

**COMMISSION ON THE CITY PLAN
TUESDAY, JULY 16, 2019 - 7:00 P.M.
100 Broadway, Room 319
NORWICH, CT REGULAR MEETING**

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

B. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

Present: Vice Chairman Frank Manfredi, Les King, Kathy Warzecha and Michael Lahan.

Absent: Swarnjit Singh Bhatia

Others Present: City Planner Deanna Rhodes, Assistant City Planner Dan Daniska and Recording Secretary Katherine Rose

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 18, 2019 Meeting Minutes Les King made a motion to approve the minutes of June 18, 2019 as presented. The motion was seconded by Michael Lahan. Motion passed. Kathy Warzecha abstained.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: City Planner Deanna Rhodes read aloud a farewell and thank you letter from Art Sharron. Mr. Rhodes also reported a referral was received from the Town of Preston regarding an amendment in Section 23 of the Zoning Board of Appeals to add in special criteria that is being requested by the state to notify any abutters to special flood areas.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS:

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS:

SUB #427: 47 Huntington Avenue. Request for a six (6) lot Re-Subdivision which includes two (2) interior lots. Property and application of American Property Group LLC. Assessor's Map 51, Block 1, Lot 39, Zone R-40.

Vice Chairman Frank Manfredi introduced the application and stated he did not feel as it would be a conflict of interest for him to sit for this application but wanted the record to show that he lives in the vicinity of this project.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Frank Manfredi, seconded by Michael Lahan the public

hearing opened at 7:04PM with all members voting in favor.

Robert Mullen of CLA Engineers presented on the proposed project. The applicant of this project is American Property Group LLC which is owned by Swarnjit Singh Bhatia. The proposed project was determined to be a re-subdivision due to the original Royal Oaks property which had been transferred along with other portions of the property. The applicant is proposing six (6) four-bedroom three-bath single family homes that will be approximately 1,800 sq. ft. in size. The property has been surveyed to meet all building requirements with city water available and a note from NPU that they will continue the near-by gas line to the homes. The property had perc-tests done for septic systems with testing submitted to Uncas Health. The City Engineer conveyed at a previous staff meeting that they would like a drainage easement, however, further discussions have raised the possibility of handling stormwater through sheet flow instead. . Mr. Mullen discussed further the land layout and reported there are no wetlands in the area of development nor is it in a coastal resource or flood hazard area. Each individual site plan will address any specific concerns regarding final location of septic systems.

Kathy Warzecha asked about the steepness of the proposed driveways. . Robert Mullen responded that the grade would be 12-13 percent at the most for lot #5 and demonstrated on the plan where the drainage would sit.

Assistant City Planner Dan Daniska read aloud his memo, adding that comments from various City departments including Public Works, Uncas Health, etc. that they are waiting to resolve. Mr. Daniska stated the property falls in an area of high archaeological sensitivity so they have reached out to the Office of the State Archaeology and are waiting to hear back. Mr. Daniska mentioned his note regarding notifying adjacent property owners as well as requiring monument and boundary markers to be set on the plan. Robert Mullen of CLA responded that in the lot layout's legend there is a reference to monument areas. Dan Daniska stated they are also requesting legal documents discussing the transfer of right of way and drainage easements if that is to occur. Mr. Daniska stated that in lieu of open space, \$100 per lot will be conveyed to the City in accordance to the subdivision regulations prior to the mylars being filed. Dan Daniska noted that the proposed subdivision is approximately 1000 feet from the Bean Hill Green and it is within the Commission's purview to request that sidewalks be placed or a multi-use path right-way dedication be made. Otherwise, the applicant needs to request in writing a waiver for a sidewalk installation which must be decided after the public hearing is closed and prior to making a decision on the application. Mr. Daniska reported there are a number of stone walls located on the parcel, and in order to preserve historic integrity it is recommended that the Commission should discuss requiring the walls remain in place or are moved within the property. Mr. Daniska stated there are also a number of old trees along the walls so discussion should also occur in regard to preserving the healthy trees, if at all possible. Mr. Daniska added the layout plan should be revised to show the anticipated extent of clearing that will take place for the construction of driveways, homes and related septic systems. Mr. Daniska stated an erosion and sediment control plan is required per the regulations; the details should be updated to reflect the 2012 State of Connecticut E&S guidelines and all Silt Fences should be installed outside of the proposed drainage easement.

Mr. Daniska said the Director of Public Works should review the need for downspouts, gutters or footing drains which is not shown on the site plan. Mr. Daniska commented the driveway of Lot 5 appears to be very long and steep so it should be determined by the Director of Public Works and the Fire Chief if a driveway pullout is necessary for emergency access. Dan Daniska reported another note about the E&S plan which should include a signature block, and noted that the site line distances on Table 3 of the plan set should be evaluated by the Director of Public Works. Mr. Daniska stated the installation of electric utilities on the site should be installed underground if possible. Mr. Daniska stated that with the number of outstanding issues that need to be resolved, it is staff's recommendation that the public hearing be continued to the next CCP Regular Meeting on August 20, 2019 to allow the applicant to address comments and discuss issues with the Director of Public Works.

Les King made a motion to continue the public hearing to the next regular meeting on August 20, 2019. Kathy Warzecha seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. CITY COUNCIL REFERRALS:

A. An ordinance appropriating \$5,000,000 for the City of Norwich Infrastructure Improvement Program (2019) and authorizing the issue of \$5,000,000 bonds of the city to meet said appropriation and pending the issuance thereof the making of temporary borrowings for such purpose.

