

MINUTES  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
Special Meeting  
Tuesday, January 8, 2019

A Subcommittee of the Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a special meeting on January 8, 2019 at 6:00 PM in the Harriet North Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT 06516.

Present: Commission Chairman Hendricks, Vice-Chairman Biancur, Commission Alternate Milano, Planning and Development Commissioner Messore, Zoning Enforcement Officer Conniff and Assistant City Planner Killeen.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Hendricks at 6:20 PM (due to a conflicting public hearing the same night).

1. Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting of November 27, 2018 Meeting

Motion was made by Vice-Chairman Biancur, seconded by Alternate Milano and passed.

2. Discussion of Implementation Schedule for Plan of Conservation and Development/Ranking of Priorities

a. Discussion of Proposed Village District Regulations

Chairman Hendricks had circulated a first draft of a proposed Village District Regulation for West Haven, for discussion purposes. She and Cathy Conniff had both worked on this draft. The Subcommittee reviewed the draft regulation one page at a time. Comments made:

- Overall, everyone was in agreement that this draft Regulation was an excellent start and could work well for West Haven. The meeting was devoted to identifying sections of the draft Regulation that could use some additional discussion.
- Section 3, Scope and Applicability, a. Downtown  
After some discussion, it was agreed that, as a zoning overlay, the Village District should be enacted as a Zone Change under the Zoning Regulations. As a result, this section could be rewritten to define the process for approval and for expansion.
- The Subcommittee discussed the need for a definition of “Substantial Rehabilitation” to help determine when the Village District Regulations would apply to specific projects. Mr. Killeen provided a sample he had seen used for Village Commercial Districts in the City of Stamford. After discussing this example, the Subcommittee agreed to incorporate some of the definitions and wording from the Stamford regulation.

- The Subcommittee also made revisions to the list of exemptions listed under Section 3. The Subcommittee removed from the list: painting, choice of paint color, non-enclosed decks, and adding a second story to an existing single-story room of a house.
- After careful discussion, under Section 5, Design Standards, the Subcommittee agreed to add solar panels to the list of items on the roof that the Regulation would not want to see visible from the street. (Subsection b, vi).
- Under Section 5, Design Standards, there was discussion regarding sidewalk cafes (Subsection f, vii). Some members felt that the City should require more than the 3 foot minimum clearance included in the draft regulation. It was suggested that the group review this draft in the context of the existing regulations for outside dining and determine where these changes should be made to ensure consistency.
- Under Section 6, Design Review Process, the subcommittee began discussing how the review would be conducted. Will the City hire an architect or try to secure a volunteer Architectural Review Committee? Commissioner Messoro said that he appreciated the Subcommittee's input on this issue, but that he felt the staff should look into how this regulation should be administered and identify potential funding.
- There were mixed opinions on whether public art should be included in this regulation. This should be considered further at future meetings.
- The Subcommittee agreed it wanted to look at the revisions that had been recommended from this meeting and to discuss how to proceed with this draft regulation.

b. Discussion of Proposed Amendments to SRR and SCR District Regulations

At the last Subcommittee meeting, Commissioner Messoro and Assistant Planner Killeen had agreed to investigate potential funding sources to conduct an engineering assessment of how to access certain properties in the floodplain to provide the ability to increase residential densities in certain zoning districts (SRR and SCR). After consulting with a representative of Milone and MacBroom who had assisted the City with the development of a Coastal Resiliency Plan a couple years ago, staff was now suggesting a different strategy. Staff had learned that the issue of development in the floodplain was something almost all coastal communities in Connecticut were addressing. Staff had also learned that the usual sources of funding for coastal resilience projects was FEMA and CT DEEP. Since both of those agencies favored reducing the number of dwellings located in the floodplain, it was unlikely that they would provide funding for the study the City had envisioned. As a consequence, staff was recommending that the City should begin working on revisions to the SCR and SRR Districts to allow some level of residential development, especially since the SCR District allows no residential development currently. The City should anticipate some pushback from CT DEEP on changes of this type. The Subcommittee agreed that this is the

direction the City should take, and instructed staff to begin working on appropriate revisions to the Zoning Regulations.

c. Update Reports

i. Steering Committee for Allingtown Plan—Next Meeting on January 31.

Staff reported that the next meeting of the Allingtown Steering Committee had been scheduled. The Subcommittee agreed to discuss an update on the Allingtown Plan at their next meeting.

ii. Outline and Potential Funding Sources for Bicycle-Pedestrian

Mr. Killeen had circulated a draft outline of a Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan for West Haven and a summary of some of the contacts he had made regarding an approach to this Plan and potential funding for it. The Subcommittee agreed to discuss this item at their next meeting.

3. New Business/Next Steps

- Staff and Subcommittee members will generate revisions to the first draft of the Village District Regulations based on tonight's meeting and present them at future meetings for further review .
- The staff and subcommittee will update the Planning and Zoning Commission on the revised approach to rewriting the SCR and SRR Districts, and staff will begin working on proposed revisions for presentation to the Commission.

4. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM, and the Subcommittee agreed to continue the consideration of these agenda items at their next meeting.