

Dear Commission Members,

This is in regard to the proposed Sullivan Avenue Plaza Project currently before the Planning and Zoning Commission. We are happy to see that something might be done to clean up this blight and we could be for it, but there is one aspect of the current plan that, if not corrected, will turn us completely against it. Our specific problem is with the proximity and height of the apartment buildings nearest to the Strawberry Fields' neighborhood property lines and homes. We attended Peter DeMallie's session with Strawberry Fields' residents and the P&ZC meeting on April 13th. We appreciate the information, but we need to address the fact that these apartment buildings are too big and too close. They will loom over our homes in plain sight. Illustrations of the proposed buildings do not account for the ineffectiveness of the dead and dying, vine infested trees that separate our properties. They do not account for sight lines from the street or from all of our homes. It is easy for us to see where the apartment buildings will be, and they will be in plain view. They are too close and they are too tall.

As an over 55 community, we have all worked long and hard for what we have. These are our homes and saying that different rules may apply because we are not single family homes is to misunderstand the nature and quality of our community, and the pride that our homeowners take in our corner of South Windsor. We personally hope the Sullivan Avenue Plaza Project does happen. But, our answer is no if the developer cannot or will not fix this problem. We hope you understand.

We listened to the presentation on how apartment buildings increase property values. We are not questioning the research, but it does not address how the property value of a specific one or two story home is affected when a three and a half story apartment building is built only 120 feet away. Forty yards is a routine field goal or pass these days.

While that is our main concern, we would briefly like to mention one more. It is difficult now to make a left turn out of Strawberry Fields. It is dangerous now to make a left turn into Strawberry Fields. If we can make a left turn out, our homeowners can shop at the new Geisslers. A turning lane to make a left turn into Strawberry Fields might be a solution for cars passing us at speed inside the fog line.

Thanks for listening and thanks in advance for your help,

Michael and Angela McMath
801 Dzen Way
South Windsor, CT 06074

From: wayne sumple [wsumple@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 18, 2021 9:43 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: Coreen Sumple; Jim Greeson; Michael McMath; Hawkins John; Elaine Anderson
Subject: [External]Comments Pertaining to Sullivan Avenue Plaza (SAP) Development

Dear Commission Members,

This letter follows our email communication dated April 6, 201 regarding the change in zoning requested for the development of the South Windsor Plaza (SAP) into a combined commercial and residential property, and provides additional information in advance of the April 27, 2021 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting.

After watching the virtual Commission meeting on April 6, 2021, and carefully examining documents submitted in furtherance of the above referenced zoning change for the Sullivan Avenue Plaza, we would like to present the following information for consideration prior to a vote by the Commission on the requested zoning change:

- 1. Buffer/Proximity/Height of New Buildings.** We continue to have very serious concerns about how both the proximity and height of the proposed apartment buildings will negatively impact the well-established Strawberry Fields homeowners and community. While the artists' renderings of the proposed apartment buildings reflect an attractive buffer of healthy trees that create a canopy that will obstruct the view of the proposed three-story buildings, the renderings are not an accurate representation of the topography and health of the trees and vegetation. As the attached video indicates, the buffer between Strawberry Fields and SAP property is actually a limited number of trees of questionable health, and a tremendous amount of low-growing vines and scrub. It seems unlikely that all of the existing trees will remain once the site work begins. If that is the case, the buffer will not meet the standard articulated by Director Lipe at the April 13, 2021 Commission meeting when she said "the buffer must obscure most of the view between the residential and non-residential zones within 5 years, and substantially block the view at maturity".

We would also like to offer clarification with respect to the Strawberry Fields neighborhood. In presentations, reference has been made to our neighborhood being two-story homes, i.e., the developer would be putting three-story apartments next to two-story homes. Strawberry Fields is comprised of 38 owner-occupied homes, of which 24 (63.2%) are one-story ranch homes, and 14 (36.8%) are two-story homes. And, of the five homes closest to the proposed apartment buildings, four (80%) are one-story ranch homes and only one is a two-story home. Building three-story apartment buildings as close as permitted to the Strawberry Fields property line will be visually invasive to our neighborhood. The bottom line is that the SAP proposal is attempting to put too many buildings in a small space that abuts a well-established neighborhood. Approval of the zone change given the current design is not in the best interests of the town of South Windsor.

Finally, we would like to echo the concerns of a few of the Commissioners at the November 26, 2019 Commission meeting regarding the possibility that apartment buildings may fall into disrepair over the years. We have the exact same concerns and find it ironic that Mr. Nanni has allowed the SAP to decline over the last 15 years, with the retail space remaining vacant and parking lots falling into total disrepair. Are we to blindly believe Mr. Nanni's assurances (see minutes of the December 10, 2019 Commission minutes where he is quoted as saying that "their company has a fifty year track record of owning and maintaining properties like this in affluent suburbs in prominent locations with good tenants"? This is the same man who was quoted at the November 26, 2019 Commission meeting as saying "they have no intention of putting fast food burger places where they will be investing \$19,500,000 in apartments", and now the plan is to use the former bank building closest to Sullivan Avenue as a fast food restaurant.

