

CITY OF WEST HAVEN, CT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE WORKING MEETING HELD ON
Tuesday, May 23, 2023

The West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission held a Working Meeting on Tuesday, May 23, 2023, in the Harriet North Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut at 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Roll Call:

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| Christopher Suggs, Chairman | Present |
| John Biancur, Vice-Chairman | Present |
| Gregory Milano, Secretary | Present @ 6:03 |
| Gene F. Sullivan, Commissioner | Present |
| Michael Todd Taylor, Commissioner | Present |
| Joseph Vecellio, Alternate | Present |
| Sammy Rivera, Alternate | Absent |
| Alternate Commissioner | Vacant |
| Ron Quagliani, Liason to Council | Absent |
| Catherine Conniff, Assistant City Planner | Present |
| Stephen Hotchkiss, Zoning Enforcement Officer | Present |
| Brian Miller, Planning Consultant | Present |
| Tom Cusa | Present |
| Associate Corp. Counsel, Sussman, Duffy & Segaloff | |

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Sullivan makes a motion to accept the minutes from the May 9th, 2023 meeting and Commissioner Taylor seconded it

Proposed Amendment to Zoning Regulations A proposal to amend Section 39.2 N in the Transit Oriented District (TOD) to allow automobile or truck rental . Vehicle rental is limited to 25 when located 250 feet of a Metro-North Train, by Special Permit.

Applicant: Jeffrey N Gordon, Codespoti & Associates **PC File #ZR23-173**

Assistant City Planner Conniff states that it was never truck rental, it was a mistake on the Agenda

Mr. Gordon explains that he is here to represent a car rental company that is currently on Derby Avenue but will be moving to make way for a Tennis Center where the existing business is now. The Company wants to stay in West Haven and relocate across from the West Haven Train Station. They will have 25 vehicles on hand. There will be no repairs made on site, only car cleaning between rentals. The rental company's plans for the existing building on that site is to not demolish it. Gordon said this will fit with our TOD because people will be able to walk from the train and rent a car. He said the cities goals for that are could take 25 years to come to fruition. Secretary Milano said Gordon should not criticize as we are trying to increase pedestrian traffic in that area. Commissioner Taylor said Mr. Gordon's presentation insinuates there is no hope for the Commissions plans.

Public Hearing

Mark Glassman, 4 Mountainview Road, Mr. Glassman said the City is stagnant in development and this parcel is at the end of the TOD. Car rentals are important and across from the train station. He said this will help development and the City should take this opportunity.

Michael Black, 45 Pilgrim Road, West Hartford, Mr. Black said he has been in West Haven for ten years with his Rental Car Company and he wants to stay. They will have electric cars and charging stations and they may even begin to rent bikes. His company, Sixt, was started 14 years ago in Florida and here in West Haven they serve 70 percent local clientele. He said his plan for across from the Train Station will enhance the City's vision.

Cathy Hebert, 166 Blohm Street, Ms. Hebert said she respects the TOD. She said this will work because some people cannot walk far and this will be close enough to make it convenient for those who cannot walk a long distance.

Vice-Chairman Biancur makes a motion to close the Public Hearing and Commissioner Sullivan seconded it.

Vice-Chairman Biancur makes a motion to deny, with discussion, the Amendment because it does not comply with 35.1 A & E; 35.2.2 and 35.2.2 A of our TOD. Secretary Milano seconded it. Chairman Suggs said it doesn't fit in the TOD and this is not the time for the City to make yet another mistake. He said we need to make more progress in this area. Commissioner Taylor said he did not hear how it will fit with the TOD and Commissioner Sullivan states that it is hard to imagine that there will be no repairs done to the rental vehicles on site.

Deliberation of PC File #ZR23-173

A vote was taken by roll call (Taylor, Suggs, Biancur, Milano, Sullivan) and it was denied unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Regulations were discussed. Campbell Avenue against Planning & Zoning was denied. RHM plaintiff brief is due June 15. There will be four applications for the June 13 meeting. Kaplowe's next hearing is next week. June 26th is the Bowl Drive In hearing.

Other Business:

The Shoreline Residential (SRR): Discuss the Shoreline area and how it fits with the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Secretary Milano and Vice-Chairman Biancur worked on the Shoreline Design (SD) for the area from Sandy Point to the left of Stowes and back two blocks to Thomas Street. They considered all of the comments from the neighbors that spoke at a previous meeting. Please see the **Attachment** that they prepared for this change.

