

Ralph Shaw, II, Chairman; Eric G. Lowry, Vice-Chairman; Cos Giuffrida, Secretary; Edward J. Kalita, Dr. Christie E. McLeod, Paul P. Parisi, Sebastian J. Passanesi, Gerald Lentini, Thomas E. Lineberry and Conrad J. Tyaack.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

George L. Augustine

MEMBERS ABSENT

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

STAFF MEMBERS

Mayor Anthony S. Marino; Phil Bauer, Engineer, Public Works Department; D'Vera Cohn, Middletown Press; Lincoln Millstein, Hartford Courant; approximately 100 members of the public at large.

OTHERS

Seb Passanesi excused. Comm. Lentini sat in his place.

ACTING MEMBER

CHAIRMAN SHAW

I would like to call to order the meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Tonight we have a public hearing item. As is our custom, I will ask our Secretary to read the call of that item and after he has read it, I will explain the normal procedure that we follow with a public hearing item. When that item is over, we will go on to the regular portion of the meeting. Secretary -

SECRETARY GIUFFRIDA

THE MIDDLETOWN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION WILL HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING, MARCH 10, 1976, STARTING AT 7:30 P.M., IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, DE KOVEN DRIVE, MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT, to consider the following:

1. Application by the Housing Authority of the City of Middletown for a Special Exception to permit construction of 40 units for Elderly Housing located in the R-1 Zone at the southwest corner of South Main Street (Rt. 17) and Randolph Road.

HOUSING AUTHORITY
SPECIAL EXCEPTION
R-1 ZONE

CHAIRMAN SHAW

This notice for this meeting appeared in the Middletown Press on Saturday, February 28 and again on Saturday, March 6, thereby providing ample legal notification of the meeting thereby calling this a legal meeting. I am going to ask first that the spokesman for the proponent, the Housing Authority, speak. After that, I will ask our Director give up whatever information he has which will be pertinent to this - we open to questions by the Commission members - following that, I will ask anyone who wishes to speak in favor of this - a proposition to come forward, identify himself and speak. When those people are through, will ask anyone who is opposed to the proposal to come forward, identify himself and speak. Then we will proceed with the balance of the meeting. Who will speak for the Housing Authority on this proposal?

MR. THOMAS GIONFRIDDO

My name is Tom Gionfriddo. I am director of the Authority.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Tom, this microphone does not work very well. You'll have to speak up.

MR. GIONFRIDDO

Our Chairwoman expresses her apology for not being here tonight. She is ill at home with the flu. As most of you probably know by now, about two years ago the Housing Authority was awarded \$640,000 by the State of Connecticut, Department of Community Affairs, to construct 40 elderly units. Initially, it was the intent of the Commissioners to locate in the downtown renewal area; however, for financial reasons, we weren't able to do so. We did go out and look at a large number of alternate sites throughout the city. We probably looked at - I, along with our architect, looked at at least half a dozen - and we explored quite a number of other sites.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Excuse me Tom. When you said your architect, you reminded me of something I had not said. Commissioner Passanesi has asked to be excused from this item because he is your architect and I'll^{ask} alternate Commissioner Lentini to sit in his place. I beg your pardon. I neglected to say that and you flicked my memory. Thank you. Go ahead.

MR. GIONFRIDDO

Well, after our exhaustive search, we - and when I say we, I mean the Commission because I speak for the Commissioners at this point - we settled on the Long Hill site as being most feasible. It has some drawbacks. We have met with Inland Wetlands - we have met with DCA representatives and we feel very definitely that the drawbacks can be overcome and that it will offer a suitable site - suitable housing site - for the elderly and, for this reason, we request a special exception be granted. We don't have a site plan and we realize any exception would have to be conditioned upon future review and approval of our site plan, but we do need some type of conditional approval tonight to meet a DCA deadline.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Tom, we haven't gone through this before in formal fashion. There is a map on the easel behind you. Perhaps for the public and for the Commissioners you could point out at least what the site is like and what you have in mind.

MR. GIONFRIDDO

OK. Well, here's South Main Street. Bradlee's being located in this area. Randolph Road - this is the old Farm Hill School right here - Long Hill School, I'm sorry. This darker green area is at the area on the site is marginally inland-wetland. Where we would locate on the site, we're not sure. We have to have

ur survey - soil analysis, etc. done before we can determine and zero in on the site; also added in has been the possible future extension of Pine Street which will come down through and possibly hit the end of our site and wrap around into here which will, hopefully, relieve this bottleneck - I guess the City has a lot of problems in this area. All told, it's 5.3 acres. This section right in here is 1.3 acres. This larger area is 4 acres. Right now the Long Hill School is being used by the State of Connecticut and MARC. It's a temporary location and there's a good possibility that if we locate on this site with these 40 units, we'll make some future use of that school for probably elderly recreation activities and possibly maintenance activity. We feel that, given the financial situation as it is, this would be far and away the best alternate site for the elderly.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Well, it's not a part of the application. I realize, are you - you are planning to keep the school building as a part of the site?