2. **Property Value.** South Windsor regulations require that the Planning and Zoning Commission give consideration to the "impacts of the surrounding area" and the "impact on surrounding property values". One of the consultants hired by the SAP developer offered testimony at the April 13, 2021 Commission meeting regarding the property value impact, indicating that numerous academic and industry studies reveal that "apartments posed no threat to surrounding single-family house values" and "the fear of potential asset-value loss among suburban homeowners is misplaced". We would respectfully disagree with Dr. Poland, and would like to point out:

- a majority of the studies Dr. Poland cites are quite dated, some as old as 2003 and 2005
- none of the studies relate to real estate in the town of South Windsor or even the state of Connecticut, and
- as far as we have been able to determine from the limited citations in Dr. Poland's presentation, none of the studies related to the placement of three-story apartment buildings within 120 feet of existing homes that are predominantly one-story high.

With all due respect to Dr. Poland, we do not think that a slide in a PowerPoint presentation that takes brief excerpts from dated studies conducted in other areas of the country should be relied upon by the Commission in deciding whether the apartment buildings, as currently designed, will have a negative effect on Strawberry Fields property values. We are in the process of reaching out to South Windsor real estate professionals to get a local view of this issue.

3. **Neighborhood Acceptance Weighed Against Community Needs.** To be perfectly clear, we do not oppose development to the SAP property. Improvement to the SAP property is long overdue. The real issue is the impact on the surrounding community. As much as we love Geisslers, and believe that there are tangible advantages in having a local family-owned grocery store in our neighborhood, we will continue to vehemently oppose the zoning change if the developer's plans cannot be modified to ensure continuation of the current ambiance of the quiet and beautiful Strawberry Fields neighborhood.

In conclusion, we believe that approval of the referenced zoning change without requiring the developer make changes to the plans will clearly weigh against the regulatory requirement to give consideration to the general character and zoning of the neighborhood, the impact on the surrounding area, the impact on surrounding property values and neighborhood acceptance weighed against community needs. We encourage members of the Planning and Zoning Commission to visit the site to gain a complete understanding of the negative impact that three-story apartment buildings will have on the Strawberry Fields homeowners. If you lived in Strawberry Fields, would you want a three-story building 120 feet from your back door?

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Coreen and Wayne Sumple
1004 Dzen Way
South Windsor, CT

Video attachments

From: David Thoman [davidwthoman@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 8:36 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: wsumple@gmail.com
Subject: [External]comments for April 27, 2021 meeting

To: South Windsor Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Andrea & David Thoman

1002 Dzen Way
Date: April 19, 2021

To whom it may concern;

We are writing this letter in order to make you aware of our concerns relating to the proposed development of the Geissler's Plaza on Sullivan Avenue.

We feel strongly that our single-family unit in the Strawberry Fields complex would be seriously impacted by the apartments as they are currently under proposal to the P&ZC. A three-story building in such close proximity to our home would create a number of problems for us. The rear building of these units would tower over our home, being 45 feet high and possibly as close as 120' to the nearest building. The proposed barrier of trees simply could not provide us with privacy, and the nearness of cars and people would create noise problems. Additionally, this development could create health issues related to the garbage that would be created by the high population density of these rental units.

It is our understanding that the traffic study prepared for this proposed development did not take into consideration the intersection of Strawberry Lane and Sullivan Avenue. We are certain that such a large increase in population within a mile of our only exit will create problems. Since Strawberry Fields would clearly be impacted, it only seems reasonable that a study should include how the increase in traffic will impact our development.

We would ask you to reflect upon the issues we have raised here before you approve this proposed development. We have no doubt that these apartments, as currently proposed, would have a serious impact upon the value of our property. Our home is our most important investment. It is imperative that we are able to maintain its value for our future well-being.

Finally, please note that we are not opposed to improvement of the Geissler's Plaza. It has been allowed to deteriorate to a point that it is an eyesore in our neighborhood. But, we wholeheartedly request that the P&ZC insure that, however it is developed, it does not negatively impact the value of surrounding properties.

Sincerely,

Andrea & David Thoman

From: adgesmundo2@aol.com [adgesmundo2@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 4:02 AM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: michaelmcmath@me.com; wsumple@gmail.com; csumple@gmail.com; greeson1@cox.net
Subject: [External]Geissler Project

Good Morning...

My wife and I live in the residential/upscale community of Strawberry Fields. We support the Sullivan Avenue Plaza to some extent. We are in complete agreement with what has been written previously by members of our community. Please see below...comments made by neighbor Wayne Sumple on April 15, 2021 and sent to the Planning and Zoning Commission Thank you, Angelo and Carol Gesmundo

We agree that it is important that the Sullivan Avenue Plaza is renovated. This will correct a terrible eyesore in the community and create the conditions for Geissler's Market to modernize for the future. While we support the concept of improving the Plaza and having the residential portion of the project adjacent to Strawberry Fields (an upscale residential neighborhood), we have significant concerns about the close proximity and height of the proposed apartment building closest to our neighborhood.

