

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON THE CITY PLAN
September 20th, 2016-7:00 P.M.
23 UNION STREET NORWICH CONNECTICUT
LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM
REGULAR MEETING

AGENDA ITEMS A, B & C-CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Art Sharron, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Commission Members Present: Art Sharron, Frank Manfredi, Michael Lahan, Les King, Kathy Warzecha, and Swarnjit Singh Bhatia.

A quorum was present.

Absent: Daniel Daniska

Also Present: Deanna Rhodes, City Planner, Debra Delaporta, Recording Secretary

D. APPROVAL OF Minutes: Minutes from August 16th, 2016 Regular meeting and September 2nd, 2016 Special Meeting.

Art Sharron asked for a motion to approve the minutes from August 16th, 2016 regular meeting. Les King pointed out a clerical error, changing the words accept to approve in two places. With that being done, Frank Manfredi made a motion to approve the minutes of August 16th 2016, seconded by Michael Lahan, with all members in favor. Mr. Sharron then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from September 2nd, 2016 Special Meeting. Frank Manfredi made a motion to approve the minutes of September 2nd, 2016, seconded by Swarnjit Singh Bhatia. All members were in favor to approve the minutes.

E: COMMUNICATIONS: Letter from Chuck Evans Jr. regarding Chelsea Gardens

Art Sharron asked for a motion to table the reading of the letter from Chuck Evans to give CCP members time to review it. Les King made the motion to table discussion of the letter until the next CCP meeting, seconded by Michael Lahan, with all members in favor.

F: PUBLIC HEARING(S): None

G: OLD BUSINESS: None

H: NEW BUSINESS:

1. SDP#1036: 460 West Main Street. Site Development Review for a proposed 7585 SF retail building, 39 associated parking spaces and other related site improvements. Application and property of O'Reilly Automotive Stores, Inc.; Assessor's Map 108 Block 3 Lot 36, Zone(s) GC & R-20.

Josh Swerling, of Bohler Engineering began the presentation by introducing himself, and giving a brief introduction of the O'Reilly Automotive Stores, their history from one store in Springfield, Missouri in 1957 to 4600 stores presently, employing 77,000 people. Mr. Swerling stated they have received both Inland Wetland and Zoning Board of Appeals approvals to proceed with the project. Mr. Swerling explained the building will be 7585 sq ft, with 39 parking spaces. They will sell retail auto parts directly to the public, as well as wholesale to auto body, car dealerships and repair shops. They do have a few small delivery trucks which make local deliveries of auto parts. He stated that both the City Planner and Pat McLaughlin (City Engineer) both had recommendations which his company has addressed, which would be incorporated into the final set of plans.

Art Sharron questioned the curb cuts on the plan. Josh Swerling stated they had submitted plans to CT D.O.T and were awaiting their response. Kathy Warzecha asked why there were two driveways both having ingress and egress on the plan. Mr. Swerling pointed out one would be used for truck deliveries, and the other one for traffic in and out. Swarnjit Singh Bhatia inquired whether one driveway could be used specifically as an entrance and the other as an exit. Mr. Swerling explained the company preferred to have both with in and out access at each, although they would comply with whatever recommendations the State of CT would require. Deanna Rhodes also questioned the allowance for two cars to cross traffic to turn left into the property at each driveways when they are so close to each while other vehicles may be coming out of a driveway, also crossing traffic to take a left. Michael Lahan suggested having one driveway with a right turn only exit, and Ms. Rhodes suggested she had made that recommendation as well.

Michael Lahan stated he would not have a problem with two driveways, provided the second driveway would be right turn only out of the property. Ms. Warzecha said she preferred only one driveway, but if there were two, she agreed with Mr. Lahan that it should be right turn only. At this point, it was decided that the Commission would require the south driveway to have in and out access, while the north driveway would be configured by design to be a right turn exit only as a condition of approval of the plan.

