



**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 24, 2022**

45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604
(203) 576-7217 Phone
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ATTENDANCE: Mel Riley, Chairman; Robert Morton, Robert Filotei, Cesar Cordero, Johanna Dorgan, Kyle LaBuff, Jacqueline Martoral

STAFF: Paul Boucher, Zoning Department; Atty. Russ Liskov; Jackson Strong, Design Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Riley called the meeting to order at 6:27 p.m. He then introduced the Commissioners seated. A quorum was present.

DEFERRED BUSINESS.

D-1 (23-08) 2600 Madison Ave. – Petition of SIMCOVE, LLC – Seeking a special permit and a site plan review to allow a self-storage facility in the previous retail supermarket building in the MX2 zone. (Request to be deferred to Tuesday, May 30, 2023)

Commissioner Riley reminded everyone that this was the last deferral for the application.

D-2 (23-19) 537 Seaview Ave. – Petition of Barnum Landing, LLC – Seeking a modification to the August 31, 2015, previously approved development plan and existing coastal site plan approval in the RX2 zone and coastal area.

Atty. Brian McCann of Pulman and Comley of Main Street in Bridgeport came forward to address the Commission. He also introduced the project engineer, David Simpson from the DE Com, and Atty. John Stafstrom from Pulman and Comley and Martin Martinson representing the application.

Atty. McCann explained that they were seeking a modification of the current site plan and special permit approval from the 2015 plans. These plans was for a ferry terminal and a mixed use light industrial zone and Coastal Site Plan approval. The zoning on the property has changed since then and they are now located in an RX2 zone. The applicant is asking for a modification of those existing approvals.

Atty. McCann said that he had submitted a memorandum to the Commission which detailed Public Act 21-34, the approval were extended for 14 years from the original approval date. The original site plan and coastal site plan are expected to expire on September 1, 2029. The special permit on the parcel runs with the land and has been recorded on the land records.

The prior approvals were in conjunction with an adjacent property for 567 Seaview Avenue for a marine related repair facility and this portion of the project will not be discussed at this time. This modification is strictly for the 537 Seaview Avenue involving the ferry terminal and associated improvements.

The original project was not able to move forward in a timely fashion due to environmental contamination on the property. The details of this were included in the memorandum and Phase 1 and Phase 2 have been completed. During Phase 3 subsurface investigations, it was discovered that the site contains petroleum, hydrocarbons, VOCs, and other compounds. This required a CT DEEP remediation program and resulted in a land use restriction on the property. This also impacted the applications requirement for modifications. There will be a required seal of impervious material on the site and the amount of excavation on site is limited. This also limits the stormwater retention.

The modifications include a reduction in curb cuts and a revision of the vehicle layout on the eastern side and the western side parking, along with the consolidated on the building program. He noted that the free standing office that was previously located in the middle of the parking lot has been incorporated into the ferry terminal building.

Atty. McCann then detailed the reason for the reduction of curb cuts and the impact on vehicular maneuvering. It will also increase the number of ticketing lanes and reduce the amount of traffic on Seaview Avenue. He indicated where the queuing lanes would be located and noted that the new site plan provides additional green space, labeled as public plaza space between the water and the staging area. This will also include public access to the water area.

A single multipurpose building has been designed that will provide maintenance and storage on the ground level. The ferry terminal and ticketing will be on the first level and there will be office and mixed use event space on the upper level.

Atty. McCann said that he had spoken with Mr. Strong earlier in the day about some of the comments on the staff report. The staff would like to see some handicapped parking spaces for the recreational area and this would be acceptable as a condition of approval.

Atty. McCann then explained that the inclusion of a water taxi was accidentally omitted from the plan and this would be acceptable as a condition of approval. He indicated where that might be located on the plans.

There were also staff concerns about a previous regulation regarding the maximum set back for the principle use on the property. The principle use is for a ferry terminal and that is what was applied for previously and is also being applied for with this application. Under the old regulations, the ferry terminal is located 410 feet from Seaview Avenue. The new application places the terminal 490 feet from Seaview Avenue. The old regulation required 10 feet or prevailing set back. There has been discussion regarding what the Commission regarded as prevailing set backs in 2015. However, there are few uses like the ferry terminal and in 2015, there were few mixed use light industrial properties. He noted that one of the only other similar water dependent uses had a building that was located at the rear of the property. While placing the parking at the rear of a property would be understandable, a ferry terminal needs to be close to the water. He noted that the previous office building was located within 10 feet of the street as well. The new regulations do not include the set back.

Mr. Simpson came forward to speak about the project and said that they had been visiting the site for the last year or so. There are now only two curb cuts instead of three and this has improved the traffic flow along with internal traffic flow. He indicated where these lanes were located and reviewed the floor plan.

