



**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023**

45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604
(203) 576-7217 Phone
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ATTENDANCE: Robin Shepard, Acting Chair; Tiheba Bain, Greg Breland, Mary Gaits, Paul Miller

OTHERS: Paul Boucher, Zoning Official; Atty. Russ Liskov; Jackson Strong, Design Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

D-1. 46 Beatrice St. – Petition of Franz, LLC – Seeking under 14-54 of the CTGS a certificate of location approval for MV repair and a variance of sec. 2.80 to allow for custom build vehicles in the existing, non-conforming workshop building in the NX2 zone.

Atty. Russo came forward and greeted the Commissioners. He said that his client was requesting a location approval for customer build vehicles which is categorized as motor vehicle repairs. Customization businesses have been increasing. Some of these custom builds can take up to a year. All work will be done inside and stored inside. It is not an intense use.

It is an existing site and there will not be any changes to the building. It is in an industrial area it there are some residences in the area. Atty. Russo distributed a floor plan to the Commissioners and reviewed where the different types of work would be done. There will only be the owner and two employees working there. Other than the vehicles owners coming to check on their vehicles, there will not be much additional traffic.

Atty. Russo distributed copies of the industrial uses of the building. It is not a car wash and it is not car repair. He also distributed copies of an aerial view of the property with the previous conditions and a photo of one of the custom built vehicles. The owner has removed the barbed wire and repaired the fence. The excess vehicles have been removed and the paving has been repaired.

Commissioner Miller asked if Atty. Russo had seen the recommendation s that Mr. Strong had made. Atty. Russo said that they were not expanding the parking area or the storage areas. He said that they would be happy to install some screening where the property abuts the residences.

Commissioner Miller asked about the sidewalk on Read Street. Atty. Russo said that he did not anticipate foot traffic along Beatrice Street but the bus station was on Read Street. Atty. Russo said that he had contacted the NRZ and that there was no issue.

Commissioner Gaits asked about the ventilation system. Atty. Russo said that they have a structure that contains the painting portion.

Commissioner Gaits asked if they had done a study on pedestrians walking to the bus station by Beatrice Street. Atty. Russo said that they had not done a study and noted that he was not sure that the property owners would be able to meet the City sidewalk standards.

Mr. Jackson Strong, the Design Coordinator, came forward and said that the application had been reviewed. He said that Atty. Russo was correct that the provision don't apply to this application. However, he is still recommending the provisions. While this property has been blighted for a long time, this was a different use. He said that the barbed wire had been addressed. It is good to hear that the client will agree to the landscaping and that the outside will not be utilized for long term parking. The sidewalk requirements would apply but the applicant is not making any external changes.

Commissioner Shepard asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. Commissioner Shepard asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition to the application.

Atty. Russo said that when the regulations were updated, there was no provision for this type of change of use or development. The client is simply trying to occupy an existing building. The client has cleaned up the site and made a vast improvement.

Atty. Russo said that he could understand having the sidewalk if it was connecting residences, but Beatrice Street basically ends at the bus station. This is a minimal use for an industrial site.

ITEM D-2 (#2) RE: 4 SEABRIGHT AVENUE – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.60.9 to permit live entertainment associated with the existing membership club in the RX1 zone.

Atty. Chris Russo came forward and gave a brief overview of the Swedish Singing Society of the Norden Inc. This group was founded in 1902 and he indicated where the Club was located on an aerial photograph. They are requesting live entertainment in the rear of the building. There will be no outside performances.

Mr. Strong came forward to speak about the review of the application and cautioned the Board Members to consider what might happen if the property was eventually sold.

Commissioner Shepard asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application.

Ms. Vangele who resides at 53 Seabright Avenue, came forward and said the music there is joyful and draws people into the club. The more people that come in, the more that the group has to contribute.

Commissioner Shepard asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition to the application. No one came forward. She repeated the call two more times with no response.

Atty. Russo came forward for rebuttal. He said that most of the music will take place in the building, but there will be special events that they will apply for separately. The number of occupants would be restricted by the Fire Marshal. The Hours would be from 3 p.m. To 11 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Commissioner Bain asked about the decibel levels of the music. Atty. Russo said that it would be controlled by the Health Department.

ITEM #1 RE: 149 HOLLY STREET – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.90.5 to allow for 2-driveways per building and a variance of sec. 3.90.8 of the minimum transparency of 18% required for the 1st floor front façade in the NX2 zone.

Mr. Kevin Moore of Habitat of Fairfield County came forward and gave a brief overview of the Habitat program. He said that they have been working in Bridgeport since 1985 and are requesting a side by side two family home. The homes are sold as condos. He said that the current code does not allow for two driveways. They are requesting a variance for the second drive way and also a variance on the minimum transparency on the front facade.

Commissioner Bain asked why they needed two driveways. Mr. Moore explained that since both units are separately owned, they are trying to get the vehicles to have off street parking.

Commissioner Miller asked for clarification on the transparency requirement. Mr. Moore said that it was 18% transparency per floor.

Commissioner Breland pointed out that the driveways were right up to the property line. Mr. Moore said that the driveway doesn't count in the setback.

Mr. Strong came forward and said that he had reviewed the application. He said that they had not made any additional recommendations.

