

MAYOR
David R. Martin



DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
Mark McGrath

LAND USE BUREAU CHIEF
Ralph Blessing, PhD
(203) 977-4714

CITY OF STAMFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD
STAMFORD, CT 06904-2152

(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)

Date: Regular Meeting held: January 8, 2019
Location: 6th Floor Safety Training Room
Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Blvd. Stamford CT 06904
Present: Lynn Drobbin, Anne Goslin, David Woods, Barry Hersh, Rebecca Shannonhouse,
Elena Kalman

REGULAR MEETING

I. Call to order (Meeting called to order 7:10 p.m.)

A motion was made to have Rebecca Shannonhouse and Elena Kalman assigned as voting members for this meeting to make a quorum.

(The motion was moved by L. Drobbin and seconded by D. Woods and carried unanimously)

II. Approval of Minutes

Two corrections to the December meeting notes were requested by Barry Hersh. Those are:

1. Under Item 3: The picture of the 860 Canal Street project shows the structural elements that will remain as part of the new project. The demolition is not "total".
2. Under Item C: Barry attended the Planning Board meeting on November 27, 2018 when both Media Village and the proposed Master Plan Change for 7-9 Woodland Avenue were discussed. There was neighborhood concern about the large scale apartment development proposed for the vacant Woodland Avenue site which is within the South End Historic District

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2018 meeting with these corrections.

(The motion was moved by B. Hersh and seconded by L. Drobbin, and carried unanimously).

III. New Business

A. Former B&S Carting Site Redevelopment

South End Historic District

Applicant: Woodland Pacific LLC, Walter Wheeler Drive SPE and The Strand/BRC Group, LLC
Participants: Lisa Feinberg, of Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, representing the owners.

Lisa introduced the project and said she does not have a full application at this time. The design for the site is very preliminary. There is only a Text Change being requested at this time. They are still digesting the zoning issues. She asked if everyone is familiar with the site and presented some larger maps of the area.



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The property is the old B&S Carting site. It is a large rectangle. BLT purchased the property in 2015 and they began remediation. The street in front was constructed by BLT. The development site is about 3.6 acres. Walter Wheeler Drive is to the south.

Lynn asked about the Text Changes. Lisa noted the first is a Master Plan Amendment. The site is in a number of categories. One is an industrial zone. They want to have the Eastern side a high density residential zone. The Western side will go into S-RDS zone as part of the Harbor Point District. That came before the Planning Board on January 2, 2019. The Planning Board asked that the remainder of the site go into Category 5. The southern part will remain in Category 9.

Barry said he has been at other presentations before the South End. There was a lot of discussion at those meetings about the progression of the Harbor Point development. He asked what will be proposed for density. The Community also wants to know what the materials will be and how will they fit in with the neighborhood. Lisa said they are considering materials that fit in with the Community in response to comments. The Pacific Street frontage was regarded the most important. The height was important. The height was limited to a 5-story structure. They want to be sensitive to the Historic District. They understand the impact to the neighborhood. But the site was a carting and industrial site that did not give anything to the Community. The Community wants brick along the pedestrian areas of Pacific Street.

Elena asked what HPAC is reviewing. Lynn added the project is in a conceptual stage and has requested an early review to understand the impact on the Community. The density is still being worked on and the building heights will be stepped. Tower 1 along Walter Wheeler Drive was 22 stories and Tower 2 was 15 stories. That may change. The Pacific Street section is planned with 5 stories. Lynn further asked how this complies with the South End Study. Lisa said they are proposing about half the density that the South End Study proposed. Barry noted that there is concern between the old South End versus the new South End. Lisa suggested the density should probably increase toward the train station.

Lynn requested public comments. Wes Haynes remarked that BLT has reached its entitlement under Antares. He asked that the City and Community develop some clear recommendations from the South End Study before this project is reviewed and approved, and before any decisions are made. He thinks it is appropriate that the Commission make a recommendation that the Master Plan be developed out of the South End Study recommendations, before the design for this site is approved.

A motion was discussed with the following comments: Lynn noted that HPAC wants to be included in continued discussions. The concern expressed by the group is with the scale, the relationships with the Community and Historic District and with the materials that will be used. David noted he supports Wes' suggestion the Commission encourage the Community and the City's Land Use Bureau to evaluate the South End Study and determine which portions should be moved forward and incorporated into the Master Plan but not sure if HPAC can hold up the development process for this site until that happens. Revisions to the Master Plan may take some time. All generally agreed the City should encourage adoptions from the South End Study. It was further requested that the owners come back with design and materials when the concepts are progressed.



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Resolution:

All generally agreed that HPAC should be included in the continued discussion regarding the design of the property and to ensure the applicant appropriately addresses the project's relationship to the surrounding area and the South End Historic District.

HPAC urges the Land Use Bureau to thoroughly evaluate the South End Study and determine which recommendations from the Study should be adopted into the Master Plan.

