



**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 26, 2022**

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

STAFF: Paul Boucher, Zoning Department, Jackson Strong, Design Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Riley reconvened the recessed meeting of September 26th to order at 6:30 p.m. He then announced the Commissioners seated. A quorum was present.

(22-38) 1234 Huntington Tpke. – Petition of Majix Enterprises, LLC – Seeking a certificate of approval of location for cannabis sales within a portion of the existing retail building located in the MX2 zone.

Chairman Riley announced that Majix Enterprises, LLC had requested this item be continued to the November 1st meeting.

DEFERRED BUSINESS

D-1 (22-34) 427 Chopsey Hill Rd. – Petition of Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County – Seeking a zone change from N4 to N2 beginning at a point on the easterly side of Wilcox Street thence running Northerly 314.49 feet; Easterly 439.54 feet; Southerly 155.54 feet; Westerly 100.00 feet; Southerly again 50.00 feet; Westerly again 125.00 feet; Southerly again 100.00 feet; Westerly again 151.80 feet to the point of beginning, and also seeking approval for a 14-lot subdivision of the existing parcel.

Atty. Robert Russo of Russo & Rizio located in Fairfield, came forward and greeted the Commissioners. He submitted the green mailing cards and then displayed a zoning map of the area. Atty. Russo explained that the property was surrounded on three sides with existing streets. He said that the change from N4 to N2 was basically a change in building types. However, the front and rear setbacks along with the coverage percentage was the same as the N4 zone.

Atty. Russo then handed out packets of photographs to the Commissioners and reviewed the details of those photographs.

Atty. Russo said that Mr. Strong had reviewed the Conservations and Development and gave a brief summary of Mr. Strong's comments. It is a 14 lot development and Habitat will have to come back before the Commission for the two family residences. Concerns about traffic speeding on Chopsey Hill have been addressed. Only one of the single family units has a driveway leading directly out to Chopsey Hill Road.

Mr. Kevin Moore, of Habitat for Humanity, came forward and gave a brief overview of the Habitat home ownership program. Atty. Russo said that the two family units would be owner occupied a with a renter in one of the units.

Atty. Russo distributed copies of an email from Council Member Roman-Christy in support of the project

Commissioner Riley asked why they were asking for a zone change. Atty. Russo said that the frontage area requirement was smaller and would allow the program to create a few additional lots. The buffers and set backs are still the same.

Commissioner Cordero asked where the driveways were located on Summit Street. Atty. Russo then indicated where the driveways were located.

Commissioner Cordero asked for clarification on the neighboring lots. Atty. Russo said that they were zoned N2.

Commissioner Morton asked if they would be affordable housing and whether there was an owner occupancy was a requirement for the two family units. Mr. Moore said that there was.

Mr. Strong came forward and said that the application had been reviewed. This is for a zoning map amendment and subdivision of a parcel. He then reviewed the criteria that the request fulfilled for both the zone amendment and the request for subdivision. The proposal is in accordance with the Master Plan of Conservation and Development and the Zoning Regulations. He noted that the type of housing that was permitted

Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward.

Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition to the application.

Mr. Rennie of 88 Wilcox Street came forward and said that everyone on Wilcox Street objects to this new development. It is not in character with the surrounding housing, which is all one family residences. Mr. Remove submitted a petition with numerous names on it.

Ms. Kim Easton came forward and said that she lives in the Lake Forest area. The property used to be a farm and then it was zoned for single family residences. She noted that in the 1980s, a moratorium was placed on duplexes. The homes will bring more traffic to the area. She noted that the intersection now has a traffic light and it takes 5 to 7 minutes to get to Route 8 where it used to take 3 minutes. The traffic also blocks access to the driveways on Chopsey Hill Road. This will double the density. The duplexes will increase the density even more.

Mr. Stephen Eaton of 331 Wilson Avenue came forward to speak against this. He said that he was for affordable housing but this would be too much. Many more people would be here if they knew about this project. Chopsey Hill is heavily traveled and this project is wrong. It will hurt the people in the neighborhood and those who will move there. The property has been for sale for many years. He said that the homes across the street were worth half a million and this parcel was all rock. He asked if they had thought about the lawsuits. This is wrong.

Mr. Rennie came forward and noted that they had constructed a number of houses along Summit Street.

Mr. Bill Coleman came forward and said he had been listening to this. The question is one of nuance. He said that he did not believe that this was correcting a zoning error. He indicated on the map where single family homes were and felt that the density should remain the same.

Atty. Russo came forward for rebuttal. He said that they were just asking for a zone change up Wilcox Street. He said that there were N2 zones on two sides of the parcel. He said that they had heard the concerns about the residents of Wilcox street and request a continuance to revise the lot lines. Discussion followed.

