

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION SITE PLAN REVIEW

RE: 95 HAMILTON STREET, Site Plan Review for 9,000 SF Youth Center in Existing Building in a RM-1 Zone (Owner/Applicant: Church on the Rock-New Haven Inc.).

REPORT: 1440-13

ADVICE: Approval with conditions.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. The Site Plan is approved for a period of five years, and the approval will expire if the project is not completed by June 16, 2015.
2. Comments under **Site Plan Review** on page 4 shall be reviewed with the City Plan Department, addressed with the appropriate City Department and changes incorporated in final plan set, prior to circulation of plans for sign off.
3. The applicant shall record on the City land records an original copy of this Site Plan Review report (to be provided by the City Plan Department) and shall furnish written evidence that the document has been so recorded (showing volume and page number) to the City Plan Department, prior to City Plan signoff on final plans for building permit.
4. Signoff on final plans by City Engineer, Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking and City Plan Department in that order shall be obtained prior to initiation of site work or issuance of building permit. The Fire Marshal and GNHWPCA shall also review the plans.
5. Final determination of traffic markings, V-loc locations, signs and traffic controls on site and on the perimeter of the site will be subject to the approval of the Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking (TTP).
6. Site Logistics Plan including any temporary closures of the public right of way, construction worker parking, and the like shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking, prior to TTP signoff on Final Plans.
7. Any proposed work within City right-of-way will require separate permits.
8. Any sidewalks damaged during the construction period shall be replaced to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works and in accord with standard City details.
9. Following completion of construction, any City catch basins in the public right-of-way impacted by the project shall be cleaned, prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy.
10. As-built site plan shall be filed with City Plan Department, prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy. Site Plan shall be submitted in both Mylar and digital format [TIFF file based on the State Plane Coordinates (NAD1983)]. Note the version of AutoCAD for the drawing files being submitted.

Submission: Development Permit application (4/22/10) Todd C. Foster for Church on the Rock, Fee of \$240, New Haven Project Narrative, Site Plan with Location Map, Building Plans and Elevations Sheets A.1.2 through A.7.1; also, Demolition, Mechanical, Plumbing and Electrical Plans. Parking Study from Traffic Engineering Solutions, P.C. (revised to 5/13/10) analyzing on-site and adjacent on-street parking capacities and utilization rates.

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Project: Site Plan Review for 9,000 s.f. youth center
Address: 95 Hamilton Street
Zone: IL

Property Owner/ Applicant:

Church on the Rock- New Haven Inc.

Agent: Sam DeFrancesco

Site Architect: Bernard J. Lombardi

City Lead: City Plan Department

Phone: 203-498-2687

Phone: 203-272- 1701

Phone: 203-457-1147

Zoning History:

- Granted Use Variance to permit a community youth center in a Light Industrial (IL) District, June 8, 2010 (BZA File #10-12V).
- Granted Special Exception to permit zero parking spaces where 26 spaces are required in conjunction with a proposed youth center in a Light Industrial District, April, 2010(BZA File 10-13-S).
- Granted Use Variance for a 1,140 seat church in a Light Industrial (IL) District, May 11, 1999 (BZA File #99-14-V).
- Granted Special Exceptions to permit joint use of parking spaces at 75 Hamilton Street, 102 Hamilton Street, 110 Hamilton Street (400 feet walking distance) and 444 Chapel Street (600 feet walking distance) for 1,140 seat church, May 11, 1999 (BZA File #'s 99-13-S, 99-15-S, 99-16-S, 99-17-S and 99-18-S).
- Denied Use Variance for 60 bed residential dormitory in an existing rehabilitation center in a Light Industrial (IL) District, September 2, 1997 (BZA File #97-55-V).
- Granted variance to allow site parking and loading to back over a City sidewalk, December 10, 1985 (BZA File #85-185-V).
- Granted Special Exception for to allow 75 parking spaces for 150 employees, December 10, 1985 (BZA File # 85-184-S).

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this application is to create a 9,000 s.f. youth center in an existing 60,000 s.f. two story structure on a 1.397 acre property located in a Light Industrial (IL) District at 95 Hamilton Street. The property has frontage on Hamilton Street to the west, Ives Place to the north and Wallace Street to the east. The applicant has received a Use Variance to permit this use in a Light Industrial (IL) District as well as a Special Exception to permit zero parking spaces where 26 spaces are required.

The structure currently houses the Church on the Rock and an Easter Seals/Goodwill Rehabilitation Facility. The church also received a Use Variance and Special Exceptions for parking in 1999. This proposed youth center will be located on the easternmost portion of the first floor of the structure currently used for warehousing and materials processing by Easter Seals/Goodwill. The remainder of the first floor will continue to be occupied by the church.

