

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
June 8, 2009 Meeting

Commission Members Present: Alan Gannuscio, Marshall Brown, Vincent Zimnoch, Janet Ramsay, and Jim Tatro

Town Staff Present: Town Planning Coordinator and Assistant Zoning and Wetlands Officer Jennifer Rodriguez, Town Engineer Dana Steele, and Town Planning Consultant Michael O'Leary

Chairman Gannuscio called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Commission roll call was taken.

MINUTES:

Chairman Gannuscio referred to the May 11, 2009 meeting minutes and noted that he, Mr. Brown, Ms. Ramsay, and Mr. Tatro were present at that meeting. He then asked the Commission members and staff for any comments or corrections. They had none. Mr. Gannuscio moved to approve the May 11, 2009 meeting minutes, as published. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5 – 0, the motion was approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None

Chairman Gannuscio stated that Attorney Thomas Fahey had requested an informal discussion for that evening regarding 130 Ella Grasso Turnpike (Budget Rental Car). He then asked Town Planning Consultant O'Leary and Town Engineer Steele if they had received anything regarding 130 Ella Grasso Turnpike. They had not received anything. A brief discussion followed and the Commission members and staff agreed to hold an informal discussion later than evening under New Business.

REVIEWS:

a. Review of the site plan modification application of The Congregational Church of Windsor Locks, Conn., Inc. for the property located at 8 Main Street.

Attorney Paul Smith addressed the Commission and stated that they were still before the Wetlands Commission with their plan because it involved a fair amount of upland area and a small wetlands area. He went on to say that they did not have an approval from the Wetlands Commission, which the Planning and Zoning Commission would

need before they could make any final decision. Attorney Smith stated that he had received comments from Mr. O'Leary and Mr. Steele and that he did not see anything in those comments that they could not address.

Chairman Gannuscio stated that he had received a memo from Gary Kuczarski, Water Pollution Control Facility Superintendent, which stated that he had no issues with the proposed site plan.

Chairman Gannuscio stated that he had received a memo from Scott Lappen, Director of Public Works, which stated that he had no issues with the proposed site plan.

Chairman Gannuscio read the May 15, 2009 memo from John Suchocki, Jr., Police Chief, as follows:

"I have reviewed the above-identified site plan modification and have no concerns with the plans as submitted, provided all Planning and Zoning regulations are met."

Ms. Rodriguez read the May 12, 2009 memo from the Fire Marshal as follows:

"Please be advised that review of the site plan specifications for the above noted project disclosed no issues affected fire apparatus access or fire suppression."

Chairman Gannuscio asked the Commission members and staff for any questions or concerns. Mr. O'Leary asked if the actual transfer of property from Walgreens had occurred. Attorney Smith replied that it had occurred and that they had filed a Merger Certificate. Mr. O'Leary noted that there was nothing on the plan that said that it had been merged and that that information was needed. Attorney Smith stated that he would get a copy of the recorded certificate and that a note could be added to the plan regarding the merger.

Chairman Gannuscio moved to continue the review of the site plan modification application of The Congregational Church of Windsor Locks, Conn., Inc. for the property located at 8 Main Street to the July 13, 2009 meeting. Mr. Zimnoch seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5 – 0, the motion was approved.

b. Review of the site plan modification application of Aaron Hotel Partners, LLC for the property located at 600 Spring Street.

Heather Dudko who was working with the sign installer, Philadelphia Sign, addressed the Commission and stated that it was an existing Comfort Suites Hotel that was

being changed to a Holiday Inn Express. She went on to say that they wanted to change the signage to reflect the name change. Ms. Dudko stated that they wanted to replace the existing freestanding sign, one wall sign and one directional sign and remove three internally illuminated wall signs. She noted that there were currently six signs that they would be replacing with three signs.

Ms. Dudko stated that there was a total of 182 square feet of signage currently on the site and that the total replacement would be 77 square feet of signage. She explained that they would use the existing brick base for the freestanding sign and remove and replace the entire sign head. She noted that the new one would be a 32 square foot internally illuminated sign (no change to the setback and no structural change to the base).

