

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: 81-87 Woolsey Street, 362-374 Grand Avenue. Special Exceptions to allow for transition parking, to permit 57 off-street parking spaces where 64 are required, and Coastal Site Plan Review. Zone: RM-2/BA-1. Owner/Applicant: Fair Haven Community Health Clinic Inc. (22-49-CAM, 22-50-S).

REPORT: 1613-08
ADVICE: Special Exception: Approve
Coastal Site Plan: Approve

PRINCIPAL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

In accordance with Section 63(d)(6) of the Zoning Ordinance, **“In the following types of special exception cases, which involve more than conventional questions of use and may have a significant impact on surrounding areas and a substantial relationship to the comprehensive plan of the city, the Board of Zoning Appeals shall, following its hearing, refer the case including all exhibits to the City Plan Commission, which shall submit an advisory report, on such factors as it may deem relevant, to the Board within 30 days after receiving all records and documents in the case. This report of the City Plan Commission shall be taken into account in the decision of the Board.”**

Accordingly, Section 63(d)(6)(f) of the zoning ordinance requires the Planning Commission’s recommendation regarding **“Transition parking in residence districts: subsection 13(b)(3)c. and regulations of other residence districts”** and **“Adjustments for parking and loading requirements: subsections 29(c); 29(h)(2); 29(i); 45(a)(6)b.; 45(a)(7) of the Zoning Ordinance”**

BACKGROUND

The applicant operates Fair Haven Community Health Care with the project consisting of seven adjacent parcels: 362, 372, and 374 Grand Avenue and 81, 83, 85, and 87 Woolsey Street. The purpose of this proposal is to resolve parking inadequacies the FHCHC has had at the site by demolishing the structures at 83, 85, and 87 Woolsey to expand the parking area to provide for 57 off-street parking spaces with upgrades to parking circulation, lighting, stormwater management and landscaping where 47 spaces are currently provided. The subject property will be improved with a 31,690sf building which will be utilized as the largest clinic site for FHCHC with hours of operation being Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8am to 5pm and Tuesday, Thursday from 8am to 7pm.

In accordance with Section 29(i) of the Zoning Ordinance, **“The Board of Zoning Appeals shall have the power to lessen the requirements of this ordinance as to the number of parking spaces required and/or increase the maximum allowable walking distance to such parking spaces, but only upon a finding that either particular circumstance or mitigative measures qualify such action.”** Consequently, the applicant seeks a special exception in the RM-2/BA Zone.

Accordingly, the Board of Zoning Appeals must take into consideration the Planning Commission’s advisory report as part of the Board of Zoning Appeals decision. The Board of Zoning Appeals seeks guidance as to:

- Whether the special exception for off-street parking will have a significant impact on the surrounding area; and

- Whether the request for special exception is aligned with City's Comprehensive Plan.

THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS JULY 12, 2022 PUBLIC HEARING

Attorney Meghan Miles (and team) presented the application stating that the proposal is in harmony with the Special Exception considerations for approval in that the current parking layout is confusing and inefficient with respect to circulation. The proposal seeks to rectify the current issues while providing more easily accessible parking while providing improvements with respect to stormwater management, lighting, and landscaping. The improvements will also see a decrease in the number of on-street parking spaces currently being utilized by those visiting the center. The FHCHC will continue to allow people in the surrounding neighborhood to utilize the parking area during hours in which the center is closed.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

Special Exception Considerations

- Nature of the Proposed Site: As mentioned above, the site consists of 7 parcels which have been underutilized and of poor quality. The proposal seeks to increase off-street parking while providing overall site improvements.
- Resulting Traffic Patterns: The proposal will increase ease of access to the center with no adverse impact to the adjacent neighborhood. The additional off-street parking will reduce the current high level of on-street parking used by patients and the number of curb cuts being reduced from 4 to 1. The advisory report provided by the Traffic Transportation and Parking department recommends approval.
- Nature of the Surrounding Area: The surrounding properties are largely residential, low-income properties that heavily relies on the center for healthcare.
- The Comprehensive Plan: The application is in harmony with the New Haven Vision 2025 plan which encourages the use of residentially zoned parcels for parking to serve adjacent commercial and institutional uses. The proposal is also consistent with the comprehensive plan by eliminating substandard and blighted housing stock and connecting residents to healthcare institutions.

