

White Plains Council of Neighborhood Associations
November Meeting

Wednesday 11/12/2025

Location: Zoom Meeting

Time: 7pm

Attendees: Michael Sanchez, Michael Dalton, Venatta Bass, Ellen Berger, Bob Friscia, Leonard Grunfeld, Robert Kahn, Tom Osbeck, Valerie Simmons, Debra Zipf

Guest Speaker: Chris Gomez – White Plains Commissioner of Planning

1. The Meeting was called to order by President Sanchez. President Sanchez let all attending that Commissioner Gomez was traveling and would be delayed in joining the CNA Zoom meeting. President Sanchez asked Tom Osbeck, CNA Treasurer, please provide a Treasurer's report. T. Osbeck said that the CNA bank account currently stood at \$1810. He reported the list of those Neighborhood Associations who had paid their CNA Dues. T. Osbeck did not name the North Street Association as having paid its current dues. B. Friscia, President of the North St Association objected (as he had done in the October meeting) ...and then cited the date the dues check was made out, the check number and date the check was cashed. M. Sanchez asked T. Osbeck to get together with B. Friscia after the CNA meeting and get the North St. due payment cleared up.
2. Pres. Sanchez reminded the meeting attendees that at the December meeting.... the CNA will be conducting the election of CNA Officers for the coming year. M. Sanchez said that current CNA V.P. M. Dalton would be running for President. As of that date...no other nominations for President have been made. Pres. Sanchez said that he had reached out to Gary O'Brien the current Battle Hill Association President...asking him to consider running for Vice President of the CNA. Pres. Sanchez reported that G. O'Brien could not commit to running for the V.P. position at this time. M. Dalton said he would call G. O'Brien and encourage him to stand for the V.P. position. Current Treasurer, T. Osbeck agreed to stand for re-election as Treasurer. Pres. Sanchez explained that he was not eligible to run for President...but would volunteer to act as the CNA Secretary in 2026 and handle writing the minutes of our CNA meetings.
3. Pres. Sanchez said that the CNA had sent a letter regarding the Hale Street Parking Garage collapse to the Mayor's Office, the Common Council members & Commissioners Amadio, Mignone & Chong. The letter called for immediate accountability and action to be taken to prevent another garage collapse. The letter was signed by 5 Neighborhood Presidents.
4. V. Simmons said that the condition of the public and private garages in the City is an area of great concern. M. Sanchez said that he had recently parked in the public parking garage directly behind City Hall. He was surprised to see sections of the garage where vehicles were "cordoned off" not allowing cars to park in the empty spaces. M. Sanchez reported that Common Council woman, Jen Puja was the only member of the Common Council to respond to the letter sent by the CAN.
5. B. Friscia asked, "the City generates a great deal of revenue from the parking fees in White Plains...where does all the money go?" E. Berger asked, "who is responsible for ensuring the parking garages in White Plains are safe?"
6. M. Dalton explained that the Hale Street Garage (where the recent collapse occurred) is a privately owned garage. The City does not manage or operate the Hale St. Garage. As a result of several private parking garage collapses in NYC....in 2018 the State of New York created the Parking Garage Assessment law which requires owners of private parking garages to engage professional Engineers to inspect and then write "Condition Reports" for their garages every 3 years. The Parking Garage Assessment law places the burden of establishing, administering and enforcing the Parking Garage Assessment law on the local "authority having jurisdiction" (AHJ) ... which in White Plains is the Building Department. The W.P. Building Department is not responsible for inspecting the Private garages. The owners of the Private garages are responsible for inspecting the structural condition of their garages every 3 years. The Building Dept. is responsible for reviewing the 3rd party Engineer reports for all private garages in White Plains. The Building Dept. is responsible for seeing that any required repairs described in the 3rd party Engineer's reports are executed.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for inspecting and maintaining the safety of the City's Public Parking Garages.