Kathy Warzecha asked about the parking spaces at the corner of the building. Josh Swerling stated that this area staying unobstructed was important to the delivery trucks. Ms. Warzecha stated the position of the two spaces at the corner of the building needed some sort of adjustment due to a conflict between the two. Deanna Rhodes suggested bollards as a solution, with everyone in agreement this would be a satisfactory solution.

Deanna asked about landscaping, and the possibility of keeping some of the existing mature trees along the roadway. Mr. Swerling stated they had not field located existing trees on the site, but would attempt to preserve what is there, or plant new street trees currently not shown on the plan. Swarnjit Singh Bhatia was concerned about site line issues and the location of trees, both existing and proposed, but as long as site line issues were addressed, it was agreed upon by Mr. Swerling the trees would either be preserved or new ones would be planted. It was recommended that they be deciduous trees including flower species, such as ornamental pear trees. Ms. Rhodes then read a list of 13 items which she recommended to be incorporated into an approval. They were:

1. That this approval will expire in 5 years unless an extension has been granted by the Commission.
2. That the applicant revise plans and/or address comments from the Planner's memo dated 09/12/16.
3. That the required signature block and the letter of approval be placed on the final revised plan set.
4. That 6 paper copies of the final revised set of plans and two sets of mylars be submitted to the Planning Department for endorsement by an officer of the Commission. The endorsed mylar set shall be filed on the Land Records by the applicant within 90 days.
5. That an E&S and site restoration bond for \$37,380 be posted prior to any soil disturbance or the issuance of a zoning permit in accordance with the procedures established by eh City.
6. That a pre-construction meeting be held with Planning, Public Works and NPU Staff prior to the start of the project and that all E&S controls be installed by the applicant and inspected by the ZEO or Planner prior to initiating any land disturbance activities.
7. 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 and Certificate of Occupancy, or a performance bond will be required in accordance with Sections 7.5.7.3 and 8.9 of the Zoning Regulations.
8. That any modifications to the approved plan may require additional review and approvals by the Commission.
9. That the Commission may require an as-built prepared by an engineer and land surveyor should it be deemed necessary by the City to determine compliance with the approvals granted.
10. 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 #DEP-PERD-GP-015.
11. That the exit on the north driveway be curved and right turn only.
12. That the parking space located at the intersection of the parking areas be adjusted to avoid conflict by installing bollards.
13. That a professional engineer inspect the installation of drainage improvements and certify the compliance with the plan prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

The Planner then presented a written motion to the Commission for their use. Kathy Warzecha made a motion to **APPROVE SDP #1036-460 West Main St**-a proposed 7585 SF retail building, 39 associated parking spaces and other related site improvements. Application and property of O'Reilly Automotive Stores, Inc.; Assessor's Map 108 Block 3 Lot 36, Zones GC & R-20; as shown on site plan entitled "Site Development Plans for Proposed O'Reilly Auto Parts at West Main Street - dated 04/29/16, prepared by Bohler Engineering"; associated building elevations and lighting plan, and based on testimony presented and subject to the 13 items noted by the planner which are integral to this application. Reasons: The proposal conforms to Chapter 2, Chapter 5 and Section 7.5 of the Zoning Regulations. The motion was seconded by Michael Lahan and approved unanimously.

2. CGS 8-24: Referral from the City Council: Proposal to add land to Mohegan Park

Deanna Rhodes presented the City Council referral relative to Mohegan Park. There are 9 parcels of land in the proposal which are requested to be added to the park. The Planner then presented a written motion to the Commission for their use.

Michael Lahan read the motion to **forward a favorable recommendation to the City Council**, pursuant to Chapter XV, Section 4 of the City Charter, that properties identified as 189 Mohegan Park Road, 195 Mohegan Park Road, St. Regis Avenue and Prentice Lane Rear, including all other properties shown on Exhibit A, be incorporated in Mohegan Park within the descriptive boundaries thereof for purposes of expanding Mohegan Park and to permit the future improvement and development of Mohegan Park. Reason: It is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development to expand existing parks and opens spaces, specifically Mohegan Park. The motion was seconded by Kathy Warzecha and approved unanimously.