The engineers have been in touch with CT DEEP about the stormwater control plans and these have already been approved by the State.

There were several questions about the location of the staging area, which will be able to accommodate 200 vehicle or two ferry loads. It was noted that these proposed changes were significant. Discussion followed.

Atty. McCann reminded everyone that there was a full traffic report in the packets, along with a drainage report. Member of the project team have met with the East End NRZ and gave a short presentation before listening to their comments. There were concerns about public access and traffic. Every attempt has been made to accommodate the concerns including vehicles idling and exhaust. He said that it appeared to be a positive meeting.

Commissioner Riley asked Atty. McCann why this was not a new application. Atty. McCann said that it was a significant change but pointed out that they already had the ferry terminal, the ticketing offices and personnel offices.

Commissioner Riley said that the layout was significantly different and the number of entrances and exits had been significantly change. Atty McCann said that they believed these were all improvements with the consolidation of the building. Discussion followed.

Mr. Jackson Strong, the Design Review Coordinator, came forward to address the Commission. He said that they had reviewed the changes based on whether they conform to the regulations. Based on the previous NULI zone standards, the application meets the standards for all

requirements other than the setback requirement. It is an unusual shaped lot and difficult to determine the actual set back. He then read the regulation requirement and explained that there was no definition of “block”.

Commissioner Riley pointed out that there was no variance mentioned in the regulation. Mr. Strong agreed. Due to the fact that the site plan did not indicate what the distance was from the street to the building, it was difficult to determine what the distance was. This allows for a great deal of variance. It is a water dependent use.

Commissioner Riley asked what the new regulations would require. Mr. Strong said that he believed it would likely be an RX2 and fall under a civic or general building type and there are setback requirements for those two building types.

Mr. Strong said that in the event that the Commission decided to approve the project, they had requested three conditions of approval:

1. At the time of submission to the Zoning and Building Departments, the petitioner shall indicate on the site plan a water taxi facility in accordance with the use standards in the NULI zoning district. On that table for this particular use, it is required as stated “only permitted on a property with direct waterfront access within and around Bridgeport Harbor”. The site plan for any such facility shall include a suitable location for public or private water taxi service and reasonable public access.
2. To insure reasonable public access, the petitioner shall provide for a minimum of four public parking spaces, including one handicapped space, to be made available for visitors of the public portions of the site, including the waterfront walkway.
3. The petitioner shall meet with City staff to discuss landscaping, hardscaping, and other site elements along the site’s frontage prior to the submission of any plan to the Zoning and Building Department.

Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in favor of the application.

Mr. William Coleman, the OPED Deputy Director, came forward and reviewed the issues that had been raised. He said that he was in favor of the project.

The water dependent use is present for this project. They want the building to be at the water's edge. In the context of the new zoning regulations, Mr. Coleman pointed out that the water is really the street.

He said that Mr. Strong's recommendations were worth consideration and they reflect the older considerations and include the water taxi. These are all practical considerations.

Mr. Coleman said regarding the site plan set back, he appreciated the concerns regarding the relocation of the office building into the main building. However the location of the building does not change the water dependent use, which is the principle use.

Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Riley closed the public hearing on Agenda Item D-1 (23-19) RE: 537 Seaview Avenue – Seeking a modification to the August 31, 2015, previously approved development plan and existing coastal site plan approval in the RX2 zone and coastal area.

NEW BUSINESS

(23-20) 4191 (aka 4187) Main St. – Petition of Bulent Sag/Main Street Creamery, LLC – Seeking a special permit and site plan review approval for three (3) roof signs measuring 41-sq. ft., 15-sq. ft. and 28-sq. ft. at the existing ice-cream shop in the MX2 zone.

Mr. Bulent Sag of 59 Churchill Street in Trumbull came forward to address the Commissioners. He submitted the mailing receipts. He said that the business had been there for a number of years. He said that they wished to put up a new sign which has LED lettering to improve their presentation to the public. Many people pass the store without knowing there was a ice cream shop there.

Commissioner Riley asked about the orientations of the signs. Mr. Sag explained where the signs were located and gave the measurements.

Mr. Sag was given the list of special permit requirements and he assured the Commissioners that he complied with each one.

Mr. Jackson Strong, the Design Review Coordinator, came forward and greeted the Commissioners. He said that the signage meets the standards for the height, size and the government standards. He said that they did not have any specific recommendations. Regarding the Special Approval, Mr. Strong said he had reviewed the Master Plan and did not find a specific provision that supports signage and there is no conflict with the Master Plan.

