

Appraisal Analysis
for
Westport Planning and Zoning Commission
Special Permit Application
for Proposed Redevelopment
of the Westport/Weston YMCA Family Facility
at
Sunny Lane, Westport, Connecticut

Value Impairment Analysis – Adjacent Area Properties

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Westport Planning and Zoning Commission
Westport Town hall
110 Myrtle Avenue
Westport, Connecticut 06880

**Re: Special Permit Application –
Redevelopment of the Westport/Weston Family YMCA Facility
Sunny Lane, Westport, Connecticut 06880**

Value Impairment Analysis – Adjacent Area Properties

Dear Commission Members:

The Westport/Weston Family YMCA (herein 'Y') is proposing to redevelop their Camp Mahackeno property, which is situated at the east end of Sunny Lane, in the north-west section of Westport, adjacent to, and south of, the Merritt Parkway.

The recorded ownership of the 'Y' property is the Young Mens Christian Association of Westport/Weston, Connecticut, Inc.

The primary site area of the 'Y' property is 25.92 Acres, the boundaries of which include the Merritt Parkway to the north, and the Saugatuck River to the east. Access to this site is via Sunny Lane from the north (west), and Rice's Lane (at the junction with River Lane), to the south. In addition to the primary site area, there are approximately 6 Acres to the north-west in related ownership, which include three dwelling lots and a section of Sunny Lane. The combined area for these two contiguous parcels is, then, in the order of 32 Acres. The Saugatuck River flows into Lee's Pond to the south-east and, in addition to the preceding, the 'Y' owns the land under Lee's Pond, constituting another 15.44 Acres.

The Mahackeno campsite has been in the ownership of the 'Y' for approximately 65 years, over which time there have been a series of Special Permit approvals for recreational improvements, including structures and playing fields, interspersed throughout the site.

A new, two-story, centralized recreational facilities building is being proposed for the extreme north area of the primary site, with on-site parking to the west, off Sunny Lane, as shown on the Site Plan herein, prepared by *Land-Tech Consultants, Inc., Environmental Scientists and Engineers*, of Westport, Connecticut, and dated June 11, 2007. The new building would be situated north of Poplar Plains Brook (which runs easterly across subject site into the Saugatuck River) and is proposed to be built partially into the rising grade from this brook, with the remainder at the generally level grade to the north. The land south of the brook rises in a southerly direction toward moderately rolling land, part improved with playing fields, and other open recreational facilities.

The development plan for the new 'Y' facility includes making Sunny Lane the only access, closing off the Rice's Lane/River Lane access, except for emergency purposes. As this latter access has been the subject of periodic complaints from property owners on these streets regarding traffic, this closure would be to their benefit.

In order to accommodate the change in traffic conditions, the 'Y' has proposed to reconfigure the approach road to Sunny Lane, which is the connecting section of the Merritt Parkway accessway (exit 41) from Wilton Road, at which there are traffic lights. Furthermore, the 'Y' proposes to construct a paved driveway for access to the single-family dwellings at 8 and 10 Sunny Lane. Currently, access is via an unfinished, and severely-potholed, right-of-way, off Sunny Lane, which is in the ownership of the 'Y'. The proposed paved driveway would run southerly around the perimeter of the 'Y's on-site surface parking lot, and would be screened by natural foliage from this lot.

The primary site area is heavily wooded to the south-west and south-east, in the vicinity of adjacent residential properties with access off Twin Falls Lane and Rice's Lane. The remainder of the site is wooded around most of its perimeter.

Subject property is situated in the Residence AAA zone, which permits single-family dwellings on minimum 2-Acre lots. In this zone, recreational facilities are allowed by Special Permit. While there have been a succession of such permits validating the existing recreational use, the current proposal requires an additional Special Permit.

A Special Permit standard in the Westport Zoning Regulations is that the Commission shall consider *if a proposed use will not have a significant adverse effect on adjacent areas located within close proximity of the use* (Section 44, Paragraph 6[3]). It is appropriate to take into account, for the consideration of any adverse effect, that there already exists an on-site recreational use (albeit with less improvements than proposed), and that zoning would allow (effectively as of right) subdivision of the 'Y' property into approximately 12 parcels for single-family dwellings, interspersed throughout the property. Existing wooded buffer areas would inevitably be removed to accommodate dwellings for this latter use.

Another Special Permit standard (Section 44, Paragraph 6[8]) is that the Commission shall consider if the proposed use *will not obstruct significant views which are important elements in maintaining the character of the Town or neighborhood for the purpose of promoting the general welfare and conserving the value of buildings*. This standard is substantially encompassed by Section 44, Paragraph 6[3].

In addition to the preceding, there is a Site Plan standard that specifically refers to Landscaping and Screening (Section 44, Paragraph 5.4). This requires the Commission, when reviewing a Site Plan Application, to take into consideration if *the proposed development will protect the environmental quality of the site and will preserve and enhance the adjacent property values*. With respect to adjacent property values, this Site Plan standard specifically relates to Landscaping and Screening. Again, the overall impact on adjacent property values is encompassed by the Special Permit standard referenced (Section 44, Paragraph 6[3]).