Chairman Gannuscio asked if the current sign gave a street address or number. Ms. Dudko replied that it did not. Mr. Gannuscio then asked if the street address or number would be added to the proposed sign. Ms. Dudko replied that it was not on the proposal, but that they could add it. Mr. Gannuzio pointed out that that was something that the Commission had been asking for. Mr. O'Leary then noted that it was in the regulations. Ms. Dudko asked where the Commission wanted to see the address. A brief discussion followed and Mr. O'Leary suggested that the number be placed on the base. The Commission members agreed that that would work best. Ms. Dudko then asked what size numbers they should use. Mr. Gannuscio replied that they should be 6 inches high. Ms. Dudko asked what color the number should be. Mr. O'Leary suggested that Ms. Dudko work with Ms. Rodriguez on the specifics regarding the number and the Commission members all agreed.

Ms. Dudko stated that the existing wall sign was 52 square feet and that they wanted to replace it at 43 square feet. She went on to say that it was the wall sign that was facing Spring Street. She noted that it would also remain internally illuminated. Ms. Dudko stated that the remaining other three existing wall signs would be removed and not replaced. She went on to say that there was also an existing ground directional sign that was 2 square feet and 5 feet overall height and that it would be replaced at the same exact size and in the same location.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. O'Leary for his comments. Mr. O'Leary stated that he had not prepared a memorandum, because the package that had been submitted was very complete. He went on to say that the freestanding sign was consistent with the size requirement and complied with the style that the Commission had been looking for. He also noted that the number of signs was being reduced.

Mr. O’Leary commented that it was an unusual parcel because it was a Spring Street address, but that the sign was right on Ella Grasso Turnpike. He then suggested that the sign actually say “600 Spring Street” rather than just the number (600) to alleviate any confusion regarding the address. Ms. Dudko stated that she did not think that the applicant would be opposed to placing “600 Spring Street” on the sign.

Mr. Brown asked if there was going to be any changes to the lighting on the signs. Ms. Dudko replied that there would be no lighting change; the existing sign was internally illuminated and the new sign would also be internally illuminated.

Chairman Gannuscio asked the Commission members for any comments. They had none.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. Steele and Ms. Rodriguez for any comments. They had none.

Chairman Gannuscio read the following from the Police Chief’s memorandum dated May 13, 2009:

“I have reviewed the above-identified site plan modification and have no concerns with the plans as submitted, provided all Planning and Zoning regulations are met, and any signage does not present any exit/egress line-of-sight blockage issues.”

Chairman Gannuscio asked staff for any final concerns. They had none. Mr. Gannuscio then noted that, if the Commission approved the modification that evening, the final review would go through staff.

Chairman Gannuscio asked the Commission members for any final questions. They had none.

Chairman Gannuscio asked for a motion. Mr. Zimnoch moved to approve the site plan modification application of Aaron Hotel Partners, LLC for the property located at 600 Spring Street with the condition that staff has final approval on the address signage. Mr. Tatro seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5 – 0, the motion was approved.

ACTION ON CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:

There was none.

OLD BUSINESS:

b. Review of the extension for 177 Old County Road.

No one was present for this review.

Chairman Gannuscio asked the Recording Secretary to carry the item forward to the July 13, 2009 meeting agenda.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. Steele about the bond reduction and if it was for North Wind Estates or Windgate Mews. Mr. Steele stated that the Commission had looked at a bond reduction the previous month for North Wind Estates, but that they were now looking at Windgate Mews. He went on to say that the project had essentially been completed and that they were looking for the last Certificate of Occupancy (CO). He noted that prior to issuing that last CO they should make sure that all of the plantings associated with the wetland enhancements were completed. Mr. Steele pointed out that, even though it was dealing mainly with wetland enhancements, the bond was a condition of the Planning and Zoning approval. Therefore, Planning and Zoning Commission authorization was required to set the maintenance bond. He explained that they would be reducing the existing bond down to \$10,000. Mr. Steele noted that they had a consultant that would be monitoring the work for a three year monitoring period. He then suggested that they include the \$10,000 maintenance bond for three years.

