

SHELTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT/DRAFT RESOLUTION

January 12, 2016

Subject: Application #15-17 John Guedes on behalf of Primrose Companies Realty, LLC.

Special Exception Approval for Multi-Family Residential and Retail Commercial

Development and Administrative Site Plan Approval

6 Bridge Street and 131 Canal Street in a Rivertown RF District

Primrose Companies Realty, LLC has filed an application to rehabilitate the former Spongex manufacturing structure for 47 units of residential rental apartments and to construct a new, two (2) story retail commercial building containing a total gross floor area of approximately 12,874 square feet on a site of 2.71 acres situated at the corner of Bridge Street and Canal Street, adjacent to the Housatonic River and the R.O.W. now or formerly of the Housatonic Railroad. The site is isolated from contiguous property by the railroad, the River, Bridge Street and Canal Street. The Commission placed the site in the Rivertown RF District in anticipation of the type of development proposed. The site has approximately 465 feet of frontage on Bridge Street as well as 166 feet frontage on Canal Street, although a major portion of both frontages is encumbered by the existing building to be renovated. The unrestricted frontage is approximately 30 feet on Bridge Street and 28 feet on Canal Street with existing curb cuts at both locations. There is approximately 465 feet of frontage on the Housatonic River, lying between the railroad bridge and the Bridge Street overpass. The site is an assembly of two (2) parcels, one owned now or formerly by Rudolph Pizoferrato consisting of 1.04 acres occupied by industrial structures. The other is owned by the City of Shelton consisting of 1.67 acres of vacant land for a total site area of 2.71 acres. The City property is vacant as a result of the demolition of the former the Rolite industrial facility and subsequent site environmental remediation activities. The main industrial building on the Pizoferrato property is proposed to be retained and restored, converting it into approximately 47 one and two bedroom rental dwelling units. The site is served by public water

supply and municipal sanitary sewers as well as gas, electric and cable TV services. Both properties have been or will be completely environmentally remediated. The site appears to lie within the FEMA designated flood zone and will require significant filling to satisfy applicable FEMA minimum elevation requirements. Minimum floor elevations will be at or above the 100 year flood levels.

Entry-only access to the site is proposed from Canal Street with egress-only to Bridge Street and will utilize the existing curb cuts. The proposed plans create a central internal access drive from Canal Street to Bridge Street, effectively dividing the site into two (2) development areas. One area accommodates the proposed, rehabilitated residential structure and supporting parking and the other is proposed to have a new, two (2) story commercial building with retail and restaurant on the first floor and limited office space on the second floor and supporting on-site parking. In addition, provisions have been made to provide the City with a 20 foot wide access easement area along the Housatonic River for a proposed Riverwalk or other appropriate use by the City. This easement also connects with the proposed internal access drive.

On-site parking for a total of approximately 122 vehicles is proposed. The residential area shows 34 spaces and the commercial provides 88 spaces. Residential parking required by zoning is 94 spaces based on 2 spaces per unit and commercial parking required is 52 spaces based on 4 spaces per 1000 sq. ft. of floor area, for a total requirement of 146 spaces. However, zoning regulations allow for shared parking for appropriate, dissimilar uses (such as the proposed residential and commercial uses). Therefore, a credit for such shared parking of 24 spaces is reasonable and appropriate. It is anticipated that a minimum of one space for each dwelling unit will be reserved, some of which will be conveniently located on the commercial site and adjacent to the central access drive, It should be noted that, in addition to the above, the City intends to provide a municipal parking area of some 72 spaces on the former Chromium Process site, directly across Canal Street, as soon as demolition and site clearance activities are completed. The central access drive will have a pavement width of 21 to 22 feet, providing sufficient width to accommodate exclusive left and right turn lanes at Bridge Street. It will have sidewalks on both sides of the drive and protective railing will be required on the River side at the upper

portion closest to Bridge Street as well as that proposed for the full length on the opposite side. The access drive as well as both development sites will have a complete storm drainage system that collects storm water to a central location, then passes it through a water quality structure and discharges into an existing drainage culvert that traverses the site, ultimately discharging into the Housatonic River. No on-site detention facilities are warranted or provided.

The internal access drive is mandated as part of the conveyance agreement for the City parcel to the applicant. The proposed access drive has been designed with a 40 foot right-of-way and is to be constructed to City street standards and secured by a Performance Bond in favor of the City. Said access drive shall be deeded to the City as a public road at such time as the City may determine.

The current RF District zoning designation of the site accommodates the proposed multi-family residential use as well as the retail commercial use, subject to the review and approval of a 33.18 of the Shelton Zoning Regulations. Proposed parking complies with the provisions of said Par. 33.18 and should be adequate for the proposed use with a reasonable number of shared parking spaces as proposed.

