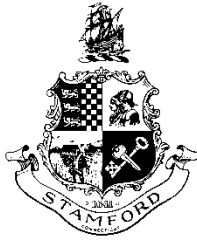


Mayor
CAROLINE SIMMONS



DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION
BENJAMIN BARNES

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CITY OF STAMFORD
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2024

TO: Board of Representatives

FROM: Benjamin Barnes, Director of Administration

CC: Planning Board
Board of Finance
Caroline Simmons, Mayor

RE: Final Report – Discontinuance of a portion of Garden Street in Stamford
(between Dock Street and Manhattan Street)

As required under Section C8-60-4 of the Charter, I conducted a public hearing on August 20, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. in connection with the discontinuance of a portion of Garden Street in Stamford (between Dock Street and Manhattan Street). Subsequent to the public hearing the Director of Administration is required to make a report, in writing, to the Board of Representatives of the probable cost of the discontinuance and the damages and benefits which should be assessed in favor of, or against any affected properties.

Notice of said hearing had been published in the Stamford Advocate on August 7, 2024; August 8, 2024 and August 9, 2024. Specific notice of said public hearing had been provided to affected parties.

The following specially noticed entities attended and made the following remarks:

Frank Steinegger

Mr. Steinegger expressed support for the proposal to discontinue Garden Street on behalf of all of the members of SMTG which incorporates the Manhattan Street block. They wholeheartedly support the proposal. He commended the City on providing a comprehensive package that clearly illustrates the benefits for both the City of Stamford and the residents of Stamford.

Bill Janocha

Mr. Janocha, whose family owns property on the street in question, supported the discontinuance of the road. He mentioned that the area has been neglected, becoming a dumping ground and that the discontinuance would be a positive step forward. He emphasized that the area requires remediation and that redevelopment would benefit the City, potentially increasing tax revenue.

Barbara Czescik

Ms. Czescik attempted to speak but faced technical difficulties with her audio. She submitted a written document in favor of the discontinuance prior to the meeting which is attached to and included as part of this report.

The following member of the public made the following remarks:

Susan Halpern

Ms. Halpern, who lives in the South End, inquired about the financial benefits the City might receive from the property. Ben Barnes responded by directing her to the City website to view the Mayor's Report that includes a recommended assessment of \$1,036,000 against adjoining property owners based on an appraisal of the property. Ms. Halpern also asked about the extent of contamination or remediation required on the property, but Mr. Barnes did not have specific information about that because the purpose of the hearing was to address the roadway.

Recommended Benefit Assessment

Following the hearing, I have conducted a final review of the proposed discontinuance and conclude that no changes are warranted to my August 5, 2024 report to the Mayor regarding the above-referenced proposed discontinuance and that the assessment of benefits as originally proposed is appropriate and fair to the City.

The adjoining property owners, Rodriguez, Csezik, Steinegger and Morabito have represented to the City that they are part of a voluntary agreement among all the owners of land within the blocks bounded by Dock, Atlantic, Manhattan and Pacific Streets, known as the Stamford Manhattan Transit Group (SMTG). At the recommendation of the Corporation Counsel, the City may levy the benefit assessment against SMTG, or against the adjoining property owners in proportion to their respective frontage on the block of Garden Street to be discontinued. In either event, the adjoining property owners or SMTG must acknowledge and accept responsibility for the removal of public utilities and any public facilities within the discontinued roadway prior to the issue of any development permits for the location.

Attachments: Correspondence received related to the proposed discontinuance.

8/20/24

Ben -

Please find enclosed
4 statements & 27 signatures
in support of the discontinuance
of Caroleen Street to be used / shared,
submitted during the Zoom hearing
today at 1pm. Thank you.

Lissa Gault

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

~ The small portion of Garden Street to be discontinued has not been used since the construction of the Urban Transit Way except to provide access to 4 land owners all of whom support its discontinuance. The incorporation of this small parcel will then allow for the development and revitalization of the land that serves as the Gateway to Stamford. Its proximity to Stamford's primary transportation hub will allow future residents easy access to public transportation resulting in less traffic congestion.

The consolidation of Garden Street with the Manhattan Street parcels will allow for the many entitlements pursuant to the CT State Enterprise Zone and the Federal Opportunity Zone.

Czescik Family
Garden Street/Manhattan Street

~ Since all Manhattan Street properties have been vacated for over the past decade-plus, the small section of Garden Street has seen near-zero car traffic. It also became a parking lot for private trucks and equipment. It became a site for trash, discarded mattresses and even a parked dumpster. Future plans for revitalization of that entire area will only increase its viable purpose, with increased tax revenue of an otherwise now-destitute property. This section of Garden Street has long been an area of low value.

Mary, Bill and Chris Janocha
Manhattan Street

~ Over the past decade, the South End has come alive again, and the development of our properties will be another step toward completing the revitalization of that area of our City. The discontinuance of Garden Street will allow for the highest and best use of the land. Due to the proximity of the land to the train station, the development of our properties would not only complement the new station, but would be appealing to business and visitors coming through Stamford.


Tony Rodriguez
Garden Street/Manhattan Street

~ I believe closure of Garden Street makes sense for the City of Stamford and its residents. The street closure will feature some of the following benefits:

- Closing Garden Street will allow for redevelopment of the entire Manhattan Street Block for a significant transit-oriented development of mixed use (e.g., apartments/retail).
- Completion of the apartment tower on the entire block, will bring more than 60 BMR units to the Stamford Train Station market and accommodate workforce housing needs.
- Development/Construction of a new complex will generate permit fees for the City of Stamford.
- The stabilized full occupancy of the building complex will generate significant tax roll revenue for many decades to the City of Stamford.

Frank Steinegger
Garden Street/Manhattan Street

Neighbors from Manhattan/Garden Street met Monday, August 19, 24
@ 5:00pm and have signed this petition in support of the
discontinuance of Garden Street.

1. Barton Guil
2. Frank Stinger
3. Mary Janocha
4. Claudia Doran
5. Nick Crescik
6. Ed Crescik
7. Ben Komega
8. 
9. Bill JANOCHA
10. David Washington

10 in
attendance

The following individuals also endorse the discontinuance of Garden Street and have hereby given permission to include their names.

1. Christine Chung
2. JoAnne Kokoros
3. Melissa Batroff
4. Mike Morabito
5. Chris Janocha
6. Joe Rodriguez
7. Jenalynn Fumega
8. Frank Jung
9. Dennis M^cMahon
10. Maribeth M^cMahon
11. Karen Miranda
12. Robert Mattera
13. Dennis Vlahakis
14. Tom Smith
15. Mike Gostowski
16. Trish Czesnik
17. Ali Czesnik

27 total
signatures