

MINUTES OF PLANNING BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING - TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2000  
7th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM, GOVERNMENT CENTER  
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Present for the Board were: Marggie Laurie, Acting Chairman; John Garnjost; Jack Rich; Tim Abbazia; Duane Hill; and Helane Rheingold. Present for staff were: Robin Stein, Land Use Bureau Chief; and Carol Davis, Senior Planner.

Mrs. Laurie opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.

**MP - 367 - Planning Board - amendment to the Master Plan to change to Land Use Category 13 – Public, Parks property currently designated Land Use Category 6 – Commercial, Local or Neighborhood and Land Use Category 5 – Residential, Multifamily, High Density and Land Use Category 4 – Residential, Multifamily, Medium Density and Land Use Category 3 – Residential, Multifamily, Low Density, and Land Use Category 8-D - Commercial Central Business District.**

Mr. Stein explained the rationale for this amendment. He said that one of the chief objectives was to develop a greenbelt and additional park land. He said the park master plan saw a deficit of parks in the city as a whole and in the central city in particular. He said a survey conducted for that plan cited a need for biking and walking trails. He said there is a need for more parks in the West Side and that with the increased residential development downtown there is a need for more public open space nearby. He said in contrast to previous studies, this proposal provides links to the east and west.

In answer to questions from the Board, Mr. Stein explained that while \$1 million has been allocated for basketball courts environmental concerns are delaying implementation. He said grants have been awarded for a walkway/bikeway on the west side and the City may apply for a grant for a bridge at Division St. He explained that unless HUD policy changes replacement housing for Stamford Manor residents would be required. He said there have been discussions with HUD regarding financing of replacement housing.

Mr. Abbazia said these amendments are consistent with the intent of the Board but the issue of 1010 Washington Blvd. needs more discussion. Mr. Stein said he hopes once the Boards make a commitment there may be an opportunity for the City to work with the owners of 1010 to implement the plan. He said the property is “maxed” out and the owners can continue to rent the building.

Regarding the vacant lots in MP-367 Mr. Stein explained that the owners may build on the property under current zoning. He said a zone change could be construed as a taking, while changing the Master Plan category is not. He said in order to implement the Master Plan the City would have to purchase the parcels.

Mr. Stein suggested that the Dreyfus boundaries be modified in accordance with Mr. Redniss’ recommendation at the public hearing.

After further discussion it was proposed that a formal explanation of the Board action be sent to other boards, the residents of Stamford Manor and the owners of 1010 Washington Blvd.

On a motion by Mr. Rich, seconded by Mr. Abbazia, the Board voted unanimously to approve MP-367 with modification of the Dreyfus boundaries. Mr. Hill did not vote.

There was discussion about the letter of intent. Mrs. Laurie suggested that a letter be sent to Stamford Manor residents, the mayor and Housing Authority stating that there is no intention of any displacement of the building or the residents until adequate housing of the same affordability and located in the same area is provided and it is assured that all moving expenses of residents will be covered by the Housing Authority. She suggested that a letter be sent to the mayor, other boards and the owner of 1010 Washington Blvd. stating that the long term objective of the Mill River Plan is to establish a park, but that this will not happen until the City is ready to purchase the building. She said the letter should propose that the City and owners work together to reach an equitable solution.

Mr. Abbazia said the City should work with the owners of 1010 to see how the building can fit in with the park and the City should not commit funds to its purchase without further analysis.

Mr. Garnjost said a letter to the mayor should urge purchase of the vacant properties.

Mr. Stein said the Board might suggest phasing of the park development. He said it can be argued that the value of 1010 will be enhanced as the park development moves forward. He said the Goodwill site should be an early priority.

On a motion by Mr. Garnjost, seconded by Mr. Abbazia, the Board voted unanimously to have staff draft one letter to the mayor copied to the parties mentioned above. Mrs. Rheingold did not vote.

**MP - 368 - Planning Board - amendment to the Master Plan to change to Land Use Category 5 - Residential, Multi-Family, High Density, property currently designated Land Use Category 4 - Residential, Multi-Family, Medium Density and Land Use Category 6 - Commercial, Local or Neighborhood Business.**

Mr. Stein reviewed this change. He said specific zoning might be developed to require an affordable component in the housing.

Mrs. Laurie asked if the zone would have to include affordable housing to comply with the Master Plan. Mr. Stein responded that the Planning Board could recommend this to the Zoning Board.

Mr. Rich asked if more housing would contribute to traffic. Mr. Stein said downtown housing tends to attract fewer cars per person, that the main traffic concern is at the peak hour and that residential uses involve reverse commute. He said that if the area is developed as proposed because commercial uses are there now the effect on peak hour traffic would be no worse.

Mrs. Laurie asked if high density housing will overwhelm the West Side and Mr. Stein explained that Category 5 is in keeping with the surrounding area.

Mrs. Laurie asked what the City gets in return for higher density. Mr. Stein replied that there is potential for assemblage south of Broad St. with easement possibilities for the park and that there is an excellent site north of Broad St. for housing relocation.

Mrs. Laurie was concerned that loss of commercial services would adversely affect the neighborhood. Mr. Stein said that the frontage on West Broad St. and Mill River St. could have some retail and offices.

On a motion by Mrs. Rheingold, seconded by Mr. Garnjost, the Board voted unanimously to approve the application. Mr. Hill did not vote.

**MP - 369 - Planning Board - amendment to the Master Plan to change to Land Use Category 5 – Residential, Multi-Family, High Density property currently designated Land Use Category 4 - Residential, Multi-Family, Medium Density and Land Use Category 8D – Commercial, Central Business District.**

Mr. Garnjost recused himself from this item.

Mr. Stein explained that the main issue here is the Exxon station. He said the owners made a telling case for the need for a service station in this location and he recommended modification of the map to remove the gas station from Category 5. He said that housing is a permitted use in commercial categories so if the gas station use should discontinue the site could be used for housing. He said most of the properties on Division St. and Clinton Ave. are built out under existing zoning and that this is an opportunity for higher density with an affordable component.

On a motion by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mrs. Rheingold, the Board voted unanimously to approve this application with the modification recommended by Mr. Stein. Mr. Garnjost did not vote.

**MP -370 - Planning Board - amendment to the Master Plan to change to Land Use Category 5 - Residential, Multi-Family, High Density property currently designated Land Use Category 4 - Residential, Multi-Family, Medium Density, for property located at (see attached legal notice).**

Mr. Stein reviewed this proposal noting that housing in this area will provide eyes on the park and that the existing non conforming auto uses will not be adversely affected by the change.

On a motion by Mr. Abbazia, seconded by Mr. Rich, the Board unanimously approved the application. Mr. Hill did not vote.

#### Minutes

#3244 Oct. 26, 1999 - Unanimously approved as corrected

#3245 Nov. 9, 1999 - Unanimously approved

#3246 Nov. 16, 1999 - Unanimously approved

#### Old Business

Mr. Stein said the pace of the Master Plan Update will be picking up. He said he is preparing the department budget for 2000-01 and that money must be allocated for the cost of public hearing notices when the plan is ready. He suggested that the Board might want to modify a previously adopted resolution regarding the notification of property owners.

Mr. Garnjost said the supplemental budget information he requested has not been received and that it should be submitted prior to the budget public hearing.

Mr. Rich said he would be away on January 25, 2000. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marggie Laurie, Acting Chairman  
Stamford Planning Board