To mitigate the potential impact to our neighborhood, and the strong possibility that our property values will decline as a result of the development of the SAP as proposed, we recommend that TPZ approval of the plan be contingent upon the following changes:

1. Increase the distance between the proposed apartment buildings and the SF property line.
2. Decrease the height of the closest buildings proposed to two (2) stories.
3. Install an appropriate and visually attractive barrier, of appropriate length to prevent foot traffic from the SAP property and provide direct access with signage from the SAP to Major Donnelly Preserve.

In conclusion, we are in favor of the zone change from commercial to combined commercial/residential. However, we are opposed to the height and proximity of apartment buildings and the absence of direct access to Major Donnelly Preserve. While the increased tax base created by the development of SAP is attractive, it would be an unintended consequence of having reduced home values and property taxes withing SF as a result of the SAP development.

From: Carol Manzella [carolannmanzella@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 11:48 AM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: Carol Ann Manzella
Subject: [External]Proposed development at Geissler's plaza

We have been owners at Strawberry Fields since 2014. We moved to Strawberry Fields from NJ because our community is so aesthetically pleasing in the wonderful town of South Windsor. From the time we moved here we couldn't understand how Geissler's plaza was allowed by the town to become the rundown mess we see today. We are certainly in favor of rehabbing the plaza but also have some reservations about the current proposal.

As resident owners at Strawberry Fields, we are concerned about the proposed development of retail and residential units at Geissler's plaza. Specifically, the proposed apartment complex will be the highest in South Windsor. This complex, as proposed, is too close to the Strawberry Fields property line. Even with the addition of trees to replace those to be removed, the developer/owner has 5 years to allow the trees to fill in. In the meantime, there will be a direct sightline to our neighbors' homes and attendant noise associated with the apartments, pool, parking and commercial traffic to the plaza.

We therefore request that the owner/developer consider reducing the height of the apartments to 2 stories and/or moving the complex further away from the Strawberry Fields property line.

As a community we contribute at least \$300,000 in property taxes to the town of South Windsor and we believe Strawberry Fields deserves this consideration.

Sincerely,

Carol Ann & Charles Manzella
303 Strawberry Lane

From: Elaine Anderson <eanderson194@yahoo.com>
Date: April 21, 2021 at 10:26:28 PM EDT
To: planningzoningcomments@southwindsor-ct.gov
Cc: Wayne Sumple <wsumple@gmail.com>, csumple@gmail.com
Subject: **Comments Sullivan Avenue Plaza April 27 PZC Meeting**

Dear Commission Members

The renovation of the Sullivan Avenue Plaza is needed, but the residential component of the plan presents several concerns.

1. The height of the buildings will make them easily visible from Strawberry Fields
2. The distance between our closest houses and the apartments being only 110' will make them feel as though they loom over our property and there is no way to screen them from our view
3. The closeness of the apartments parking lots and the pool make me concerned about noise. I am also concerned about the placement of the dumpsters
4. The management and upkeep of the renovated property is also concerning. With the same ownership that has let the property deteriorate to it's current state, I question whether the renovated property will be well maintained
5. The impact of the traffic on Sullivan Avenue. At certain times it is difficult now to enter and exit Strawberry Fields

I feel that the renovation of the blighted Plaza is necessary, but the placement and height of the residential component of the project needs some modifications to make less of an impact on our neighborhood. I hope you will consider these concerns.

Sincerely
Elaine Anderson
804 Dzen Way

From: Terri Butler [t.artist803@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 8:55 AM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: Coreen Sumple; Wayne Sumple
Subject: [External]Geissler's Plaza renovation

I have not been a fan of the project from the beginning, but had resigned to the fact that it was going to happen. Having a millennial son myself, know that they want clubs and nice restaurants to walk to, they are not looking to live near a grocery store. So the tenants of the two bedrooms will probably have children. My main concern though is where are the kids going to play? Skate boarding and running around in the parking lot? On busy Sullivan avenue? Now we have been presented with a new plan, 3 story buildings, that Strawberry Fields residents will have to look at from their homes. Its an eyesore, tenement, comes to mind. Please consider less apartments and changing the height back to two stories. Maybe Geissler's would consider moving to Evergreen Walk. You could then use the entire parking lot as an upscale apartment complex and the building could be 2 stories and spread out with the pool in the middle along with a play area. Thank you for your time.

Terri Butler (803 Dzen Way).