Chairman Gannuscio clarified that it was for Windgate Mews. Mr. Steele stated that that was correct; it was the active adult condominiums.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. O'Leary and Ms. Rodriguez for any concerns or comments. They had none.

Chairman Gannuscio moved that the Commission adopt the recommendations of the Town Engineer set out in his June 8, 2009 letter for a maintenance bond in the amount of \$10,000 issued prior to the final Certificate of Occupancy. The maintenance bond shall remain in place for the three year monitoring period. However, the amount of the bond may be re-evaluated annually. Ms. Ramsay seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5 – 0, the motion was approved.

Chairman Gannuscio clarified that the Commission had voted on North Wind Estates at the previous month's meeting and that nothing else needed to be done with it. Mr. Steele stated that that was correct. He went on to say that they were in the process of getting the performance bond in place for Phase III and planned to move forward with construction of that phase. He noted that the drainage problem seemed to have been resolved.

c. Discussion regarding the bus shelters.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she had had some communications with CRCOG and that they were looking to see if the Town had made any moves on building anything into the regulations or talking about how the Town might permit an off-site sign. She noted that the ordinance only allowed for Town properties to be exempt from the Zoning Regulations, but that the bus shelters would be on State right-of-ways and possibly a small portion of each bus shelter would lie on private property. Ms. Rodriguez commented that the Town would need to change an ordinance or the Zoning Regulations to allow for the bus shelter signs.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. O'Leary if he would like to work with Ms. Rodriguez on it. Mr. O'Leary stated that they could do so. He then pointed out that if the bus shelters were entirely in the State right-of-ways then they would be all set, because it was not controlled by the Town's regulations. He commented that maybe all that Ms. Rodriguez needed to know was if the Commission was supportive of the concept or not. Ms. Rodriguez reiterated that CRCOG wanted some type of Zoning approval for the shelters. Mr. O'Leary asked what the timeframe was for the shelters. Ms. Rodriguez replied that it was dependent upon getting everything coordinated with all of the towns. Mr. O'Leary commented that technically if they were on private property they would need an amendment to the regulations. He then pointed out that an amendment would be very simply. A discussion followed regarding the various bus stops in Town and whether or not bus shelters would be placed at all of them on Main and North Streets as well as Route 75. Ms. Rodriguez stated that CRCOG had chosen the bus stops with the most use and listed them as follows:

- Windsor Locks lot at South Main Street;
- two at Bradley International Airport;
- Ella Grasso Turnpike and Burger King;
- Ella Grasso Turnpike and Double Tree;
- Corporate Drive;
- Loten Drive; and
- Schoephoester and Postal Road.

Chairman Gannuscio commented that they all appeared to be within the State right-of-way. Ms. Rodriguez stated that the majority of the shelters would be in the State

right-of-way, but CRCOG had not been comfortable saying that all of them would be completely within the State right-of-way; some might partially extend onto private property.

Mr. O'Leary commented that when CRCOG knew where the shelters would be located then the Commission could act. Ms. Rodriguez noted that she just needed to be able to tell CRCOG that she had discussed the issue with the Commission. Chairman Gannuscio commented that Ms. Rodriguez could inform CRCOG that they had had a discussion regarding the bus shelters and that there would continue to be discussions as the sites were identified more concretely. The discussion continued briefly and Mr. Tatro asked, if a shelter were on private property, if it would make it defacto State property. Ms. Rodriguez replied that it would. Mr. Tatro then pointed out that the question would then be mute because it would all be State property.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. O'Leary if he had anything regarding election signs. Mr. O'Leary replied that he did and then proceeded to distribute a packet of information to the Commission members and staff. He referred to the October 20, 1999 letter contained in the packet and stated that it served as a very nice summary. Mr. O'Leary went on to say that Items 1, 2, and 3 in that letter really summarized the letter and what towns could do with election signs. He then pointed out that it was different for municipal-owned property, privately-owned residential property and privately-owned non-residential property. He noted that traffic safety and illumination were all things that the Commission could address with regard to political signs.

Mr. O'Leary suggested that the Commission members read through the packet of information and that they could discuss it further at a future meeting. He went on to say that he did not think that it would involve a huge change to the regulations.

