with regular members seated.

Absent: Alternate Jason Arndt

Others Present: City Planner Deanna Rhodes and Recording Secretary Melinda Wilson

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 27, 2018 Special Meeting & September 28, 2018 Special Meeting

On a motion by Frank Manfredi, seconded by Kathy Warzecha, the commission unanimously approved the September 27, 2018 Special Meeting minutes and the September 28, 2018 Special Meeting minutes.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: None presented

On a motion by Les King, seconded by Michael Lahan, the commission unanimously voted to suspend the agenda to address Item F first.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. SDP #1041: 2 Westledge Drive. Site Plan Review for Reconstruction of Multi-Family Development (previous known as Peachtree Apartments) and installation of associated site improvements and amenities. Application and property of Westledge Apartments, LLC. Assessor's Map 117, Block 1, Lot 14, Zone MF.

Brandon Handfield of Yantic Consulting, Lebanon, CT, reviewed aerial photos of the 8.75 acre site formerly known as Peachtree Apartments. In 2008, the 120-unit buildings were destroyed by fire. The current application proposes multi-family use in a multi-family zone and maintains the three stories of the Peachtree buildings. There are no wetlands on the site. The proposal lays out four smaller structures: two 36-unit buildings and two 24-unit building consisting of ten pods. The same access drive will be widened and a second access will be emergency use only. It will be gated with fire department access. The proposal maintains two way circulation around the buildings, adding a mail pad near the main entrance and a trash receptacle in the northwest end of the site. The plan calls for 193 parking spaces around perimeter which is more than the 180 spaces required per regulations. Each pod has through access and access to a central recreation area. Sidewalks will provide for bike access and bike racks will be placed at each pod. The sidewalks will connect to the sidewalks on Westledge Drive. The units will be two- and three-bedroom units. The plan has thirty-two 3-bedrom units.

Kathy Warzecha and Deanna Rhodes both expressed concern that there was not enough parking in the plan. Deanna noted that Dunham Street will soon have a bike lane. Swarnjit Singh Bhatia verified handicapped spaces. Brandon confirmed there will be two for each 36-unit building and one per 24-unit building.

Brandon reviewed the multi-phased recreation plan. Every building has a grill area. There are plans for a dog park and a playground. The plan calls for the remainder of the space to be left as natural space. They plan only to cut trees for the recreation area. Brandon said that everything on the plans meets city zoning regulations.

The potential school bus stop access was discussed. Brandon noted that they are not expecting many children. In general, this is transitional housing so the children are pre-school age. There is a plan for sidewalk access to Westledge Drive.

Brandon indicated that the storm water receptacles comply with MS4 requirements. City Engineer Pat McLaughlin had objections so they will add a treatment system to meet MS4 which the site doesn't have today. The plan includes the addition of gas, water and sewer. Norwich Public Utilities will be putting a water main under Westledge Drive. All utilities are available for the development. They plan to leave utilities in place where they can.

Brandon described a landscaping plan focused on frontage with a variety of conifers and flowering shrubs. The major street trees will be a variety. The landscaping plan is heavy on the foundation plantings and the central patio will be flanked with landscaping. Deanna questioned Brandon regarding the invasive nature of the plantings. He confirmed that he confirmed none of the proposed landscape plantings are on the 2014 Connecticut invasive species list. Cedar mulch will be placed under and around plantings.

Deanna noted that a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) cannot be issued for any buildings until the amenities are in place. Brandon replied that a phased approach to the development will start with utilities which are looped, so the developers will be working on the whole site at one time. It was discussed and decided that the amenities will have to be constructed with safe access by the issuance of second building's CO. Brandon understood and agreed.

Les King asked about lighting. Brandon said they are working on the lighting to ensure no trespass. The lighting plan was not fully complete so did not bring that plan to the meeting. However, it is close to completion and he will present it to Deanna.

Brandon showed several architectural drawings of the buildings and site plans.

Deanna read her memo dated October 12, 2018 with added recommendations and instructions per this discussion:

1. That this approval will expire in 5 years unless an extension has been granted by the Commission.
2. That the City's required signature block and letter of approval be placed on the final revised plan set.
3. That 6 signed and embossed sealed paper copies and 2 mylars of the final revised set of plans be submitted to the Planning Department for endorsement by an officer of the Commission. The

mylars must include the red indelible ink certification which includes the name of producer and process used.