Sent from my iPad

From: jchase1231@aol.com [jchase1231@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 6:37 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: csumple@gmail.com; wsumple@gmail.com
Subject: [External]April 27, 2021 - PUBLIC HEARING - Sullivan Avenue Plaza Redevelopment

Dear Planning & Zoning Commission Members,

As a homeowner at Strawberry Fields, I want to express my concerns and make some general recommendations regarding the proposed zone change and redevelopment plans before you regarding the Sullivan Avenue Plaza.

First, the rejuvenation of the plaza itself will be a welcomed turn of events, particularly because it's been such an eyesore for so long. If for no other reason then we've all endured this "embarrassment" too many years, now it's imperative we make certain it's redeveloped, then managed and maintained well going forward.

In my early career, I had the opportunity to be the chief housing planner for the State of VT. Though working for the State was short-lived, it helped influence, inform and shape the rest of my 40 + year career as a private real estate developer. My point, I understand the development process from both sides.

The proposed Sullivan Avenue Plaza redevelopment in it's current iteration, presents scale, density, devaluation, privacy, noise, traffic, visual encroachment and potential trespassing issues. Each of these issues on their own, have the potential to impact the value of our homes and the overall desirability of living at Strawberry Fields. If these issues are not satisfactorily addressed during the planning and approval process and before the redevelopment is constructed, the peaceful enjoyment of our very well-maintained and desirable community will absolutely be negatively impacted. Diminished assessed values and marketability of our homes due to a less than well-conceived redevelopment next door will translate into unhappy Strawberry Fields homeowners. More difficult salability of our homes, lower sales prices and lower assessed values, will also mean lower real estate tax revenues to the Town of South Windsor.

Shoehorning 125 apartments into an area more suited for half that density is why the developer has designed and is requesting 3-story buildings, 45 feet high. Though the SAMUD Overlay Zone permits buildings of 3-stories not to exceed 45 feet in height, regular Multi-Family Zoning (MF) limits buildings to 2 1/2 stories and 35 feet in height. That extra floor and 10 more feet in height will have a meaningful and permanent negative visual impact on the quality of our views at Strawberry Fields and will also look out of scale next to the new Geisler's building. No amount of traditional buffering or screening will obscure the stark fact, 3-story 45 foot apartment buildings in that location (next to primarily single story homes next door at Strawberry Fields) would be out of character, out of scale and forever stand out like sore thumbs. I can't stress enough, 2-story apartment buildings in that location, (particularly given Strawberry Field's lower profile architectural design and close proximity) would appear more in character and scale with the preexisting neighborhood.

In SAMUD Overlay Zones, residential buildings adjacent to single-family zones or single-family developments shall not exceed 2 1/2 stories. Though Strawberry Field homes are not detached single-family homes, they are individually owned attached single-family homes. As such, I believe Strawberry Fields meets the tenor or intention set out under the code definition, therefore any adjacent development should follow the code and be limited to 2 1/2 stories.

Privacy, sound / noise and potential encroachment / trespassing can be minimized by requiring the developer install a permanent barrier wall / fence at a height equal to the height of the buildings and built between Sullivan Avenue Plaza and

Strawberry Fields. We've all seen these Residential Noise Barrier Systems &/or Commercial Concrete Sound Wall Systems along highways. These could be placed between our two properties, landscaped with dense conifer trees and ivy. Just planting trees without a continuous physical wall will not provide year-round visual, sound and encroachment / trespassing protection.

Traffic along Sullivan Avenue is already quite problematic and dangerous, especially during peak commuting times, though more and more throughout the entire day. If a traffic study has not been undertaken for this development, it really ought to be to understand how adding all these new residents vehicles will impact the already overburdened roadway. I would strongly recommend adding turning lanes into developments like Strawberry Fields (& others) where at times we have to sit for minutes on end in the middle of the roadway waiting to turn while cars either back-up or whiz by around us. These moments (& there are many) are accidents waiting to happen!

Finally, unless access to Major Donnelly Preserve is formally addressed in the Sullivan Avenue Plaza redevelopment plan / permit, Strawberry Fields could become a pathway for access to the "Preserve." We do not want to have to be put in a situation where neighbors are forced to patrol their own property from neighboring tenants who may be encroaching or trespassing across our private property to reach the Major Donnelly Preserve. Lets make sure they have access to the "Preserve" from their own property and not ours.

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration during your review of this project and ultimate decision on this redevelopment application.

The Sullivan Avenue Plaza redevelopment can be a win / win / win, for the Town of South Windsor, the neighbors and the developer, if the end result reflects all the stakeholders concerns have been addressed.

Jon Chase
1101 Dzen Way

From: pj111655@aol.com [pj111655@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 3:25 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: csumple@gmail.com; wsumple@gmail.com
Subject: [External]Proposed Sullivan Avenue Plaza Project

Dear Commission Members,

This is in regard to the proposed Sullivan Avenue Plaza Project currently before the Planning & Zoning Commission.

