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MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Arnold Finaldi Jr. at 7:33 PM.

Present were Robert Chiochio, Kevin Haas, Helen Hoffstaetter, Perry Salvagne, and Arnold Finaldi Jr. Also present was Deputy Planning Director Jennifer Emminger and Associate Planner Allie Smith.

Chairman Finaldi noted that they still have no alternate members.

Mrs. Hoffstaetter made a motion to accept the September 6, 2023 minutes. Mr. Salvagne seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by voice vote with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi).

PUBLIC HEARING:

Route 6 Plaza LLC – Application for Revised Special Exception/Revised Site Plan For Change of Use from Restaurant to Fast Food Restaurant (“Wing Stop”) in the CG-20 Zone – 56 Newtown Road (L12025) – SE #765.

Chairman Finaldi read the legal notice regarding this application. PE Benjamin Doto spoke in favor of this, saying that this is simply a change from a Chinese restaurant to a fast food restaurant that serves chicken wings. He described the location of the shopping center and spoke briefly about the road work that has been done in this area by the State. He said this space consists of approximately 1,600 sq.ft. and will have 16 seats, but the majority of their business is take-out. He said that the owner of the franchise is here if anyone has questions about the actual business. He said in 2018 a special exception for trip generation was approved for this site and they had the traffic engineer who did the traffic study then submit a supplemental report for this application. His opinion was that this change will have no significant impact on the site or the level of service (LOS). He said some of the site work from the 2018 approval was done and there are no changes proposed to the site for this application. It is simply an interior change of use and a façade change for the sign. He said there are 93 parking spaces required and the site presently has 98 spaces. He noted that at the Planning Department’s request he had made some revisions to the site plan, but they were submitted before the staff report was issued.

Mr. Chiochio asked about the previous approval which had been for an expansion of the existing building. Mr. Doto said that approval is still valid and the property owners intend to do it along with the rest of the site work that was approved. He added that all of the remaining work can be done under this revised site plan approval and should not impact this proposal in any way.

Mr. Chiochio made a motion to close the public hearing. Mrs. Hoffstaetter seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi). Mr. Salvagne then made a motion to move this to item #1 under the Old Business on tonight's agenda. Mr. Haas seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi).

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Down Home Associates LLC (Property Owner) – Application for Special Exception/Site Plan Approval for Self Storage (Putnam Three Self Storage) in the IL-40 Zone - 7 Great Pasture Road (L16001) – SE #794.

PE Mike Mazzucco spoke in favor of this application. He said they had met with Planning Staff to discuss the comments received from the City Traffic Engineer. He said they had submitted revised plans earlier this week. The biggest change that was made is that the driveway around the front of Building A has been eliminated. This allowed them to make the building slightly bigger and to put a sidewalk in on the south side that is handicap accessible. This also resulted in a slight reduction in the amount of impervious area and eliminated the concerns about the traffic patterns within the site. He said he also revised the drainage calculation and the floor plans have been updated. He said the change to Building A allowed the landscape plan to be revised by pulling all of the plantings further into the site and away from Great Pasture Road. He reviewed the revised traffic flow through the site and pointed out the change to the proposed fencing. He also presented a revised rendering showing the changes to the front of the site. Mrs. Hoffstaetter asked some questions about the entry to each building and Mr. Mazzucco pointed out all of the doorways in each building.

Mrs. Emminger then said she wanted to clarify something for the record. It was noted at the beginning of the public hearing process that no pre-application meeting was done and that is incorrect. She said she had met with Mr. Mazzucco and Mr. Putnam in January. Chairman Finaldi thanked her and said that there have been so many self-storage applications this year, it is easy to confuse them.

Chairman Finaldi asked if there was anyone to speak in opposition to this application and there was no one.

Chairman Finaldi said he does not believe they are ready to close the hearing and asked if they are still waiting for reports. Ms. Smith said they need to keep this open because none of the Departments have reviewed the revisions which were submitted on Monday of this week. Mr. Mazzucco said he would submit an extension letter to get this to the next meeting.

