

NORWALK PLANNING AND ZONING REGULAR MEETING 01.13.2025

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 13, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by Chairperson, Megan Regennitter. Those present at roll call were Carson Forst, Brent Hinders, Elizabeth Thompson, & Andrew Steiger (via Zoom).

Absent: Howard Eaton, AJ Samuelson

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

Approval of Agenda – 25-01

Motion by Forst and seconded by Steiger to approve the agenda. Approved 5-0

Approval of Minutes – 25-02

Motion by Steiger and seconded by Forst to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2024, meeting. Approved 5-0

One guest present in Chambers, one guest present on Zoom

Public Hearing and Recommendation on an Amendment to the Orchard Hills Planned Unit Development related to High Density Residential and Neighborhood Commercial uses in PUD Land Use Parcel 1 —25-03

Public Hearing opened at 5:47 p.m.

This request is for an amendment to the Orchard Hills Planned Unit Development (PUD) to allow for the development of the southern 2.75 acres of Land Use Parcel 1 into a High Density Residential for a proposed residential townhome and apartment project as well as Neighborhood Commercial uses. The original PUD only allowed C-1 Neighborhood Commercial, in 2010 R-4 was added to Parcel 1 as an allowed use. This amendment would split the Parcel into two Parcels: Parcel 1A and Parcel 1B, in doing so the requirement of developing the entire parcel is no longer necessary and allows the applicant to develop 1A and 1B at separate times. The City Council, moving to proceed with the rezoning process, has requested the northern portion of Parcel 1 be preserved for commercial use only. An amendment to the PUD may still be required in the future for development of Parcel 1A.

Abigail Bemis, 601 Orchard Hills Dr Unit 5001 spoke.

Barry Accountius, WODA Cooper Development, Inc., was available via Zoom to answer questions.

Public Hearing closed at 6:06 p.m.

Regennitter entertained a motion, Hinders motioned to approve and Thompson seconded. Approved 5-0

Public Hearing and Recommendation on a Zoning Amendment regarding the Norwalk Technology and Industry Overlay District —25-04

Public Hearing opened at 6:10 p.m.

The City was contacted about a year ago by a national large-scale development group that purchases large parcels of ground around the U.S. for the intended purpose of developing sites for technology & data center companies. The proposed Norwalk project was named "Project West". Over several months many meetings, site & property visits took place and a non-disclosure agreement was signed between both parties and many obstacles were overcome. Staff identified the need for the creation of the M-2 Technology Industrial District, and a Zoning Amendment to add that district to the official Zoning Ordinance. On December 19, 2024, City Council considered a resolution to approve the annexation of approximately 3,200 acres into Norwalk to ensure that the City investment of the North River Sewer Interceptor project was protected. Within that 3,200 acres, "Project West" exists, which will cover approximately 300 acres of land. Another item to consider with this zoning amendment is the idea of administrative approvals of site plan details of large data center projects. These projects tend to have a time frame for building that lasts several years, it would be beneficial and allow these projects to move forward more swiftly and smoothly through the City review and approval process as an overlay district. Creating a technology overlay district will make Norwalk appealing to data center users, it is a tool that will help Norwalk recruit high-value developments for the Southwest Development Corridor. This will also ensure that city staff and future development groups can be most efficient with both their time and money. Staff reviewed the current site plan review process as well as other Technology Overlay Districts. This led to the creation of the draft of the Norwalk Technology and Industry Overlay District.

NORWALK TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRY OVERLAY DISTRICT SUMMARY

This district simplifies and speeds up approvals for large, tech-oriented projects while ensuring they align with Norwalk's development goals.

1. Purpose:

- Encourage large-scale, tech-focused, clean industrial, and high-tech projects in Norwalk.
- Create jobs and support private infrastructure with a faster approval process.

2. Key Terms:

- NTI Master Site Plan: The overall plan for a project.
- NTI Sub Site Plan: Detailed plans for parts of the project.

3. Eligibility:

Projects must:

- Be located in specific zones (M-2, M-1, or IC).
- Cover at least 40 acres and have 100,000+ square feet of building space.
- Include private infrastructure unless public use is required.
- Have City Council approved development agreements and completed subdivisions.

