



**City of Stamford**  
**Zoning Board**

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**STAFF REPORT**

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**TO:** CITY OF STAMFORD ZONING BOARD  
**FROM:** VINEETA MATHUR, PRINCIPAL PLANNER  
**SUBJECT:** ZB #222-17, 40 Signal Road, 0 Threadneedle Lane  
**DATE:** July 10, 2022, Revised July 21, 2022  
**MASTER PLAN:** Master Plan Category 2 (Residential Low Density Single Family)  
**ZONING:** RA-1 (Very Low Density Single Family District)

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**REQUESTED ACTIONS:**

222-17	Zoning Map Change from RA-1 to R-20 Zoning District	Sound Beach Landing LLC
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**Introduction**

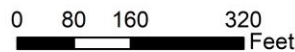
The Applicant Sound Beach Landing LLC requests the change of the Zoning District from the current designation of RA-1 to R-20 for the properties 40 Signal Road and 0 Threadneedle Lane together totaling 2.41 acres in lot area.

**Site and Surroundings**

The site comprises of two parcels 40 Signal Road and 0 Threadneedle Lane. The site is currently occupied by a legally non-conforming two story office building with approximately 11,000 sf of floor area. The remainder of the properties include landscaped areas, two parking area, lawn and beachfront with a boat dock. The area to the north is the Sound View Farms corporate park and is occupied by several large office buildings. The area immediately to the west is occupied by a legally non-conforming office building used as the headquarters of Genève Corporation. The area west of Genève Corporation is occupied by the Cummings Point single family neighborhood. The area across the water to the east is occupied by single family homes in the Dolphin Cove neighborhood.



222-17  
 40 Signal Road, 0 Threadneedle Lane



Date: 7/10/2022





**Existing office building at 40 Signal Road**



**View of 40 Signal Road and 0 Threadneedle Lane looking south east**



**View of dock on 40 Signal Road looking southwest**



**View of parking area located partially on 40 Signal Road & 0 Threadneedle Lane**

## **Zoning Map Change**

The Applicant requests a change from RA-1 to R-20 Zoning District. Both zoning district allow the same uses including single family residential as listed in Section 4.B.1.b. The subject application is only for the change in the Zoning Map. A Coastal Site Plan review with referrals to Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and various city departments including EPB, Engineering, TTP and Fire Marshall will be required prior to any Building Permit. Any subdivision application will require approval by the Planning Board. A subdivision of the subject property will likely result in five or fewer units of housing depending upon site constraints and does not necessitate a traffic study per standards of Section 12.A.5.

The following zoning chart shows a comparison of the Zoning Standards for RA-1 and R-20 zoning districts.

### **Zoning Comparison Chart**

Zoning Standard	RA-1	R-20
Min. Lot Area	43560 sf	20000 sf
Min. Frontage	200'	125'
Min. Circle Diameter	200'	125'
Min. sf per family	43560	20000
Max family per plot	1	1
Max. Building Height	3 stories or 35 ft	2 ½ stories or 30 ft
Max. Building Area	15% of lot	15% of lot
Min. Front Setback	40' (street line), 65' (street centerline)	40' (street line), 65' (street centerline)
Min. Side Setback	15' (one side) 35' (both side)	15' (one side) 35' (both side)
Min. Rear Setback	60'	50'

### **The proposed R-20 zoning district is appropriate for several reasons:**

1. The rezoning of the property would facilitate the redevelopment of an office building which is currently non-conforming with the RA-1 zoning designation. The R-20 single family zoning district is moderately higher density than RA-1 and is consistent with Master Plan Category 2, will

incentivize this change. The R-20 is the lowest density district among those permitted within Master Plan Category 2. Master Plan Category 2 “is intended to provide for and protect a suitable environment for single-family dwellings, as well as compatible uses.” Further, the Master Plan Category 2 “permits development on parcels less than one acre where the availability of public utilities, public road systems and other essential public services and the density of existing development so warrant.” The R-20 Zoning District allows single family residences and compatible uses such as parks, public schools and Special Permit uses such as Child Day Care Centers, Religious Institutions, Clubs etc. Further the property is already serviced by infrastructure including public water and sewer, therefore R-20 density would make better use of the existing infrastructure compared to the very low density RA-1 zoning district which is intended for areas with private water and sewer facilities (Section 4.B.1.a.).

2. The property is located in a coastal flood hazard area. The redevelopment of the property will ensure that the property is built to current FEMA standards and withstand future flood events. Compliance with FEMA standards by dry or wet flood-proofing entail high costs which can be offset by the modest increase in density.

3. The proposed R-20 Zoning district is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood including the Dolphin Cove single family neighborhood (R 7 ½ zoning district), Sound View Farms to the north which is which is a multi-story office complex within the Industrial Park Design District and Cummings Point neighborhood (R-20 zoning district) to the west. The R-20 zoning district allows for single family residences, family day cares, public schools and parks along with certain uses such as schools, camps and clubs permitted by Special Permit pursuant to Section 19. The surrounding neighborhoods of Dolphin Cove and Cummings Point are subject to the same use regulations and are built to a scale similar to that which is permitted in the R-20 Zoning District. Sound View Farms comprises of two story office buildings with large setbacks and substantial landscape screening. The Industrial Park Design District requires buildings to be setback 50 feet from a property line and 100 feet from residential zoning district. The proposed R-20 Zoning District is thus compatible with the current land use pattern and surrounding zoning designations.

4. While the maximum number of dwelling units permitted for a 2.41 acre lot is five (5), a subdivision may result in fewer dwellings given the site includes unbuildable beach area and will also be required to provide street frontage for each of the lots.

5. Future redevelopment entailing a change from the current office use to single family residential use will lessen the intensity of the property given that office use typically has higher traffic and parking impacts than single family residential.

6. Future redevelopment after the rezoning will be subject to further review by city boards including approval of any subdivision by the Planning Board and a Coastal Site Plan Review by the Zoning Board ensuring orderly site development and opportunity for imposing appropriate conditions for health and safety of future residents.

7. The proposed R-20 Zoning District permits a lower height than the current RA-1 zoning district and will thus not result in any exacerbation of visual impact of buildings on the site compared to the current zoning designation.

9. Section 9.I.2 of the IP-D district regulations states that *“No portion of the area sought to be converted to an IP-D DESIGNED INDUSTRIAL PARK DISTRICT shall be contiguous to an RA-2 or RA-1 One Family Residence District.”* The proposed change to R-20 zoning district will lessen the current non-conformity related to the adjacency of IP-D with RA-1.

## **Referral Comments**

### **Planning Board**

The Planning Board reviewed the application at its regularly scheduled meeting dated June 14, 2022 and found the request compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category 2 (Residential Low Density Single Family) and recommended approval of the Zoning Map Change from RA-1 to R-20 district.

### **Stamford Harbor Management Commission**

The Stamford Harbor Management Commission reviewed this application at its regularly scheduled meeting on May 17, 2022. The Commission expressed no objections to the application for zoning map change from RA-1 to R-20 zoning district.

### **Summary**

Staff recommends approval of the Zoning Map Change request which will allow the redevelopment of the property in conformance with Master Plan Category 2, facilitate future compliance with FEMA flood regulation and allow modest growth in the vicinity of similar and higher density residential neighborhoods.