

**STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES - TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2022
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
VIA THE INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL
*Regular Meeting - 6:30 p.m. / Public Hearing - 7:00 p.m.***

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81706612220>

Meeting ID: 817 0661 2220

Passcode: 209586

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/81706612220>; **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; Michael Buccino and Michael Totilo. Alternates: William Levin and Stephen Perry. Present for staff: Sandy Dennies, Director of Administration; Lou Casolo, Engineering Bureau Chief/City Engineer; Emily Gordon, Director of Housing & Community Development and Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief.

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

Ms. Dell introduced the first item on the agenda.

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

April 19, 2022: After a brief discussion, Ms. Godzeno moved to recommend approval of the Planning Board Regular Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2022; Mr. Totilo seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Godzeno, Levin, Tepper and Totilo). (Mr. Buccino and Mr. Perry were absent at the April 19, 2022 meeting and were ineligible to vote.)

April 26, 2022: After a brief discussion, Mr. Totilo moved to recommend approval of the Planning Board Regular Meeting Minutes of April 26, 2022; Mr. Buccino seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo). (Mr. Levin was absent at the April 26, 2022 meeting and was ineligible to vote.)

REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

- 1. TRIENNIAL LIST (Tabled From November 16, 2021 & April 12, 2022):** In accordance with Section 9-4 of the City Code of Ordinances, the Director of Administration has submitted a list of real property owned and leased by the City (the Triennial List) to the Planning Board, the Board of Finance and the Board of Representatives for review with the objective of recommending future use or disposal of unused properties. The following two (2) properties will be discussed at this meeting. The remainder of the Triennial List will be discussed at the June 14, 2022 meeting.
- a. 384 Elm Street:** Elm Street & Myrtle Avenue. Site of the former DeYulio Sausage Factory (.29 acres). Sale / Development Potential: 3,600 sq. ft. of retail and four (4) DUs.
 - b. 402 Elm Street:** Elm Street & Myrtle Avenue. Former site of Subway (.10 acres). Sell to abutter/ Development Potential: 1,300 sq. ft. of retail and one (1) DU. Difficult to access.

Sandy Dennies, Director of Administration, made a presentation on both properties and answered questions from the Board. Mr. Blessing also made additional comments regarding zoning of the properties.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Godzeno recommended approval of the sale of the property known as 384 Elm Street & Myrtle Avenue with a minimum bid of \$850,000.00 and this request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and Section C6-30-13 of the City Charter and finds this request to be consistent with CGS Section 8-24, and the City Charter Section C6-30-13, as well as consistent with the adopted 2015 Master Plan; Mr. Buccino seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

After a brief discussion, Ms. Godzeno recommended approval of the sale of the property known as 402 Elm Street & Myrtle Avenue with a minimum bid of \$390,000.00 with the stipulation no curb cuts will be allowed on the parcel and this request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and Section C6-30-13 of the City Charter and finds this request to be consistent with CGS Section 8-24, and the City Charter Section C6-30-13, as well as consistent with the adopted 2015 Master Plan; Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

Ms. Dell called for a motion to bring forward the Supplemental Capital Project Appropriation Request for Stamford High School Plaster Ceiling & Floor Removal.

Mr. Totilo made the motion to bring forward the Supplemental Capital Project Appropriation Request for Stamford High School Plaster Ceiling & Floor Removal; Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

SUPPLEMENTAL CAPITAL PROJECT APPROPRIATION REQUESTS:

- 2. STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL PLASTER CEILING & FLOOR REMOVAL - PROJECT #001267 - 55 STRAWBERRY HILL AVENUE - TOTAL REQUEST \$4,122,491.00:** Scope: *(a)* Remove asbestos containing material (ACM) from plaster ceilings on the 2nd floor of the 1927 Building. Install new lay-in tile ceilings. Reinstall existing lighting, IT equipment and any fire alarm devices; *(b)* extend classroom and corridor walls to the roof deck above; and *(c)* remove ACM from floor tiles (classrooms only) and wooden sleepers below. Seal perimeter of the classrooms to prevent additional leaks. Install new wooden sleepers, insulation, subfloor and LVT flooring.

Lou Casolo, Engineering Bureau Chief/City Engineer made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended approval of the Stamford High School Plaster Ceiling & Floor Removal - Project #001267 with a Total Request of \$4,122,491.00 and this request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and Section C6-30-13 of the City Charter and finds this request to be consistent with CGS Section 8-24, and the City Charter Section C6-30-13, as well as consistent with the adopted 2015 Master Plan; Ms. Godzeno seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

PUBLIC HEARING BEGINS AT 7:00 P.M.

***INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON THE
DRAFT HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PLAN***

- *Speakers from the public will be allowed to address the Planning Board. As there may be many who would like to speak, please try to limit the time to 5 minutes.*
- *All public speakers wishing to speak at the Public Hearing shall send a Chat message to the Moderator/Planning Board Chair with their name and address to sign-up to speak.*
- *During the meeting, please do not send Chat messages to “Everyone” because it is distracting for all attendees.*
- *All public speakers shall announce their name and address clearly for the record prior to speaking.*
- *Any public speaker wishing to submit written testimony prior to the meeting can send it to Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner at vmathur@stamfordct.gov or to Theresa Dell, Planning Board Chair, at tdell@stamfordct.gov or submit the request through a Chat message to the Planning Board Chair during the meeting.*

Ms. Dell opened the Public Hearing and provided a brief explanation of the proceedings and instructions for the public once they are allowed to speak.

1. **STAMFORD DRAFT HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PLAN:** The Planning Board will discuss and hear public comments on the Draft Housing Affordability Plan. The City undertook a 10-month housing planning process including extensive community engagement to evaluate current conditions and prioritize strategies for the future. The resulting draft Housing Affordability Plan was created to meet the State requirement for every municipality to adopt an affordable housing plan no later than June 1, 2022. The Plan identifies rental affordability, housing supply and home ownership access as Stamford’s most pressing housing issues and primarily recommends that the City consolidate the management of housing programs, scale up investments, and use land more effectively.

Mr. Blessing made brief comments on the Plan.

Ms. Godzeno stated the Legal Notice needed to be read into the record, which she did as follows:

In accordance with Section C-611.3 of the Stamford Charter, the **STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.** via phone and internet video conference **to hear public comments on the DRAFT HOUSING AFFORDABILITY PLAN.** Copies of the Draft Housing Affordability Plan document are available on the Planning Board website at www.stamfordct.gov/government/boards-commissions/planning-board.

ATTEST: THERESA DELL, CHAIR
STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD

Dated at the City of Stamford this 29th day of April 2022.

Ms. Dell stated there were letters received from the public, which will be made part of the public record. Ms. Dell introduced Ms. Gordon.

Emily Gordon, Director of Housing & Community Development, made opening comments and introduced Christiana Whitcomb, Director, H&RA Advisors, who made a presentation on the Housing Affordability Plan and answered questions from the Board.

Ms. Dell opened the public portion of the hearing and turned it over to Mr. Blessing to moderate. Ms. Dell reminded everyone to please state your name and address when asked to speak.

The following individuals from the public made comments on the Housing Affordability Plan:

- Vincent Tufo, Charter Oaks Communities
- Chris Dawson, Resident.
- Dice Oh, Resident
- Zachary Oberholtzer, Resident
- William Wright, Resident - Pepper Ridge Road, Stamford, CT.
- Luke Bittenwieser, Resident/Student
- Joan Carty, President, Housing Development Fund
- Jeanette Billachansky(?), Resident (Call-in) - Idlewood Drive, Stamford, CT
- John Wooton, Resident - South End
- Karen Camporeale, Resident
- Barry Michelson, Resident - Idlewood Drive
- Richard Freedman, Chair, Board of Representatives
- Cynthia Bowser, Resident

Ms. Dell thanked everyone who spoke and closed the public portion of the Hearing.

Ms. Dell asked Ms. Whitcomb if she had any comments with regard to the speakers.

Ms. Whitcomb stated all the comments provided were very helpful and also thanked everyone who spoke.

Ms. Dell asked the Board if there were any further questions; there was no response.

Ms. Dell stated she felt the Board could vote on acceptance of the Plan but thought there were some issues that needed to be reconsidered, one being how the plan looks at seniors. Ms. Dell felt the Plan is very informative and will be helpful when working on the new Master Plan.

Mr. Tepper asked about the difference between voting for acceptance and voting for approval.

Mr. Blessing and Ms. Dell provided an explanation of the difference between voting for acceptance and voting for approval, which led to considerable discussion on whether to vote at this meeting or table to May 24th for further discussion.

Matthew Quiñones, Director of Operations, made comments with regard to meeting the State requirement timeline for coming back to all Boards and Commissions.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended **approval** of the *Stamford Draft Housing Affordability Plan* to comply with the State regulation timeline of June 1, 2022 and with the understanding the Board has questions on individual items within the Plan that may come about upon further discussion and that this request is compatible with the City's neighborhoods and consistent with the 2015 Master Plan; Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with all members present voting, 7-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Levin, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

Ms. Dell closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Dell announced a 5-minute break.