4. NTI Review Committee:

- Consists of a Council determined number of staff, elected officials, and appointed commission members.
- Oversees decisions and communicates with applicants.

5. Plan Requirements:

- NTI Master Site Plan:
 - i. Outlines the project and ensures it meets city standards.
 - ii. Includes maps, land use details, utility plans, traffic studies, and timelines.
- NTI Sub Site Plan:
 - i. Provides detailed plans for specific areas based on the Master Plan.
- Approval is tied to the land, even if ownership changes.

6. Approval Process:

- NTI Sub Site Plans are reviewed by the NTI Review Committee (NRC).
- NRC gives feedback, requests changes, and issues approvals with conditions.
- Deviations from city codes require City Council approval.

NTI REVIEW COMMITTEE OPTIONS:

Staff developed several options for how the NRC would be created. Staff's only goal is to ensure a nimble process that can quickly submit submissions for an NTI Sub Site Plan. that the NRC is the approval committee, the City will still conduct the full site plan review process utilizing our City staff review group.

- Option 1 - Community Development Director, Public Works Director, Fire Chief, City Engineer, City Attorney, City Manager, Mayor, Council Member
- Option 2 - Community Development Director, Mayor, Council Member
- Option 3 - Community Development Director, Economic Development Director, City Manager, City Attorney, Mayor, Two Council Members, Planning & Zoning Commission Chair

The City can establish this review committee with any make-up that seems appropriate. The only primary thing to consider is that Council Member participation should be limited to two members to avoid a quorum of the City Council.

Public Hearing closed at 6:35 p.m.

Regennitter entertained a motion, Hinders motioned to approve and Forst seconded. Approved 4-0
{Steiger left meeting?}

Request from Kathleen M. Zimpleman Rev. Trust for approval of the Final Plat of Orchard View Plat 2 —25-05

This request is for a final plat as a minor subdivision that would change the lot lines of two existing lots on the western side of the City with one fronting Orilla Road and one fronting Hwy G-14. There is no public infrastructure involved. The change of lot lines will allow for an accessory structure to be constructed, that will not fit on the existing lot. Staff as no objection to the change of lot lines.

Regennitter entertained a motion, Forst motioned to approve, and Thompson seconded. Approved 4-0

Request from JLM Sales, LLC for the approval of the Final Plat of Speed Corner Plat 1—25-06

This request for a final plat would allow for the combining of two parcels at the corner of Gracie Lane and Orilla Road. The proposed final plat would enable the development of a commercial building for a sports training facility. Applicant, Josh Maxwell, 6879 Meadow Ct. West Des Moines, spoke and was available for questions.

Regennitter entertained a motion, Thompson motioned to approve and Forst seconded. Approved 4-0

Request from JLM Sales, LLC for approval of the Site Plan of the Speed and Performance Center—25-07

This request is for the approval of a site plan of the Speed and Performance Center for construction of a 6,000 sq ft commercial building housing a sports training facility at the corner of Orilla Road. A solitary accessory structure would be demolished upon approval of the site plan. The property would be required to have forty parking spaces, and the proposed site plan shows 19 spaces with a draft of future parking expansion on the north side of the property. With future parking that would bring the total number of spaces to thirty-eight.

Regennitter entertained a motion to approve the Speed and Performance Center subject to a two-year gravel temporary waiver to run from Council approval date and a requirement that the ghosted in parking plan (drafted future parking plan) be completed at that same period, subject to all the waivers. Forst motioned to approve, and Thompson seconded. Approved 4-0

City Council Update- No update

Economic Development Update- Hollie will email Commissioners the updates due to meeting running longer than expected.

Community Development Update- Permits for 2024 totaled 305 consisting of 234 SFR & 71 Th's. The Building Department received 77 residential permits in December due to the ending of the Tax Abatement. Klimowski recommended the Commission check out Celebration, Florida to see what neighborhoods look like with homes that are rear loaded or alley ways.

Next meeting Date – January 27th @ 5:45 p.m.

Adjournment – 25-08

Motion by Forst and seconded by Thompson to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.
Approved 4-0

Megan Regennitter, Chair

Elliot Klimowski, City Planner

Date:_____