The Shelton Planning & Zoning Commission held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, February 3, 2004 at 6:30 P.M. in the Shelton City Hall Auditorium and Room 303, 54 Hill Street, Shelton, CT.

The Chairman reserves the right to change the sequence of the items on the agenda.

Tapes (3) and correspondence on file in the City/Town Clerk’s Office and the Planning & Zoning Office.

Members present:  Chairman Joseph Pagliaro
Comm. Alan Cribbins
Comm. Patrick Lapera
Comm. Daniel Orazietti
Comm. William Papale
Comm. Anthony Pogoda
Comm. Karen Tomko-McGovern

Staff Present:  Richard Schultz, Planning Administrator
Anthony Panico, Planning Consultant
Pat Garguillo, Court Stenographer
Diana Barry, Secretary

On a motion made by Alan Cribbins seconded by William Papale it was unanimously voted to come out of Executive Session and reconvene in the auditorium.

APPLICATION # 03-65 R.D. SCINTO FOR EXTENSION OF SDA OVERLAY ZONE, PARROT DRIVE, (MAP 28, LOT 17) IA-2 DISTRICT
AND
APPLICATION # 03-66 R.D. SCINTO, INC. FOR PDD ZONE CHANGE AND MODIFICATION OF PDD’S # 4 AND 37 (APARTMENTS) PARROTT DRIVE (MAP 28, LOTS 7, 11, AND 17) IA-2 DISTRICT

Comm. Orazietti read the call of the hearing. There was one additional piece of correspondence from George M. Shurard in support of Mr. Scinto’s proposal.

The Chairman explained the procedure, the applicant will make his presentation and we will give the people 10 minutes to look at the plans. Then the public will get a chance to speak. There is a clipboard or pad in the back we ask that you sign your name & address. Speak clearly into the microphone and address only this subject matter.

R.D. Scinto addressed the Commission. He stated he would be doing a slide show this evening and that James Swift the Project Engineer would be presenting that. After Mr. Swift is done then I will present the architectural overview, stated Bob Scinto.

James Swift, Project Engineer, addressed the Commission. He presented the mailing receipts and proceeded with the slide show. There is a radius map that shows the current building that is under reconstruction. Access to this parcel will be off Parrott Drive. This slide gives you a feel for what is around the site. There are PDD’s and SDA’s all around this parcel.

Comm. Sylvester arrived at 7:20 P.M.

The next slide shows the overall plan. There is Parrott Drive in the lower section. This shows 2 parcels with U.I. and the lot for Renaissance. The U.I. is under construction with an existing parking lot and access out to Parrott Drive. The U.I. has very little change. The parcels will be split sometime and that is incorporated into the plan.

The apartments will be constructed here and there is access to Parrott Drive here. There will be a service area here and this connects to Corporate Drive and Corporate Building # 6.
There will be comprehensive walkways, stated James Swift. We will tie into the rest of the building with comprehensive walkways to get throughout. There will be a few handicapped parking spaces here. Parking will be from the parking garage for Corporate 6. There is a covered canopy over here and Corporate 2 parking lot will be available.

The benefit to this proposal is that if you put this in an office setting it will eliminate some driving trips, stated James Swift. Those we don’t eliminate, then we will reduce other trips, with the traffic that is going the other way.

There is another slide with details as to what is going on around the site. There is a slide with conceptual landscape plans and buffers in three different locations. There will be shade trees and ornamental trees.

There is a slide to show what goes on with all of his buildings and where the apartments will be tied into the other buildings. There is a Corporate 6 building here with other office buildings located off Enterprise Drive.

Traffic will connect from Commerce Drive to Enterprise Drive up and through the parking of the apartments. The traffic then circulates out to Parrott Drive. Another connection comes up Corporate Drive to the back of this out to Parrott Drive and interconnects to Parrott Drive. There is access out to Parrott Drive over here stated James Swift. We will reduce the impact by allowing traffic to go in the way that is convenient to them.

There is a slide of consideration to the sewers and utilities that are all available to the site. There are no problems with services or sizes of these to this area.

There is rock and removal of the rock that was already approved by this Commission.

WPCA may make a comment on the sewers. He would like to see the sewers come out to Progress Drive, stated James Swift. That is down gradient from us and we will be working on that, stated James Swift. We have discussed that and it is not a problem, he added.

**Mr. Scinto addressed the Commission and continued the slide presentation.** The building will go right in the middle of the complex close to this garage and that garage. This is the best height of off peak parking and the concept of shared parking is when one is an apartment building and one is an office building. They have tried shared parking with a railroad station and that doesn’t work well. There are 450 parking spaces emptied in these garages during the daytime, stated Mr. Scinto.

This next slide shows the entrance with regard to traffic. This comes up from Rudy Tuesdays. Trucks and garbage for moving in and out is under this terrace and you won’t see this. You can come from this garage and walk under cover. You won’t travel a road path here. The traffic, the key element here is that 4000 people come here everyday. These people can walk here. If people leave this complex to go to work they are going in the opposite direction. It will have a zero affect on traffic.

Next slide- is the 2 traffic reports and the Engineer is here. He is here and he will answer any questions that you (the Commission) or any of the public will have. He got his research out of the technical books that traffic engineer people use. The tables will show the different numbers that they recommend for shared parking. The town has a requirement for 12,000 cars. We have plenty of parking to handle the concept of shared parking. There are 1500 empty spaces at night.

Next slide please- the biggest mistake I made is talking about height and not explaining properly. The one complaint I hear from people is the 17 stories. I made a mistake because this 17 stories is not 70% higher then these buildings. The apartment building is only 10.5 feet between floors and the office building is 12.5 feet between floors. So a 17-story apartment building is equaled to a 14-story office building. It is not 70% higher it is 40% higher, stated Mr. Scinto.
Next slide please – that is the height of the apartment building in relationship to the office building. The apartment must look different from the office building. You would not expect someone to live in a building that looks like an office building. It has to have a different character. If you can’t see these buildings from where you live today, then you won’t be able to see these buildings from where you live tomorrow. If you can see these from where you live today then tomorrow you will see the apartment and it is not 70% taller it is 40% taller. As you see from these slides it is not a drastic difference in height.

Next slide please – this shows coming up the road where the rock will come out. This is Corporate 6 and this next slide is Corporate 1 & 2 and this slide shows the other garage. There is a road that has been roughed in to show the parking going right into the garage.

