LITCHFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
June 6, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Annex, 80 Doyle Rd. Bantam
In Person Meeting

Call to order – Vice Chairman Peter Losee called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
Members present - Peter Dauten, Jordan Richards, John Cox, Stephen Simonin
Recused – Chairman Carol Bramley, Burke Gibney
Absent - Abby Conroy, Guy Cunningham
Appointment of alternates - Norm Sauer
Commissioners requests- none

PUBLIC HEARINGS

15 West St. – Lex Litchfield – Special Exception Boutique Hotel. Legal notice read into minutes. Peter Alter and Megan Hope with Alter & Pearson gave a 1 hour presentation. Required legal notices were submitted. 15 green cards were returned. 2 cards were not returned. P. Dauten went thru list. Applicant asked that the Hearing and the Application Reception be combined in the interest of time and the information presented will be repetitive. Application approved in December 2021 for an amendment to Zoning regulations to permit a Boutique Hotel use in the BH Zone. HDC gave design approval January 2022. Zoning board of appeals approved variances. Worked closely with CT state Historic Preservation office of CT to gain SHPO approval. National Parks Service (NPS) gave conditional approval. Complete binders of the Proposed Site Plan Documents were provided and are available in the land use office.

Lexington Partners Marty Kenny, Patrick Kenny were introduced. History of company and philosophy were presented. Salt Hotels provide operations management & their projects. Ernest Nepomuceno, Tecton Architect discussed the conditions of building and Historic Preservation process. Courthouse being on the Historic Buildings Registry must meet guidelines while meeting town’s regulations. SHPO is requiring the Courtroom space be preserved. Design was shifted to create the Café space. Elevator bulkhead was reduced. Important architectural features will be preserved and reused. Molding, banisters, window sashes, judges bench. Fireplaces will be refurbished. Front door ceremonial only. New addition must be separate and distinct from original building. SHPO & National Parks Service (NPS) provide tax credits if guidelines followed. Met with SHPO 3/2021 work together and submitted a letter of recognition to NPS Geoff Fitzgerald,Bohler Engineer/Planner. Noted site constraints and electrical easements and retaining wall. Proposing to remove retaining wall and then create the entrance and access to parking lot. Area to be regraded and elevator installed to meet ADA requirements. Underground oil tanks will be removed. Letter of approval from WPCA with conditions was read into the minutes. Coordinating with town engineer for storm drainage system. Matt Skelly Engineer, Traffic Operations Engineer, Fuss & O'Neill, studied parking, circulation 179 parking spaces provided. Parking count took place on Friday May 13th between 3-9 pm on average
110 parking spaces were occupied. At peak, 7-8pm 122 spaces were occupied. Letter from Raz Alexe Town Engineer read into the minutes in support of the study. Showed different views of courthouse to show impact. Lower level plan will house lobby no boiler, kitchen and fitness room Second floor café, third level will house guest rooms. White wash on proposed section to blend with original building. Lighting is shielded never see fixture of light but gives clean view. Boutique hotel to attract high level guests. Roof top will hold 50 people max is 1500 square ft, intended to be used by guests only. Serving beverages and light snacks. Not a full scale entertainment venue. Restaurant open to public. Salt staffs hotel and restaurant and maintains operations. Rooftop cafe must satisfy ADA requirements.

Jenni Loughman, Chief of Staff at Salt Hotels. Spoke to their approach to work with and become part of the community. Offering Salt school open to all, as an opportunity to learn about the industry as an investment in the community.

Peter Alter closed his presentation stating he believes all POCAD requirements have been meet and the project will bring the building back onto the tax rolls, provide jobs, and will preserve an iconic building. Suggests it is a suitable use for the property and will become an economic driver.

P. Dauten asked if 20 parking spaces have been promised to the project and if not, will it end the project. P. Alter answered, Selectmen are working with the Town Attorney to see if spaces can be designated. Salt needs to be satisfied with parking arrangement. P. Dauten questioned deliveries. P. Losee questioned traffic study times, traffic flow, parking availability. Clarification of traffic study and elevation were provided. J. Cox questioned proposed railing. Railing to be glass 42” high with lighting to meet ADA-NPS requirements. N. Sauer questioned employees parking at St. Anthony’s. M. Kenny, Lexington Partners explained an agreement was reached with the Archdiocese giving permission for employees to park in Church lot. 12-15 employees will be on site at any given time. N. Sauer asked restaurant hours of operation? Can hold small events of 49-50 people. Acoustic’s on rooftop will not amplified music. S. Simonin asked about lighting. Food served by dumbwaiter to 2nd floor restaurant. Elevator is electric traction and must be enclosed in shaft on outside of building in the new addition.

Public comment – Following people spoke in favor of project. Doyle Finan, Richard Quay, Michael Peloquin, John Jakmetz, Jeff Russak, Lois Shafer, Victoria Sansing, Art Schmidt, Cleve Fussenich. Richard Quay, GLPT provided a list of 104 signatures of people who are in favor of the project. Cleve Fussenich, EDC April meeting unanimously approved project. 58 letters in favor of the project and one against and are on file in the Land Use office. John Langer submitted letter and spoke against project. Wilma Joas spoke against the project.

At 9:16 pm commission called for a 5 min recess, returned at 9:24pm. P. Losee read names of people who signed the petition and the intent into the minutes. Petition and list of names on file with the Land Use office. Dr. Tobin, Steven Byrne asked if the Proposed Site Plan Documents contained materials needed to close hearing?

J. Cox moved to close the public hearing at 9:45pm, P. Dauten seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
P. Dauten moved to amend the agenda to add 15 West Street for discussion at 9:51pm, N. Sauer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

P. Losee read Proposed Site Plan Documents sheet title index into the minutes and is on file in Land Use record.

J. Richards expected more opposition he approves. S. Simonin good project important building to preserve. J. Cox impressed, approves. N. Sauer impressed with research and care provided taken into consideration the P&Z concerns, approval given. P. Dauten in favor of project, hope neighbors are not disturbed by sound or lighting. P. Losee felt questions answered, agrees project meets regulations.

P. Dauten moved to approve 15 West Street – Lex Litchfield at 9:55pm, J. Cox seconded and the meeting passed unanimously.

**APPLICATION**

16 South St. – Lex Litchfield – Site plan for northwest portion of parking area to be regraded and striped. Refer to C-301 Site Layout Plan in Proposed Site Plan Documents for the parking plan Revised 5-25-22.

P. Dauten motion to approve 16 South St. Lex Litchfield, S. Simonin seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes May 16, 2022.** Tabled till June 20, 2022

**Old Business:** none

**New Business:** none

**Correspondence** letter from Cicchetti, Tansley & McGrath read into the minutes. Neighbors are asking for a cease and desist. Original application was denied. Options are to go to court and get an injunction to stop him. Steve Byrne stated what Hubbell is doing is not permitted. Commission will direct Attorney Byrne to deliver a letter to Hubbell reaffirming event is not permitted. J. Cox moved to authorize $250.00 in fees to Attorney Byrne to compose and deliver letter, N. Sauer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

*Any new item added to the agenda requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Commission. Taking up any item after 11PM requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Commission*

**Adjournment** - P. Dauten moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 pm, N. Sauer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Peter Losee, Vice Chairman

06/08/2022