

East Haven Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing

The East Haven Planning and Zoning Commission held a Public Hearing Wednesday, February 6, 2013, at the East Haven Community Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven, CT

Chairman Cianelli called the public hearing to order at 8:20 p.m.

Roll call: Present 5(Ruocco, Raymond, Cianelli, Colangelo, and Fiorillo)

Also present/not voting: Alternates (DeMayo and McKay)

The petition of Autumn View LLC for the project entitled "Autumn View Housing, 92, 100, 110, 118, 126, 180, 242, Strong Street" in East Haven. The applicant is going before the commission for a zone change, text change to the zoning regulations. The zone change is to change the existing R-3 and PEFD Zone to a proposed Mixed Income Housing District "MIHD". The proposal being petitioned for a zone change is 17.09 acres.

Chairman Cianelli welcomed everyone and stated he understands that there is a lot of passion on both sides of this application. Kindly, make concise statements because there is so much to digest and everyone is to be heard.

Attorney Hollister introduced his staff:

Joe Balskus, Traffic Engineer

John Torello, Architect

Attorney Hollister submitted the certified mailings receipts and verification of the posted signs on 1/25/2013.

He and staff further stated that this is an approved site of 17.09 acres approved in 2007.

This application for affordable housing used a development in Wallingford, CT as a template. The site is partially cleared with no wetlands or watercourse, access to city sewers, and public utilities. It currently is approved for 51 age restricted single family units. This project is 105 two story units, which will include 16,000 linear ft. of roadway built in 4 phases three bedrooms, two car garage, with an exclusive use area, club house, mail area, striping on road, sidewalks on one side of the road, association will be responsible for trash and snowplowing. There are two models to choose from one will be a tandem raised ranch with a side entry. The price restriction applies to the affordable units, under 8-30G. The price restrictions will apply to 32 of the 105 units based on state regulations. There will be some blasting, with dust control and stockpiles on site but absolutely no rock crushing. Part of the open space borders the golf course with the construction entrance and egress at that point where the thru traffic will follow a loop, with a chain link fence around the detention pond. The roof leaders will direct clean water to go into the detention pond so that the water will flow to golf course. There will be underground utilities with one pole and then drop underground. The resident will utilize two spaces to park within the parcel or the two

car garage and 41 on street parking spaces. The architect stated that the developer will be landscaping with indigenous large shade trees and some flowering trees shorter in stature, some evergreens around the clubhouse with dwarf elements. It's their professional opinion that there is no adverse impact off site due to this development. The traffic engineer has 24 years of experience and it is his professional opinion that this is a low generator of traffic having little impact on existing conditions. The DOT has traffic counts from October 2012, at three intersections at 7-9:00a.m. and again at 4-6:00p.m. with a traffic count of 1,800 cars per day, approximately 100 cars per hour. Strong Street is considered a collector road it is meant to carry and feed traffic to an expressway, Foxon Road. The level of service rated for Strong Street is "B," an excellent level; the site line is approximately 350 ft. from both driveways. The rate of vehicle trips is 21 coming into the site and 62 leaving the site at peak hours with the distribution coming from North High Street and South Strong Street. It is his professional opinion that there will be no significant impact.

Chairman Cianelli recognized Director Administration and Management, Town of East Haven who read a statement from the Mayor Joseph Maturo, Jr., in opposition to this development; the statement is on record in the Zoning Office.

Bill Richardson, Councilman, 136 Bennett Road stated that he believes most residents would be opposed to the new proposal while the original plan is acceptable. There is no way they will sell that amount of homes. What happens when they don't sell they'll want to revert to 55 and older. This zone change should be rejected.

Richard Anania, Town Council Chairman, stated that he grew up in this area and feels that Strong Street is now a raceway and the addition of 105 units is ridiculous. He urged the commission to vote no on a zoning change.

Malanie Senlow, 244 Grannis Street feels that the traffic situation will increase much more than indicated by the engineer and why should there be another text change.

Attorney Hollister stated that age restricted units have been over built and affordable housing is where the demand is.