This slide shows you coming in the front of the building. I have one focus here when my father died a couple years ago, stated Mr. Scinto, I really wanted to find my mother an apartment. It was impossible to find a nice an apartment to put my mother in. There is a real demand in this whole area for apartments. I have one simple focus for this to be the best apartment building in Connecticut. We built a restaurant that might be the best restaurant in Connecticut. I want this to the be best apartment building in Connecticut, he added.

This slide shows the ground floor. There is a patio to run all around the building so you see no concrete against the building. You will walk up three steps onto to the patio into the lobby and 3 steps up to the first floor and walk down. I need you to walk up 6 steps so you won’t be able to see into the first floor apartments and get the building up higher. You will see here where the garbage will be and where this gets you into the garage.

Next slide please – this shows the lobby. I want this to look like a New York lobby. This will be alabaster and I will show you that material, stated Mr. Scinto. This is stone that you will see light here. There will be security guard here and that is 24/7. We call him a doorman. He will have a TV. camera on every entrance in the complex. This panel will be clear Canadian maple and the floor is all limestone. The man will take deliveries. There will be a full basement with self-storage. The man will be our employee. We will buy him a blazer and he will treat my customers as they were guests in my house.

Next slide – shows the floors. There will be 13 apartments on each floor. We did that to keep it intimate. There are 5 in this direction and 5 in this direction. Each floor has a room right here and right here to bring your garbage to throw it down a shut. There will be bins for cans and newspapers. In our kitchen there will be draws for cans and newspapers. No door will open across from another door. There is no door across from another door.

There are 5 types of apartments. There is a very large 2-bedroom apartment right off the lobby. This here is a one bedroom, this is a 2 bedroom, this is a larger 1 bedroom and this at the end is my favorite with windows all around. There are 2 elevators that go the way to the basement.

Next slide please – each apartment will be done with a bathroom that contains a washer and dryer, walk in closet, limestone bathroom, granite countertops, an eating area, all stainless steel G.E. features, this is a living room and this is a bedroom.

All apartments as part of the rent will have high-speed access (Internet access).

Next slide – this is the one bedroom that is behind the elevator. It is 925 sq ft. This has the same kitchen with a little dining area, living room, bedroom, bathroom, walk in closet and a second closet, stated Mr. Scinto.

Next slide please – this shows a 2 bedroom. All 2 bedrooms will have 2 baths. Again we have the kitchen with a little eating area, a living room, one bedroom and the second bedroom.
Next slide please – this is the large apartment I told you about. This is 1500 sq. ft., stated Mr. Scinto. This is where there are 2 sconces off the lobby area. This is a gallery kitchen, it is a little bit bigger, at the end of the kitchen will be the laundry room (washer & dryer), a large space that shows a conference room, (my clients have asked for space to bring someone in for an interview but that could be a bedroom), we show a bathtub here that will be set in a slab of limestone and there is a shower here.

Next slide please – this is the one I like the best. This is what my Mom wants. This is on the end. There are 2 windows in each bedroom. There are 2 walk in closets. Washer & Dryer with the eating area here.

Next slide shows an image of the walk in closet. We will be finishing these apartments to the 9’s, stated Mr. Scinto. When people come here the closets will be done high end.

Next slide shows the image on the kitchen. The cabinets show the draws behind the doors. There is limestone on the floors. There are microwaves and fans in each unit. This shows the eating area I spoke about.

Next slide shows the top of the building. The penthouse. From this point this will be all health club. There is all exercise equipment with a sunning deck here. There will be chairs and lounges. There will be no showers up here. On this side are all the social elements. There will be a room here for entertainment. There will be an area that cocktail parties could be held here. There will be seminars for the tenants and we will have regular social activities for the tenants, stated Mr. Scinto.

Next slide shows an image of the building. This is the base of the building. These will be awnings. They will be dark green against beige limestone. This is the middle and this is the top. This is base, the middle and top. There is the health club and there will be glass above to look at the sky. This is a wall 6 feet high and that will be a safe space for those using the decks.

Next slide focuses on the design. This shows the patio. This will be a planter and there will be trees here. There will lights here to hit the top. This is a 2-story column that will light the building at night to glow. The light has to be done so that it doesn’t bother the tenants. The secret to great architecture is the way the sun travels across the face of the façade. The sun will light up these columns and the v won’t be light up. The shadow will create the great architectural interest. There is recess that will go in to create more lights. I need this building to look out of this world, stated Mr. Scinto.

Next slide- I wanted to show you pricing. This is a building in Trumbull, Avalon. It is a wooden building with vinyl siding. There ranges are one bedroom $1200-$1400 and 2 bedrooms $1800-$1900. We will be in this price range. These numbers work for me because I own the land and I own the parking. There are additional charges at Avalon that include $100 for parking, $350 for the health club and there is $25 for a washer & dryer.

We are also giving all our tenants a 5% discount and we will give anyone in Shelton who sells there house that wants to stay in Shelton a 5% discount. I want this building to be a building for the Community.

The next slide shows the road I talked about. You see the garage. The building harmonizes with what is there. I am proud of this design.

The next slide shows letters from my tenants, stated Mr. Scinto. These are not all my letters, these are about a 1/3. I have about 100 tenants. Mr. Scinto goes over the letters explaining about some of his tenants and their concerns for apartments for their employees.

End of Side 1A of 3A, Tape 1 of 3 at 7:50 P.M.

Mr. Scinto continued the letters of support including letters from Dr. D’Souza, IMS, Mutual of Omaha, GE, American Mortgage, Ray-Tech (used to be Raybestos) Sectrar (software that reads MRI) and Sir Speedy.
He showed 2 last letters and there are about 15-30 letters that were not included. One from Iroquois Gas that states the writer had to buy a condominium 25 miles down the road.

Mr. Scinto stated I showed the slides and the companies because this is a great benefit to the town. The building will be $25-$30 million dollar building that goes to your tax rolls. That is not including the 300+ cars that will end up in the garage that will go on the tax list. That is another $10-12 million dollars so you are looking at a $35 million dollar number. None of this would have happened if this Commission didn’t vote for these things in the beginning.