In addition to the Special Permit requirements, there are three separate regulations to be considered, which he review with the Commissioners, including the backing of the signage being against a roof or wall, the signage not covering a windows, cornices or similar architectural features. He noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission was required to make a finding that all special permit applications and find that the proposed sign has the proposed language when viewed from any in zone property within ½ mile radius of the sign location will not illuminate or reduce by more than 25% of the view of significant or natural features. It is up to the Planning and Zoning Commission to determine what those local or significant features may be. He noted that a map was included in the information packet and noted that the sign was not viewable for most of the distance due to its low height. Therefore there were no issues with this.

Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in favor of the application.

Mr. William Coleman, the Deputy Director of OPED, came forward and said that he was compelled to speak in favor of ice cream, which was a key factor in economic strategy. It's not cannabis or alcohol. He said that the signs needed to be replaced after over 20 years.

Commissioner Riley pointed out that this sign was on a main corridor. He felt that they should make a main street more attractive. Mr. Coleman agreed and said that his department would discuss this.

Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Riley closed the public hearing on Agenda Item (23-20) 4191 (aka 4187) Main St. – Petition of Bulent Sag/Main Street Creamery, LLC – Seeking a special permit and site plan review approval for three (3) roof signs measuring 41-sq. ft., 15-sq. ft. and 28-sq. ft. at the existing ice-cream shop in the MX2 zone.

(23-21) 2101 Commerce Dr. – Petition of Extra Space Properties Two, LLC – Seeking a special permit, site plan review and coastal site plan review approval for the construction of a 32,000-sq. ft., 3-story, self-service storage building and a 3,700-sq. ft., 1-story self-service storage building in the MX2 zone and coastal area.

Atty. Chris Russo of Russo and Rizio, LLC came forward and greeted the Commission. The application is for construction of two separate self storage facility buildings. He then reviewed the area on Commerce Drive. There is currently a self storage facility on the parcel next to the location. It is bordered by railroad tracks and a car dealership, along with other industrial businesses. Ash Creek is 265 feet to the west of the property.

Atty. Russo then gave an overview of the parcel and explained that there was a grade change between Commerce Drive and the parcel. An easement was created to allow the driveway from Commerce Drive to the building. Originally, the developer was looking at a different type of

development that did not come to fruition, so the developer is requesting permission for a self-storage facility.

Atty. Russo then displayed the site plans for the two buildings. The access will remain the same and the parking area will be controlled by gates. There will be no storage of hazardous materials, outdoor vehicles, and cannot be used as a residence. A discussion followed regarding the increase in the number of apartments and self-storage units.

Atty. Russo said that the other self-storage unit parcel is kept in very clean condition. He then spoke about the Special Permit standards and explained that the application qualified. There are no residential neighbors and the development of the site would be an improvement. Any impact to Long Island Sound will be appropriately mitigated. Ash Creek is more than 200 feet from the site. Mr. Gaucher had requested that type of retention system be used for the storm water runoff.

Mr. Jackson Strong, the Design Review Coordinator, came forward and greeted the Commissioners. He said that the petition had been before the ZBA for variances because the building would normally be required to be closer to the street. This will improve the sidewalks since there are currently no sidewalks. He added that this would be compliant with the Master Plan by attracting new businesses and growing existing businesses. Self-storage units tend to pay taxes that exceed their actual cost to the city. He also spoke about as-of-right infill development.

The application follows the site plan review requirements and while it is within the coastal boundary, the business will not affect coastal resources. Since it is not adjacent to the water, there is no impact in terms of land use.

Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in favor of the application.

Mr. William Coleman, the Deputy Director of OPED, came forward and said that he was present to speak in favor. He said that he had been told by others in the industry that based on the population of Bridgeport, the city should have 1.8 million square feet of storage. He estimated that there was approximately 4,000 square feet of storage in the existing facilities. He listed some of the locations for the other storage places. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Riley then asked if there was anyone who would like to speak in opposition to the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Riley closed the public hearing on Agenda Item (23-21) 2101 Commerce Dr. – Petition of Extra Space Properties Two, LLC – Seeking a special permit, site plan review and coastal site plan review approval for the construction of a 32,000-sq. ft., 3-story, self-service storage building and a 3,700-sq. ft., 1-story self-service storage building in the MX2 zone and coastal area.

DECISION SESSION

D-1 (23-08) RE: 2600 MADISON AVENUE – Seeking a special permit and a site plan review to allow a self-storage facility in the previous retail supermarket building in the MX2 zone.

Commissioner Riley reminded everyone that this was the last deferral they would receive before they have to reapply.

**** COMMISSIONER LABUFF MOVED TO DEFER AGENDA ITEM D-1 (23-08) RE: 2600 MADISON AVENUE – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW TO ALLOW A SELF-STORAGE FACILITY IN THE PREVIOUS RETAIL SUPERMARKET BUILDING IN THE MX2 ZONE TO TUESDAY, MAY 30, 2023.
** COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

D-1 (23-19) RE: 537 SEAVIEW AVENUE – Seeking a modification to the August 31, 2015, previously approved development plan and existing coastal site plan approval in the RX2 zone and coastal area.

