

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES #3749
TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2012
7TH FLOOR LAND USE CONFERENCE AREA,
GOVERNMENT CENTER
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

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

Mrs. Dell called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and introduced the Board Members. She announced that the first three items on the agenda had been held over from the previous meeting and that Zoning Board Applications 211-13 and 211-14 have been withdrawn.

Mr. Quick stated part of the legal agreement should be part of the Parking Management Plan for future applications.

Mr. Tepper stated he'd like the Planning Board to issue a letter that future Parking Management Plans include language for legal agreements between any and all parties involved to ensure the Board is comfortable reviewing/approving them.

Regular Meeting

Mr. Williams updated the Board on the Charter Revision Commission and its potential impacts to the Land Use Bureau. He explained that there was a proposal to elevate the Director of Economic Development into a cabinet level position and move the Land Use Bureau out of Operations under this new position. Mr. Williams said this organizational proposal was put forth by the Mayor to have one person that the Land Use Departments report to would have more efficient operations. Under one director, you'd have City departments respond in a faster and more coherent manner.

Mrs. Dell expressed concern that an Economic Development Director would influence Planning and Zoning (P&Z) decisions and push economic development through even if P&Z might not approve.

Mr. Williams said issues may come up involving conflict of interest issues. He has the sense that the actual boards would provide a buffer to this. The concept is supported by the Mayor and his staff and feels it would result in more efficiency.

Mr. Tepper said he felt this would be a poor public policy. The Planning Board is dependent on the Land Use Bureau staff especially if the thrust is going to have anything to do to attract new business. He compared it to mixing apples and oranges and doesn't feel it's a wise government policy but more of a political thing.

Mr. Williams said it wasn't designed for the current Economic Development Director and there's been a lot of discussion on the concept and that among the Commission it wasn't a unanimous vote. The Mayor's position is that the City would benefit around a more efficient coordinated approach.

Mr. Tepper said he felt it puts the Land Use staff in a hard position going into applications.

Mr. Williams said there'd be many Public Hearings where people will have the opportunity to weigh in on this option.

Mrs. Dell returned the Board to the applications before it and modification of the subdivision; all of which are related to Juner properties: a text amendment, special exception and subdivision modification. Mrs. Dell described the applications. Mr. Totilo recused himself and left the table. Having not been at the previous meeting, Mr. Williams and Mr. Naumowicz announced they would not participate in the discussion or vote.

Subdivision:

Modification of Subdivision #3358, 3 Roxbury Road, request to modify Condition 1 of Planning Board Certificate #3358 by relocating the existing open space to the northerly most portion of the Property (*continued from 5/15/12*).

Zoning Board Referral:

ZB 212-03 – June Rosenthal, Zoning Text Amendment to Amend Article III, Section 7.3 Special Exception Uses for Historic Buildings to allow real estate office use in R-20 districts that front State Highways provided the property contains an approved and/or legally nonconforming residential use.

ZB 212-04- June Rosenthal, Zoning Special Exception - requesting approval to salvage, relocate and restore an off-site historic building on 0.58 acres in an R-20 zone and accommodate a real estate office which currently exists but is nonconforming.

Richard Redniss, representing the Applicant, reviewed the open space issue, EPB concerns, ecologically sensitive land and provided an overview of how the open space would be increased. He described how the Applicant had gone back and forth with parking spaces and decided to give up spaces in order to line up the open space in the front of the parcel. Parking won't be stripped to designate specific spots.

Mr. Tepper asked what the front of the new building would look like? Mr. Redniss said it would be green.

Mrs. Dell noted the main parking is in back and asked if it would be possible to eliminate some of the spaces and include a turn around. She also had a question about the site plan. She suggested that if the application is approved and when the building is erected, the area should be staked and protected during construction to delineate open space and protect it.

Mr. Tepper asked about the curved path shown on the plan connecting the old building with the school house. Mr. Redniss said it was a walkway connecting through to the front door.

Mrs. Dell said language should be open that there could be two houses on the property.

Mr. Quick asked if this has always been one lot? Mr. Redniss said no, it was part of a larger subdivision with one lot divided into four but the houses have always been on-site. Mr. Quick also asked about the parking liability in front of the Juner office. He asked if they'd approached the City to buy this parcel so there'd be no liability.

Mr. Tepper said the existing office is currently a real estate office and they are not changing the use. If saving the historic building is the objective, he doesn't want to add other negatives for the neighborhood.

Mrs. Dell agreed and noted this should be stressed in the referral letter to the Zoning Board.

Mr. Quick said he knows the referral language will note two separate buildings will be on-site but doesn't want to set a precedent of using historic language to get approval of non-conforming buildings.

After further discussion, Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the modification of the open space for Subdivision #3358. Mr. Quick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 3-0 (Dell, Quick and Tepper).

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the Zoning Text Amendment #212-03 application. Mr. Quick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 3-0 (Dell, Quick and Tepper).

Mr. Quick moved to recommend approval of the Zoning Special Exception #212-04 application. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 3-0 (Dell, Quick and Tepper).

Planning Board Meeting Minutes:

Meeting of 5/1/12

Mr. Quick moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Dell, Quick, Totilo and Tepper).

Meeting of 5/15/12

Mr. Tepper moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Quick seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Dell, Quick, Totilo and Tepper).

Old Business

Mr. Dumais updated the Board on the status of the Master Plan RFP.

New Business

There will be no meeting next week, May 29, 2012 due to the Memorial Day Holiday. There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting at 7:47 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.