People want to thank me for the amount of taxes that I pay. I say don’t thank me, thank the people on the Zoning Commission that voted for all of this. The PDD allows you to create this bonanza and envy of Fairfield County. Nippy Russell used to say if you are crazy enough to build a 10-story building, we are crazy enough to approve it, stated Mr. Scinto. That started this thing here, he added. This Commission has created this towns values.

He showed Fairfield Counties tax rates with 4 towns cheaper then Shelton that include Darien, Greenwich, Westport and New Canaan. We compare Shelton with Greenwich and Darien.

He showed houses and there taxes including Monroe, Bridgeport, Fairfield, Trumbull and Shelton. The taxes on the house in Shelton were $4,000.

I am passionate about this because I really want to do a great job, stated Mr. Scinto. I want to build Shelton the finest building in Connecticut. It is a plus for the tax collector, a plus for the tenants, the residents and it is a plus for the people who love Open Space. Where you need residents you are not going into open space because you are using an existing commercial park and the taxes that are paid will go to buy more open space, if that is what the town wants.

Renaissance means rebirth, stated Mr. Scinto. I really believe this will be a rebirth of this town and send us into another level of status in this town. Thank you very much.

Mr. Scinto showed the audience the alabaster stone.

The Chairman stated we will take a short recess to allow the public to look the project over and when we come back we will open this up to the public. Once the meeting reconvened the Chairman added that you should address your comments to this hearing. If someone has already said what you want to say just confer with it. We want to cover as much as we can this evening.

**Ronald Pavluvcik, 287 Eagles Landing, addressed the Commission.** He stated he was here before speaking against Pinecrest. I spoke against the scope of the project. He was concerned about taxes, he is glad that Pinecrest has been scaled back. This project tonight is a no brainer. He stated his reasons that include not a lot of school age children living there and Mr. Scinto’s reputation as a developer. The office building he has built are the best office buildings. There are letters from his tenants and I used to be a worker in 2 of his buildings. He stated his dealings with Mr. Scinto. This should be an automatic approval on this application. This will be a great asset to the town. I checked out Merritt 7’s apartment building and this is unique. There will be no other building like this in Connecticut. I say to this group that you should approve this before you go home tonight and to Mr. Scinto put me on your waiting list for a future apartment.

**Richard Patterson, 31 Daybreak Lane, President of WER-1, addressed the Commission.** He stated he will be looking at this building.

He did some research on the Code of Ethics and he read from Section of 1-3 concerning conflicts of interest. Paragraph C is the definition of this. I brought this up so that anyone who has a potential conflict of interest can excuse himself or herself.
He read a letter that he prepared and he presented that letter to the Commission. His letter includes a request for a moratorium on any application, which should be denied until an update of the comprehensive plan can be done.

He made comments on what he heard this evening including commending Mr. Scinto’s building, he wants Shelton to remain a bedroom Community, we don’t want to be New York, he doesn’t want apartments to built everywhere, he was concerned with other applications, he was concerned with the infrastructure, he was concerned with the traffic, he was concerned with the difference in traffic from apartments and office buildings, he was concerned with the access roads at a failing grade, he was concerned for the safety of our citizens, and this should be built in Stamford. He was concerned with regulations with regard to the height of the buildings. He was concerned with the parking and the size of the parcel to handle this. He stated his concerns for the tenant’s letters with regard to keeping this office space.

Joan Flannery, 8 Partridge Lane, addressed the Commission. She stated her concerns about the pencil sketches and no pictures of what the full view will be. She questioned balloons that were placed as to the height of the office building prior to their construction and asked that they be used for the height of this building. She stated her concern with the reverse commute to Stamford. She will be going against traffic at Exit 12. I will have more traffic. She stated her concern with the height difference. She stated her concerns with city live. She stated her concerns with the reassessment of her house and the value of the same house in Stamford. She stated her concerns with the taxes and values of the other cities mentioned. She read a prepared letter into the record in opposition of this project and presented that to the Commission.

Peter Francini, 48 Cherrygate Lane, Trumbull, addressed the Commission. I am very familiar with this property. My father built Parrott Drive almost 30 years ago. We owned the road and when U.I. moved in we deeded the road to the City. Mr. Scinto has done a great job with his proposal but I feel this project is too much for the community. Parrott Drive has a lot of problems. He stated his concerns with Bridgeport Avenues traffic. He was concerned with children getting on buses and trucks coming in and out of other properties. This is too big and I think this is spot zoning, he added. It does belong somewhere in Shelton but not Parrott Drive. There are other proposals and I don’t how you will decide who will get the apartment building. PDD’s can become spot zoning, he stated. He stated this is in the wrong spot. This is enormous and the traffic will be difficult. He was concerned with location and coming & going residents. He stated his concerns with the height you are seeing. He was concerned that this be placed in a very congested area.

Sal DeFilippo, Sr., 3 Colony St., addressed the Commission. He stated his concerns and his opposition with the application. He was concerned with changing zones and illegal spot zoning. He stated his concerns with the Commission abusing the zones. He stated his concerns with tall buildings. He stated his concerns with the traffic. He stated his concerns with the grand list and taxes. He stated his concerns with higher taxes and more services. He requested this application be denied. The burden is on this Commission and no one else.

Walter Sofian, 7 Andrew Drive, addressed the Commission. He read a prepared statement and he asked this Commission to reject this project. His prepared statement included a request for a 12-month moratorium on further development. (see attached)

**End of Side 1B of 3A, Tape 1 of 2 at 8:50 P.M.**

Walter Sofian continued with his prepared statement.

David Beardsley, 41 School Street, addressed the Commission. I would like to be on record as being in favor of this project. I have concern with one item, Mr. Scinto didn’t mention this and I am concerned with the taxes to the City of Shelton. It would bring in a lot of taxes and it would not bring in one single school child to be educated here. One apartment building like this, the best in the State, and I believe him in that, it will not bring in any school children. Not for that type of apartment building, stated David Beardsley.
James Higgins, 341 Walnut Tree Hill Road, addressed the Commission. I have lived in Shelton for all of my years and I am an admirer of Mr. Scinto’s works including David. My concern is for the height in regard to fire safety. He stated the Fire Chief has spoken on this and he doesn’t represent the Department. I have been a firemen for close to 43 years in town. He commented on an article in the Connecticut Post with regard to fire safety. There are new fire safety codes and changes being made in the City. (New York) There are concerned with high-rise buildings. He stated the article is concerned sprinklers are an issue. He stated his concerns with the height and ability to reach anything higher than 8 stories. The Fire Dept. makes a lot of calls in that area with malfunctions in the sprinkler systems and alarms in that area, added James Higgins. He presented a copy of the article to the Chairman.