Atty. Russo then requested a continuance of the hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

(22-36) 55 Congress St. – Petition of the United Illuminating Company – Seeking a site plan review and coastal site plan review to permit the installation of a perimeter floodwall around the existing Congress Street substation to improve the protection from outages due to coastal and riverine flooding and storm damage in the P4 zone and Coastal Area Management overlay zone.

Mr. Todd Berman, Environmental Manager for UI, came forward and greeted the Commissioners. He displayed a site plan showing a flood wall. The distribution lines run east of the river and there are two that go north. It is the beating heart of the power grid.

Commissioner Riley said that a letterhead been received from Mr. John Gaucher regarding this. The letter states that the proposed structure meets the flood wall requirements.

Mr. Berman encouraged the Commissioners to come out and view the plant while under construction. They hope to have it up and running by next year.

Mr. Strong, the City's Design Coordinator, said that his department had reviewed the application for the flood protection wall. He noted that this project was overseen by the Connecticut Siting Council, which supersedes the Planning and Zoning Commission. He added that they were requesting one recommendation about a small sliver of land by the river, which the City hopes to turn into a park. He said that it was the hope of the Department to work with the City to have a continuous public walkway along the Pequonnock River riparian zone.

Mr. Berman said that he would work with Mr. Strong and attempt to provide this request, however, he cautioned the Commission that this might not be possible.

Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition of the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Riley closed the public hearing on 55 Congress Street.

(22-37) 835 Clinton Ave. – Petition of We Want More, Inc – Seeking a special permit and a site plan review approval for adaptive reuse of the historic carriage house to be retrofitted to counseling offices and a meeting room as accessory to the prayer and counseling house located in the N3 zone.

Mr. John Mastera, of New Canaan, came forward and greeted the Commission. He said that the building had been occupied by the Sisters of the Holy Cross and was subsequently sold to We Want More, Inc. The carriage house was used as counseling rooms and they wish to retrofit it. The parcel is large for that area. The building is architecturally significant. The Historic Commission approved this project on August 2nd. The roof will need to be reconstructed and will include a number of dormers consistent with the Tudor style. The main house is both a private residence but also houses some offices.

Commissioner Riley said that the WPCA had requested a lateral for the sewage. Mr. Mastera said he had not received that document. Commissioner Riley gave him a copy of it.

Mr. Strong, the City's Design Coordinator, came forward and said that this was the first application for the new adaptive reuse regulations. The City's regulations are intended to govern new construction. The new code contains a number of flexible areas. He then reviewed the details with the Commission. He said that the application complies with the Zoning regulations

and is also consistent with the Master Plan of Conservation and Development. He added that the upgrades to the facade included additional elements that are consistent with the Tudor style.

Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition of the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Riley closed the public hearing on 835 Clinton Avenue.

(22-39) 61 Herald Ave. – Petition of Joseph Sicsico – Seeking a special permit and a site plan review approval for the construction of a two-family dwelling in the N2 zone.

Atty. Russo came forward and turned in the green mailing cards. Mr. Sicsico also came forward. He said that the proposed two family project abuts another two family residence. The lot exceeds the ones to the north, east and west. It has over 1 1/2 times of frontage that is required for the zone. Atty. Russo then reviewed the details of the site plan along with the floor plan and exterior drawings.

Atty. Russo gave an overview of the Special Permit requirements.

Mr. Strong, the City's Design Coordinator, came forward and reviewed the details of the regulations with the Commission. He said that the project was consistent with the Master Plan.

He noted that there were two existing trees on the property. Mr. Strong said that they would like to continue to provide a tree canopy. He recommended that the existing oak tree at the rear of the lot be preserved to the greatest extent feasible. He added that the site plan should contain the landscaping plan. There will also need to have a sidewalk installed even though the neighboring properties do not have sidewalks.

Commissioner Morton asked what the minimum landscaping was. Mr. Strong said that 30% had to be permeable, but noted that there were other requirements.

Atty. Russo said that they would agree to the recommendations.

Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Riley asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition of the application. Hearing none, Commissioner Riley closed the public hearing on 64 Herald Avenue.

Commissioner Riley then closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

DECISION SESSION

Agenda Item (22-38) 1234 Huntington Tpke. – Petition of Majix Enterprises, LLC – Seeking a certificate of approval of location for cannabis sales within a portion of the existing retail building located in the MX2 zone was deferred to November 1, 2022.

D-1 (22-34) 427 Chopsey Hill Rd. – Petition of Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County – Seeking a zone change from N4 to N2 beginning at a point on the easterly side of Wilcox Street thence running Northerly 314.49 feet; Easterly 439.54 feet; Southerly 155.54 feet; Westerly 100.00 feet; Southerly again 50.00 feet; Westerly again 125.00 feet; Southerly again 100.00 feet; Westerly again 151.80 feet to the point of beginning, and also seeking approval for a 14-lot subdivision of the existing parcel.