Mrs. Hoffstaetter made a motion to continue the public hearing. Mr. Salvagne seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by voice vote with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi).

Safstor Real Estate Co LLC (Applicant) /94 Sandpit Road LLC (Property Owner) – Application for Special Exception/Site Plan Approval for Self Storage (SafStor) in the IL-40 Zone – 94 Sandpit Road (K10014) – SE #795.

Attorney Amy Souchuns said with her this evening is PE Jeff Bord from Bohler Engineering. She said they had been waiting for comments from the City Traffic Engineer which were received yesterday. She said she had been going back and forth with Ms. Smith over the Planning Department Staff Report. She said any comments that are still outstanding in the can be made conditions of approval. She said there is a minor revision that needs to be made to the elevations but they did submit all of the revisions. Mr. Bord took over then and presents a colorized version of the site plan as he spoke. He said they had submitted revised plans to address the Planning and Engineering Department's comments. He said a truck turning plan had been requested and additional information regarding the adequacy of the loading areas. He pointed out that you could park two SU-30 trucks in front of the loading dock without it impeding the two way traffic. He then switched to an aerial view of the site pointing out where the improvements would be made. He said the trip generation for self-storage is minimal, maybe a maximum of twenty trips per day during peak hour. He also pointed out the reduction in impervious coverage noting that this will be a tremendous improvement as there currently is no drainage on the site. He said they are adding a pretty sophisticated storm water management system in both the front and the rear of the site, which will really make a significant difference. He said the driveway location was shifted about 30 feet and narrowed in width to about 26 feet. He said there have been some discussions about the sightlines coming off the existing driveway, but he could not find any incidents that have occurred because of them. He then pointed out the curbing for the driveway that is used to access the buildings located on the abutting property. He added that there also is fencing and landscaping on on this access driveway that also affect the sight line. He said the proposed location of the driveway is a much safer location than any of the other sites that they considered. He then spoke about the new LED lighting fixtures that they are proposing pointing out that they allow much more directional control and help to avoid light spillage. He said they have not yet received Engineering comments on the revisions submitted September 12th but there was nothing in there that would significantly impact the design of the project. He said it was mostly revisions to the calculations and the hydro cad modeling. He again touted the significant

improvement they expect with the new stormwater management system. He also spoke about the driveway location again, saying that they are closing one of the existing driveways and they felt this was the best location for the one driveway because of all the traffic that converges in this area of the roadway. He said choosing the location was challenging due to paper driveway that accesses Mr. Iappaluccio's property, the grade changes, the curb cuts, and trying to maintain the sight lines. In closing, he said they feel this proposal is a much less intense use which will result in safer traffic conditions in the immediate area.

Attorney Souchuns said they have nothing else to present this evening and they are comfortable with the outstanding Planning and Engineering comments being made conditions of the approval. She added that the City Traffic Engineer's report refers to updating some detection equipment in the area, but they do not believe that this use will create the demand for these improvements. She said additionally there is no representation as what these improvements will cost and how they would be accomplished. She then said that their team disagrees with the City Traffic Engineer's recommendations but if the Commission thinks they are important, they are willing to discuss them.

Chairman Finaldi asked if there was anyone else to speak in favor of this application and there was no one. He then asked if there was anyone to speak in opposition to this application and there was no one. He then said that there still are some open issues, so they cannot close the hearing tonight. He noted that they just got the City Traffic Engineer's report and there are still other open Engineering issues. He added that based on the traffic report, there needs to be some discussion between the applicant and staff to come to an agreement, which means keeping the hearing open. Mrs. Emminger said it is the staff recommendation that they keep the hearing open. She said staff will work with the City Traffic Engineer and the applicant to resolve the video detection issue as well as the Engineering Department comments which have not yet been addressed.

Attorney Souchuns then asked if any of the other Commission members disagree with the new driveway location because that will factor into their discussion with City Staff regarding the traffic. She reiterated that as Mr. Bord outlined, the driveway location is important because it gives the best sight line and addresses traffic safety. She added that if any of the Commission members are not in agreement as to the driveway location, it would be important to know that now. Based on these issues, she agreed that they should keep the public hearing open until the next meeting.

