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: B. Anderson, E. Hirsch, J. Kader, B. Kaligian, J. Mortimer, R. Satti, M. Zahariades

Not Present: N. Austin, J. Castignoli, J. Quish **Staff:** D. Sulkis, City Planner; M. Greene, Rec. Sec'y

Vice Chairman Satti opened the meeting. He welcomed Mr. Anderson and reviewed the items that would not be heard.

C. NEW BUSINESS

<u>O Seaview Avenue</u> (Zone R-10) Approval pursuant to CGS Section 8-24 for a permanent drainage easement from The Laurel Beach Association in favor of the City of Milford on Map 9, Block 130, Parcel 44A. **POSTPONED**

VOTE BY JANUARY 12, 2024

<u>3 Anderson Ave</u> (Zone R-12) Petition of Aleksandra Moch for a Coastal Site Plan Review on Map 082, Block 791, Parcels 2, of which Caroline Schiff is the owner.

Ms. Moch, 44 Lewelyn Road, Stamford, addressed the board. She reviewed photographs of the site, describing features of the property. She identified beach grasses and other coastal resources. She said the main house would be preserved and pointed out additions including a 2nd floor addition and porches. Several areas are to be removed. She reviewed aspects of the site plan that would tend to prevent water runoff. The plan featured revisions requested by the city engineer. She identified flood zones and square footage of beach areas.

Mr. Sulkis read his administrative noting no adverse coastal impacts and that the application is substantially zoning compliant.

Vice Chairman Satti asked for a motion.

Mr. Mortimer moved to *approve as presented* the petition of Aleksandra Moch for a Coastal Site Plan Review on Map 082, Block 791, Parcels 2, of which Caroline Schiff is the owner.

Second: Mr. Kader seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: Motion carried with Messrs. Anderson, Hirsch, Kader, Kaligian, Mortimer, Satti, and Zahariades voting with the motion.

D. PUBLIC HEARINGS

VOTE BY FEBRUARY 16, 2024

<u>Proposed Regulation Change #23-6</u> Petition of Kevin Curseaden, Esq. for changes to Article III, District Use Regulations Section 3.5 – Office District. **POSTPONED TO DECEMBER 5, 2023**

<u>0, 305, 325 Sub Way</u> (Zone OD) Petition of Kevin Curseaden, Esq. for a Special Permit with Site Plan Review and lot consolidation to construct a 160,000 SF warehouse on Map 41, Block 303, Parcels E, F, and G, of which Subway Subs, Inc., Bic Drive Realty II, LLC, and Subway Subs II, LLC are the owners. **POSTPONED TO DECEMBER 5, 2023**

CLOSE BY NOVEMBER 22; VOTE BY JANUARY 25, 2024

<u>695 West Avenue</u> (Zone CDD-1) Petition of Thomas Lynch, Esq. for a Special Permit with Site Plan Review for an Automotive Repair Facility on Map 043, Block 334, Parcel A4, of which 695 West, LLC, is the owner.

Attorney Lynch, 63 Cherry Street, addressed the board. He introduced his client who runs a boutique high-end automotive repair business. He described the site and its zoning requirements. He said there would be no changes to the structure now on the parcel. He referred to a statement of use describing hours of operation and a staff consisting of 3 mechanics. He said it would be a very low volume site with no repairs or storage of cars outside. He said the city engineer required removal of parking spaces and some tree stumps that were located within the city's right of way. He said most of the utilized building space would be on the first floor. He stressed that no additional construction was needed. He said it was zoning-compliant and all departmental reviews were submitted, including a traffic analysis reporting no sightline issues. He said the Fire Department had issued a conditional approval

based on their determination as to whether sprinklers will be required; if so, they will be provided. **Mr. Hirsch** asked about the absence of floor drains; Attorney Lynch said the practice is for fluids to be bottled and taken away. **Mr. Satti** asked why the Inland Wetlands Agency (IWA) was involved; **Attorney Lynch** said Inland Wetlands Officer Palumbo's statement was a standard one indicating no required IWA review.

Mr. Sulkis reviewed the DPLU summary, noting that the summary is not his work. The statement described the lot and structure with parking spaces to be removed as well as those that will remain, noting that all repairs will be done inside the building, and that the plan was substantially zoning compliant.