Project Site

As noted above, the site is located at the intersections of Hamilton Street, Wallace Street and Ives Place. The structure is located on the northern two-thirds of the site with its southernmost portion devoted to approximately 30 existing on-site parking spaces. It is surrounded by properties whose uses are largely reflective of its IL zoning, e.g., warehousing, wholesale merchandising and supply, and associated commercial office use. I-91 is located approximately 300 feet away to the west and an industrial rail line and the Mill River are located approximately 600 and 900 feet respectively to the east of the site.

To the immediate south 95 Hamilton Street there is a property (75 Hamilton Street) of similar size with a structure of nearly the same footprint that has its on-site parking located on the northern portion of the site, contiguous to and physically connected to that of 95 Hamilton. There is a 40 foot wide surface easement that runs east to west (20 feet on each property) between this property and 75 Hamilton Street that allows for rights to pass for each of the two properties. The eastern and western termini of this easement each feature a shared curb cut and access way onto Wallace

and Hamilton Streets respectively. It appears as though the purpose of this area of “cross easement” may have been to enhance accessibility of the two contiguous parking areas.

Proposed Activity

The proposed 9,000 s.f. youth center will include classrooms ranging in size from less than 200 s.f. to almost 1500 s.f. in area, a 1,200 s.f. arts and entertainment space, fitness rooms, a computer center/library, administrative space, and even a small café. While there will be secondary interior access to the center from Ives Place on its north side and from Wallace Street on its east, primary interior access will be located in the southeast corner of the building adjacent to the parking lot. There will be a pick-up and drop off area located in this corner large enough for a school bus to operate with a reasonable degree of safety. The number of on site parking spaces have actually been reduced to 21 (from 30) in order to move all parking out of the common easement area. The intent of this measure is to minimize any traffic related impact on the parking lot and loading areas at 75 Hamilton Avenue.

The primary use of the facility will be as an after school Youth Center with a staff of five. It will serve between 45 and 65 students from nearby K through 6 or K through 8 schools. They will be transported by bus, parents, or they will walk to the center. It will operate between the hours of 3:00pm and 6:00pm Monday through Friday. In addition, there will be occasional auditorium events on weekday evenings and early afternoons. There will be a single parents program three days a week from 10:00am to 2:00pm with an estimated enrollment of twelve to fifteen people. Also under consideration is a daytime skills and education program for homeless people. Finally, an existing Summer Youth program currently operating from the church may be expanded from 50 to 75 high school age people. The onsite portion of this program will run from approximately 9:30am to 1:00pm.

Circulation and Parking

As noted above onsite parking and circulation will consist of approximately 22 spaces, including four handicapped spaces and a pick up and drop off area for a school bus size vehicle. A disability entrance ramp will also be installed in the drop-off area.

A parking study by Traffic Engineering Solutions, P.C dated 5/13/10 provided evidence of the fact that there are sufficient numbers of underutilized on street parking spaces in the immediate area to accommodate anticipated traffic from this proposed use. In fact, in the final sentence of the report the author asserts that “The Youth Center will have less impact on parking and traffic than the warehouse use that previously occupied the same space that will be occupied by the Youth Center”.

Utilities/Stormwater Management/ Soil Erosion and Sediment Control

As there is no increase in impermeable coverage and no additional utilities work, no sedimentation and erosion control plan is required.

Public Hearing

At the June 16, 2010 public hearing Attorney John Parese introduced the application and submitted letters of support from Mayor John DeStefano, Dr. Reginald Mayo, and Richard Borer, President of Easter Seal Goodwill Industries. He noted the site plan reflected reopening of a City right of way through the site which resulted in fewer parking spaces, and they were implementing measures to make up for the lost spaces. Architect Bernard Lombardi submitted photographs of the relevant side of the building and presented the site plan and architectural plans. He said encroachments of bus turning movements onto private property would be removed from the plan.

Phil Bleich, owner of 75 Hamilton Street next door, testified that he had no problem with night or summer use of the Center but that his tenants complained constantly of parking and circulation conflicts. He hoped the improvements would alleviate the conflicts.

Sixteen other persons spoke in favor of the application noting the need for youth programs, that children would be dropped off by parents or by bus, and that the proposed improvements would be successful to handle any traffic or parking concerns.

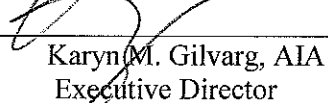
Site Plan Review Requirements

- Accessibility ramps must be 5 feet wide.
- Signage for Disability Van space.
- Clear marking of easement area (both properties) as a “No Parking Area”
- To prevent encroachment of bus traffic upon neighboring private property at 75 Hamilton Street, bus traffic shall be one way from Wallace to Hamilton Street.

ACTION

The City Plan Commission adopts the submitted Site Plans subject to the standard conditions (see page 1).

ADOPTED: June 16, 2010
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director