

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES #3604  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011  
7<sup>th</sup> FLOOR LAND USE CONFERENCE AREA  
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

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

***Regular Meeting***

The chair, Mrs. Dell, opened the regular meeting at 7:30 PM.

***Capital Budget:***

Discussion & Vote on the Planning Board's recommended **Capital Budget 2011-2012 and 2012-2018 Capital Plan**

Mrs. Dell asked members of the Board if they had any specific comments or discussion on the Capital Budget, specifically on issues or comments raised during last weeks Public Hearing.

Mrs. Fishman asked if the Board of Education was still working on their budget? Mrs. Dell responded no, they are working on their Operating Budget but if it is the consensus of the Board, should leave in the Turn-of-River school.

Mr. Tepper had several comments. First, he made a general statement that the taxpayers of Stamford pay millions of dollars in Federal taxes and as a City we should take advantage of some of the money we send to Washington. He stated that suggestions that emergency funding of Capital Projects should be the preferred method is false and doesn't work. On the comments about the illegality of funding the Mill River Park, Mr. Tepper said that the City is not obligated to fund Mill River Park, however, we choose to do it. Mr. Tepper added that it is not the job of the Planning Board to oversee how the funds are processed and spent because we are given neither the resources or authority to do so in the Charter.

Mrs. Fishman said some of the comments directed at the Board during the Public Hearing were wrong and made it seem like the Board didn't know what they were talking about.

Mrs. Dell added that the comments about the Mayor not being allowed to add to the budget are incorrect; he can both add and take out funds, in the process outlined in the Charter. She noted that the Board of Finance and Board of Representatives cannot add items to the Budget once the Mayor has submitted his budget. Mrs. Dell stressed that to come in at a \$25 million budget would be a disservice to the City and that both the Board of Finance and Board of Representatives could cut down to this number if they choose.

Mrs. Fishman asked if the Planning Board could speak before the Board of Finance? Mrs. Dell stated that she would have to check on the correct process to do so, but that the Planning Board would send all of these comments in writing and submit them formally. Mr. Tepper suggested the Planning Board transcribe their comments and send them to the Advocate.

Mr. Quick discussed the Old Town Hall and questioned the need for a \$300,000 dollar kitchen.

Mrs. Dell introduced members of the Engineering Bureau, Mani Poola, Dominic Tramontozzi and Ann Brown and stated that they were here to answer specific questions raised during the Hearing last week.

Mr. Tramontozzi stated that the Mayor is a strong advocate for infrastructure and has directed Engineering to focus on several streets that have high priority on the list. He explained that the City needs \$11 million to do 91 roads and that even if we get money in July, we'll go through another winter where the streets won't get any better and problems will multiply. Mr. Dumais then distributed a list of backlog streets projects to the Board.

Mrs. Dell asked if there were any projects that could be postponed or do they need more funding? Mr. Tramontozzi said the taxpayers see the state of roadways and will quickly realize the results of a lack of funding.

Mrs. Dell said they approved \$250,000 for Spring Street improvements and asked if that could be postponed for an additional year and direct funds to an out year.

Mr. Tepper asked how these priorities would stack up against other projects?

Mrs. Fishman asked about school zone flashers. Mrs. Dell said they'd have to look at each project.

Mr. Tramontozzi said street projects are a higher priority than such projects as the Solid Waste Garage and the Cove Island Parking Lot.

Mr. Quick asked why the complete roads projects need to be paved and is it possible to do a road in sections. Mr. Tramontozzi said they do complete roads and also partial patches. Mr. Quick asked if they kept funding to \$2million, could they deal with that? Mr. Tramontozzi stated they would work with whatever we get.

Mrs. Dell said the main question is to understand the amount of Federal funding and the amount of local funding on the Stamford Urban Transitway.

Ann Brown described funding as a split of 80/20 but have received some 100% federal funds. When they estimate a project, they identify an estimate of \$65 million based on 2007; R.O.W. costs have come down since then but costs are higher. Construction costs are less now. Closer to \$56/\$57 million in costs and that the learned good lessons learned from Phase I.

Mrs. Dell asked where the extents of Phase II are? Ms. Brown answered Elm Street on Elm/Myrtle, down Myrtle to Main Street near Lincoln/Lockwood section.

Mr. Tepper asked if she could explain \$16 million in local funds? Ms. Brown said they received an 80/20 grant where \$8 million was local funds. When we didn't get the \$32 million in Tiger Grant, we got \$16 million in a Federal grant they couldn't use so this is \$1 million in addition to \$3 million we did allocate.

Mr. Quick asked how we could repair the railroad, Route 1 underpass? Mani Poola said it is coordinated with the State and repairs are based on State funds.

Mrs. Dell asked how long Phase II would last? Ms. Brown said they estimate two construction sessions but depends on the funding put forth in the Capital Budget.

Mrs. Dell asked if they had an accounting of what's been spent for Phase I? Ms. Brown said a total of \$65million from both Federal and Local. Mr. Poola said the City is committed to completing these projects.

Mrs. Dell recommended that when the Engineering Department presents to the Board of Finance to mention the priorities of the City and stress to the Chair the consequences of not funding the projects with federal Grant matches.

Mr. Poola said if these Federal projects are funded now, the City would be prevented from getting future Federal funds.

