

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

FEBRUARY 11, '76
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Ralph H. Shaw, II, Chairman, Eric G. Lowry, Vice-Chm.;
Edward J. Kalita, Dr. Christie E. McLeod, Paul P. Parisi,
Sebastian J. Passanesi, George Augustine, Thomas Lineberry,
Conrad Tyaack and Gerald Lentini.

COMMISSION
MEMBERS PRESENT

Cos Giuffrida, Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT

George Reif, Director; Catherine V. Raczka, Ass't Dir.,
Althea Rinaldi, Recording Secretary

STAFF MEMBERS

Gerald Daley, Administrative Assistant, D'Vera Cohn,
Reporter, Middletown Press, and Phil Bauer, Engineer.
Also 25 members of the public at large.

OTHERS

Gerald Lentini sat for Cos Giuffrida

ACTING MEMBER

CHAIRMAN SHAW

I would like to call the meeting to order. Before we
start I would like to announce that prior to this meeting
there was an organizational meeting held upstairs in the
office of the Planning and Zoning Commission at which time
the officers of the past year were re-elected and appoint-
ments have been made for the liaison representatives to
other agencies which remain, in the case of Dr. Lowry,
who will continue to represent us at the Redevelopment
Agency - I will continue to represent the agency at
Inland Wetlands and Paul Parisi will become our represent-
ative to Midstate Regional Planning. That is the only actual
change - the naming of Paul Parisi to that position. We
will go directly into our public hearing. I'll ask that
Jerry Lentini, who is sitting in the seat of the absent
Secretary Cos Giuffrida, to read the call of the meeting.

ACTING SECRETARY LENTINI

THE MIDDLETOWN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION WILL HOLD A
PUBLIC HEARING FEBRUARY 11, 1976, STARTING AT 7:30 P.M.
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, DE KOVEN DRIVE,
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT, to consider the following:

LEGAL NOTICE

1. Application by the Concord Steel Corporation - Newfield
Street - to amend the text of the Zoning Code. Item
36.04, concerning lot coverage in the I-2 zone to read:
36.04 - Lot Coverage - "Each main building or structure
hereafter erected, together with its accessory building
or structure, shall not cover more than fifty (50)
per cent of the net lot area".

APPLICATION
TO AMEND
ZONING CODE
TEXT.-CONCORD
STEEL CORP.
NEWFIELD ST.

The lot coverage constraint currently in effect is 30%
of the net lot area.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

As is our custom, I will ask people who are going to speak
either for or against a particular application or proposal
to come forward and identify themselves so that we can
pick up the information for the tape recorder.

We will follow the pattern of having the proponents speak first and after the proponent and any other people who wish to speak in favor of the proposal, we will ask those who are in opposition. to any particular application or activity to speak. Who is speaking for Concord?

ATTY. IRWIN MITTELMAN

I am Mr. Chairman. Does my voice carry adequately from here? Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission: I am here on - My name is Irwin Mittelman. I practice law in Middletown, Ct. and I represent Concord Steel Corporation primarily in respect to the application before this Commission for an amendment to the text of the Zoning Code particularly with respect to Item 36.04 with respect to maximum use of building structure in the I-2 zone. As you know, the present code provides for maximum usage of 30% and it's requested there be a modification or amendment to include 50%. Briefly, Concord Steel started its operations in Middletown a little over 20 years ago at which time they had four employees. Within a period of two years - in 58 - they acquired most of their present land. Now, presently, their operation off the Newfield Street area encompasses approximately an acre and a half of land use. In total, they own approximately a little in excess of seven acres. It is contemplated, subject to the approval of this amendment, that Concord would expand its operation by demolishing the Quonset hut which you see on the proposed plan which is at the north end of the premises, of constructing a new building which would be along the railroad, and also constructing another building along the southerly side of its present building and, in accordance with the plans as presently formulated by my client, the structure would encompass something in excess of 40% of the net lot area. I know that and I assume that this Commission has received copies of the memorandum to the effect that there's no wetland area involved. You've got that approval and I know that the activity out there would not interfere with with any other activity. You have the railroad principally running along one entire side of the premises. This corporation is a growing corporation - it hopes to expand and it would - if the amendment is approved - it would reasonably anticipate an addition of about - oh, about 60,000 square feet of building space which, incidentally, would also broaden its employment basis by, conservatively, 35 more employees. I would hope that this Commission would give favorable action on this, especially with respect to the expansion policy.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Thank you. Do you have any questions? Thank you. George, do you have any comments to make about this proposal?