Additional Considerations for Transition Parking

- The property abuts directly on the lots occupied by the use or uses which such parking is connected, for at least 75 feet.
- No structures are erected or used for parking of automobiles on more than one level; no automobile sales, service, dead storage, or other such commercial enterprise is conducted upon such property; and no signs are erected thereon except signs complying with section 27 which are necessary to state the condition of use and to regulate traffic and parking.
- The area of the property used for parking is suitably paved and drained with significant lighting and landscaping improvements and is arranged so that the flow of automobiles to and from streets will cause minimum interference with vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- The surrounding residential areas are adequately protected by the location of entrances are not within 20 feet of any other residentially zoned property. The area will be suitably landscaped, between the paved parking area and all street lines in residence districts with a buffer strip of land at least five feet in width, located on such property between the paved parking area and all residentially-zoned land on which such property abuts directly, and the arrangement of artificial lighting is used for the parking area so that all direct rays fall entirely within the paved parking area or within areas used for the center.

COASTAL SITE PLAN REVIEW

The Board's Coastal Site Plan Review, in accordance with Section 55C of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance shall consider the characteristics of the site, including location and condition of any coastal resources; shall consider the

potential effects, both beneficial and adverse, of the proposed activity on coastal resources and future water-dependent development opportunities; follow the goals and policies of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act, as amended, and identify conflicts between the proposed use and any goal or policy of the Act.

Characteristics and Condition of Coastal Resources at or Adjacent to the site:

Coastal Flood Hazard Area (Flood Zone): The property is within Flood Zone X Areas determined to be areas of minimal flood hazard. Map# 09009C0442J (July 8, 2013).

Nearshore Waters: The site is approximately 940ft to the west of the Mill River.

Shorelands: The site is within the coastal boundary on a previously developed non-waterfront or waterfront-adjacent site.

Coastal Program Criteria	Comments
1. Potential adverse impacts on coastal resources and mitigation of such impacts	None
2. Potential beneficial impacts	The project plans to improve the quality and reduce the discharge rate of runoff from the site to the West River which would result in a reduction in runoff to combined sewers in Grand Avenue and Woolsey Street
3. Identify any conflicts between the proposed activity and any goal or policy in the §22a-92, C.G.S. (CCMA)	None
4. Will the project preclude development of water dependent uses on or adjacent to this site in the future?	Not waterfront
5. Have efforts been made to preserve opportunities for future water-dependent development?	Not waterfront
6. Is public access provided to the adjacent waterbody or watercourse?	Not waterfront
7. Does this project include a shoreline flood and erosion control structure (i.e. breakwater, bulkhead, groin, jetty, revetment, riprap, seawall, placement of barriers to the flow of flood waters or movement of sediment along the shoreline)?	No
8. Does this project include work below the Coastal Jurisdiction Line (i.e. location of topographical elevation of the highest predictable tide from 1983 to 2001)? New Haven CJL elevation is 4.6'.	No

Sec. 60 Stormwater Management Plan:

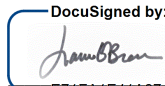
The applicant submitted a Stormwater Management Plan as part of this application. This plan indicates that the proposal will result in an increase to the impervious surface on the 1.07-acre property. Filters will be provided in the existing and proposed drainage inlets on site and in any existing catch basins in the streets adjacent to the site

along with a silt fence being installed along the downslope of the permitter of the property during construction. Post-construction the majority of the roof drainage will be directed to on-site stormwater management systems to the rear of the site while small roof areas that appear to discharge to Grand Avenue will be managed by small retention/infiltration systems in landscaped areas in the front of the building. There will be six on-site catch basins with runoff from the parking lot being routed through two hydrodynamic separators.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on considerations discussed above, the Commission views the Special Exception is essentially in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the ordinance, the City’s Comprehensive Plan and that the public health, safety, and general welfare will be served based on the location of this site and the surrounding infrastructure to support the granting of the special exception. Accordingly, the Commission recommends approval.

ADOPTED: July 20, 2022
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST:  September 1, 2022 | 3:26
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Laura E. Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department