Accordingly, as required for Special Exceptions, a duly noticed public hearing was commenced on October 27, 2015 and continued to and concluded on 11/10/15 to consider the Special Exception application for the proposal. At the hearing, no one spoke in opposition to the proposal except for concerns expressed by the public regarding adequacy of parking and street circulation, citing experiences at other nearby residential facilities.

The Commission and its Staff have reviewed the site and architectural plans, entitled "Canal Bridge Lofts and Riverside Commercial Center" prepared by Guedes Associates, Inc., Architects, dated August 18, 2014 and Site Plans dated revised 9/21/15 plus a Bridge Street Intersection Plan dated 11/09/15 prepared by Codespoti & Associates, P.C., Surveyors and Engineers. All required referrals were made and the comments and concerns of both the City

Engineer and the Fire Marshall have been or will be addressed to their satisfaction. Based on its review, the Commission notes the following comments and concerns:

1. Dwellings in the Downtown area should be geared to the needs of single adults, young marrieds and adult empty-nesters. The provisions for some 3 bedroom units is of some concern and may impact parking needs and should be avoided.

2. The applicant should continue to explore possible solutions for providing internal rubbish control in the residential building. With only a 3 foot difference between parking lot pavement grade and lower floor elevation in the vicinity of the entry, it may be possible to ramp down at a grade of 8 percent or less to service a rubbish room at the lower floor level. Even if it is necessary to raise the floor level slightly, the elevated entry floor elevation would still allow access. Only as a last resort will exterior dumpsters be allowed and if so, they must be completely enclosed within a gated, masonry enclosure that compliments the exterior materials of the building. It should be provided with a separate pedestrian gate and a baffled entrance to avoid escaping debris. It should be high enough to avoid visual intrusion.

3. The Commission would like additional clarification and specifics concerning the proposed treatment of existing windows. Will existing windows be retained or replaced and how will the interior side of the windows be treated for visual consistency throughout the building?

4. All on-site curbing both on the residential site and commercial site shall be extruded concrete or better. No bituminous concrete lip curbing is acceptable.

5. The entrance to the commercial site must be realigned slightly. As currently configured, it tends to direct vehicular traffic flow into the right front area of the parking lot. Also, if possible a sidewalk connection should be provided from the building sidewalk to the access drive sidewalk. To accomplish the above, it may be necessary to reorganize that

right front portion of the parking area and may result in the loss of one or more parking spaces. It may also be desirable to reexamine the dumpster location for more convenient access by the commercial tenants.

6. No information or details have been provided regarding the several retaining walls indicated on the site plans. Additional information should be provided as to materials of construction, surface finishes, protective fencing atop the walls where needed, etc.

7. The Landscape Plan requires further attention, especially in the areas along the River. The plan should be annotated to indicate how the applicant proposes to leave this area, after completion of construction, until such time as the City determines its plans for this area. Site lighting should be shown, unless incorporated into the Site Improvements Plan.

8. Site plans should include one or more detail sheets showing details for proposed dumpster enclosures, fencing, retaining walls, sidewalks, curbing, lighting standards, raised cobble islands, etc.

Subject to the satisfaction of the comments noted above, the Application conforms to the zoning requirements and standards for the Riverfront RF zone. Accordingly, Application #15-17 for Special Exception Approval and conditional approval of the accompanying site plans can be granted with conditions.

If the Commission is prepared to act favorably upon the subject Application at this time, the following **RESOLUTION** with conditions and stipulations is offered for consideration:

Based upon the findings set forth above, the Shelton Planning and Zoning Commission hereby approves Application #15-17 for Approval of a Special Exception and accompanying site plans subject to the following conditions and stipulations:

1. Compliance with any and all requirements and conditions of the City Engineer, Fire Marshall, Local Traffic Authority, W.P.C.A and I.W.C.

2. Modification and revision of the site and architectural plans to satisfy the concerns of the Commission as set forth above and summarized as follows:

- a. Elimination of all 3 bedroom units.
- b. Further study of potential for internal rubbish control.
- c. Clarification of window treatment.
- d. Use of extruded concrete curbing.
- e. Reorganization of commercial site entry/parking layout.
- f. Modification and expansion of Landscaping Plan.
- g. Provision of retaining walls design details.
- h. Incorporation of miscellaneous details drawing.

3. Confirmation of property acquisition prior to issuance of permits..

4. Posting of site completion bonds in amounts to be determined by the Commission to assure installation and maintenance of sedimentation and erosion control measures, satisfactory completion of all required off-site and on-site improvements and final site landscaping. It is acknowledged that, as provided for in the Sales Contract between the City and the Applicant, the Performance Bond posted with the City regarding the construction of the internal access drive may serve dually and will not require further bonding of that work for this approval, providing said Bond is amended to name the Shelton Planning and Zoning Commission as obligee/beneficiary.

There being no further discussion, on a roll call vote, Commissioners _____, _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____ voted in favor. _____ voted in opposition.