3. CGS 8-24: Referral from the City Council: An Ordinance appropriating \$800,000 for the City for Norwich's share of costs relating to the demolition, removal of debris and landscaping on the Reid & Hughes property and authorizing the issue of \$800,000 bonds of the City to meet said appropriation and pending the issuance thereof the making of temporary borrowings for such purpose.

Michael Lahan asked if the CCP were to give a negative recommendation, what it meant for the Council vote and it was explained they would need a 2/3 vote for the ordinance to pass. Deanna Rhodes introduced Jim Troeger, Building Official, who is very familiar with the condition of the Reid & Hughes building based on the numerous inspections he has been called upon to perform over the years. Mr. Troeger said based on these inspections, in his opinion, the building is "non-repairable" due to environmental and safety issues. Mr. Troeger went on to explain the condition of the inside of the building, stating part of the roof had collapsed, all flooring needed to be replaced, and that the building contains asbestos, which would need special services to abate. Michael Lahan and Kathy Warzecha both asked questions about the building in relation to the buildings on either side of the Reid & Hughes. Mr. Lahan had concerns about the appearance of the remaining walls of the adjacent buildings, and Kathy Warzecha expressed concerns about there being an empty space there. Jim Troeger stated the owners of the Shannon building have expressed concerns that seepage from the deteriorating Reid & Hughes building was entering their building.

Ms. Rhodes stated that removal of the building would give an opportunity to connect to the waterfront, and that since the building is located in a special flood hazard area, you can only make improvements up to 50% of the existing value or need to make it 100% flood compliant. The Planner also wanted the CCP members to be aware of the fact that the condition of this building was having an impact on the two adjoining buildings. After much discussion about the condition of the building, concerns about the safety and environmental issues, all CCP members shared in the opinion that while they could forward a favorable recommendation to the City Council, it would be with the stipulations that part of the removal would include a specific plan for the site to be prepared for restoration and rehabilitation, with Art Sharron adding that the landscaping include more than just leveling the site and planting grass and a few shrubs. At this point, Mr. Sharron asked for a motion. The Planner then presented a written motion to the Commission for their use.

Les King made a motion to **forward a favorable recommendation to the City Council**, pursuant to Chapter XV, Section 4 of the City Charter, for AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$800,000 FOR THE CITY OF NORWICH'S SHARE OF COSTS RELATING TO THE DEMOLITION, REMOVAL OF DEBRIS AND LANDSCAPING ON THE REID & HUGHES PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$800,000 BONDS OF THE CITY TO MEET SAID APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF THE MAKING OF TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE. Reasons: It is consistent with several strategies in the Plan of Conservation and Development, including:

- Protecting and preserving historical resources such as the adjacent buildings which are also located within the National Register Downtown Norwich Historic District and are potentially at risk of compromise due to the deteriorating condition of the Reid and Hughes building;
- Enabling the redevelopment of historic properties which are located in floodplain areas;
- Supporting redevelopment of node areas such as the Chelsea Central Zone;
- Recognizing that the waterfront is a key development opportunity area.

With the following stipulation: That a plan be prepared for restoration and rehabilitation of the site. The motion was seconded by Frank Manfredi and approved unanimously.

I: EXTENSION REQUESTS: None

J: BOND RELEASES: None

K ZONING MATTERS: None

L. OTHER BUSINESS: Discuss Planning priorities

Art Sharron suggested tabling the discussion on planning priorities until the next meeting to allow CCP members a chance to review Kathy Warzecha's submission of suggestions and to allow other members to submit ideas as well. Les King made the motion to table the discussion, seconded by Frank Manfredi, with all members in favor.

M. ADJOURNEMENT: Upon motion by Les King, seconded by Swarnjit Singh Bhatia, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra Delaporta". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Debra Delaporta