

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 28, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE:** Mel Riley, Chairman; Cesar Cordero; Johanna Dorgan; Bob Filotei; Kyle LaBuff; Jacqueline Martoral; Carlos Moreno; Robert Morton

**STAFF:** Dennis Buckley, Zoning Official; Nick Sampieri, Zoning Inspector; Jackson Strong, Design Review Coordinator; Bill Coleman, Deputy Director of OPED; Russell Liskov, City Attorney.

**OTHER:** Atty. Raymond Rizio; Atty. Charles Willinger; Atty. Christopher Russo; Diane; Donna Curran; Elaine Bissenden; Grace Bissenden; James Nichols; Joe Staigar; Joel Mellitz; Julianne's Wine and Liquor; June Vendetti; Kiersten Cary; Council Member Matthew McCarthy; Michael Robinson, Attorney Patricia Sullivan; Robert Cooper Michelle Weinstein; S Hock; William Jennings; Aunia O'Byrne; Michael Weissbrod; John Stevens II; Jason Labs

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Riley called the meeting to order at 6:34 P.M. There was a quorum present.

Chairman Riley reviewed the rules of the meeting for those present.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS**

**C-1 (21-45)**

**547 NORTH AVE. – PETITION OF 547 N AVE BRIDGEPORT REALTY, LLC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO ESTABLISH AN APPROXIMATELY 850 SF RETAIL CONVENIENCE STORE WITHIN THE EXISTING BUILDING AS ACCESSORY TO THE EXISTING VEHICLE SERVICE FACILITY IN THE I-L ZONE.**

Atty. Pat Sullivan sent a letter requesting this item to be continued as the requested traffic study had not been completed at this time.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO CONTINUE ITEM C-1 547 NORTH AVE. – PETITION OF 547 N AVE BRIDGEPORT REALTY, LLC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO ESTABLISH AN APPROXIMATELY 850 SF RETAIL CONVENIENCE STORE WITHIN THE EXISTING BUILDING AS ACCESSORY TO THE EXISTING VEHICLE SERVICE FACILITY IN THE I-L ZONE. TO THE MEETING OF 03/28/2022.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**DEFERRED BUSINESS**

**D-1 (22-02)**

**547 NORTH AVE. – PETITION OF 547 N AVE BRIDGEPORT REALTY, LLC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO ESTABLISH AN APPROXIMATELY 850 SF RETAIL CONVENIENCE STORE WITHIN THE EXISTING BUILDING AS ACCESSORY TO THE EXISTING VEHICLE SERVICE FACILITY IN THE I-L ZONE.**

A letter has been submitted by Atty. Russo on February 22, 2022 requesting a deferral.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER DORGAN MOVED TO DEFERR ITEM D-1 (22-02) 547 NORTH AVE. – PETITION OF 547 N AVE BRIDGEPORT REALTY, LLC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO ESTABLISH AN APPROXIMATELY 850 SF RETAIL CONVENIENCE STORE WITHIN THE EXISTING BUILDING AS ACCESSORY TO THE EXISTING VEHICLE SERVICE FACILITY IN THE I-L ZONE. UNTIL THE MEETING OF 03/28/2022.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**NEW BUSINESS (REVISED)**

**(22-03)**

**543-545, 547, 549, 557 ELLSWORTH ST. – PETITION OF 547 ELLSWORTH NAVCAPMAN, LLC – SEEKING A COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 6-STORY, 123-UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING WITH 135 ON-SITE PARKING SPACES IN THE R-CC ZONE AND COASTAL AREA.**

Atty. Christopher Russo submitted a letter on February 25, 2022 requesting that this item be deferred.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED TO DEFERR ITEM (22-03) 543-545, 547, 549, 557 ELLSWORTH ST. – PETITION OF 547 ELLSWORTH NAVCAPMAN, LLC – SEEKING A COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 6-STORY, 123-UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING WITH 135 ON-SITE PARKING SPACES IN THE R-CC ZONE AND COASTAL AREA. UNTIL THE MEETING OF 03/28/2022.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER COREDO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**(22-05)**

**238 JEWETT AVE. – PETITION OF THE BRIDGEPORT ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESAN CORPORATION – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 2-YEAR ASSOCIATES DEGREE PROGRAM BY FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY IN A PORTION OF THE EXISTING DIOCESE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING IN THE R-A ZONE.**

Atty. Christopher Russo submitted a letter on February 25, 2022 requesting that this item be deferred.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER DORGAN MOVED TO DEFER ITEM (22-05) 238 JEWETT AVE. – PETITION OF THE BRIDGEPORT ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESAN CORPORATION – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 2-YEAR ASSOCIATES DEGREE PROGRAM BY FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY IN A PORTION OF THE EXISTING DIOCESE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING IN THE R-A ZONE UNTIL THE MEETING OF 03/28/2022.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**(22-04)**

