

SHELTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JUNE 22, 2016

The Shelton Planning and Zoning Commission held a special meeting on Wednesday, June 22, 2016, Shelton City Hall, Auditorium, 54 Hill Street, Shelton, CT 06484 at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Chairperson Ruth Parkins
Commissioner Virginia Harger
Commissioner Thomas McGorty
Commissioner Ned Miller – Alternate sitting in for
Commissioner Elaine Matto (Absent)
Commissioner Jim Tickey
Commissioner Anthony Pogoda
Commissioner Frank Osak – Alternate (Absent)

Staff Present:

Richard Schultz, Planning & Zoning Administrator
Anthony Panico, Planning & Zoning Consultant
Patricia Gargiulo, Court Stenographer
Virginia Evanski, Recording Secretary

Tapes (2), correspondence and attachments are on file in the City Town Clerk's Office and the Planning & Zoning Office and on the City of Shelton website www.cityofshelton.org.

I. II. & III. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL

Chairman Parkins called the June 22nd Special Meeting of the Shelton Planning & Zoning Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call of members present. She then noted that Commissioner Ned Miller would be acting as an alternate for Commissioner Elaine Matto.

Chairman Parkins then provided an overview of the procedures for those who are not familiar and asked the P&Z Secretary to read the Call of the Hearing.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING

A. APPLICATION #16-9, R.D. SCINTO, INC. FOR INITIAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN AND PDD ZONE CHANGE APPROVAL (THREE NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS), 100 COMMERCE DRIVE (MAP 39, LOT 1), IA-3 DISTRICT.

P&Z Secretary Commissioner Harger read the Call of the Hearing, application and two (2) correspondences, both addressed to Richard Schultz, Administrator, from Fire Marshal and City Engineer.

ROBERT SCINTO – PROPERTY OWNER

Mr. Scinto addressed the Board and provided a history of the property and his ownership of the property, as well as, the other properties he owns in the area of this property.

JIM SWIFT – PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Mr. Swift presented the proposed plans for the property starting with noting the existing layout of the property most commonly known as the Tetley Tea building. About 5.3 acres site. Currently in an IA-3 Zone with some development. The proposed plans have three (3) buildings for general retail use. One (1) building on the lower end of the property, closest to Bridgeport Avenue is a two-story retail building. On the upper end, two (2) buildings, both one-story. The middle building of the three (3) being a smaller building, as a proposed coffee shop with a drive through and outside patio with flexibility to the plans. Total building area 48,000 square feet. The third (3rd) building in the back being another retail building. Proposing 5 uses per square feet, which is typical. Access to the site will be done in two (2) different spaces, one (1) on Bridgeport Avenue which is a right turn in and right turn out. Second (2nd) access will be with new entry as opposed to the existing entry to provide better flow of in and out from Commerce Drive. Proposed use is pretty close to the requirements to the IA-3 use. As for the grading, the first (1st) building will be lower and there will be a parking area down low and then will go up to the second level of the first building. From there it's relatively flat.

Commissioner Ned Miller asked about the need for a retaining wall due to there being quite a hill and Mr. Swift indicated that there would be and he would get to that.

Mr. Swift noted that the existing site is very steep with the coffee shop area being about 15 feet higher than Commerce Drive and noted where the plans propose a retaining wall about 6 to 8 feet tall which is the only spot for a retaining wall on the proposed plans.

As for drainage, Mr. Swift pointed out it is pretty straight forward and standard and meets the new ordinances. Sewer is also straight forward which will tie into the existing system and hope to use the existing water, fire, and domestic services same as the gas and will hopefully not have to open commerce drive at all.

The commission asked if there was gas on site for this property. It was not clear but Mr. Swift noted that they had hoped that there was because it is known to be nearby.

Mr. Swift went on to note the erosion control plan of the project and noted that it was an initial plan and followed the standard erosion control.

Mr. Swift went on to discuss the landscaping, plantings, and the parking lot lighting.

The Commission asked questions about the entrance and the proximity to the existing condominiums as well as excavation of the site.

Mr. Swift responded to the Commissions concerns and what was expected and its impact.

