

**STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES - TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2022
REGULAR MEETING
VIA THE INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL
6:30 p.m.**

JOIN ZOOM MEETING
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87598702303>

Meeting ID: 875 9870 2303
Passcode: 048927

Web & Phone Meeting Instructions:

- If your computer/smartphone has mic and speaker then:
Type in, paste or click the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87598702303>; **OR**
- If not, then **Call-in** using the **phone number & password** provided above.
- Sign-up for Planning Board meeting updates by emailing lcapp@stamfordct.gov.

Web Meeting Ground Rules:

- The meeting shall be recorded and the video shall be posted on the City of Stamford website http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=8
- The Planning Board shall moderate the audio for attendees.
- Attendees shall be on mute and will be unmuted when called to speak by the Planning Board members.
- Applicants will have 20 minutes to make their presentation.
- Any applicant wishing to submit written testimony can send it prior to the meeting to lcapp@stamfordct.gov or submit through a Chat message to the Planning Board Chair during the meeting.

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Voting Members: Theresa Dell, Chair; Jay Tepper, Vice Chair; Jennifer Godzeno, Secretary; and Michael Totilo. Alternate: Stephen Perry. Absent: Michael Buccino, Regular Member and William Levin, Alternate. Present for staff: Vineeta Mathur, Acting Principal Planner and Anthony Romano, Management Analyst, Office of Policy & Management.

Ms. Dell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., introduced the members of the Board and staff present.

Ms. Dell introduced the first item on the agenda.

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

December 14, 2021 - Regular Meeting: After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the Planning Board Regular Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2021; Mr. Perry seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Dell, Perry, Tepper and Totilo). (Ms. Godzeno was ineligible to vote as she was absent at the December 14, 2021 meeting.)

January 11, 2022 - Public Hearing Capital Budget: After a brief discussion, Ms. Godzeno moved to recommend approval of the Planning Board Public Hearing Capital Budget Minutes of January 11, 2022; Mr. Perry seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Godzeno, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

Ms. Dell announced to anyone attending for the Zoning Board and/or Zoning Board of Appeals referrals that they would be heard in approximately ½ hour as the Capital Budget would be discussed first.

Ms. Dell opened the discussion for the Capital Budget.

CAPITAL BUDGET:

In accordance with Section C-611.3 of the Stamford Charter, the Stamford Planning Board will have final deliberations and vote on the recommended Capital Budget for 2022-2023 and Capital Plan for 2023-2029.

Ms. Dell stated the Capital Budget and transmittal letter would be reviewed and to make any final adjustments for vote at the February 8, 2022 meeting.

The Board went through each request by department/agency adding funds to projects previously reviewed, discussed the transmittal letter to the Mayor and made some minor adjustments. Mr. Romano will update the figures and the letter for final vote at the February 8, 2022 meeting.

Ms. Dell closed the discussion on the Capital Budget and called for a 5-minute break.

Ms. Dell resumed the Regular Meeting and introduced the next item on the agenda.

ZONING BOARD REFERRALS:

- 1. ZB APPLICATION #221-32 - STAMFORD WASHINGTON OFFICE, LLC & WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT, INC. - 677 & 707 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD - Special Permit:** Applicant is requesting permission pursuant to Section 13.H.9 of the Zoning Regulations to transfer unused signage rights from the Federal Street (North) façade of the property to the Atlantic Street (East) façade of the property.

The requested Special Permit allowing transfer of signage rights will facilitate signage for the tenant, WWE, who will occupy more than 100,000 sq. ft. of floor area in the building. The proposed signage is consistent with the signage package previously approved by the Zoning Board. The overall signage will remain compliant with the Center City North zoning district.

Rachael Breslin, of Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP, along with Lisa Feinberg, of Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP; Iain Paine, Workplace Operations, WWE and Steve Hahn, Project Manager, WWE, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #221-32** and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown); Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Godzeno, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REFERRALS:

- 1. ZBA APPLICATION #001-22 - PETER MEDOIT representing GERALDINE SIMPLICE - 63 HICKORY WAY - Variance of Table III, Appendix B:** Applicant owns a single-family dwelling with a wood deck, brick patio and a shed and is proposing to add a garage and second floor. Applicant is requesting: **(a)** side yard setback of 6.9 ft. in lieu of the 10 ft. minimum required and **(b)** a total yard setback of 16.9 ft. in lieu of the 20 ft. required.

