

**STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES - TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2016
4TH FLOOR CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT**

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Voting Members: Theresa Dell, Chair; Jay Tepper, Vice Chair; Claire Fishman, Secretary and Michael Totilo. Alternate: William Levin. Absent: Jennifer Godzeno. Present for staff was David W. Woods, PhD, AICP, Principal Planner.

Ms. Dell, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and introduced the members of the Board and the first item on the agenda.

PRESENTATION: ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Thomas Madden and Laura Burwick made a 15 minute presentation on the proposed Energy Improvement District which the Mayor's office will be requesting an authorization for a Supplemental Capital Project Appropriation at the Board's September 6, 2016 meeting.

REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

SUPPLEMENTAL CAPITAL PROJECT APPROPRIATION REQUEST:

1. **INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - PULASKI STREET @ WASHINGTON BLVD.:** This supplemental request is for the improvement of intersection and adjacent rights-of-way and pedestrian sidewalks and crosswalks which will require a real property acquisition and/or permanent and temporary easement. This additional appropriation of \$7,600.00 is being requested to acquire 101 sq. ft. of property on the southwest corner of Pulaski Street and Washington Boulevard for the purpose of improving the turning radius for eastbound to southbound right turns. The property is part of the lot at 4 Pulaski Street and is currently owned by Church of Holy Name of Jesus. This intersection and this turning movement in particular, have experienced increasing volume in recent years as the south end continues to experience new growth and the residential population increases. The improved radius will facilitate traffic flow and safety, but requires acquisition of a small portion of the corner of the adjacent lot. The construction work associated with this project is being paid for and executed by BLT. After a brief discussion, Mr. Levin recommended approval of the Intersection Improvement project; 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 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. Fishman seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Levin, Tepper and Totilo).

2. **WPCA - MAJOR REPLACEMENT - WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY - 111 HARBOR VIEW AVENUE - PROJECT #CP6904:** This account is used for major repairs of tanks and equipment associated with the treatment of wastewater including pumps, clarifiers, solids handling equipment, etc. The additional appropriation is being requested to supplement the current free balance of \$3,076,065.99 to allow for expenses for: (1) flow distribution improvements, estimated at \$4,100,000.00; (2) replace the Motor Control Center at Thickener Facility, estimated at \$100,000.00; (3) design phase for upgrading the Sludge De-gritting System; (4) new equipment purchases, estimated at \$400,000.00; (5) Ops Building HVAC improvements, estimated at \$200,000.00; (6) ladder and guard rail safety improvements, estimated at \$100,000.00; and (7) Shed for the sludge trailers, estimated at \$500,000.00. *Total requested supplemental appropriation amount is \$2,500,000.00.*

The “Major Replacement” account is used for major repairs of tanks and equipment associated with the treatment of wastewater including pumps, clarifiers, solids handling equipment, etc. This is an ongoing capital expenditure. The additional appropriation is being requested to supplement the current free balance of \$3,076,065.99 to allow for expenses for: (1) Flow distribution improvements - Est. \$4,100,000.00; (2) Replace Motor Control Center at Thickener Facility - Est. \$100,000.00; (3) Design phase for Upgrading the Sludge De-gritting System; (4) New equipment purchases - Est. \$400,000.00; (5) Ops Building HVAC improvements - Est. \$200,000.00; (6) Ladder & Guard Rail Safety improvements - Est. \$100,000.00; and (7) Shed for the sludge trailers - Est. \$500,000.00. After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended approval of Project #CP6904; 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 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, Fishman, Levin, Tepper and Totilo).

ZONING BOARD REFERRALS:

Lisa Louer Feinberg, of Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey, made a presentation to the Board on Empire Main, LLC Application Nos. 216-31; 216-32 & 216-33 at West Main Street and Greenwood Hill Street. These were presented as one application even though it is comprised of three elements as described below:

- a. **ZB APPLICATION #216-31 - Text Amendment:** This text amendment to the Mill River Design District zone regulations is part of the RBS approval that the Zoning Board approved on Monday, August 1, 2016. This Text Amendment is the same as for RBS, amending the Mill River Design District standards.
- b. **ZB APPLICATION #216-32 - Map Change:** The applicant is requesting a map change from RM-F Zone to MRD-D Zone (Mill River Design District) which is similar to what the applicant requested for the RBS development site on the southeast side of the Mill River.
- c. **ZB APPLICATION #216-33 - General Development, Final Site Plan, Special Exception:**
[1] Special Exception - The applicant is requesting approval to permit a retaining wall higher than 6 ft. tall on the side; **[2] Special Exception** - The applicant is requesting approval to permit a parking ratio of one (1) space per dwelling unit of 2-bedrooms or less which is consistent with the MRD-D District approval for RBS Application #216-24; **[3] Special Exception** - The applicant is requesting to waive the 5 ft. setback requirement for parking adjacent to residential buildings; **[4] General Development Plan** - The proposed development consists of a five (5) story building, containing 110 residential units and 2,300± sq. ft. of retail space on West Main Street. The remainder of the ground floor will be dedicated to the residential lobby, resident exercise room and leasing office space. The residential units will be spread between four (4) upper levels and will include a mix of studio (52), one-bedroom (42), and two-bedroom (16) units. A total of eleven (11) units will be designated as on-site Below Market Rate (BMR) units available at rents affordable to families earning no more than 50% of Area Median Income. Each of the residential floors will also include storage space for the residents to rent, and a community room will be located on the second floor. A large outdoor terrace (11,000 sq. ft.) with an indoor kitchen and additional community room are contemplated on the roof of the building. The site is also directly across the street from the Mill River Park which will provide an important amenity for the residents of the building. The required Below Market Rate units (10% of the total dwelling units) shall be provided on-site. The Board complimented the applicant for providing the required BMR units on-site.

