

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
CAPITAL BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
APPROVED MINUTES, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2014
7TH FLOOR, GOVERNMENT CENTER
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Theresa Dell, Chair, Claire Fishman, Zbigniew Naumowicz, Jay Tepper, and Michael Totilo. Roger Quick was absent. Present for staff was David W. Woods, Ph.D., AICP, Principal Planner.

Approximately thirty (30) members of the public attended of which about 16 citizens' spoke.

Capital Budget FY 2014/15 & Capital Plan 2016-2021

Ms. Dell called the Public Hearing to order at 7:05 p.m., and requested all who wished to speak to sign in on the pad provided. Ms. Dell read into the record the Chair's Statement (see below). Ms. Dell then went through the Capital Budget project by project asking if anybody in the audience wished to speak on a certain project.

A number of people spoke on the proposed Capital Budget for the Board of Education arguing that the Board had cut it too deeply; after the citizens spoke, Dr. Winifred Hamilton, Superintendent spoke by first complementing the Board on a difficult task and then answered many of the citizens' questions.

Ernest DiMattia, President of Ferguson Library spoke about the SHPO grant of \$200,000 that the Library has received since he spoke before the Board in the Fall, which he hoped the Board would add additional funds to use to fix the columns in the entry of the Library.

A number of people spoke out in support of providing the necessary funds for the Animal Shelter.

The other key issues included sidewalks, especially along Hubbard Avenue, and Oakdale Road Culvert and Catch Basins, which include directly affected residents including on with a daughter who is severely mobility impaired.

The Public Hearing was closed at 9:10 p.m.

Chair's Statement

On behalf of the Planning Board I would like to welcome you to this evening's public hearing on the Preliminary Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2014/15 and the Capital Plan 2015-2021 and provide you with a brief narrative of the process involved in its preparation.

First and foremost let me state the Planning Board is and always has been...keenly aware of the changing, difficult economic environment and the financial challenges facing our City. It was imperative that we as a Board adequately identify the Capital needs of the entire City and plan and allocate the City's financial resources while exercising appropriate fiscal restraint in developing this Budget.

This year's Capital Budget process began in September when City Departments, Boards and Outside Agencies; were advised of the Planning Board's schedule to hold meetings for reviewing

the Capital Budget requests and detailed instructions from Office of Policy Management (OPM) on Capital Project requests were sent out.

In total we received 180 Capital Budget requests totaling over \$96.4 million. This compares with \$79.6 million in requests for the 2013-14 Capital Budget, which excluded the capital requests for the Board of Education, and \$95.5 million for the 2012-13 Capital Budget.

Throughout October and November the Planning Board met formally (each Tuesday for four weeks) to review the Capital Budget requests. Per the City Charter requirements, the meetings were open to the public (however, they were not permitted to ask questions) and were attended by members of the Board of Finance and Board of Representatives Fiscal Committee, with members from each Board fully participating in the review process. Each of the City Departments and Outside Agencies presented their requests; providing rationale for their criteria ratings, answering questions and giving clarification where necessary.

After these meetings, the Planning Board and staff met weekly to discuss each project in depth and the Capital Budget as a whole. Projects were then placed into the current budget year and the out years and per the Board's request, Staff adjusted the out years for dollar values and to make sure no project was dropped and that future requests were honored.

Project Review Criteria:

- a. What are the department's / agency's highest priorities, especially the department's /agency' highest priority;
- b. Can the project be completed in one-year or is it a multi-year project;
- c. Will the project make money or save money for the City, or does the project include grants (Federal, State or private), or rebates;
- d. What level of funding was provided in previous years?

After our final preliminary budget decisions for 2014/15 and capital plan 2015-21 were made; the Planning Board then ranked the projects into four tiers with Tier 1 being most important for the City.

Criteria for Tiers: After using the project review criteria outlined above, the Board placed all of its FY 2014/15 Capital Budget requests into four Tiers, based on the following criteria:

Tier 1 – The Board recommends that the City needs to include those project in its FY 2014/15 Capital Budget to protect the public health, safety and welfare, or it is a high priority project that includes grants – no decision necessary. The Board recommends \$22,644,889 or 61.93% of the projects be placed in Tier 1.

Tier 2 – The Board recommends that these projects are important to include in its FY 2014/15 Capital Budget, but given the fiscal constraints on the City, the Mayor needs to review and decide whether to include these project in this year's Capital Budget, and at what level. The Board recommends \$11,674,000 or 31.93% of the projects be placed in Tier 2.

Tier 3 – The Board contends that the City may desire to put this project off for a year and fund the whole project, but the Mayor needs to review these projects to decide if the project needs to be included in this year's Capital Budget and at what level. The Board recommends \$2,145,000 or 5.86% of the projects be placed in Tier 3.

Tier 4 – Given the fiscal restraints on the City, the Planning Board recommends postponing these projects to a future year. The Board recommends that the Mayor review these projects carefully, given that some of the Board’s identified projects may belong in a Tier above.

The Planning Board will now ...

- Hold a Public Hearing on our recommended Capital Budget. Hear any and all inputs, from the Public or City Department or Agency on any proposed projects and on Tuesday, February 18, 2014 we will discuss our final adjustments based tonight’s public hearing recommendations.
- The Planning Board’s recommended Capital Budget will then be presented to Mayor Martin by March 1st, as required by the Charter. Once the Mayor has made his revisions, he will submit Capital Budget to the Board of Finance for their review and approval and finally, the Budget will be reviewed and acted upon by the Board of Representatives.
- The Planning Board feels the recommended Capital Budget 2014/15 and Capital Plan 2015-2021 that we will be presenting this evening, is one that encompasses the physical needs of the entire city, and is cognizant of the financial restraints of the City.

We look forward to hearing your input this evening.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting.t

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Fishman, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board