

Question from NancyOnNorwalk:

Jessica Vonashek said the City estimates it would cost you \$2,000 to do the design review required in the Central Business District. Why not just spend the money and allow him to open?

Answer from Jason Milligan:

Are you suggesting that if I agree to be extorted for \$2000 in order to open the bakery?

Or is this a hidden tax required to open?

What is the trigger for the \$2000 review?

What exactly will be reviewed? There are currently 2 very similar permits for the bakery that are in the possession of the Redevelopment staff. One that was submitted approximately 6 months ago. It details work that would take place on the façade. It was submitted by my company. Then there is one that is submitted by the baker via a contactor. This permit involves zero façade improvements. What you see is what you get. The work is done!

Now if or when the bakery would like to have a sign installed that is a separate permit that must also be approved by the Redevelopment Agency.

Have you read the pamphlet that the Agency is relying on to deny the bakery?

The pamphlet appeared out of nowhere, almost 2 years after the 2019 Neighborhood Plan was approved. Ignoring that fact, the process in the pamphlet was followed. The permit application is to be submitted. Then is supposed to be reviewed by the Agency. If the façade improvements exceed \$50,000 then a 3rd party architect review is automatically triggered. The Agency manages that process. I have gone through it in the past. They have a list of approved 3rd party architects. They send the permit application to the architects for a bid. Then the applicant hires the 3rd party architect and undergoes the review.

What is the trigger for 3rd party architect review in my case? None of the applications I have pending exceed the \$50,000 façade improvement threshold.

What would the architect review?

The Agency and the rest of the government is inventing new rules and procedures. They complain when others don't follow the rules, rules that they routinely ignore, or change when it suits them.

The process is corrupt.

I have tried to discuss this with Jessica. She has tried to be helpful, but it is still unclear what the Agency is asking for. They certainly are not following their written, approved rules, and they are not following their pamphlet.

Brian Bidolli has also veered wildly outside of his limited area of involvement. The agency has FAÇADE DESIGN REVIEW! They are not tasked with ADA compliance. They have no code enforcement arm. They have no inspectors on their staff.

Keep in mind that at least 50% of people that are required to pull permits in Norwalk do not. Most never get caught. When people get caught they typically are required to pull permits after the fact to rectify the situation. This includes tenant fit ups, bathroom renovations, finishing a basement, installing a sign without a permit etc.

I pull lots of permits. I try to follow the asinine rules while at the same time I am fighting for changes using the proper channels. I attend the public task forces; I meet with the consultants the city hires. I voice my opinion and concerns whenever possible. I write op eds. And I use the courts when it rises to that level. The Redevelopment Agency has risen to that level. The degree of lying and corruption that went on in order to get the 2019 Neighborhood plan approved was disgusting. The Agency is corrupt. The statute that empowers them was established to fix dangerous, dilapidated slums. The worst neighborhoods in the state. The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency did not seek to redevelop the worst neighborhoods. They sought to designate the entire downtown of Norwalk as a slum, so they could have power and influence and be in charge of lots of government money and the power that comes with it. They had their Wall Street & West Avenue plan awkwardly loop around the hospital... Was it because the hospital is a slum? Hardly. Is it because the hospital is an intricate part of the neighborhood? Not even close. It is up a gigantic hill from the neighborhood and it is separated by a super highway.

The hospital was included in the neighborhood for the MONEY!

I have a lawsuit that is seeking to put the Agency out of business and out of our neighborhood. I have taken 100 hours of deposition testimony under oath. I have reviewed close to 100,000 pages of documents and emails.

The Agency lied like hell to the public, to the commissioners, and elected officials. They also did not follow the law!