

1 TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

2
3 TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

4 January 13, 2015, 6:40 p.m.,

5 Legislative Chambers

6
7 Re: Application On Behalf of DHR North Main
8 Street, LLC ("DHR"), Contract Purchaser and
9 Intended Developer, and Sandra G. Mitchell
10 and Antoinette F. Henning, Co-owners of 747
11 North Main Street to Construct a Multi-family
12 Development Consisting of 10 Townhome Units
13 Within 2 New Buildings, and Upgrade the
14 Existing 12-unit Apartment Structure, All
15 with Attendant Parking, Landscaping, Lighting
16 and Signage at 747 North Main Street

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1 A p p e a r a n c e s:

2 Town Council Members Present:

3 MAYOR SCOTT SLIFKA

4 CHRIS BARNES

5 DENISE HALL

6 LEON DAVIDOFF

7 CLARE KINDALL

8 SHARI CANTOR

9

10 Alternates

11 JOSEPH STAFFORD

12 JAMES NEEDHAM

13

14 RONALD VAN WINKLE

15 Town Manager

16

17 JOSEPH A. O'BRIEN, ESQ.

18 Corporation Counsel

19

20 PATRICK ALAIR, ESQ.

21 Deputy Corporation Counsel

22

23 ESSIE S. LABROT,

24 Town Clerk

25

1 A p p e a r a n c e s (Cont'd.):

2 For the Applicant:

3 ALTER & PEARSON, LLC

4 701 Hebron Avenue

5 Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033

6 By: ROBIN PEARSON, ESQ.

7

8 KEVIN SOLLI, Engineer

9 Solli Engineering, LLC

10

11 JACK KEMPER, Architect

12 Kemper Associates Architects, LLC

13

14 DIAN BARNES, Landscape Architect

15 Dian Barnes Landscape Design, LLC

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1 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay.
2 We're going to call the 6:30 public hearing
3 to order. This is an application On behalf
4 of DHR North Main Street, LLC, known as, DHR,
5 contact -- Contract Purchaser and Intended
6 Developer, and Sandra G. Mitchell and
7 Antoinette F. Henning, co-owners of 747 North
8 Main Street to Construct a Multi-Family
9 Development Consisting of 10 Townhome Units
10 Within 2 New Buildings, and Upgrade the
11 Existing 12-unit Apartment Structure, all
12 With Attendant Parking, Landscaping, Lighting
13 and Signage at 747 North Main Street.

14 This application seeks to
15 rezone all of 747 North Main Street from the
16 current R-13 and RM-3 designation to RM-2,
17 and then designate the rezoned area a special
18 development district in order to proceed.

19 A roll call please,
20 Ms. Labrot.

21 COUNCILOR CANTOR: Mr. Barnes.

22 COUNCILOR BARNES: Present.

23 MS. LABROT: Ms. Cantor.

24 COUNCILOR CANTOR: Here.

25 MS. LABROT: Mr. Captain is

1 absent. We have Mr. Stafford.

2 COUNCIL ALT. STAFFORD: Here.

3 MS. LABROT: Ms. Casperson.

4 COUNCILOR CASPERSON: Here.

5 MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff.

6 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.

7 MS. LABROT: Mr. Doar is

8 absent. We have Mr. Needham.

9 COUNCIL ALT. NEEDHAM: Here.

10 MS. LABROT: Ms. Hall.

11 COUNCILOR HALL: Here.

12 MS. LABROT: Ms. Kindall.

13 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Here.

14 MS. LABROT: And Mr. Slifka.

15 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Here.

16 Thank you, Ms. Labrot.

17 We will begin with a

18 presentation from the Applicants.

19 Ms. Pearson, welcome.

20 MS. PEARSON: Good evening,

21 Mr. Mayor and members of the Town Council.

22 One would think I'd know by

23 now. Happy New Year to you all.

24 My name is Robin Pearson. I'm

25 an attorney with the law firm of Alter &

1 Pearson in Glastonbury, Connecticut. I'm
2 pleased to be here this evening on behalf of
3 the applicant, DHR North Main Street, LLC, as
4 noted in the notice of the meeting, the
5 contract purchaser, and as I'll explain
6 further on in the presentation through David
7 Raiser, the member of that organization, one
8 who's has been very involved in this
9 particular site for many years.

10 We are going to use a
11 PowerPoint presentation to make this more
12 interesting for you and for the audience.
13 And I have already provided the Clerk with
14 the signed affidavit attesting to the posting
15 at the property for seven days prior to the
16 beginning of this public hearing.

17 Before we begin -- and can you
18 go to the first cover page? Kevin Solli is
19 going to be my assistant and getting us
20 through this PowerPoint.

21 And I'd like to introduce the
22 applicant's team, though they are hiding
23 behind the screen, but let me tell you who
24 they are. David Raiser, as I mentioned, is
25 the member DHR North Main Street, LLC. He is

1 the intended developer, the applicant through
2 his LLC and the contract purchaser for the
3 property.

4 He is a long-time resident of
5 West Hartford. He has been here for over 44
6 years. He grew up in West Hartford. His
7 children have gone through the Hall and KP
8 and Norfeldt Schools, and the family
9 currently resides at 10 Northcliff Drive in
10 West Hartford.

11 With me this evening is Kevin
12 Solli, Solli Engineering, LLC, located in
13 Monroe, Connecticut. They are the consulting
14 engineering firm on this proposal.

15 Jack Kemper, Kemper
16 Associates, is the architect. Jack's offices
17 are in Farmington, Connecticut. And I know
18 you are familiar with Jack for his work on
19 other projects, at least the most recent one
20 on North Main Street that has come before the
21 Council.

22 Our landscape consultant is
23 Dian Barnes. She is also located in
24 Farmington and I do believe has also
25 presented before the Town Council previously.

1 Our order of presentation
2 tonight will go as follows: I'm going to
3 give you an overview of the site, the
4 location of the site, the zoning in the area
5 and general evolution of the design proposal.
6 I'll be followed by Kevin Solli, our engineer
7 who will describe the existing site
8 conditions, the proposed development plan
9 including utilities, drainage, trash
10 management, lighting, signage and the
11 standards for which relief is sought from the
12 zoning regulations by utilization of the
13 special development district vehicle.

14 Jack Kemper will then go
15 through the architectural details and aspects
16 of the design and, in particular, would like
17 him to comment on the changes that have been
18 made. As we have gone through the review of
19 this application with DRAC, and we had a
20 number of study sessions with DRAC to get to
21 the point of the design as you will see it
22 this evening.

23 Dian Barnes will then present
24 the landscaping plan. It is a particularly
25 extensive plan proposed for this site, and

1 she will go through for you some of her
2 considerations in preparing that plan and
3 what was done given the proximity of this
4 site to single-family neighborhoods.

5 I'd like to conclude with a
6 brief overview of outreach, staff and agency
7 reviews on this application. I have to touch
8 on the findings that you need to make with
9 regard to the S -- special development
10 district regulations. And we can talk
11 briefly about potential conditions for
12 approval in the hopes that you will see your
13 way to approving this application.

14 So to begin, I'd like to
15 locate the property for you. And we're going
16 to go to an aerial view that outlines the
17 property in red. This is a single lot. If
18 approved it would be subdivided. That
19 subdivision cannot proceed unless the special
20 development district is approved as well as
21 the underlying change of zone from RM-3 and
22 R-13 and RM-2 and then to special development
23 district.

24 The total area of the property
25 as well as the area to be rezoned for this

1 request to RM-2, is 63,825 square feet, or
2 1.465 acres. On the existing site are two
3 structures. I'd like to show those right
4 now.

5 There's an existing 12-unit
6 apartment building and it's two stories.
7 It's brick. That's a portion of it. That's
8 the view, I believe, facing North Main
9 Street. The building extends further beyond
10 what you see right there. And the garage in
11 the back is a one-story brick garage housing
12 11 vehicles. I'd like to go back to the
13 aerial view. The site buffers commercial
14 sites and also is really a transition
15 location with regard to the commercial sites
16 and the residential zones beyond.

17 If we look at this particular
18 piece of property -- is there another one
19 that's got a closer view of the area --

20 MR. SOLLI: Sure.

21 MS. PEARSON: -- or the
22 properties?

23 MR. SOLLI: I can jump ahead.

24 MS. PEARSON: Okay. Let's do
25 that. This is pretty good.

1 If you look across the street
2 to the east, the property is outlined in
3 yellow, you will see Crossroads Plaza, which
4 houses the ShopRite --

5 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Big Y.

6 MS. PEARSON: -- shopping --
7 Big Y. That's right. Big Y supermarket.
8 There's a gas station on the corner down
9 there. We recently approved changes to the
10 Webster Bank up in the northwest corner, and
11 there's continuing commercial development
12 beyond that.