7. B. Kahn suggested that the CNA letter regarding the Hale St Parking Garage collapse be sent to Mayor-elect Justin Brasch.
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8. Pres. Sanchez was notified that Commissioner Gomez had joined the Zoom meeting. Pres. Sanchez welcomed and introduced the meeting's guest speaker: Commissioner Gomez. Pres. Sanchez asked C. Gomez to update the CNA attendees on the status of the Galleria redevelopment project and the White Plains Hospital expansion project.
 9. Commissioner Gomez explained that the "Draft Environment Impact Statement" (DEIS) submitted by the applicant (the developer) was reviewed and accepted as "complete" by the Common Council. The DEIS is based on a "conceptual development plan" proposed by the developer. The "conceptual development plan" includes the 7 acres of the property (which includes the retail buildings on the property) + 3.5 acres of City owned Parking. In order for the property to be redeveloped per the "conceptual development plan"...the developer will need the property that is currently zoned only for retail use...will need to be "re-zoned" to a mixed use that includes approximately 3000 rental apartments, 100,000sf of retail space, a parking facility for 3000 vehicles and open public space. The "conceptual development plan" calls for a total of 7 towers on the 10.5 acres property.... with 3 towers proposed along Main St. The Common Council is the government body that will need to vote to approve the change of Zone that would allow the proposed project to move forward. C. Gomez expects the Common Council to be voting on the change of Zone for the Galleria redevelopment in December or January Common Council meeting.
 10. Commissioner Gomez explained that when a developer requests a change in the zone for a parcel of property.... the developer is asking for a "favor" from the City. In response.... the City's Planning Dept. has asked, "what is the public benefit for changing the Zone?" In the case of the Galleria property...the existing zoning is for a retail mall with an F.A.R (floor area ratio) 6. Which means...the total square footage of built floor area cannot exceed 6 times the square footage of the property. The "conceptual development plan" proposed by the developer calls for the F.A.R. for the Galleria property to be increased from 6 to 7.5. To support the increase in F.A.R. to 7.5...the City's Planning Dept. has requested 3 public benefits be included in any to re-zone the Galleria property.
 - The 3 public benefits are:
 - i. Increase the affordable housing percentage from 12% to 25% of the 3000 units being proposed.
 - ii. Increase the total "open space" being proposed by an additional 50,000sf.
 - iii. That the developer includes in their proposal and then builds an "event space" of at least 20,000sf and that the event space be included in the 1st phase of the re-development.
 11. Commissioner Gomez cautioned.... that the complicated process of reconciling the "conceptual development plan" with a "final development plan" has not been completed. It is often the case that the "final development plan" can be quite different from "conceptual development plan."
 12. The re-zoning of the Galleria property is the next step in the development process. C. Gomez expects the Common Council to approve the re-zoning either at the December or January Common Council meeting.
 13. Commissioner Gomez explained that the re-development of the Galleria property would "roll out in several construction phases". The 1st phase of the project would be where the Macy's building now stands along Court and Main streets.
 14. Commissioner Gomez explained that to achieve the increase in affordable housing from 12% to 25%...the developer is proposing to add another building to the project which would have 500 affordable units in order to reach the 25% target.
 15. M. Dalton said that there is considerable opposition to the idea of concentrating 500 affordable units in a single building rather than distributing the additional 500 affordable units evenly across all the residential

buildings on the property.

16. B. Kahn reiterated that the affordable apartments need to be spread across all the residential buildings on the property. B. Kahn asked C. Gomez if an “art person” creating large scale works of art in the project was still involved in the development plan? C. Gomez responded by saying he expects that large scale art will be included in the project...but it is too early to discuss this....it will be discussed “down the road”. B. Kahn suggested that “kid friendly art be part of the plan and that the art be created by “local artists”. B. Kahn complimented Commissioner Gomez for the emphasis that has been placed on affordable housing in the proposed project.
17. B. Friscia asked Commissioner Gomez, “Have you looked at “off ramping” the traffic entering the City when the re-development of the Galleria Project gets going?” Answer, “No...we have not looked at re-directing traffic in the City as a result of the re-development of the Galleria property.” B. Friscia asked C. Gomez to report on the status of projects at 70 and 80 Westchester Ave. C. Gomez reported that the proposed project at 70 Westchester Ave has submitted its final DEIS report and should be on the Common Council agenda in the next month or two. Regarding 80 Westchester Ave.... C. Gomez said that this project still has question marks.
18. D. Zipf asked Commissioner Gomez, “does the City’s sewer system have the capacity to process the increased sewerage that will be generated by all of the new housing projects?” Commissioner Gomez explained that when any proposed new multi-family project is proposed in the City...the Planning, DPW, Traffic, Public Safety departments all review the impact of the proposed project and whether the existing infrastructure has the capacity to handle that new project. In the case of the sewerage generated by a new apartment complex...the DPW reviews a new project’s water and sewerage volumes to ensure the City can take on that new volume of water or sewerage. If the DPW finds that the new water or sewerage volume cannot be accommodated with the existing infrastructure.... the developer will be asked to pay for the necessary improvements to ensure the City has the necessary capacity to service the water and sewerage requirements of the proposed project. Commissioner Gomez said, “the City has compelled the developers of the new projects in the City to actually pay for much of the required infrastructure upgrades necessary to meet the needs of these new buildings.”
19. M. Sanchez asked Commissioner Gomez about the status of the 13 Windward property. The former Windward School campus is a 5.35 acre vacant currently zoned for single-family development. M. Sanchez said that the owner of the property, Luigi Casale has met with members of the neighborhood to discuss a change of zone for the property. Commissioner Gomez explained that any zoning change requires Common Council review and approval. C. Gomez explained that the new Comprehensive Plan proposed an evaluation of potential amendments to the current zoning regulations for conservation developments, allowing attached housing units on parcels greater than 5 acres. But the new Comp Plan did not amend or change the current zoning of the property. C. Gomez suggested that the Owner 13 Windward make a proposal that the Planning Department and the Common Council evaluate.
20. M. Sanchez thanked Commissioner Gomez for attending our CNA meeting. M. Sanchez reminded the attendees that the CNA will be electing Officers at the December meeting and that Mayor-elect Justin Brasch will be the guest speaker in December.
21. President Sanchez thanked all the attendees. He then closed the meeting.