

**CITY OF SALEM
JOINT PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD
JANUARY 30, 2023**

The Salem City Council held a Joint Public Meeting with the Planning Board remotely via zoom in accordance with Chapter 170 of the Acts of 2022 and in person in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 93 Washington Street, Salem, 2nd floor on Monday, January 30, 2023, at 6:30 P.M. pursuant to Chapter 40A, Section 5, of the Massachusetts General Laws. The purpose of the public hearing is to provide interested parties with an opportunity to comment on the proposed Zoning Map Ordinance Amendment relative to rezoning a parcel at 67 Derby Street, Assessors Map 41, Parcel 0339 from Residential Two Family (R2) to Industrial (I) District.

Notice of this hearing was posted on January 12, 2023, at 5:39 P.M. and advertised in the Salem News on January 16, 2023, and January 23, 2023.

Absent were: None (Councillors Watson-Felt and Hapworth were remote)

Councillor Megan Stott presiding.

The following Planning Board Members were present: Bill Griset (Chair) Helen Sides, Carole Hamilton Sarah Tarbet Kirt Rieder Tom Furey Zach Caunter Jonathan Berk & Josh Turiel.

Also, in attendance were: Honorable Mayor Robert McCarthy, Seth Latrell – Salem Harbor Port Authority (City of Salem), Attorney Joe Correnti for the Petitioner – Salem Wind Terminal LLC, John Barry and Jared Kemp – Crowley Wind Services

The following is the text of the ordinance (text and map can be viewed in the City Clerk's Office)

(#724A) – ZONING ORDINANCE TO AMEND ZONING MAP

An Ordinance to amend an ordinance and map relative to Zoning

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Salem as follows:

Section 1. The City of Salem Zoning Map, in accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 5, that the following parcel located in the Residential Two Family (R2) and Industrial (I) Districts be rezoned to the Industrial (I) District

Address
67 Derby Street

Assessor's Map and Lot Number
Assessor's Map 41, Parcel Lot Number 0339

Section 2. This Ordinance shall take effect as provided by City Charter

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Joe Correnti, 70 Washington Street, representing this petition on behalf of Salem Wind Terminal, LLC, This is the land surrounding the Power Plant , about 64 acres, I believe it was at the time, subdivided into two lots and a lot A is now what we know as the gas fired power plant that was permitted by footprint and has been operating the last couple of years. And then there is the remaining land, approximately 42 acres that is not power plant land, but forms sort of a horseshoe around the PowerPoint. The power plant land along the ferry terminal runs along the water in front of the plant. And then another parcel by the sewer district.

Of the 40 odd acres, virtually the entire site is zoned industrial. This small parcel that we're talking about, that we're asking to rezone is zoned are two residential, two family, which is what most of that section of Derby Street is zoned. And these were older house lots that formed this small parcel several years ago until the power plant had purchased these lots. They've been owned by the power plant land for decades. And the land is behind the evergreens if you're standing on Derby Street. So it's always been land that's sort of behind the fence, along India Street.

Jared Kemp is showing Power Point of the area:

Councillor Prosniewski: India street is public property. Has that already been declared surplus? Have we already sold that?

Attorney Correnti: No and no. So it remains a public street. And you may be coming in with a petition to ask you to discontinue it, but that has not happened.

Councillor Dominguez: What is the purpose of changing the zoning on the site?

John Barry-Crowley Wind Services.: That area of the site, it will be we're looking to have it rezoned for industrial use, and we will use it for the laydown. At this time, we're looking for quite possibly blade storage. Will have the blades for the windmills stored in that.

Councillor McClain: What happens to the existing buffer that's there right now? That's a popular area for walking dogs. There's a lot of tree and shrubbery cover that kind of shields the industrial look of the site on the other side from the neighborhood that butts up right against it. Can't tell from the renderings what the intent is to continue to manage that or not manage that. So what happens for the neighbors who now may have something built right up against their public way?

Attorney Correnti: The intent is to keep that buffer in place. Wants to be careful to say that not every tree you see there will remain there is going to be some replantings. A comprehensive landscape plan will be prepared and submitted as part of our Planning Board site plan review, which we will be going to in the next couple of months. But the intent is to keep the buffer.

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Council President Stott: Any further questions from the council? Any questions from the Planning board? Chair Griset?

Zach Caunter: Are there any plans on developing India Street? I bring this up not only as a member of the Planning board, but as somebody who lives about two blocks away from where this rezoning would occur. And just like Council McClain was bringing up, I am one of those individuals who walks their dog regularly along that green space and not thrilled about the idea of industrial construction use that close to where such dense, walkable communities are. So just kind of getting a better idea of what kind of development is going to happen here if it gets changed over to industrial.

John Barry Crowley Wind Services: The intent will be a storage area. The intent would be to improve that area to make it even more desirable than it is today. And we're working with some of the members of the Planning Board to make sure that we try to address some of the concerns from the community in the area that we will be laying. These components will really sort of be sort of stagnant. There won't be a lot of activity and these blades will be the shortest components, so they will have the least amount of impact to the neighborhood. So that's why we're tending to use that area for these blades at this time.

Zach Caunter: Is there any way to get assurances that that green space will remain either green space or have some sort of non-industrial use? It sounds like we're going a lot on faith at this point, and it's a very important green space in that neighborhood. And I would like to know for certain that beyond just some sort of like, promises or we don't intend to construct on this particular space, if there's anything that we can get to assure that that will be continued community space?

Joe Correnti: Yes, submitting to the Planning Board in about three months, going to submit a plan for the board's review and approval. Those plans will show the green space listed there with a landscaping plan showing what additional plantings will be made, what might be removed, what will remain.

