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CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
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(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular meeting held: July 7, 2020
Location: Via Zoom
Present: Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman, and Rebecca Shannonhouse. Alternate: Dee Davis Oberwetter.

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order 7:03 p.m. Anne Goslin is the chair for the current meeting.

II. Approval of June 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2020 meeting. There were no changes to the minutes noted.

(The motion was moved by B. Hersh, and seconded by R. Shannonhouse, and carried unanimously)

III. New Business

**A. Modifications to ZB Application #217-16 - HP Gateway Land I, LLC
Map Plan Approval - 340 & 400-440 Washington Blvd.**

Participants: William Hennessey, of Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP; representing the owners.

Presented: A. Goslin provided a brief update of the progress since the last meeting. This is the Charter Communication site at Washington Blvd. and Pulaski Street.

1. A. Goslin noted the Commission previously reviewed the landscaping along Pulaski Street and Washington Blvd. Since that review, a house on Washington Blvd. (340) was demolished. This is in the South End National Register Historic District.
2. Bill Hennessey said this project has been before many Boards and there have been changes that we will review. Lisa Feinberg is here to help; they represent Charter. Charter entered into a long-term lease with Building & Land Technology ("BLT") for this property. The project is 6.5 acres in size. He showed an aerial view. Tower #2 will trail Tower #1 by about one year. There are about 1,000 spaces in the parking structure.
3. The house on the north side of Pulaski Street is not owned by BLT. The City has tried to take it by eminent domain but has stopped that process. The garage will be enlarged. The request now is to rezone the 340 Washington Blvd. lot to the Transportation Center Design District zone (TCDD).



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4. By folding that lot at the corner into the development, the parking garage can be redesigned allowing better circulation in the parking garage. They can move parking off from the top of the deck. There is no net increase in parking. There is a cap on parking provided by the City. There is an orange rectangle on the site plan that was supposed to be the loading dock. Since this is a single user building, they can use the existing loading dock on Washington Blvd. near the railroad tracks.
5. The cross-hatched yellow areas on the site plan show areas where there are easements for road widening. This will include landscaping and sidewalks. The Master Plan has also been updated. The next diagram shows setbacks from Washington Blvd. and Pulaski Street. There is planting, landscaping and sidewalks on the Washington Blvd. side of approximately 14 ft. They plan to use Linden trees. The wall is masked by Arborvitae that will grow to 25 ft. and will exceed the height of the parking wall. There is an extra line of trees along Pulaski Street. These setbacks are about 50 ft. minimum. It is 54 ft. at the corner of Washington Blvd. There will be a sitting wall as well at the corner of Washington Blvd. and Pulaski Street. There is an entrance and landscaping to the Mill River Park. Part One of the current application is the rezoning of the lot and the other is the landscaping application.
6. Anne asked for comments or questions. Elena asked how tall will the garage wall be along Pulaski Street? Bill will check on the wall height above-grade. She also asked what is the driveway next to the existing house? Bill said that has been there for many years. Barry asked about the corner at Washington Blvd. and Pulaski Street. Bill said there is seating as shown on the view. He noted, the City controls all of the Mill River frontage and is in the process of landscaping it. The condition for the current permit is for the upper river walk. Later they will be required to design and enhance the lower river walk. Barry said they have come a long way. Barry also said HPAC saw a proposal across Washington Blvd. Bill noted the HDF proposal and the hearing has been closed and is likely to be approved.
7. Rebecca asked how mature will the trees be when they are installed? Bill corrected the previous statement and noted there are Pin Oaks along Pulaski Street. The middle row will be Redbuds. They will be 8 to 9 ft. There are some Spruce as well. The maturity level of the oaks will be three (3) calipers and about 12 to 14 ft. high. Arborvitae will be 8 ft. tall when they are planted.
8. Anne asked if we should close the discussion and form a resolution. She asked if there are any public comments? Elizabeth McCauley said the garage seems to be 15 ft. tall. She is concerned about the views of the Duncan Phyfe house. She noted for many years it has been visible as you drive down Washington Blvd. Bill said there are large trees in front of the Duncan Phyfe house now. He also said the views are being opened up and there is a nice gathering space across the street (at the corner). Anne noted the rendering shows a wider Washington Blvd. Bill added, with the widening, the location of the trees will allow greater views of the Duncan Phyfe house. Elizabeth said she would like to see the rendering of the views along Washington Blvd. Bill said OK. Sue Halpern asked if the seating area can be larger? Bill noted the size is fairly large as designed.