Kathy Hebert, 166 Blohm Street, Ms. Hebert thanked the Commission for hearing.

Pat Bollettieri, 215 West Walk, Pat thanks the Commission and asks for a meeting because she and her neighbors did not intend to agree with four stories, they want to discuss.

It was said that Vice-Chairman Biancur and Secretary Milano will meet with them.

Rich Hebert, 166 Blohm Street, He also thanks the Commission for hearing the public and he questions the parking in this area.

Bonnie Posick, 107 East Avenue, She thanks the Commission and said that this is being done right and it will aid in development.

Vice-Chairman Biancur makes a motion to adjourn and Secretary Milano seconded it

Adjournment: 7:47

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ATTACHMENT

30.2.8 Shoreline Design (SD)

In an effort to protect the architectural and unique residential character of portions of the West Haven shoreline, the SD District shall start at the Sandy Point Bird Sanctuary and extend to the end of Beach Street/Washington Avenue. It shall encompass two city blocks (from Beach Street to Thomas Street).

Section 32 Shoreline Design (SD) District

32.1 Statement of purpose

The purpose of the SD is to encourage the physical development of the Shoreline area from Beach Street to the Sandy Point Bird Sanctuary that protects the unique residential nature of this area. This should be done in a manner that preserves the character of adjacent neighbors. The SD seeks to promote and encourage structures that promote the architectural heritage of West Haven and are in keeping with the scale of surrounding communities.

32.2 Description and Intent

The Commission shall find that the proposed architectural design including, among other elements, the exterior building material, roof-line, and building elevations shall be designed in the style and vernacular inspired by a New England coastal aesthetic consistent with figures below. New construction or reconstruction shall adhere to the design principles and purposes of this district, in whole or in part. All new development should be based on creating an inviting environment for the pedestrian at street level. New construction shall harmonize with the neighborhood, ensure the transition between unlike areas, shall protect property values and shall preserve and enhance the appearance and beauty of the community.

32.2.3 The Shoreline Design District shall seek to enhance, conserve and respect the architectural heritage of West Haven, the area's aesthetic appeal, historic scale and massing, pedestrian access, and recreational water-related uses and views while limiting the intensity of development consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development and keeping with the scale of surrounding communities. The City of West Haven shall encourage all entities that are not legally required to comply with this Section to consider the purpose of this Section when submitting designs for the area.

32.2.4 Pre Existing Conditions

32.2.4.1 Existing buildings that do not conform to the provisions of this Section, may continue in use as they are until a substantial modification is requested, at which time; the Planning and Zoning Commission shall determine the provisions of this section that shall apply.

32.2.4.2 Minimum lot width, lot depth, and lot areas assigned to the SD District shall only apply to newly plotted lots and shall not preclude the redevelopment of existing lots that do not meet these standards. The redevelopment of such existing lots shall be considered a pre-existing condition and shall be allowed as of right.

32.2.4.3 The modifications of existing buildings shall be permitted as of right, with Site Plan Approval, if such changes result in greater conformance with the provisions of this Section

32.3 Design Standards & Guidelines

32.3.1 Building Character, Massing and Orientation

The scale, proportions, massing, and detailing of any proposed building shall be in proportion to the scale, proportion, massing, and detailing in the district. The building and layout of buildings and included site improvements shall reinforce existing buildings and streetscape patterns and the placement of buildings and included site improvements shall assure there is no adverse impact on the district.

A. Height. Any building shall not exceed 2 stories by right and 4 stories by Special Permit. If any story is used for parking, that is considered a story. Structures which exceed the as of right height for the district and are seeking approval by special permit shall incorporate into their design, variations in building orientation, setbacks, facade or other architectural treatments including height/story stepbacks to mitigate potential adverse impacts to the area.

B. Building Setback

To the extent possible in addition to the current minimum for the streetline setback, any new principal structure located on the corner of an arterial street and a minor street shall increase the minor streetline setback to enhance public views to the water from adjacent residential properties.

