

REGULAR NORWALK PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING 1.25.2021

Call to order

The regular meeting of the Norwalk Planning and Zoning Commission was held at the Norwalk City Hall, 705 North Avenue, Monday, January 25, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by Chairperson Judy McConnell. Those present at roll call were Elizabeth Thompson, John Fraser, AJ Samuelson, Megan Regennitter, and Donna Grant. Absent: Zach Webster

Staff present included: Elliot Klimowski, City Planner, Luke Parris, Community Development Director, Hillarie Ramthun, Community Development Coordinator, and Hollie Zajicek, Economic Development Director.

Approval of Agenda – 21-05

Motion by Regennitter and seconded by Grant to approve the agenda. Approved 6-0

Approval of Minutes – 21-06

Motion by Fraser and seconded by Samuelson to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2021 meeting. Approved 6-0

(Webster arrived at 5:50 p.m.)

Public hearing and recommendation on a request from Peter Cutler to rezone property at 1008 North Avenue from R-2 to the Center North Infill Planned Unit Development—21-07

Public hearing opened at 5:51 p.m.

This request from developer, Peter Cutler of Capital Homes, 475 SE Alice's Rd, Waukee, would be to rezone a pair of parcels currently zoned R-2; Multi-Family Residential located at the southeast corner of Center Street and North Avenue. The proposed rezoning would be an Infill Planned Unit Development allowing for R-3 and R-1 uses. The applicant would like to propose platting for 5 lots which would contain 5 single-family owner occupied homes. The development would allow four of the houses to front North Avenue and one would front Center Street. Neighboring properties contain single-family homes, though the zoning varies from R-4 to the west, R-1 to the North, R-2 to the east and R-F to the south. The proposed development would contain three narrower 45-foot lots, one 55-foot lot, and one 60-foot lot. Due to the nature of the request and it having similarities to existing properties, Staff would recommend approval of the IPUD. Commissioners inquired about the current setbacks in comparison to the proposed setbacks and also the reason for a proposal of five lots as opposed to the currently platted four lots.

Applicant, Peter Cutler, spoke -- explained the desire to add 5 lots with single family homes to within the proposed IPUD and the project would not be cost effective to leave it as four lots. At present, the area where the development is proposed is currently zoned to allow for duplexes on four lots, which would be denser than what the applicant is proposing. Grant inquired about traffic implications in the area due to the additional driveways proposed. Cutler explained that the proposed driveways would be a less intense use than the 8 that are currently allowed.

Brandy Huntoon and Eric Huntoon, 1018 North Ave. & Emily Hughes of 1100 North Ave. expressed opposition to the proposed development due to narrow lots, proximity of setbacks making homes

too close to existing homes, and also the danger of adding more traffic to an already busy street/area with the library and park located near additional proposed driveways.

Parris made a recommendation to the Commission to use the PUD process to be creative in recommendations to make all parties satisfied with the outcome. Fraser suggested to rear load the North Avenue lots by way of access off Center Street. Cutler addressed the suggestion indicating that the grade of the area would not allow for a back alley without a lot of fill brought in, for a project like that an HOA would then be required, and also insufficient turnaround for emergency vehicles in a back alley. Regennitter inquired if Cutler would continue with the duplex project if the single family IPUD is denied. Cutler would move forward with a duplex project if this request is denied. Thompson inquired why the lots could not remain as originally platted so most lots front Center rather than North Ave. Cutler would not make sense to have the lot on the corner exit at the stop sign of Center/North. Grant inquired about the possibility of shared driveways. Cutler would be willing to include shared driveways if the Commission would request.

Public hearing closed at 6:46 p.m.

Commission discussion included Regennitter's comment of the IPUD having less draw backs for the area than duplexes. Thompson agreed and would include concern of driveways on North Avenue. Fraser wanted to discuss what could be done to move everything to the west to allow for more space between the eastern most lot and existing properties. Parris explained that the way Klimowski has written the IPUD, it would allow for more separation between the lots and existing properties. Webster wanted to point out that he didn't feel that it is not the best use of the space due to the added driveways and traffic. Grant did not agree with the reason for the proposed plat to meet a price point. Samuelson struggled with additional driveways off North Avenue being a safety concern as well as not finding the appeal of 45' narrow lots in the middle of town. Cutler pointed out driveway use is less intense than other uses, and the proposal is reasonable. McConnell inquired about traffic study of driveways, Parris answered the assumption of trips for a typical single family setting with two driving adults could result in 6 trips per day per driveway so anywhere from 24-32 trips to the area. Klimowski tried to show a map comparison of the Green Hills neighborhood indicating 10 driveways, Fraser and Grant told Klimowski to stop because the comparison was not the same.

McConnell entertained a motion, Samuelson motioned to approve the request with a recommendation or modification that the eastside setback from the eastside property line to the first dwelling unit should be a minimum of at least 8' to allow for a separation of at least 10'.

Regennitter seconded.

Approved 4 – Denied 3

Moves forward to Council as approved with a recommendation.

City Council Update- No update from Councilman Baker

Economic Development Update- Hollie Zajicek gave updates on the Commercial Improvement Grant Program and that it was passed by Council to add demolition of dilapidated structures as an eligible expense. Cobblestone Hotel & Steakhouse are in negotiations at this time with more specifics of the development agreement. Norwalk Central project and the sports campus, (this is

the Hughes Crossing/Town Center area of town) new estimates from the land owner which would allow for further discussion about possibly amending the development agreement.

Community Development Update-Parris announced the steering committee meeting in the week ahead so the Comp plan is continuing to move forward. Public meetings will go hybrid and any issues people might have should be brought forward so they can be discussed.

Next meeting Date – February 8, 2021.

Adjournment – 21-08

Motion by Thompson and seconded by Grant to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m. Approved 7-0.

Judy McConnell, Chairperson

Elliot Klimowski, City Planner