

**MINUTES OF THE ZONING BOARD  
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING,  
HELD MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014, 7:00 P.M.,  
4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER  
BUILDING, 888 WASHINGTON BLVD,  
STAMFORD, CT 06901**

Present for the Board: Thomas Mills, Barry Michelson, William Morris and Joanna Gwozdziowski. Present for staff: Norman Cole, Land Use Bureau Chief and David Killeen, Associate Planner

Chairman Mills called the meeting to order and opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

1. **Application 213-31 – SEASIDE REAL ESTATE GROUP, LLC, 108, 114, 116 and 118 Seaside Avenue, Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses and Coastal Site Plan Review**, proposes to construct a 17 residential unit, 11,459 s.f. development located on properties known as 108, 114, 116 and 118 Seaside Avenue in an R-5 zone covering approximately 0.785 acres. Proposed demo of two existing buildings and construction of 4 new buildings with site and landscaping improvements (*continued from January 6, 2014*).

Mr. Mills read the description of the Application into the record and explained it was a continuation of a Public Hearing from January 6, 2014.

John Pugliesi, P.E., for the Applicant, presented the site plan and discussed the existing building development and topography. Mr. Pugliesi reviewed the proposed development of 17 units including 2 BMR units. He discussed the location of the buildings, garages beneath and the heights of the buildings. He explained the site is terraced to accommodate the development. To make grade transition, retaining walls are required around the sides and rear and include a fence for privacy and to buffer views of the dumpsters. Mr. Pugliesi submitted samples of materials for the retaining walls which will use stamped concrete to look like stone. He provided a brochure regarding the fence specification which is proposed to be solid vinyl.

Mr. Pugliesi described the proposed drainage system which will include detention galleries and will have a piped discharge through an easement to connect to Webb Avenue. The detention system will not discharge to ground-waters. The dumpster will be moved to the Northeast corner. Snow would be stored at 5 spots in the parking lot utilizing excess parking spaces. He showed an illustration of turning movements for garbage trucks entering the site. He submitted for the record a letter of support from the neighboring property owner at 102 Seaside. He discussed the lighting plan of 8' and 10' posts with low wattage. He reviewed the sign plan and landscaping.

Mr. Morris asked if the driveways were 20 feet wide. Mr. Pugliesi said they are 18 foot wide driveways which satisfy requirements because they serve fewer than 10 residential units.

Ms. Gwozdziowski asked if plowed snow would block access to the dumpster. Mr. Pugliesi explained that the snow piles would not be in the way.

Mr. Michelson said the Board would prefer to consider an upgrade from vinyl siding and vinyl shingles. Ravi Ahuja, project architect, offered a substitution of Hardi plank siding and Azek trim as an upgrade in exterior material, with Anderson vinyl windows.

Ms. Gwozdziowski asked about a signage plan. Mr. Ahuja said there would be two signs mounted on the stone wall on either side of the entrance driveway – one two square feet in size and the other four square feet in size.

Mr. Mills called for comments from the Public.

Patricia Foston, 79 Webb Avenue, said she and 50 area residents are opposed to the size and scale of the project and said it is too dense. Traffic congestion is a major issue because Seaside Avenue backs up from I-95 and there are too many cars parked on Seaside Avenue. She asked why there was no traffic study. She said the height of the retaining wall and fence will be out of character with the area. The existing farmhouse was built in the 1880's and the new project should integrate this into the design in keeping with the neighborhood.

Stan Piasecki, 101 Webb Avenue, a neighbor and a builder, said that he was also opposed to the project. High coverage will increase runoff with no recharge. The buildings will be much taller than his property and all the trees are being removed. There is no shortage of affordable housing in the Cove neighborhood and he presented a list of available properties for rent and sale. Parking conforms to zoning regulations but may not meet demand.

Lou Volpatesta, Esq. representing Vito & Frank Chiappetta, 122 Seaside Ave. and 8 Mathews Street, expressed concern about the dumpster location. He asked about the location of the building mechanicals and the noise they generate and asked for screening from the massive wall and fence. He questioned whether the bonus density for BMR units was worth the added impact of the four additional units.

