

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES - TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2022
(Revised September 28, 2022)
REGULAR MEETING
VIA THE INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL
6:30 P.M.

JOIN ZOOM MEETING
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87954745191>

Meeting ID: 879 5474 5191
Passcode: 028490

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/87954745191>**; **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 (Left meeting at 8:45 p.m.); Jennifer Godzeno, Secretary; Michael Buccino and Michael Totilo. Alternates: William Levin and Stephen Perry. Present for staff: Sandy Dennies, Director of Administration; Michael Toma, Assistant Corporation Counsel; Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner and Lindsey Cohen, Associate Planner.

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:

June 28, 2022: After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the Planning Board Regular Meeting Minutes of June 28, 2022; Mr. Totilo 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:

1. **BOARD OF EDUCATION LONG TERM FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION - PROJECT #C30727 - TOTAL REQUEST \$40,000.00:** Request for additional appropriation for Capital Project #C30727 to update the Master Plan's implementation schedule, project cost model, and aggregate Master Plan capital funding forecast based on recently updated State reimbursement rates for school construction. Work will include updating the cash-flow model for the 10-year plan to include 80% State reimbursement for Westhill construction and 60% State reimbursement for other school construction projects.

Kevin McCarthy, Director of Facilities Operations, Stamford Public Schools, made a brief presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Buccino recommended approval of the Board of Education Long Term Facilities Implementation - Project #C30727 with a Total Request of \$40,000.00 and this request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and the City Charter Section C6-30-13 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).

REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

1. **TRIENNIAL LIST (Continued From June 28, 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 property listed will be discussed:

0 Haig Avenue: Building on the northeast corner of Haig & Crestview Avenues (1.63 acres). Formerly the Police/Civil Defense building (165 Haig Avenue). To be sold with the requirement to maintain/restore historic building.

At the June 28, 2022 Planning Board meeting, the Board postponed this item in order to understand the historic significance of the property and to explore alternative uses for the building and the property. The Land Use Bureau finds that allowing a multiple family dwelling in an R-10 zoning district, as permitted by Section 7.3 of the Zoning Regulations, is the only land use that would facilitate historic preservation of the building at 0 Haig Avenue. Commercial uses allowed in the R-10 zone (i.e., clubs, daycares) are higher intensity uses that would result in greater levels of traffic and would require more property be used for parking compared to multifamily. The Bureau understands that traffic is a local concern and, thus, recommends a less traffic-intense use. The neighborhood and the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC) are in favor of preserving the building. HPAC addressed this item at their meeting held on August 2, 2022 and reaffirmed their 2017 Resolution recommending preservation of the building. If the building is to be preserved, in order for the sale of the building to be palatable to a developer, the cost of preservation must be offset. Multifamily dwellings are the only use that would facilitate the preservation of this building. The building has been vacant for 50+ years, used as storage until recently. Per the City's Engineering department, while demolition or gutting of the interior is feasible with the envelope of cobblestone walls, foundation, and roof in fair condition, the windows and doors are in poor condition and the utilities and building systems are non-existent. Preservation of the building by the City for a civic use is, thus, cost prohibitive. Any future sale of the building will require further approval by the Planning Board. Additionally approvals for multifamily housing will require a Planning Board referral as part of the Zoning Board application.

Ms. Dell made introductory comments mentioning that the Board of Representatives made a recommendation that two properties on Rock Rimmon Road be removed from the Triennial List and not sold and also providing details of the actions taken by the Board of Finance and Board of Representatives at their July meetings on 0 Haig Avenue.

Sandy Dennies, Director of Administration, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

Michael Toma, Assistant Corporation Counsel, provided additional information and answered questions from the Board.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Buccino recommended approval of the sale of 0 Haig Avenue with the following conditions: [a] original historic building must be preserved; [b] property will be subdivided into two (2) parcels consisting of a 0.63 acre parcel containing the building to be sold and a one (1) acre parcel to be kept by City; [c] subdivided parcel of 0.63 acres with the building cannot be rezoned; and [d] development of the 0.63-acre parcel and building shall be limited to no more than four (4) units, and this request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and the City Charter Section C6-30-13 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. Dennies provided comments on the Board of Representatives' recommendation to not sell the properties on Rock Rimmon Road and answered questions from the Board.

