

City of West Haven
Planning and Zoning Commission
Special Public Hearing and Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2019, Harriett North Room

The Meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairperson, Kathleen Hendricks

Present: Chairperson Kathleen Hendricks, Vice-Chair John Biancur, Secretary Christopher Suggs, Steven Mullins, Gene Sullivan, Gregory Milano (alternate), Debra Johnson (alternate), Fred Messoro, Commissioner of Planning and Development, and David Killeen Assistant City Planner.

Chair Hendricks opened the meeting and congratulated Mr. Milano on his team's accomplishment of finishing a 200 mile, 12 man team relay to benefit Multiple Myeloma. Mr. Milano contributed 27 miles in that relay.

#1. Proposed Amendments to Zoning Regulations- The City proposes to add a new Section 21 to the West Haven Zoning Regulations to create a Village District Regulation which will establish standards for building design, building orientation, parking lot layout and site plan layout subject to review by an independent architect, pursuant to Section 86 of the West Haven Zoning Regulations. Applicant: West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission. File# ZR-19-038.

Asst. City Planner, Dave Killeen provided a brief explanation of the proposed Village District Regulation, pointing out that it was developed by the Commission after public input was received at a public information session in June and a public workshop in July. He also reviewed the various notices and referrals that were required by State statute and the City's Zoning Regulations. He provided the dates of each notice and referral and concluded that all requirements have been met.

Chair Hendricks took a moment to commend the efforts of this Commission and of Greg Milano, for his wisdom and guidance along with his investigative prowess.

Chair Hendricks thanked the public for their support and input throughout this process. Comm. Biancur thanked Chair Hendricks for her hard work as well, noting that she had written the draft regulation based on input they had received.

Mr. Killeen noted that this proposed regulation was a recommendation from the Plan of Conservation and Development which was adopted by the Commission in 2017. This Commission is working diligently toward the implementation of the recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Chair Hendricks asked if there was anyone who wanted to address the Commission on this proposed amendment to the Regulations. After asking a 2nd time:

Robin Parsons, 129 Bellevue Avenue- Mrs. Parson stated that she is in favor of this regulation but felt it was important for the Commission to add specific language to this Village District Regulation as it pertains to Low Impact Development Practices. This matter was discussed throughout the public hearings and she believes it will benefit the City long term.

Chair Hendricks explained what the Committee's plan is for implementing the Plan of Conservation and Development. She stated that a subcommittee of the Commission has been meeting regularly and are attacking each item on the spreadsheet list. Low Impact Development (LID) will get the attention it deserves. The Chair felt that Low Impact Development strategies shouldn't be used only in the Village District, but that it should apply to developments Citywide. We want to treat that recommendation with the same due diligence that the Village District received.

If this were specified in each separate regulation and then became a City wide regulation, the City would have to edit each individual reference, rather than creating one specific regulation on the topic that would affect all areas of the City. This would require substantial time as well as money.

The Chair felt this matter is best suited to the Complete Streets part of the plan which is the next item on which the subcommittee will concentrate.

Comm. Biancur asked that the residents be patient because this Committee is making progress but it is going to take time. Alternate Milano echoed those sentiments.

Chair Hendricks thanked Robin for her comments.

Kathie Hebert- 166 Blohm Street- Very much in support of this regulation and wanted to thank the Commission for explaining the reason for making LID city wide. She understands the reasoning and agrees it makes sense.

Pamela Murphy, 1 Campbell Avenue Apt. 63 Ms. Murphy asked why emphasis had been placed on the Village District before addressing the Shoreline area which is the greatest asset within our city.

Chair Hendricks explained that the Plan addresses different sections of the City including Allingtown, the Train Station area, the waterfront, etc. There are several things that must be completed before they can really focus on the beach area. Beach Street must be raised due to flooding issues. The Federal Government has purchased several properties in the flood zone and those homes will be demolished and property turned back into open space.

The Allingtown area is already going through substantial transformation, and the Commission is in the process of developing a Plan for that area.

The Committee has established this so-called "pilot" Village District overlay but are confident that this will grow in time, and the Commission will want to see this District used in other parts of the City as well.

Chair Hendricks asked three more times if there was anyone else who would like to address the Commission. There was no one else present to speak for or against the proposed Village District Regulation.

Comm. Biancur made a motion to close Public Session. Seconded by Comm Sullivan. Motion carried.

Comm. Biancur made a motion to approve File # ZR-19-038 as published. Seconded by Comm. Suggs. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

2. Proposed Amendments to Zoning Map. The City proposes to create a Village District as an overlay district to the Zoning Map, which would affect all properties located within the following boundaries and including properties on both sides of each street noted and properties on all streets located within the proposed boundaries, which boundaries include: Conrail Railroad Tracks on the north, Washington Avenue on the east, Atwater Street on the south, Savin Avenue on the west, then along Main Street to the west until reaching Candee Avenue, then heading north on Candee Avenue and heading east on Center Street until reaching Savin Avenue, then heading north on Savin Avenue and crossing over Elm Street to the Conrail Railroad Tracks, which forms the northern border of the District. This application submitted pursuant to Section 86 of the West Haven Zoning Regulations. Applicant: West Haven Planning and Zoning Commission. File # ZM 19-041.

Mr. Killeen summarized all referrals and notices required for this application by State Statutes and local Zoning Regulations. He noted that the only referral required on the Zone Change was to the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). A representative of DEEP provided correspondence confirming they had no concerns with the proposed zone change being adopted. He concluded that all referrals and notices had been made and that the application was prepared for consideration at this public hearing.

Chair Hendricks opened the Public Hearing on the above proposed Amendment to the Zoning Map. She asked three times if anyone would like to speak. There was no one present to speak for or against this application.

Comm. Biancur made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Comm. Mullins. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Comm. Biancur to approve File # ZM 19-041. Seconded by Comm. Suggs. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

A motion to adjourn was made by Comm. Biancur. Seconded by Comm. Suggs. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.