MR. GEORGE REIF

Only that reference was made to a site plan. We are not involved in a site plan review. We are involved in text amendment (rest inaudible)

CHAIRMAN SHAW

But the area in Westfield - not on Newfield - by I-91 - is I-2. That is the new (inaudible)

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Do you have any idea what the difficulty in relationship is to the new industrial park project? (rest inaudible)

MR. GEORGE REIF

This coverage (rest inaudible)

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Any other questions? Is there anyone else -

COMM. MC LEOD

Is there any adjacent land (rest inaudible)

MR. REIF

Yes.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Any other questions? Is there anyone else who wishes to speak in favor of this proposal? Anyone at all? Is there anyone who wishes to speak in opposition to this proposal? Anyone at all? Hearing none, we'll close hearing on that item and go on to our second item. I'll ask our acting Secretary to read the second item.

ACTING SECRETARY LENTINI

2. Application by William Charatan for a Special Exception to permit conversion of a rooming house at 144 Washington Street, the B-3 zone, to three apartments. The specific relevant Zoning Code items are 61.02.14 and 44.08.21.

SPECIAL EXCEPT.
ROOMING HOUSE
CONVERSION-144
WASHINGTON ST.
B-3 ZONE

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Thank you. Who will speak for this proposal?

MR. WILLIAM CHARATAN

I will.

MR. REIF

Why don't you come up here.

MR. CHARATAN

My name is William Charatan and I am the owner of the building at 144 Washington St. Right now the building is a rooming house and I would like to change it to a three - three apartments. Now the rooming house is on the second floor. Instead of having the single rooms which are there now, I would like to convert it to three efficiency apartments. We had a plan drawn up by Mr. (sounds like Richters), a building - a plot plan - designating that we have available to us seven parking stalls on the lot and we reserved three next door - making it a total of ten and there are more available if we need them so that we meet most of the requirements for the parking. The problem - this has been brought up before and it was rejected because of the open air - environmental open air requirement. Your committee has eliminated the need for this open air environmental space

now and, therefore, I see no reason why the request should not be approved.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Any questions of Mr. Charatan? We have gone through this a couple to times before. George, do you have any comments you want to make about this?

MR. REIF

No.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Any additional information we haven't already known?

MR. REIF

-the fact that you are using the second floor now for private rooms.

MR. CHARATAN

yes, yes. It would be an improvement.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

There would be three apartments where there's five rooms.

MR. CHARATAN

Right. There would be efficiency type of apartments meaning mostly that they would have their own bathroom and kitchen. Right now there is a single bathroom in the hall. We would put in two more bathrooms at various places to (inaudible few words) in each apartment. They would have their own bathroom and a kitchenette.

COMM. PASSANESI

Have you talked to the Building Department about this?

MR. CHARATAN

Yes. They seem to say its OK.

COMM. PASSANESI

There are no problems?

MR. CHARATAN

No. No problems with the building or any construction, plumbing or electrical or heating. Everything will be all right. It was just the open space requirement that we couldn't meet until it was eliminated in the last week.

MR. REIF

You have one and one-half parking spaces for each dwelling unit.

MR. CHARATAN

Yes.

MR. REIF

For instance, four and one-half -

MR. CHARATAN

Yes, we have adequate -

MR. REIF

Total of six. You don't need any for the retail (inaudible)
Six parking spaces covers your need.

MR. CHARATAN

We have (inaudible - two talking) on-site and three off.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

You actually have ten. You would have ten.

MR. CHARATAN

And there are more available if we do need any but, actually,
we don't according to the specifications.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Any questions? Thank you very much. Is there anyone else who
wishes to speak in favor of this proposition? Is there anyone
who wishes to speak in opposition to this application? Hearing
no other comments on this, I'll ask our Secretary to read the
call for the third item on our agenda.

ACTING SECRETARY LENTINI

3. Application by Farmers & Mechanics Savings Bank for a
Special Exception to permit construction of a branch
bank primarily designed as a drive-up facility at the
southeast corner of West Silver Street and Main Street
Extension - a TD zone (Transitional Development Zone).
The specific relevant Zoning Code items are 61.02.04
and 44.08.12.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

On this item Commissioner Passanesi has asked to be excused
and I'll ask that Commissioner Lineberry sit in his place.
Commissioner Kalita has asked to be excused and I'll ask
Commissioner Tyaack sit in his place. Who is going to speak
for this applicant?