13 To the North of the property
14 it is all zoned R-13. And if you look at our
15 site, it's the RM-3 site in yellow right
16 there outlined in red. All to the north is
17 R-13, and that is true to the west, but note
18 that our particular site stands as a
19 transition between the Big Y shopping center
20 to the south -- no, I'm sorry, to the east,
21 and the R-13 single-family neighborhoods to
22 the West. It also stands as a buffer and a
23 transition zone from the Staples shopping
24 center to the south, and the residential
25 zones to the north.

1 Those residential properties
2 behind our site, you'll note Farmstead Lane
3 has a number of properties, the rears of
4 which of those properties abut our westerly
5 boundary. And the same is true for Overhill
6 Road.

7 If you look to the south, I've
8 already mentioned that particular commercial
9 center houses Staples, McDonald's, Panera
10 Bread, and I explained how this property
11 stands as a buffer for the neighborhood to
12 the north.

13 So in this area you clearly
14 have commercial uses and zoning on the four
15 corners that constitute Bishops Corner. In
16 addition to the two corners that we've
17 discussed you have the Edens development
18 where Whole Foods Market is, Marshalls on
19 this side, and on the other side strong
20 commercial development with --

21 MR. SOLLI: Marshalls.

22 MS. PEARSON: No across the
23 street is --

24 MR. SOLLI: This is Whole
25 Foods. This is Marshalls, and Walmart.

1 MS. PEARSON: Okay. Whole
2 foods.

3 This zoning map is interesting
4 because it also shows a pattern of zoning in
5 this area which we think would be important
6 in your consideration of this application. I
7 mentioned the multifamily acts as a
8 transitional zone and also as a buffer from
9 the commercial to the single-family
10 neighborhoods.

11 You'll note our site is zoned
12 RM-2 currently with a small R-13 border. You
13 have RM-2 further to the north beyond the
14 Big Y center. Going towards the east, you
15 have RM-1 which is a special development
16 district and currently is the home of
17 Conover's development, multifamily
18 development in that location.

19 If you look -- the town's map
20 is not current as to what has happened
21 recently. The planner provided this to us
22 today. This shows that the Metro development
23 has also been approved, and so property that
24 was shown on the prior map as RM-3 -- Kevin
25 is pointing it out to you right now -- is now

1 an underlying RM-1 zone also.

2 RM-1 is a more intensive zone
3 than the RM-2 multifamily that we are looking
4 to have our site zoned to. So you already
5 have a pattern with high-intensity
6 residential multifamily uses on one of these
7 corners. And as I mentioned, the RM-2 zone
8 to which we are seeking approval is less
9 dense than one -- zoning in that area that's
10 already been established.

11 So we believe this property
12 proposal is very conducive to the type of
13 zoning that's already in place in the area.
14 It fits in with a pattern of development that
15 makes sense around Bishops Corner. And as
16 will be noted as we go through the
17 presentation, what we're proposing for
18 development under a special development
19 district is only two units greater in density
20 than what would be allowed under the existing
21 RM-3 zone for the site.

22 So even though we're
23 requesting a zone that goes to a more dense
24 RM-2 zoning, 2,000 square feet per unit, we
25 are not seeking to maximize the development

1 of the site to the extent that would be
2 allowed under a RM-2 zone. So again, our
3 development, as proposed, is only two units
4 greater than what would be allowed under
5 existing zoning on the site.

6 I'd like to -- I'm going to go
7 back to that zoning map. I'd like to point
8 out that the site is in two zones. It is
9 RM-3 currently with a 25-foot wide strip
10 along the northern and western boundary of
11 the site that is zoned R-13, retained the
12 zoning of the area of the rest of the
13 single-family development behind it.

14 We missed this in our original
15 submittal. We referred to the town's zoning
16 map, the official map. This is on a smaller
17 scale, so insignificant it did not readily
18 show up to us. And it wasn't until we were
19 many weeks, in fact, a number of months into
20 the process that we realized that we had a
21 split-zone site, and that we would have to go
22 back and re-notice the application to make
23 sure everyone understood that the request to
24 change was not from RM-3, which we originally
25 applied for, to R-2, but rather, R-13 and

1 RM-3 to RM-2.

2 Since per your special act
3 charter there are limited -- there's a
4 limited time in which you can schedule a
5 public hearing. Unlike any other application
6 in accordance with state statute, it's not
7 possible to re-notice and extend the time in
8 which you open a public hearing. So we
9 immediately withdrew and resubmitted the
10 application making the correction with regard
11 to the zoning, the split-zone -- split-zone
12 zoning for the site. And that is why the
13 last public hearing previously scheduled
14 was -- was rescinded and the application was
15 withdrawn and resubmitted.

16 The fact that there is a split
17 zone is sort of interesting for this piece of
18 property. As you'll notice in this zoning
19 depiction of the area, certainly the more
20 intense multifamily zones, the RM-1 zones
21 which -- can you just point out where they
22 are? -- the RM-1 zones are all also special
23 development districts. The RM-2 zone to the
24 north of the Big Y center is also a special
25 development district.

1 Our RM-3 zone has no such as
2 SDD imposed on it, which was actually a point
3 of discussion almost 55 years ago when this
4 application for a rezoning to establish the
5 original RM-3 zoning came before the Town
6 Council.

7 We believe that using a
8 special development overlay zone to achieve
9 proper buffering, which was the purpose of
10 installing that R-13 25-foot wide strip many,
11 many years ago, is better achieved through
12 utilization of the special development
13 district vehicle. That is because -- and the
14 strip was put into place to provide a buffer
15 from what was then a proposed special -- I'm
16 sorry, an apartment zoning on that site. But
17 we believe that using an SDD allows you much
18 more protection and ability to -- to design a
19 site so that the neighbors are protected,
20 than just straight R-13 single-family zone.

21 Another reason we are
22 proposing to not keep that R-13 buffer along
23 the edge of the property, but instead to
24 rezone the entire site to RM-2, and then
25 impose a special development district, is

1 because the Town has a strong policy against
2 split zones for sites. You look to see
3 zoning lines follow property lines whenever
4 possible.

5 So how did it get to the point
6 where there was that R-13 strip imposed so
7 many, years ago? We look back into the
8 history of the site. Back in 1959 Mr. Grella
9 owned this property and he approached the
10 Town Council to rezone it to -- from the
11 single-family zoning then, which was AA, to a
12 zone called G, which is a garden-apartment
13 zone. He wanted to be able to build 20 units
14 on the site in two buildings. The neighbors
15 did not appreciate that particular proposal.
16 The Town Plan and Zoning Commission in
17 considering the application suggested that
18 there be that buffer put into place, which I
19 believe one of the neighbors had requested in
20 proceedings before that the TP and Z, a
21 25-foot setback to be able to give some
22 protection to the neighbors, and the Town
23 Council adopted that in approving the zone
24 change to garden apartments. That was over
25 the protests of Mr. Grella back then, but

1 they did do it.

2 It's interesting to note
3 that -- that a neighbor at that time actually
4 asked the Town Council, and was specifically
5 why a Section 15 zoning designation was not
6 applied in conjunction with the requested
7 change to garden apartments back then.
8 Section 15, some of you may recall, is the
9 early iteration of your special development
10 district regulations.

11 The Town Planner, then a
12 Mr. Brown, in response to a question the
13 neighbor asked, so why wasn't a Section 15
14 designation used? And does that mean if you
15 grant this zone change that there will be
16 absolutely no restrictions in terms of what
17 can develop there? The Town Planner
18 Mr. Brown said, That is true, there would be
19 no restrictions.

20 Nonetheless the applicant did
21 not decide to use the Section 15 vehicle,
22 requested the straight zone change and that
23 is why the only thing the Council could do at
24 that point to provide the protection was to
25 adopt the suggestion of the TP and Z and

1 limit the zone change to what is now the RM-3
2 portion of the site.

3 But again, even back then so
4 many years ago it was recognized that
5 utilization of a special development
6 district, even one, you know, at that time
7 which was quite different from what you have
8 today, might perhaps have changed things for
9 Mr. Grella, provided the protections that the
10 neighbors needed by requiring a plan to be
11 adopted that respected their setbacks and
12 provided sufficient buffering and perhaps
13 Mr. Grella would have secured the zone change
14 back then.

15 As it turned out, he did not
16 build the second thing. We know there was a
17 second building proposed both in the
18 testimony from the record and also by
19 reference to a map that was approved as part
20 of an application to the ZBA in 1961.
21 Instead, he built one of those buildings and
22 the 11-car garage, and the other side of the
23 site remained vacant for all these years, or
24 remained undeveloped.

25 Before getting to the

1 specifics of the development, I'd like to
2 tell you a little bit about Mr. Raiser's
3 affiliation with the site and with the Grella
4 family. I said before that he was a
5 long-time resident over 44 years, but he's
6 also had a longtime relationship with this
7 property. He cares very much about this
8 property. He's always liked it, and he's
9 always worked with the Gellers to make the
10 property as -- as good a development as it
11 could be under -- under their ownership.