Commissioner Shepard asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. She repeated her question two more times. There was no response. Commissioner Shepard asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in opposition to the application. She repeated her question two more times. Hearing no response, she closed the hearing at 7:02 p.m.

DECISION SESSION

46 Beatrice St. – Petition of Franz, LLC – Seeking under 14-54 of the CTGS a certificate of location approval for MV repair and a variance of sec. 2.80 to allow for custom build vehicles in the existing, non-conforming workshop building in the NX2 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-1 46 BEATRICE ST. – PETITION OF FRANZ, LLC – SEEKING UNDER 14-54 OF THE CTGS A CERTIFICATE OF LOCATION APPROVAL FOR MV REPAIR AND A VARIANCE OF SEC. 2.80 TO ALLOW FOR CUSTOM BUILD VEHICLES IN THE EXISTING, NON-CONFORMING WORKSHOP BUILDING IN THE NX2 ZONE.**

**** COMMISSIONER GAITS SECONDED.**

A discussion followed as to whether or not the installation of a sidewalk was needed on Beatrice Street.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-1 46 BEATRICE ST. – PETITION OF FRANZ, LLC – SEEKING UNDER 14-54 OF THE CTGS A CERTIFICATE OF LOCATION APPROVAL FOR MV REPAIR AND A VARIANCE OF SEC. 2.80 TO ALLOW FOR CUSTOM BUILD VEHICLES IN THE EXISTING, NON-CONFORMING WORKSHOP BUILDING IN THE NX2 ZONE FAILED TO PASS WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR SHEPARD, BRELAND AND MILLER) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (BAIN AND GAITS).**

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-1 46 BEATRICE ST. – PETITION OF FRANZ, LLC – SEEKING UNDER 14-54 OF THE CTGS A CERTIFICATE OF LOCATION APPROVAL FOR MV REPAIR AND A VARIANCE OF SEC. 2.80 TO ALLOW FOR CUSTOM BUILD VEHICLES IN THE EXISTING, NON-CONFORMING WORKSHOP BUILDING IN THE NX2 ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. BARBED WIRE IS PROHIBITED.**
- 2. A LANDSCAPE SCREEN CONSISTING OF ARBORVITAE WILL BE PLANTED ALONG THE WEST PROPERTY LINE ABUTTING THE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.**
- 3. THE PAINT SPRAY BOOTH SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED TO ELIMINATE PARTICULATE MATTER AND ODORS FROM ESCAPING THE BUILDING.**
- 4. THERE WILL BE NO OUTSIDE STORAGE OF EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, OR VEHICLE PARTS.**
- 5. A SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTED TO CITY STANDARDS SHALL BE INSTALLED ON REED STREET.**

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

City of Bridgeport
Zoning Board of Appeals
Regular Meeting
January 10, 2023

- 1. NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD.**
- 2. THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH THE EXISTING BUILDING.**

**** COMMISSIONER GAITS SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ITEM D-2 (#2) RE: 4 SEABRIGHT AVENUE – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.60.9 to permit live entertainment associated with the existing membership club in the RX1 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER GAITS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-2 (#2) RE: 4 SEABRIGHT AVENUE – SEEKING A VARIANCE OF SEC. 3.60.9 TO PERMIT LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXISTING MEMBERSHIP CLUB IN THE RX1 ZONE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. AMPLIFIED AND ACOUSTIC MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT IS ALLOWED.**
- 2. THE BACK REAR OF THE BUILDING IS THE ALLOWED LOCATION OF THE ARTISTS.**
- 3. LIMITED TO FRIDAY’S FROM 3PM TO 11PM AND SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM NOON TO 11PM.**
- 4. A SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR ANY OUTDOOR EVENTS.**
- 5. NO ADULT ENTERTAINMENT.**

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MEMBERSHIP CLUB.**
- 2. THE HOURS ALLOWED ARE A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD.**

**** COMMISSIONER BRELAND SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ITEM #1 RE: 149 HOLLY STREET – Seeking a variance of sec. 3.90.5 to allow for 2-driveways per building and a variance of sec. 3.90.8 of the minimum transparency of 18% required for the 1st floor front façade in the NX2 zone.

**** COMMISSIONER BAIN MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM #1 RE: 149 HOLLY STREET – SEEKING A VARIANCE OF SEC. 3.90.5 TO ALLOW FOR 2-DRIVEWAYS PER BUILDING AND A VARIANCE OF SEC. 3.90.8 OF THE MINIMUM TRANSPARENCY OF 18% REQUIRED FOR THE 1ST FLOOR FRONT FAÇADE IN THE NX2 ZONE with the following CONDITION:**

THE PROPERTY AND BUILDING WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY DEVELOPED

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PLANS ON FILE.

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. PROVIDES REASONABLE PARKING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR OWNERS.**
- 2. NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD.**

- ** COMMISSIONER SHEPARD SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no additional business to consider at this time.

OTHER MATTERS THAT MAY PROPERTYLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD

There were no other matters to consider at this time.

MINUTES

- August 10, 2022**

A quorum was not present to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2022 meeting

- October 11, 2022**

A quorum was not present to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022 meeting.

- November 9, 2022**

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2022 MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER GAITS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2022 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- December 13, 2022**

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2022 MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER BRELAND SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2022 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER MILLER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER BAIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services