Vice Chairman Satti invited the public to comment; hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Mr. Mortimer moved to *approve as presented* the petition of Thomas Lynch, Esq. for a Special Permit with Site Plan Review for an Automotive Repair Facility on Map 043, Block 334, Parcel A4, of which 695 West, LLC, is the owner.

Second: Mr. Hirsch seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: Motion carried with Messrs. Anderson, Hirsch, Kader, Kaligian, Mortimer, Satti, and Zahariades voting with the motion.

25 Shell Avenue (Zone R-7.5) Petition of Timothy Hollister, Esq. for a Site Plan Review with CAM for a 20-unit residential building proposed under CGS 8-30g on Map 27, Block 444, Parcel 16, of which Sea Shell LLC c/o Fortitude Capital LLC is the owner.

Vice Chairman Satti read the intervener's statement identifying Robert Fuchs of 17 Shell Avenue as the intervener. He said the City Planner and City Attorney's Office determined that the petition submitted was sufficient to allow the intervener to participate in the hearing as a party. He said the scope of review was to decide if the intervener had presented sufficient evidence to prove that 1.) the proposal will cause or is reasonably likely to cause pollution of the state's natural resources and 2.) that reasonable alternatives exist. He asked the intervener to identify himself and to identify his counsel.

Attorney Keith Ainsworth, 51 Elm Street, New Haven, identified himself as an environmental attorney whereupon Vice Chairman Satti seated him for the proceedings.

Vice Chairman Satti explained that 2 independent findings would be required of the board, first, to decide if the intervener met his burden of proof and second, whether the application should be approved. He asked Attorney Hollister if he would agree to allow the intervener petition to be presented to the board, given the board's unfamiliarity with the action.

Attorney Hollister addressed the board, saying he was aware of the intervening letter and that a response had been provided by Codespoti Associates. He agreed to an approach of allowing the intervener to present with a response from his team afterward.

Vice Chairman Satti asked Attorney Ainsworth to define the standard used to determine if the burden of proof has been met in these actions. Attorney Ainsworth said the requirement is presentation of substantial evidence regarding environmental issues. He said the format of presentation is not prescribed, so the one described by Vice Chairman Satti is fine. He said an intervener has a right to make a longer, more formal presentation than a member of the public providing comments. He said after that, the hearing opens to public comment and after that, the board can make a ruling. Vice Chairman Satti asked Attorney Ainsworth to reference documents such as the verified petition for the record.

Attorney Ainsworth said a copy of Mr. Fuchs' verified petition to intervene was in his submitted materials, noting that such a petition is verified under oath as a sworn affidavit. The petition is required to allege unreasonable impact to natural resources with factual specificity, in this case, the contention being that the design of the stormwater management system is not in compliance with CT DEEP requirements. He referred to a report by Professional Engineer Stephen Trinkaus that wasn't yet distributed. Mr. Hirsch asked why the engineer's report was not submitted to the board earlier; Attorney Ainsworth said he didn't know if Mr. Fuchs would be accepted as an intervener. He said the report, dated 11/6 and 4 pages in length, would be presented by its author. Attorney Ainsworth said Mr. Trinkaus' CV is 25 pages long. He distributed copies of both documents to the board and city planner. He again introduced his clients Robert Fuchs and Deborah Fuchs, 17 Shell Avenue. He said the natural resources impacted are ground water and coastal waters in LI Sound. He said the unreasonable impacts would be reduced with fewer units. He said the PE hired by the Fuchs had raised environmental and nonenvironmental issues and would be speaking as a member of the public. He listed other issues as snow storage and management, and storm water separators used in series because as water is discharged, pollution removal efficiency rates go down as water moves through each one. He said pollutant reduction is overstated in the

application. He said that the traffic study was done in autumn, not in summer when traffic is higher. **Vice Chairman Satti** reminded Attorney Ainsworth that the traffic study was not part of the intervention. **Attorney Ainsworth** returned to the environmental effects and said the burden of proof is on the application and that a pollutant-loading analysis is needed.