12 He -- as he has relayed to me,
13 he was friends with the current owner's
14 mother. The current owners are Tony Henning
15 and Sandra Mitchell. He met Mrs. Geller,
16 their mother --

17 MR. SOLLI: Grella.

18 MS. PEARSON: Grella, I'm
19 sorry -- before she passed away. He met her
20 over 13 years ago. He -- and they both
21 became friends. He became a sounding board
22 for her over those years with regard to
23 questions about property management,
24 development, what contractors she might want
25 to use because he had some familiarity with

1 that in maintaining the property. Obviously
2 she had taken over for Mr. Grella after he
3 died. So for those 13 years he would answer
4 those kinds of questions for her and help her
5 as -- on as many of those issues as he could,
6 particularly with regard as to how she should
7 manage the site.

8 She did -- he did let her know
9 that he was interested in purchasing the
10 property, but she said, no. Much like her
11 husband, she wanted to hold onto it and keep
12 it in the family. So that was that. He
13 understood that, that she wanted to hold onto
14 it. Nonetheless, he helped her with any
15 advice if she needed it over the years.

16 For the past seven years after
17 she died, he has continued that relationship
18 with the sisters. He's helped them to manage
19 the property. For the first two years after
20 her death, he actually managed it during a
21 transition as the sisters lived out of state.
22 That work involved screening tenants,
23 rentals, hiring contractors, negotiating with
24 vendors, et cetera, and working on tenant
25 relations, and he did all of that as a

1 friend.

2 He then did make a
3 recommendation to them for the property
4 management company White & Katzman, and they
5 hired them. And White & Katzman took over
6 management of the property, but he maintained
7 relationship with the sisters and continued
8 to help them whenever possible.

9 However, about a year ago,
10 they decided not to renew that contract, and
11 they came back to David and asked him to take
12 over management officially as, you know, a
13 contractor, and he did do that. He -- he
14 again -- they had said during all this time
15 that they wanted to continue owning the
16 property, but he did let them know that he
17 thought it would be a great property to own
18 and fix up some day. And for all those 13
19 years, you know, he worked with the mother
20 and then the sisters to get to this point.

21 So as I said, about a year ago
22 they called and said, okay. Let's -- let's
23 talk. They hired him as the manager of the
24 property and they entered into a contract
25 with him to purchase the property on the

1 assumption that it could be rezoned for this
2 particular use, really carrying out the
3 original plan of Mr. Grella 55 years ago by,
4 let's see, at that time it was a proposal for
5 20 units. This is for 22 total units.

6 As soon as he had formalized
7 his relationship on a more professional level
8 with the Grella sisters, he begin to reach
9 out to the neighborhood. When he would drive
10 by the property, as he did often, and if he
11 saw neighbors outside he would stop the car,
12 approached them, introduce himself, let them
13 know who he was and try to build up a good
14 relationship with them and establish him as
15 someone that they could talk to if they had
16 any issues also.

17 He began working with staff
18 and with the Design Review Commission. It's
19 been going on for months prior to the actual
20 submission earlier this year. The initial
21 design that he proposed and came into the
22 town staff and started working with proposed
23 14 units on the other side of the site.
24 Staff and DRAC thought that maybe 12 might
25 make more sense.

1 Actually, they went down from
2 14 to 12 and the current design is for ten
3 more units on the other side of the site in
4 two buildings. But this was an evolving
5 process, a lot of input both from the
6 planning staff and from DRAC to get to this
7 location as well as with neighbors.

8 He did reach out to neighbors
9 before filing his application. This
10 depiction shows all of the properties
11 outlined in yellow that received an
12 invitation, the initial invitation to whom he
13 officially reached out with. Again, he had
14 been continuing negotiate -- not
15 negotiations, but discussions about his plans
16 particularly with abutting neighbors up to
17 that point.

18 This, we'll go through it in a
19 little more detail later, but certainly this
20 goes well beyond the normal 300- or 500-foot
21 perimeter that you might undertake in
22 approaching neighbors to discuss a particular
23 proposal.

24 So I'd like now just to go
25 into the particulars of the application.

1 Again, I mentioned that we are now proposing
2 ten units in two buildings. The intense --
3 the more intense aspects of the development
4 will be confined to the center of the site,
5 keeping a strong buffer and extensive
6 landscaping on the rear to the neighbors,
7 honoring the intent, if you will, of that
8 original R-13 setback.

9 I mentioned to you, I think,
10 or maybe I didn't, that Mr. Raiser, through
11 this entity will continue to own the
12 apartment building that currently exists on
13 the site. His intent is to subdivide this
14 property, should it be rezoned with a special
15 development imposed on it, and sell the ten
16 townhome units. So they would be sold as a
17 common-interest ownership condominium, if you
18 will, and be individually owned.

19 But like the Grellas, he is
20 interested in maintaining a long-time
21 relationship with the neighbors with this
22 piece of property, and he will hold onto the
23 apartment building.

24 So that's it. The -- we'll go
25 now to the site plan improvements that are

1 proposed and Kevin Solli will walk you
2 through those.

3 MR. SOLLI: Thank you, Robin.

4 For the record, my name is
5 Kevin Solli. I'm a licensed professional
6 engineer in the State of Connecticut with
7 Solli Engineering. Our office is in Monroe,
8 Connecticut.

9 First, I'm going to talk about
10 the existing conditions of the property and
11 then go into the proposed site plan and
12 extensive improvements that we're proposing
13 both to the existing apartment building and
14 for the proposed units.

15 So as Robin indicated, the
16 existing site is approximately -- is located
17 at 747 North Main Street. It is
18 approximately 1.46 acres, and it is improved,
19 currently improved with a 12-unit apartment
20 building and a 11-car garage, which is
21 interesting as we started to look at this,
22 that this existing site for the 12 units only
23 has 11 garage spaces. So it's currently
24 considerably underparked by current standards
25 and that was something we wanted to address

1 with our proposed site and site design.

2 The site is accessed via a
3 single driveway on North Main Street.

4 There's some pretty good grade changes across
5 the property. There's an elevation of
6 approximately 160 at the intersection with
7 North Main Street, and that goes up all the
8 way up to about 178 in the far west corner of
9 the property along here. And we actually use
10 that grade change. We incorporated that into
11 our site design, so we can make sure that we
12 were creating a good plan that -- that
13 provided right considerations to the
14 neighbors and incorporated those, those grade
15 changes.

16 The existing building, there
17 are -- you know, there are dumpsters in this
18 back area here, which are somewhat
19 uncontrolled. They're not really contained,
20 which is something else we wanted to make
21 sure that we addressed.

22 The northern portion of the
23 property, which is where our proposed
24 townhome development is, it's currently --
25 it's very overgrown. The trees out there are

1 -- they're -- they're -- they have a very
2 high canopy. They're very mature. They have
3 a very low -- they're somewhat almost past
4 their useful life, because there isn't really
5 any kind of vegetation down here that
6 provides any kind of screening. And as we
7 went through our neighborhood program, what
8 we learned is that a lot of the neighbors on
9 Overhill, you know, they were concerned
10 because there wasn't any screening with this
11 parcel and they could still see lights from
12 Big Y. The -- you know, the front portion of
13 the property is -- is overly congested with
14 vines and things like that. So it's
15 really -- fortunately, we had something that
16 we could really make a significant
17 improvement on from an esthetic standpoint.
18 And I think we -- we did a very good job, and
19 we're very proud of the plan that we've
20 created.

21 So again, what we're proposing
22 is to subdivide the parcel into two lots.
23 The northerly parcel will be the area subject
24 to the proposed improvements. And we are
25 proposing two five-unit townhome buildings.

1 The site will continue to be accessed from
2 the existing driveway, which will be shared
3 from the -- between the existing and the
4 proposed apartments, the existing apartments
5 and the proposed townhomes.

6 We are -- we are providing 25
7 parking spaces for the proposed 10 units.
8 Now that includes each unit has a garage
9 space within the unit and a tandem parking
10 space behind the garage. So you'll be able
11 to -- I lost my cursor here -- you'll be able
12 to pull into your garage and then also park
13 your car behind.

14 As we went through the process
15 with staff, which as Robin indicated, is that
16 we've been working with staff for about a
17 year at this point, and we've had several
18 meetings with DRAC which we'll touch on a
19 little bit more, but this has morphed quite a
20 bit. And what we have now with these two
21 buildings kind of creating this courtyard
22 area, we think it provides the most
23 protection to the neighbors, because all that
24 activity is kind of centralized in here.

25 So in addition to the garage

1 spaces and the individual spaces outside of
2 the garage, we also provided an additional
3 five parking spaces along the driveway in
4 this location here, which -- which actually
5 exceeds the parking requirements of the
6 regulations. We do have a few waivers, which
7 I'm going to touch on. One of them does
8 address the parking spaces, but I'm going to
9 get to that in a little bit.