Russell Choate, 86 Blueberry Lane, addressed the Commission. He stated he is in support of the building. He feels this will be quality living for the town. Shelton is a progressive town in Fairfield County. He stated his concerns with traffic and he feels this won’t impact traffic. He stated the traffic that Wal-Mart brought onto Bridgeport Avenue is more than what you will get from here. He stated his concerns with the height and asked if he was too tall? If you downsize you have to leave and this will allow those people to stay here, added Russell Choate. The infrastructure in town is one where if we want something they should give us it.

Randy Szkola, 245 Walnut Tree Hill Road, addressed the Commission. I own a farm in town and I have been an active member of the Open Space Comm. The fact is that there has to be development in town. If you own land you have the right to develop it in the right direction. I have worked for Mr. Scinto’s and his development is a first class development. At first I wasn’t thrilled with the size. I sat with Mr. Scinto and looked at the height. I am in favor of this project. He stated his concerns with City services and tax revenues. The money could be reinvested in Open Space somewhere else in town. He stated this should be done in town more. He was concerned with the big mansions in town. He was concerned with an area like this downtown. This is why the PDD benefits the town. He stated the charges of the Commission and enforcement of the projects to be denied and approved. He suggested approving this project.

John Fitzgerald, 7 Emerald Ridge Court, addressed the Commission. He complimented Mr. Scinto who is a top shelf developer. My concerns is with the older multi-family neighborhood in the older part of Shelton. There are a lot of Mom & Pops who have their 2 and 3 families. Mr. Scinto is a higher end clientele but some consideration should be given to a study in the older development. The older couple whose retirement is based on there rentals, if Mr. Scinto’s rents are lower he will take their clients away, stated John Fitzgerald. One and two bedrooms are fine and they mentioned they have no children. He stated his concerns with his properties and the people who rent from him. My concern is the impact of the older 2-3 family neighborhoods in Shelton.

Leon Grant, 80 Milton Road, Litchfield, addressed the Commission. I represent a company from Thomaston. I have worked on projects with Mr. Scinto for the past 25 years. All of his projects are top notch. We use his projects as examples for our projects. His concerns are with the struggling economy and he can go back if this project goes forward and tell carpenters & laborers they will have a job during construction of this. Down the road this will be an established building in Shelton.

Irving Steiner, 23 Partridge Lane, addressed the Commission. I must commend Mr. Scinto for a wonderful delivery and beautiful project. Unfortunately these applications are too tall and in the wrong place at the wrong time. I am against high-density residential complexes on the Route 8 corridor. Our Route 8 corridor should remain primarily for corporate office construction. He stated his concerns with Shelton remaining a bedroom community not a carbon copy of Greenwich. The office park district should not be turned into a high density residential. He voiced his concerns with the economy and businesses moving into the area. He was concerned with office space. He was concerned with the long-range goals of the Community. He stated his concerns with the Plan of Development. He was concerned with the Plan of Developments update. He was concerned with the progress of new committee formed for this purpose. He stated his concerns with Oxford’s moratorium. (see attached) He stated WER-1 hopes this Commission will follow Oxford’s lead.
Eric Levine, 410 Buddington Road, addressed the Commission. He stated he passes by Mr. Scinto’s building many times a day. His structures were beyond my expectations. His ideas of another building there have minimum implications to the Community. He stated his concerns with adequate parking. He stated his concerns with more money added to the tax base. He voices his concerns with the infrastructures addition to more children. This is a positive thing for the Community. It will benefit the Community. The economical structure is informational not manufacturing and these people have to live somewhere. They go down to exit Shelton to go where they live. They could walk and it would be a benefit to Shelton. He stated his concerns that this will be done now or later. I would agree with the people involved if this was in the middle of a non-industrial zone, stated Eric Levine.

Ralph (?) 60 Grove Street, addressed the Commission. I recently moved into town from Stamford and I didn’t come here tonight to approve or disapprove because I don’t even know Mr. Scinto. I heard the City of Stamford mentioned. The developers moved into Stamford and they developed everywhere. The cost of living went sky high. The gas is 20-25% higher then here. The people had to move out because they could not afford to live there. I think the question tonight is that you have to make a decision – do you want a city like Stamford? Then let the developers in to put up their high rise or do you want a different type city like you have to cater to the local people? Mark my words if you let one in you have to let the others. The people who can’t afford the high rise will move out of the City.

Chris Panek, 19 Meghan Lane, addressed the Commission. I am a member of the Citizens United Party here in Shelton. He stated his concerns that changes be made to protect the future of the City. He stated his concerns with slowing the development. He stated we are for smart development. He stated there should be a review of all regulations including a town wide meeting for public, developers and people involved in Commissions. He stated his concerns with regard to a moratorium. He didn’t place blame on the developers or the Commissions. You have to receive the developments per statutes. He stated his concerns that the Party ran a Mayoral candidate who got a 1000 votes. WER-1 has been formed and is targeting specifically zoning issues. They proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations and they have sought Legal Counsel. He stated there are elected officials placed there to do that. He stated his concerns with possible busing issues. He stated his concerns with elected officials protecting the citizens of Shelton. He stated his concern about the quality of the building being proposed and he asked about the number of children? He didn’t want children added to an already overcrowded situation. He questioned the height of the building? He stated his concerns with the jobs for carpenters but the people who live here are burdened with this being the right location.

Rick Carlson, 28 Wesley Drive, addressed the Commission. He stated that he is against this development. He has been coming here in opposition for the past 15 months. Once these apartments start you will have to do it again. When will it end. There is Roseland’s coming, Mr. Botti has another proposal coming with 3 applications and 600 apartments. What will our City become? Stamford, questioned Rick Carlson. Darien doesn’t have high-rise apartments. He spoke with his concerns about Shelton. He stated the traffic is an issue we have to live with. He spoke of Bridgeport Avenue. He stated with regard to growth in regard to corporate and commercial development. I drive 25 minutes to work and there are many people who drive to Stamford for the high paying jobs. He was concerned with the amount of land and amount of cars on the roads 7 days a week. He stated his concern with destroying the City. He stated there is a right for the Commission to listen to the people. I am opposed to this, he added.