My mother and I reside in the community of Strawberry Fields which is adjacent to this project. We are both pleased that the Sullivan Avenue Plaza will be revitalized to an updated facility and support the project. We do have major concerns and look forward to modifications to the developer's plans with regard to the following:

- * The proximity and height of the proposed building closest to Strawberry Fields.
- * The need for sufficient buffer between the proposed project and Strawberry Fields.
- * Prevention of foot traffic into our private community since the project does not allow for direct access to the Major Donnelly Preserve.
- * Impact of proposed Sullivan Avenue Plaza project to property values of Strawberry Fields homes should plans not be revised.
- * Future maintenance of new structure to prevent property decline as is currently experienced at the Sullivan Avenue Plaza.

Thank you for your time and consideration to the points listed above.

Sincerely,

Paula J. Csengo
Arline J. Stieber
202 Strawberry Lane
South Windsor, CT

From: Margaret Dopirak [margheldo@cox.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 7:44 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Subject: [External]re: Geissler's plaza

To: South Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission

As residents of Strawberry Fields (SF) Condominiums on Sullivan Avenue, we want to convey our concerns and objections to certain aspects of the proposed Geissler's Plaza development.

Firstly, we want to make it clear that we are in favor of the plaza development.

Our concerns and objections are, for the most part, in regard to the 3 story apartment building which would abut the Strawberry Fields property:

- 1) the building is too close to our property line - a distance of only 120 ft!
- 2) the building, especially the 3rd floor, would be visible to us through the sparse foliage, and would be aesthetically displeasing.

A little history here: the town insisted, in 2006, that our clubhouse be built to resemble the original barn (which had to be torn down). The reason given by the town was for aesthetics, and to maintain the appearance of a "historic" barn in order to preserve the farmland atmosphere in this area. Now, right up the road from us is going to be built 2 and 3 story apartment buildings, crowded into a very small space, and certainly not (in our view) aesthetically appealing to this area of town! At the very least, one story less would present a less congested appearance to the cluster of buildings.

- 3) the close proximity of the proposed 3 story building, pool, and clubhouse to our homes in SF would invite noise and light pollution to our quiet SF neighborhood.
- 4) the concerns listed above will negatively impact the real estate values of our homes.

Additional concerns we have are:

- 5) foot traffic through SF to the Major Donnelly Preserve. We propose specific access to the Preserve at the Geissler's end of the property.
- 6) increased traffic on Sullivan Avenue from and to the apartments and retail will make it even more unsafe for SF homeowners, guests, delivery trucks & workers to turn left on to Sullivan from our entrance driveway.
- 7) that the new development and apartments, still owned by the current owner, will not be maintained in the future, and will become rundown and even more of an eyesore than it is now. We hope the town will address this issue with the property owner.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Margaret & Bill Dopirak
102 Strawberry Lane

**To the South Windsor Planning & Zoning Board:
Re: Sullivan Avenue – Geisslers Plaza – Mixed Use Zone Change**

April 21, 2021

My wife and I live in Strawberry Fields at 501 Dzen Way. We are concerned about the scope of the building project at Geisslers Plaza having a negative effect on the value of our home. We have been living here almost 20 years (we are the first residents of SF). We are in a private neighborhood with one entrance/exit from/to Sullivan Avenue. We watched your April 13th meeting which informed us very well about the project. We are in favor of refurbishing Geisslers store and like the idea of adding apartments. Our concern is the size and location of the proposed buildings and the quantity of apartments. Also of concern is all the general things that come along with a project of this size. The buffer area between SF property and the apartments is not sufficient to prevent the residents of SF from noise and sight from the apartment residents. The trees in the buffer area are in bad shape and covered with vines that kill-off what is left of the existing trees. The additional trees that are to be planted will take many years, maybe 20+ years, to be considered "BUFFER AREA".

Other negative effects of the project that affect SF are as follows:

- 1) Noise from the club house and pool.
- 2) Oder from dumpsters (depending on their location).
- 3) Residents of the apartments cutting thru SF to get to the Donnelly Preserve.
- 4) Wildlife will be diminished.
- 5) There will be much more traffic on Sullivan Avenue going by SF exit.

The bottom line here is the apartment buildings are too high and crammed on a property that is too small for the mixed-use of this project.

Steven & Susan Livingston

From: MARGARET MARX [gmarx1234@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 6:24 PM
To: planningzoning-comments@southwindsor-ct.gov; PlanningZoningComments
Subject: [External]Apr 27 PZC Meeting - Comments on Geissler Plaza Development

To the SW Planning and Zoning Commission:

Thank you for considering my comments on the proposed zoning change and upgrades to the Geissler's plaza on Sullivan Avenue.

First let me say that the plaza is sadly in need of improvement and is at present a black eye on the town, so in principle I support the zoning change. Having residential units and commercial space in one development area has been done very successfully in other towns, e.g., West Hartford, as today's young professionals as well as older adults downsizing from larger homes seem to enjoy having shopping and eating amenities adjacent to where they live.

