

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
JOINT PUBLIC HEARING AND
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES # 3725
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2011
4TH FLOOR CAFETERIA
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

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

REGULAR MEETING

Mrs. Dell called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

Zoning Board Referrals:

ZB Appl. 211-26 Zoning Map Amendment – GB New England 2, LLC & Nine Sixty Nine Associates, to rezone approximately 5,110 s.f. of land currently zoned C-N to R-10 and to rezone approximately 2,890 s.f. of land currently zoned R-10 to C-N located at 955 & 969 High Ridge Road.

ZB Appl. 211-27 Special Exception - GB New England 2, LLC & Nine Sixty Nine Associates, requests approval pursuant to Section 7.5, Large Scale Development to redevelop an existing commercially zoned property located at 969 High Ridge Road with a new 14,568 s.f. CVS building.

Mrs. Dell noted that the discussion on Applications 211-26 and 211-27 was a continuation from the previous meeting and that since Mr. Totilo did not attend the meeting or listen to the tapes Mr. Tepper would be voting in his place

Attorney Hennessey, representing the Applicant, reviewed a list of questions from the last meeting regarding the site plan, adding more landscaping, softening the site and the architecture of the building. He explained how they went back to the client and how they are now submitting a revised site plan with new tree plantings in the main parking area, three new landscaped islands, two in front of the store, an extended / enhanced sidewalk from the street to the front door (stamped asphalt brick pattern) for better pedestrian connectivity and added a bike rack at the front of the building. Mr. Hennessey said he now believes the site there is better site circulation and operates well within parameters discussed with staff.

Attorney Hennessey distributed various elevation renderings and discussed three options for façade architecture. He noted that the designs are similar to what was submitted on the application but without the red mullions, includes much more brick and has more angular features and includes additional windows and more detail brick insets. He then discussed the various design options with #1 and #3 being the extremes and #3 looking more like a traditional store. The applicant hopes the revisions have addressed the Board's concerns.

Mrs. Dell said she liked the greening but had a question about the wall in the back? Attorney Hennessey said there was a fence around the rear of the property for the benefit of all the residential neighbors and was specifically requested by one neighbor asking the site be cleaned up.

Mr. Tepper asked if the fence was broken? Attorney Hennessey said that had been discussed but when they met with neighbors but ultimately they didn't want a break.

Attorney Hennessey discussed the curb cuts.

Mr. Tepper stated they have three different plans? Attorney Hennessey said the recommendation had been to incorporate more brick and windows and substantially those characters can be found in plan 3.

Mrs. Fishman expressed her concern and stated that she has a real problem with the traffic light and said she is absolutely opposed to adding a new traffic light at this location. Attorney Hennessey said the State Traffic Commission has studied the traffic light situation on High Ridge Road to death as it's a State Road. Whether a 60,000 sf office building or 38,000 sf retail building is put on this site, a traffic light is warranted and will be entirely paid for by CVS. The new light will work in synchronization with traffic.

Mr. Williams stated heading south without a light will be almost impossible. Several Board members stated support of a light.

Mr. Totilo noted a CVS Pharmacy visit by customers will be short so they'll have more people in and out of this location and a traffic light makes sense.

Mrs. Fishman wanted to address the thinking behind putting another CVS Pharmacy location here. Attorney Hennessey said he couldn't address that but CVS feels there's a need and it will be successful. Competition is something that exists and it is currently not planning on having the store open 24 hours a day.

Mrs. Dell noted that since it won't be open 24 hours a day the lights can be dimmed and encouraged they be very neighborhood friendly.

Mr. Quick asked if there were differences in the site lighting? What's the plan difference between this site and Bull's Head? A CVS rep discussed lighting and specifically after-hours lighting. She stated that the site was designed with 30' poles with shielded 1,000 watt bulbs and that they are standard for a commercial development. They are sensitive to 0 to 1 foot candle near the residential property locations. Attorney Hennessey said they'd submitted photometric plans and hope to see 0 foot candles in areas offsite or in the residential zone.

Mr. Williams moved to recommend approval of the map change. Mr. Quick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Dell, Williams, Tepper and Quick in favor with Fishman abstaining).

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the special exception. Mr. Quick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Dell, Williams, Tepper and Quick in favor with Fishman abstaining).

Mrs. Dell said in the Board's recommendation to the Zoning Board that specific messages be addressed regarding lighting, planning, the rear wall, brick and the windows. The Board members selected Plan 3 as their approved elevation from a neighborhood perspective and noted that the traffic light should be looked at and properly synchronized. The Board also noted they wish to encourage as much pedestrian and bike friendly traffic to the site as possible.

Subdivision:

Subdivision Application #4000 Mark A. Senerchia, for subdivision of property into two (2) parcels. The property is located on the north side of Rutz Street; having an address of 24 Rutz Street.