Phil Cavallaro, 408 Leavenworth Road, addressed the Commission. He stated that this Commission has taken a beating tonight when people say you are not doing your job. I for one think you are doing your job and a great job. Mr. Scinto is in an area where there is development in a tasteful way. I saw a billboard in Norwalk that said if you lived here you would be home. We live in a day when living, working and playing all in the same area is very prevalent. There are a lot of farms around me and we have a lot of diversity here. This area where this is proposed is a great location. You won’t see it and it is not obtrusive. Every building is in great character and great taste. He is the largest taxpayers. You as Commissioners have the right to make a decision, which should come or go. You have done a great job of it. We enjoy a good tax base and I am in favor of this. You have to increase the tax base and these projects are tasteful.
Phil Cavallaro stated he has lived here for 18 years and he hopes to live here a lot longer. I am happy living here. I have an office in Florida and commute here. I pay taxes here and put the children through school here. I believe it is a great project.

**Sally D’Sousa, 98 Blueberry Lane, addressed the Commission.** I have nothing prepared and I didn’t bring my 75-year-old mother out in this weather for nothing. We have developed a piece of property on Bridgeport Avenue. I have to compliment the Commission, you have taken a lot of criticism tonight along with Mr. Scinto. I put up a beautiful piece of property next to Duchess. I have lived here for 20 years and I am a tenant of Mr. Scinto’s. I have been around his development and I know there are a lot young executives in the area that are looking for such a situation as this. We are in full approval of this and he does a beautiful job. I am all in favor of this, she stated.

**Linda Raineri, 11 Monroe Road, addressed the Commission.** I have lived here for 25 years. The taxes have gone up and mine have tripled. My children went to Elizabeth Shelton but my grandchildren won’t be able to go there because there is no room. We need another school. We do not need apartments. It might bring tax revenue but put another corporate building there. Put your apartments somewhere else. The project is beautiful and the height is a problem. She is concerned with the blatant disregard that 2 bedrooms will have no children. I am a realtor and I know what I am talking about.

**Mr. Scinto responded and addressed several concerns.** He stated technically that there will be less traffic at the peak. If you live in the apartments and walk to work there will be less traffic.

Shared parking is a good concept. I just did shared parking with a company that will share parking with the movie theaters. The Fire Department is a concern. It is safe in my buildings. You don’t fight from the outside you fight fire from inside. There will be fans blowing the air out and it is a safe environment. You will be safer fighting a fire in a 17-story building then one of those buildings downtown.

Traffic – someone mentioned the traffic light. I have a desire to put one on Parrott Drive. We have to request that from the State. He will represent that he will do everything possible to get a light and he would pay the 25% of that cost.

You have to be optimistic and look forward to change. I do, stated Mr. Scinto. Change you will happen no matter what. That is the key to understanding things. You hear what you hear and to the groups I say you can’t be against everything. This is a good project that affects no open space and brings nothing but tax base. There are 28000 cars coming into the City and you have a responsibility to supply affordable apartments, stated Mr. Scinto.

**End of Side 2A of 3A, Tape 2 of 3 at 9:35 P.M.**

There is a responsibility of this Commission to find a location for apartments that will work. Robert Moses built all of the highways in New York City. When he built the bridges they backed up and he had to build another bridge and another bridge. Then he built expressways and people say he destroyed the Cities. I am trying to start a little City, a little Community. Older folks can walk to the daycare center. This town needs this type of development. If you are against everything you lose creditability and you are losing creditability being against this project, stated Mr. Scinto.

The Chairman stated we will close this hearing. We all agree that you have heard most of the facts. Once the hearing is closed you cannot speak to any of the Commissioners, if you have factual information you can bring it to the Staff. We have to be technical to the State Statues, he added.

**On a motion made by Alan Cribbins seconded by William Papale it was unanimously voted to close the Public Hearing on Application # 03-65 and 03-66.**
APPLICATION # 03-53 WIACEK FARMS, LLC FOR SUBDIVISION APPROVAL (24 LOTS
WIACEK FARM ESTATES) MEADOW STREET (MAP 137, LOT 3) R-1 DISTRICT – REQUEST
FOR EXTENSION OF REVIEW PERIOD, DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Richard Schultz read a request for extension.

On a motion made by Alan Cribbins seconded by Anthony Pogoda it was unanimously voted to accept the letter of extension on Application # 03-53.

Anthony Panico discussed and presented maps. We have never had the opportunity to meet as a group to discuss this piece of property. There have been issues with Wetlands and they have gone back for a modification. That was approved, stated Anthony Panico.

This has not been before you and here we are facing an 11th hour decision. There are concerns including just dealing with the parcel right next door to the high school. We are concerned about the negative impact on this property. There is an issue with the interrelationship with the high school. The public and the Mayor have been interested in this property. There is concern that this be part of the Cities Open Space but none of that has been done yet.

If you add the work schedule, holiday schedule, and the weather schedule it has been difficult to get this scheduled. Staff needs additional time for review things such as alternative developments. There are Open Space issues and there will be more Open Space issues. There was concerns voiced to us from the Board of Education relative to drainage impacts to the High School.

Staff has been made aware of expansion to the high school that may impact this development, stated Anthony Panico. The Staff has not discussed this and various other issues with the Commission.

Anthony Panico stated per State Statues these subdivisions applications have to be decided within 65 days. This application was received November 18, 2003. January 12, 2004 is the date an action should be taken by. Statues recognizes needing more time so there can be 2 additional 65-day extensions with authorization from the applicant. However, to date the applicant has only authorized extensions for 13 days, which would allow the Commission to have until February 4, 2004, for a decision. Although the Staff has requested the additional time extensions these have not been forwarded back from the applicant, he added.

I thought how we could get this to come to a responsible decision. If you take the amount of Open Space 4.6 acres and you say that are high priority is to buffer the high school as much as possible, then we need a 100-foot strip. That would give you the protection that is necessary. If it was that simple then I would say go ahead and take an action with that condition on it, stated Anthony Panico. However, there are some other things that could be done that would be beneficial to the City and the applicant, stated Anthony Panico.

For example, to develop this part is really of no great concern but maybe that area can be developed in another way by taking some of the units are that spread elsewhere and get them in that area.