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

REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

SUPPLEMENTAL CAPITAL PROJECT APPROPRIATION REQUESTS (Con't):

1. ROXBURY SCHOOL REPLACEMENT PROJECT - PROJECT #001268 - 751 WEST HILL

ROAD - TOTAL REQUEST \$86,000,000.00: Construction of a new K-8 school at 751 West Hill Road. This project aligns with the goals of Stamford's Long Term Master Plan to create sustainable facilities that best address the City's educational goals and community needs. A school construction application will be submitted to the State Office of School Construction Grants Review in June 2022. If approved, Stamford will be eligible for a minimum 60% reimbursement.

Mr. Casolo made an opening statement providing details on the grant process and then introduced Jeffrey Wyszynski, Principal, Tecton Architects.

Mr. Wyszynski made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After some discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended approval of the Roxbury School Replacement Project - Project #001268 with a Total Request of \$86,000,000.00 and this request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and Section C6-30-13 of the City Charter and finds this request to be consistent with CGS Section 8-24, and the City Charter Section C6-30-13, as well as consistent with the adopted 2015 Master Plan; Ms. Godzeno seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Next regularly scheduled Planning Board meetings are:

- May 24, 2022 (Public Hearing - Master Plan Application #MP-443 - 40 Signal Road)
- June 14, 2022
- June 28, 2022
- ***NO MEETINGS IN JULY - PLANNING BOARD ON HIATUS***

Ms. Dell asked the Board if there were any other issues to discuss.

Ms. Godzeno made mention of Mr. Freedman's Comments during the Public Hearing regarding an item in WestCOG's Affordable Housing Plan about towns meeting their fair share. Ms. Godzeno wanted to provide clarification that what the current draft language states regarding meeting the proposed 10% threshold required by State Regulation 8-30G. WestCOG would allow wealthy neighboring towns to avoid meeting the 10% by paying cities like Stamford to claim credit for affordable housing units we have already built (i.e., not offering new money to build new housing). Ms. Godzeno felt this item could be problematic, and is not in the spirit of integration the Planning Board is trying to accomplish in Stamford through programs like the onsite BMR zoning program.

Ms. Dell stated she agreed and felt it should be looked at. But this Plan is not being brought before the Planning Board to make a recommendation and the Board is receiving information piece-meal.

Mr. Blessing stated Land Use is not in agreement with WESTCOG's Plan and administration is aware of its shortcomings. Mr. Blessing explained WESTCOG tends to cater to the small municipalities and does not take into account the needs of the cities and their Plan seems to follow the same line.

Ms. Godzeno asked if it might make sense, before WESTCOG approves or ratifies this Plan, for the Planning Board to encourage the Mayor's office to push back on this item.

Mr. Blessing stated he would be happy to speak with the Mayor's office and noted Janeene Freeman, Special Assistant to the Mayor & Director of Partnerships and Community Engagement, was in attendance and asked if she would like to make any comments.

Ms. Freeman explained the Mayor would be meeting with the head of WESTCOG and Mayor Simmons has reviewed the Plan and was not in agreement with several items in the Plan. The Mayor will respond accordingly to those points.

Mr. Buccino suggested, if appropriate, that a letter be published stating the City's disagreement with WESTCOG's Plan.

Mr. Quiñones stated he agreed and asked Ms. Freeman to coordinate with the Planning Board on a timeline and how to communicate to WESTCOG.

Ms. Dell made one more call for any discussion items.

Ms. Godzeno mentioned that the Charter Commission has been meeting and there is a meeting this week to review changes to the Charter. Some of the provisions being looked at will directly impact the powers, provisions and requirements for the Planning Board. There are two key items. One is a recommendation to potentially move to a two-year Capital Budget cycle, and the other is regarding many provisions around public participation with public hearings and meetings. This includes encouraging more petition processes to obstruct and overturn items the Planning Board has considered along with the Zoning Board, and requirements for public comment and discussion during regular Planning Board meetings that are not public hearings.

Ms. Dell asked Mr. Blessing if it would be possible to get a copy of the changes being considered to the Charter for Land Use so the Board could make comments.

Mr. Blessing stated he would look into it.

Mr. Quiñones stated the Mayor's office has a copy and will forward it to the Board.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Dell adjourned the meeting at 10:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
May 12, 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