That said, I request that the Commission very carefully consider the actual detail of the proposed development plan which includes some items of concern for me as a resident of Strawberry Fields. As you know, our community of beautiful, well-maintained single family owned units abuts the property under consideration. As such, we and the Commission have an interest in making sure that the development is in keeping with our property and South Windsor as a whole.

A couple of specific areas for your consideration:

- The 100-ft buffer between the two parcels of land seems inadequate for two properties of such different character and I am concerned that building so close to Strawberry Fields will lower the property values of multiple homes in our community.
- The proposed height of the rental units, at 3.5 stories, is higher than the homes in Strawberry Fields and will be utterly too imposing if built in such close proximity. This will have an adverse effect on the character and aesthetic of our community. As initially proposed, the design showed rental units at 2.5 stories which is much more in keeping with the neighborhood.
- All outside storage units and refuse dumpsters should be enclosed so that they are not visible from Strawberry Fields homes.
- Strawberry Fields is a private community and as such prohibits public access to our property. Non-owners should be prevented from trespassing. The planned development must make provision for tenants to access the Nature Preserve from behind the development itself to avoid foot traffic through our property.

Thank you.

Regards,

Gretchen Marx
802 Dzen Way
South Windsor, CT 06074
860-305-0233

From: Donna Smith [outlook_C38B5617C2BFDD5B@outlook.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 5:27 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: csumple@gmail.com; Wayne Sumple
Subject: [External]Proposed zone plan change to Sullivan Avenue Plaza

Dear Commission Members,

This is in reference to the zone change being considered for the Sullivan Avenue Plaza. I am in favor of redevelopment of the SAP, however, not with the proposed zone change that would allow a three story building to be crammed into a small corner of this property. South Windsor has no other building of this height in town and this multi-family structure would be situated within 120 ft. of one story single family dwellings with not enough of a visual barrier to protect our privacy.

I have lived in Strawberry Fields for 14 years, a beautiful premier neighborhood, which is a very desirable community for those 55 and over who have looked into South Windsor to relocate. We are a wonderful, close-knit community of residents (tax payers and voters) who care deeply for each other and for South Windsor. I would hope that the commission members would take into consideration the best interests of our community.

I am also concerned that renters within the SAP development will use our private streets as a short cut to the Major Donnelly Preserve. As an older resident living alone, I do not like to think that my safety will now be at risk.

We have difficulty now making a left hand turn out of our community to shop at Geisslers or to gain access to other businesses on Sullivan Avenue or to Route 5. This will only be exacerbated with the increased traffic from SAP

What has happened to the Sullivan Avenue Plaza over the years does not represent South Windsor in any way – a prime town in Northern CT. I remain dubious that, given the past history of the owner, that the development will be maintained properly

I ask that the commissioners reconsider the proposed zone change which would allow the 3 story multi-family structure to be built in the eastern corner of the SAP property so close to the single family homes in Strawberry Fields.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Smith
1203 Dzen Way
South Windsor, CT 06074

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Althea Freemer [apfreemer@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 1:00 PM
To: PlanningZoningComments
Cc: Wayne Sumple; Althea Freemer
Subject: [External]The Sullivan avenue Geissler's Plaza

Dear Council:

I have been a resident of Strawberry Fields Condominiums since 2003 and have been a faithful customer of Geissler's grocery store since I have moved to South Windsor. As a resident of this town since 2003, I have seen this town grow in a positive way. Although in general, I am in favor of a newly renovated and developed Geissler's strip mall, since this "mall" has been a ghost town with the exception of Geisslers and Hot Leather, however I believe they have taken this project to unfavorably new heights. I am referring to the 125 units that will abut Strawberry Fields with a height of three stories high. They may want to boast that they will have the highest building in the town, but this seems to go against the efforts to keep South Windsor as natural in appearance and fitting in with the land formations which also abut the Major Donnelly Preserve wherever possible. Rising three stories up and towering over our development is an eye sore. Two stories would be pushing the limit, but three stories is unsightly.

Also, our privacy as well as safety are at risk. Paths leading from the plaza through our Strawberry Fields community to the Major Donnelly Preserve that cut through our property would put us at risk. To quote Robert Frost, "Fences make good neighbors." Please give this issue careful consideration.

