



Special Permit Application

City of Norwalk Planning & Zoning Commission

Phone: 203-854-7780

www.norwalkct.gov

Date Received:

Per Section 8.4.8 of the Norwalk Zoning Regulations, Special Permits are for Uses, Buildings, or Structures that are considered to be generally appropriate in the applicable District, but because of their potential for impacts with Adjacent Uses, Buildings, or Structures, require individual review for specific locations.

1. Address of Subject Property(s):

10 Norden Place, Norwalk, CT

2. District: 3 Block: 17 Lot(s): 40 3. Zone: SD-LI, Overlay/Village District: None

4. Historic Structure(s): ☒ No ☐ Yes 5. Flood Hazard Zone: ☒ No ☐ Yes, Flood Zone(s) No

6. Coastal Area Management Zone: ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, include application for Coastal Site Plan Review or specify Section allowing exemption: _____

7. Existing Use of Property:

See Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.

8. Proposed Use of Property as Identified per Table 4.3.9.A: Building, Lot & Building Site Principal Uses:

Car club for storage of privately-owned automobiles and accessory gatherings and events for car club.

See Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.

Applicant Information

Applicant Name: Norwalk Center, LLC and The Auto Collective

Billing Address: 10 Norden Place, Norwalk, CT 06855

Phone Number: c/o Elizabeth Suchy, Esq. - 203-252-2656 Email: c/o Elizabeth Suchy, Esq. - esuchy@carmodylaw.com

Signature: Carmody Tenavance Sandak & Hennessey LLP Their attorneys

Property Owner Information and Authorization

Owner of Record: Norwalk Center, LLC

Billing Address: 45 Main Street, Suite 800, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Phone Number: c/o Elizabeth Suchy, Esq. - 203-252-2656 Email: c/o Elizabeth Suchy, Esq. - esuchy@carmodylaw.com

Signature: Carmody Tenavance Sandak & Hennessey LLP Its attorneys

**By signing, the property owner confirms that the Applicant has been authorized to apply for Planning & Zoning approval, and attests that all information provided is true and accurate.*

NORWALK CENTER, LLC AND THE AUTO COLLECTIVE
10 NORDEN PLACE, NORWALK, CT
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL PERMIT
NARRATIVE
SCHEDULE A

BACKGROUND

Norwalk Center, LLC (hereinafter “Norwalk Center”) is the owner of real property with the improvements thereon located at 10 Norden Place in Norwalk, CT (the “Property”) totaling 33± acres. Generally bounded by other developed property to the east, Courville Nurseries and Metro-North Railroad to the south, Norden Place to the west, and an accessway to a rear lot to the north, the Property is designated as Tax Lot 40 Unit A in Block 17 of the Third Taxing District and is zoned SD-LI. I-95 is located to the north of the drive aisle that leads to the data center on the Property and the Halstead multi-family development on an adjoining property to the east. (Refer to “Aerial Plan (Drawing Title C0.02)” dated February 19, 2025 prepared by Tighe & Bond, “Property Survey, ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey 10 Norden Place – Unit A Norwalk, Connecticut Prepared for Norwalk Center, LLC Scale: 1”=80 Ft.” [“Survey”] dated August 28, 2023 and “Resubdivision Map of Revised Lot 2, Maps 12681A & 12681B Depicting Proposed Parcels 1A, 1B & Lot 2 10 Norden Place Norwalk, Connecticut Prepared for Courville Nursery Property Scale: 1”=80Ft.” [“Resubdivision Map”] dated January 16, 2024, both prepared by Seymour Surveying, all attached hereto and made a part hereof).

Initially, the Property was approximately 80 acres. Around 2006,¹ the prior owners sold half of the Property (40 acres) to Norwalk Center, which in 2013, received approvals for and constructed a 167,691± sq.ft. data recovery center on the easternmost five (5) ± acres of the site (Unit B). In 2024, a site plan application for the use and occupancy of interior and exterior space by Metro North for a transportation maintenance facility approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission (“Commission”).² In addition, the Commission approved a subdivision application in 2024 which created a three (3) acre lot which was purchased and currently used by Courville Nurseries.

The Property (Unit A) is improved with a 635,430± sq.ft. building, formerly the headquarters of and a manufacturing site for Northrup Grumman-Norden Systems, a national defense contractor, which operated three (3), round-the-clock shifts at the height of operation and production, employing nearly 3,000 people daily across three (3) shifts. Today, the building is largely vacant, but had been the site of Tauck Worldwide Tours, Pepperidge Farms, and Katharine Gibbs secretarial school, among other tenants.