Mr. Dumais described the subdivision. He noted that it was a two-lot subdivision that the Board recently approved, however, the applicant failed to submit the final subdivision map in the required timeframe. Mr. Dumais stated that since the previous subdivision was void so the applicant resubmitted it. He noted that nothing changed and distributed draft conditions of approval for the Board to review. Mr. Williams moved to recommend approval of the subdivision with modified conditions. Mr. Quick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Quick).

Lease Agreement:

Proposed License Agreement between Antares SHS, L.P. & and City of Stamford for a Police Substation at 700 Canal Street.

Mr. Dumais explained the agreement to the Board members who requested he review the license agreement and note its provisions. After a brief discussion, Mr. Williams moved to recommend approval of the license agreement. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Quick).

Planning Board Meeting Minutes:

Mrs. Dell announced that approval of the minutes would be tabled until the next meeting.

Mrs. Dell then announced that the remaining items on the Regular Meeting Agenda would be taken up after the conclusion of the Joint Public Hearing.

Joint Public Meeting

Capital Budget Presentations FY 2012/13-2019

Mrs. Dell called the Joint Public Hearing on the Capital Budget to order of. She explained the Charter requires this joint meeting and it was properly noticed in the Stamford Advocate. She next and introduced members of the Planning Board, Peter Privitera from OPM, Todd Dumais, Associate Planner with the Planning Board, Jay Fountain from the Board of Representatives and Kathleen Murphy from the Board of Finance.

Peter Privitera discussed the process of identifying projects slated to be closed out but held open by the Mayor and said that he would offer each department presenting with the correct information regarding project balances.

Mr. Tepper asked on multi-year projects would Bonds be issued for a one year portion? Mr. Privitera responded yes the commitment is for the first year and hopes the Planning Board and other Board's look favorably in future years. Note on page 3 the project balance of \$3.4 million is an accumulation of projects that didn't get bonded. Mr. Privitera noted that they are going to close this out and are compiling a list past projects and plan to go forward.

Short Term Capital - Citywide Technology

Mike Pensiero , Information Services Director and John Chnowski, Assistant Director Information Systems present to discuss Technology Management Services and Citywide Technology.

Mr. Pensiero discussed meeting with each department head to ensure departmental plans fit with the City's ability to fulfill their technology needs. He then identified twelve separate projects throughout the City for \$1.515 million, which includes new initiatives and

replacement/recycling of existing projects of which \$1.13 million for replacement and \$0.4 million for new projects.

Mr. Pensiero explained the LAN/Telecom needs replacement for existing network switches which is on a 6-year lifecycle. They are looking at upgrading their virtual servers which would save on heating and A/C and associated electrical costs. He explained the phone system was installed in 2003 and is reaching its 9-year life cycle. They need to update this equipment and will need \$150-\$200K in an out-year. The City owns its phone system. He discussed the City Website Upgrade due to many FOI requests and making more information available to the general public.

Mr. Pensiero then discussed the need for \$7,000 for a learning management system for City Staff. \$50,000 for a disaster recovery center upgrade to supply uninterruptible battery power supply – currently get 4 hours of run time. He explained the need for the Emergency dispatch to upgrade to Windows 7 for Police/Fire/CAD and the 5-year project to replace all the mobile data terminals in the fire trucks and adding rugged laptops that are designed for fire services.

Mr. Pensiero then discussed GIS and the importance of this technology and the need for upgrades to allow for annotation and depiction of property parcels and possible availability of access via the web for public use.

Mrs. Dell asked if money was actually there? Mr. Pensiero said yes, funds provided privately.

Mr. Quick asked if they could expect updates to include utilities, easements, wetlands with GIS information. Mr. Pensiero said yes.

Kathleen Murphy had a question about GIS and the WPCA project. Mr. Pensiero agreed that was an important issue. Mr. Privitera mentioned the GIS staff is down to 1 person and there's a need to increase staffing to handle all this requested information.

Mr. Chnowski explained an Engineering Record Conversion project involving digitization of engineering documents. \$75,000 will be needed to convert 50 years documents.

Mr. Tepper asked how they're doing with the life cycle replacement city wide? Mr. Pensiero said they are falling behind at this point in the fiscal year and are stretching the 6-year mark. Mr. Tepper asked why funds for the website are listed in Short Term Capital instead of operating? Mr. Pensiero said traditionally it had been on a 5-year design but being short staffed has put them behind schedule.

Mrs. Dell asked if the projects were ranked by importance? Mr. Pensiero said they tried to prioritize and a staying afloat with no viable funding this year.

Mrs. Dell told them to submit a project and they'll determine what amount/projects will be Bonded so that's why the Board needs to know where the priorities lie. Mr. Pensiero said they'd submit a list in descending priority order. Mr. Privitera said they want to know what the money is going to be for.

Mr. Williams asked if the \$350,000 for telephone included BofE? Mr. Pensiero said yes, a portion.

Mr. Quick noted utility companies have up to the minute data and asked if there would be a point when this gets into our system? Mr. Pensiero said this would need to be done in the future.