This plan shows a road coming off of Meadow Street traversing inefficiently through the land. If the decision is this is where the Open Space is more critical then Open Space up here is not so critical, and the Commission thought it was worthwhile they could bring the road to swing this way. This then could be cut up and eliminate crossing which also would make more Open Space, stated Anthony Panico.

We need a reasonable time, a 65-day extension. We made a request and got one extension and the total is only a 13-day extension. We need to have a subsequent discussion and we have to get to a meaningful decision, stated Anthony Panico.
The Chairman stated I suggest that we request a 65-day extension. Since I have been here a number of years, I have never heard of a 13-day extension. It is imperative to get an extension. We need a technical session with Mr. Panico and Mr. Schultz, stated the Chairman. If the applicant agrees to give us an extension then we will accept the extension, if not then we have to have a motion to deny or approve this, he added.

**James Swift, Civil Engineer, a member of the applicant’s team, addressed the Commission.**

The history of the project as it stands right now is that we started the process under review with the Staff in March of last year. Almost a year ago. We did have a couple of technical sessions at that time. We did explore several things, we explored Open Space and we talked about lump sums Open Space locations. We talked about Open Space in regard to the High School. We did come back at the second session with drawings showing that. The Staff was concerned the effect that would have on the High School.

As all of those things were happening the applicant/ the owners of the property really didn’t think that the City had some sort of interest in the property. They expected that to take place and that didn’t take place, stated James Swift. They felt that they had to go forth with the application. No one knows better then I the workload that this Commission is under and how dedicated they are. I am not trying to butter anyone up here. I do understand the workload.

The first extension was given and we knew that this was on an agenda for discussion and an action might take place. The weather did get in the way of that and now we are sitting here with a request for another 65-day extension, stated James Swift. I am unsure what is going to happen with the City’s other interest in possibly acquiring the property, he added.

Anthony Panico stated I cannot speak to the issues of rather or not the City will pursue its interest in acquiring this. My responsibility on this Commission is to make sure they understand what can and cannot be done. We did have a session in March of last year, I will agree with you on that, but again that was conceptual, a presubmission to find out what possibly could be approved and what can’t. What seems to work and then we had a lot of engineering requirements with regard to Wetlands, he added.

Then there was a concern with Wetlands. There is no sense to submitting this to the Commission if we are unsure what Inland Wetlands is going to do with this, stated Anthony Panico. Yes, we had discussions we are aware of what has been going on but the Commission isn’t aware, he added. The Commission doesn’t get involved until the date it was submitted, that November date. You know what our schedule has been since November 18. It has been horrendous.

James Swift stated let me comment on the nonconventional subdivision regulations. As the Commission knows with the PDD is a tool that maximizes Open Space. There are public hearings and special permits required. We are aware of this. The owners of the property were cautious of exposing themselves to that process which brings more latitude to the City, he added. It is also a process I would not suggest initiating unless I spoke to the Commission and they agreed with me that there was some benefit of pursuing that stated Anthony Panico. Even if we said it would be conventional there is still potential to reroute that road. Initially we started to have the Open Space between the existing parcel and the recreational area. Subsequent to that time our concern for activities with regard to the development of homes had a greater weight then the worry over Open Space.

Now we have to ask why bother to build the big road and why not bring it out Constitution Blvd. What would this do for us, stated Anthony Panico? We know what the number of lots are within one and that is the one major accomplishments.

A gentlemen from the audience (later identified as Shawn Splan) stated it is great we are trying to make a Planned Residential Development and you are telling us to do R1. We are not telling you to do that sir, don’t put words in my mouth, stated Anthony Panico. We are suggesting it is an option that maybe should be looked at, that is all.
I grew up on the property, I worked it, it is farmland, it has been in the family for 85 years, stated Shawn Splan. We have gone through the process with the City. Basically it is the City putting their arm across the property and saying we want this half. I don't buy that. My whole family has heard conversations about the Mayor being in negotiations with us. There is more information out there in the rumor mill, he added. It is my understanding that there might be some question concerning where the Open Space may or may not be. We have been through the process and the City has made the recommendations of where they want their Open Space. We have spent additional money trying to find an Engineer. We started this process, I think 18 months ago and the City was aware of this. The Mayor says other people are aware of what is going on. I am looking at this and I know there is a question of Open Space.

I know there is some flexibility but this is basically a 24-lot subdivision. If we are talking open space and buffer areas then it is probably someone who wants to keep that land more open then it would be someone in the City or sitting here then it is me. The way I look at it is a subdivision and from my understanding from speaking to our Attorney that it is our right and we are entitled to it, stated Shawn Splan. The laws in the State of Connecticut allow us to do that.

For us to come in here and at the last minute come over here to talk about maximizing our density and put in cluster houses. I don't want to live in cluster houses, I live in 1/3 of acre now and I hate it. I grew up on a farmland and everyone here grew up there. There were cows there and the school was not there. You are talking about buffering the school. We have school children walking through that land all the time. We lived with that now you are coming in telling us that you want more buffer land because you are afraid it will encroach on your land. It has been encroaching on our land for the last 30 years, since the school has been there.

It is 24 lots stated Shawn Splan. I received a phone call that basically people have reviewed this and this should be approved. We granted the time and based upon a phone conversation that this was on the agenda. We granted the other extension because of the weather. I cut a vacation in Vermont short to be here for that meeting. This is a 24 lot subdivision and I am reading special minutes session with the Board of Aldermen about Planning & Zoning's land acquisition. I didn't think that you guys were in the job of land acquisitions. Are you? Is that part of the Charter, asked Shawn Splan? I haven't looked at. You are having meetings about land acquisitions that show up on an agenda and I really don't understand that, he added.

It said on the agenda for land acquisition stated Shawn Splan. The Chairman stated we can only go into Executive Sessions for legal purposes. I can go to the Freedom of Information Act to see what was discussed there. I didn't see any Attorney's in there, stated Shawn Splan. That is on the record that there were no Attorney's in there if you are discussing legal matters, he added. You can't be protected by Attorney Client privileges then, is that correct, asked Shawn Splan?

All I am saying is that, stated the Chairman. You don't have to respond to this sort of cross-examination, Mr. Chairman, stated Anthony Panico. The Commission sought and called a properly identified Executive Session, it was for the purpose of discussing potential acquisitions of various parcels of land, none of which can be disclosed to the public, at this time. It is a valid case for an Executive Session, he added. If this Chairman thinks that you acted in violation of the Freedom of Information Act then let it take an action against the Freedom of Information. I was told before this meeting, by an Aldermen, that the City is entitled to take this property by way of eminent domain, stated Shawn Splan. So, this is a problem.

