

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES # 3737
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2012
4TH FLOOR CAFETERIA – GOVERNMENT CENTER
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Theresa Dell, Dudley Williams, Michael Totilo, Claire Fishman, Jay Tepper and Zbigniew Naumowicz. Present for staff was Todd Dumais.

Mrs. Dell opened the Public Hearing at 7:30pm.

Public Hearing

2012-2013 Capital Budget and 2013-2019 Capital Plan

Mrs. Fishman read the legal notice into the record.

Mrs. Dell read a statement into the record regarding this year's Capital Budget preparation and process. She then explained that she would read through each item in the Capital Budget and that if anyone wished to comment or speak to come forward and make a statement or question on the specific item.

All Capital Budget Items were announced, the ones below were discussed by Board members or the Public.

Animal Shelter

J. Arthur Layton, 668 Glenbrook Rd, #10 stated he hoped the Planning Board would reconsider adding some funding back. Shelter is in dire need of repairs and they're hoping for the opportunity for significant private funds to build another animal shelter.

Laurie Hollywood, Animal Control Officer stated that they have been approached by a number of 501-C-3 charities and feels that there is potential to match/surpass \$1.5 million they need to build a more state of the art animal control facility. What they build depends on the site location and she estimates that it will cost \$2 - \$2.5 million for a 6,000 sf facility. They can obtain a matching grant.

Lou Casolo, City Engineer, stated the Mayor has requested an evaluation of the current facility and they've looked at six different relocation sites. Initial estimate was prior to putting out the budget. Still in the conceptual stage but their needs are greater than what's currently on the books and that the potential complete design this year with construction plans to follow.

Heather Skuddy, volunteer, Animal Shelter, potential for major donations to the shelter and that this is important to the City.

Ally Girardi, Outreach to Pets in need, 501-C-3, they work with and support the shelter. They work on the operating side with the shelter. She stated that Stamford is a premier city and should have a premier shelter. Especially shelter should have sound-proof conditions and be better equipped for emergencies.

Mrs. Fishman asked if the design had already been funded? Mr. Casolo said yes, design is already funded.

Pam Kelly, Strawberry Hill Avenue resident and volunteer for 6 years spoke as a taxpayer and said there needs to be thought and work put into a new animal shelter.

Oakdale Road Culvert

James Van, 59 Oakdale Rd, described the condition in front of his house when it rains and how the road floods and how the Oakdale culvert doesn't drain. Mr. Van explained that he has lived at this address since 1996. There are 30-40 neighborhood homeowners who have signed off on this at \$50,000 because the area is like a funnel with many houses flooding when it rains. He commented that it has flooded twice up to knee level.

Joseph Gonzalez, 71 Oakdale Rd, said he's been a resident since 1998 and described the topography of Oakdale and agrees a funnel forms at both ends of the road when it rains and they have the Noroton River as a backyard. Oakdale Road becomes impassable after a 1" rainfall. Neighbors are requesting to have put funds in to have this problem fixed.

Lou Casolo, City Engineer, said the \$50,000 was for design.

Mrs. Dell asked if any of the work could be done through a supplemental funding request. Mr. Casolo said he'd look into that.

Mr. Dumais asked if the fix could be made just by replacing the culvert? Mr. Casolo said they wouldn't know until they looked at the problem further and at the depth of the design work.

Street Patching & Resurfacing

Karen Murphy, 68 Saddle Rock Rd, discussed street patch projects. She expressed concern about this as the previous amounts approved were for over \$9 million for street patch work. She asked how street patch work could be funded for \$9 million. She asked that this account be reviewed as the request seems highly unlikely.

Hope Street Reconstruction

J. Arthur Layton, Board of Representative from Springdale District 17. He said the Hope Street reconstruction project is very important to Springdale residents which is a heavily trafficked area. It is hoped that the project is not cut and highly anticipated by all residents of Springdale.

Traffic Calming

Joe Gonzalez discussed the speed bumps to calm traffic on Oakdale. Speeds exceed the 30mph limit and the City promised 5 speed bumps. He'd also like to request a follow-up study. He requested that funding be allocated for this.

Mill River Corridor

Kathleen Murphy, she'd like to understand what the City's role in the TIFF funding is and perhaps the Board could look into this.