Ms. Dell asked Ms. Dennies if she could look into the insurance liabilities with having open space abutting residential properties on each side.

Harry Day, President, Stamford Land Conservation Trust, also provided additional comments.

REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION OF SUBDIVISION CONDITIONS:

The Stamford Land Conservation Trust (SLCT) is purchasing approximately 64 acres of property with the assistance of a State Grant and City funding. This acquisition affects a portion of the approvals for Subdivision Nos. 3615 and 3738. The State Grant requires that the property is free of conservation easements. As such, in accordance with the City of Stamford Subdivision Regulations Section 8.7 "Reconsideration of Approval Conditions," the Planning Board is being asked to reconsider and remove the conservation easement condition to allow for the sale of the property to SLCT.

Staff is supportive of the reconsideration of Conditions and Map Notes related to Subdivision #3615 and #3738 because the parcels will become part of a larger effort for conservation through this acquisition. In fact, on August 11, 2021, the Planning Board unanimously approved \$1M in City Funds to support the SLCT's purchase of property as part of Open Space Acquisition Project #001237. As noted in the meeting minutes from August 11, 2021, "the acquisition will result in linking together a total of 245 acres of preserved open space. The properties will be available for public access with trails and recreational use." The proposed consolidation map will be held in Escrow by the Law Department until the sale of the land to SLCT is completed.

Harry Day, President, Stamford Land Conservation Trust, made some introductory comments and then introduced Richard Redniss, Redniss & Mead, as Trustee of the Stamford Land Conservation Trust, made a presentation explaining the history of both subdivisions and providing details on which parcels will be consolidated to be sold to SLCT and answered questions from the Board.

- 1. SUBDIVISION #3615 - MARGARET LANG TRUST AND ARTHUR ALTSCHUL TRUST - RIVERBANK ROAD & DEN ROAD:** To eliminate Condition Nos. 1 and 3 on the Planning Board Certificate dated October 14, 1998 and Note 7 on Map #12983A titled "Subdivision Map Prepared for Margaret Lang Trust and Arthur Altschul Trust, Stamford, CT (Sheet 1 of 2)" dated July 22, 1992, related to Conservation Easement from parcels to be acquired by the Stamford Land Conservation Trust, Inc. for permanent open space.

On May 26, 1992, the Planning Board approved Subdivision #3615 allowing the subdivision of the parcel owned by the Margaret Lang Trust and Arthur Altschul Trust into Parcels 2A and 2B with the conditions that a conservation area be delineated on the map (Condition No. 1 of the Planning Board Certificate) and a conservation easement be filed with the Planning Board Office (Condition No. 3 of the Planning Board Certificate). Further, Note 7 on Map #12983A makes reference to maintenance of the Open Space Preserve.

The Applicant requests removal of Condition Nos. 1 and 3 from the Planning Board Certificate dated October 14, 1998 and Note 7 from Map #12983A titled "Subdivision Map Prepared for Margaret Lang Trust and Arthur Altschul Trust, Stamford, CT (Sheet 1 of 2)" dated July 22, 1992, as it relates to Parcel 2A and the portion of Parcel 2B which is part of the sale to SLTC as shown on the Draft Consolidation Map.

After some discussion, Mr. Tepper made a motion to approve the removal of Condition Nos. 1 and 3 from the Planning Board Certificate for Subdivision #3615 dated October 14, 1998 and removal of Note 7 on Map #12983A titled "Subdivision Map Prepared for Margaret Lang Trust and Arthur Altschul Trust, Stamford, CT (Sheet 1 of 2)" dated July 22, 1992; Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

2. **SUBDIVISION #3738 - ARTHUR G. ALTSCHUL TRUST - 356 RIVERBANK ROAD:** To eliminate Condition Nos. 1 and 2 on the Planning Board Certificate dated April 29, 1999 and Notes 7, 8 and 16 on Map No. 13068 titled "Subdivision Map of Lot 2B, Map 12983B S.L.R. Prepared for Arthur Altschul Trust, Stamford, CT" dated June 2, 1999, related to Conservation Easement from parcels to be acquired by the Stamford Land Conservation Trust, Inc. for permanent open space.