Atty. Liskov pointed out that it was up to the Commission to decide if the changes were significant enough to require a new application. Discussion followed.

**** COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOVED TO DENY AGENDA ITEM D-1 (23-19) RE: 537 SEAVIEW AVENUE – SEEKING A MODIFICATION TO THE AUGUST 31, 2015, PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND EXISTING COASTAL SITE PLAN APPROVAL IN THE RX2 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA.
** THE MOTION FAILED DUE TO THE LACK OF A SECOND.**

**** COMMISSIONER MARTORAL MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-1 (23-19) RE: 537 SEAVIEW AVENUE – SEEKING A MODIFICATION TO THE AUGUST 31, 2015, PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND EXISTING COASTAL SITE PLAN APPROVAL IN THE RX2 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA
** COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED.**

The discussion moved to the fact that the application was approximately 8 years old and there were questions regarding the setback requirements. Atty. Liskov suggested that the Commission might need more time to research the issue.

**** COMMISSIONER MARTORAL RESCINDED HER MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-1 (23-19)
** COMMISSIONER MORTON RESCINDED HIS SECOND.**

**** COMMISSIONER MARTORAL MOVED TO CONTINUE AGENDA ITEM D-1 (23-19) RE: 537 SEAVIEW AVENUE – SEEKING A MODIFICATION TO THE AUGUST 31, 2015, PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND EXISTING COASTAL SITE PLAN APPROVAL IN THE RX2 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA TO TUESDAY, MAY 30, 2023**

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

23-20. RE: 4191 (aka 4187) MAIN STREET – Seeking a special permit and site plan review approval for three (3) roof signs measuring 41-sq. ft., 15-sq. ft., and 28-sq. ft. at the existing ice-cream shop in the MX2 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 23-20. RE: 4191 (AKA 4187) MAIN STREET – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND SITE PLAN REVIEW APPROVAL FOR THREE (3) ROOF SIGNS MEASURING 41-SQ. FT., 15-SQ. FT., AND 28-SQ. FT. AT THE EXISTING ICE-CREAM SHOP IN THE MX2 ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITION:**

THE SIGNAGE IS APPROVED AS PER PLANS SUBMITTED.

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. THE IMPROVEMENT COMPLIES WITH THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF SECTION 11.50 AS WELL AS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.70.**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MASTER PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.**
- 3. THE ADDITION OF SIGNAGE WILL ASSIST THE LONGTIME BUSINESS TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS.**

***THIS SPECIAL PERMIT APPROVAL, AS REQUIRED UNDER SEC. 11.50.9 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CT SHALL EXPIRE MAY 1, 2024.**

**** COMMISSIONER CORDERO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

23-21 RE: 2101 COMMERCE DRIVE – Seeking a special permit, site plan review and coastal site plan review approval for the construction of a 32,000-sq. ft., 3-story, self-service storage building and a 3,700-sq. ft., 1-story self-service storage building in the MX2 zone and coastal area.

**** COMMISSIONER DORGAN MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 23-21
RE: 2101 COMMERCE DRIVE – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT, SITE PLAN
REVIEW AND COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW APPROVAL FOR THE
CONSTRUCTION OF A 32,000-SQ. FT., 3-STORY, SELF-SERVICE STORAGE
BUILDING AND A 3,700-SQ. FT., 1-STORY SELF-SERVICE STORAGE BUILDING IN
THE MX2 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITION:**

**THE APPLICANT IS TO COMPLY WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF
DEEP OUTLINED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYST’S EMAIL DATED
APRIL 24, 2023.**

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF
SEC. 11.50 AS WELL AS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC.
11.70.**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MASTER PLAN OF
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.**
- 3. THERE WILL BE NO DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON LONG ISLAND SOUND.**
- 4. THERE IS A QUANTIFIED NEED FOR THIS TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT IN
THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT.**

***This special permit approval, as required under sec. 11.50.9 and coastal site plan
approval, as required under sec. 11.80.7 of the Zoning Regulations of the City of
Bridgeport, CT shall both expire May 1, 2024.**

**** COMMISSIONER MARTORAL SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no additional items to consider at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

There were no additional items to consider at this time.

OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

There were no additional items to consider at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of March 27, 2023 – Present: Acting Chairman, Melville Riley.

Commissioners: Cesar Cordero, Johanna Dorgan, Robert Filotei, Kyle LaBuff, Jacqueline Martoral; PZC Clerk: Paul Boucher

**** COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 27, 2023 MEETING AS SUBMITTED.**

**** COMMISSIONER DORGAN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 27, 2023 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER MARTORAL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services