Steven Trinkaus, PE, 114 Hunters Ridge Road, Southbury, said his expertise is in low impact development, specifically runoff quality impacts. He reviewed the specifics on how water will move and the operation of hydrodynamic separators, which have been used since the 1990s, but have subsequently been found not to be efficient at removing suspended solids. He referred to a study conducted at the University of New Hampshire for water quality. He disputed the average removal rate in the proposal versus research done since 2004 on removal efficiencies regarding trapped sediment versus other pollutants. He spoke about increased nitrogen loads and impacts to marshes and LI Sound. He said metals and hydrocarbons will be flushed from cars in parking lot into the Sound. He rebutted the response from Codespoti Associates, saying lab testing doesn't reflect reality. He described the test bed for the UNH study as a 9-acre parking lot that creates a real-world scenario. He provided percentages for pollutants he expected over time, saying storm water impacts build up over time. Mr. Zahariades asked if a certain size would remove adverse impacts. Mr. Trinkaus said different systems must be used to protect the environment, especially with sand that is very permeable. Mr. Hirsch pressed for details on current conditions featuring the present building with a gravel drive plus ground or green space. Mr. Trinkaus said if oil drips now, pollutants will get caught in the gravel and roof runoff probably is directed by gutters, but with hardscape they will flow to LI Sound. Mr. Mortimer asked if a solution would be to keep a gravel driveway. Mr. Trinkaus said a rain garden could be used to filter and remove pollutants with a similar treatment for the driveway, but when the whole site is paved, this is not an option. Mr. Hirsch asked if floor drains would be part of property system such that runoff goes to the sanitary sewer system or other treatment system. Mr. Trinkaus said that with under-building parking, it doesn't have to go to a sanitary sewer, but still needs to be treated, perhaps by a properly designed bioretention system or rain garden. He said that until the last few years, there has been little interest in storm water quality. Vice Chairman Satti asked if Mr. Trinkaus visited site, who said he had not. Vice Chairman Satti asked for the relevance of the UNH facility and Mr. Trinkaus said it was a commuter lot where all discharges flow to one catch basin where samples are dispersed to 9 different treatment practices to compare them for removal efficiencies. Discussion ensued on technical aspects of water processing. Vice Chairman Satti asked whether Mr. Trinkaus reviewed the city engineer's report, CT DEEP's report and the Codespoti rebuttal, noting that none found a large environmental concern. Mr. **Trinkaus** said he had but disagreed with those assessments.

Vice Chairman Satti asked Attorney Ainsworth about his claim that the proposed number of units represents overbuilding without proposing an appropriate number of units. Attorney Ainsworth said the problem is not so much about units, but the amount of impervious surface required. Discussion of possible relevant case law ensued regarding environmental concerns as related to 8 30gs affordable housing proposals. Mr. Hirsch suggested a case that talks about health and safety, but this was not something that specifically applies. Attorney Ainsworth stressed that he is not saying the site can't be developed if it were designed properly but neither was it the intervener's burden to redesign the project such that it works.

Vice Chairman Satti asked Attorney Hollister to rebut the intervener.

Attorney Hollister asked if the board had a copy of the Codespoti response and provided hard copy. He said he had a 2-part response, and that Professional Engineer Robert Wheway would also speak. There was discussion of the submission timing of the Intervener and the Codespoti rebuttal. Attorney Hollister said the city engineer and CT DEEP had reviewed the storm water treatment plan and noted no concerns. He noted that the IWA had also reviewed the plan and determined that no regulatory activities required a permit. Some discussion of environmental case law ensued. Attorney Hollister said the strictly defined, pollution is any change detectable in a natural resource, but that quantification of the change is crucial, using the example of a drop of arsenic added to an Olympic-sized swimming pool. He said the correct reduction of density couldn't be quantified so existing conditions and proposed conditions can't be compared. He said the DEEP 2004 Manual is not a regulatory document.