(A motion was made by B. Hersh and seconded by E. Kalman and carried unanimously)

B. Demolition 237 - 239 Henry Street

South End Historic District

Applicant: Owners, Peter Laskowski, Jolanta Laskowski

Participants: same

The owners, Mr. and Ms. Laskowski, presented the project. Peter said they have a site plan/map but do not have a design or elevations of the buildings at this time. They are proposing to build six (6) condominiums in place of these two (2) houses. They propose to tear the two (2) existing houses down because the driveways are very narrow and only passenger cars can get into the back of the property. They were neglected for many years. The foundations are shot. The houses are in very bad shape. Peter showed a building plan that has a row of six (6) townhouse-style buildings with parking on the back part of the site.

Lynn asked if they have considered a Section 7.3 application. They said no. She suggested there may be a density bonus available to them if they save the existing structures. She asked for Renee's comments on the use of Section 7.3. Renee said this is an almost intact row of houses. There are other projects on the same street that used Section 7.3 and have turned out very well. Renee says the buildings can be restored. She recommends the owner goes for the density bonus. Peter said they did not think Section 7.3 could work because they need access to the back for construction. Renee also noted they may be able to work out a deal with the neighbors for access to the back.

David pointed out that a demo delay has been placed on the properties by the Commission. Barry recommended the owners meet with Renee to discuss a Section 7.3 project that would include saving the existing houses.

Resolution:

A motion was discussed that HPAC should recommend the owners investigate a Section 7.3 application to preserve the two (2) existing historic houses proposed for demolition. It was noted that HPAC will not approve the demolition of these buildings. It was further noted to the owners that Renee can also help with outreach to the City and architects, including supporting modifications that can help save these buildings.

(The motion was made by A. Goslin and seconded by B. Hersh and carried unanimously)



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C. One Atlantic Street, Brick Repairs

Downtown Historic District

Applicant: Gregory Shaughnessy, representing the owner.

Participants: Same

Greg presented a study and documents that were done by Superstructures. They intend to repoint the bricks and precast the stone to ensure the façade is stabilized. Everything, including the material of the historic façade, will remain the same. The color will be the same. They want to do an exact match of the brick and mortar joints.

Lynn asked about stone sections that have cracks. Greg noted they need to do more inspections but they intend to restore those. David asked if there will be work on the lintels of water damage. Greg said those repairs will match the existing. He also noted some of the brick may need to be replaced and they will do that with an exact match.

Resolution:

There was a motion to approve the plans for restoration of the façade including repairs as shown in Superstructure's documents.

(The motion was made by E. Kalman and seconded by B. Hersh and carried unanimously)

D. 228, 236, 240, 248 West Broad Street - Map Change - Restore four (4) Houses and Build five (5) Additional Units (Adjacent to Hubbard Heights District).

Applicant: G and T West Broad Street Associates

Participants: Leonard Brahman, Wofsey Rosen Kweskin Kuriansky; Vince Colangelo, Colangelo Architects

Leonard introduced the participants. This is a Map Change request. The owners plan to restore four (4) houses along West Broad Street and build an additional five (5) houses. There will be new landscaping along West Broad Street. There will be four (4) attached units at back and one (1) infill house in front along the row of existing houses. They are seeking an increase in density. They want to change the zone to R-5 from existing R-7½. There has been considerable discussion with Planning staff. The area is dominated by the hospital. They want to preserve the residential character of the area.

The four (4) single-family colonials were built between 1926 and 1960. The owner will replace the siding and roofing. They want to use vinyl siding. Two (2) homes are listed on the State register. They want to make the new housing at back in a way that is consistent with the existing. Leonard also noted they plan to conduct the beautification of the neighborhood with new deciduous shade trees. He claims the back units will not really be visible from Broad Street. There is a landscape plan from Matt Popp who briefly described the improvements.

Vince Colangelo added they have tried to work with two different scales. They will fill in the gap in front (Broad Street side) with a three-story house and then build four (4) attached units of a larger scale in back. He noted the units in back will not be visible from the district streetscape, only from the hospital.

Elena said she is not concerned about the buildings in back. She would like to see the street façade with materials that are historic and original and not vinyl or aluminum siding. She said HPAC would not allow vinyl or aluminum siding. She also noted she does not like the parking configuration in front of the



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infill house along Broad Street and recommended the driveway not be double-wide. The scale is not good on Broad Street. David added he is concerned about the back building not being in scale with the houses. He added that more attention should be paid to the façade materials, the roof scale and slope and the massing for the back building. He also said the driveway in front may not be necessary and the owners may not want to add a curb cut on Broad Street. The design of the back units could be more like townhouses with some scale and massing adjustments. Lynn suggested the attached units not be one single continuous block but articulated to appear as single-family attached units with architectural details that relate to the district homes. Mr. Colangelo said there is a lot they can do with the rear building and they will look at it.

Rebecca noted she is a resident of Hubbard Heights and there is concern with the suggested zoning. Across the street is the Historic District. There is concern for the precedent this sets for other properties in the City where there are adjacent neighborhoods. The concern is that the next owner can use that zone change to make further changes to the site out of character with the Community. She further noted that Hubbard Heights had an understanding with the hospital and with Charter Oak (the initial purchaser) that the buildings were to remain as single-family. The multifamily aspect of this project is a concern. These houses along Broad Street were on a draft of the original Hubbard Heights National Register application as contributing buildings; that note was removed at some point. She noted they may consider the possibility to extend the Historic District to include these properties.