John McGuire, President of the Grannis Lake Home Association, stated that the lake is a safety issue and is an attractive nuisance. We have to contact the police department repeatedly for people who come with boats and boat trailers to go fishing. Kids are attracted to the lake and with 105 units, 400 additional people, and 150 kids there will be no way to protect this lake, especially in the winter with regard to the liability; the town would have to take it over. The traffic max is 75 cars at peak hours, "No big deal," the value of our house just dropped \$150,000 for 325 homes. Three houses away from mine the owners just walked away, these are middle class people. The lake is affected by the rainfall and based on a 2-3 inch rainfall; you may think it's no problem. It goes into the storm sewer to Margaret Court with no easement and even with 3 oil separators the oil gets into the lake. The lake is under stress now and the researchers at our associations meeting recommend grass eating carp. Every month we get 15/16 bags of garbage out of the lake area, the

quality of the water is at great risk due to the increase in pesticides and he speaks as a Environmental Engineer.

Bill Zampa, Strong Street, stated that there are a lot of issues here they came before the commission to create a zone change from a R-3 to PEFD and now MIHD of 105 units on 17.09 acres: this is the fourth time they have come before the commission. We oppose this type of development for our community. The development is high density and spot zoning and does not conform to our plan of development.

John Loffredo, asked the applicants if they have observed North High Street during these peak hours with the school buses, your analysis does not include this. The cost of educating the children would be \$12,000 to per child for approximately 240 students will place the burden on the current tax payers. This development would be at the town's expense.

Lawrence Sgrignari, Angela Drive, stated that he echoes the Mayor the previous speakers' sentiments. With respect to the past 5 years going forward, historically, this site is a dump left in deplorable condition. This shows the level of irresponsibility and should be a factor in this deliberation. It does not conform to the current zoning and creating a new zone is improper spot zoning. There are traffic safety factor and public health issues; contrary to your traffic study. Last evening there was a serious accident because of the difficulty maneuverings the road. The site lines are not great; they may satisfy your traffic study if you're driving 25MPH. The grade of the road from Grannis Street to Strong Street is steep and when the roads wet or icy it's difficult to get up the road. The data that was utilized does not add up, it's flawed. The public health is affected by the density of 105 units because the infrastructure can not absorb that density. Blasting is ultra hazardous considering how close to the lake, it raises significant health issues.

Leida Pacini, stated that she agrees with the current zoning of this parcel and she also echoes the concerns of the other neighbors and does not support the zone change.

Caroline Pompano found it to be enlightening that the fair market value of these units that are 1288 sq. ft. is \$275,000 - \$325,000. While, her home is on 1.33 acres and 3,250 sq. ft. and has had three independent real estate appraisers appraise the house at \$259,000 - \$370,000. The numbers you give just don't wash; don't tell me the surrounding homes will not be affected, with these homes on postage size lots.

Fred Morro, Erico Drive is concerned with the airborne dust created by this construction and blasting.

Angela Mattie, 210 Strong Street, she abuts the property and is concerned about the blasting, and the length of construction. The traffic is a concern and this is definitely spot zoning. This specific change does not match the area and there is overwhelming opposition to this development.

Bill Maher, 16 Viking Street stated that he is a retired firefighter of 40 years and has been to Route 80 and Green Street for numerous serious car accidents because it is a dangerous

intersection. The traffic study is wrong there is a car every minute; this plan is too dense. The original plan is much better of 51 units.

Lori Pellegrino, 49 Robbie Lane stated that she has lived there for 17 years and has seen a significant amount of accidents. The houses in the area are not selling, why would anyone want a house of lower quality for the same amount of money. She is opposed to this development; the town has nothing to gain and isn't gas service in this area.

Joe Balskus, Traffic Engineer, stated that if this were a super-center, such as a Walmart we would be required to study Kimberly Avenue, North High Street and Foxon Road, but we are not required. They did a speed count at the curve at 32 MPH, the traffic data may be confusing to the public but the DOT says that there have been 15 accidents with no fatalities; all property damage. If there is a problem at this intersection then it should be enforced by the police.

David Nafis, Site Engineer, stated that drainage is captured by the first inch of rain in the detention pond, all water less the 2 inches. The water quality is at 80% designed to meet DEEP criteria, which far exceeds their requirement.

John McGuire stated we are concerned with the solids resulting in the build-up of nitrogen and phosphorus; this increases the growth of weeds and traps contaminants. You can not rely on the association to dredge the detention basin.

Michele Scasino, 75 Erico stated, there are 13 children in my neighborhood and we have four school buses daily. How many buses would there be with 105 more homes?

John Loffredo pointed out that they would need a drainage easement to go through private property.

Chairman Cianelli thanked everyone and the public hearing portion is concluded.

Attorney Hollister asked if this starts the 35-day period.

Attorney Zullo indicated, "yes".

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta A. DeLuca
Commission Clerk