Robert Wheyway, PE, VP, Codespoti & Associates, 263 Boston Post Road, said he designed the storm water management system, received the letter from Mr. Trinkaus, and wrote the response provided. He said the property is not currently pristine, it's developed and is therefore considered a redevelopment property by DEEP. He said the gravel surface had to be replaced with a paved surface to provide structural support for emergency vehicles. He said the design was based on Milford Fire Department requirements and the CT DEEP manual with an effective date of 2024. He went into detail about what the updated manual requires in terms of calculations for verification of pollution renovation. He disputed Mr. Trinkaus' assertions on the knowledgeability City Engineer Greg Pidluski, who was on the steering committee for revised manual, and John Gaucher of CT DEEP, who was on the steering committee for original manual. He expanded on Attorney Hollister's arsenic analogy, asserting that no storm water treatment practice can eliminate all pollution, but rather the level of treatment must meet the water quality standards set out in the DEEP manual. He reiterated that the professionals and reviewing agencies agree that requirements have been met. He said the

intervener has submitted conjecture, not evidence. **Mr. Anderson** asked whether the storm treatment plan is designed to deal with worst case scenarios or average conditions. **Mr. Wheyway** said there is no consideration of peak rates of runoff because the city's requirement is to ensure water quality management. He reviewed technical details of how runoff is collected and how the hydrodynamic separators should ensure that 83% of suspended solids will be retained. **Mr. Hirsch** and **Mr. Wheyway** discussed the possible benefit of floor drains in the garage, noting that the Public Works Direct has concerns about connecting floor systems to the sewer system. **Mr. Wheyway** said that any garage floor runoff is directed to the parking area, thence to the hydrodynamic separator.

Attorney Hollister said that this concluded the applicant's remarks.

Vice Chairman Satti discussed the next phase of the hearing, noting that as a public hearing, he would invite public comment on this issue and after that, two votes would be taken to determine whether the intervener has made his case. Both Attorneys Ainsworth and Hollister agreed to wait until the end for further comment. Vice Chairman Satti then asked Mr. Sulkis to remind the board of traffic issue.

Mr. Sulkis reviewed the board's request for a 3rd-party peer review of the traffic study, noting that the reviewing traffic engineer was John Thompson.

John Thompson, PE, 79 Schoolhouse Rd, Wallingford, advised that he had been hired per the board to do a 3rd-party peer review of the submitted traffic study. He stressed that his assignment was to comment on integrity of report, not to do a separate report. He said that at first, he found the report lacking due to lack of traffic volumes references. He noted that the original report did have rates of traffic, but no volumes on Shell Avenue. He said he interacted with other professionals in his field for guidance and that Mr. Ullman was aware of this. He said he made a list of the missing information and forwarded it to Attorney Hollister. He said he and Mr. Ullman discussed how he extrapolated to obtain summer volumes to make a reasonable inference. He said Shell Avenue is different in summer based on pedestrian activity and other traffic. He described how he then performed his analysis after the applicant went out to get additional information and said he now can be confident that this project won't create a threat to health and safety. He said there will be an impact, but the site will be a low generator of traffic that can be handled within the existing street system. Mr. Hirsch and Mr. Mortimer were skeptical about this conclusion and parking requirements but were advised parking is exempt under the 8-30g statute. Discussion continued about how traffic analysis is done and about the conclusions drawn. The conclusion remained the same; that the proposed project could be constructed to handle 20 apartments safely.

Steve Ullman, Traffic Engineer at Benesch Engineering, Glastonbury, said he had responded to all Mr. Thompson's concerns. He said he didn't do a full study initially, but after further work, he reiterated his original finding that there would be an additional 4 trips during peak hours each morning and evening respectively. He said that when people commute, they leave and return at different times. He described the analytical techniques he used, noting that he had factored for the worst-case scenario. He discussed other measures to further assess impacts. Mr. Mortimer and Mr. Ullman discussed parking volume scenarios. Vice Chairman Satti confirmed with Mr. Ullman that the Milford Police Department made a finding of no impacts to public safety. Vice Chairman Satti asked if the intervener had any specific questions for Messrs. Thompson or Ullman and was advised there were none. Mr. Hirsch asked the intervener if any evidence of a specific harm resulting from traffic. Attorney Ainsworth said he had no testimony to present. Mr. Hirsch pressed further as to whether the intervener had any type of evidence at all regarding specific harm to public safety. Attorney Ainsworth said that Mr. Trinkaus's report discussed the ability of the Milford Fire Department to gain access to the property due to narrow streets with overcrowded parking. Mr. Hirsch confirmed that the report differs from the fire department's own opinion about access.