Anne asked for a resolution. Bill said there is a Map Change and there is a modification of the building and landscaping. Both are included in the Presentation. A motion was made to approve the plans and the modification to the zoning as submitted.

(The motion was moved by B. Hersh and seconded by E. Kalman, and carried unanimously.)



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- B. ZB Applications #220-26 & # 220-27 - Walter Wheeler Drive SPE, LLC
Zoning Map Change and Site & Architectural plans**
- C. ZB Application #220-28 - Walter Wheeler Drive SPE, LLC
Master Plan Change**
- D. ZB Application #220-29 - Woodland, LLC
Zoning Change**
- E. ZB Application #220 - 30 Woodland, LLC
Harbor Point Development Plan Change**

Participants: Lisa Feinberg and William Hennessey of Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP; on behalf of the Applicant, BLT.

Presented: A. Goslin provided a brief update

1. Anne started by noting the Commission reviewed a preliminary Master Plan proposal now known as the Eastern site. The Eastern and Western sites are bisected by Commons Park South. She wants to review these four (4) applications together.
2. L. Feinberg first showed a map view looking toward the south. It is the former B&S Carting site. For the purpose of these applications, they have divided the property into two sections, the Eastern Site, and the Western Site. The total site is 7.3 acres. They will update the Master Plan categories. The additional application is for Coastal Site Plan Review

Western site

3. The Western part of the property is about 4 acres including the road, Commons Park South. The Western site is planned to have 174 units and 281 parking spaces. 5-9 Woodland Avenue will remain. (Excluded on the former General Development Plan.) The properties will be mostly re-zoned to **SRD-S**. BLT owns these properties now. On Woodland Avenue, there are still some apartment buildings, Numbers 5-9, that will be left untouched. There are some ground floor commercial buildings at the corner with Pacific Street; they will remain. The full part of the site extends to Walter Wheeler Drive. The dog park location will remain. There are three (3) houses on Walter Wheeler Drive. Lisa showed a view along Atlantic Street, with some commercial structures. The plans for buildings shown on the site are preliminary only. Lisa said the design has not been developed. Elena asked if there will be anything taller than 45 ft. on Woodland Avenue? Lisa said the taller building will be on Atlantic Lisa said the property will be re-zoned SRD-S

Eastern site

4. Lisa said most of the Eastern property is vacant. The site is about 3.3 acres. Lisa walked the Commission around the property (virtually). It is bounded by Woodland Avenue to the North; Pacific Street to the East; Walter Wheeler Drive to the South and Commons Park South Drive to the West. There will be zone changes on the Eastern property. They will consolidate into **R-HD** zone over most of the site. The owners intend to build 540 units, 690 spaces in structured parking, and 7 to 25 stories.