There is also an existing 9,000± sq.ft. test building in the southeast section of the Property. Further, the Property is improved with more than 1,000 parking spaces, interior driveways, sidewalks, landscaped areas, etc. Adjacent to the Metro-North Railroad tracks, there is a 0.99±

¹The prior owners received approvals in 2009 to construct a 200+ unit multi-family development which is owned and operated today by Avalon.

²The 2024 site plan approval is under appeal by both Norwalk Center, the successful applicant, and the adjoining multi-family property owner.

acre parcel that is occupied via a temporary easement by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, which uses that area for staging purposes in connection with the Walk Bridge project.

REQUEST

Norwalk Center, as owner, and The Auto Collective, as prospective tenant, (hereinafter, the “Applicants”), jointly file this application for special permit³ in connection with the proposed use and occupancy of 137,000± sq.ft. of interior space in the existing northeastern section of existing building on the Property for a car club. Specifically, the Applicants seek approval for the use and occupancy of 84,600± sq.ft. within the building for the storage of approximately 420 privately-owned, luxury motor vehicles.⁴ Vehicles will be driven to the site individually by owners and not on flatbeds or tractor trailer transport, and then stored on dual-level stacks. Approximately 15-20 vehicles will be checked out on a monthly basis by owners. (Refer to “Overall Site Plan (Drawing Number C1.00),” “Conceptual Layout (Drawing Number C1.01),” and “Conceptual Layout (Drawing Number C2.01)” all dated February 19, 2025 prepared by Tighe & Bond, attached hereto and made a part hereof).

In addition, the Applicants propose approximately 20,800 sq.ft. of event space for members and their guests, such as Formula One watch parties and other private gatherings. There is also 26,450± sq.ft. earmarked for a members’ club area, along with 5,300 sq.ft. set aside as a more intimate members’ lounge which could be reserved by members for board meetings and smaller gatherings. The Applicants will also seek to obtain a café liquor permit from the State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection – Liquor Division. No additions to the existing structure are proposed and all existing parking spaces will generally remain unchanged. Minor renovations to the northern building elevation are proposed to accommodate a vehicular ramp to two (2) new overhead doors so that members can drive their vehicles into the building. (Refer to “Overall Site Plan (Drawing Number C1.00),” “Site Plan (Drawing Number C1.01),” and “Drainage, Grading and Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (Drawings Number C2.01 and C2.02)” all dated February 19, 2025 prepared by Tighe & Bond and “Proposed Main Level Floor Plan & Exterior Elevation (Drawing A2.01),” “Details – 1 (Drawing Number C3.01),” “Details – 2 (Drawing Number C3.02),” and “Perspective Views (Drawing A2.02)” all dated 2.19.25 prepared by Kenneth Boroson Architects, attached hereto and made a part hereof).

This application is submitted pursuant to the Sections 4.3.9.A, 4.3.9.G and 8.4.8G of the City of Norwalk Zoning Regulations (“zoning regulations”). In connection therewith, the Applicants submit that the application meets or exceeds the general conditions and standards for this use as set forth in Sec. 8.4.8G.2 (a-o) as follows:

- (a) Density of use and bulk of buildings. The existing structure complies with the density of use and bulk of buildings requirements for the SD-LI zone (Refer to Overall Site Plan, Survey, and Resubdivision map, all attached hereto and made a part hereof). No additions to the structure are proposed.

³An application for zone text amendment is simultaneously submitted herewith.

⁴A similar facility is North American Motor Car, located on Miry Brook Road in Danbury (<https://morthamericanmotorcar.com>).