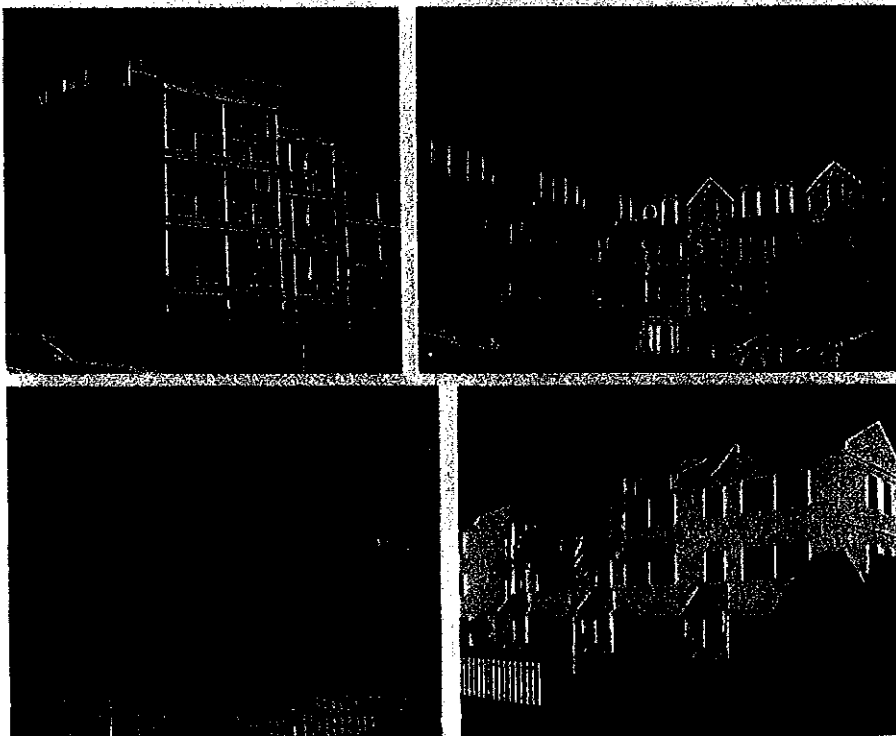
C. Building Orientation

- a. Buildings shall be oriented with the primary building façade(s) facing the primary street frontage(s) of the site, except when orientation is designed to maintain or enhance public views.

- b. Buildings shall be placed to conceal parking at the interior or rear of building lots.
- c. The following shall be maintained and enhanced wherever possible through careful design and siting of structures:
 - 1. Public views to and along the water
 - 2. Public access to Beach Street as well as City owned properties including parks, bike/ pedestrian facilities and beaches
 - 3. Residential access to solar (ie. new construction must address impacts to surrounding properties)

D. Form

- a. Residential buildings shall incorporate massing and façade design elements such as front porches, front-gable roofs, cross-gables, or hipped roofs with dormers or towers that help relate their building massing to that of the examples in the figures below.
- b. Commercial and mixed-use buildings shall incorporate massing and façade design elements such as storefronts, cornices and parapets that help relate their building massing to that of the examples in the figures below.



E. Building Facade

Any building facade longer than 40', visible from a street, adjacent property, publicly-owned land will be designed to have interruptions in the walls of the building to avoid the appearance of a flat uninterrupted facade. Interruptions in a facade may include changes in wall plane, surface ornamentation, porches, awnings or other treatments in addition to windows and doors.

F. Materials

Building facade exterior materials, including architectural trim and cladding, shall be of high quality and durable, including but not limited to stone, brick, wood, metal, glass, sustainable cement masonry board products. Clapboard, shingle and board and batten siding or a combination is preferred.

G. Windows

Ratio of facade.