10 In addition to the parking for
11 the existing facility -- or the proposed
12 facility, we wanted to look at what was
13 provided at the existing 12-unit apartment
14 building, and as I stated, all we had was 11
15 parking spaces in this garage. So we
16 actually looked and found a way to add an
17 additional six spaces to the westerly corner
18 of the property and to provide a handicap
19 accessible space, which the property
20 currently doesn't provide.

21 So this actually brings this
22 existing parcel into compliance from a
23 parking standpoint, where today it's
24 considerably deficient from those parking
25 requirements of one-and-a-half spaces per

1 unit.

2 As I stated, the site does --
3 there is a grade changes across the property
4 from the driveway up to the back. So what we
5 wanted to do is we created the easterly
6 building closest to North Main Street. It is
7 a three-story building, so there's a garage
8 level where you pull in and there's two
9 living floors above that.

10 And for the westerly
11 building -- oh. Okay. Here we go. Sorry.
12 For the westerly building, we took advantage
13 of that grade change and this building is
14 actually built into the hill. So as you pull
15 into the garage space in the -- from the
16 east, you'll get into that garage floor, but
17 then you walk up a flight of stairs into that
18 first living floor, and that first living
19 floor actually walks out to patios in the
20 back.

21 So that was able to sink this
22 building into the hill and really kind of
23 help protect these neighbors to the west so
24 that there's -- so it doesn't seem to be a
25 three-story building right up against the

1 property line, and it reduces that height.

2 Additionally, what we've done
3 from an architectural standpoint, which Jack
4 Kemper will discuss a little bit more, is
5 created a much better aesthetic and a view
6 which will actually block some of the lights
7 from Big Y from what these neighbors
8 currently see.

9 And again, the applicant David
10 Raiser, as I said, we had several
11 neighborhood meetings and I was even on the
12 phone with him as he sat and sat on the deck
13 with one of the neighbors and we kind of talk
14 through the plan. And so it was a very
15 extensive outreach. And he took it -- he
16 took it very personally to make sure that he
17 individually spoke to all the different
18 neighbors.

19 All of our utilities are
20 proposed to be underground. Electric,
21 telephone and cable are coming in on the
22 north side of the buildings. Water and sewer
23 is proposed, and we have been coordinating
24 with MDC. We did get our -- the letters
25 required from them and we've gong through our

1 design with them.

2 From a storm water standpoint,
3 we are proposing some underground storm water
4 retention underneath this parking area here
5 in this courtyard to make sure we are
6 reducing inflows and attenuating any increase
7 from the increase in impervious area, but we
8 are actually reducing flows for the property
9 for the storm events. And all of our plans
10 have been reviewed with -- with engineering
11 and they've signed off on what we've propose.

12 Gas service, David was able to
13 negotiate. We are getting a granting an
14 easement to Connecticut Natural Gas for -- to
15 tie into the existing gas line that's in the
16 Staples plaza. This was actually something
17 that was done just recently, which brought
18 this building, the existing building off of
19 oil and onto gas. And we're going to be
20 tying into that gas line to service the
21 proposed facilities.

22 I'd also like to say, you
23 know, as we had our initial outreach meetings
24 one of the concerns that we heard from the
25 neighbors was they really want natural gas.

1 And is there any way they can try to -- we
2 may be able to help facilitate that. So
3 we've actually, I think, through our
4 discussions and through David's, and though
5 our diligence, they've actually had meetings
6 with several of these neighbors. And I think
7 that that possibility is now -- is ongoing,
8 and there's more discussions with those
9 neighbors about getting them on gas as well.

10 The air-conditioning units,
11 just to touch on them as it was something we
12 went through with DRAC. Each unit is going
13 to have it's own air-conditioning unit and
14 they are provided behind each facility here.
15 We actually, in this location for the
16 westerly building and these locations for the
17 building closest to North Main Street, we
18 actually took a lot of care in designing
19 those, and we've actually provided a
20 board-on-board screen fence to surround
21 those, an additional to landscaping, to make
22 sure they are screened and they're not a
23 nuisance or anything like that to the
24 neighbors.

25 We are proposing a monument

1 sign for the development that which is going
2 to be located in this location here. The
3 applicant hasn't named the development yet,
4 but he is proposing to have a small monument
5 sign, brick to be complementary to the
6 existing building and that is going to be --
7 it does comply with the -- the regulations.

8 We have two light poles
9 proposed as part of the project located on
10 this location here, and here in this
11 location. Those are both proposed to be full
12 cutoff light fixtures with a recessed light,
13 dark sky compliant to make sure there's no
14 light pollution and we comply with the
15 lighting ordinances and lighting
16 requirements. This is the wall-mounted
17 fixture that we're proposing, which you'll be
18 able to see on the elevation that Jack will
19 touch on in a little bit.

20 One of the other items that we
21 heard from the neighbors and when we looked
22 at the existing site was an issue that we
23 know we wanted to address was waste
24 management and how the site is currently
25 handled from the trash pickup standpoint.

1 There's currently dumpsters kind of in this
2 corner. They're not enclosed. There's no
3 screen fence or anything like that. And as
4 we talked to the neighbors, there's a lot of
5 concern about, well, they hear a lot of noise
6 from where the dumpsters are emptied at the
7 commercial centers. So what we did is we
8 proposed and designed two dumpster
9 enclosures, one for each property and located
10 them at the end of the shared access drive.
11 And these are also kind of built into the
12 hill so that there's a screen fence around
13 and they're kind of tucked in underneath with
14 some pretty extensive landscaping
15 surrounding, surrounding those dumpsters.

16 In addition to that, we
17 reached out to Waste Management who is going
18 to be -- I believe they currently handle
19 trash service for the property and they will
20 moving forward. We were actually able to get
21 them to agree that to coordinator the
22 dumpster pickup so that it happens once a
23 week, it happens in the late morning, early
24 afternoon, so it's not going to provide that
25 nuisance to the neighbors that they've

1 complained about. So we took some -- we took
2 a number of steps to make sure that that was
3 one item that was addressed.

4 We did look at the traffic
5 just make sure there would be no impact. A
6 development like this has very little trip
7 generation, five trips in a peak hour. So
8 there really would be a negligible impact on
9 traffic, and we are very familiar with the
10 traffic operations through this corridor, as
11 I was a part of the studies for a number of
12 properties and projects in the recent past.

13 And then there are a number of
14 waivers that we are requesting as part of
15 this subdivision and zone-change application.
16 We'll touch on them now. We are requesting a
17 waiver from a front-yard setback. The front
18 yard requirement is 50 feet. We are
19 approximately 48 feet. And as we went
20 through the process with DRAC, we went
21 through the single building with 14 units.
22 We then had two buildings with 12 units.
23 DRAC asked us to look at something that had
24 three buildings and like another -- like a
25 "U" shape. And as we kept going back and

1 forth the design we ended up with billing
2 this is easterly building forward a little
3 bit, but it allowed us to get a better buffer
4 and better protection to the neighbors to
5 the -- to the west. And further, with the
6 extensive landscaping, we have along this
7 hill and North Main Street, we think we've
8 addressed and compensated for that small
9 reduction in that front-yard setback.

10 We also require waivers for
11 the -- sorry. We also are requiring waivers
12 from the front -- or side- and rear-yard
13 setbacks for the buildings on Lot 2. Loading
14 spaces, just because of the size of the
15 development, both of these would -- both lots
16 would require their own loading space, rather
17 than create additional pavement that we would
18 see -- we would really deter it to be
19 unnecessary. We're requesting a waiver so we
20 don't have to provide those loading spaces.

21 We also have parking spaces
22 within 15 feet of a habitable -- of a window
23 from a habitable structure. So there's
24 another waiver that we're requesting, and
25 that -- just because these, the tandem spaces

1 would be within 15 feet of a window and these
2 additional five spaces are within 15 feet of
3 a window. But from operation standpoint, we
4 feel that it's perfectly appropriate for this
5 type of development to have those parking
6 spaces in those locations.

7 And then, we're requesting a
8 slight waiver in the reduction for parking
9 space dimensions. These spaces in this
10 location are 9-by-18 instead of the standard
11 9-by-20.

12 So that summarizes my portion
13 of the presentation. At this point, I'd like
14 to invite Jack Kemper up, and he's going to
15 talk to you a little bit about the
16 architecture.

17 MR. KEMPER: My name is Jack
18 Kemper, Kemper Associates, Farmington,
19 Connecticut.

20 We started on this project
21 probably last April, last May, so we've been
22 working on it for quite a while. And as
23 Kevin mentioned, we've had several
24 iterations. We once had a one larger
25 building with an elevator that got to be too

1 big. We were looking at a longer building.
2 We've looked at a lot of different ways.

3 This -- this -- this scenario
4 with two buildings facing each other with an
5 interior courtyard seemed to have worked out
6 the best for the development and for the --
7 the impact on the neighborhood.

