

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4th, 2007
7TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Jeffrey Curtis, Theresa Dell, Claire Fishman, John Garnjost, Rose Marie Grosso, Duane Hill and Jay Tepper. Staff members present were: Robin Stein and Todd Dumais.

The Chairman, Mr. Duane Hill, opened the Special Meeting at 7:00 PM.

Special Meeting:

Letter from Mayor Malloy regarding changes in FY 2007/08 Capital Budget

Director of Operations, Ben Barnes, briefly described of the letter from Mayor Malloy regarding projects revised to the proposed FY 2007/2008 Capital Budget. He then highlighted five (5) projects which he felt warranted additional attention;

- Intervale Area Sewers – The recommended budget includes \$3,055,000 over the recommend plan.
- Old Town Hall Restoration – The recommended budget includes \$3,600,000 over the recommended plan.
- Light Rail Transit – The recommended budget includes \$250,000 over the recommended plan. Mr. Barnes further described this as a long range traffic mitigation effort and transportation vision.
- Strategic Fire Study – The recommended budget includes \$150,000 over the recommended plan.
- Mill River Stormwater Management Plan – The recommended budget includes \$1,737,455 over the recommended plan.

After describing the listed projects, Mr. Barnes fielded questions from the Board. Mr. Garnjost asked if the amounts in the budget constituted a reformatting. Mr. Barnes acknowledged the way in which the list of projects was revised into the recommended budget did constitute a reformatting. Mrs. Dell asked if the City Sidewalks project was for new sidewalks or replacement / repairs to existing sidewalks. Mr. Barnes indicated that it was for both.

With no further questions, the Board acknowledged the letter from Mayor Malloy regarding projects revised to the proposed FY 2007/2008 Capital Budget.

Master Plan Amendment:

MP-394 New Hope Realty, Inc. To amend the Master Plan. Present Master Plan Land Use Category #7 Commercial – Arterial and #4 Residential-Medium Density Multifamily. Proposed Master Plan Land Use Category #5 Residential- High Density Multifamily. Area bounded by East Main Street, Lincoln Avenue and Sherman Street. The Chairman, Mr. Hill, asked if the Board had any objections for moving this item from fourth on the agenda to second. There being no objections Staff member, Mr. Dumais, summarized the application for the Board and described it as both consistent with the Master Plan and with the East Main Street Corridor Neighborhood Plan.

Mr. Stein informed the Board that after the public hearing, Staff received a letter on behalf of the record owners of 942 East Main Street requesting that their property not be included in the amendment.

Mrs. Dell moved to recommend approval for the Master Plan amendment as depicted in application MP 394 New Hope Realty, Inc. Mrs. Grosso seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Zoning Board Referrals

ZB. 207-10 Metro Green BBSF, LLC to amend the TCCD Transportation Center Design District standards.

ZB 207-11 – METRO GREEN, BBSF LLC, Zoning Map Change, 669 Atlantic Street, to change to Transportation Center Design District (TCDD) property currently zoned, M-G zone, “General Industrial” and R-MF Zone, “Multi Family Residence Design.”, bounded by Atlantic, Henry, Washington Blvd. and Station Place.

207-12 – METRO GREEN, BBSF LLC, Special Exception & Coastal Site Plan, 669 Atlantic Street, associated with the submission of General Development Plans requesting approval of a 325,000 square foot office tower, 230 feet in height, and 220 dwelling units in three separate buildings, with associated structured parking, utilities, landscaping and streetscape improvements.

Mr. Stein explained that though this is not a public hearing, the applicant requested to make a presentation to the Board. Mr. Stein gave a brief overview of the project identifying it as a transit oriented development that utilizes green building and sustainable design and noted that during the pre-application process Staff issued a favorable report.

Mr. William Hennessy, attorney for the applicant, introduced the members of the development team and gave a brief project overview highlighting; site orientation, existing zoning conditions, proposed zoning changes and proposed development.

Mr. Allen Davis, of Tighe & Bond Civil Engineers, Traffic and Parking Consultants, presented the utilities and traffic reports for the project. Mr. Davis asserted that the sewer and drainage requirements of the development could be supported under existing conditions.

Mr. Lee Wientrout, Landscape Architect, presented a series of diorama-style boards which highlight the landscaping and public / private space amenities associated with the project.

Mr. Brad Perkins, of Perkins Eastman Architects, presented the residential buildings component of the development. He described the general size, look and number of units for each of the three buildings. He further explained that the applicant intends for the project to meet LEED Silver certification for New Construction and LEED Gold for Neighborhood Development.

Mr. Rick Cook, architect for the commercial component of the project, introduced the office building. Mr. Cook described the design aspects of the building highlighting the importance for the building to define Stamford’s skyline as a visual bridge across I-95; the importance of the building to be the healthiest working environment in Connecticut; the importance for the building to be integrated with the surrounding streetscape; and the importance for the building to meet LEED Gold certification.

Anthony Malkin, of W & M properties, described Metro Green, utilizing the principles of transit oriented development and sustainable design, can serve as an example to the rest of the country of how good a project can be.

Mr. Brian Ketcham, P.E., presented a transportation impact analysis of the project on behalf of his client SEIU 32 BJ. In his opinion, Mr. Ketcham, stated that this project is not a transit oriented development. Based on his analysis, the traffic created by Metro Green is significantly greater than what the applicant's traffic report states. He said that the applicant completely ignored traffic conditions on I-95 and the future traffic of the Harbor Point and Yale & Towne projects.

The Board members and Staff expressed concerns over Mr. Ketcham's report and agreed that they needed time to review the report prior to making a decision on the application.

Zoning Board of Appeals Referrals

ZBA 032-07 Jos LLC variances of setbacks & coverage to construct replacement garage at 178 West Ave. Mr. Stein described the details of the application to the Board. Mrs. Dell moved to recommend denial. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

ZBA 035-07 Spruce Street Town Homes LLC variances of setbacks & coverage to construct two residential buildings at 20 Spruce St. Mr. Stein described the details of the application to the Board. Mrs. Grosso moved to recommend approval. Mrs. Dell seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

ZBA 036-07 Bach Hoa Vo & Duc Hong Nguyen variances of height & stories to construct a residential building at 302 & 312 Shippan Ave. Postponed until a further date.

Subdivision

Subdivision Application #3953 of Edgewood Terrace III, LLC & Edgewood Terrace, LLC 103-107 Highview Avenue 111-115 Highview Avenue for subdivision of property into 2 parcels. Property is located on the east side of the intersection of Mead Street and Highview Avenue. Known as 115, 111, 107 and 103 Highview Avenue. Mr. Stein described the details of the application to the Board. Mrs. Fishman moved to recommend approval. Mr. Garnjost seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Old Business

The Board discussed congestion pricing tools and its potential impact on Stamford. Mr. Tepper suggested that if the Board agreed that congestion pricing was not acceptable, a letter should be drafted and sent to Stamford's State and Federal Representatives. Mr. Stein produced a copy of the pending Connecticut Bill and a document from the USDOT on the subject. The Board agreed to research the subject further before making any decisions.

There being no further business or comments, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rose Marie Grosso, Secretary

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.