4. That after the filing of the mylars, a zoning permit shall be issued prior to any land disturbance activities commencing in the site.
5. That the applicant submit the required erosion and sediment control bond prior to requesting a zoning permit, in the form of a check or letter of credit, and the associated paperwork to the Planning Department for review and approval by the City's Attorney.
6. That any modifications to the approved plan shall be reviewed by the Zoning Enforcement Officer prior to occurring and may require additional review and approval by the Commission.
7. That a pre-construction meeting be held with the Planning, Public Works Departments and NPU prior to the start of the project.
8. That all E&S controls be installed by the applicant and inspected by the ZEO prior to initiating any land disturbance activities.
9. That all proposed improvements associated with this application are to be completed according to the approved plan prior to the issuance of the required Certificate of Zoning Compliance or a performance bond will be required in accordance with Sections 7.5.7.3 and 8.9 of the Zoning Regulations.
10. That the Commission may require an as-built or certification by a licensed engineer or land surveyor should it be deemed necessary by the City to determine compliance with the approval granted.
11. That verification by the lighting expert will be necessary before issuance of the certificate of zoning compliance.
12. That the discharge of stormwater and dewatering of any wastewater from construction activities is less than 5 acres and falls under CT DEEP general permit.
13. That all comments from the City Engineer's memo dated 10/10/18 are addressed to his satisfaction.
14. That a photometric be provided prior to issuance of a zoning permit to indicate compliance with the illumination standards for the proposed exterior light fixtures.
15. That the sidewalk be installed from the development to connect to Scott Street at the north (gated) entrance.
16. That the dog park and playground be installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy of the second building and shall include safe access to the area during construction/development.

Frank Manfredi made a motion **TO APPROVE SDP #1041 for 2 Westledge Drive. Site Plan Review for Reconstruction of Multi-Family Development (previous known as Peachtree Apartments) as recommended by the Planner.**

Les King seconded the motion. No further discussion took place. The motion passed unanimously.

F. OLD BUSINESS:

1. SP #18-07: 61, 63 & 65 Town Street. Special Permit request for a drive-through window as an accessory use to a proposed restaurant. Application of Amaral Revite Corporation. Property of Allstate BK Real Estate Holdings, LTD. Assessor's Map 67, Block 3, Lots 56, 57 & 58, Zone NC.

Les King spoke to missing the September 27, 2018 public hearing. He has since listened to the recording to be qualified to be seated tonight. Art Sharon issued a disclaimer that he is a lifetime member of the Norwich Historical Society. Michael Lahan missed the September 28, 2018 Special Meeting. He has since listened to the recording in order to be qualified to be seated tonight. He is also a member of the Norwich Historical Society.

Chair Sharon asked Deanna Rhodes to present her comments. She referred the commission to comment #17 in her memo for consideration.

Kathy Warzecha read a statement referring to the proposed buffer strip reduction from 50' to 20'. She spoke to the importance of the preservation of the graveyard and the subjective nature of the proposed conditions. Kathy made a motion to reject the reduction of buffer strip. There was no second to the motion. The motion died.

Chair Sharon asked for a motion to approve the reduction in the buffer. Frank Manfredi asked if he could request more information. Chair Sharon explained that he could not as the public hearings had closed. Deanna Rhodes did provide clarification that the proposed buffer is 20 feet and greater.

Frank Manfredi made a motion to approve the reduction of buffer as per the plan presented by the applicant. Michael Lahan seconded. The motion passed four to one.

Kathy Warzecha requested to speak regarding the proposed special permit for a drive-through unit. Kathy made a motion to deny the plan. She gave reasons based on the criteria for special permits. She based several comments on quotes from the city's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). She gave multiple cases of apparent inconsistency with the POCD. There was no second made to the motion. The motion died.

Michael Lahan moved approval of SP #18-07. Les King seconded. Michael spoke to the reasons behind his motion to approve. He walked cemetery twice, taking into consideration views, and potential sound and light pollution from the drive-through. He noted that all agree the cemetery is an important historic site and the required Phase 1B architectural study will be done. The buffer will take care of sound and light pollution. 7.7.6 criteria has been met. He does not see substantial impact on the cemetery or neighbors.

Frank Manfredi agreed spoke in agreement. He also does not see significant impact of the drive-through on the burial grounds. He noted the other similar businesses on the street. He agreed that the architectural survey will be done according to statute.

Les King noted that this is a sensitive neighborhood. The developer has gone above and beyond the normal developer by listening and taking it all into consideration.

Deanna noted that it is procedural to add conditions to the motion.

Chair Sharon allowed a courtesy amendment.

