

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
REGULAR MEETING  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
JANUARY 31, 2022**

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

**STAFF:** Nick Sampieri, Zoning Department; Dennis Buckley, Zoning Department; Paul Boucher, Zoning Department

**OTHERS:** Atty. Michael Jankovsky; Patricia Sullivan; Catina Cricco; Atty. Charles Wilinger; Damien Breier; Devon Brown; Domick Caiati; Erika Caiati; Elise Nappi; Jack Belowich; John Stevens; Jim Rotondo; Kate Spain; Lee Jennings; Sue King; Tom Ryder; Shea Willcox; Jack Bella; Emily Sanpi

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Riley called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M. There was a quorum present.

Chairman Riley read the following statement into the record:

‘This meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission complies with Governor Lamont executive order 7-B as It relates to web-based meetings. Therefore, in person meeting requirements is eliminated as long as people can participate by phone or video in real time. Also, the return receipt of notifications we're voting property on this has been relaxed. As long as the agenda for today's meeting has been online with the statute’s normal earliest publication date in the Connecticut Post. This agenda was placed on the City website on January 11<sup>th</sup>, which complies with that requirement. The Zoning Department staff posted appropriate signs on each property on tonight's agenda excluding any Continued Items. This meeting is being recorded to comply with the open meeting requirements and will be available on this webpage immediately following tonight’s meeting. For those who are participating in tonight's meeting petitioners, attorneys, Commissioners, and members of the public and staff please state your name each time you speak. This may be awkward at first however it is necessary for the record to repeat your name whenever necessary. Nicholas Sampieri of the Zoning Department and I have administration capabilities during this meeting. Staff and Commissioners will be unmuted as needed. If anyone wishes to be acknowledged to speak feel free to use a chat button, which allows you to leave a message or use the raise your hand button on the computer. If neither of these options are available to you please send an email to nicholassampieri@bridgeport.com So they have the opportunity.’

**DEFERRED BUSINESS**

**D-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 MIXED-USE CENTERS MX2 ZONE.**

Ms. Patricia Sullivan came forward to speak. The site is presently approved for a motor vehicle gas station and a building to support that use. The proposal will add 850 square feet to the existing building for a convenience store. The notice of the meeting was sent, and green cards returned.

Ms. Sue King came forward to discuss this item. She provided schematics of the property for the Commission's review. They will be restriping the parking lot as well.

Ms. Sullivan said that the convenience store requires a special permit. They are compliant with the special permit requirements. It is not immediately adjacent to residential and there are no new signs. It will enhance the value of nearby properties and it is not disruptive to existing uses. It complies with the Master Plan.

Chairman Riley said it was a congested area and asked if there was a traffic study.

Ms. Sullivan said that they did not have a traffic study but stressed that they were only adding a convenience store which would not likely increase traffic in the area. She did not feel it would change the amount of traffic.

Commissioner Filotei said he vaguely recalled there having been an issue with an existing wall in the original approval which was why it had been restricted to be only for gas.

Mr. Buckley recounted the history of the site for Mr. Filotei. A cease-and-desist order had been issued when a prior attempt to install a convenience store had been done which had resulted in the site being vacant for years. He did not recall it coming before the board for approvals.

Commissioner Filotei said he did not feel the current amount of parking was adequate for the store. He also questioned the que from the gas pumps onto North Avenue and if the existing garage would be repurposed for use in the proposed store.

Mr. Buckley said that, while a number of repairs had been done in the past, the building that dealt with them had been razed. He also said that the current configuration for the que had not come for a hearing as it had been a gas station prior. It could be double-checked if needed. Further discussion followed.

Commissioner Filotei noted that he had seen items being sold recently and believed it had been retail and asked for clarification.

Chairman Riley said that the store had the right to sell automotive stuff.

Commissioner Filotei said he had seen tobacco being sold.

Ms. Sullivan said that it was an existing site, and they were not changing anything.

Commissioner Filotei said he was also concerned about the number of lanes that could get into and out of the convenience store. Discussion followed.

Chairman Riley said that a traffic study should be done by a licensed engineer.

Mr. Jack Bella came forward to discuss this item. He pointed out that, the prior year, a gas station with a store and with more difficult parking had been built across the street. He stressed that there would not be an increase in traffic. The parking spaces do comply with zoning regulations as well. He said there was no repair facility present and that they could not be done.

Chairman Riley said that they were in a very different location and situation.

Mr. Bella said that they would do the traffic study but that he believed that the location would also make it easier for people to enter and leave. Further discussion followed.

Ms. Sullivan said that they would like to continue this item so a traffic study could be done.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOTIONED TO CONTINUE ITEM 21-45 UNTIL THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup>.**

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

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

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**(22-01)**

**39 PENFIELD PL. – PETITION OF LANDTECH – SEEKING SPECIAL PERMIT, SITE PLAN REVIEW, AND COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW TO CONSTRUCT A BOATHOUSE, POOL, DOCK, REPAIR AND REPLACE THE EXISTING SEAWALL AND ADDITIONS TO THE EXISTING 1-FAMILY DWELLING IN THE ESTATES N3 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA.**

Mr. Tom Ryder came forward to discuss this item. He provided schematics of the site for the Commission. They have sent out mailings and provided receipts to Ms. Gloria Blackwell. He reviewed the details of the property and proposed buildings for the Commission. Most of the dock is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Energy Environmental Protection. A structures dredge will be done, and applications filed as part of the process. He reviewed the drainage system for the Commission. The application has been reviewed by the engineering departments and has received comments and only one concern regarding the use of plastic. Concrete has been proposed and they have agreed to change the design.

