

SHELTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, July 21, 2021
Shelton City Hall (VIRTUAL)
54 Hill Street, Shelton, CT 06484

PZC Commissioners Present: Virginia Harger, Chairman
Charles Kelly, Vice-Chairman
Elaine Matto, Secretary
Ruth Parkins
Jimmy Tickey (Left at 8:00 p.m.)
John Uysal, Alternate
Peter Laskos, Alternate (Sat in for Comm. Widomski)

PZC Commissioner Excused: Mark Widomski

Also Present: Alexander Rossetti, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Josh O'Neill, Assistant Administrator, Zoning Enforcement Officer
Anthony Panico, Consultant
Kenneth Nappi, Downtown Development Coordinator
Stephanie Charboneau, Stenographer
Sarah Vournazos, Recording Secretary

Stephanie Charboneau
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CITY OF SHELTON
TOWN CLERK

Tapes, correspondences, and attachments are on file in the City/Town Clerk's office and the Planning and Zoning office. Minutes are on the City of Shelton website: www.cityofshelton.org.

I. Call to Order

Comm. Harger called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

All those who were present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Comm. Harger identified members present.

IV. Public Hearing

Comm. Harger read aloud the guidelines for the public hearing, and how the public who wished to comment on the proposals being presented will be recognized by the Chair.

A. Initiation of Appl. #21-10, "River Side Commercial," Riverside Retail Center, LLC., at 131 Canal Street (Assessor's Map 130, Lot 2), petition for a modification of Special Exception Application #15-17, in the River Front District (RFD) zone. This proposed

modification intends to convert second-floor office space in an existing two-story retail/commercial building into eight apartments with onsite parking. The plans are titled "Riverside Commercial Center," were prepared by Guedes Associates, Inc. and Primrose Companies.

Comm. Matto read aloud the public hearing notice for Appl. #21-10.

Mr. John Guedes, President of Primrose Companies, addressed the Commission. He indicated his original intent was to have retail on the first floor and office space on the second floor. He mentioned there is now 75% retail space leased, which should be operational within the next eight weeks, from an optometrist. There will also be a restaurant on the first floor as well. However, since the second floor has been unsuccessful with finding tenants, Mr. Guedes stated he is requesting a modification to allow a total of eight apartments, comprised of one studio unit, five one-bedroom units and two two-bedroom units, "working with the space that exists."

Chairman Harger inquired about the number of parking spaces and Mr. Guedes replied, "I believe firmly that the apartments will require less parking than the office space." He mentioned one parking space will be designated and there is available parking behind the farmer's market. He said, "the majority of the parking spaces behind the farmer's market are vacant." He further stated, "I believe strongly that we have adequate parking for these eight apartments." Chairman Harger noted she would like Mr. Guedes to provide a site plan showing the two buildings with the parking spaces lined and she would appreciate comments from the traffic authority be made and to have more information about the restaurant (e.g. hours of operation).

The Commissioners inquired about handicap parking for the second floor and Mr. Guedes said it is not required and it falls under the Adaptive Reuse program. Chairman Harger stated she would appreciate it if staff would document in the regulations where that appears. Mr. Guedes said, "parking is always going to be an issue in the downtown area until certain things happen; if private sector takes the issue at heart, similar to what I did with the Riverpark Royal and is able to create a number of parking more than what is required." He further stated, "my understanding is that the mayor is going to support a private partnership to put up a municipal parking garage."

Chairman Harger inquired whether there will be any affordable housing units and Mr. Guedes replied, "no, there will not." Comm. Parkins mentioned the downtown area needs mixed-use and not just apartments, saying, "it's vital for us to have mixed-use down there...it can't just be filled for apartments."

Comm. Harger opened up the public portion and the following member of the audience spoke via Zoom regarding Appl. #21-10:

1. Rebecca LeGrant, Shelton, CT addressed the Commissioners. She spoke about her traffic concerns and Mr. Guedes replied, "I think overall, traffic wise, the apartments will generate less trips than the office use."

Motion made by Comm. Matto, seconded by Comm. Kelly, to continue the public hearing until August 18, 2021 for App. #21-10. On a roll call vote taken by Comm. Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Tickey – Aye	Comm. Parkins – Aye	Comm. Matto – Aye
Comm. Laskos – Aye	Comm. Kelly – Aye	Comm. Harger – Aye

The motion passed 6 to 0.

B. Initiation of Appl. #20-22, "River View Park Royal," Dominick Thomas for Canal Properties, LLC., at 113-123 Canal Street (Assessor's Map 130, Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7), petition for a Special Exception on 2.57 acres in the River Front District (RFD) zone. This proposal is for a five-story mixed-use building with 11,000 square feet of retail/commercial space on the first floor and ninety-two (92) studio, one, two, and three-bedroom apartments with onsite parking. The plans titled "Park Royal" were prepared by J. Edwards & Associates, engineers, and Guedes Associates, Inc., architects.

Comm. Matto read aloud the public hearing notice for Appl. #20-22.

Attorney Dominick Thomas from Cohen & Thomas addressed the Commission on behalf of the applicant. He indicated that an application was filed in June 2021 with the Inland Wetlands Commission and he is waiting for their comments. He mentioned the site is 11,000 square feet, located in an RFD Zone, for 92 studio, one, two, and three-bedroom apartments, along with 179 onsite parking spaces.

Mr. Larry Edwards, P. E., addressed the Commission on behalf of the applicant. He reviewed the site plan noting two accesses, one at the south-end of the property and the other one going into a lower-level parking garage. He then went over the drainage plan and noted they are waiting for DEEP permits.

Mr. John Guedes, President of Primrose Companies, addressed the Commission. He mentioned the property is city-owned with four factories onsite. He reviewed the floor plan, noting the parking garage with areas of self-storage and even for bicycle racks. He stated, "the state has included the section of Bridge Street for a walk-way and a bicycle trail." He then said, "we would provide the Riverwalk easement and also construct the Riverwalk (extension from Veteran's Park heading along the river, along the railroad tracks and exiting onto Canal Street East)".

Chairman Harger questioned the balcony as being a safety issue and Mr. Guedes replied that the railings are 42 inches high. He noted the building has a sprinkler system. Chairman Harger asked about the trash removal and Mr. Guedes said there are interior chutes for the trash. Chairman Harger then inquired about the possibility of affordable housing units and Mr. Guedes stated, "we weren't planning on it, but it's something we can sit down with staff and work out."

Attorney Thomas mentioned the site had to be remediated and "it required a substantial

amount of site work.” He pointed out the amount of available street parking and public parking and said, “if you want everybody to start providing onsite for all commercial traffic...in my opinion you are just shooting yourself in the foot because now you’re requiring a developer to remove some of his development and therefore reduce the economic viability.” Chairman Harger inquired about charging stations for electric vehicles and Mr. Guedes replied, “there are provisions being made.”

Chairman Harger requested that she would like Mr. Rossetti to follow up with receiving information from the city engineer and fire marshal. In addition, Mr. Panico mentioned he would like Mr. Guedes to provide the Commission with a perspective of the rear elevation and Mr. Guedes said, “I can look into that.”

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Matto, to continue the public hearing to a later date for Appl. #20-22. On a roll call vote taken by Comm. Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Kelly – Aye	Comm. Laskos – Aye	Comm. Parkins – Aye
Comm. Matto – Aye	Comm. Harger – Aye	

The motion passed 5 to 0.

V. Other Business

A. Minutes available for review on the website for the following meetings:

i. July 13, 2021 – Regular Meeting

VI. Adjournment

Comm. Harger adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Vournazos,
Recording Secretary