PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY
R-6 Zoning Study
Greenwich, CT
Workshop Date: January 19, 2017

Prepared on behalf of:

The Town of Greenwich
Department of Planning & Zoning
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I. Introduction

On January 19, 2017, the Greenwich Planning & Zoning Commission hosted a second public workshop for the R-6 Zoning Study in the Town Hall Meeting Room. The workshop focused on identifying some of the key issues that the study is seeking to address, and presenting preliminary zoning recommendations to the public. Notification of the workshop was sent to each property owner within the R-6 zone. Approximately 40 stakeholders, including residents as well as developers, were in attendance.

Planning and Zoning Director Katie DeLuca opened the workshop, introducing the study and members of the consultant team. BFJ Planning, the consultant, presented a brief background of the project and the objectives, the importance of the R-6 zone, key issues to address, and preliminary recommendations.

During a brief coffee break, attendees had the opportunity to speak directly with the consultants, Town staff and members of the P&Z Commission about the study’s initial recommendations. This was followed by an open discussion for the consultants and attendees to talk together about the recommendations. After approximately an hour of discussion, the formal meeting ended, but the project team remained to discuss attendees’ individual concerns and questions. Comments raised during the meeting are summarized in the following section.
II. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Allowing two-family as a permitted use on lots larger than 8,400 square feet
This recommendation was the focus of most of the discussion. Some participants felt the change would not go far enough, and that two-family dwellings should be a permitted use, regardless of lot size. Others felt that the recommendation would amount to an increase in the minimum lot size for a two-family dwelling, which would be an issue since many lots do not meet the current minimum. The consultants explained that there would be no change to the existing minimum lot size for two-family dwellings; rather, the recommendation seeks to make things easier for owners with larger lots. Some attendees felt that the change would not actually improve the situation for many people, since few lots are larger than 8,400 square feet. Several participants questioned the logic of the 8,400-square-foot threshold, as it is based on the minimum per-unit lot area requirement for multifamily in the R-6, and multifamily is now proposed to be eliminated. A threshold of 7,500 square feet (the current minimum lot size for single- and two-family dwellings) was suggested instead. Participants also requested more data on the percentage of undersized lots (less than 7,500 square feet) by neighborhood, to better assess the relative impact of the recommendation.

Elimination of multifamily as a permitted use in the R-6 zone
Some attendees, mainly homeowners, welcomed the change, supporting preservation of a single- and two-family character for the R-6. Other participants were concerned that the recommendation would affect the diversity of housing in Greenwich, potentially reducing affordability, and would also limit development options for property owners, possibly lowering their property value.

Allowance of tandem and back-out parking and administrative site plan for minor alterations
Attendees were supportive of these proposed changes to streamline the review process and promote parking design that can reduce paved areas and parking in the front yard.
III. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The next steps in the R-6 Zoning Study process include additional meetings with the Planning & Zoning Commission, Town staff and BFJ to refine the zoning recommendations based on public input. The team will then draft the full set of zoning revisions for presentation at a public hearing and consideration for adoption by the Commission.