MR. REIF

I am going to hang your drawing on the board, Harry.

MR. HARRY HAGEL

Thank you. My name is Harry Hagel and on behalf of the
applicant, Farmers and Mechanics Savings Bank, I am very
pleased to be here to present this request for a special
exception in this Transitional Development zone. Inasmuch
as I spent a good deal of my youth in this area and I
think since then a lot of things have happened because
I'm pretty old and -

CHAIRMAN SHAW

How do you think you make the rest of us feel?

MR. HARRY HAGEL

Biff, you're younger. I think this sort of - almost compliments the full cycle in this area because I can recall back in the '30's this was sort of a southern hub of Middletown. Several houses to the east of this area where we had Cassidy's Drug Store which is now Maron's, the old Gus's Lunch, Peltons No. 2, Economy Market and a very active Valley Oil Station on the other corner. Since then there's been some changes and I believe now that the time has passed-perhaps private enterprise is taking over and having a resurgence in this area. I know that where I went to school at Hubbard we now have the start of a new post office and Squeaky has moved - well, I guess Gus's Diner was demolished and Squeaky has a new aluminum diner across the street - so that's progress. I hope that, coming down the street where we have sort of put a nice package together, it appears to me where the properties of George Cameron, which are the two houses located furthest west on this parcel and at the intersection, and then there's a - two properties actually - it's sort of one if you look at it going from north to south - The frontage - it's sort of a nice house - it's an older home - it's in pretty good shape that Marino Main Realty owns - so there's three houses that are contemplated being razed for this project and - well, sort of - circumnavigating part of that area is a right of way which will be available to the bank on an easement and right-of-way basis for use in connection with this property. Now, initially, I believe our request for approval of this site would be for a drive-up facility which encompasses, I believe, that orange building or the site that's depicted in orange there as being the initial construction project. To the northwest of that you have the corner of, I believe that there will be quite a bit of site improvement at that corner by a lowering of the grade which will provide a much better view of cars as you enter Main Street Ext. from West Silver St. so there will be, hopefully, a general improvement in safety and aesthetics in the area and, hopefully, this Commission will see fit to grant this approval and, I believe, it will be certainly for the best interest of Middletown and for the South Farms area.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Thank you. Are there any questions?

COMM. LOWRY

What are your future plans?

MR. HAGEL

I believe that future plans would, perhaps if a - business warrants, which is usually the case, hopefully, when you put together a package like this, is that there would be a regular branch bank in that area which would encompass the green square rectangular area that is just to the east of the orange drive-up facility, which is probably twice as big as the original facility and would accommodate people coming in for conferences, mortgage loans and things like that - rather than just the banking facility that would be carried on

at a drive-up or walk-up station.

COMM. PARISI

Then the access is going to be off West Silver as well as where that Juvenile Court (rest of question inaudible)

MR. HAGEL

Yes. There's an access -

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Excuse me, Harry. We need some more orientation on this map. (inaudible) show us where (inaudible few words)

MR. HAGEL

Well, perhaps. I don't know how familiar everybody is but -

MR. REIF

They are seeing it for the first time.

MR. HAGEL

All right. Fine

MR. REIF

Heres the pointer.

MR. HAGEL

Thank you, Cathy. Well, as is illustrated here, Main Street Ext. goes generally north and south along the westerly boundary of this property. The Juvenile Court which is, I believe, located in this area has access to and from through this driveway and there's a parking area here, of course, for persons using that facility. This present depicted right of way, I believe, is unused and, perhaps at this point, unpaved. I'm not sure. But this is one of the areas that is - from West Silver Street going south. This will be an access off of West Silver Street and (inaudible word) will come in here - (inaudible word) will leave here and go out West Silver Street. Coming out of the parking area you will be able to have access to Main Street Ext. from this point and, more readily, as the traffic may come in this way and go around or come in here and go around to the kiosk or the drive-in window - kiosk is an esoteric word - I understand it means stand-up little things out here - remote banking. I'm not really learned in that field - anyway, as the cars leave the area they can go out here and exit on to Main St. Ext. About what - couple of hundred feet up here - is Maron's Drug Store. I believe over in this area - the other corner - is the church that was formerly the Economy Market building. On this side are, I believe, several houses. Squeaky's is way over here now.