- (b) All proposed uses for which a site plan is required shall provide for ingress and egress to the site which does not adversely impact the normal flow of traffic or normal safe conditions of the roadways. Site plans shall be referred to the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Transportation, Mobility and Parking Department (TMP) for review and recommendations. The Property is served by two (2) existing driveways, the configurations of which will not change. The use of the building and Property along with the traffic analyses and parking requirements generated by and parking resources provided for the storage of motor vehicles and accessory club uses have been forwarded to TMP and DPW for review and comment. (Refer to Overall Site Plan, Site Plan, Conceptual Layouts, Survey, Resubdivision Map, and "Traffic Evaluation Letter" February 13, 2025 dated prepared by TPD, Inc. ("Traffic Report"), attached hereto and made a part hereof).
- (c) The Commission may require such reasonable improvements as may be necessary to accommodate traffic increases caused by the proposed development to maintain existing levels of service to improve traffic safety. A traffic impact analysis, as specified, below may be required from the applicant to determine the extent of necessary improvements. The Applicants conducted a traffic analysis for the proposed use. The result of the analysis revealed that "... the proposed auto storage facility is expected to generate less traffic volume than previously approved use for the site. As such, the proposed project will not have a significant negative impact on the site circulation or traffic flows on the adjacent public roads." (Traffic Report p. 5).
- (d) Availability of mass transit facilities and provision of sidewalks, with a minimum clearance of five (5') feet without obstructions. A five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk exists along both sides of Norden Place. (Refer to Survey and Resubdivision Map). Wheels Bus Route 7 has stops on Norden Place and at the Halstead multi-family development. The East Norwalk Train Station is located about one mile away to the west
- (e) Availability and compatibility of utilities. The Property is and will continue to be served by city water and sewer. Stormwater runoff from where a small, landscaped area is being converted to pavement, will be collected by an inlet water quality structure, and routed to a lined detention system with filter. This will utilize a treatment train approach and incorporate low impact development systems to treat the water quality flow, remove total suspended solids, and reduce peak flow. (Refer to Survey, Resubdivision Map, Overall Site Plan, Conceptual Layout, and Engineering Report, all attached hereto and made a part hereof).
- (f) Adverse impact from noise, odor, fumes, dust and artificial lighting. With the exception of infrequent displays of some of the luxury vehicles outdoors, all activity and events will occur within the building, so there will not be any impact from noise, odor, fumes, dust, or artificial lighting. Further, no building additions or other site improvements are proposed as part of this application.

- (g) Signs of size and design that are in harmony with the neighborhood. Limited wall and ground signage is proposed at this time, which comply with signage regulations set forth in the zoning regulations.
- (h) Adequacy of yards and open space, screening and buffering. Yards and open space, screening and buffering for the site comply with city zoning regulations for the SD-LI zone. Any irregularities or inconsistencies with the SD-LI are legally nonconforming conditions that will continue. (Refer to zoning data chart on Overall Site Plan, attached hereto and made a part hereof).
- (i) Impact on neighborhood properties, as compared to uses and structures permitted as a matter of right. The proposed interior use of the Property as a private, luxury motor vehicle storage facility with an accessory members' club is compatible and consistent with other uses in the vicinity including multi-family residential, commercial landscape business, office, and other uses. With the exception of events for members, most of which will occur indoors, use of the square footage dedicated to vehicle storage is not expected to have impacts on the neighborhood. Vehicles will be driven to the site by owners and no automotive repair will occur inside the building or on the grounds.
- (j) Existing land use in the area. The area surrounding the property is generally developed with single- and multi-family residential complexes, assisted living facility, data center, and nursery business.
- (k) Proximity of community facilities. Various retail, restaurant, and other public venues exist near the site. The East Norwalk Train Station, East Norwalk branch of the Norwalk Public Library, and various restaurants are within one (1) mile of the site. Calf Pasture Beach, Taylor Farm, and Shady Beach are within two (2) miles of the site.
- (l) Compliance with the Zoning Code and Plan of Development (POCD). The proposed automotive storage use is permitted by special permit with limitations per the new zoning regulations adopted in December 2023 and made effective February 19, 2024. The Applicants submit herewith a zone text amendment application to add car club as a use permitted by special permit, which reflects the goal of the Plan of Conservation and Development to allow Norwalk to evolve and meet the changing demands and needs. (POCD p. 223). The proposed use also addresses the POCD goal of repurposing and renovating old buildings and preventing stagnation. (POCD p. 223).
- (m) Utilization of green infrastructure and other sustainability measures. Low impact development measures have been proposed to handle stormwater runoff. (Refer to "Engineering Report" dated February 19, 2025 prepared by Tighe & Bond, attached hereto and made a part hereof).

- (n) Conservation of wetlands, watercourses and other ecologically viable lands. Inland wetlands and watercourses exist on the Property, but no regulated activity is planned anywhere within the wetlands, watercourses, or upland review areas, so there will be no impact to wetlands, watercourses, and other ecologically viable lands.
- (o) No zoning violation exists on the property. There are no known zoning violations on the property.