Chairman Riley asked if they had reviewed Mr. Goucher's letter regarding the dock.

Mr. Ryder said that Mr. Goucher had no comments on the site plan, and they were working with the D.E.E.P. to adjust the site plan. They have also requested additional data on the beach, and they have done that and are in the process of setting up an application.

Chairman Riley said that they could not approve the dock until Mr. Goucher provided clearance.

Mr. Ryder asked if the site plan could be approved without the dock, and they return for approval of the dock at a later date.

Commissioner Filotei asked if there would be a hoist on the dock.

Mr. Ryder said there would be a boat lift. They were still in the process of designing it, however. The designs will be sent to the D.E.E.P. for review.

Commissioner Filotei asked if the boat would be stored on-site.

Mr. Damien Brier came forward to discuss this item. He said the boat would not be storied on-site and currently is docked at Captain's Cove and storied at Fairweather Boat Yard.

Commissioner Filotei asked if the life would be used for the boat or for kayaks and the like.

Mr. Brier confirmed this.

Commissioner Morton asked about the drainage on the site and how long it had been designed for.

Mr. Jim Rotundo came forward to discuss this item. He said it had been designed for a 25-year storm event. Its main purpose is for stormwater quality and not detention of stormwater. Further discussion followed.

Commissioner Morton questioned the length of the dock.

Mr. Ryder said it went out to the low water as a fixed pier and further reviewed the details for the Commission. Further discussion followed. He clarified it was for rainwater, not for surging waters.

No one wished to speak in favor of this application.

Mr. Domick Caiati came forward to speak in opposition to this application. They had concerns about the renovations to the property. He said that the driveway would be relocated which would cause problems with the traffic flow which was already difficult. There have been issues with traffic due to the street being a dead end. Additionally, there are concerns that the new structure will block the line of sight to the water which is a concern of theirs. Finally, the construction and blockage of the view could decrease the value of the property.

Ms. Emily Sanpi came forward to speak in opposition to this item. She has issues with the proposed dock. She is concerned it will impact their view. She said that the people on the street desire to have the water view from their porches. She felt that the dock would be an eyesore.

Ms. Erica Caianti came forward to speak against this item. She felt they would end up effectively having a McMansion across the street which she was very concerned about.

No one else wished to speak in opposition.

Mr. Brier came forward to rebut. He said having one driveway across from another was a common thing and there were other driveways on the street opposing each other. Before purchasing the property, he had also done research to ensure there was no easement on the property and there had not been one. As it was his property, he did not feel he needed to consider the point of view of others regarding their ability to see the water. There are also docks nearby in the harbor already.

Mr. Ryder said that they were prepared to discuss the dock, but since it was not currently part of the application, it would be irrelevant for now and could be discussed and receive public comment later. There had also been a zoning charge in relation to the size of the house and he reviewed the details for the Commission. They are below the site coverage for the zone. Additionally, the view is not part of the Coastal Area Management Act and there are no regulations or enforcements for this.

Commissioner Filotei said that there was an issue of flooding that had not been brought up which he reviewed for the Commission. He felt they also needed to maintain the integrity of the area and the project may be too intense for it. Four out of the six people on the street felt it was a bad idea and that needed consideration.

Atty. Michael Jankovsky came forward to discuss this item. He wished to remind the Commission that this application involved a request for a special permit. As a result, they would need to make their findings in 11-50.6.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOTIONED TO DENY APPLICATION 22-01.**

\*\* The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

**\*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOTIONED TO APPROVE APPLICATION 22-01.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION FAILED TO PASS WITH TWO IN FAVOR (MORTON, LABUFF) AND THREE OPPOSED (MORENO, DORGAN, FILOTEI)**

**\*\* THE FOLLOWING REASONS WERE GIVEN FOR APPROVAL:**

- **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE LONG ISLAND SOUND ECO-SYSTEM.**
- **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT MEETS THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT'S ON-SITE RAIN-STORM WATER RETENTION REQUIREMENTS.**
- **THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION REVIEWED THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT THEY HAD NO COMMENT/ISSUES FOR THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION'S CONSIDERATION REGARDING THE SITE IMPROVEMENTS.**

**\*\* THE FOLLOWING REASONS WERE GIVEN FOR DENIAL:**

- **THE AREA ALONG THE SHORE CAN BE IMPACTED BY COASTAL STORM SURGES.**
- **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPERTY IS TOO INTENSE FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD.**

- THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INCREASES THE IMPERVIOUS AREA OF THE SITE.
- THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WILL ADVERSELY IMPACT THE INTEGRITY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

(22-02)

3115, 3129, 3135 FAIRFIELD AVE. 704 COURTLAND AVE, 30 CLARKSON ST. – PETITION OF 3115 FAIRFIELD AVENUE, LLC – SEEKING SITE PLAN REVIEW, AND COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW TO CONSTRUCT A MIXED-USE BUILDING WITH GROUND FLOOR RETAIL AND 52 APARTMENTS IN THE RESIDENTIAL-OFFICE CORRIDOR RX1 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA.

This item was **deferred** until the next meeting.

(END OF PUBLIC HEARING)

OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

There was no other business at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

NOVEMBER 16, 2021

- \*\* COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 16, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.
- \*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

NOVEMBER 17, 2021

- \*\* COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 17, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.
- \*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

NOVEMBER 29, 2021

- \*\* COMMISSIONER FILOTEI MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.
- \*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

- \*\* COMMISSIONER MORTON MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.
- \*\* COMMISSIONER LABUFF SECONDED THE MOTION.

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

*The meeting adjourned at 7:46 P.M.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ian A. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services