

**COMMISSION ON THE CITY PLAN
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020, 7:00 PM
Virtual/Remote Meeting
NORWICH, CT
REGULAR MEETING**

Assistant City Planner Daniel Daniska read information pertaining to virtual meetings and clearly stated that the meeting, including video, will be recorded.

A. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Frank Manfredi called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

B. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

Present: Chairman Frank Manfredi, Vice Chairman Les King, Swarnjit Singh Bhatia, and Michael Lahan

Absent: Jason Courter and Kathy Warzecha

Swarnjit Singh Bhatia was seated as a voting member.

Others Present: City Planner Deanna Rhodes, Assistant City Planner Dan Daniska, Recording Secretary Melinda Wilson, Kathy LaConta of KML Architects, Attorney Mark Block, and Brandon Handfield of Yantic River Consultants

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 19, 2020 and May 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Swarnjit Singh Bhatia, seconded by Michael Lahan, the meeting minutes of the May 19, 2020 Commission on the City Plan (CCP) minutes were approved as presented. Chair Frank Manfredi abstained from the vote due to non-attendance.

On a motion by Michael Lahan, seconded by Les King, review and approval of the minutes from May 28, 2020 were unanimously tabled.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: None presented.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **SDP #1044:** 3 North C Street. Site Plan Review for a Multi-Family Development and installation of associated site improvements and amenities. Application and property of The Hills at Riverview LLC, Assessor's Map 39, Block 1, Lot 93, Zone MF.

Brandon Handfield of Yantic River Consultants presented a site plan emphasizing the amenities and the compliance of the layout. The site is immediately to the south on the west side of Route 97 in Taftville. The 6.29 acres site is the former development of single family homes but only remnants of driveways remain. The proposed 7 townhouse buildings would contain 52 units and be built in two phases. Easements to provide access are planned through the neighboring development to the northeast via existing driveways in front of building 100 and between buildings 100 and 200. The proposed development would also have North C Street access, with a slight widening of the road needed to provide more drainage. Phase 1 would include 4 buildings for 30 units. Phase 2 would have 5 buildings with access to North Third Avenue. This proposed use is permitted in zoning regulations and the density is allowable.

Mr. Handfield continued to describe the development. Phase 1 Buildings A & B and C & D will be built together and include a community area for those buildings. Phase 2 Buildings E, G & F will be built together. All have parking and community areas. All units have enough handicapped parking and pedestrian access. The main road does not have parking or sidewalks. Sidewalks were not shown on the plans for either Phase 1 or Phase 2 as the applicant anticipates there will be more discussion on pedestrian access. One of the gathering spaces has views of Ponemah Mill and the river. The applicant plans to expand the plan to include a playground and a dog park area. There will be a hiking trail into the natural wooded area on the site. The proposal exceeds required recreation area.

Attorney Mark Block read a letter he had written on behalf of the applicant to City Planner Deanna Rhodes regarding whether regulations restrict townhomes to two styles, garden style and high-rise.

Kathy LaConta of KML Architects reviewed the townhome design of the proposed buildings and their integration into the topography. The townhomes are designed with front porches, versus back porches, and will have a door on both sides, either at ground level or with stairs to a deck.

Mr. Lahan asked for a description of garden style and a high-rise. Ms. Rhodes described garden style as a layout not an architectural style that is less than 3 stories and must face onto a street or greenspace. She explained that some of the buildings face the back of the other buildings. They have stoops that face greenspace, but they do not have access to the greenspace. Buildings B, C & G have this situation. A high-rise has four or more floors. She read the complete definitions.

Discussion ensued on building G as the units open up onto the greenspace, whether it be basement level or first floor, with a 10x8 deck and a door to access living space.

Discussion ensued regarding the CCP giving an informal opinion. Extensive discussion ensued. It was generally decided that a site plan displaying walkways to aid compliance of two sides of the buildings being treated as fronts by offering residents and visitors accessibility to a front door of choice, and with the decks having direct access to these walkways, would be considered.

Assistant City Planner Dan Daniska suggested that sidewalks, to allow children to safely board a school bus and residents to walk the entire development, should be considered. These sidewalks should also connect to the Route 97 sidewalks. Mr. Handfield felt this was reasonable.

On a motion by Michael Lahan, seconded by Swarnjit Singh Bhatia, the discussion was unanimously tabled to a special meeting to be held on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 7 PM.

F. OLD BUSINESS: None

G. EXTENSION REQUESTS: None

H. BOND REDUCTION / RELEASE REQUESTS: None

I. OTHER BUSINESS: Referral from the City of Norwich – Zoning Board of Appeals

1. V# 20-04: – 159 Dunham St. Application of Alexander Gebbie, Member of Westledge Apartments, LLC, Assessor's Map# 117, Block# 1, Lot# 15, R-20 Zoning District, Owner: Elfrieda Harvey, Request relief of ZR Sec. 4.1.1 to permit the use of the existing single family home as a rental office, with a conference room, and parking, all to be ancillary to the Westledge Apartments. (Referral in accordance with ZR 7.10.2.5)

Ms. Rhodes gave an overview of the referred application. A residential house, adjacent to the Westledge apartments, is for sale. The applicant would like to purchase the home and renovate it for use as a rental office for Westledge Apartments. The house would also serve as a place for residents to pick-up mail. The house is an R-20 property.

Ms. Rhodes gave staff comments for consideration of a favorable recommendation.

Discussion among CCP members ensued.

Michael Lahan made a motion for a favorable recommendation with the following four stipulations:

1. That the property at 159 Dunham is deed restricted so that it shall only be a leasing office of the Westledge property and that no other commercial use would be permitted. Should the property no longer be utilized for a leasing office, the dwelling must be converted back for single-family residential use.
2. That the appearance of the single-family dwelling remain to not adversely affect the existing residential neighborhood.
3. That the properties either be connected by a pedestrian walkway or that the developer trim and maintain the trees along the existing sidewalk to provide the access between the two sites.
4. That signage be restricted to be placed only on the building itself and that none be allowed in the front yard as not to look like a commercial property.

Les King seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

J. POCD PIC MEETING UPDATE + REMINDER: Ms. Rhodes reminded the members of the next POCD-PIC meeting, which may be held virtually on July 8, 2020.

K. STAFF REPORT: Ms. Rhodes asked the CCP members to confirm their availability for a special meeting of the CCP next week, July 25 2020, at 7 PM, to discuss the extension requests. She will confirm via email to ensure a quorum.

L. ADJOURNMENT: On a motion by Les King, seconded by Swarnjit Singh Bhatia, the CCP unanimously adjourned at 8:39 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Melinda Wilson
Recording Secretary*