

MINUTES OF CITY OF WEST HAVEN  
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, June 18, 2019  
7:00 PM  
Harriet North Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
City Hall, 355 Main Street  
West Haven, CT 06516

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Hendricks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Commissioner of Planning and Development Fred Messori, Mayor Nancy Rossi, Commissioners Gene Sullivan, Steven Mullins, John Biancur, Alternate Commissioners Deborah Johnson and Greg Milano, ZEO Conniff and Assistant City Planner David Killeen

2. Introduction, Presentation – “A Village District Concept for West Haven Center”

Commissioner Hendricks explained in 2017 a task force put together a Plan of Conservation and Development, which was approved and in effect today. This plan sets a guideline for the city. One of the items is the Village District Overlay in the center. Tonight’s meeting will explain what this district is and what it will do for the city. Mr. Killeen gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the details of the Village District and what it will do for the city. Village District allows municipalities to protect the unique character of certain areas and to guide new development in that area. He also presented the history of the center of the city from the 1700s and the buildings that exist today, which present different types of architecture. The proposal of this district will guide business owners on facades and to reviewing architecture to protect the character of the center. The process of implementing the Village district was explained and what aspects of a structure will be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission in context with setbacks, rear parking and uniformity of cornices and building heights. Interior modifications will not be regulated and other improvements that are not visible from the street or are minor changes. Examples of buildings were shown depicting a Village District design. The area that will encompass the Village District is proposed from the railroad tracks to the north, south to Atwater St, Washington Avenue to the East and Savin Avenue to the West. Buildings on both sides of the street would be included under this regulation. Chairman Hendricks described the process when a project is proposed from the initial meeting with staff and how they will walk you through what would be required and what will be needed to go forward with the proposal. Chairman Hendricks stated this meeting tonight is the first step in implementing the Village District. The second step will be to hold a public workshop

and get feedback from the citizens of West Haven. The final step will be to go before the Planning and Zoning Commission for a public hearing and approval.

### 3. Opportunity for Public Dialogue and Input on Proposed Concept

Richard Standish, 78 Atwater St. – as a former P & Z Commissioner, he feels this discussion has been going on for years. He feels the problem is the property owners that do not take care of their buildings. He is in favor of the proposed concept.

Marilyn Wilke, 250 Ocean Ave. – is in favor but is concerned about existing signs and the fact that the proposed regulation may not control the use of color. She stated it would be disruptive to the area if someone painted their building in pink and purple. Chairman Hendricks stated the Village District regulations will go into effect when 30% of the building is being changed or a new building is being constructed.

Bridgette Hoskie, 326 Washington Ave. – in favor and excited about this proposal and asked about the next steps and timeframe.

Ed Clessas, 12 Laurel St., - concerned about extra costs regarding architecture and time for developers to obtain approvals and how this will effect homeowners that live in this district.

Kathie Hebert, 166 Blohm St., - in favor and used Town of Branford as an example and how walkable it was.

Pat Bollettieri, 215 West Walk, - is in favor but is concerned about the small businesses if this will bring in national retail chain stores.

Robin Parsons, 129 Bellevue Dr., - is enthusiastic about this proposal and is in favor since this could enhance the city. She would like to see standards set and would like to see original facades return.

Barbara Tracy, 222 Court St. – is in favor and asks how to get businesses to come into West Haven

Maria Zervos, representative for the West Haven Library, stated this is a wonderful idea and informed the commission that an original part of the library was a Carnegie Building. The library is very interested in partnering with the city.

David Carr, 29 Lake St – Main St. in 2020 is where people want to go and where things are happening. He would like to see how to get people to connect within the Village District.

Barth McNeil, 257 Park St. – is representing the Arts Center and is excited about this concept. He would like to see the Arts Center as a priority for the city.

Alan Olenick, 76 Trumbull St – representing the West Haven Chamber of Commerce, would like to see this fast tracked and would like to see more regulation when it comes to the existing businesses.

Pat Libro, 146 Connecticut Ave., excited about this concept and does not want box stores. Would like to see boutique shops. There are federal grants that cities can use for storefront improvements.

John Panza, 275 Forest Rd., as a former P & Z Commissioner this was discussed several years ago as well as traffic concerns. He feels what was discussed then is somewhat where this commission is going and if it needs revising down the road it can be expanded. He would like to see streetscaping and possible square footage restriction to get the type of stores that are needed.

Frank Andriulli, 118 Anderson Ave., is in favor and asked what type of businesses should be considered such as restaurants that will attract people to the center.

Jane Whelan, 100 Ames Dr., in favor and asks about regulations on B & B's. She is also concerned about three homes for sale on Washington Ave and what could happen with them before the Village District is implemented.

Robert Fisher, 201 Ocean Ave., feels this is a great idea and stated traffic patterns dictate the real estate market. He gave as an example individuals, avoiding certain streets because of traffic and making certain streets one way to make traffic flow better. A plan was devised by Yale School of Design for one way on Savin and Washington and angled parking some years ago.

John Anderson, 30 New St. – asks about an appeal process if the regulations are too restrictive.

4. Summary, Wrap-up – Chairman Hendricks stated tonight was very refreshing to get feedback. A workshop will be planned and publicized. A public hearing will be held on the specific plan in the future. Commissioner Mullins stated this commission has changed over the last 13 years ago and has been very open to the community at large with workshops and other types of forums. He thanks the citizens and the commission. Commissioner Biancur thanked the staff for their work as well as Commissioner Milano for all his work.
5. Adjournment: 8:54 p.m.  
Commissioner Biancur made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Mullins and passed.