Chairman Gannuscio asked the Recording Secretary to carry forward a discussion regarding the sign regulations (election signs) to the next meeting agenda.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. O'Leary if he had anything regarding the Zoning Regulations (density, shared parking and a possible village district). Mr. O'Leary replied that he did not have anything for that evening. Mr. Gannuscio then asked the Recording Secretary to carry forward a discussion regarding the Zoning Regulations (density, shared parking and a possible village district) to the next meeting agenda.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Public Input

There was none.

Chairman Gannuscio asked for any staff concerns. Mr. Steele referred to the Northwind Estates subdivision and stated that they were putting in a detention basin on three of the lots that had not been part of the original approval. He then suggested that a new subdivision mylar be filed, at least for that sheet, for Commission signature. Mr. Gannuscio commented that that sounded reasonable.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she had received a letter from Andrea Wagner who had previously received an approval from the Commission for a farm stand and ice cream shop. She explained that Ms. Wagner had installed part of the required sidewalk, but had run into some issues while searching for the sewer line and was unable to lay the rest of the sidewalk. Ms. Rodriguez stated that Ms. Wagner wanted to postpone installing the remainder of the sidewalk so that she could open for business for the summer season. She then commented that the question for the Commission was whether or not they wanted to permit bonding for a portion of the sidewalk. Chairman Gannuscio suggested that Ms. Rodriguez and Mr. Steele work with Ms. Wagner on the sidewalk issue. The other Commission members agreed.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she had received a letter from Ed Kowalski regarding a community garden at 440 North Street. She then submitted the letter to Chairman Gannuscio and noted that it was the Sluzinsky property. Ms. Rodriguez stated that it was currently zoned Industrial, but that the last use of the property was agricultural. She went on to say that she had asked Mr. Kowalski if it would be a for profit business, but that she really had not gotten an answer to that question.

Ms. Ramsay left the meeting at 8:00 pm.

Chairman Gannuscio asked if Mr. Kowalski owned the property. Ms. Rodriguez replied that he did not own the property; he was thinking about leasing the property. A brief discussion regarding community gardens followed and Chairman Gannuscio stated that, with the lack of detail provided, he did not really know what to say about it.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she had received a letter from Jason Charette regarding 252C Main Street and then submitted it to Chairman Gannuscio. She went on to say that the property in question was across the street from Windsor Locks Commons and that she had not seen any issue with it. Ms. Rodriguez stated that it was currently retail and that the proposed business was a dog grooming business where people would drop off their dogs for grooming. She went on to say that there were five parking spaces in front of the strip, another three spaces on the side and Windsor Locks Commons' parking across the street. Ms. Rodriguez stated that she had had no issue with the proposed business. Chairman Gannuscio agreed and stated that it sounded okay.

Ms. Rodriguez commented that she and Mr. O'Leary had talked briefly at the beginning of the meeting about tree houses because she had been asked earlier that day to ask the Commission for their position on tree houses and whether they considered a tree house a structure. She went on to say that the Building Office had never given a permit for a playhouse or tree house, but that she had been asked to clarify it. Chairman Gannuscio asked if it was a concern because there was a tree house too close to a property line. Ms. Rodriguez replied that that was the case; there was a tree house about three or four feet off the property line and it bothered the neighbor. A discussion followed and Mr. Gannuscio commented that it should be dealt with between the neighbors. Ms. Rodriguez reiterated that tree houses were not permitted and Mr. O'Leary pointed out that they were also not regulated.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that a request had come in regarding 2 Northgate Drive. She explained that it was an industrial use that abutted a residential property and the two property owners were in a bit of a dispute over what could be placed in a conservation buffer. Ms. Rodriguez noted that part of the approval was a 35 foot wide conservation buffer. She went on to say that there were some nice mature trees there and that she did not think that the conservation easement was put in place for any kind of wetland preservation. She then stated that the question that had been presented was could they also put up a fence in the conservation easement, if it was really required as a landscape buffer to provide screening.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she did not see any issue with putting up a fence. She then asked if the Commission was comfortable with her making that call. Chairman Gannuscio stated that he was okay with Ms. Rodriguez making the call regarding the fence.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. Steele and Mr. O'Leary if they had anything for discussion. They had nothing further.

c. Informal Discussion of 130 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Budget Car Rental
(This item had been added to the agenda earlier that evening.)

