

**City of Newport
Department of Planning and Economic Development
Staff Report to the Planning Board**

Statement of Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

Meeting: September 9, 2020
Applicant: Derek Savas, Jay DeLeon, and Alvaro Vieira
Owner: Charles F. Hill, Jr.
Petition: Special Use Permit

The applicant has applied to convert a commercial condominium unit to a dwelling unit in an existing mixed-use development at 359 Thames Street (AP 27, Lot 158, Unit UFG), a WB zone.

Standards of Review

As part of the Zoning Board of Review (ZBR) review process, the Planning Board has been requested to provide the ZBR “an opinion as to the petition’s conformance to the (Newport) comprehensive plan.” (Newport Zoning Board of Review Policies & Procedures)

Staff have reviewed the following relevant components of the Comprehensive Plan in order to determine consistency:

Goal LU-1 – To provide a balanced city consisting of residential, commercial and employment uses consistent with the character, environmental resources and vision of the community.

Policy LU-1.6 – The City shall encourage upgrading, beautification, revitalization, and environmentally appropriate reuse of existing commercial areas.

Policy H-2.1 – The City shall emphasize the provision of housing that is priced to meet the needs of Newport’s workforce.

Goal H-3 – To reduce the percentage of seasonally vacant homes and increase neighborhood stability and vitality.

Policy H-3.1 – The City shall identify and implement actions to limit or reduce the percentage of City homes that are vacant on a seasonal basis, focusing on neighborhoods most affected by these homes.

This property is a mixed-use condominium development, with ground floor retail, residential, and a timeshare outfit. This change in use will not significantly alter the character of the area and this minor change is not inconsistent with the vision for the community. The Board should explore the petition with continued concern with regard to the proliferation of short-term rentals. There are no proposed exterior modifications as part of the petition.

Planning Department Recommendations

The Planning Department recommends the Planning Board find this petition consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, with the contingency that the dwelling unit not be rented for a duration shorter than three (3) months.