Alexandra Moch, 13 Webb Avenue, expressed concern about trees being cleared away, the height of the buildings and the retaining wall, and said the project needs an environmental impact study because very little green space will remain. She expressed concern about the quality of fill dirt and said that it needs to be certified clean. She questioned whether drainage plans were adequate and said she was particularly concerned about the slope of the property. She noted that the stormwater plans don't address water quality and that Holly Pond is already degraded by pollution. The landscaping plan is not sufficient to address the impact of 34 new cars on site; parking is inadequate; traffic backs up along Seaside. She'd like to see hedges and landscaping to soften the retaining wall. She commented that the design is not consistent with the character of the neighborhood and the orientation and shape of the roof cannot accept solar panels. She recommended the Board reduce the density to 13 units.

Christina Haskin, 88 Seaside, said the 1880 farmhouse should be preserved.

Wes Haynes, Executive Director of the Historic Neighborhood Preservation group said the 1880 house is one of the oldest on the street and an example of a vernacular building style. The project design isn't in keeping with the Cove. The design doesn't have a primary gable facing Seaside Avenue. He also recommended reducing the number of units to 13 and said the project needs more green space.

Carolyn Foston, 79 Webb read a letter for the record in opposition.

Mr. Mills called a 10 minute recess and resumed the public hearing at 9:15pm.

Danette Melchionne, 37 Bungalow Park was opposed to the project indicating it is too dense and increases already bad traffic problems.

Al Sgritta, 103 Midland , expressed concern with traffic and said the area is already too dense. He expressed concern with drainage and said the area has a high water table.

David Winston, 1128 Cove Road, said 13 units would work better. The site is too steep. The requested 4 bonus units are not as of right.

Ralph Antonacci, 30 Kenilworth E, said the City's infrastructure is poor. Holly Pond needs rehabilitation and the area is too densely populated. The walls and fence are too tall.

Loretta Gerus, 112 Mathews Street asked about the width of the sidewalks and she'd like to see the results of a traffic calming study on Seaside.

Mr. Pugliesi, responding to comments, said there are a lot of existing multi-family developments with inadequate parking whereas they will have adequate parking. The buildings step down the slope utilizing the topography. They don't need a special exception for the wall, only for the fence. Trees will need to come down for any development. Drainage problems are caused by existing developments with no drainage control. They are proposing 23% green space which is higher than most existing developments. The sanitary and storm design has been approved by the City Engineer. They are offering to provide screening of the wall on abutting properties. The footing drains will improve high groundwater conditions. They can add sediment traps to improve stormwater quality. The bank requires 70% of units to be owner occupied. 13 or 17 units will require the same walls to control the slope.

Mr. Pugliesi agreed to submit copies of all revised plans to the Zoning Board for the continued hearing. Mr. Killeen asked the Applicant to address the driveway widths and BMR bonus criteria.

Mr. Mills continued the Public Hearing to January 27, 2014, 7:00pm, 4<sup>th</sup> floor cafeteria, Government Center Building.

Mr. Michelson made a motion to change the order of the agenda to discuss the coastal application at Wallacks Drive, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and unanimously approved 4 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris and Gwozdzowski).

**REGULAR MEETING**

**PENDING APPLICATIONS:**

1. **CSPR-946 – CAPONE LAND SERVICES, 65 Wallacks Drive**, to install a 1,000 gallon buried propane tank and related site improvements in a coastal flood hazard zone at 65 Wallack's Drive.

Mr. Mills read the description of the Application into the record. Mr. Killeen read the EPB recommended conditions of approval.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Morris made a motion to approve the application with EPB conditions, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and unanimously approved 4 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris and Gwozdzowski).

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **APPL. 211-15 – GDP & Final Site and Architectural Plans - RMS FRANKLIN, LLC & JFFS REALTY, LLC, 159-163 Franklin Street**  
*(administrative approval of signage); (continued from December 9, 2013).*

Mr. Cole explained the MX-D sign standards. Ms. Gwozdzowski was concerned the illuminated sign would sign into the adjoining residences and she suggested it be turned off at 10pm.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve the sign request modified to have the illumination from dusk to 10pm only, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and approved 3 to 0 (Mills, Michelson and Gwozdzowski with Morris abstaining).