We cannot address what an Aldermen says, or what the Mayor says, or what the Board of Education says, stated the Chairman. We can only address the decision making process that is put before us. This came before us on November 18, 2003.

We tried to meet on several occasions, meetings have been cancelled due to snow or some other reasons with holidays in there too. It is a crucial time of the year, he added. I understand that stated Shawn Splan.
Now Mr. Swift has been before us a number of times, he can tell you that, he and other clients have given us extensions, none of them less than 30 days that I ever recall after being on this Commission for years, stated the Chairman. This is not being unreasonable. Now if you want these people here to make a responsible decision on this they need time to get advise from Mr. Panico and other people within the City. They need to make a decision that will be best not only for yourself but for the entire City. That is what we are asking for as this Commission. What you do with the Mayor or the Board of Aldermen or someone else that is your business. We cannot get involved with that, he added. I think if you check the record Mr. Panico did suggest that this be a planned residential development and being an owner, stated Shawn Splan. You may be right and I am not saying that you are not, stated the Chairman but we as a Commission have not discussed this at this table. I have not stated the Chairman.

James Swift stated I want to address the issues of the planned residents district and conservation districts. This was discussed when we first started this process. It was decided that it was inappropriate direction. We didn’t want to expose the applicant to things that are not a matter of right. The family most of them will construct lots at the site. Do the subdivision with regard to all the regulations. We did conform to all the regulations, stated James Swift. I respect you for that stated the Chairman to James Swift.

Walter Wiacek, addressed the Commission. I am not clear at this point what is happening. Shawn and myself got together to discuss what the best possibility would be. We shared with the mayor our plan and we shared with him personal information, financial and otherwise. We knew the City had an interest in the property. We were told to seek Wetlands approval and Planning & Zoning approval. We asked several times where we are and what was the next step, stated Walter Wiacek. When Mr. Panico said we have a preliminary tech session I take offense at that. I relied on our Engineers. I am unclear on preliminary. I never thought that we said we would not give an extension. However, when you read in the paper that the City can take the property or that an Aldermen says you are in negotiation with the City that is little disheartening. This is where this is and I am not sure of how the extensions work, questioned Walter Wiacek. We did give extensions of whatever days you asked for, he added. Staff asked for additional extensions as of last week in access of 30 days, stated Richard Schultz. I don't want to get into this and I advised you that the Commission had not acted on this and needed more time. This is a very emotional issue, he added.

I am sorry I cannot control certain things stated the Chairman. I do sympathize with your position and I ask that you sympathize with our position. We are meeting 4 times a month. If you were in our position you would want to act responsible and allow us to review this with Mr. Panico. If we feel you have all the rights for an R1 subdivision by right as a matter of right we have to give it to you. The public is very angry with us because we grant you your matter of right. We have not had the opportunity and as a matter of the Statues we do have the right to ask for extensions.

That is not what happened and we were never asked for 65 days extensions( not identified now but later identified as Thomas E. Minogue, Jr.). We want to be reasonable too. The goal post are moving and we are hearing from other people that the City is going to take the property in a way that it won’t have the value of the subdivision. I want this on the record and it is not clear where we are going. Requests for delay, coupled with the stories in the papers and overtures along with other issues, I respect that you need additional time and this is the first time. We are prepared to be reasonable. What will happen that we make the commitment to give the extension, who are we talking to, when do we meet and what are we talking about?
I have been recently retained by the applicant. I do agree with counsel that you are entitled to an approval however there are 2 areas of discretion. The Commission has to inject its position on the location of the Open Space and the road layout. I need to discuss these 2 issues with my Commission. Jim and I have talked about what works and doesn’t work. We looked at the impacts to the Open Space and we have talked about lots. We have no disagreement, Jim and I, stated Anthony Panico. These 2 majors area have to be discussed.

The Attorney stated I know that you can work with Jim on the Open Space and the road. How long will that take, he questioned? Anthony Panico stated we have to have a finding from the Commission on the interior lot with regard rather it is or is not appropriate. You have one interior lot that they have to decide if that is appropriate. That is the question with regard to how many lots. No matter what we do it is 22 or 23 lots for the subdivision. Then the Commission can decide what they want to see with regard to the Open Space and road layout, he added.

Attorney Minogue stated some subdivisions are actually approved then modified? Why don’t you consider that, he questioned? Not when the modification creates a whole different plan, stated Anthony Panico. I don’t even know if your client thinks that will work or not, he added.

We could stay here all night, stated the Chairman. I want to ask one question how long will it take to talk about the roads and Open Space, 65 days? I don’t think so, stated Attorney Minogue. The Chairman went over the schedule stating that we have meetings on 5th, 10th and then we go into March. We have Public Hearings on the 10th and public hearings on the 5th. We have another meeting on the 24th stated Comm. Cribbins. We need to know what direction we are going in and this needs to be put on 2 agendas stated Anthony Panico. Could we make a decision by the 9th of March, questioned the Chairman? Yes, stated Anthony Panico. Why don’t you take 5 minutes to discuss this with your client in the hallway, stated the Chairman? We will put the Staff right on this, he added. We could put that on the 9th and then give us the Wednesday after the Tuesday meeting, March 9th with the extra day until March 10th.

Comm. Cribbins stated one thing I looked at this map for about 10 minutes there are high-tension wires right through this property. That doesn’t prevent them from subdividing it, stated Anthony Panico. I understand that but I need to understand the road pattern around the high-tension wires, where the Open Space is and I see on these drawings that they want to give us the Open Space under the high-tension wires, stated Comm. Cribbins. You can see that has an x through it stated Anthony Panico. I personally have not had enough time to review this, stated Comm. Cribbins. It is important to make an intelligent decision, he added. The Chairman and Anthony Panico are discussing what is sufficient time and the scheduling. (it is hard to hear them)

Attorney Minogue stated March 10 is soon enough for us. I could have done it in 25 days but I don’t control meeting schedules, stated Anthony Panico. We will need a letter with the effective date of the extension stated the Chairman. When does the Commission want to discuss this before that, asked the Attorney?

End of Side 2B of 3A, Tape 2 of 3 at 10:30 P.M.