Dan Daniska noted that this item is similar to a request that was made in 2017, and it is consistent with the City's Plan of Conservation and Development to provide for adequate infrastructure to meet community needs and support desired growth patterns.

Michael Lahan made a motion to forward a **FAVORABLE** recommendation to the Council, pursuant to Chapter XV, Section 4 of the City Charter, as it is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development to provide for adequate infrastructure to meet the community needs and support desired growth patterns. Les King seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to sell property known as 18 Falls Avenue by competitive bid.

Dan Daniska noted that this item is consistent with the City's Plan of Conservation and Development to provide for economic development strategies and growth. Kathy Warzecha noted that in the future it would be preferable if the CCP could be provided with a map and photos of properties for further information. There was general agreement among Commission members that this would be helpful.

Michael Lahan made a motion to forward a **FAVORABLE** recommendation to the Council, pursuant to Chapter XV, Section 4 of the City Charter, as it is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development to provide for economic development strategies and growth. Les King seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3. OTHER:

- A. Review 2018 Housing Data Profile provided by Partnership for Strong Communities for Sustainable CT project.

Assistant City Planner Dan Daniska stated the City is in the process for applying for Sustainable CT certification. As part of that project he needs to provide the Commission with the housing data collected in the report. Dan Daniska reviewed the 2018 profile and discussed Norwich-specific statistics.

- B. Election of Officers - Chairman and Vice Chairman:

Michael Lahan made a motion to nominate Frank Manfredi as Chairman. Les King seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Michael Lahan made a motion to nominate Les King as Vice Chairman. Frank Manfredi seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- C. Select volunteer member for SCCOG Regional Planning Commission (RPC):

Kathy Warzecha made a motion to table the item to the next regular meeting. Les King seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

F. OLD BUSINESS: None

G. EXTENSION REQUESTS: None

H. BOND REDUCTION / RELEASE REQUESTS: None

I. OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Bubbles to Butterfly Swim School

City Planner Deanna Rhodes reported at the previous meeting there was discussion regarding the changes to the Bubbles to Butterfly Swim School building design. She

was asked at the meeting to get an opinion from the City Attorney whether the Commission had recourse regarding the unapproved modifications to the exterior of the building which were significant and included the building materials and roof pitch. She stated that the owner hasn't receive a final Certificate of Occupancy until she receives a Certificate of Zoning Compliance. This is on hold until the Commission determines how they would like to handle this matter.

Owner Margee Charron introduced herself and apologized for the confusion as she is new to the process of building a facility and was not aware there were any concerns until she received Mrs. Rhodes email on July 6th. Mrs. Charron explained that after her initial meeting with the Commission there were several changes on her end including a change of contractor who showed her a building with the trusses that had rusted within a year and would not be suitable for their facility. Mrs. Charron stated she was aware that she had site approval, but was not aware that she had to re-communicate any changes since the buildings footprint remained the same as what was approved. Margee Charron explained that it took so long to file mylars due to the delays she faced. Mrs. Charron stated she did take a portion of the fault in lack of communication but she was relying on her hired contractor which had not fully explained this process to her. Mrs. Charron explained the drainage, lighting and square footage of the building is the same as what was approved and that the only differences are the roof line and material used. Kathy Warzecha noted that she would like to see two trees planted along the roadway in front of the building if possible, at the discretion of Planning Staff. Mrs. Charron stated that it may be difficult to accommodate the trees in front of the building without blocking newly installed signage. Ms. Warzecha replied that she was aware of the signage and that Mrs. Charron should work with staff to ensure that the trees are installed in suitable locations.

Deanna Rhodes explained how the error occurred on the City's end in regards to the gap in time from the filing of mylars and then the request for a foundation-only permit. The Zoning Enforcement Officer has approved the CCP approved elevations and floor plan, but due to the significant delay to when the building plans were submitted for the building permit, the building officials only noted that zoning had already issued their approval. Internal discussions with Staff about the process should prevent this happening again, especially when a foundation-only permit is requested. Mrs. Rhodes stated she spoke to Attorney Mike Driscoll, and his letter reflects that it is up to the Commission to decide whether to approve the changes to allow the Zoning Official to sign off on zoning compliance.

Frank Manfredi made a motion to approve the building as constructed based on the submitted construction drawings on-file with the City with the addition of two trees that are to be planted at the discretion of Planning Department Staff, and to authorize the Zoning Enforcement Officer to issue the Certificate of Compliance. Michael Lahan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Select volunteer member for Inlands Wetlands, Watercourses and Conversation Commission (IWWCC):

Frank Manfredi made a motion to table the selection until the next regular meeting.

Michael Lahan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

J. MEETING REMINDER: Deanna Rhodes stated they did not have the POCD PIC meeting July. The next scheduled meeting is September 11th.

K. STAFF REPORT: Mrs. Rhodes reported the City's Building Official Greg Arpin gave notice to retire at the end of July. . Code Official Dan Coley has received a lateral transfer to the Assistant Building Official position and will be in that position starting August 1st. Mrs. Rhodes said the City is beginning the process of hiring a new Code Official to fill Mr. Coley's vacancy.

L. ADJOURNMENT: On a motion to adjourn by Les King, seconded by Michael Lahan, the CCP meeting unanimously adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine Rose
Recording Secretary