a. Residential

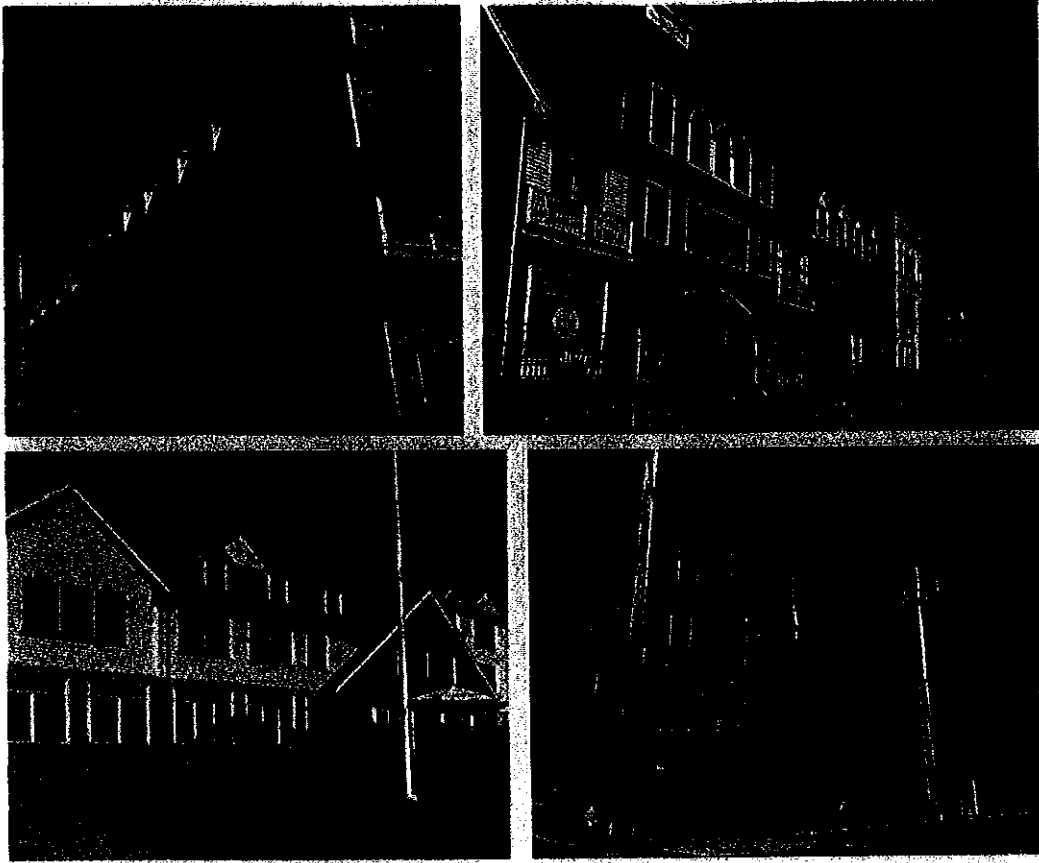
1. No less than twelve percent (12%) and no more than thirty-five percent (35%) glass area will be employed on the foremost front facing facade of a building.
2. No more than thirty-five percent (35%) glass area will be employed on other facades.

b. Commercial

Building facades facing the principal street or public open space shall have at least 25% of the overall facade in transparent windows and at least 40% of the ground floor facade in transparent windows. Along the secondary facades that face pedestrian alleys or connections, facades must achieve at least 15% transparency. Windows on the ground floor of the primary facade shall not be mirrored or use tinted glass or be obstructed by curtains, shades, or blinds.

H. Roof style

The shape of the roof will compare to the majority of roofs within the district. Pitched gabled roofs shall be broken up with dormered upper levels or towers. Roof-top mechanical equipment, other than solar energy panels, shall be concealed from all sides.



I. Landscaping

The landscape design shall complement the district's landscape patterns.

- a. **Parking:** Parking shall be located at the interior of blocks, behind buildings, or at the rear of sites, away from prominent site edges, public spaces, and streets. Above-grade parking structures, or portions of underground parking that protrude above grade shall comply with the following requirements: Primary and secondary frontages shall be lined with an active use at grade or shall be screened on all levels with an architectural treatment compatible with the building for 100% of its frontages. Parking areas shall be separated from the street with landscape buffers of between five feet and eight feet in width. Parking areas on secondary streets may also be screened by other site components, including fences, gates, walls, permanent planters, or hedges. Landscape medians shall be provided between parking spaces to break up the impervious surfaces and mitigate the visual impact of parking. No landscape island shall be less than 6' wide with a minimum width of 10' is required for planting strips with trees.

b. Sidewalks & Walkways:

1. Sidewalks shall be separate and distinct from motor vehicle circulation to the greatest extent possible.
2. Walkways shall be raised and curbed along buildings and within or adjacent to parking lots. Pedestrian street crossings shall be clearly delineated by a change in pavement color and/or texture.

c. Street Furnishings:

1. Benches shall be provided in areas of gathering and high pedestrian activity and shall meet city standards.
2. Bike Racks shall be properly anchored, hold at least two bicycles and should be provided in safe, accessible, convenient, and well-lit locations, placed within 100 feet of a building's entrance.

J. Eating and Drinking Establishments:

Eating and drinking establishments shall be allowed and outdoor seating is encouraged.

K. Signs

Signage shall be appropriate for the scale and character of the building and the area, provide consistency and uniformity of signage through the zone and shall comply with signage standards as permitted by the regulations.





L. Public Facilities

Public facilities including structures dedicated to water pollution control, recreation, police, sanitation, public works, etc should follow the design recommendations of this section as to the use of materials, facade treatments, roof types, character etc.