1. **ZB APPLICATION #216-31- LISA LOUER FEINBERG - Text Change:** Applicant would like to amend Subsection #7 (Mixed-Use Commercial Development) of Article III, Section 9-I (Mill River District). After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended approval of *ZB Application #216-31*; and this request is consistent with the 2015 Master Plan Category #5 (Residential-High Density Multifamily); Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Levin, Tepper and Totilo).
2. **ZB APPLICATION #216-32 - EMPIRE WEST MAIN, LLC; 17 WEST MAIN FRITZ PROPERTIES, LLC & WALTER O. FRITZ - 9, 17, 33 & 43 WEST MAIN STREET & 4 GREENWOOD HILL STREET - Map Change:** The Applicants propose to re-designate the properties from the RM-F zoning district to the MRD-D zoning district. After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended approval of *ZB Application #216-32*; and this request is consistent with the 2015 Master Plan Category #5 (Residential-High Density Multifamily); Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Levin, Tepper and Totilo).
3. **ZB APPLICATION #216-33 - EMPIRE WEST MAIN, LLC; 17 WESTMAIN FRITZ PROPERTIES, LLC & WALTER O. FRITZ - 9, 17, 33 & 43 WEST MAIN STREET & 4 GREENWOOD HILL STREET - General Development, Final Site Plan, Special Exception and Coastal Site Plan Review:** The Applicants are requesting approval to replace existing non-conforming commercial uses with a new five (5) story mixed-use building located on the southwest corner of Greenwood Hill Street and West main Street. The proposed development includes the removal of existing buildings and the construction of a mixed-use building with 2,300± sq. ft. of ground floor retail space and 110 residential units above as well as indoor and outdoor amenity space, parking and landscaping improvements. Special Exception requests include approval of a retaining wall exceeding six (6) feet in height, a parking requirement of one (1) space per dwelling unit and the waiver of the five (5) foot setback requirement for parking adjacent to a residential building. After a brief discussion, Mr. Totilo recommended approval of *ZB Application #216-33*; and this request is consistent with the 2015 Master Plan Category #5 (Residential-High Density Multifamily); Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Levin, Tepper and Totilo).

William Hennessey, of Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey, made a presentation on the proposed development and Text Change on behalf of ROECO, LLC & St. John's Roman Catholic Church of Stamford ZB Application Nos. 216-27 & 216-28 which was presented as one application even though it is comprised of two elements. Mr. Hennessey also included a request to lower, by Special Exception, the 10% BMR requirement to 6% for this project.

4. **ZB APPLICATION #216-27 - WILLIAM J. HENNESSEY, JR. - Text Change:** The Applicant is requesting amendments to Table IV, Appendix B as well as corresponding Footnote Nos. 4, 7 & 8.
5. **ZB APPLICATION #216-28 - ROECO, LLC & ST. JOHN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT - 245 ATLANTIC STREET (a/k/a 279 ATLANTIC STREET) - Special Exception, Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses and Coastal Site Plan Review:** The Applicants are requesting approval to construct a new residential building adjacent to the existing St. John's Roman Catholic Church) located at 245 Atlantic Street (a/k/a 279 Atlantic Street) on the northwest corner of Atlantic Street and Tresser Boulevard. The proposed development project consists of 212 apartments, one (1) guest suite and up to approximately 8,000 sq. ft. of retail/flex space as well as 315 parking spaces within an enclosed structured parking garage. Special Exception requests include approval of a large scale development, a Below Market Rate requirement of 6% to be satisfied by an alternative method of compliance, a parking standard of one (1) space per unit of two bedrooms or less and one and one quarter (1.25) spaces of three bedrooms or more, the waiver of a parking requirement for the church and reduced front yard and side yard setbacks.

PLANNING BOARD DISCUSSION:

The Board unanimously disagreed with the reasoning for lowering the BMR requirement of 10% to 6%. Among the concerns raised by the Board was the appearance of trading low market rate housing units for parking spaces. The savings to the developer of \$1.6M in reality equates to approximately \$7,500 per unit and given that the Bell Street garage is directly adjacent to this development site, which does not charge to park on Sunday for anybody, the Board believes, as presented, other and better alternatives should be explored before entertaining amending the required BMR units. The Board is sympathetic to the financial needs of Inspirica to develop 53 (deeply affordable) units on Franklin Street. The Board believes that the full requirement of 10% is better for even this project. In addition, the Board raised issues about the appropriateness of approving only a 7-floor stick-built building in the heart of downtown; shouldn't this building be more consistent with the Capelli Towers across the street?

After a considerable discussion and testimony by the applicant, Steve Wise; Jason Shaplen, CEO of Inspirica; William Hennessey, the applicant's attorney; Dr. David Woods and Robin Stein, Mr. Tepper moved to Table this item until a future meeting in September; Mr. Levin seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Fishman, Levin, Tepper and Totilo).

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

Meeting of 6/21/16: After a brief discussion, Mr. Totilo moved to recommend approval of the Planning Board Minutes of June 21, 2016; Mr. Levin seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 3-0 (Dell, Levin and Totilo)

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Next regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting is:
9/6/16

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Dell adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Fishman, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board

NOTE: These proceedings were recorded on video and audio tape and are available for review in the Land Use Bureau located on the 7th Floor of the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, during regular business hours.