



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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MINUTES PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2017 SPECIAL MEETING 7:00 P.M. BRANFORD FIRE HEADQUARTERS 45 NORTH MAIN STREET

Commissioners Present: J. Lust (he recused himself from both items on the agenda), J. Chadwick, J. Viauso, F. Russo, C. Andres, M. Palluzzi

Commissioners Absent: C. Kelly, P. Higgins

Staff Present: H. Smith- Town Planner, M. Martin- Clerk

J. Lust arrived at 7:23 pm

Chairperson Andres introduced the staff and the Commission present.

REGULAR MEETING 7:00 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Tidal Basin LLC.-Attorney Gregg Burton, Agent-
Applicant & Owner
60 Maple St. & 2 & 5 Indian Neck Avenue &
4 & 6 Indian Neck Avenue
PDD Modification/Master Plan Amendment
Application #17-10.1
A/R 10/5/17, PH opened 11/16/17, PH continued from 12/07/17

Attorney Gregg Burton- (Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey LLP) represented the Applicant. Also present was David Spear (Traffic Engineer), Ed Crowley (Applicant) Joe Sepot (Joe Sepot Architects) and Bob Criscuolo and Jim Pretti (Criscuolo Engineering).

Attorney Burton said he will be giving one presentation for the PDD Modification and the Site Plan and Coastal Site Plan after the Applicant briefly speaks.

The Applicant (Ed Crowley) then briefly highlighted his general business plan for the hotel, noting the views of the nearby tidal basin are beautiful. He explained they did best use of the land studies and ultimately, a small hotel was the best choice for the parcel noting the site and shape of the property is unique. His plan is for a 33 room boutique hotel with waterfront rooms which will complement the Atlantic Wharf project. He spoke briefly of the different studies they did regarding the feasibility of the hotel and the parking. The customer parking will be under the hotel.

He wants his guest to experience the local culture. The hotel will have food service available for breakfast and lunch only and will apply for a liquor license. He also noted that a boardwalk is being discussed.

David Spear – (Traffic Engineer from DLS Traffic Engineering LLC) spoke next because he had to leave the meeting early. He highlighted his traffic study, citing counts at different times of the day and locations as well as accident statistics in the area.

The Commissioners asked a few questions.

Attorney Burton then spoke and reviewed the prior PDD history and the uses. He explained that a hotel use was included in the prior PDD but was eliminated in 2012. In January 2014 the PDD was modified to allow the brewery at 5 Indian Neck Avenue and the storm water detention and parking at 2 Indian Neck Avenue. The purpose of this PDD modification is to separate the residential uses from the commercial uses, noting there are different standards for each use.

After consulting with Town Staff, it was determined it was logical to add the Tidal Basin property(4-6 Indian Neck Ave) to the Anchor Reef PDD and then divide the Anchor Reef PDD to form a new PDD called "The Branford River PDD" which would include only commercial parcels, and would be more cohesive. The hotel use would then be added into the Branford River PDD.

He then reviewed the CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection comments.

He also noted that the letter he submitted at the start of the meeting from the Applicant states that the Applicant agrees as a condition of approval to contribute Fifty Thousand dollars towards the construction of a boardwalk along the southern portion of its property at 4-6 Indian Neck Avenue and adjacent properties. The town can build it when all the approvals are in place.

He then reviewed again the two step process which is: adding 4-6 Indian Neck Avenue to the existing PDD and then the second stop is the commercial properties becoming its own PDD called "The Branford River PDD".

The Commission discussed this briefly.

Jim Pretti (Criscuolo Engineering) spoke next reviewing the Site Plan. He highlighted the parking, layout of the site, and the drainage system.

Bob Criscuolo (Criscuolo Engineering) then reviewed Site Plan drawings.

Joe Sepot (Joe Sepot Architect) had colored drawings of the hotel which he reviewed; noting the exterior plan and the interior layout.

Chairperson Andres asked Commissioner John Lust to speak about the public access to the water.

John Lust distributed colored drawings to the Commission showing the proposed two thousand foot long pedestrian access connecting Indian Neck Avenue to Montowese Street. He noted he has volunteered his time for this project for the past few years and it has been well received by many people. The plan is for the boardwalk to be a nature walk as well as a pedestrian walkway. This qualifies as a special environmental project with CT dept. of Energy and Environmental protection as its main agency.

He then briefly talked of a dingy dock project he is also working on proposed at the end of the boardwalk.

For the record, Commissioner Lust recused himself from the application.

PUBLIC INPUT:

1. Bill Horne- 246 Pleasant Point Rd. - he noted he spoke to Commissioner Lust about this project many years ago. He represents the Branford Land Trust and they have a few concerns concerning liability and maintenance since some of the walkway will be on Land Trust property. The Land Trust does not object to the project, they want to be sure the Land Trust is protected.

H. Smith reviewed the Staff Report. He also read the 3 DEEP (CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection) into the record as required by law.

The Commissioners had a brief discussion.

In response to a question during the consideration of the Site Plan and Coastal Site Plan Applications,

Attorney Burton stated the Applicant would be willing, if the Boardwalk is not built within a 5 year period of time, to provide a contribution of \$25,000(Twenty-five thousand dollars) towards a different project anywhere along the Branford River that the Town could elect to accept instead at any point beyond the five years from the approval of this application.

Chairperson Andres closed the Public Hearing. He said he wants a written resolution from Staff before the Commission will vote on these applications, noting they will vote on each application separately. The Commission then had a discussion.

The Commission concluded their deliberations concerning the applications by directing staff to prepare two draft resolutions for approval, one for the PDD Modification/Master Plan Amendment application and one for the Site Plan/Coastal Site Plan application. The Commission noted that the resolutions should reflect acceptance of the general terms of the Applicant's amended offer of a monetary donation towards the provision of public coastal access subject to discussion of the details of the execution of the amended offer with the Town Attorney.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Tidal Basin LLC.-Attorney Gregg Burton, Agent-
Applicant & Owner
60 Maple St. & 2 & 5 Indian Neck Avenue &
4 & 6 Indian Neck Avenue
Site Plan /Coastal Site Plan
Application #17-10.2
A/R 10/5/17, Tabled from 12/07/17

The meeting adjourned at 10:19 pm.