The applicant has proposed overall renovations and expansion to the residence and portions of the expansion require a side yard Variance. The building is currently legally non-conforming with respect to the side yard on the north side and one of the bump outs and second story addition will expand the non-conforming area and thus requires a Variance.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Perry recommended **approval** of **ZBA Application #001-22** and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #2 (Residential - Low Density Single-Family); Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Godzeno, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

2. **ZBA APPLICATION #002-22 - JASON KLEIN, CARMODY TORRANCE SANDAK HENNESSEY, LLP representing DOMINICK ROSA, JR. (ROSA'S MINI MART, LLC) - 0 HOPE STREET a.k.a. 351 HOPE STREET - Variances, Special Permit & Motor Vehicle:** Applicant owns an existing gas station with a ±1,401 sq. ft. building consisting of office space and repair bays previously utilized for automobile repair activities. Current parking is along the easterly side of the property and both sides of the building. The applicant is proposing the following:

- Converting the existing building into a convenience store.
- Replacing the two (2) existing gas pump islands with three (3) new gas pump islands.
- Installation of canopies over the new gas pump islands.
- Striping eight (8) parking spaces to bring the property into conformance with current parking regulations.
- Proposed landscaping.

The applicant is seeking the following variances:

- **Section 3.B (Accessory Structures):** To permit canopies that are 17 ft. 9 in. tall in lieu of 15 ft. allowed.
- **Table 12.5:** To permit the striping of two (2) parking spaces, including one (1) handicapped accessible parking space) 0 ft. from the existing building in lieu of 5 ft. required. (*NOTE: Vehicles currently park 0 ft. away from the existing building.*)
- **Section 11.C.5:** [*a*] To permit an existing curb cut on Church Street to be relocated 8 ft. from the intersection of Hope & Church Street in lieu of the 10 ft. required. (*NOTE: Existing curb cut is currently 4 ft. away from the Hope & Church Street intersection*); and [*b*] To permit an existing 20 ft. wide curb cut on Hope Street to remain in lieu of the 25 ft. required.

Special Permit: The applicant proposes that converting the existing building into a convenience store will be more compatible with the neighborhood than the automobile repair use that previously occupied a portion of the existing building. Modifications include striping eight (8) parking spaces to bring the property into compliance with current regulations and new underground tanks placed further away from the adjacent residential property and the three (3) new gas pump islands.

The recently adopted Section 12 - Mobility regulations create non-conformities on the site and the requested variances are necessary due to the proposed improvements on the site including addition of the canopy, striping of parking areas and change in size and location of curb cuts. The height variance relates to the gas station canopy, which needs adequate clearance for vehicles of various sizes. The reduction of curb cuts necessitating a Variance of Section 11.C.5 will improve pedestrian safety. Staff recommends that the applicant consult with Transportation, Traffic and Parking Bureau with respect to final design of the sidewalk.

Jason Klein, of Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP, along with Larry Webster and Ryan Scrittorale of Benesch Engineering, made a brief presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Totilo recommended **approval** of **ZBA Application #002-22** with the recommendation of additional landscaping between the curb cuts on the Hope Street side of the property and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #6 (Commercial - Neighborhood Business); Mr. Perry seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Godzeno, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

3. **ZBA APPLICATION #003-22 - NICHOLAS W. VITTI, JR., MURTHA CULLINA, LLP representing DR. HERBERT F. GRETZ III & DR. JULIANNE M. DUNNE - 45 SAGAMORE ROAD - Variance of Section 3.B (Accessory Structures):** Applicant owns a single-family dwelling and is proposing the addition of a new pool and patio deck, which would technically be placed in the front yard on Ralsey Road South and South Sagamore Lane due to the property's unusual frontage on three separate roads. Applicant is seeking a variance of Section 3.B (Accessory Structures) to allow for the pool and patio to be located in the front yard along Ralsey Road South and South Sagamore Lane.

The site is triangular in shape and surrounded by streets on all sides and therefore, three (3) front yards. The site has no as-of-right location option for an Accessory Structure such as pool. The location is adequately screened by existing trees along both Ralsey Road South and Sagamore Lane and will be further screened by a pool security fence. The pool and patio will be well setback from the property lines and will likely have minimal visual impact from the surrounding area.

Nicholas Vitti, of Murtha Cullina, LLP, made a brief presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Perry recommended **approval** of **ZBA Application #003-22** and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #2 (Residential - Low Density Single-Family); Ms. Godzeno seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Godzeno, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Dell stated Mr. Romano will make the changes discussed tonight and will be sent out next week for review for the February 8, 2022 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Dell mentioned there will be an Omnibus Text Change scheduled for the February 8, 2022 meeting which is quite extensive. Ms. Dell spoke with Ms. Mathur about the Planning Board attending the Zoning Board meeting scheduled for Monday, February 7, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. to have a joint discussion on this Text Change. All Board members stated they were available to attend.

Ms. Dell stated she would ask Ms. Capp to send everyone the 2022 meeting schedule and asked all Board members to contact Ms. Capp if there were any changes to their contact information. Ms. Dell also asked all Board members to make sure they all had a working City email address as per the Freedom of Information Act.

Next regularly scheduled Planning Board meetings are:

- February 8, 2022
- February 22, 2022

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Dell adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
January 28, 2022

Jennifer Godzeno, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board

NOTE: These proceedings were recorded on video and are available for review on the Planning Board website at http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=20