MR. GIONFRIDDO

Well, right now, of course, it's up in the air. We would not impact at all on any present activities in the area. The Commissioners all feel very useful activity is being conducted in that center. We have no designs on that building until such time as they're through with it. I have spoken with some representatives from MARC, specifically Joe Carney, who's very active in it. He said they would like to find another site, but we most certainly wouldn't want to impact on them at this point; but if they ever do find another site, it's something that we - as long as it's a feasible building - we haven't gone through it and looked at it yet - but if it is feasible, we would make use of it - yes.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

OK. Any questions?

VICE-CHM. LOWRY

Would any change in the special exception affect the use of the school for the (inaudible word)? Any conflict?

MR. REIF

No.

VICE-CHM. LOWRY

You make it specially for the whole area? and the school stays there as it?

MR. REIF

Well, it is possible to create a separate lot for the school if it's going to stay there. The application does not specify whether the school is going to stay there. There's enough acreage to provide for that.

CHAIRMAN SHAW
Accomodate both.

COMM. KALITA
The only difference would be is you use the school for another purpose.

MR. REIF
Right. Now, they are going to use it in conjunction with the housing, then there's no problem.

MAYOR MARINO
For the record, let me speak on this. There are actually two distinct pieces of property as far as deeds are concerned. The four-acre piece of property is owned by the City of Middletown. The 1.3 acre, on which the school is located, is owned, according to the deed, by the Long Hill School district - whatever that's worth. However, I would like to make it very clear that, in offering this land to the Housing Authority, we are in no way requesting or asking the people who are presently using the building - and the reason I bring this up is - the question was raised today. It was a question on the part of the Board of Education about this and no way are we asking the Kuhn Center or MARC to leave until they're ready to leave from the old Long Hill School property. I want to make this very, very clear. We're not throwing them out. The Housing Authority has requested of the City that they be given the right of first refusal when that building is made available. At this time, it will be used by the Kuhn Center and the MARC people as long as they want to use it and the Housing Authority will have the opportunity, if the Council approves this, and I am sure they will - to have right of first refusal when the property is empty. The Housing Authority may require some of this property -

MR. GIONFRIDDO
This is the 1.3 acre site right here.

MAYOR MARINO
Right. This is the 1.3 acre here. This is the line. They may require some of this property in order to develop the 40 units of housing so we may, in fact, turn over - if this is all approved - the four-acre site and part of the 1.3. Again, not in any way infringing upon or impairing the operation of the Kuhn Center or the MARC Center, but they may need some of this land in order to make the 40 units go, so that possibly the 4.0 acres and part of the 1.3 may be transferred to the Housing Authority immediately and then, eventually, when the use of the school is no longer required by the Kuhn Center, they may get the whole thing if they want it.

CHAIRMAN SHAW
Fine. Any questions? George, do you have any comments to make?

MR. GEORGE REIF
No. I'll touch on the fact that the Zoning Code permits housing for the elderly in an R-1 or R-2 zone if the Planning Commission

grants the Special exception. There's one or two detailed requirements in Section 44 that deals with special exceptions and that limits the - sets the maximum density of not more than 35 persons per acre; obviously they can make that because they are planning (inaudible few words). Other than that, there seems to be no (rest of sentence inaudible). We have no comments from other departments.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

OK. OK Tom. Thank You.

MR. GIONFRIDDO

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

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?

MR. MAX CORVO

I do, Mr. Chairman. I am Max Corvo, publisher of the Bulletin. I have followed very closely some of the pros and cons relative to the site in question. As a matter of fact, only two days ago I measured the exact mileage between the site and the nearest shopping center where anybody can go. It's exactly eight-tenths of a mile going down, and eight-tenths of a mile coming back up. There is no sidewalk on which any of the elderly or senior citizens who would be located out there could safely walk from the site down to Stop & Shop or any other place where you might even consider to be an amenity. I think probably a good test of all of it would be to get the two youngest people on this Board and have them walk from Long Hill School down to Stop & Shop, pick up a five-pound - I say only a five pound - package of groceries and walk back to the site. This is not the kind of a site that lends itself clearly to the kind of use that it is intended for to put to. I think, in addition to that, the problem seems to also be that the site should be downtown where, within walking distance, they can go to the Senior Center - they can have their hot meals without being taken out to them. I think one more point can be scored as far as the downtown site is concerned and that is the fact that we're terribly worried about what we're going to put in the redevelopment area. There's nothing wrong with a senior citizen project of 40 units being located and occupying one of the parcels downtown. If there are other developers who want to put up elderly housing, there's no reason they can't go to other sites. They have Section 8 money which I requested at this time, but with the limited amount of DCA money it would, as far as I'm concerned, be a good thing for the City to put in the extra money and those people that have been battling for the downtown site are battling for a good thing for the senior citizens of Middletown.

CHAIRMAN SHAW

Thank you. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak in opposition to this proposal? Anyone at all? Hearing none, I'll declare the public hearing closed and we'll go on to the regular business of our meeting tonight.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Rogers

Eileen Rogers
Transcribing Secretary

Ralph Shaw, II, Chairman
Planning & Zoning Commission