**83 & 87 PRIMROSE AVE. & 405, 407, 409 WOODMONT AVE. (FKA 536 PEET ST.) – PETITION OF DERECK PETTWAY AND DIVERSE BUILDERS, LLC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 3-UNIT TOWNHOUSE STYLE BUILDING IN THE R-C ZONE**

Atty. Raymond Rizio came forward to discuss this item. He provided photos of the site for the Commission. The lot is currently vacant. No variances are needed, and it is in accordance with the regulations. The proposed building will be similar to prior buildings built by the applicant. Each of the proposed units will have a one-car garage and access from the rear of the property. He further reviewed the details of the proposed properties.

Chairman Riley asked if these units would be rental units or condos.

Atty. Rizio said that they would be rental units currently but could be turned into condos at any time. Further discussion followed regarding the landscaping plans.

Commissioner Dorgan asked about the concrete stairs and railings and if there would be handrails.

Atty. Rizio said that those were handled by code and that did not require the handrails. He also did not think that they would not add much safety.

Ms. June Pandenni came forward to speak in favor of this item. She asked if the units had any relation to ongoing on June Ave. and she was concerned about traffic congestion in the area. She was informed that there was no relation and there was ample parking.

Mr. Bill Coleman came forward to speak in favor of this item. He introduced Mr. Jackson Strong to the Commission.

Mr. Jackson Strong came forward to speak in favor of this item. He said that that it did conform to development standards and the standards of the prior code. It encourages infill development and housing creation. There were also recommendations made that he reviewed for the Commission.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 83 & 87 PRIMROSE AVE. & 405, 407, 409 WOODMONT AVE. (FKA 536 PEET ST.) – PETITION OF DERECK PETTWAY AND DIVERSE BUILDERS, LLC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 3-UNIT TOWNHOUSE STYLE BUILDING IN THE R-C ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- **THE PETITIONER SHALL INCORPORATE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DESIGN REVIEW COORDINATOR AS CITED ON PAGE 3 OF HIS 12-16/22 REPORT TO THE COMMISSION.**
- **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECT PARCEL TO BE IN STRICT ACCORD WITH THE PLAN SUBMITTED TO AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION.**

- THE PETITIONER SHALL FILE PLANS AND APPLICATION FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A ZONING COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE AND A BUILDING PERMIT.

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- THIS DEVELOPMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ZONE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OF THE R-C ZONE.
- THE PROJECT AS APPROVED IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF SEC. 14-4-4, AS WELL AS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC. 14-2-5.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**(22-06)**

**252 HALLETT ST. – PETITION OF CRESCENT CROSSINGS, LLC - SEEKING A MODIFICATION OF APPROVAL TO A PETITION GRANTED BY THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ON 05/27/14, WHICH INITIALLY PERMITTED THE CONSTRUCTION OF SIX (6) RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS CONTAINING 93-UNITS AND THEN REDUCED TO 84-UNITS ON 10/14/20 AND TO NOW INCREASE TO 85-UNITS IN THE NCVZ ZONE AND COASTAL AREA.**

Atty. Rizio came forward to discuss this item. This item has been approved three times prior. New issues have arisen since 2017 requiring minor modifications. He reviewed the history of the site and prior applications for the Commission. The site plan was provided for the Commission. There will be no impact on Long Island Sound from this project. It is consistent with all regulations, will not depreciate values, have an impact on health, and is consistent with the Master Plan. There is ample parking. He said that they had done tests and worked with engineering programs to ensure there was no impact.

Chairman Riley read a letter to the Commission from Mr. Goucher regarding the impact that the project would have on the Sound to the Commission.

Atty. Rizio pointed out that this item has been looked at multiple times by the City and there would not likely be coastal impact.

No one wished to speak in favor of this application.

Ms. Michelle Weinstein came forward to speak against this application. She expressed concern about the amount of parking, especially that there were 84 units but only 92 parking spots.

Atty. Rizio came forward to rebut. He said it was consistent with the parking requirements of the neighborhood and its design meant it required less parking. Similar units in the area have similar amounts of parking with no issues.