On April 27, 1999, the Planning Board approved Subdivision #3738 allowing the subdivision of the parcel owned by the Altschul Trust on the east side of Riverbank Road into parcels 2B-1 and 2B-2 with the conditions that a conservation area be delineated on the map (Condition No. 1 of the Planning Board Certificate) and a conservation easement be filed with the Planning Board Office (Condition No. 2 of the Planning Board Certificate). Further, Notes 7, 8 and 16 on Map #13068 make reference to maintenance of the Open Space Preserve.

Applicant requests the removal of Condition Nos. 1 and 2 from the Planning Board Certificate dated April 29, 1999 and Notes 7, 8 and 16 on Map No. 13068 titled "Subdivision Map of Lot 2B, Map 12983B S.L.R. Prepared for Arthur Altschul Trust, Stamford, CT" dated June 2, 1999, as they apply to the approximately 34-acre Parcel 2B-1, which is part of the sale to SLTC as shown on the proposed Draft Consolidation Map. All conditions will continue to apply to parcel 2B-2.

After some discussion, Ms. Godzeno made a motion to approve the removal of Condition Nos. 1 and 3 from the Planning Board Certificate for Subdivision #3738 dated April 29, 1999 and removal of Notes 7, 8 and 16 on Map No. 13068 titled "Subdivision Map of Lot 2B, Map 12983B S.L.R. Prepared for Arthur Altschul Trust, Stamford, CT" dated June 2, 1999; Mr. Buccino seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

ZONING BOARD REFERRALS:

1. **ZB APPLICATION #222-23 - SEAVIEW HOUSE, LLC - 68 SEAVIEW AVENUE - Map Change:** Applicant is proposing to rezone 68 Seaview Avenue from the present R-5 (Multiple Family Medium Density Design District) to the proposed RM-1 (Multiple Family, Low Density Design District).

2. ZB APPLICATION #222-24 - SEAVIEW HOUSE, LLC - 68 SEAVIEW AVENUE - Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses, Special Permit and Coastal Site Plan Review:

Applicant is proposing to convert the main building, a mostly vacant office building, into a predominantly residential multifamily development containing (52) residential units, office space on the second floor and on-site parking. The Marina will be unchanged and continue operations and the boardwalk located on the east of the property will continue to be open for public access.

The related applications for Zoning Map Change (R-5 to RM-1), Special Permit, Site & Architectural Plan and/or Requested Uses and Coastal Site Plan Review will together facilitate the conversion of the existing office building located at 68 Seaview Avenue to 52 dwelling units, residential amenity, 5,300 sq. ft. of office space along with parking and other site improvements. The existing building footprint will remain unchanged. The site comprises of a 1.38-acre parcel on Seaview Avenue, at the terminus of Seaview Avenue, south of the Halloween Yacht Club and bordering the Long Island Sound to the east. The property lies within Master Plan Category #10 (Shorefront - Mixed-Use) and is consistent with the goals and policies for this category in that it will protect existing water-dependent uses, encourage the preservation and enhancement of public access to waterfront areas and waterfront vistas, and encourage a mix of compatible uses. The building will contain a mix of one-bedroom (13), two-bedroom (35) and three-bedroom (4) apartments. The Applicant is currently seeking Special Permit approval per section 7.4.D.3 of the Zoning Regulations in order to make a fee-in-lieu payment of \$2,426,028.00 to be dedicated to affordable housing initiatives in Stamford. The fee-in-lieu payment aligns with the recent policy recommendations outlined in the Stamford Housing Affordability Plan. This adaptive reuses project has been thoughtfully designed with special emphasis on enhancing the ground level experience, making the land use more compatible with the surrounding land uses than the current use, and updating the building with high quality building materials and landscaping. Staff recommends approval of this application, which is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #10 (Shorefront - Mixed-Use).