COMM. LOWRY

You are proposing two entrances and exits to Main St. Ext.?

MR. HAGEL

Yes. Yes. This primarily and as a more or less a secondary source of traffic to get off the street and in the event of busy times to the bank. This primarily is the court driveway - in and out for

the juvenile court. We feel that this would be a good access and egress because of the fact that it will have a good traffic pattern.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Would you propose allowing a left turn going out of the Main St. Ext. (inaudible one or two words)

MR. HAGEL

I believe that might be open to some discussion - whether you are going to have a regulated right turn only or -

CHAIRMAN SHAW

I see a problem with someone coming out of the Juvenile Court, making a right turn, someone coming out of that building taking a left turn. They are very close together.

MR. HAGEL

It might merit some discussion. I believe this could be something that would be resolved between the Engineering office and the architect and the Police Department as to whether this might be right turn only or -

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Is it not possible to use the same opening as the entrance without coming around ~~without coming around~~ what you show there as being a green (inaudible word). That's a question and not a statement.

MR. HAGEL

I think it would be a more usable site and a more functional site if we could have at least exit from it.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Can you give me the dimensions of that parking area?

MR. HAGEL

Gosh, I should. I think it's about 175 or 80. We have a legal description along West Silver St. and back here I think it's in excess of 200 going to the rear, because there's two pieces - there's one 147 and one 67, so it goes back about 220 or so.

COMM. PARISI

How many houses are you going to be taking down?

MR. HAGEL

Marino Main has a big house here, George Cameron has 2 houses here which are presently in kind of disrepair. I don't even know if they are occupied.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

One of these is unoccupied.

COMM. KALITA

They are both condemned.

MR. HAGEL

So I think it certainly would be a boon to the area to start getting some tax base out of this area.

COMM. LOWRY

All of this is supposing a widening of West Silver Street, isn't it?

MR. HAGEL

I assume from just heresay that the City has some ideas.

COMM. LOWRY

What if it isn't? What if it stays in its present state? Could you still handle (inaudible word)

MR. HAGEL

I think provisions have been made by the engineer or indoor architect for up to approximately 10 feet as may be available to the City in the event they wish to widen West Silver St.

COMM. LOWRY

Suppose they don't want to widen it.

MR. HAGEL

If they don't want to widen it, I'm not sure how the traffic -

COMM. LOWRY

(Inaudible few words) at for entrances and exits?

MR. HAGEL

Oh, it could be used now without widening it but I think that -

COMM. LOWRY

One way.

MR. HAGEL

Well, I think this is. This is presently a one-way street, isn't it?

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Phil, can you comment at all on the streets.

MR. PHIL BAUER

I have something right here.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

What is it you have?

MR. REIF

Would you like to read that letter?

MR. BAUER

Go ahead. Go ahead - read it.

MR. REIF

Now I've got to find it.

MR. REIF
(Inaudible few words) some pertinent comments.

CHAIRMAN SHAW
Don't go too far Harry.

MR. REIF
"This office has the following comments to offer for the above described facility:

1. We are endeavoring to introduce a plan to widen West Silver Street to facilitate two-way traffic and this will not affect the development of the site for the proposed building. With this in mind, we do recommend that a larger turning radius be provided at the northeast corner of the site for a right turn from West Silver Street.
2. An existing monument in the proposed driveway is shown to be removed. This monument must remain and be lowered or replaced with a less conspicuous reference point, i.e. a railroad spike in the finished pavement."

MR. PHIL BAUER

Well, the present pavement, if I understand it correctly, is from our field measurements is somewhere in the neighborhood of 21 feet. We hope to widen the minimum to 24 between the new curbs. Hopefully, we're going to get another 2 feet - 26 out of it. We show 24 on this proposal and this, taking advantage of the release of the bank (inaudible word) plan of giving us a strip along the northerly property line, we are able to do the necessary right-angle relocation with Main Street Extension. The Police Department has this plan in their possession as well, and they are in favor of this type of renovation and this is not only for this development but at the request of the Postal Authorities for two-way traffic.

CHAIRMAN SHAW
Then you would have two-way traffic.

MR. BAUER
Right.

CHAIRMAN SHAW
What happens at East Main Street intersection?

