

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES #3607
TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2011
7th FLOOR LAND USE CONFERENCE AREA
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Theresa Dell, Roger Quick, Michael Totilo, Jay Tepper, Zbigniew Naumowicz and Dudley Williams. Present for staff was Norman Cole and Todd Dumais.

Regular Meeting

The chair, Mrs. Dell, opened the regular meeting at 7:30 PM and announced that Dudley Williams was confirmed as a Full Time Planning Board member.

ZB Appl. 210-49 – Zoning Map Amendment – Stamford Health System, Inc., 49 Wright Street, to rezone approximately 5,189 s.f. of land currently zoned R-5 (Multiple Family, Medium Density Design District) to HCDD (Hospital Complex Design District)

ZB Appl. 210-50 – Modification to General Development Plan (GDP) - Stamford Health Systems, 30 Shelburne Avenue, seeking change to Condition 7 of previously approved General Development Plan (GDP) for Stamford Hospital Campus expansion to include an additional 5,189 s.f. parcel of land on the West side of Wright Street and a land triangle on the East side of Spruce Street and modification of GDP related to generators.

ZB Appl. 210-51 – FINAL Site & Architectural Plan – STAMFORD HEALTH SYSTEM, INC., 30 Shelburne Road, requesting final site plan approval for Phase 1 of the Stamford Hospital Expansion on its approximately 30 acre campus. Phase 1 improvements include construction of the basement and first four levels of the Specialty Building (283,404 s.f.), construction of the new Central Utility Plant (33,500 s.f.) and parking lot, driveway and landscaping improvements.

Attorney William Hennessey, for the applicant, introduced the development team (David Smith, VP Stamford Hospital Systems, Pam Kaprowski and Ken Monroe, Project Manager, Joel Cowel, Architect, Paul Nielin, Skanska, Jannen Prince, LA Dirtworks and Dave Sullivan, Traffic and Parking Consultant, along with Rick Redniss, site planner) and presented all three applications. He stated this project started over 1.5 years ago to as a way to better regulate the hospitals use. Att. Hennessey noted that they looked at other communities to see what they did and crafted a new regulation to allow for the growth of the hospital. After crafting the new text, SHS asked to rezone almost 30 acres and sought approval of a General Development Plan. Since that time, SHS has finalized the road discontinuances and completed a complicated land swap with Charter Oak Communities. Att. Hennessey added that within the bounds of the SHS Campus were two out parcels that were not part of the GDP approval; one has since been acquired which is one of the requests before the Board tonight.

Mrs. Dell asked if anyone is still living on Finney Lane? Att. Hennessey answered no.

Attorney Hennessey then described the three items before the Board tonight. 1) map change to include the purchased lot in the HCDD Zone; 2) Amendment to GDP to include this area plus landscaping that was mapped HCDD but left out; 3) A condition

regarding emergency generators because of the unique nature of the Hospital, need to run generators 6am to 9pm and on non-holiday weekends.

Mrs. Dell asked how noisy the generators are? Ken Monroe said they meet noise all of the sound requirements of the City are that they are only tested once a month for a few hours.

Attorney Hennessey continued by saying Phase I includes: new parking areas, construction of a new Central Utility Plant (CUP), a Specialty Building designed to be built in two stages and the long term plan is to put a bed tower on top of this building. Attorney Hennessey described the building and activities occurring in the building and where they will move to. This project is anticipated to be a five-year project and very complicated.

Mrs. Dell asked what would be adjacent to the Central Utility Plant impacted by the noise?

Attorney Hennessey said the Hospital doesn't own that property and expect it will be redeveloped. The CUP is all new equipment and has been studied against the City's existing noise ordinances. He continued to say the new Specialty Building is a bit above the size of the Tully Center, a little taller than Tully at 86' tall and showed a presentation board of the height next to the current Whittingham building. He proceeded to walk through the proposed building floor by floor – showing a new ER larger than state of the art which separates uses into specific areas (i.e. new surgery, prep and recovery areas) new ICU and heart and vascular institute, new floor area approximating 220,000 sf. Att. Hennessey explained that they plan to construct the building and fit it out and finish the spaces at such time as the tower is feasible. The Medical Office building was part of Phase I but is taking longer to develop final plans. The CUP will take advantage of the grade differential along Finney. He then discussed what is happening to the existing facilities with a few buildings being demolished.