The Chairman stated we all know that there are high-tension wires and that is where the Open Space is going. The map shows this is Open Space Deed stated Comm. Cribbins. I only saw this now for 10 minutes and that is a question, stated Comm. Cribbins.

Attorney Minogue stated we were told there will be one sit down conversation and one for a final extension. My answer for the extension to the Chairman is that there will be the last day of the extension is March 10th and there needs to be a discussion before that. There are 2 or 3 agendas before that on which will be the discussion of this matter, stated Anthony Panico.
Comm. Sylvester stated I know this family. I don’t like the feeling that I am getting as to how they feel they have been treated. Much of what has been discussed, we are and I am not alone here, we are unaware of the kinds of conservations that have been going on. It is clear in my mind that your property is a valuable piece of property especially to the Board of Education. The Board has said that we recognize it has had problems with the children and students walking on your property. We were lead to believe that you were fully aware that open and honest discussions were going on. I am taken back and embarrassed that when you were say that you have not had these types of conversation. I was caught totally unaware and we assumed this parcel was up for development, never for taking just as an honest negotiations based on value.

Anthony Panico stated this is the beneficial part of the ongoing process to assess a value on this property with regard to the subdivision. I assumed there was open dialogue and they see it as a important piece with regard to the school, stated Comm. Sylvester. There has been very opened and honest dialogue. In any other dialogue it is based on value and then you have to look at the subdivision, stated Anthony Panico. We have to do our job and bring this to a conclusion. I can honestly say that if this came in a month before or even a month after that it would not happened like this, he added.

On a motion made by Alan Cribbins seconded by Anthony Pogoda it was unanimously voted to accept the letter of extension on Application # 03-53 until March 10, 2004 with discussion to take place prior to March 10, 2004.

PLAN UPDATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Chairman stated Mr. Orazietti is unable to sit on this advisory committee. Anthony Panico stated I have compiled a schedule for the update to be finished August no later than September of next year. We do have to have significant meetings on this and it will require a lot of work.

The Chairman stated I also have a heavy workload and I will step aside to allow anyone else on the Commission to take this over. Fred Musante has added his name to the committee.

Comm. Sylvester stated that it is interesting and ironic to me that we sit here and take public abuse about there feelings about being overwhelmed by development. Then I have to take personal innuendos that there may be something inappropriate in my participation on this Commission. That we have to sit here and take constant abuse on trying to do a good job of promoting this Community. Yet, we are all feeling as overwhelmed as they are. I would think that there thought of a moratorium is not a bad idea, There is too much work going on. I know I miss a lot of meetings but I work I have Committees also. I can’t keep up with all of this and I am tired of the kinds of things that we are listening too from certain groups of people who keep coming back to finding personal fault while we are trying to do a good job.

We are overwhelmed with applications and I think it is time to say wait. Mr. Chairman I apologize I would do this with you alone before putting this out there. This reminds me when I was Chairman back to Summerfield. We are not on the side of anyone.

It is appalling that people in this Community that they (the people in this Community) stand up and put children in the same place where they put garbage and traffic. That they believe that children, traffic and garbage are the reasons that this City is going to hell in a handbag, stated Comm. Sylvester. That is incredible to me. Children are an important part of the development of this Community and I don’t think that we should look at development as to if it is good or bad as if it brings children in or if it doesn’t bring children into. I can’t believe the kinds of people who intend to represent our Community can say those things.

It is time we as a Commission respond back to those kinds of things and talk about what we are elected to talk about, proper development.
The other part of it is that it is time we take control of our own self and people don’t lead us down paths where we don’t want to be. This Commission has the intelligence and the integrity to do that, stated Comm. Sylvester. This thing about taxes and Grand List, we have gotten swept up in that and it is time to just say enough.

The Chairman stated we have asked Corporation Counsel to give us some information on moratoriums. Well good for you but next time you do something like that you should share that with us, stated Comm. Sylvester. That is important information. I feel left out and it is important that we should know about that, he added. Until we get some information back from him we are wasting our time discussing it stated the Chairman. We will have an answer in a short period of time, then we can discuss it, he added. Long before the Oxford situation we had discussed moratoriums back when you were Chairman I think.

To have a moratorium you have to have a specific reason stated Anthony Panico. They have a limited purpose or an action you want to accomplish then they can be done. What about a study group asked Comm. Sylvester? What we heard is a moratorium on all building, that won’t hold up in Court stated Anthony Panico. If you wanted to put a moratorium on because we had trouble with our subdivision regulations and we put a moratorium on for 6 months to rewrite those, then you can do that, he added. You cannot put a moratorium on just to do a plan update.

Comm. Sylvester stated I know that you are a very knowledgeable guy and you would know that. I think that an item like a moratorium should be on an agenda where the people can come and listen to our frustrations like we have listened to there’s. I know when I brought to this Board certain issues with regard to traffic on Route 8, he added. We have been troubled by the same issues and I don’t want anyone to think we are having a moratorium just because someone other then us asked for it. We are doing it because we are men of reason, people of reason and we are elected to do the right thing. That is why we get elected because people believe in us, he added.

The development in Shelton in the 60’s with Route 8 was grid locked and is still grid locked. There is no way we will ever be able to handle that type of volume stated Anthony Panico.

The Chairman stated I do feel the frustrations too. The ultimate decisions come back to this Commission.

The Chairman stated that Anthony Pogoda will replace Daniel Orzietti and Fred Musante will replace him on the Plan Update Advisory Committee. The Committee was set up for 3 people who included Peter DeCarlo, Daniel Orzietti and Anthony Pogoda. This Commission has the right to appoint 3 people. The Chairman stated that we need a representative. I want to make sure that the person who is representing this Commission is not a politically motivated person, stated Comm. Sylvester. It is not my choice but the choice of this Commission. Tom Harbinson is on this, Jim Tate, Peter DeCarlo, Fred Musante, Frank Osak, Michael ?, and Anthony Pogoda. They need to have an organizational meeting. We have to give them a presentation and give them their charge. Comm. Sylvester stated the person representing this should reflect the hard work of this Commission. There will be policies and visions of there statements so that we see their goals and policies. I don’t want this to be adopted with changes that didn’t take place. I don’t want this to be their goals, stated Anthony Panico.

On a motion made by Alan Cribbins seconded by Patrick Lapera it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 11:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diana Barry
Secretary