Attorney Thomas Fahey addressed the Commission and stated that Bob Sweeney, City Manager for Avis/Budget, was also present. He then distributed conceptual plans and a three paragraph summary to the Commission members and staff.

Attorney Fahey explained that all of the car rental agency leases located on airport property expired this year and that four locations had gone out to bid to the highest bidder. He went on to say that they had an Avis facility and a Budget facility located on airport property, but that Enterprise had out bid Budget. Therefore, they needed to relocate the Budget facility off of airport property.

Attorney Fahey stated that 130 Ella Grasso Turnpike was currently their maintenance and repair facility. He went on to say that it would be a change of use to locate the Budget Rent-A-Car facility to that location.

Attorney Fahey stated that, being sensitive to not creating extra traffic on Route 75, the plans showed the main entrance being the road at the stop light opposite the Hertz facility. He then explained that it was a long, narrow site and that it had never conformed to the minimum size lot requirements for a Business 1 lot. He noted that the property had a history of being used for similar types of uses. Attorney Fahey then pointed out that Budget had to be off airport property by November 1, 2009. He then reiterated that they would not be able to satisfy all of the requirements.

Chairman Gannuscio asked Mr. O'Leary what he thought. Mr. O'Leary asked if the parking shown on the plan was all currently parking. Mr. Sweeney replied that it was currently all parking.

Mr. Sweeney explained that the State of Connecticut road that accessed the long-term parking had a traffic light and that Budget could use the light and road to access their site and take all of the traffic flow off of Route 75. He went on to say that the current entrance would be shut down and used only for emergency access and deliveries. Mr. Sweeney then proceeded to give a brief summary of the site history and layout.

Mr. O'Leary noted that improvements along the face of the corridor would be needed. He went on to say that Section 402 contained no reference to rental agencies, but that there was a provision which stated that if it were similar to other permitted uses the

Commission could consider it under the same procedure as the comparable use. Mr. O'Leary pointed out that the comparable use was car sales. He then stated that it would be a potential Special Use Permit.

Mr. O'Leary asked if they would still do repairs and maintenance on the site. Mr. Sweeney replied that they would do some of it on the site.

Mr. Brown asked how far up on Schoephoester Road they were located. Attorney Fahey explained that after entering Schoephoester Road, at the first light Hertz was on the right and the access road was on the left.

Attorney Fahey clarified that they would need a site plan to comply with a Special Permit. Mr. O'Leary stated that that was correct; they would need a special permit application along with an Existing Conditions Plan. Mr. Steele stated that they would also need a traffic analysis. Attorney Fahey asked if they would need just their own company counts or all traffic counts. Mr. Steele replied that they would need counts for the intersection in order to do a level of service analysis.

Mr. O'Leary asked if the Bradley International Airport road was a State road. Mr. Sweeney replied that that was what Roncari had told him. Attorney Fahey asked if they wanted them to clarify the right-to-use the road. Mr. O'Leary replied that that was correct; they would need to see more information.

Attorney Fahey pointed out that the signage would not be on their property. Mr. O'Leary stated that that might be a variance issue.

b. Receive New Applications

There were none.

COMMUNICATIONS AND BILLS:

Chairman Gannuscio stated that he had received a bill for Mr. O'Leary's May/June, 2009 retainer in the amount of \$3,333.00. He then moved to approve Mr. O'Leary's bill in the amount of \$3,333.00. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5 – 0, the motion was approved.

Chairman Gannuscio asked the Commission members and staff for any other concerns or items for discussion. They had none.

Chairman Gannuscio moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Tatro seconded the motion. All were in favor. The vote was 5 – 0, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Ferrari
Recording Secretary

THIS IS A DRAFT

Please check the following month's meeting minutes for official approval of these minutes and any amendments or corrections that were made.