Chairman Finaldi said he does not think that any of the Commission members have any issue with the driveway location, but the issue of video detection equipment does require more discussion. He added that this is a relatively new technology, but they have required it as a condition of approval on at least two other applications. He asked the Commission members if they had any comments or questions for the applicant or staff and there were none.

Mr. Chiochio made a motion to continue the public hearing. Mr. Haas seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by voice vote with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi)

OLD BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

Route 6 Plaza LLC – Application for Revised Special Exception/Revised Site Plan For Change of Use from Restaurant to Fast Food Restaurant (“Wing Stop”) in the CG-20 Zone – 56 Newtown Road (L12025) – SE #765.

Chairman Finaldi asked if any of the Commission member had comments regarding this application. Mrs. Hoffstaetter said this is a pretty clean application and Mr. Doto’s presentation covered everything, so this should be approved. Mr. Chiochio said he agreed with Mrs. Hoffstaetter that this should be approved, especially because this is a similar use to what was there before. He added that this will not cause an increase in traffic and the parking lot has been much improved due to the driveway and roadway changes that have been made. Mr. Salvagne said he agreed with Mrs. Hoffstaetter and Mr. Chiochio. Chairman Finaldi added that he also agrees and with the massive amount of roadway changes that have been made, this site is working much better.

REFERRALS:

8-3a Referral/ Petition of the City of Danbury by Sharon B. Calitro, Planning Director to Amend Sections 6.A.5.g. & 10.B.2.f. of the Zoning Regulations. (Amend Certificate of Location Approval issuing authority from Zoning Commission to Zoning Enforcement Officer for automobile and truck sales in the IL-40 Zone and amend permit fee language for Location Approvals.) Public hearing scheduled for October 24, 2023.

Mrs. Emminger reviewed the Planning Department staff report dated September 7, 2023. She said this is another petition needed to comply with Section 30 of Public Act 23-40, which became effective on July 1 of this year. She said when the previous petition for this change was prepared, amending the language in these two sections of the Zoning Regulations was missed. She said there are no other references to the Certificate of Location Approval anywhere in the Regulations. She added that this complies with the Plan of Conservation and Development (“POCD”) because it is necessary to have our Regulations address the changes proposed by this Public Act and the State Statutes.

Mr. Chiochio made a motion to give this a positive recommendation for the following reason: This is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development because it will ensure compliance with Public Act 23-40 that became effective July 1, 2023 and the State Statutes governing the licensing of this use. Mr. Salvagne seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by voice vote with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi).

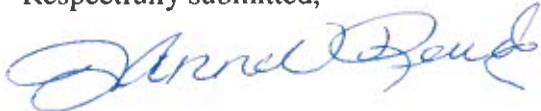
8-3a Referral/ Petition of Bright Ravens IS Danbury, LLC to Amend Sections 5.B.2. & 5.B.4. of the Zoning Regulations. (Add Hotel Conversion with Specific Use Requirements as a Permitted Use in the CA-80 Zone.) *Public hearing scheduled for October 24, 2023. This will be discussed at a later meeting.*

Chairman Finaldi said this matter would be discussed at one of the October meetings. He questioned why this was not listed under For Reference Only. The secretary explained that she had put both of these under referrals because this is the first agenda that these are listed on. She said if this will not be discussed at the next meeting, then it would be listed under For Reference Only on that agenda.

Chairman Finaldi said there was nothing listed under New Business, Correspondence, or Other Matters. He said that under For Reference Only were three floodplain permits listed.

At 8:35 PM, Mrs. Hoffstaetter made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Salvagne seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by voice vote with five ayes (from Mr. Chiochio, Mr. Haas, Mrs. Hoffstaetter, Mr. Salvagne, and Chairman Finaldi).

Respectfully submitted,



JoAnne V. Read
Planning Assistant