You have already heard many other issues from my neighbors. I am in agreement with these issues. I hope you will give our concerns the attention they deserve as we move forward to build another positive neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Althea Freemer
Resident and home owner of of 701 Dzen Way
South Windsor, CT 06074

From: adgesmundo2@aol.com [adgesmundo2@aol.com]

Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2021 11:41 AM

To: PlanningZoningComments; michaelmcmath@me.com; wsumple@gmail.com; csumple@gmail.com; greeson1@cox.net

Subject: [External]Geissler Project

My name is Carol Gesmundo, and I am a member of the wonderful Strawberry Fields luxury condominiums community . And yes, I am aware that my husband, several days ago, wrote to the PZ commission regarding the Geissler Project. However, I felt it important to express my own feelings as well. Please see below:

- 1) Generally speaking I am in favor of the Sullivan Avenue Project, since it is much better than what we presently enjoy. However, perhaps not in our back yard (not aesthetically pleasing but overshadowing).
- 2) I have some serious concerns regarding the noise factor that we are going to be "saddled" with.
- 3) Traffic is another concern of mine...125 apartments, more stores, Geisslers new store, a restaurant etc.
- 4) More importantly the height of the apartment buildings scares me. Quite visible from several of our condos (units 804, 901, 903, 1001 etc.)
- 5) The closeness of the "new adventure" to our property line.
- 6) This project will result in lower resale values for Strawberry Fields homeowners.
- 7) Future upkeep of apartments...(examine the present upkeep of the property as it exits?)

We moved to this community several years ago...to what was, and still is, a luxury condominium community. We were very "picky" about our choice. We moved from another town...a large decision had to be made. We continue to look out for one another, enjoy a neighborly relationship that is safe, secure and caring. We live in a community that we consider aesthetically beautiful, sought after, noise free and secure. We ask the commission to please keep all of the above in mind when considering this project. Thank you for listening, thank you for your patience...thank you for South Windsor.

Carol Gesmundo

April 22, 2021

To: Planning & Zoning
Planningzoningcomments@southwindsor-ct.gov

Cc: CSumple@gmail.com; WSumple@gmail.com

Subject: April 27, 2021 SAP Public Hearing

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter regarding the proposed zoning change and the construction project on the south side of the Geissler's strip mall.

Pam and I are relatively new to the Strawberry Fields development, having moved to the area at the end of 2019. Some of the features that attracted us to the area include the proximity to great South Windsor attractions (restaurants, shopping, things to do, etc.) but a living space in a beautiful, rural, and quiet setting, which our development has provided. Once we drive into our complex from Sullivan Road, we get the sensation of leaving the hustle and bustle of South Windsor for a private, homey and peaceful living space. We enjoy where we live, and love sharing it with our neighbors (who all enjoy the same).

We are not opposed to the proposed construction project on the property adjacent to Strawberry Fields. However, we have some concerns, as follows:

- The planned height of the apartments is excessive (three stories), and in close proximity to Strawberry Fields. I wonder if the apartments will have a view right into our residences, (as some will be located just 120 feet from five of our homes);
- There will be additional traffic on Sullivan Ave due to the influx of new tenants. It is already a chore for residents of Strawberry Fields to turn left onto Sullivan Ave, and that situation will worsen, as a result of the project;
- We are concerned about apartment tenants walking through the Strawberry Fields development to access the Major Donnelly Preserve;
- We are unclear what impact the construction project will have on our home's resale value.

We hope that our concerns are considered, and that adjustments can be made.

Respectfully submitted,



Pam Bartol & Dan Weinick
502 Dzen Way
South Windsor, CT 06074

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Dolores Massari. I live at 901 Dzen Way in Strawberry Fields.

In principle I favor the redevelopment of the Sullivan Avenue Plaza. It will revitalize the area and bring considerable revenue to our town.

However, I respectfully implore the Committee to carefully consider and mitigate the negative impact the proposed plaza will have on the citizens of Strawberry Fields. Specifically, the proposed complex will destroy the aesthetics and peace and quiet of our neighborhood. It will adversely affect our quality of life, privacy, security and safety, property values, health and generally well being.

Strawberry Fields is a very quiet, friendly neighborhood of people ranging in age from 55 to 100 years old. We are good citizens and active members of the South Windsor community. Some residents have lived in town their entire lives. Most of us are retired, and many spend the majority of days here. Because we are an aging community, some residents must convalesce from serious health complications at home. This is the last place in which some of us will ever live.

Ours is a small, middle-class neighborhood. We take great pride in the appearance of our lovely domiciles and beautiful manicured grounds. We ensure that our homes and property are well maintained. Approximately two-thirds of the dwellings in Strawberry Fields are 1-story, ranch style homes. The density of our housing is 2.5 units per acre. According to Northeast Collaborative Architects, the designers of Strawberry Fields, "The aesthetic and quality construction recall the Connecticut River Valley's architectural heritage. The community creates the sense of individual homes in a neighborhood..."

I invite the members of the Commission to visit Strawberry Fields, so you can see our community first hand and why we enjoy living here.

In the proposal for the Sullivan Avenue Plaza, the 2-story apartment buildings originally planned have been replaced with 3-story buildings. The total height and proximity of the 3-story apartment building closest to Strawberry Fields is daunting. It will dwarf our development and be visible throughout Strawberry Fields. It will destroy the aesthetics of our community.

