

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2024, 7:00 PM

The meeting of the Planning and Zoning Board came to order at 7:00p.m.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

B. ROLL CALL

Members Present: J. Agnese, B. Anderson, J. Alling, B. Kaligian, M. Macchio, J. Mortimer, J. Quish, M. Zahariades

Not Present: E. Hirsch, R. Satti

Staff: D. Sulkis, City Planner; M. Greene, Rec. Sec'y

Chairman Quish opened the meeting, saying that no action would be taken on 104 Edgewater Place until the Harbor Management Commission has an opportunity to review the Coastal Area Management application at its meeting on Thursday.

C. NEW BUSINESS - None

D. PUBLIC HEARINGS

VOTE BY MAY 30, 2024

104 Edgewater Place (Zone R-12.5) Petition of Kevin Curseaden, Esq. for a Coastal Site Plan Review to construct a single-family dwelling on Map 045, Block 513, Parcel 39, of which Brenton C. Artz is the owner (**Hearing Closed**).

CLOSE BY MAY 23, 2024; VOTE BY JUNE 27, 2024

Proposed Regulation Change #23-15 Petition of the Planning and Zoning Board for a change to Milford Zoning Regulations Article V, Section 5.1.4 Figure 4 Off-Street Parking, Multiple Family Dwellings.

Chairman Quish asked Mr. Sulkis to explain the requirement for the regulation change. **Mr. Sulkis** said that the state legislature has changed state parking requirements and local regulations cannot mandate parking at a higher level than the new statute specifies. He read the city's current parking requirements for various types of apartments in multi-family dwellings, noting that they exceed the new guidelines. **Chairman Quish** confirmed with Mr. Sulkis that the regulation must be changed to conform to the statute.

Chairman Quish opened the meeting to public comment; seeing none, he closed the hearing and asked for a motion.

Mr. Mortimer moved to approve as presented the petition of the Planning and Zoning Board for a Board for a change to Milford Zoning Regulations Article V, Section 5.1.4 Figure 4 Off-Street Parking, Multiple Family Dwellings.

Second: Mr. Agnese seconded.

Discussion: To help newer board members, **Mr. Anderson** listed the agencies that are contacted when regulations are changed, asking Mr. Sulkis to confirm that the list was complete; **Mr. Sulkis** said that the list was correct.

Vote: Motion carried with **Messrs. Agnese, Anderson, Alling, Kaligian, Macchio, Mortimer, Quish, and Zahariades** voting with the motion.

Proposed Regulation Change #24-1 Petition of the Planning and Zoning Board for a change to Milford Zoning Regulations Article III, Sections 3.1.1 Permitted Uses and 3.1.2 Special Uses Group day care home.

Chairman Quish asked Mr. Sulkis to explain the requirement for the regulation change. **Mr. Sulkis** said that the state legislature has mandated that certain types of group homes and day cares cannot be treated differently than single family residences. He said that the city historically made those uses subject to Special Permits and this practice must likewise be changed to conform to the statute. He advised that more adjustments to the regulations may be forthcoming regarding this regulation and that DPLU would consult with the City Attorney's Office further.

Chairman Quish opened the meeting to public comment; seeing none, he closed the hearing and asked for a motion.

Mr. Mortimer moved to approve as presented the petition of the Planning and Zoning Board for a for a change to Milford Zoning Regulations Article III, Sections 3.1.1 Permitted Uses and 3.1.2 Special Uses Group day care home.

Second: Mr. Anderson seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: Motion carried with **Messrs. Agnese, Anderson, Alling, Kaligian, Macchio, Mortimer, Quish, and Zahariades** voting with the motion.

E. OLD BUSINESS: Discussion of affordable housing ideas for the Regulation Subcommittee

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Chairman Quish said that the new line item under old business was meant to encourage debate on all topics but that for some time into the future, he wanted to focus on the challenge of meeting Milford’s affordable housing percentage. He said one idea to consider is creating regulations that mandate incorporating affordable units in all multifamily projects as a proactive way to encourage building more such units. He shared a matrix based on unit size and a requirement for the percentage affordable. He said he wishes to invite stakeholders such as developers, attorneys, and citizen housing activists for exploratory discussion. **Mr. Zahariades** said it is important to understand such regulations in the context of the 8-30g statute. **Chairman Quish** then noted that 8-30g allows developers to build without respect to local zoning regulations, making it very unpopular in single-family neighborhoods and that if the city can get to 10% of its units being affordable, it can avoid being made subject to 8-30g overrides. He noted another reason to pursue affordability in the form of Milford residents who want to live in the city but can’t afford to. **Mr. Agnese** noted that it is important to remember how density affects profits for developers. **Mr. Alling** commented that inclusionary housing percentages are important but what really addresses the need for more housing units is allowing for density, for example along transit-oriented districts and near amenities. **Chairman Quish** suggested that rezoning some areas in the city could make them attractive to developers, perhaps starting with one zone to prove the concept. **Mr. Mortimer** said he thought mixed use is desirable and suggested looking at underutilized office-zoned or light industrial areas. **Mr. Agnese** again stressed the importance of hearing from developers to see if there is interest. **Mr. Sulkis** said he knows a large-scale developer who would like to address the board on the topic and said he would ask about his availability. He said he also wants to invite small developers. **Chairman Quish** said a developer in another town described a process using the CT Finance Authority and wanted to learn more about that. **Mr. Sulkis** said that a local attorney is an expert at reviewing affordability plans and that he would invite her to a meeting. **Mr. Anderson** said he agrees with that approach and suggested the city explore possibilities for leveraging land. He said the city could consider providing a list of available sites that are under its control or identify more affordable areas. He said that creative uses of bonding could be explored, noting that is currently used mostly for capital projects. **Mr. Agnese** highlighted the struggles of his demographic—namely, young families—as they try to buy homes. He suggested targeting that group. **Mr. Sulkis** said he has reached out to Fairfield, which has had success in expanding its affordable housing inventory, particularly near its rail stations on formerly industrial sites. He said he will forward some references. **Mr. Sulkis** shared a spreadsheet from the ct.gov webpage called Affordable Housing Appeals Listing, showing Milford’s housing statistics, which now stand at just 5.29% affordable, versus other municipalities as of 2023. **Chairman Quish** asked him to share the link to the website. **Mr. Sulkis** said that he will invite the attorney and developer he mentioned to the next meeting. **Chairman Quish** said new stakeholders could be invited on an ongoing basis. **Mr. Sulkis** stressed that it is important for the board to get feedback from the people whose projects they want to regulate. He suggested that the board’s efforts may be supported by an outside consultant similar to community development consultant hired last year. **Chairman Quish** asked if any funds remained from the consulting budget for the POCD; **Mr. Sulkis** said he will research it. **Chairman Quish** asked the group to think about which zones to address first as a prompt for next meeting. **Mr. Mortimer** said researching other town’s successful practices was also important.

F. LIAISON REPORTS

G. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

H. APPROVAL OF MINUTES—3/5/2024 minutes were approved unanimously.

I. CHAIR’S REPORT – The chair again stressed that he sought new ideas from the entire board under Old Business.

J. STAFF REPORT - None.

K. ADJOURNMENT was at 7:35.

Attest:

M.E. Greene

New Business, not on the Agenda, may be brought up by a 2/3’s vote of those Members present and voting.

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