Mr. O'Neill confirmed that this was following the current regulations and only 54 spaces were required.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 22-06 252 HALLETT ST. – PETITION OF CRESCENT CROSSINGS, LLC - SEEKING A MODIFICATION OF APPROVAL TO A PETITION GRANTED BY THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ON 05/27/14, WHICH INITIALLY PERMITTED THE**

**CONSTRUCTION OF SIX (6) RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS CONTAINING 93-UNITS AND THEN REDUCED TO 84-UNITS ON 10/14/20 AND TO NOW INCREASE TO 85-UNITS IN THE NCVD ZONE AND COASTAL AREA WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECT PREMISES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED LANDSCAPING, SHALL BE IN STRICT ACCORD WITH THE PLAN SUBMITTED TO AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION.**
- **THE PETITIONER SHALL FILE PLANS AND APPLICATIONS FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF ZONING COMPLIANCE AND A BUILDING PERMIT.**

**FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**

- **THE MODIFICATION OF THE APPROVED PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OR COASTAL AREA.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**(22-07)**

**436-500 NORTH AVE. – PETITION OF JEM 500 NORTH, LLC – SEEKING TO MODIFY THE PRIMARY STREET WALL PERCENTAGE REQUIRED UNDER SEC. 3.10 TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EAT-IN/TAKE-OUT FAST FOOD RESTAURANT WITH A DRIVE-THRU FACILITY IN THE MX2 ZONE.**

Atty. Charles Willinger came forward to discuss this item. He said that it was unknown as to if the Commission the authority to modify a design regulation. Further discussion on this point followed. O.P.E.D., the City Planner, and the City Council have given their full endorsement for the design.

Chairman Riley said that wanted to be careful since this was the first and they wanted to set a proper precedent. He asked if they would be willing to continue the item into next month for proper research.

Atty. Willinger said that there were cases in which the Commission could grant a waiver of the regulations. He detailed this for the Commission.

Chairman Riley said he still wished to think it over as they would be establishing a new precedent under the new zoning laws. Atty. Liskov agreed that they would have a better handle on the item by next month.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO CONTINUE ITEM 22-07 436-500 NORTH AVE. – PETITION OF JEM 500 NORTH, LLC – SEEKING TO MODIFY THE PRIMARY STREET WALL PERCENTAGE REQUIRED UNDER SEC. 3.10 TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EAT-IN/TAKE-OUT FAST FOOD RESTAURANT WITH A DRIVE-THRU FACILITY IN THE MX2 ZONE.TO THE MEETING OF MARCH 28, 2022.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER CORDERO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**(22-08)**

**146 ANDOVER ST. – PETITION OF ARTHUR H. HOWLAND & ASSOCIATES, PC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN AUTOMATED CAR WASH FACILITY AND SITE AMENITIES IN THE INDUSTRIAL I ZONE.**

Atty. Rizio came forward to discuss this item. The property has a history of enforcement violations and has been cleaned up. It used to be owned by a porta-potty company. They have worked with O.P.E.D. for this plan. There is no legitimate car wash in this part of town. He provided the plans for the site and reviewed the details for the Commission. They will have more than adequate parking and queuing.

Commissioner Filotei asked if there would be any retail or accessories of that nature.

Atty. Rizio said there would likely be some minor over-the-counter stuff like air fresheners but nothing major.

Chairman Riley asked about the environmental aspects.

Atty. Rizio said that they were following the regulations which were specific. He stressed that this would also just be a carwash.

Mr. Jackson Strong came forward to speak in favor of this application. He said that they had reviewed the design and it conformed with all standards under the prior zoning code which it is subject to. They did make suggestions regarding landscaping. The plan has also been adjusted for the current zoning laws and to allow for future development.

No one else wished to speak in favor of this application.

No one wished to speak in opposition to this item.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED TO APPROVE APPLICATION (22-08) 146 ANDOVER ST. – PETITION OF ARTHUR H. HOWLAND & ASSOCIATES, PC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN AUTOMATED CAR WASH FACILITY AND SITE AMENITIES IN THE INDUSTRIAL I ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECT PREMISES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED LANDSCAPING, SHALL BE IN STRICT ACCORD WITH THE PLAN SUBMITTED TO AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION.**
- **THE PETITIONER SHALL FILE PLANS AND APPLICATIONS FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF ZONING COMPLIANCE AND A BUILDING PERMIT.**

**FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**

- **THE PROJECT AS APPROVED IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.50, AS WELL AS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.70.**
- **THE APPROVAL OF THIS PETITION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MASTER PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**THIS SPECIAL PERMIT APPROVAL AS REQUIRED UNDER SEC. 11.50.6 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CT SHALL EXPIRE ON MARCH 7, 2023.**

**(22-09)**

**3171 FAIRFIELD AVE. – PETITION OF JALPA SHAH – SEEKING AN APPROVAL OF LOCATION FOR A LIQUOR STORE IN THE EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDING IN THE MX1 ZONE.**

Mr. Jalpa Shah came forward to discuss this item. The store will be located close to another liquor store. It will have 12 parking spots located next to the building and will not increase street traffic. Further discussion followed regarding the parking.