This apartment building is only 120 feet from our nearest home. Four of the 5 homes closest to this building (including mine) are 1 story high. The bedroom windows in our units face the bedroom windows in this apartment building. If this building is built as planned, I will be obliged to cover my windows day and night in order to protect my privacy. This will affect my well being. I spent many months last year in my bedroom recovering from 3 separate major surgeries. One of my few joys was peering out my windows at the flora and fauna.

In the artist's rendition of the Sullivan Avenue Plaza, trees in the buffer zone tower above and completely block this apartment building from view. This is a very unrealistic

drawing. It will take many, many years of growth for any new plantings to obscure this proposed 3-story building with its very high roof. No matter how tall or thick the deciduous trees, once the leaves fall, the apartment will be visible for 5 to 6 months of the year. It is already the end of April, and a few of the trees in the buffer zone are just beginning to show new foliage.

The proposed construction is expected to take a minimum of 2 years and, undoubtedly, will be very noisy. Once the construction is completed, traffic within the Plaza – delivery trucks, garbage trucks, snow plows, shoppers' and residents' vehicles, etc. – will contribute noise. Outdoor activities from residents also will add noise. A pool in close proximity to Strawberry Fields is planned. The peace and quiet at Strawberry Fields will end, and noise nuisances will ensue.

According to the Environment Protection Agency, "Sound becomes unwanted when it either interferes with normal activities such as sleeping, conversation, or disrupts or diminishes one's quality of life. The fact that you can't see, taste or smell it may help explain why it has not received as much attention as other types of pollution, such as air pollution, or water pollution. The air around us is constantly filled with sounds, yet most of us would probably not say we are surrounded by noise. Though for some, the persistent and escalating sources of sound can often be considered an annoyance. This "annoyance" can have major consequences, primarily to one's overall health."

Devon Thorsby, the real estate editor at US News and World Reports states, "Purchasing a condo or townhouse may be one of the most significant expenditures you will undertake; therefore you have every reason to expect answers with respect to your privacy needs and freedom from intrusive noise from your neighbors. If you have a noise problem that is not resolved and you go to sell your unit, you may be compelled to reveal the deficiency to a prospective buyer which can have an impact on the selling price."

Most of the residents of Strawberry Fields no longer earn wages. It will be extremely difficult for us to recoup financial loss if we are forced to sell a devalued house.

Although an 8-foot retaining wall adjacent to Strawberry Fields is planned and will absorb some noise, the wall will not block all of the noise and does not extend across the entire border between the Plaza and Strawberry Fields. I hope that the Commission will take whatever measures are needed to mitigate noise pollution that will originate from Sullivan Plaza, both during construction and after it is completed, so that the lives of Strawberry Field residents are not adversely affected.

Thick vegetation currently prohibits access by foot from Sullivan Plaza to Strawberry Fields. Once this vegetation is cleared, it may be possible to enter Strawberry Fields from the Plaza. The Plaza will be accessible not only to the apartment residents but also to anyone via Sullivan Avenue. Some of us are vulnerable senior citizens. Our safety and security will be jeopardized. I hope that whatever means are needed to prevent access to Strawberry Fields from the Plaza will be required.

In conclusion, I respectfully request the Committee to carefully examine the effects the proposed Plaza will have on the citizens of Strawberry Fields and take whatever steps are needed to preserve our quality of life and the unique character of Strawberry Fields.

I thank the Committee for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dolores Massari

BERMAN & RUSSO
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
819 CLARK STREET
SOUTH WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06074
TELEPHONE (860) 644-1548
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JON D. BERMAN
FRANK W. RUSSO

April 23, 2021

Michele Lipe, AICP
Director of Planning
Town of South Windsor
1540 Sullivan Avenue
South Windsor, CT 06074

RE: Geissler's Plaza Mixed-Use Proposal

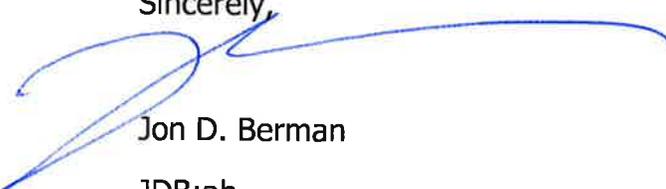
Dear Ms. Lipe:

I am writing as a homeowner and business owner in South Windsor for over 25 years. My wife Myra and I strongly support the plan for the Sullivan Avenue Geissler's development project and site plan as submitted and designed by Design Professionals. We believe it will be an extremely attractive and highly desirable improvement to the community and particularly to the specific area, which I unfortunately have to drive by frequently. The Town desperately needs an infusion of affordable but attractive residential living for young people and others trying to start a family and seek employment in South Windsor, and this project will bring a much-needed infusion of tax revenue as well. Hopefully with that infusion of tax revenue resulting from this project and future mixed-use development projects, we will not need a Town Referendum for every vital infrastructure improvement in the future. The "status quo" is no longer acceptable.

I strongly encourage the approval of the plan as submitted and I hope it can proceed expeditiously.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jon D. Berman

JDB:ah