Attorney Hennessey showed a sample of the exterior of the buildings and commented that they are very high quality. He explained that the buildings have high quality mixture of terra-cotta, glass, curtainwall stone and a point-glass supported wall system and resin wood paneling. They will improve outside areas and how it interacts with the building is very, very important to them. The CUP building is very well designed with trellis screening and showed samples of the material to be used for both buildings.

Attorney Hennessey said the Hospital has engaged a consultant from Philadelphia that specializes in way finding and sought the best organize the traffic flow in and around a site. He explained various parking areas/designation, including a bit of community shared parking for on-street parking lost on Finney.

Mrs. Dell asked if there'd still be a parking garage? Attorney Hennessey replied that that is likely 10-15 years in the future and they don't know. The Zoning Board approved it but they have to return before final site plan application.

Mr. Quick asked how general visitor parking will be charged? David Sullivan stated they'll be adding 132 spaces (from 334 to 466) which will be a combination of self park and valet parking.

Mrs. Dell said she was more concerned about the parking garage and thought that was a bad thing. Attorney Hennessey said the Hospital leases off-site spaces for staff historically from UCONN.

Mr. Quick asked for clarification of the entrances and exists off-site. Attorney Hennessey said the South entrance designed to give more of a balance to neighborhood traffic. The Shelburne entrance; Tandent entrance, across from Hubbard and the South entrance.

Mr. Dumais asked the team to discuss the Sustainable/Green features of the project.

Ken Monoro described they are going for LEED Silver; and that the project includes pervious pavers; green roofs on the buildings; and that they are avoiding light pollution by shielded lights to keep it all within the Campus; that there is no vinyl in the project; there is onsite co-gen for energy efficiency. Tannin Prince said the maximum open space on-site will be 20% and 50% reuse of potable water within the irrigation system. Going for both levels of LEED commissioning.

Mrs. Dell asked about the generator site and if there would be enough green around it to shield from neighbors? Attorney Hennessey showed an elevation for planted frontage of the CUP and answered that there is no more room to plant any more green materials.

Mr. Quick asked if the generators were oil or gas fired? Ken Monroe answered they are designed to burn either fuel.

Mr. Totilo commented that he thought the applicants had done a good job of screening the back of house service and mechanicals of the buildings and that the overall design was of very high quality.

Mr. Totilo moved to recommend approval of the ZB application 210-49. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Tepper, Quick and Naumowicz).

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of ZB application 210-50, the General Development Plan. Mr. Naumowicz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Tepper, Quick and Naumowicz).

Mr. Quick moved to recommend approval of ZB application 210-51, the Final Site and Architectural Plan. Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Tepper, Quick and Naumowicz).

Zoning Board of Appeals Referral:

APPL. #007-11, Bohanman & Loughran Realty, LLC, requesting variances of setbacks and coverage to construct a fabric awning over a seasonal dining area for the Colony Grill located in a C-N having an address of 168 Myrtle Avenue.

Mr. Dumais briefly described the application. He noted that there is an existing retractable canopy that the applicant wishes to replace with a fixed canopy. Mr. Dumais noted that the Zoning Enforcement Office considers a fixed canopy as a structure and required it meet setback and coverage requirements.

Mr. Tepper stated that the location of the awning was over the existing rear patio and bounded by parking lot and would not negatively impact the neighborhood.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Totilo moved to recommend approval of the requested variance. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Williams, Quick and Naumowicz).

APPL. #008-11, Badoyannis & Berger, requesting a variance to expand a nonconforming to expand an existing non-conforming commercial office building located at 1700 Bedford Street in a R-MF residential zone.

Mr. Dumais explained the requested variance. Mr. Cole noted that the R-MF zone used to permit Commercial Office use as-of-right. Several members of the Board commented that they did not have a problem with this application, as the neighborhood has been in transition for a number of years.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Williams moved to recommend approval of the requested variance. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Williams, Quick and Tepper).

Planning Board Meeting Minutes:

Planning Board meeting minutes of 3/8/11. Mr. Tepper moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Totilo, Naumowicz, Quick and Tepper).

New Business

Mr. Cole distributed the DSSD/URC Study on the Downtown. He noted that they DSSD and URD has requested to present the study at a joint meeting of the Planning and Zoning Boards with the Mayor. However, he noted that no dates have been set.

Mrs. Dell said she'd like to see something on the agenda in May 2011 but noted that the City Wide Master Plan amendment process will begin in 2012 and may make the most sense to wait until then to entertain recommendations based on this study.

Mr. Tepper updated the Board about the tolling issue and SWRPA.

There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Fishman, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board

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