8 These -- these slides here
9 show the existing building to your left.
10 Yes. And the double screen is confusing to
11 me, so I pre-apologize for that -- with our
12 new building to the right. One of the things
13 that we've tried to do is to sort of take
14 some elements of the existing building --
15 while I don't necessarily think it's like a
16 prize-winning building, it's a nice building.
17 It's got some nice materials and nice roof
18 shapes, and we've tried to incorporate those
19 into the new building where we have the brick
20 on either end. And I know that's something
21 that DRAC has wanted to see, is brick along
22 North Main Street or all of Main Street.

23 And so we've tried to mimic
24 the hip roofs. We've tried to drop the
25 building as much as we can. You're seeing

1 the largest elevation, which is the North
2 Main Street. We've done a band of trim along
3 the top to kind of visually lower that roof
4 line. We played with the roof lines to keep
5 them, you know, in the same scale as the
6 existing building.

7 The lower drawing shows the
8 south elevation, and that shows the actual
9 distance between the buildings. So you would
10 sort of get the sense of how, the building
11 one, the south is kind of up the hill from
12 North Main. And building two, if you see, it
13 actually goes, it goes into the hill. So
14 that you -- where Kevin has the pointer is
15 fenced in between the patios. So that
16 building is lower from the -- from the west.

17 We can go to the next one.

18 This just shows some of the
19 materials, the brick, and the windows. There
20 are a lot windows. These units range from
21 around 1600 and change to about 2100 and
22 change square feet. Per unit, each unit has
23 a garage. Each unit has a separate entry.
24 They're townhouses.

25 As Kevin mentioned, the garage

1 is on the first floor. The main living space
2 works as one open space on the middle floor
3 front to back, open kitchen, dining, living
4 room all one space. Very, very open. Very
5 much what we're designing for everything
6 these days.

7 And the lighting on each unit
8 on the interior courtyard are recessed lights
9 in every doorway. And on the back we have,
10 over the patio doors, we have the down
11 lights, the old-fashioned sort of down
12 lights. So we didn't want the lights to go
13 bother the neighbors.

14 And this lower elevation shows
15 the two-story elevation of the west building.

16 And we'll go to the rendering.
17 This is what we're proposing for colors and
18 materials. We're looking to do brick at
19 either end. We've kind of made each unit
20 look kind of like a tower at either end and
21 have the brick. We've -- every unit has
22 either a patio or a terrace. We have -- the
23 balconies on the end units are actually kind
24 of enclosed. They're kind of in the
25 building. They're carved out of the

1 building.

2 You see we've dropped the roof
3 line a little bit in the middle, and we've
4 made the dormers, just give it a little more
5 interest, and to get it -- you know, just to
6 keep the size as low as we can keep it.

7 The materials, we've gone back
8 and forth with DRAC a lot, but, right now,
9 it's -- as we're submitting, it's a composite
10 trim, vinyl siding and brick and
11 architectural grade shingle.

12 So that's -- that's what we're
13 proposing. And really, I think I would just
14 be available for any questions if you had any
15 questions.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. SOLLI: Thank you.

18 And with that, we'll have Dian
19 Barnes, our landscape architect come up and
20 talk about our extensive landscaping program.

21 MS. BARNES: Hi. I'm Dian
22 Barnes of Dian Barnes Landscape Design out of
23 Farmington. I just want to reiterate the
24 existing conditions on the site for the plant
25 materials.

1 High canopy trees that are
2 really at the end of their usefulness as a
3 buffer. They, at one time, buffered nicely,
4 but they don't that the more from a person's
5 point of view. And the site is completely
6 overgrown with invasive vines. Generally a
7 mess. So there are two very nice trees on
8 the -- in front of the existing apartments,
9 two large maple trees and we will be
10 retaining those.

11 There are three factors that I
12 used when I designed the planting for this
13 site. One, is for all-season interest. Two,
14 is for the right plant in the right place
15 taking into consideration shape, size and
16 horticultural needs of the plants. And
17 three, is aesthetics, that we want them to be
18 beautiful as well.

19 So starting on the west
20 boundary, first of all, there will be a
21 six-foot fence along the west boundary of the
22 proposed apartments and it will be a solid
23 board fence. There are five red maples, five
24 blue spruce and four flowering dogwoods along
25 that property line. There will also be 27

1 arborvitae, a narrow variety that will be
2 around the garbage dumpsters. So those will
3 be completely screened.

4 There are two neighbors along
5 that property that we are going to be -- that
6 we have worked with through neighborhood
7 meetings. One is Kevin and Lori Kobelski at
8 9 Farmstead. And there is a tree on the
9 corner of their property. And at that back
10 corner that is what I would consider a hazard
11 tree. It's leaning over actually towards our
12 property and they suggested they'd be happy
13 to have that removed. We're going to remove
14 that for them and in its place, put in a blue
15 spruce, which we be the same spruce that is
16 along that back property line on our side,
17 but we'll be planting that on their property.

18 In addition at Brian West's
19 property at 15 Farmstead, which is right
20 here, this property, we will be removing a
21 lot of overgrown pine trees that were
22 planted, again along that property line for a
23 buffer at one time, but they are well above.
24 They've lost all their lower branches and no
25 longer offer that buffering, and instead are

1 just offering a lot of shade and maintenance
2 issues. So we're going to take those trees
3 down for him.

4 On the north boundary, we are
5 including a buffer of seven green giant
6 arborvitae, three zelkova, and two flowering
7 dogwood.

8 MR. SOLLI: There's also a
9 six-foot fence there, as well.

10 MS. BARNES: Yes, there is a
11 six-foot solid board fence there as well.

12 On the east boundary is the
13 street. One of the keys here was to visually
14 unite this property so that the existing
15 property and the proposed property would read
16 as one, and unify that with a street tree
17 planting. We've added maples along there to
18 mirror what's already the existing maples
19 there. We've also, between that street tree
20 planting and the units on both sides, have
21 added a buffer of shrubs and ornamental
22 grasses and -- and some blue spruce. So
23 there are ten blue spruce, five green giant
24 arbs and then there's over a hundred mixed
25 shrubs and ornamental grasses that will be a

1 buffer along that.

2 This, the plantings between
3 the buildings and the street will offer as
4 much buffering to the neighbors as well as to
5 this property from the commercial development
6 across the street. So that will -- will do
7 both things.

8 In the center parking area,
9 this courtyard area that you've heard
10 everybody talk about, there will be ten
11 upright hornbeam trees, which will be narrow.
12 Because of the size, you don't want it to be
13 too dark and oppressive, so they're very
14 narrow trees. And in addition, 184 shrubs
15 and perennials that were chosen for their
16 colors, their variety of textures and their
17 ease of maintenance.

18 Why don't we go to that next
19 slide and let's talk about that.

20 These are the trees that will
21 be planted on the property. Starting over in
22 the upper left-hand corner, in the upper
23 left-hand corner is the red maple. That's
24 along the west property line. This tree that
25 the pointer is on is the street tree. It's a

1 sugar maple.

2 This is a courtyard tree, the
3 narrow upright tree that will be in the
4 center courtyard. Flowering dogwood is here,
5 which is around the north and the west
6 property lines, blue spruce which is found
7 throughout the property.

8 These are the narrow
9 arborvitae that would be surrounding the
10 garbage dumpster area. These are arborvitae
11 that would be on the western property line
12 and some screening the -- kind of between the
13 driveway and the front of the property.

14 And this is zelkova. This is
15 the tree that is proposed on the north
16 property line. Its vase shape allows it to
17 be on narrower stretch of land as opposed to
18 the broader maples.

19 And then the next slide will
20 show you the variety of shrubs. I won't go
21 into detail on all the different shrubs and
22 perennials and ornamental grasses that are
23 proposed, but you can see the wide variety.
24 These are all, of course, and you've got to
25 show them in flower. They won't all flower

1 at the same moment. And, in fact, you know,
2 part of the design is to get some interest
3 throughout the whole spring, summer and fall.
4 But lots of good foliage, colors, textures,
5 different flower colors, that -- and a lot of
6 plants now, too, come in nice dwarf sizes, so
7 they don't overgrow and it's an easier
8 maintenance for the property owner as well.

9 And that, in conclusion,
10 really extensive plantings providing, you
11 know, a rich tapestry of color and texture
12 for the property.

13 MS. PEARSON: Thank you, Dian.

14 I mentioned to you initially
15 that Mr. Raiser has maintained ongoing
16 contact with neighbors, both individually,
17 and through the process you've become used to
18 with inviting people to neighborhood
19 meetings.

20 Actually, this effort was
21 really even more extensive than you're used
22 to seeing, I believe, with applications. He,
23 as individually before the original
24 application was submitted to the Town
25 Council, invited all of those individuals

1 well beyond the circle of 300 or 500 feet --
2 this is 500? -- and went beyond that. You
3 have that map that we presented earlier that
4 showed the individuals specifically to whom
5 we sent out the invitation.