In order to analyze the effect of the proposed 'Y' development, on adjacent properties, I have inspected subject property (most recently on December 10, 2007), reviewed the proposed Site Plan (and associated architectural drawings), and conducted an overview of neighboring areas, which included visiting all proximate streets. Included with this report is an Assessor's Tax Map Abstract, which shows the area studied.

To the west of Sunny Lane, on the south side of the junction of the Merritt Parkway accessway with Wilton Road, is the *Red Barn Restaurant*. Adjacent to the east of the Red Barn property, at 2 Sunny Lane, is a site owned by Cellco Partnership, on which a *Verizon* cell tower has been constructed.

Twin Falls Lane runs easterly off Wilton Road, approximately 500 feet south of the entranceway to the Merritt Parkway. Single-family dwellings on the north side of this street back up to either the *Red Barn* or the *Verizon* cell tower property. These locational influences have neither prevented new construction at 7 Twin Falls Lane (1.00 Acre site, with 1954 ranch-style dwelling, demolished after purchase for \$725,000 on 07/11/07), nor potential new construction at 11 Twin Falls Lane (2.09 Acres with pond/wetlands, and a 1940 Cape Cod style dwelling, demolished after purchase for \$700,000 on 07/06/07). The dwelling location on the latter site is to the west, with wetlands and a wooded area to the east, providing significant screening from the proposed on-site parking on subject property. The remaining properties to the east, and south, on Twin Falls Lane, would be well-screened by natural foliage from the proposed building on the 'Y' property.

Similarly, residential properties on Rice's Lane are well-screened (from the proposed building) by wooded areas contained mostly on the 'Y' property. Further, these properties, and those on River Lane would benefit, as noted, by the closing of the 'Y' property access from the south.

To the east of Lee's Pond are single-family dwellings which have pond frontage, and distant views of the 'Y' property across this pond. Those dwellings are on Richmondville Avenue, Calumet Road and Stone Drive. Two dwellings, at the west end of the latter cul-de-sac, are relatively close in proximity to the proposed 'Y' building, but are screened by heavy foliage to the west, on State-owned property east of the Saugatuck River. Views of the proposed 'Y' building would be substantially obscured during winter months, and almost totally obscured throughout the majority of the year.

The dwellings with Lee's Pond frontage farther south, on Calumet Road, have views across the pond at the south end of the 'Y' property, but are set back from having views of the proposed 'Y' building. On Richmondville Avenue, some dwellings look northerly across Lee's Pond, toward the location of the proposed 'Y' building, but this structure would be so far removed (approximately one-third of a mile) and partially obscured by foliage, that the visual impact would be minimal, in my opinion.

North of the Merritt Parkway, opposite subject site, are a few residential properties on the south side of Quarter Mile Road, at its east end. These properties share their southern boundaries with the Merritt Parkway, from which their dwellings are well-screened by natural foliage, in order to minimize the value impact of the Parkway proximity. This screening would also serve to substantially obscure the proposed 'Y' development on the south side of the Parkway.

In summary, then, it is my opinion that there would be no significant adverse effect (from the 'Y' development proposed) on the values of the residential properties referenced on Twin Falls Lane, Rice's Lane, Richmondville Avenue, Calumet Road, Stone Drive and Quarter Mile Road.

As noted herein, there are two residential properties: 8 Sunny Lane (owner – Fiorenza) and 10 Sunny Lane (owner – Lounsbury) which would be close to the south of the proposed on-site parking area serving the 'Y' facility. These, then, require special analysis in the context of the referenced Special Permit standard. Although both would benefit from a newly constructed driveway access, and there would be planted screening between this driveway and the parking area, the proximity of the parking area is an offsetting detriment, in my opinion.

In order to measure the impact of this proximity, I have prepared paired-sale analyses for single-family dwellings with similar parking area proximity. In a paired-sale analysis, a sold property with a specific detriment is compared with sales of similar properties that do not have this detriment, so that a measure of impact may be segregated. Insofar as the impact is measured on a percentage basis, the data analyzed is neither date, nor location, sensitive. In light of the difficulty in finding recent relevant data, I have used two Westport sales: one from 2001 and one from 2005.

6 North Pasture Lane sold on 07/24/01 for \$1,189,000. The rear of the property is adjacent to a Staples High School parking area. It is fairly well screened from the parking area by fencing and foliage, but the high school building is visible.

1 Canning Lane sold on 11/03/05 for \$1,795,000. It is adjacent to a parking area to the rear of a retail (*Westport Big and Tall*) and office building at 1276 Post Road East. It has limited screening between the dwelling and the adjacent parking area.

Neither of the above sales precisely replicates the detriment described for 8 and 10 Sunny Lane, but reasonable conclusions may be made on a comparative basis.

On the following pages are the paired-sale analyses, the results from which will subsequently be reviewed.