In addition to its consistency with Master Plan Category #10 (Shorefront - Mixed-Use), the development is also consistent with the following Master Plan Policies and Implementation Strategies:

- C1.2: Support efforts aimed at maintaining and enhancing the scenic quality of key corridors serving the Cove neighborhood. Priority should be given to maintaining roadways that provide waterfront views and access.
- C3.1: Protect and promote water-dependent uses, recreation and boating.
- C3.2: Promote neighborhood access to public waterfront amenities.
- C3.3: Promote waterfront views and access, particularly in connection with future waterfront development.
- 6B: Preserve existing and create new affordable housing
- 7E: Support an active and diverse waterfront
- 7I.4: Vehicle charging stations

William Hennessey and Rachel Breslin, Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP, along with Eric Rains, Landscape Architect, Eric Rains Landscape Architecture; Stuart Johnson and Charles Chappell, Architects, Minno & Wasko PC; Leonard D'Andrea, Civil Engineer, D'Andrea Engineering & Surveying PC; Peter Cabrera, Valerio Zambrano, Mike Roberts, Dixon Mallory, and Charles Mallory, Ownership, Seaview House LLC/Greenwich Hospitality Group, made a presentation providing history of the property, the current condition of the building, a detailed overview of the renovation of the building and property and answered questions from the Board.

Ms. Dell did allow Stu Madison and Linda Terhune, Board Members, Marina Bay Association (61 Seaview Avenue), to make comments and ask questions of the Board and panel members.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Totilo recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #222-23** and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #10 Shorefront - Mixed Use); Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

After considerable discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #222-24** with the conditions the applicant return to the Planning Board with the plan for affordable housing and keep the Marina Bay Association at 61 Seaview Avenue informed on the progress of the project and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #10 Shorefront - Mixed Use); Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

NOTE: On September 21, 2022 the Planning Board received two letters from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) dated September 14, 2022 providing comments on Zoning Board Application #222-23 (Map Change) and ZB Application #222-24 (Coastal Site Plan). Both letters will be made part of the public record.

3. **ZB APPLICATION #222-25 - WALTON PLACE, LLC & 80 PROSPECT STREET PARTNERS, LLC - 0 WALTON PLACE (002-6688 & 002-6698) & 80 PROSPECT STREET (004-1560) - Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses and Special Permit:** Applicant is proposing the redevelopment of the site, which includes repurposing a 1900s church building, removal of a 1960s addition and the former retail building and the addition of a new 224 unit multifamily residential apartment building along with ample green space and covered parking.
4. **ZB APPLICATION #222-26 - RICHARD REDNISS (22 1ST CORP.) c/o REDNISS & MEAD - Text Change:** Applicant is proposing to amend Section 6 [Design Standards for Publically Accessible Amenity Space (PAAS)] to include an option for alternate means of compliance, including a fee-in-lieu of onsite PAAS.
5. **ZB APPLICATION #222-27 - WALTON PLACE, LLC & 80 PROSPECT STREET PARTNERS, LLC - 0 WALTON PLACE (002-6688 & 002-6698) & 80 PROSPECT STREET (004-1560) - Map Change:** Applicant is proposing a rezoning from the present R-H & C-L Zoning Districts to the RH-D Zoning District.