Chairman Riley expressed concern over the amount of traffic and size of the store. He asked how many customers were expected per day.

Mr. Shah said he expected about 60 per day.

Commissioner Cordero noted that there was a church across the street from the store and there were distance regulations that were required. Further discussion followed.

Mr. Buckley said he had received phone calls regarding the exiting of the property as there was only one driveway out. He suggested that a traffic survey should be done to resolve concerns with traffic at this very busy intersection.

Chairman Riley requested that Mr. Shah return with a traffic survey and a survey of location to show that there no sensitive uses in the surrounding area.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO CONTINUE ITEM 22-09 TO THE MEETING OF 03/08/2022 FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**

- **AS THE SUBJECT PREMISES IS IN AN AREA WITH TRAFFIC CONGESTION THE PETITIONER IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A TRAFFIC STUDY FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMISSION.**
- **THE PETITIONER’S SITE PLAN MUST ALSO INDICATE ANY PROTECTED USES WITHIN A 750-FOOT RADIUS OF THE SUBJECT PREMISES.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER CORDERO SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**(22-10)**

**2800 MAIN ST. – PETITION OF SVMC HOLDINGS, INC. – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE PLACEMENT OF A 1,207-SQ. FT. ROOF SIGN UNDER SEC. 11.50 & 11.70 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS IN THE P2 ZONE.**

Chairman Riley asked why this item was on the agenda since it had been reviewed in 2021 and there were bylaws saying it couldn't be heard more than once in a 12-month period.

Mr. Buckley said that this was not for a text amendment but for a special permit which was potentially different but said that Atty. Liskov or the Commission needed to decide if it was eligible.

Atty. Liskov said that they were asking for approval for a special permit under new zoning laws instead of a text amendment as previously. As such, while it would seem similar, it was a new application that had not been heard yet and did not violate any of the bylaws. Further discussion followed.

*Commissioner LaBuff recused himself at 8:06 P.M.*

Atty. Rizio came forward to discuss this item. He pointed out that this was different from the text amendment as the new regulations had come into existence. The sign is currently consistent with the regulations that have been approved. He pointed to the section with the specific regulations for roof signs as well as why they'd need a special permit. He further reviewed the regulations. The prior comments by the Commission have been considered such as a reduction in size and to change it to prevent it as being seen as advertising. Over 100 neighbors have signed a petition in favor of this application. It will be backed by a parapet wall that is the same color as the building. He provided images of what the sign will look like and reviewed the details of the sign. They also believe it will help stabilize the surrounding areas. It will not be seen by many surrounding properties. The application is in line with the current regulations.

Mr. Jason Labs from Hartford Healthcare was present to answer questions. He said that a member of the sign vendor was also present to answer questions.

Ms. Tracy Becker came forward to answer questions. The sign will be lit by internal LED illumination. There will be no spillover of light off the roof. The current light from the hospital will be more disruptive than the sign light.

A question was raised about the presence of the Hartford Healthcare logo on the sign. Ms. Becker said she did not believe that the logo was on the sign at that elevation. There is one at ground level.

Mr. William Jennings came forward to discuss this item. He pointed out that they were creating jobs and an economic engine.

Mr. Coleman came forward to speak in favor of this application. He pointed out that the staff findings and reviews had been done and submitted. The site does comply with regulations regarding size, location, and other characteristics that are required. It is also compliant with the master plan.

Atty. Rizio pointed to the petition and verified that the neighbors had signed in support of the sign and that it would not impact them. Also, Council Member Herron and Council Member Castillo said they had no objections to it being installed.

No one wished to speak in opposition to this item.



**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO APPROVE APPLICATION 22-10 WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- **THE PETITIONER SHALL FILE PLANS AND APPLICATIONS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ZONING COMPLIANCE AND A BUILDING PERMIT.**
- **THE ROOF SIGN SHALL BE IN STRICT ACCORD WITH THE PLAN SUBMITTED TO AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION.**

**FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**

- **THE APPLICATION AS APPROVED IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.50.6, AS WELL AS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.70.2 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Commissioner LaBuff returned to the meeting at 8:34 P.M.*

Mr. Buckley reported to the Commission that he received two applications seeking a one year extensions of time to their Special Permits, which he approved.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 31, 2022 AS SUBMITTED.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER LABUFF SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOTIONED TO ADJORN.**

**\*\* COMMISSIONER FILOTEI SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*The meeting adjourned at 8:37 P.M.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Ian A. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services