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO CONTINUE AGENDA ITEM D-1 (22-34) 427 CHOPSEY HILL RD. – PETITION OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF COASTAL FAIRFIELD COUNTY – SEEKING A ZONE CHANGE FROM N4 TO N2 BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE EASTERLY SIDE OF WILCOX STREET THENCE RUNNING NORTHERLY 314.49 FEET; EASTERLY 439.54 FEET; SOUTHERLY 155.54 FEET; WESTERLY 100.00 FEET; SOUTHERLY AGAIN 50.00 FEET; WESTERLY AGAIN 125.00 FEET; SOUTHERLY AGAIN 100.00 FEET; WESTERLY AGAIN 151.80 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND ALSO SEEKING APPROVAL FOR A 14-LOT SUBDIVISION OF THE EXISTING PARCEL TO THE NOVEMBER 1, 2022 MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER MORENO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

(22-36) 55 Congress St. – Petition of the United Illuminating Company – Seeking a site plan review and coastal site plan review to permit the installation of a perimeter floodwall around the existing Congress Street substation to improve the protection from outages due to coastal and riverine flooding and storm damage in the P4 zone and Coastal Area Management overlay zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED AGENDA ITEM (22-36) 55 CONGRESS ST. – PETITION OF THE UNITED ILLUMINATING COMPANY – SEEKING A SITE PLAN REVIEW AND COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW TO PERMIT THE INSTALLATION OF A PERIMETER FLOODWALL AROUND THE EXISTING CONGRESS STREET SUBSTATION TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION FROM OUTAGES DUE TO COASTAL AND RIVERINE FLOODING AND STORM DAMAGE IN THE P4 ZONE AND COASTAL AREA MANAGEMENT OVERLAY ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITION:**

THE DESIGN REVIEW COORDINATOR'S RECOMMENDATION OF A PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE WATER BE INCORPORATED INTO THE PROPOSAL ONLY IF UI DEEMS IT IS A FEASIBLE REQUEST BASED ON MAINTAINING THE SECURITY OF THE SITE.

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

THE PROJECT AS APPROVED WILL HAVE NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE COASTAL AREA.

***This coastal site plan approval, as required under Sec. 11.80.9 of the Zoning Regulations of the City of Bridgeport, CT shall expire on October 3, 2023.**

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

(22-37) 835 Clinton Ave. – Petition of We Want More, Inc – Seeking a special permit and a site plan review approval for adaptive reuse of the historic carriage house to be retrofitted to counseling offices and a meeting room as accessory to the prayer and counseling house located in the N3 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED AGENDA ITEM (22-37) 835 CLINTON AVE. – PETITION OF WE WANT MORE, INC – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW APPROVAL FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE HISTORIC CARRIAGE HOUSE TO BE RETROFITTED TO COUNSELING OFFICES AND A MEETING ROOM AS ACCESSORY TO THE PRAYER AND COUNSELING HOUSE LOCATED IN THE N3 ZONE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:**

THE PROPOSAL MEETS THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.50; THE ADAPTIVE REUSE STANDARDS, AND THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.70.

***This special permit approval, as required under Sec. 11.50 of the Zoning Regulations of the City of Bridgeport, CT shall expire October 3, 2023.**

**** COMMISSIONER MARTORAL SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

(22-39) 61 Herald Ave. – Petition of Joseph Sicsico – Seeking a special permit and a site plan review approval for the construction of a two-family dwelling in the N2 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED AGENDA ITEM (22-39) 61 HERALD AVE. – PETITION OF JOSEPH SICSICO – SEEKING A SPECIAL PERMIT AND A SITE PLAN REVIEW APPROVAL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TWO-FAMILY DWELLING IN THE N2 ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. A SIDEWALK IS TO BE INSTALLED IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY FROM PROPERTY LINE TO PROPERTY LINE.**
- 2. EXISTING TREES ARE TO REMAIN IF POSSIBLE.**
- 3. LANDSCAPING IS TO BE PROVIDED PER THE ZONING CODE.**

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. NO ADVERSE IMPACTS.**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL MEETS THE SPECIAL PERMIT STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.50 AS WELL AS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS OF SEC. 11.70.**

***This special permit approval, as required under Sec. 11.50 of the Zoning Regulations of the City of Bridgeport, CT shall expire October 3, 2023.**

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

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no additional business to consider at this time.

OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

Mr. Boucher said that the Zoning Office will begin accepting applications online and they will be switching to paperless presentations in the future.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- August 29, 2022**

**** COMMISSIONER MORENO MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 29, 2022 MEETING.**

City of Bridgeport
Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
September 26, 2022

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED.
** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 29, 2022
MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** COMMISSIONER LABUFF SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services