6 Invited them to a meeting on
7 August 22. You have a report in your package
8 that talks about the comments that were made
9 at that meeting. People were concerned with
10 some of the items that Kevin addressed when
11 he did his presentation, things such as
12 dumpster noise, the appearance of the
13 building, intervening with CNG to see if
14 there might be a way to facilitate gas
15 service for neighbors in the area, and
16 overall feeling about the design of the
17 building and making sure that it is good
18 design, attractive building, conducive to
19 what already exists in the neighborhood.

20 After that meeting Mr. Raiser
21 also sent out an individual mailing to the
22 same neighbors prior to the meeting on
23 September 3rd with the Bishops Corner
24 Neighborhood Association. He wanted to make
25 sure that all those same neighbors knew that

1 that meeting was going to take place because
2 I think about six of them had attended the
3 initial meeting. He wanted to give them
4 another forum in which to look at the plans
5 as proposed.

6 That meeting took place on
7 September 3rd. The record doesn't indicate
8 whether or not neighbors were there. I don't
9 believe they were, however that meeting was
10 also -- the individuals who were there really
11 appreciated the application and his efforts.
12 And I believe you now have in your file a
13 letter from the Bishops Corner Neighborhood
14 Association indicating support for this
15 particular proposal.

16 As I mentioned, we then
17 withdrew the application. This was just
18 before the hearing in December where we had
19 hoped to present the application. Before
20 that meeting, Mr. Raiser contacted all the
21 abutters just to make sure they knew that
22 that was happening and the application was
23 being withdrawn, so they didn't come to town
24 hall and find that the lights were dark.

25 He also sent out again, an

1 invitation to all the same neighbors for a
2 meeting that he proposed to take place on
3 December 2nd. He was going to show them the
4 final changes in the plans that had evolved
5 even since the original meetings, but he also
6 used that time as an opportunity to explain
7 why the application had been withdrawn and
8 the fact that there is a double zone on the
9 site.

10 He wanted to make sure that
11 they understood that the split zone was there
12 in case they had any issues with regard to
13 that. There were four neighbors that
14 attended that meeting and you have a report,
15 a supplemental report in your file with
16 regard to the comments that they made.

17 Subsequent to that, he met
18 individually with Mr. and Mrs. Kobelski who
19 still have a few concerns. And you have a
20 second supplement which is an e-mail from
21 Mr. Raiser to our office which indicated the
22 results of that meeting.

23 I should also add that in the
24 neighborhood report that you have, the
25 initial one, Mr. Raiser -- and those are

1 Mr. Raiser's words in that report, where he
2 described for you all the individual
3 communications he had with neighbors.

4 He, of course, was the only
5 one participating from the applicant side
6 with regard to those communications, and we
7 simply recopied the information and provided
8 it to you. But that is his reflection on the
9 results of those individual discussions with
10 neighbors.

11 So again, the outreach has
12 been extensive. Hopefully people are pleased
13 with what they see now. I know you've
14 received some letters of support from the
15 community. And, of course, we'll have to
16 wait and see what the public presentation
17 component in this public hearing holds for
18 us.

19 As far as Town reviews, you
20 have in a file an October 23rd e-mail to the
21 Planning Department from the Fire Department,
22 indicating there are no issues affecting any
23 of their concerns. After a number of
24 go-rounds with the Engineering Department,
25 you have a final Engineering Memo dated

1 December 24th, from Engineering to Planning
2 which says, all of the Engineering Division
3 comments have been satisfactorily addressed.

4 You have dated as of
5 yesterday, January 12th, a statement from the
6 Planning Department that says all of the
7 planning and zoning aspects of this
8 application have been satisfactorily
9 addressed.

10 You have a recommendation, a
11 unanimous recommendation, 5-0, from the Town
12 Plan and Zoning Commission arising from their
13 January 5th meeting in which, and I quote,
14 they recommended approval of the subject
15 application finding the request consistent
16 with the West Hartford Plan of Conservation
17 and Development.

18 And finally, you have a
19 January 5th transmittal from the Design
20 Review Advisory Committee unanimously
21 recommending approval of this application.
22 And in that, I'm just pulling a couple of
23 comments out of their transmittal. They say
24 that in addition to our formal meeting on
25 this application, the Committee notes that

1 the review process incorporated four
2 additional study sessions.

3 The Committee appreciates the
4 applicant's active participation in the
5 design review process and its ultimate
6 consideration and inclusion of the DRAC's
7 comments in the revised and final project
8 design.

9 The Committee made the
10 following specific findings for the Town
11 Council's consideration. This is important
12 because I think the landscaping does go well
13 beyond what you might normally find in an
14 application such as this, and is indicative
15 of the benefits of utilizing a special
16 development district overlay zone.

17 DRAC said that the landscape
18 elements of the plan are enhanced and
19 appropriately screen the adjacent residential
20 neighbors, and that was a point they wanted
21 to make in particular in terms of the
22 recommendation to you.

23 So in conclusion, we believe
24 that the special development district vehicle
25 is appropriately utilized in this

1 application. You have a very good design
2 presentation.

3 Utilizing the SDD, we were
4 able to vary some of the standards of the
5 zoning regulations to allow us to be able to
6 fit onto the site in a way that has been done
7 with sensibility to the neighborhood, but
8 such things as the additional parking to
9 bring the apartment building that currently
10 exists basically in conformance with the Town
11 standards.

12 Remember there was less than
13 one space per unit existing on the site -- or
14 there is one space, less than one space per
15 unit existing on the site right now, as well
16 as allow for the appropriate build out of the
17 rest of the site for a multifamily use that
18 is not overly dense, is very well designed,
19 is internal to the site. So it has minimal
20 impact on the neighbors with buildings
21 positioned as well as landscaping to provide
22 suitable screening and buffering for the
23 neighborhood, all in terms of a zoning
24 configuration that is compatible with the
25 zoning patterns already found in this area

1 around Bishops Corner.

2 So for all those reasons, in
3 addition to the fact that we're only
4 proposing two units more than would be
5 allowed under the existing zoning, and you
6 have received extremely favorable
7 recommendations from all of the Town staff
8 and boards who have already reviewed this
9 application, we hope that you would be in a
10 mind to favorably act on this presentation.

11 Thank you.

12 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,
13 Ms. Pearson, for the presentation.

14 One thing to get out of the
15 way perhaps at the beginning, Mr. Alair, I
16 believe -- thank you -- distributed the
17 proposed conditions of approval to us. There
18 are standard SDD conditions of approval. I
19 trust you've had a chance to look at them.
20 If you have not, please let us know, but I --
21 or you have memorized them in your
22 experience, perhaps. But if you could give
23 us your reaction to them.

24 MS. PEARSON: I have reviewed
25 them. One suggestion I suggest be made, and

1 I did talk with Mr. Alair about that, is that
2 the prohibition with regard to lighting hours
3 be removed. This is a residential
4 development. That language is really more
5 appropriate for a commercial area. Whatever
6 lighting is needed so that people can safely
7 get in and out of their units and the
8 parking, which by the way is, again, internal
9 for the most part to the site. So we ask
10 that that be eliminated.

11 I understand that he has
12 injected some language that might be
13 appropriate for review of any documents that
14 would be needed, a review of those documents
15 by the Corporation Counsel's office with
16 regard to cross easements and that is
17 certainly appropriate. We will prepare those
18 if the application is approved.

19 And they would also be
20 presented to the Town as part of the
21 subdivision application which will be the
22 next step if the zoning zone changes in the
23 special development district portion of this
24 is approved. I don't think there was --

25 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: If I could

1 ask --

2 MS. PEARSON: Was there
3 anything else that I missed?

4 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Well, I
5 just thought I'd maybe ask Mr. Alair to come
6 up while we're on the subject if we can
7 dispose of it.

8 I saw that highlighted
9 portions of the conditions, of the DRAC
10 conditions, Mr. Alair, they were exactly in
11 the sections that Ms. Pearson was
12 referencing.

13 Just so I get a firm
14 understanding for the Council as a whole,
15 that your proposal to, in response to the
16 site lighting I believe would be to -- this
17 is in Section 2-D, sub 3, entitled "Site
18 Lighting," that you would delete the second
19 sentence in that paragraph that says, "all
20 lighting should be turned off no later than
21 10 p.m., except for security lighting which
22 is triggered temporarily by motion or sound?"

23 MR. ALAIR: Correct. What
24 I've highlighted for you is two provisions.
25 That one, which is part of your standard, or

1 recently your standard conditions that is
2 suggested for deletion. And then the next
3 piece is not part of what you have done in
4 the past as a standard condition, but which I
5 think is appropriate for this project given
6 the fact that it's going to be two parcels
7 and a common-interest community on one, one
8 part.

9 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: So D, 2-D,
10 sub 4 is a whole new section?

11 MR. ALAIR: Exactly.

12 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay.