Paired-Sale Analysis – 6 North Pasture Road

ITEM	SUBJECT	COMPARABLE NO. 1		COMPARABLE NO. 2		COMPARABLE NO. 3	
Address	6 North Pasture Road Westport	164 Roseville Road Westport		5 Kensington Place Westport		57 North Avenue Westport	
Proximity to Subject		0.85 miles W		0.57 miles NW		0.30 miles SE	
Sales Price	\$ 1,189,000	\$ 1,220,000		\$ 1,349,000		\$ 1,051,500	
Price/Gross Living Area	\$ 354.19 中	\$ 300.94 中		\$ 293.52 中		\$ 320.48 中	
Data and/or Verification Source	Inspection Town Hall	Town Records/MLS V. 2277, P. 152		Town Records/MLS V. 1868, P. 240		Town Records/MLS V. 1863, P. 9	
VALUE ADJUSTMENTS	DESCRIPTION	DESCRIPTION	+(-)\$ Adjust.	DESCRIPTION	+(-)\$ Adjust.	DESCRIPTION	+(-)\$ Adjust.
Sales or Financing Concessions		Conv. Time: +1.25%	+15,250	Conv. Time: +.75%	+10,120	Conv. ime: +1.5%	+15,775
Date of Sale/Time	7/24/01	6/14/01(cts 5/11/01)		6/28/01(cts6/11/01)		6/14/01(cts4/22/01)	
Location	Avg/Good	Average/Busy +50,000		Avg/Good		Average/Busy +100,000	
Leasehold/Fee Simple	Fee Simple	Fee Simple		Fee Simple		Fee Simple	
Site	1.00A	1.04A		1.54A -13,500		1.00A	
View	SchoolParking lot	Neigh.Dwellgs Not adjust		Neigh.Dwellgs Not adjust		Neigh. Dwlg. Not adjust	
Design and Appeal	Colonial/Avg.	Col/Cape/Avg.		Colonial/Gd -25,000		Col/Cape/Avg.	
Quality of Construction	Good	Good		Good		Average +50,000	
Age	1989	1988		1989		1953/Rem.95	
Condition	Good	Good		Good		Good	
Above Grade Room Count	Total Bdrms Baths 9 4 3F	Total Bdrms Baths 10 4 3F1H -20,000		Total Bdrms Baths 11 5 5F1H -50,000		Total Bdrms Baths 10 5 4F1H -30,000	
Gross Living Area	3,357 Sq. Ft.	4,054 Sq. Ft. -52,275		4,596 Sq. Ft. -92,925		3,281 Sq. Ft. +5,700	
Basement & Finished Rooms Below Grade	Bsmt- 850 sf fin. 2 Rms, Bath	Full Unfin. +12,750 +20,000		Bsmt- 1,000 sf fin -2,250 Rec.Room +20,000		Partial- 324 sf fin. Rec.Rm +20,000	
Functional Utility	Good	Good		Good		Average +25,000	
Heating/Cooling	GHA/ C/Air	OHA/ C/Air		OHA/ C/Air		GHA/ C/Air	
Energy Efficient Items	Typical	Typical		Typical		Typical	
Garage/Carport	2 Car Garage	2 Car Garage		2 Car Garage		2 Car Garage	
Porch, Patio, Deck, Fireplace(s), etc.	Deck 2 Fpls	Deck, Patio -2,000 3 Fpls -4,000		Deck 2 Fpls		OP, Patio, Deck, Bal 4 Fpls -6,000 -8,000	
Fence, Pool, etc.	I/G Pool vinyl	None +15,000		None +15,000		None +15,000	
Other							
Net Adj. (total)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> + <input type="checkbox"/> - \$ 34,725		<input type="checkbox"/> + <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - \$ -138,555		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> + <input type="checkbox"/> - \$ 220,365	
Adjusted Sales Price of Comparable		Net 2.8 % Gross 15.7 % \$ 1,254,725		Net 10.3 % Gross 17.0 % \$ 1,210,445		Net 21.0 % Gross 29.3 % \$ 1,271,865	
Comments on Sales Comparison (including the subject property's compatibility to the neighborhood, etc.):							
Sale #2- 5 Kensington Pl.- More conventional exterior design.				Sale #1- 164 Roseville Rd- Busy street.			
Sale #3- 57 North Ave.- Busy street. Older dwelling renovated in 1995. Built to a lower specification.							
Gross living area adjusted at \$75/sq.ft., Finished basement area adjusted at \$15/sq.ft. + \$25,000 Partial bsmt. Excess acreage adjusted at \$25,000/ acre. A +1/2% per month time adjustment was made from date contracts were signed to date of appraisal. Approximately equal weight given to each sale.							
ITEM	SUBJECT	COMPARABLE NO. 1		COMPARABLE NO. 2		COMPARABLE NO. 3	
Date, Price and Data Source, for prior sales within year of appraisal	No prior sales noted within last 3 yrs.	10/28/98 \$929,000		No sales noted within previous 3 yrs.		No prior sales within previous 3 yrs.	
Analysis of any current agreement of sale, option, or listing of subject property and analysis of any prior sales of subject and comparables within one year of the date of appraisal: No prior sales noted within last 3 yrs.							
INDICATED VALUE BY SALES COMPARISON APPROACH \$ 1,250,000							
INDICATED VALUE BY INCOME APPROACH (if Applicable) Estimated Market Rent \$ _____/Mo. x Gross Rent Multiplier _____ = \$ _____							