Lynn asked for public comments.

Vicki Zcharewicz, President of the Hubbard Heights Association (HHA), spoke. She noted the HHA had conducted a coordinated effort to save these homes with an agreement with the hospital. There was a condition with the first purchaser that they would remain as single-family (with Charter Oak). She added, now that they are sold, the agreement has been abandoned. The association will not support a change in zone and will object to the scale of the infill house. They may also include the houses in the Hubbard Heights District. It was noted the owners are planning a meeting with HHA Association in the next week.

The following note was received by HPAC after the publication of the DRAFT minutes. It is included here, in the FINAL meeting minutes:

"During the meeting I stated that in 2009 the HHA neighborhood saved these four (4) homes from demolition and at the time the hospital and COC agreed to preserve the single-family zoning and exclude it from the zoning change needed for the Vidal Court development. I thought I also mentioned that Mike DeMilt wrote Tom Bellele a letter in April of 2017 stating our opposition to a zone downgrade and he bought the properties with that knowledge. Also our district representatives are in favor of preserving single-family zoning".

"I don't believe that I ever said the agreement between HHA, the Hospital and COC was abandoned, rather it is being ignored."

Vicki Zacharewicz, President, HHA

Rebecca asked why the developers are not considering a Section 7.3 application. She further added that a Section 7.3 application can allow the site zone to stay as is. They can also get the density they are looking for. Leonard said he did not think Section 7.3 will apply as this is not a historic district. Renee said that Section 7.3 is very flexible and properties just need to be eligible. They only considered using the same zone as the Charter Oak properties. Wes Haynes added there may be tax credits available of 25% of the construction costs. The owners agreed to speak to Wes about historic tax credit options. Lynn added there is a fear this will be a precedent for properties adjacent to a historic neighborhood. She added the design could be made more compatible to the district.



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Resolution:

Lynn introduced a motion that the development team needs to return to the Commission at the next meeting. HPAC will formally request they consider a Section 7.3 application and do not change the underlying zone. She further noted the neighbors have some concerns about the zone change on the perimeter of the Hubbard Heights Historic District. The group also added the design needs to be studied so that it fits better with the scale of the single houses on Broad Street.

A motion was restated as: First, the owners should explore Section 7.3 to achieve the density they want. The back housing block should have better massing so that it will fit into the context. The driveway off of Broad Street should be redesigned including the elimination of the excess parking in front of the one new house. Finally, the scale of the new infill house should match the articulation and proportions of the others.

(A motion was made by A. Goslin and seconded by D. Woods and carried unanimously)

E. 32 Pulaski Street, Section 7.3 Density Bonus Review

Applicant: Mr. & Ms. Matthew Reinhard

Participants: Renee Kahn, Historian & Consultant to City and Marsh + Woods Architects
(David Woods recused himself from the proceedings)

Renee Kahn presented the project. The old “4 square” house is a contributing property within the South End National Register Historic District which had the original front porch removed and a storefront added. The footprint of the building will not change; the first floor warehouse will be converted to three (3) apartments. Two (2) are in the main part of the original house and one (1) will be in the back where there is a block building now. Renee will remove layers of the façade to potentially uncover original details and will return to the Commission to present proposed construction, colors, and materials based on findings or what was used on houses of the same period and style.

Resolution:

After a motion by Anne Goslin, the Commission voted to approve the project based on the current design with the condition upon following the façade investigation, the owners and Renee return to the Commission with updates on the siding, construction, materials, and colors.

(A motion was made by A. Goslin and seconded by L. Drobbin and carried unanimously)

Anne Goslin provided the notes for this item

IV. Old Business

A. 159 Grove Street Section 7.3 Density Bonus Review

Applicant: Capital Investments, LLC

Participants: Daniel Kolich, Kolich Capital; Renee Kahn Historic Consultant for the City

This project was approved previously by HPAC. At that time there was a request the owners return at the point where finishes would be selected. Owner, Daniel Kolich, and Renee Kahn presented proposed materials and color. A facade investigation revealed original woodwork in good condition and a light-ochre color for the original wood shingle siding that Renee stated is period-appropriate. The wood will be repaired and repainted with the same ochre color. Fiber cement siding in a grey color will be used for the new construction at the back.



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Resolution:

After some discussion of a motion, the Commission voted to approve the use of existing materials with properly repaired shingles, woodwork, and windows. The paint colors will be ochre as was found under the asbestos shingle siding and grey for the new construction in the rear. Outreach and assistance with HPAC architects and Renee will continue.

(A motion was made by E. Kalman and seconded by A. Goslin and carried unanimously)

Anne Goslin provided the notes for this item

V. Adjournment

Lynn Drobbin adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Drafted by: David W. Woods, Secretary - HPAC (with Anne Goslin additions): January 9, 2019

Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm in the 6th Floor Safety Training Room. The next meeting is planned for February 5, 2019.