Attorney Hollister concluded his presentation by responding to **Vice Chairman Satti**'s question on city agency responses by confirming that the city's fire and police agencies responded that they could handle access, and that the city engineer had also reviewed and approved the proposal, expressing no concerns. He then briefly reviewed features of the proposal and the process for an 8-30g application. He said the plan was well prepared and a positive addition to the neighborhood.

Vice Chairman Satti asked if Attorney Ainsworth wanted to make any further remarks. Attorney Ainsworth said that the criticism about failing to quantify potential harm also applied to the application because the applicant only consulted a manual. He said the plan should feature a pollutant loading calculation but rather than saying why it wasn't needed, the applicant just said it wasn't required. He said both sides made assumptions. He said another criticism involved the date of the petition being before the report was issued, but that his client had access to the preliminary report.

Vice Chairman Satti invited the public to comment. He urged respectful civility and limiting comments to facts.

Robert Fuchs, 17 Shell Avenue, said the intervention was undertaken on behalf of the entire street. He said experts live elsewhere, but residents are directly affected. He said safety concerns are behind the intervention, including parking on a narrow street. He said he understood the constraints of 8-30g applications, but the addition of over 30 bedrooms creates the need for additional cars in a worst-case scenario. He described seasonal differences in parking with beach goers creating even more parking demand. He said his cars in his driveway have been hit 3 times and that the applicant's motive was financial.

Nancy Herman, 33 Shell Avenue, said she has no issue with developing the property, but that the number of units is the problem. She described current apartments as small studios whereas so many new larger apartments would be a problem. She said delivery vehicles, lawn care services, etc., will be dangerous to pedestrians and that parking is also a grave concern. She said the street has 3 public accesses to the beach creating more strain on parking availability. She said she doesn't see how an emergency vehicle would negotiate the street and stressed that consideration of the coastline was crucial.

Sue McNulty, 46 Shell Avenue, said peak parking is 4th of July and should be considered versus average statistics.

Dan Welby, 28 Shell Avenue, said he doesn't understand how the presented statistics make sense. He said he wants a foot traffic study, that Amazon trucks make deliveries on the street 2 or 3 times a day, and that now there will be more deliveries. He said no photographs were presented of what it looks like to drive down the street and offered to share them with the board. He said he is aware of car accidents that were unreported for the analysis.

Vin Bagdassaria, 27 Thompson Street, asked the board to consider the effects of the several 8-30gs already built along Seaside Avenue. He suggested the current Shell Avenue building has some historical significance.

Dan Howarth, 18 Shell Avenue, described observations he has made in the May-September timeframe, saying beachgoers park on Shell and go to Fort Trumbull beach. He said he must park on his lawn when he has guests. He asked reduce the number of units.

Patrick Callahan, 10 Seaside Avenue, said his condo complex has 9 units with signs posted regarding private parking, but people still park in the lot. He said additional units will make things worse. He said he approves of redevelopment but not of 20 units and hoped there might be a middle ground. He thought that if the board denies the project, the applicant may discuss some middle ground with the neighbors. He noted that the condo owners in his complex could use the same tactic. He asked for a vote to deny.

Deborah Fuchs, 17 Shell Avenue, said she agreed with previous comments. She said she reviewed the ZBA denial. She said she worried about large-scale Florida-type developments in the future, and she was worried about safety. She said East Broadway is part of the eastern shoreline greenway and that it can feature road races. She said the sidewalks are small and broken, so people walk in the street, or there may not be a sidewalk at all. She said there is also water runoff to Silver Sands beach. She described wave action during storms and said current residents have trouble parking. She also worried about emergency vehicle access.

Vice Chairman Satti noted that no further comments were forthcoming, and asked Mr. Sulkis about an administrative summary updated from October. He asked Mr. Sulkis to highlight any changes. Mr. Sulkis said a comparison had been made of what the R-7.5 zone allows versus what the application requests, there was more detail about parking, and information on compliance or lack thereof with state statutes.