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5. There is more progress with the architectural plans for the Eastern side. They want to pay attention to the different boundaries of the site. Along Pacific Street, the building will top at 7-stories. Along Woodland Avenue, there will be 12-stories. On Walter Wheeler Drive, there will be a taller building. There is a view of the B&S Carting site that is existing. In 2015, BLT remediated the property. They want to move forward with redevelopment. It was a large dusty, smelly existence. Lisa added it is a big improvement over the industrial site that is was before.
6. Anne asked if it was supposed to be 5-stories on Pacific Street? Lisa said there were adjustments to the units to spread out the units on the site. It is 7-stories in the plan now. Some moved from the middle. Most of the height is on the Walter Wheeler Drive side. Elena said she is having a difficult time understating the heights on Walter Wheeler Drive. Is it 25 stories? Elena asked if they are asking for a much denser development? She is concerned with light and air. Lisa said the Walter Wheeler Drive side is SRD-S now, and allows 225 ft. in height.
7. Barry asked about setbacks. The front setbacks are 10 ft. and there are setbacks at upper stories. There is a wedding cake effect to the building. Barry said he shares Elena's concern about light and air. Barry asked if they have had meetings with the Planning Department. Yes, they are asking for a new zoning designation.
8. Lisa added the plan is for 540 units on the Eastern site and 174 on the Western site, for a total of 714 units. She noted this is less density than the South End study proposed for this site. There was a recommendation for over a thousand units of housing.
9. David expressed concern about the development along Pacific Street. He noted he is not as concerned about the heights along Commons Park South and Walter Wheeler Drive where it is adjacent to the other Harbor Point development buildings. David also asked what the Commission is being asked to review? Anne said the Commission reviews the development including the architecture. David expressed concern that HPAC is not an architectural review Commission and may not have the authority to comment about architecture design. David asked Lisa about her comment that Pacific Street is supposed to be townhouse development. He said it does not look like townhouse scale or design. Others noted the Commission should provide some architectural guidance.
10. Rebecca stated all have expressed concern with Pacific Street. She shares that concern. She also noted that other Boards are looking for guidance on architectural design from this Commission. All generally commented about the Pacific Street side with 7-stories when it was previously proposed as 5-stories. Elena agreed that we do not know how far to go with our concerns. Dee noted the Pacific Street side properties seem disconnected from what is there already. Elena was happier when there were 5-stories on Pacific Street. Rebecca asked if the zone changes have already been adopted? She agrees with concern about Pacific Street. It would be nice if it was made to be a bit more complimentary.
11. Anne opened up the discussion to the public. Elizabeth McCauley noted this is too large, imposing and overwhelming. She does not like it is pitched as an improvement over industry. She thinks Pacific Street should be scaled down. She does not see this as preserving our historic character. Sue Halpern agreed. She said the Post Mark building is 10-stories and cannot imagine a 25-story building on this site. There is no indication this will blend into the neighborhood. She hopes BLT will change their plans. Sheila Barney added she has been there when B&S Carting was on the site. They had light an air. It seems BLT is not considering the community input. She said on the west



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side and Stillwater Avenue there is development that relates to the community. Why can't BLT approach this site the same way? Anne made a note that in 2018 HPAC asked to review the building design and materials.

12. Carmine Tomas asked if he could make a comment. He said they own two buildings on Pacific Street and Woodland Avenue. He said they will be surrounded by these big ugly buildings. He does not understand how this development can happen. He hopes that HPAC can review the impact of these buildings. It seems like the administration does not care and it needs to be correct in size and density for this neighborhood.
13. Judy Norinsky from HNP added the development does little to relate the district and historic buildings.
14. Anne asked if the Commission could form a resolution. Barry said he would like to express the concerns of the group. He noted we can only express our concerns with the plans. The Commission discussed the following comments with the hope the development can be more protective of the neighborhood and more sustainable. He wants to give guidance to the Planning Board. Anne asked about the materials and if we should make a recommendation. Barry does not think that the Commission should comment.
15. Elena added if Zoning allows a certain type of density the developer will pursue that density. It looks like the neighborhood is looking for less density. If we are advising the City on the zoning designation, there may be better balance of the density on the site. She agrees the density should be reduced and suggested moving the tower a little further away from the Pacific Street corner. She also does not think rebalancing of the property will be enough.
16. Rebecca added the Zoning Board will be looking for HAPC guidance on architecture and design. She added that Boards are looking for our recommendations. Dee said she agrees with the thoughts, and is concerned with light and air as has been expressed. She also believes the presented materials do not match the historic structures and the neighborhood.