The related applications for Zoning Map Change (R-H and C-L to R-HD), Zoning Text Change [add alternative means of compliance (i.e., fee-in-lieu) to Section 6] and Special Permit, Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses and Coastal Site Plan Review will together facilitate the redevelopment of the 1.95 acre parcel with frontage on Walton Place, Prospect Street, and Bedford Street with a multifamily residential building containing 224 dwelling units, residential amenities, parking and green space improvements and rehabilitating/preserving/repurposing an early 1900s church building. The development lies within Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown) and is consistent with the goals and policies for this category in that the development will create a desirable mix and interaction of people (building residents) and activities (nearby Latham Park, Bedford Street “restaurant row,” Avon Theater, retail, and the Ferguson Library) and will preserve the existing Church having significant architectural and historic value. The development will contain a mix of studio (37), one-bedroom (89), two-bedroom (86) and three-bedroom (12) apartments. The project generates 23 BMR units. The Applicant currently proposes off-site BMR units of a size that will better serve families in need of affordable housing. The proposed BMR unit mix will include one-bedroom (3), two-bedroom (15) and three-bedroom (5) units. The proposal will provide more units than what would be required if provided on-site and the Applicant is able to offer the units at the time

of Building Permit, at least two years before any of the new units could be occupied. A portion of the Special Permit application is inextricably linked to the Text Change application in that the Special Permit would be for the application of the companion Text Change Application to provide a fee-in-lieu of providing Publicly Accessible Amenity Space. The Applicant proposes to provide a fee of \$84,800.00 in lieu of providing 4,240 sq. ft. of publicly accessible open space. The 4,240 sq. ft. of publicly accessible open space, if required, would be located between the Church and Bedford Street, where the Applicant currently plans to leave as open space even in the case of providing a fee-in-lieu. The project is well within the maximum permitted standards of the zone and is appropriate to the Downtown neighborhood, thoughtfully preserves a historic building, and maintains connectivity to the Downtown streetscapes. Staff recommends approval of this application, which is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown).

In addition to consistency with Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown), the development is also consistent with the following Master Plan Policies and Implementation Strategies:

- 3B.1 and 5A.1: Concentrate regional office, retail and entertainment uses and high-density residential development in the Downtown.
- 4C.3-c: Implement traffic calming strategies to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.
- 5A.6: Promote infill development on vacant sites within Downtown.
- 5B.1: Improve pedestrian connectivity within Downtown and between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
- 5B.2: Implement streetscape and traffic calming improvements Downtown.
- 6B: Preserve existing and create new affordable housing
- 6D: Preserve Historic Structures and Districts
- 7B.1: Provide high-quality streetscape designs along principal streets
- 7C: Enhance open space management
- 7H Encourage infill development
- 7I.4: Vehicle charging stations
- 7Q.5: Protect, manage and expand the urban forest, which is comprised of trees in the City right-of-way and in City parks, and street trees.

Richard Redniss and Raymond Mazzeo, Redniss & Mead, made a presentation providing some history of the church and a detailed overview of the renovation and answered questions from the Board.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Levin recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #222-25** and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown); Ms. Godzeno seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Levin and Totilo).

After considerable discussion, Mr. Perry recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #222-26** 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, Buccino, Godzeno, Perry and Totilo).

After considerable discussion, Mr. Totilo recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #222-27** and that this request is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with Master Plan Category #11 (Downtown); Ms. Godzeno seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Levin and Totilo).

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Dell mentioned that the 2023 calendar is being worked on and hope to have a draft for the August 30, 2022 meeting for review.

Ms. Dell stated that the Zoning Board is having conversations about changes to affordability coming through Hartford proposed for the State. Ms. Dell has asked Ms. Mathur for the Planning Board to be included in some of these discussions so the Board will know how the proposed changes will relate to the Master Plan and whether to opt out.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Dell stated she would try to speak with Elda Sinani, Director and Anthony Romano, Management Analyst, Office of Policy & Management, regarding the upcoming Capital Budget meetings in October to get letters out to all the departments and outside agencies.

Ms. Dell mentioned the sewer projects for Perna Lane and White Oak Lane, which may be coming back before the Board from the WPCA. The Board of Finance denied the funding and the Mayor has asked the Planning Board to look into these projects.

Next regularly scheduled Planning Board meetings are:

- August 30, 2022
- September 13, 2022

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Dell adjourned the meeting at 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
August 15, 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