2. **APPLS. 212-08 and 212-09 – Gershman Brown Crowley, Inc. and Connecticut CVS Pharmacy, L.L.C. - 221-229 Hope Street Road**  
*(administrative approval of signage).*

Gary McCoy, representing CVS explained the store will be open 24 hours and the signs will stay on all night. Mr. Cole noted that the Board's approval conditions authorized staff to approve the hours of operation of site lighting.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve the application as it applied only to the signs, seconded by Mr. Morris and unanimously approved 4 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris and Gwozdzowski). Staff will research the issue regarding hours of operation for this location.

3. **APPLS. 211-23 & 211-24 – PROCUREMENT, LLC** – 816 – 820 High Ridge Road *(administrative approval of floor plan to demonstrate compliance with Condition #3 and site plan to comply with Condition #11).*

Mr. Killeen explained the Zoning Board conditions to approve.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Gwozdzowski made a motion to approve the plans submitted, seconded by Mr. Morris and approved 3 to 0 (Mills, Morris and Gwozdzowski approving; Michelson abstaining).

4. **APPLS. 211-27 and 211-28 - G.B. New England 2, LLC and Nine Sixty Nine Associates**, 969 High Ridge Road (*extension of time request*).

Mr. Killeen read the request for an extension of time.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve the one year time extension, seconded by Mr. Morris and approved 4 to 0 (Mills, Morris, Michelson and Gwozdzowski).

5. **APPL. 211-10 – Final Site & Architectural Plans and Coastal Site Plan Review (CSPR), SG Stamford, LLC, 75 Tresser Blvd and 68 Clinton Avenue**, (*administrative approval of signage*).

Lisa Feinberg, Attorney representing the Applicant, presented the proposed free standing sign to be located at the corner of Tresser Boulevard and Clinton Avenue. Discussion ensued with questions raised about the height and length of the brick wall supporting the sign.

By consensus the application was tabled to the next meeting to allow the applicant time to study and present alternative signage options.

6. **APPLS. 212-10 & 212-11 – FIRST GARDEN DEVELOPMENT, LP, 1032 Hope Street, Site and Architectural Plan Review**, Construction of a new four story mixed-use building consisting of 88 rental apartments, 2,222 s.f. of ground floor retail space and associated amenities, parking and landscaping on 0.94 acres of property located in a V-C (Village Commercial District) (*extension of time request*).

After a brief discussion, Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve time extension, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and approved 4 to 0 (Mills, Morris, Michelson and Gwozdzowski).

7. **APPL 210-16 – FINAL Development Plan (GDP) and Coastal Site Plan Review – GATEWAY, Washington Blvd**, (*Site Plan Modifications*).

Attorney John Freeman and William Buckley, explained modifications that have been made in the garage entrance to the Gateway garage from Washington Boulevard, and that they are eager to receive a certificate of occupancy to open one floor of garage for commuter parking. Mr. Cole explained that the change in the entrance driveway, increasing the number of lanes from three to six, had not received any approval from the Zoning Enforcement Officer and would require amendment of the General Development Plan as well as amendment of the Phase One final site plan. Discussing ensued regarding the impact on the streetscape, landscaping and pedestrian sidewalks connecting to the deck at elevation 39'. Mr. Michelson asked Staff to do an evaluation of plans and submit a report to the Zoning Board. The Board asked for copies of the currently approved plans, the as-built plan, and a proposed interim landscaping plan to be maintained until

the Phase One buildings are constructed. Board members agreed to review the plans and discuss the matter further at the January 27 meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Michelson recommended that the Zoning Board institute a moratorium on medical marijuana dispensaries for a 12 month period. Mr. Cole stated that the zoning regulations currently do not appear to permit a medical marijuana dispensary use and that the Zoning Enforcement Officer has requested guidance from the Law Department whether any further changes to the regulations are necessary. Mr. Mills tabled the discussion of a moratorium to the next meeting.

Mr. Mills adjourned the meeting at 11:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Michelson, Secretary  
Stamford Zoning Board