The Commission raised sidewalk concerns and what is expected to be done which was addressed by Mr. Swift and also concerns about trash, transformers, existing plantings, and sight lighting.

MARK BARTUCCI – SENIOR TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER, FUSS & O'NEILL

Mr. Bartucci informed the Commission that he would be talking about the traffic for the retail center. He indicated that as part of the traffic study the intersection of Bridgeport Avenue and Commerce Drive were analyzed and also the two intersections on Old Stratford Road where Route 8 ramps are found and driveway intersections as well. For the traffic volumes that were utilized in the study he noted they were obtained from the recent traffic study that was prepared for the town center at Shelter Ridge and those volumes also included traffic from a number of other developments.

Mr. Bartucci noted that the traffic for the coffee shop is expected to be existing traffic in the area with people stopping in on their normal route of traffic. He noted that their study shows that the traffic levels do not change and only area of concern is Route 8 North ramp but that it was within acceptable standards.

Mr. Bartucci then discussed the functions of the driveways in and out of the property and the conditions as they currently exist with the existing roadways including the traffic light at the intersection of Bridgeport Avenue and Commerce Drive. He noted a concern as to times when traffic backs-up from the traffic light blocking the driveway on Commerce Drive. He also discussed sight lines from the driveway intersections.

Mr. Bartucci went on to discuss the impact of traffic due to the retail center and noted it would not significantly impact traffic operations, existing traffic operations on adjacent road network. He noted that with adjustments to the traffic light times, it would improve the functions of the intersections.

The Commission questioned Mr. Bartucci about the study's note as to 2% traffic growth, impact on rush hour traffic, the change to the traffic light times and the need to be pedestrian friendly.

JIM JAMIESON – BUILDING DESIGNER, JAMIESON ARCHITECTS

Mr. Jamieson showed the Commission a rendering of the buildings proposed. He noted that he's been working with Mr. Scinto for many years on various projects, Il Palio being one of them and noted that Mr. Scinto always does a quality job, cares about what he builds and builds things to last. He then went on to talk about the materials to be used on the buildings, the designs of the buildings and the signage for the retail space.

The Commission asked questions about the designs and questioned the signage to be on the buildings as shown on the rendering proposed. The Commission also raised the types of tenants that would be using the retail space.

Robert Scinto also spoke to the Commission as to the building design and materials to be used including the tiles and his vision for the buildings. He also noted that the existing building is an eyesore and that he wants to improve the visual aspect as it is to be the gateway into the rest of the properties. Mr. Scinto also addressed concerns raised as to what kind of tenants would be using the space, corporate logos and signage.

PUBLIC PORTION

Greg Tetro – 281 Buddington Road

Mr. Tetro stated that he wants to be a part of the solution by going to as many various meetings including the Board of Aldermen's meeting, Republican's Town Committee meeting, as many P&Z meetings as he can because it is important to him. He then told the Commission a story about two bridges that were damaged for years with nothing done to fix them until there was a meeting where Mayor Mark Lauretti was in attendance and then the area where the bridge once was, was fixed. He then went on about how he's looked into the existing building for this project and found it to be useless. He noted he looked at the proposed plans for the site including the materials to be used and stated that the building is going to be beautiful. He went on to state that he liked the building, concept and the idea. He raised his concerns for the coffee shop and high-end retail fitting in. He also noted his problems and concerns with the traffic in the area. He also raised the rate at which Shelton is developing.

The Commission then asked if the traffic study had included anything regarding accidents in the area. Mr. Bartucci responded that there are accident records from Department of Transportation included and they didn't see anything of concern.

Motion to close the public hearing on Application #16-9 made by Virginia Harger second by Thomas McGorty, motion carries.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. APPLICATION #16-13, FAR MILL, LLC FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION APPROVAL (GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR PANELS), 600 BRIDGEPORT AVENUE (MAP 39, LOT 13), LIP DISTRICT: ACCEPT AND SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING

Motion to accept and schedule a public hearing on 7/12/2016 on Application #16-13 made by Virginia Harger second by Jim Tickey, motion carries.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:25 pm made by Virginia Harger second by Thomas McGorty, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Evanski
Planning & Zoning Recording Secretary