Mrs. Fishman expressed concern about reducing the money request and an emergency hits, how would it be handled? Mr. Privitera said in an emergency, they could do a supplemental request; not the way they'd want to do it. In the current fiscal year, there's \$0 for tech.

Mrs. Murphy stated the ranking system could leverage other funds and mandated legal; she'd like to see this in an updated form. A multi-year plan would be helpful.

Jay Fountain agreed with the need for prioritizing, even with projects that are lumped together. Mr. Privitera said the purpose of prioritizing is a budgetary function but most projects could be broken into subsets. Helpful to know the risk of not doing some of these items.

Scofield Manor

Maureen Green Neuberger, Administrator, discussed the requests. She explained the front deck wooden ramp needs to be replaced for safety reasons and that the elevator needs to be replaced. It's hydraulic with the lift 20' underground and there's some concern with leaking fluid. The hallway handrails are not ADA compliant. And, they need an emergency generator.

Mr. Tepper asked about the component costs of the \$172,000 between the projects? Mr. Williams asked if the new elevator would also be hydraulic? Mrs. Neuberger said she didn't think so but they'll replace the cylinder and jacket.

Mr. Tepper asked what the residents will do during construction? Mrs. Neuberger said they'd have to work around the construction and no one is in a wheelchair.

Mr. Privitera said the project balance is \$54,350 and is this request in addition to this or for something else? Mrs. Neuberger said its an open project for next Bonding and want to make sure this money gets spent to fix a drainage issue.

Bartlett Arboretum

Peter Saverine, Executive Director of Operations noted 2011 was a year of pride for the Arboretum as they opened their Silver Educational Center and outdoor classroom. He explained the request is one the Board has seen before – replacement of the heating system as the current one is on its last legs. \$250,000 for a total replacement of the heating system and correction of drainage items from the system. A band-aid solution has been holding up today and they have been bearing those costs. Mr. Privitera agreed they'd been talking about this item for awhile.

Mr. Fountain asked if they'd done any research to see if the water quality is corroding the pipes? Mr. Privitera said they can get back to the Board with a breakdown of the system. Nancy Ormsby Flynn, City Engineering Department answered Board technical questions.

Mrs. Dell asked what approach to the system will they take this summer?

Mr. Quick asked what the size of the Visitor Center was? Mr. Saverine answered about 3,000 sf.

Stamford Historical Society

Pam Coleman, Chairwoman

Mr. Privitera noted the project balance of \$1million is committed to put A/C into the building and basement windows. Different zones are needed for fabric and document retention concerns. Mr. Privitera said that right now this is an active project.

Mrs. Coleman added that \$200,000 is requested for the roof (at the end of its lifecycle) and masonry (repairs caused by leaking roof).

Office of the Mayor – Housing Development Fund

Tim Beeble, Community Development Director, stated this is the 30th year of funding for this program. The remaining balance is for Palmer's Hill Project and Metro Green. \$1,070,000 towards Merrell Avenue. He noted that the current request is \$1.25 million for a joint venture project at 992 Summer Street. Mr. Privitera said they have a signed contract for development which this money is allocated for.

Mr. Dumais questioned home replacements and asked for a monetary breakdown.

Mrs. Murphy asked if these funds were a reasonable amount to spend to develop a 22 unit complex.

Stamford Museum

Melissa Mulrooney, Director, expressed gratitude to the City for their capital support in the past and distributed photographs of projects in progress. She reviewed the water line tie-in (from 2008-2009) and then described the project requests for \$250,000 for engineering design and piping / regulators and \$210,000 for an electrical upgrade.

Mrs. Dell asked how far up Scofield the waterline runs? Mrs. Mulrooney said to Haviland Rd. Mrs. Dell asked if there'd been any complaints from the North Stamford Association? Mrs. Mulrooney answered no.

Mr. Fountain asked about a project balance if any? Mr. Privitera said it is important in future years.

The Chair announced that this evenings presentations on the Capital Budget were conclude and that the Joint Meeting was continued to Tuesday, October 25th.

Old Business

Subdivision #3996, 44 Woodbine Road, request of a 90-day extension of time to file the final subdivision map.

Mr. Dumais explained the request. After a brief discussion, Mr. Quick moved to recommend approval of the time extension. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Quick).

New Business

There was a motion by Mr. Totilo to add a request from John Leydon to the agenda for a modification of a subdivision condition. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Quick). Mr. Dumais discussed the request. Mr. Quick moved to recommend approval of the request, seconded by Mr. Totilo and the motion passed unanimously with the eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Williams, Fishman, Totilo and Quick).

Mr. Tepper updated the Board about SWRPA and their role as a Regional Planning Agency versus a Regional Council of Governments.

The Board discussed sending Mr. Lunney a formal letter regarding the proposed Five-Guys retail restaurant on High Ridge Road. Mr. Quick asked who they'd received bids from and expressed an interest in a list of names and where they are from.

There being no further business to discuss Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting at 10:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Fishman, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board