

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES #3570  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2010  
7<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE AREA  
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

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Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Duane Hill, Theresa Dell, Claire Fishman, and Jay Tepper. Present for staff were Robin Stein and Todd Dumais.

***Regular Meeting***

The chairman, Mr. Duane Hill, called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

***Lease Agreement between the City & Cox Radio Inc. for property on Magee Ave.***

Mr. Stein described the request and provided the Board with a map of the area. He explained that the City has had a lease since 1985 and that this agreement would increase in payment terms and would be good for another 20 years.

After a short discussion, Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the lease agreement. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 4-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman and Tepper)

***Supplemental Capital Request: Bartlett Arboretum \$145,100***  
***Capital Project Closeout: Bartlett Arboretum \$145,100***

Lou Casolo, City Engineer, explained that the request was for funds to build an Education Center on the grounds of the Arboretum. He stated that the requested closeout was linked to the Visitor Center renovation that no longer needed to be completed. Mr. Casolo added that he was requested that the funds from the closeout be redirected into a Supplemental Account to fund the Education Center. Mr. Casolo noted that this capital request was linked to a State grant which expires in December 2010.

Kenneth A. DellaRocco, President of the Board of Directors of the Arboretum explained that this is part of an existing project and it is very important for the Arboretum because the Education Center is a revenue producing area.

Mr. Tepper asked if the closeout related to the Visitor Center was truly not needed? Mr. Casolo replied that at this time it is not needed and that the priority is the Education Center Project.

After a short discussion, Mrs. Dell moved to recommend approval of the Supplemental Capital Request. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 4-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman and Tepper)

Mr. Hill announced that for the record, the Board had no objection to the Capital Closeout request.

***Capital Budget FY 2010/11-2017:***

Mr. Stein explained that there were three main topics to discuss related to the Capital budget. The first was the actual requests as listed in the 12/9/09 draft; the second, was

draft budget message and lastly, how to react to the newspaper article on the Board's alleged violation of the Charter.

#### Requests in Numbers in 12/9/09 Draft

Mr. Stein explained changes made to the request made for the Mill River project and distributed a map to the Board. He described the responsibilities of the Army Corps of Engineers versus those of the City. Mr. Stein explained that the purpose of the request was to facilitate the completion of this portion of the Park and that it will require a significant amount of work on the City's behalf. He explained that he decreased the original request of \$7.5 million when he heard the numbers for Safe Debt was \$40 million. Mr. Stein then explained that he has received subsequent calls wanting to put funding back into the project and suggested areas in which the Board could choose to reduce the budget to put funding back into Mill River. Those areas were: \$700K from the Rippowam School because the roof was under warranty; Environmental Stormwater compliance and Park & Field improvements.

Mr. Hill asked where the Planning Board's overall Budget total was. Mr. Tepper answered \$46,117,000. He then expressed his concern about making reductions from other projects because of the likelihood that the other boards will make additional cuts. Mr. Tepper then stated that Mill River is the most visible project in the City and he doesn't have any problem with adding onto the overall number.

Mr. Hill said that the Board could remove additional money from the areas previously noted by staff but that even with those reductions the overall Capital Budget would grow slightly.

Mr. Tepper again stated that other Boards are going to cut and that added to the Budget is not a problem because he believes the Board has developed a fairly conservative budget.

Mrs. Dell suggested that the Board reduces funds as follows: \$700K Rippowam, \$200K from Environmental Compliance Stormwater and \$300K from Parks & Fields.

Mr. Hill stated that getting \$1.5 million back into the Mill River would be a more significant amount and added that the Board needed to find \$300K from somewhere.

Mr. Tepper suggested that the Board take another \$100K out of Environmental compliance and push it into an out year and possibly take more from the Parks.

#### Draft Budget Message

Mr. Stein and the Board discussed the Draft Budget message.

Mr. Hill distributed draft language which modified Staff's introduction paragraph.

Mr. Tepper suggested amending this to include language that included the phrase we hope the final number doesn't go below the \$40 million safe debt limit. He also noted that statement appears to be more aggressive in than in the past.

Mrs. Fishman then suggested some additional corrections to the Draft Budget Message.

#### Stamford Advocate Article Discussion

Mrs. Dell said all the Board members were upset at how the situation has unfolded. She exclaimed that she was insulted because the Board put in long hours in preparing the budget and they have to find out about future meetings and policy in the newspaper.

Mr. Hill said they haven't gotten anything official about requesting a joint Board of Finance, Planning Board meeting but that if he does, he will write a memo stating the Planning Board procedures have been properly complied with. He added that all of the Board's meetings are open to the public and that as a practical matter it is impossible to do Capital Budget reviews in a single meeting. Mr. Hill made it clear that he will assure that the point is made that the Planning Board has complied with the City Charter.

Mrs. Dell stated that if they do nothing, the Planning Board will look like idiots since the matter was in the paper. Mr. Hill assured the Board that if they receive a request to meet, the Board will respond.

Mr. Tepper said if Corporate Counsel decides the Planning Board has not followed the City Charter, the Planning Board can make changes for Capital Budget review process for next year.

Mr. Hill said he would call Corporate Counsel and also speak with the Mayor.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Tepper discussed a report from SWRPA about becoming potentially becoming a COG.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Hill adjourned the meeting at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Duane Hill, Chairman

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