Resolution

The Commission is concerned the building's current design will endanger the neighborhood's light and air quality, and the building will detract from the character of the homes and businesses in the historic district.

The Commission discussed the following design recommendations:

- a. Reduce scale and density.
- b. Façade along Pacific Street should be five (5) stories as originally proposed, in order to blend with the surrounding structures.
- c. The building should step away or back from the corner at Pacific Street and Walter Wheeler Drive.
- d. Building materials and design should have a contextual relationship with the historic district.

(The resolution motion was made by B. Hersh and seconded by D. Woods, and carried unanimously.)



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IV. Old Business

A. Demolition Permits

David noted he has not received demolition permit applications over the last month.

B. Tree Manual

Rebecca is tracking the planting manual Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, introduced a few meetings ago. She has requested a copy. There may be a draft available soon.

C. Potential Nominations & Surveys

1. Judy Norinsky and Anne met to review recommendations made by Rachel Carley (East Side and Glenbrook) and Christopher Goodwin and Associates (Sandy grant money, Cove and Shippan) upon completion of Historic Resources Inventories.
2. The following were recommended by Rachel and CGA:
 - Mariner's houses, Cove - NRHD
 - Northfield Cemetery - NRHD
 - Elmwood district (St. Basil's area), East Side - NRHD
 - Courtland Terrace, Glenbrook - NRHD
 - Oakdale/Glen Terrace, Glenbrook - SRHD
 - DeLuca Construction, Crescent Street - SRHP
 - Hunt Carriage House, East Side - NRHP
3. Judy and Anne also discussed areas to prioritize for future HRIs:
 - Shippan
 - Westside
4. HNP plans to apply for Elmwood district and Hunt Carriage House nominations and wishes to survey the Westside.
5. Judy said: if there is an important property to be listed, the group can go directly to a nomination rather than starting with an inventory. She added we will still need to examine buildings before nomination. Anne suggested HPAC request support from the City to nominate DeLuca Construction and survey Shippan. David requested she forward information and photos of the building for Commission to review. All generally agreed to survey Shippan.

(The item was Tabled without further decision. Review of status will be on going)



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D. Future Event Noted: 644-650 Atlantic Street, 79 Garden Street & 130 Henry Street

Anne noted: On August 5, 2020 at 10:30 a.m., there will be a meeting organized by SHPO and the Historic Preservation Council with BLT about the proposed South End demolitions (Blickensderfer Building, 79 Garden Street and 130 Henry Street). There is a petition that HNP has started with a link on HNP Facebook page. The meeting will be in Hartford (live attendance) and it will be via a zoom connection. All are encouraged to send letters/attend the meeting/sign the petition.

(The item was Tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing)

E. One Atlantic Street Modifications to Submitted Plans

Participants: Jason Klein, of Carmody Sandak Torrence Hennessey, LLP representing the owner and Greg Shaughnessey, Building Manager, Stone Harbour Capital.

1. Lisa Feinberg and Jason Klein contacted Anne to inform and express regret that the staircase from the front entrance to the basement was removed to accommodate a bank tenant. This removal was not revealed in previous plans. The staircase was saved and can be reinstalled at the rear of the building.
2. Anne stated the Commission had carefully reviewed and approved alterations to the building (exterior pointing, converting the Broad Street windows to doors and subdividing the first floor) making clear and stating in resolutions that it is important the first floor and exterior original features remain in place. Anne reminded Jason that the first floor interior photography as requested. Jason said the photographs are forth coming and HPAC is welcome to visit the space. He will arrange something.

A conversation ensued regarding the Commission's review of alteration methods. This was a condition of a previous resolution. The Commission requested that details be forwarded regarding how partitions will be installed and how the original floor will be preserved under the new flooring.

(The item was Tabled without further decision. Review of status will be ongoing.)

V. Adjournment

A. Goslin adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m. (There was no further discussion.)

Drafted by David W. Woods, AIA - July 24, 2020,
Secretary, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for August 4, 2020 via. Zoom.