Mr. Dumais had a question about the HOV lanes. Mrs. Brown stated that the administration will enforce HOV lane restrictions and explained the HOV lane dynamics and that non HOV vehicles will be riding in it because it is also serves as a right turn lane.

Mrs. Dell asked for a motion to table the discussion and vote of the Capital Budget to the end of the meeting. There being no objections, Mr. Tepper moved to table the discussion and vote on the Capital Budget, seconded by Mr. Quick and passed unanimously 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Quick, Totilo and Tepper).

***Zoning Board Referrals:***

**ZB Appl. 210-34 - Palmer Hill Partners, LLC**, Special Exception request to provide a fee-in-lieu payment for 13 of 20 required below market rate units for the project located at 77 Havemeyer Lane. This request would modify condition #1 of the Zoning Board approval 210-38 and 210-39.

Mr. Cole opened the discussion on the application. He explained that that this is an opportunity to put together funds and solve a problem and discussed the background of the Highgrove project and how it relates to this request. Mr. Cole noted that at first, when approached with this idea, staff was negative about it but now is in strong support of it.

Rick Redniss and William Hennessey on behalf of Palmer Hill Partners presented to the application to the Board. Mr. Redniss described this application as a win-win-win-win situation and us several projects coming together to produce something good for the Coty. He explained that Charter Oaks was working on redeveloping their properties including Cezik Housing under I-95 and near train tracks in flood plane and that the Mill River Collaborative was looking at this site for a park use including a kayak launch. Now, there is an opportunity to redevelop 992 Summer Street, moving Cezik homes there and adding new BMR units and get more park land.

Mr. Tepper asked if they've contacted the residents for input? Mr. Redniss said not yet because they are too early in the process because what happens if they approve this and something happens on the other end. Also, another aspect of this is the Housing Development Fund; who will have a piece of this of the fee-in-lieu money.

Mrs. Dell asked if they could go over this and how the different groups would split the fee-in-lieu.

Mr. Redniss said Palmer Hill will have 7 units on-site BMR units, the equivalent of 3 units will go to Housing Development Fund, and the equivalent of 10 units to Charter Oaks Communities and the Mill River Park gets 2.8 acres and 700 linear feet of park waterfront.

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval the Special Exception. Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Totilo, Quick and Tepper).

**ZB Appl. 210-48 – ORCHARD K&G ASSOCIATES, LLC, 275 Greenwich Avenue,** Special Exception pursuant to Article III, Section 7.3, Uses for Historic Building to restore and preserve existing 2-1/2 story building and construct an additional 4 residential unit in an R-MF district.

Mr. Dumais introduced the application. Don Knight, the co-applicant, explained the project and the improvements proposed to the existing historic structure. Right now the building is run down and doesn't look very nice.

Mrs. Fishman asked how many units will be in the house? Mr. Knight answered three.

Mr. Knight added that in the rear of the property they will add 4 townhouse units each with a two car garages and will make use of the density bonus for two properties to the rear of this proposed project.

Mr. Tepper asked if all the units will be rentals? Mr. Knight answered yes.

Steve Grabowski, co-applicant, said for the record they have built homes for last 26 years and remodeled over 200 units mostly low and medium income units.

After a short discussion, Mrs. Fishman moved to approve the application for Special Exception. Mr. Naumowicz seconded the motion and it carried unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Quick, Tepper and Naumowicz).

***Capital Budget:***

Mrs. Dell asked Board to return to Capital Budget discussion and opened the floor on discussion of funding for the Library. Mrs. Dell noted she approved of putting funds into the Budget for this line item.

Mrs. Dell stated that since the City doesn't own Old Town Hall they should consider eliminating the kitchen renovations, which would give the Board \$300K. This money could then be allocated partially towards the library's exterior repairs. After additional discussion, the Board agreed to take the Old Town Hall out of the Budget. The Planning Board noted that it was pleased with Library's fundraising efforts which are being used for operating expenses. Mrs. Dell noted that in the future, furniture shouldn't be included in the Capital Budget.

Mr. Tepper said the city roads are awful and that the Board should approve the additional funding request for the roads.

Mr. Totilo noted the Board went through the requests mindful of the financial needs of the City and it's the Board's opinion that an additional \$1.85 million would help and at an impasse on how to prioritize any more.

Mrs. Dell said \$25 million needs to be bonded; \$20 million in closeouts and that the \$25 million approved over past 2 years and we are still waiting for funds. Whatever we put in

will be adjusted and due to the severity of winter the streets request is justified and reasonable. She added that the Board feels \$38,737,435 is fair for the City and the Board needs to come together as a group and support this number.

Mr. Totilo said he felt comfortable voting for approval of this Budget. Mr. Tepper stated he wanted to compliment the Staff on the work they have done in helping prepare the Budget and on Mrs. Dell's chairmanship.

Mrs. Dell said everyone has put in long hours and hard work and thanked the Board

Mr. Naumowicz said this has been a learning experience. Mr. Quick agreed they were all beginners and they've all learned a lot from the process. He stated departmental sheets need to give them ability to weigh different priorities where now it's vague.

Mr. Tepper moved approval of the Planning Board's recommended Capital Budget 2011-2012 & Capital Plan 2012-2018. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Totilo, Quick and Tepper).

### ***New Business***

Mr. Dumais commented that the Board's next meeting would be March 1, 2011.

There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting at 9:51 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 7<sup>th</sup> floor of Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, during regular business hours.