13 MR. ALAIR: Exactly. So
14 that's -- that's the highlighted piece is
15 what's a deviation, either a removal or in
16 addition to what you've been doing in the
17 past.

18 MS. PEARSON: However, I
19 should note that with regard to site lighting
20 that first sentence does remain and that is,
21 of course, important. It says: "All outdoor
22 lighting shall be down shielded so as to
23 prevent glare onto adjoining properties."
24 And that is, of course, what we intend with
25 this application.

1 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: So you're
2 in agreement with?

3 MS. PEARSON: I have no
4 objection to what is proposed.

5 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you.
6 Does anybody have any
7 questions or comments related to the
8 conditions?

9 COUNCILOR BARNES: Yeah.
10 Actually, I did.

11 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Go ahead,
12 Mr. Barnes.

13 COUNCILOR BARNES: Thank you,
14 Mr. Mayor.

15 I have one question about the
16 solid-waste condition. I note in the
17 application that some of the neighbors
18 concerns related to the trash pickup. And
19 All Waste, I think Kevin mentioned that they,
20 in a letter dated September 18, 2014, to have
21 a pickup on Friday's midday.

22 To protect the concerns or to
23 address the concerns of the neighbors in that
24 area, should we modify the condition to
25 reflect All Waste's agreement?

1 MS. PEARSON: Because All
2 Waste may not always be managing or servicing
3 this property, I think it would be fair if
4 you wish to change -- and it may not always
5 be on a Friday. It may be another day of the
6 week. I think it might be fair to amend it
7 to make it not as expansive as it is right
8 now, but to say something about, and any
9 pickups should be -- could we do during the
10 week and late morning to --

11 COUNCILOR BARNES: Midday.

12 MS. PEARSON: -- around
13 midday? Well now, that's -- let's say
14 after -- between late morning and
15 mid-afternoon. How's that?

16 COUNCILOR BARNES: That's fine
17 with me.

18 MR. O'BRIEN: Ten to three.

19 MS. PEARSON: Ten to three, to
20 be specific. That would help.

21 So I've heard a suggestion,
22 ten to three, which is okay with us. Our
23 intent is to do it. It will probably be one
24 pickup a week. Right now, it's scheduled for
25 a Friday and it's supposed be later in the

1 day.

2 So I'm looking at my client
3 and asking if between ten and three is
4 appropriate. And the answer is yes, we'd be
5 happy with that.

6 COUNCILOR BARNES: Great.

7 Thank you.

8 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Anyone else
9 on the conditions of approval?

10 (No response.)

11 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay. Then
12 I will open it up on anything else?

13 Ms. Hall.

14 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Public
15 hearing?

16 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: We're in a
17 public hearing.

18 COUNCILOR KINDALL: No, public
19 making comments.

20 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: We'll get
21 to that.

22 Mrs. Hall.

23 COUNCILOR HALL: Thank you,
24 Mr. Mayor.

25 I had one question in regard

1 to the letter that we received from Mr. Brian
2 West who said the developer has agreed to
3 address my concerns for the development, and
4 as long as that holds true I will not oppose
5 this project.

6 Can you expand on what his
7 objections were?

8 MS. PEARSON: I've ask this
9 question also of Mr. Raiser. So I believe I
10 have it, and he's going to correct me if I
11 get it wrong, but that he agreed to remove
12 approximately ten trees from Mr. West's
13 property along the border of his property,
14 trees that shade his property and have become
15 unattractive and scraggly, and they will do
16 that as part of the, you know, the
17 development of the site.

18 COUNCILOR HALL: I'm sorry.
19 Were those trees on Mr. West's property or
20 on --

21 MS. PEARSON: They were. They
22 were on Mr. West's property. So on the
23 record, through me, Mr. Raiser is committing
24 to do that.

25 COUNCILOR HALL: Thank you.

1 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,
2 Ms. Hall.

3 Anyone else?

4 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Is this
5 general?

6 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Anything.
7 Ms. Kindall?

8 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Will there
9 be any upgrades to the existing permanent
10 buildings?

11 MS. PEARSON: There will.
12 First, I know Mr. Raiser will be upgrading
13 the internal units, the inside as they turn
14 over. I have to say, people like living
15 there. And he's told me that turnover is not
16 great at that -- in that building, but they
17 will be upgraded as people leave.

18 There are other improvements
19 that will be made such as putting in new
20 windows and obviously the landscaping on the
21 site. There's no significant design change
22 to the exterior of the building.

23 Am I missing anything else?
24 No, that appears to be it.

25 COUNCILOR KINDALL: And the

1 other question I had, was is it fully rented
2 or what is the occupancy?

3 MS. PEARSON: It's a hundred
4 percent rented.

5 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,
6 Ms. Kindall.

7 Mr. Barnes?

8 COUNCILOR BARNES: Thank you.
9 I understand from the
10 presentation that the ten new units are going
11 to be for sale?

12 MS. PEARSON: Correct.

13 COUNCILOR BARNES: And will
14 there be an association or something in place
15 to maintain the property?

16 MS. PEARSON: Yes, we'll have
17 to prepare that. Yes.

18 COUNCILOR BARNES: Thank you.

19 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,
20 mr. Barnes.

21 Anyone else?

22 Mr. Davidoff?

23 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Thank
24 you, Mr. Mayor.

25 My first question is to

1 Corporation Counsel. The applicant has
2 inferenced that they're going to, if this
3 gets approved, subdivide the parcel upon
4 approval. My question is, would that be
5 something that would come back to this body
6 as something that we would decide since it
7 would be an SDD that would require a
8 subdivision?

9 MR. O'BRIEN: No, that's part
10 of the application. But the paperwork, the
11 cross fees, it's going to come to our office
12 for approval and that's part of the standard
13 conditions that we've just talked about in
14 Item 2-D(4). So the legal documents will be
15 coming back to our office.

16 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: So we're
17 approving the subdivision as well this
18 evening.

19 MR. O'BRIEN: Yes.

20 MS. PEARSON: Could I
21 elaborate on that, if I may? The Town
22 Council, actually, you know, you don't have
23 jurisdiction to approve a subdivision, but
24 what you have acknowledged and the plans
25 show, is a proposed line of subdivision. And

1 therefore, the setbacks, et cetera, that
2 would be appropriate for the two new lots and
3 that's inherent in the special development
4 district plan.

5 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Thank
6 you, Attorney Pearson.

7 Currently there is visitor
8 parking alongside the concrete pavement that
9 abuts the apartment building, and I
10 understand from the plans that the concrete
11 pavement is going to be removed. So will
12 there be no longer parking allowed along that
13 drive?

14 MR. SOLLI: Yeah, currently
15 there is. People do park along this -- I'm
16 sorry.

17 People do park along this
18 drive, and I think that's really just because
19 there's a lack of parking available on the
20 site. By adding the -- by adding the
21 additional six spaces in this location, we're
22 going to be providing that surplus parking
23 for -- for either tenants or visitors. So
24 yes, as part of this, the existing drive is
25 going to be proposed to be 24-foot wide, so

1 we wouldn't be having any parking along that
2 drive, and we have a surplus parking to
3 both -- on both lots to accommodate for
4 visitor parking.

5 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: So will
6 there be signage informing people that they
7 will no longer be allowed to park adjacent to
8 the building --

9 MR. SOLLI: We didn't --

10 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: -- and to
11 let them know that visitor parking is now
12 going to be located in the rear? Because
13 since 1960-something, visitors to that site
14 have parked along that sidewalk.

15 MR. SOLLI: Well, we aren't
16 proposing any signage at this point. We kind
17 of feel that having the additional spaces,
18 that will be somewhat apparent and, kind of,
19 visitors will kind of learn as the site is
20 improved where it's appropriate to park.

21 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Okay.

22 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Anybody
23 else?

24 (No response.)

25 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay. Then

1 we will go to the sign-up sheet.

2 MS. PEARSON: Would you like
3 us to keep the screen down?

4 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Sure.

5 MS. PEARSON: Okay.

6 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Why not,
7 because if anybody wants to point to it.

8 While that's happening, I will
9 just read into the record a letter dated
10 January 6, 2015, from Town Plan and Zoning
11 Commission recommending approval; a letter
12 dated January 5, 2015, from the Design Review
13 Advisory Committee recommending approval; and
14 a letter dated January 8, 2015 from the
15 Design Review Advisory Committee recommending
16 approval.

17 The first is Peter Mehlman.

18 For all speakers, if I could
19 just have you state your name and address for
20 the record.

21 PETER MEHLMAN: Hi. My name
22 is Peter Mehlman.

23 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: I'm sorry.
24 Mr. Mehlman, could we -- we want you at the
25 one we can see you at. Thank you.

1 PETER MEHLMAN: I live at 1
2 Overhill Road --

3 A VOICE: Come over here.

4 PETER MEHLMAN: How's this?

5 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: If I could
6 ask you to get by the mic, so we can get you
7 on the record.