Vice Chairman Satti offered Attorney Hollister another chance for rebuttal.

Attorney Hollister said he had no need to respond to neighbors, noting that having worked on many such applications, the comments from neighbors tended to be similar. He said to Mr. Sulkis that the administrative summary did not reflect an agreement to make one of the 4th floor units affordable. **Vice Chairman Satti** asked for details; **Attorney Hollister** recalled that Mr. Sulkis suggest that 2 of the 4th floor units be designated affordable, but the applicant compromised and agreed to 1.

Mr. Sulkis advised regarding the vote requirements, saying that if the board closed the hearing, they must vote, using a simple majority of those present, on the merits of the intervener's arguments, and then on the application itself. **Vice Chairman Satti** asked Mr. Anderson if he had enough information to vote, **Mr. Anderson** said he watched MGAT and read pertinent documents.

Vice Chairman Satti asked for board member comment. Hearing nothing further, he asked for a motion to close the hearing. **Mr. Kaligian** moved to close the hearing.

Mr. Mortimer seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Hirsch asked about the consequences for not closing the hearing. Mr. Sulkis said that the applicant would have to

grant the board an extension of time. If the applicant declined to do so, and if the board then failed to vote for denial, the application would be automatically approved.

Vote: Motion carried with Messrs. Anderson, Hirsch, Kader, Kaligian, Mortimer, Satti, and Zahariades voting with the motion.

Vice Chairman Satti then made a motion pursuant to 22-18 of the Planning and Zoning Board Scope of Review finding that the intervener has met his burden of proof in that the proposed activity will or is reasonably likely to cause pollution to the state's air, water, or other natural resources and there are prudent and feasible alternatives to the proposed activity in order to protect the state's resources.

Mr. Zahariades seconded.

Discussion: **Mr. Hirsch** asked for a standard for the burden of proof. **Vice Chairman Satti** repeated the relevant portion of his motion. **Mr. Sulkis** clarified that the intervener had to present alternatives to the proposed activity that protects the state's resources. Discussion ensued on what alternatives had been placed on the record by the intervener. **Vice Chairman Satti** said he was more persuaded by the evidence presented by the applicant's expert, that the intervener's evidence was speculative, and that he would be voting against the motion.

WITH THE MOTION: J. Kader, J. Mortimer, M. Zahariades

AGAINST THE MOTION: B. Anderson, E. Hirsch, B. Kaligian, R. Satti

Mr. Kaligian moved to *approve with the following modifications*] the petition of Timothy Hollister, Esq. for an application under CGS 8-30g with a site plan and CAM Review to Construct a 20-unit residential building on Map 27, Block 444, Parcel 16 of which Sea Shell LLC is the owner.

Proposed Modifications:

- 1) One of the 4th floor units shall be set aside as affordable at 60% of median income and one other 4th floor unit shall be set aside as affordable at 80% of median income level.
- 2) These units shall replace one 2-bedroom unit that was designated at 60% and one 2-bedroom unit designated at 80% of median income found on floors 2 and 3.
- The Affordability plan shall be updated with the contact information for the reporting entity.

Second: Mr. Mortimer seconded.

Discussion: **Vice Chairman Satti** expressed appreciation for public comment and noted the importance of city agency review and CT DEEP. He noted the restrictions associated with 8-30g applications.

Vote: Motion failed.

WITH THE MOTION: B. Kaligian

AGAINST THE MOTION: B. Anderson, E. Hirsch, J. Kader, J. Mortimer, R. Satti, M. Zahariades

ACCEPTANCE OF 2024 PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD CALENDAR

Mr. Hirsch moved to approve the adoption of the 2024 Planning and Zoning Board meeting calendar.

Second: Mr. Mortimer seconded.

Discussion: None.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

- E. OLD BUSINESS None
- F. LIAISON REPORTS None
- G. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS None
- H. APPROVAL OF MINUTES 11/8/23 with Mr. Anderson abstaining.
- I. CHAIR'S REPORT None
- J. STAFF REPORT None
- K. ADJOURNMENT was at 10:21

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.

ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY WHO NEEDS SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, (203) 783-3230, FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING, IF POSSIBLE.