Michael Lahan amended his motion to read:

TO APPROVE SP #18-07: 61, 63 & 65 Town Street. Special Permit request for a drive-through window as an accessory use to a proposed restaurant with the following conditions:

17. That the site plan for the special permit will expire in 5 years unless an extension has been granted by the Commission.
18. That a note be added to the site development plan requiring an immediate stop of work and notification of the City Planning Department and State Archaeologist should any archeological resources or remains of any kind be uncovered during the development of the project.
19. That the City's required signature block and letter of approval be placed on the final revised plan set, and that all plan sheets include the stamped seal and signature of the licensed professional.
20. That 6 signed and embossed sealed paper copies and 2 mylars of the final revised set of plans be submitted to the Planning Department for endorsement by an officer of the Commission. The mylars must include the red indelible ink certification which includes the name of producer and process used.
21. That the endorsed mylar set shall be filed on the Land Records by the applicant within 90 days.
22. That the certification of approval for the Special Permit use be filed with the City Clerk's office before becoming effective. This certification will be provided to the applicant by the City Planning Department post approval after the appeal period has ended.
23. That after the filing of the mylars, a zoning permit shall be issued prior to any land disturbance activities commencing in the site.
24. That the applicant submit the required erosion and sediment control bond of \$33,900 prior to requesting a zoning permit, in the form of a check or letter of credit, and the associated paperwork to the Planning Department for review and approval by the City's Attorney.
25. That any modifications to the approved plan shall be reviewed by the Zoning Enforcement Officer prior to occurring and may require additional review and approval by the Commission.
26. That a pre-construction meeting be held with the Planning, Public Works Departments and NPU prior to the start of the project.
27. That all E&S controls be installed by the applicant and inspected by the ZEO prior to initiating any land disturbance activities.
28. That all proposed improvements associated with this application are to be completed according to the approved plan prior to the issuance of the required Certificate of Zoning Compliance or a performance bond will be required in accordance with Sections 7.5.7.3 and 8.9 of the Zoning Regulations.
29. That the Commission may require an as-built or certification by a licensed engineer or land surveyor should it be deemed necessary by the City to determine compliance with the approval granted.
30. That the discharge of stormwater and dewatering of any wastewater from construction activities is less than 5 acres and falls under the CT DEEP general permit.

The motion passed four to one.

A question was asked by the public if Kathy Warzecha would give her written comments for the record. She indicated she would not as they were her notes.

2. Continue Discussion and Potential Action: LED Light Fixtures in Norwichtown Village District

Deanna reported that Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) is replacing all of the streetlights throughout the city with LED bulbs. This would be a good time to put an arm and a new head on the light poles in the in Norwichtown Village District. The LED lights will save the city money. However, the light fixture that are being installed throughout the city are not consistent with the design guidelines of the Norwichtown Village District. The village district has a total of 39 existing poles. The historic district recommends a simple new fixture be added to the poles with LED light bulbs. She handed out pictures of the general replacement LED lights and the proposed fixtures for the 39 poles in the village district. She then read a memo from NPU indicating that they would not be installing the preferred fixtures in the Norwichtown Village District due to cost. She noted that even though there is no application, this issue falls under this committee's jurisdiction.

Kathy Warzecha made a motion to hold off on 39 replacements with standard LED bulbs until such time as funds are available to replace them with decorative fixtures. Les King seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

G. EXTENSION REQUESTS: None

H. BOND RELEASE REQUESTS: None

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Review and Adopt 2019 Meeting Calendar

Frank Manfredi made a motion to accept the proposed calendar. Les King seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

J. POCD PIC MEETING REMINDER: 11/14/18

Deanna gave a reminder of the next POCD PIC meeting which will be November 14, 2018.

K. STAFF REPORT: Zoning Text Amendment Update:

Deanna reported speaking with Mayor Nystrom regarding several modifications that need to be made. She will continue working with Zoning Enforcement Officer on this issue.

Other:

Deanna reported that the city is applying for two grants. One is for improvements to the Greeneville Dam Recreation Area including bike trails and ADA accessibility upgrades. There is an existing kayak launch there. The land abuts the Town of Preston. She asked Preston for a Letter of Support for the grant proposal and hopes the trails can continue into Preston.

The second grant proposes remediation of the Terminal Way area properties that the city owns. There is new private interest in those sites. After clean-up the development will go out to RFP. The hope is to kick start economic development in that area. She has a consultant assisting her with the more technical aspects of the grant. The proposal is due October 31, 2018.

Deanna expects the Hale Mill applications next week. They are submitting in time for wetlands in November. The December meeting will be a public hearing on the proposed hotel development of the site.

She noted that the marina up for sale. City leaders have met with several different groups interested in purchasing the business and leasing the land from the city. It is critical to city's economy so a lot of effort is being expended on vetting proposed developers. The pink building is listed for sale separately.

Deanna reported that Uncas Leap Heritage Area is a Top 5 finalist in the American Planners Association 2018 People's Choice Great American Location Awards. Online voting starts tomorrow.

L. ADJOURNMENT: On a motion by Frank Manfredi, seconded by Les King, the CCP adjourned at 8:56 PM.