8 PETER MEHLMAN: Fine.

9 Hi, my name is Peter Mehlman.

10 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you.

11 PETER MEHLMAN: I live at 1
12 Overhill Road, West Hartford.

13 My entire southern exposure of
14 my property is this development's northern
15 border of the property. And I have greatly,
16 greatly endorsed this by David because a lot
17 of my friends at our age have retired. We're
18 looking to do the terrific job of downsizing,
19 and we honestly want to stay in the area, and
20 we certainly don't want to be going into
21 apartments.

22 I have attended all the
23 meetings David has had, and myself and my
24 wife are very excited about moving into one
25 of these. I think it would be a great, great

1 thing to bring to my town. Thank you.

2 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you
3 Mr. Mehlman.

4 And rather than mispronounced
5 this name, because I cannot unfortunately
6 read the handwriting. It is the resident of
7 17 Farmstead Lane. Come up. I apologize.

8 JEFF RHEINER: My handwriting
9 isn't that bad, Mr. Mayor.

10 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Well, mine
11 is equally bad, so we're in good company.

12 JEFF RHEINER: Hi. My name is
13 Jeff Rheiner from 17 Farmstead Lane.

14 MR. SOLLI: That's you right
15 here.

16 JEFF RHEINER: Seventeen,
17 right there. Yeah, that's my property. As
18 you can see, I abut right up against where
19 the additional parking spaces are and the
20 dumpster area, the left side of the dumpster
21 area, I guess, the left two dumpsters.

22 My meetings with David have
23 been positive. I think it's going to be a
24 nice addition to the neighborhood. He's
25 agreed in our discussions, and in the plan it

1 shows that the plantings around are going to
2 be well buffering the dumpsters. My biggest
3 problem, it was the dumpster pickup. Over by
4 where the dumpsters are currently in this
5 bottom corner near where the parking spaces
6 are, where the existing old garage is, when
7 that dumpster truck comes in it's very loud.
8 Sometimes it's very early in the morning, as
9 well as the dumpsters in back of McDonald's
10 and Staples. Sometimes they are there at
11 four o'clock, five o'clock, six o'clock a.m.
12 And during the summer, when the windows are
13 open or the spring, the windows are open,
14 beep, beep, beep. And we've contacted the
15 property management over there. They've done
16 their best to curtail that, but to no avail.
17 It still happens.

18 He's agreed to make sure that
19 that doesn't happen by prearranging the
20 pickup times, which is more than satisfactory
21 to me and my family. I think he's gone --
22 he's done about everything he can to satisfy
23 everybody. I think it's a well-maintained
24 plan. I don't have a problem with it, and I
25 know Kevin Kobelski, at the other house --

1 the other neighbor to the right, far right
2 corner doesn't have a problem. He's helping
3 us out with additional plantings. So I think
4 it's a good project, and it's going to make
5 the neighborhood that much better.

6 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you
7 Mr. Rheiner.

8 That concluded the sign-up
9 sheet. Is there anybody who did not sign up
10 to speak who wished to speak to this
11 application?

12 (No response.)

13 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay. Then
14 with that, we're back to the applicant. If
15 we have anything further. Ms. Pearson, I
16 have one question. It's not about the
17 substance of the application. I'm just not
18 recalling right now if it was addressed. I
19 believe there is a request for a waiver of
20 the application fee in this. If you could
21 explain that.

22 MS. PEARSON: Oh, good point.
23 I actually forgot about that myself.

24 Because we filed the original
25 application and paid the fee with that

1 application, and we just hope that you will,
2 out of the kindness of your heart, allow us
3 not to have to submit an additional
4 application fee because the public hearing
5 was never held and it just seems like the
6 right thing to do.

7 So if you will honor that
8 request, we'd appreciate it. So you have
9 been paid an application fee. We just ask
10 that it be applied to the reapplication.

11 Thank you.

12 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Understood.
13 Thank you.

14 Mr. Barnes, it looks like you
15 have a question.

16 COUNCILOR BARNES: What is the
17 amount of the fee, if you know?

18 MS. PEARSON: I'll find it for
19 you. 2500, you think it was. Is that it?

20 COUNCILOR BARNES: Great.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. PEARSON: I don't recall.
23 I'd have to check with the application for
24 sure.

25 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Perhaps we

1 have someone who works for the town who might
2 know.

3 MR. VAN WINKLE: He wrote the
4 check.

5 MS. PEARSON: It was either 25
6 or 26 hundred, according to our engineer.

7 COUNCILOR BARNES: That's
8 fine. We don't need an exact number.

9 MS. PEARSON: Close enough?

10 COUNCILOR BARNES: I was
11 wondering if it was \$50 or --

12 MS. PEARSON: Oh, no, no, no.
13 It was a sizable application fee.

14 COUNCILOR BARNES: Very good.
15 Thank you.

16 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Mrs. Hall
17 has a question.

18 COUNCILOR HALL: Just out of
19 curiosity, and one of the residents brought
20 it to my mind. I know we're putting in the
21 two handicapped spots. Are we also -- are
22 plans for the two new buildings include
23 handicapped accessible bathrooms and that
24 type of thing? Because I know with so much
25 of our stock in West Hartford, so old,

1 finding good handicap accessible living is
2 tough. So I'm just curious on that.

3 MR. SOLLI: Yes. The -- in
4 accordance with the building code we are
5 providing accessible units. Actually, the
6 end units in the easterly building, both end
7 units are fully accessible.

8 COUNCILOR HALL: Thank you.

9 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Mr. Needham.

10 COUNCIL ALT. NEEDHAM: Yes.
11 Just so the handicapped spot on the bottom
12 unit. Is that a dedicated handicap spot, so
13 if a handicapped person doesn't live in that
14 apartment?

15 MR. SOLLI: It is. To comply
16 with the ADA, and provide the minimum of one
17 handicapped parking spaces, we did have to
18 provide one handicapped parking space and we
19 did align that with an accessible unit.

20 COUNCIL ALT. NEEDHAM: But
21 just to be clear, I mean, so someone who is
22 handicapped has to live in that unit because
23 that's right behind their driveway, correct,
24 or their garage?

25 MR. SOLLI: They don't -- I'll

1 wait for Attorney Pearson.

2 COUNCIL ALT. NEEDHAM: Otherwi
3 se there's only four in response.

4 MS. PEARSON: There is no
5 legal requirement that somebody be
6 handicapped and to live in that particular
7 unit, but we're expecting that it might be
8 desirable in terms of, you know, overall
9 interest in this community.

10 As you heard, you know, people
11 who are looking to downsize and maybe a
12 little more elderly would like a unit like
13 that, but it is in front of the unit, a unit
14 that's been prepared to be accessible.

15 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: All right.
16 Thank you.

17 Anything further?

18 Mr. Davidoff?

19 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Sorry,
20 Mr. Mayor. One further question.

21 Once the property gets
22 subdivided and the owners of the townhomes
23 take ownership of those parcels, will they
24 also -- will there be a homeowners
25 association created?

1 MS. PEARSON: Correct, there
2 will be.

3 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: And part
4 of the homeowners association -- I just to
5 make sure I get it on the record -- is that
6 they're going to be responsible for the storm
7 water management infrastructure in terms of
8 the maintenance schedule and everything else
9 for that, because this will not be a town
10 road?

11 MS. PEARSON: That is correct.

12 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: I just
13 wanted to get that on the record.

14 Thank you.

15 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Anyone
16 else?

17 (No response.)

18 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay.
19 Ms. Pearson, back to you. If you have
20 nothing further?

21 MS. PEARSON: No, we have
22 nothing further to add. Thank you very much.
23 We hope you'll approve the application.

24 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you.
25 With that, we will close the public hearing.

1 (Whereupon, the above
2 proceedings were adjourned at 8:07 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

1
2 I hereby certify that the foregoing 81
3 pages are a complete and accurate
4 computer-aided transcription of my original
5 verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing in
6 Re: APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF DHR NORTH MAIN
7 STREET, LLC ("DHR"), CONTRACT PURCHASER AND
8 INTENDED DEVELOPER, AND SANDRA G. MITCHELL
9 AND ANTOINETTE F. HENNING, CO-OWNERS OF 747
10 NORTH MAIN STREET TO CONSTRUCT A MULTI-FAMILY
11 DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF 10 TOWNHOME UNITS
12 WITHIN 2 NEW BUILDINGS, AND UPGRADE THE
13 EXISTING 12-UNIT APARTMENT STRUCTURE, ALL
14 WITH ATTENDANT PARKING, LANDSCAPING, LIGHTING
15 AND SIGNAGE AT 747 NORTH MAIN STREET, held
16 before the West Hartford Town Council, at
17 Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Room 314,
18 West Hartford, Connecticut, on January 13,
19 2015.

20
21
22 -----
23 Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857
24 Notary Public
25 UNITED REPORTERS, INC.
90 Brainard Road, Suite 103
Hartford, Connecticut 06114

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