Peter Privitera, City Budget Director, responded to the TIFF bonds and said they will not be issued for Mill River.

Ms. Murphy said bonds were issued in past years. Discussed cash flows and no new TIFF funds.

Mr. Privitera described the financing problem between now and the time to issue the bonds. By excluding the request out of the plan does a disservice to the project itself.

Government Center Renovation

Karen Murphy, spoke about the Capital Budget, last year's plan, the planning process and how it is unrealistic because the out years never match or come close to the current years requests.

Juvenile Detention Cells

Mr. Privitera discussed juvenile detention cells and that the item was withdrawn because they are now doing the work.

Ferguson Library

Ernie DiMattia, Ferguson Library President and Stamford resident, thanked the Board for listening to their funding requests and being supportive of the Library efforts. There is now a contract to digitize the Advocate from 1892 – 1990. Now a question on how far they should archive and that the money the Board put in is a great first step.

Mrs. Fishman asked what condition the old documents were in? Mr. DiMattia said the microfilm is okay, the original papers are in poor condition. They'll digitize from the masters.

Northeast Corridor Renovations

Pauline Rauh, prior Principal Northeast School, said NE School is not ADA compliant. Mrs. Dell stated the Board had given the Board of Education 100% of their request. Mr. Casolo said the HTE balance is not there. Mr. Williams noted that this was the BoE 17th ranked priority.

Mrs. Rauh discussed the Board of Education. Mr. Tepper asked if she could coordinate. Mrs. Dell said the Board had been told \$8 million was going toward HTE balances and the Board can only work with the figures they're given.

Child Learning Center

Barbara Garvin-Kester thanked the Board for their great support and they realize they made two requests and they are thankful the Board has approved their priority.

Housing Development Fund

Vin Tufo said their request is \$1.25 million to be a piece of the capital structure for replacement of senior housing and they will leverage \$12 million in additional funding. They will be replacing the Czeik home which is older and in a flood zone

Jason Shaplen, CEO St. Luke's Lifeworks continues to have a great partnership with the City and the funding from the Board will allow that to go on.

Stamford Center for the Arts

Mike Moran, General Manager, hopes the roof stays in place this year and the Board approves their requested funds. Elisa Joda said thanks to the Board for their support.

Mrs. Dell opened the hearing up to the Public for general comments.

Kathleen Murphy discussed the planning process and hearing project specifics and cashflows and she's trying to get a handle on what is approved, how the process can be more effective and what projects are actually getting done. Quarterly reports should be required to allow the Board to have an idea on which projects are moving forward and how the funds are actually being used.

Mr. Williams said he'd prefer job specific bonding and agreed that quarterly reports would be a helpful tool going forward. He suggested the Board formally ask for reports on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Tepper said the Board is dependent on other people giving it financial data. He's heavily against "project specific bonding" and doesn't think it's a wise way to go.

Ms. Kathleen Murphy said she has a serious problem with bond funds and said there'd be issues with double bonding. She then stated there've been numerous unreported spills at the WPCA and that the Board is responsible for looking at their future Capital Spending.

Mrs. Dell closed the Public Hearing at 9:15pm and took a 5 minute recess.

Regular Meeting

Zoning Board of Appeals Referrals:

ZBA Appl. 009-12 – Clarks Hill Shopping, LLC requesting a variance of Table IV, Appendix B, building coverage, to allow an existing building, awning and walk-in refrigerator to remain on a property having an address of 806 East Main Street, located in a C-N zone.

Mr. Dumais updated the Board and explained that the awning and walk-out refrigerator were both built without the proper permits. After a brief discussion Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the requested variance. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Tepper).

Planning Board Meeting Minutes:

Minutes of December 31, 2011

Mr. Williams moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Tepper).

Minutes of January 10, 2012 and January 17, 2012

Discussion of these minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

Minutes of September 6, 2011

Mr. Naumowicz moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Naumowicz).

Old Business

The Board discussed the consultant interviews and agreed Members Quick and Tepper should participate in the selection of a consultant for the City's Master plan update.

There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Fishman, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board

Note: These proceedings were recorded on tape and are available for review in the Land Use Bureau located on the 7th floor of Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, during regular business hours.