

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
APRIL 1, 2015**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Andy Kidd, Acting Chair
 Horace Brown, Secretary
 Susan Shanbaum
 Michael Stebe

Alternates: Julian Stoppelman
 Pat Kennedy (Sitting)

Absent: Eric Prause, Chair
 Teresa Ike

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
 Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
 Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner
 Karen Logan, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m. The Secretary read the legal notice for the application when the call was made.

CENTRO BRADLEY MANCHESTER I, LLC – For a proposed change of 38,688 +/- sq. ft. from Land Use Type I to Land Use Type VI for a proposed indoor recreation facility in Land Use Area “A” at 49 Pavilions Drive – CUD Preliminary and Detailed Site Development Plan Modification (2015-023)

Attorney John Knuff, 147 Broad Street, Milford, CT spoke on behalf of the owner of the property at 49 Pavilions Drive. Attorney Knuff indicated that his client was proposing to convert the existing retail building into an Edge Health Club. There was no expansion and no site plan modifications proposed for the property, except for the proposed change of roof color from blue to red. Attorney Knuff reported that there are currently 493 parking spaces available for use at the site, which meets the parking requirements under the zoning regulations for the current and proposed land use types.

Attorney Knuff also detailed a trip generation report that had been prepared for the applicant. The report estimated 136 weekday afternoon peak hour trips and 180 Saturday morning peak hour trips, which is slightly higher than trip generation by small retail facilities in the “specialty retail center,” which is 115 trips during the weekday afternoon peak and 150 trips during the Saturday morning peak hour, he said.

Mr. Kidd asked Attorney Knuff to review the elevations of the building. Mr. Steven Iovanna, Architect, illustrated the details of the building elevations. He reiterated the proposed change of roof color and indicated that they planned to power wash the façade.

Mr. Kidd called for questions from the Commission members. He then asked staff to review the

different requirements for land uses and provide some background on the logic behind different land use types in the CUD zone.

Mr. Pellegrini explained that when the CUD zone regulations were adopted the various land use types were established to provide greater flexibility in development while retaining oversight within the regulations. Because of the way the regulations are written, applicants must come before the Planning & Zoning Commission if they wish to change land use types.

Ms. Shanbaum asked Attorney Knuff if the ten other Edge Health Club locations around the state were comparable in size to the proposed Manchester location. Attorney Knuff responded that they are comparable. He added that the flagship location is in Fairfield with approximately 40,000 sq. ft. of space. Ms. Shanbaum asked how many members there were in total and whether members belonged to specific locations or if they could visit any location they wished. Attorney Knuff was not sure of the total membership number and stated that once a member belongs to one location, they can visit any location.

Ms. Shanbaum asked about peak times for the club. Attorney Knuff said that peak hours are early morning and early evening workweek hours and Saturday mornings.

Ms. Shanbaum asked about the traffic study report. Attorney Knuff summarized the traffic report prepared by Fred Greenburg of BL Companies, stating that the report compared trip generation of health clubs vs. shopping centers and found that the two are comparable.

Mr. Stebe asked whether the existing parking lot lighting is sufficient for increased traffic during evening hours. The architect, Mr. Iovanna, reported that he had been at the location late in the day and felt the lighting was sufficient. Mr. Stebe further asked about whether the increased traffic using the access road from Home Depot through to Pavilions Drive was a concern. Mr. Bill Grime, representing the owner and in charge of construction for the north region, assured the Commission that safety and lighting were primary concerns and that if the lighting in this location needed to be changed, the owners would take care of it. Attorney Knuff further noted that Manchester's traffic engineer did not call out a concern about traffic.

Mr. Stebe then asked about access points for the handicapped and what kind of accommodations were available. Mr. Pellegrini pointed to the handicapped parking spot on the previously approved plan and noted that the approved plan meets the zoning regulations and there are no proposed changes. The applicant's proposal is simply to change the approved land use types on this site from Land Use Type I to Land Use Type VI, and the Town staff has not identified zoning matters that needed attention, Mr. Pellegini said.

Mr. Stoppelman asked for confirmation that the 493 parking spaces available included spaces around Pier 1, Hobby Lobby and Sleepy's, and Mr. Pellegrini replied that this is correct.

Mr. Kidd asked staff if Mr. Mayer had a chance to review the report. Ms. Bertotti indicated that he had reviewed the plan and the report. He did not have concerns regarding streets' capacity to carry additional traffic, but he had requested that a sign currently on the site be changed from "Keep Right" to "Right Turn Only."

Mr. Kidd asked if any member of the public wished to comment either in favor of or in opposition to this application.

Mr. Justin Santangelo of 183 Oak Forest Drive presented his objections to locating a health club at this site. His first objection was that the proposed location was too small to accommodate a health club, with only a limited number of parking spaces. The lack of adequate parking would place the public at risk because of cars parking on roadways and it would endanger pedestrians in the plaza, Mr. Santangelo said.

Mr. Santangelo added that the applicant's health club will increase traffic on Pavilions Drive and he said the Commission should request a study by the State traffic administration to determine what effect the addition of a health club will have on traffic patterns. He noted that there were documented complaints about traffic patterns at other Edge facilities in the state.

Mr. Santangelo distributed pictures of parking problems at other Edge facilities, as well as copies of an article from The Connecticut Post dealing with difficulties that have arisen at other Edge facilities in the State.

Finally, Mr. Santangelo concluded, at the exit of the parking lot, there is a sign indicating "Right Turn." However, Mr. Santangelo said some drivers do make a left turn out of the parking lot, as this is physically possible. He said this has led to many accidents in this location, according to Manchester Police reports.

Mr. Santangelo called into question the identity of the applicant, stating that he was unable to determine who the owner of this facility is after numerous searches on internet web sites. For all of these reasons, Mr. Santangelo called on the Commission to delay approving the zoning change until more thorough studies could be conducted in the public interest.

Mr. Kidd thanked Mr. Santangelo for his presentation and comments before the Commission, and asked if there were any other people who wished to speak. Hearing none, Mr. Kidd asked Attorney Knuff if he cared to respond to the comments made by Mr. Santangelo.

Attorney Knuff reported that some of the issues raised by Mr. Santangelo had already been discussed. He noted that the available parking exceeds the requirements of the zoning regulations as discussed earlier. Additionally, he said OSTA (the State's traffic administration authority) has already issued a certificate for the entire Buckland Hills Mall area, which has been in effect for a number of years. As far as the question about the ownership of the property, he said Centro Bradley is the owner in good standing and has the authority submit the application to the Commission.

Attorney Knuff went on to say that the only comments from the town's traffic engineer were that the sign exiting the parking lot needs to be changed to "Right Turn Only" and that the club might need more than the required number of spaces. Both of these conditions have been met and, in the case of the parking spaces, exceeded. The owners also contacted the Town of South Windsor regarding the increased use of water and sewer facilities and have an email stating that the water and sewer are both sufficient to support a health club at this location.

Mr. Kidd thanked all the parties for attending the hearing and moved to close the Public Hearing. Mr. Stebe seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chairman closed the public hearing at 7:43 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

June 15, 2015

Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

**NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN
BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.**