MR. BAUER
The East Main Street intersection - we haven't thoroughly studied because we have got some plans for East Main Street and we hope to develop this one. This can still be two-way. It's going to be rather close at the entrance to the drug store. No - It can still be done and we found that we can do our widening there without interfering with the present

buildings.

CHAIRMAN SHAW
(Inaudible few words) about parking there.

MR. BAUER

Yes. This is what we referred to the Police Commission. No parking at all. We're going to restrict the parking in front of the now church and in front of the drug store and delicatessen.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

You will have a chance. Don't be impatient. We'll get back to you. Any other questions? George, do you have any items you want to -

MR. REIF

Yes. I want to say that in back of the (rest inaudible except for few words here and there)

CHAIRMAN SHAW

That's a State highway.

MR. BAUER

No. It is not. City street.

MR. REIF

Try to tip this package and make it add to all of the other things going on, including this improvement in the street.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Do you have any comments (inaudible-someone coughing) about that proposal?

MR. REIF

Not really. They're not opposed (rest of sentence inaudible.)

MR. BAUER

I might add that we are - in our bond - recent expansion program we are intending to resurface Main Street Extension either late this fall or early next spring.

MR. REIF

The Health Department is particularly pleased that the three houses are going to be removed because they all violate the (inaudible)

MR. HAGEL

As you probably can see, Mr. Morgan is here in the event you have any technical questions about banking which I can't answer.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Is there anyone else who might want to ask any questions of Atty. Hagel? Any questions which Ralph Morgan might answer? Is there anyone who wants to speak for this proposal?

MR. TONY MARINO

My name is Tony Marino and I represent the Marino Main Realty Corporation.

I just would like to speak in favor of this proposal because we're glad to be a part of any proposal which would improve any part of the City of Middletown and we feel that this is such a proposal. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Thank you. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak for this proposal? Is there anyone who wants to speak in opposition to this proposal? Please come forward so we can get it on tape.

MS. MARY NEDZA

I am Mary Nedza and I live on Main Street Extension, right across from the area in front of Main Street and Ridge Road. My question, first of all, is this - We do walk up West Silver Street. Are any provisions being made for a sidewalk?

MR. BAUER

Well, there are side walks-

MS. NEDZA

Oh no, there are not.

MR. BAUER

There's a pathway in the dirt - something like this but - no - hopefully, we - the sidewalk is going to be built in the overall site development like thusly from existing (inaudible 2 words) and, hopefully, we're going to be able to connect it from that point to the drug store sidewalk when we develop plans for the actual construction.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Well, the question is - Is there side walks on the - on your site plan?

MR. BAUER

On the bank site plan there is.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

All right.

MS. NEDZA

Going up West Silver Street -

About 4 people talking at once.

MR. BAUER

That's their side walk. Their proposal.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Right.

MR. BAUER

We're proposing to pick it from that point up to Maron's Drug Store.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

I think it would be easier (inaudible few words) shovel it.

MS. NEDZA

It would be nice to have one after all this time because they don't even shovel it on Main Street Ext. let alone anything on (inaudible 2 words)

CHAIRMAN SHAW

(Inaudible sentence)

MS. NEDZA

The only thing - other thing I want to make sure - that they take careful consideration of the classic situation in that area. We, at present, have a very hard time getting out of our driveway now and, as you know, there are plenty of accidents on the corner of Ridge Road and Main Street Extension and you have had accidents on West Silver Street and Main Street Extension and you have had people that have been killed, and the package store that's across the street practically across from the site where you propose to put the bank has plenty of traffic, people are always pulling in and out of there - they do not have parking facilities and if the bank goes in and I think it's a good idea but I do feel that there should be lines drawn in the streets to define the pattern of traffic so that the cars don't take over the shoulder as they go into Ridge Road especially.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Thank you very much. Very helpful comments. Does anyone else want to comment on this? Anyone at all?

COMM. KALITA

I would like to add that we on the Police Commission have requests for stop lights on Main Street Extension and, as of today, the matter has been tabled due to the future of West Silver Street becoming a two-way traffic and we'd want to see what the outcome of that is along with the Post Office traffic.

COMM. LOWRY

You mean traffic lights?

COMM. KALITA

Yes, traffic lights.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Any other comments? If not, that closes that item and closes the public hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Rogers

Eileen Rogers
Transcribing Secretary

Ralph Shaw, II, Chairman
Planning & Zoning Commission