Kirt Rieder: Back when the Power Plant was designed, the Power Plant came in front of the Planning Board and again, we will fully expect to have dimension drawings and very precise drawings that indicate specific trees that shall be removed, those that may be replaced in a similar or totally different configuration. I would point out, as part of the permitting and approvals for the power plant, a former owner of this property, we went through a lengthy public process to ensure that that all of honey locust trees were kept intact, with the evergreen hedge as a distinct dimensional and landscape buffer between the Derby Street neighborhood and the finished use, whatever that might be. I understand that this is a new owner, speaking for my seat on the Planning Board, we are going to be looking to keep that intact to the greatest extent possible just to telegraph expectations. That's all I have to say. It would be helpful if Crowley Wind or Attorney Correnti could respond to the comment about India Street right now. It's a

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public way. I understand that it may be closed off, but it'd be good to hear, if not tonight, certainly you'll speak to us as the Planning Board about whether you would use that as a gated entrance to the property. So your choice when you want to address that.

Attorney Correnti: No, that's being laid out and prepared in our plans and we'll fully explain that at the right time when go in front of the Planning Board.

Josh Turiel: Doesn't have any inherent issue with the rezoning. Just want to make sure that as we manage this through the process, in that space right now there is a substantial buffer between the property and the neighborhood. And I want to make sure that that is preserved and if possible, even enhanced somewhat. The last two uses of the property were very passive uses in that area. It was just some of the staging site prior after the tanks after the tanks and coal piles were removed, which was a very passive use, it was just the part of a parking area, which was also a relatively passive use for the construction teams. And it's been vacant ever since. It's an industrial property all over altogether by nature, and that's fine. That's part of what the city is. But as best as possible, it's an industrial site that lives right on the edge of a neighborhood. And the more we can do to buffer and protect that neighborhood from the activities of the power plant, the better off we are.

Bill Griset: What I'm hearing and what I'm feeling myself, I will express. My big concern is the issue of buffering and proximity to a neighborhood.

Public Comment:

Robert McCarthy, 93 Washington Street. Acting Mayor/ Ward One Councillor, this has been my biggest concern since day one. And I will say that all of the early on design plans have included green space. Basically, the existing fence line, if you look at the owner owns right to the sidewalk. That green space that everyone alludes to is talking about, that is in every plan that I have seen, has been kept. The fence line will be enhanced because of elevation concerns that may have to do with the property about grading. So there may be similar berms as we see we saw, maybe not to the scale of what's over on the power plant site itself, but I can stand here tonight in full confidence saying that there will be a green space buffer zone between the neighborhood in this property. It may not look exactly the way it does now, but there will be a green space. And if it is enhanced, it hopefully will be, because that's what's going to happen. And obviously that's what's going to happen with the trust of the planning board in the next phase of this.

But what we're talking about right now is the rezoning of former house lots. We're not taking any house lots. No houses are coming down for this. They're just looking to rezone it. So the zoning is consistent through the whole process. I don't have an issue with it. The property is already being used that way. Just to make sure that the use is consistent with what's going on, I would be in support of it.

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Councillor Varela: Concerning the storage of these blades, how large are these blades? Only reason I ask is because basically with the refraction of south and North, I'm just very curious how big of it.

John Barry Crowley Wind Services: Blades. It's still actually to be determined because they have not selected their equipment manufacturer for the first project, so it will vary, I think, right now, the blades intended to be approximately 300 feet.

Councillor Varela: And how high when they're in storage?

John Barry Crowley Wind Services: Blades will be in racks, and they'll be stacked three high. So the height just guessing, but let's say 12 to 15ft.

Councillor Varela: Okay. So they'll be stacked this way, three in a row, and say let's say 15ft plus.

John Barry Crowley Wind Services: I'll get you the better details, though, as soon as I can. I'll email to this team.

Councillor Varela: Answer alleviates my concerns

Councillor McClain: Good faith conversation about what we'd like to see protected there, I do just want to extend the conversation a little bit to wrap around the corner towards Blaney Street, there are a couple of properties there not a lot, It turns into city land pretty quickly, but there are a few. And it happens to be one of the more sort of enjoyable local flavor properties that sits right around the corner there. There's a small sculpture yard that's sort of one of our local institutions. It's one of those things that gives our local community a little bit of its own special character. And so I want to make sure that that neighbor is also being communicated with, and that spot is going to be protected and enjoyable as well. So just want to make sure that is on the radar for everybody in the conversation.

Kirt Rieder: Sorry about that. I only wanted to point out that our expectation when the team comes before the planning board, that we talk not strictly in two dimensional plan, but that you have fully rendered three dimensional perspectives and cross sections that show the relationship of the existing Honey Locust mature trees relative to the stacking of the blades that were described vertically and through words tonight. Because ultimately, the combination of illustrative sections and perspectives are going to help not only the board, but the neighborhood residents understand what this means and how we move forward from there.

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Councillor Morsillo: Moves that the public hearing be closed by Roll Call Vote

Councillor Cohen: Seconded

RCV: 10 YEAS – 0 NAYS – 0 ABS

Councilor Morsillo: Moves that the matter be referred to the planning board by Roll Call Vote.

Councillor Dominguez: Seconded

RCV: 10 YEAS – 0 NAYS – 0 ABS

Councillor Dominguez: Motion to adjourn by Roll Call Vote

Councillor Prosniewski: Seconded

RCV: 10 YEAS – 0 NAYS – 0 ABS

Meeting Adjourned at 7:05 P.M.

ATTEST:

ILENE SIMONS
CITY CLERK