

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING MINUTES # 3598
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2010
4TH FLOOR CAFETERIA
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Theresa Dell, Claire Fishman, Michael Totilo, Roger Quick, Jay Tepper and Zbigniew Naumowicz. Present for staff were Robin Stein and Erin McKenna.

Public Hearing

The Chair, Mrs. Theresa Dell, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MP 413 - STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD, to consider a proposed amendment to the Master Plan, Citywide Policies Report of the City of Stamford, CT. The proposed amendment is a combination of existing objectives/policies and new initiatives now codified under one section: Sustainability. "Sustainability is a process of continuous, ongoing improvement, and a realignment of community goals and practices to grow in a more responsible and resilient manner." Included are the following sections: Land Use & Transportation, Energy & Climate, Open Space & Natural Resource Management, Infrastructure & City Services, New Construction & Existing Buildings, Adaptation & Mitigation, and Community Involvement & Education.

The Secretary Clair Fishman read the legal notice into the records, followed by a reading of the staff report by Land Use Bureau Chief, Robin Stein.

A number of people spoke in support of the Master Plan Amendment on Sustainability, and several offered suggestions for modifications to the draft amendment:

- Bill Hennessey, Sandak Hennessey & Greco (and on behalf of Rick Redniss, Redniss & Mead)
Mr. Hennessey provided a copy of the amendment with suggested changes inserted in red for later review by the Planning Board and Land Use Bureau staff. He said that the amendment will keep Stamford in the forefront of sustainability issues. He worried, however, that the "scorecard" described in 1.A.2. would be onerous for developers, suggested that automobile efficiencies like car sharing should not be ignored, and said the importance of landscape architects mentioned in 1.A.2. should not be featured above that of other professionals like mechanical engineers.
- David Kooris, Regional Plan Association – CT Office
Mr. Kooris said that the amendment helps Stamford maintain its leadership role in environmental issues. He said that it is necessary to incorporate sustainability objectives and strategies directly in the City's Master Plan rather than in a separate document, as is typically done in other municipalities. As one of the consultants who developed the "scorecard" mentioned in 1.A.2., he assured Mr. Hennessey that it would not be onerous for developers, as it would be filled out by City staff and would simply be used to reward particularly sustainable projects.
- Cynthia Reeder, Historic Neighborhood Preservation Program
While supportive of the amendment generally, Ms. Reeder pointed out that there is no reference in it either to preservation or historic buildings, and there should

be. She argued that the removal/demolition of buildings over preserving them is often an unnecessarily wasteful practice.

- Kristine D'Elisa, R.S. Granoff Architects/Sustainable Stamford/ Southwestern CT Green Building Council/Glenbrook Neighborhood Association
Ms. D'Elisa spoke in favor of the amendment, emphasizing that the objectives and strategies are proactive and show great forethought on the part of the City.
- John Dunster, Green Energy Institute
Mr. Dunster suggested that adding a strategy to Section G about creating a "show house" for sustainability.
- Sue Sweeney, downtown resident
As a resident of downtown who relies on public transportation, Ms. Sweeney urged the adoption of the amendment. She also provided a number of suggested improvements on the topics of supporting the needs of the middle class, low income housing, encouraging the use of public transit, managing open space effectively, and improving recycling in multi-family dwellings.
- Megan Baroni, Robinson & Cole
Ms. Baroni said that the City has already thoroughly vetted the proposal and urged officials not to weaken the amendment.

After thanking the speakers, Mr. Stein made some general comments:

- Historic preservation is already addressed elsewhere in the current Master Plan.
- The Land Use Bureau has been working on the "scorecard" with the Regional Plan Association and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, and a lot of research has gone into it. As Mr. Kooris explained, it would not be an onerous mandate.
- A "show house" would be a real community resource.
- After speaking with Rick Redniss prior to the Public Hearing, Mr. Stein agreed on the points about ride sharing and other topics. He disagreed, however, on the point about landscape architects, because the Planning Board routinely looks at site plans where the landscaping is given "short shrift." And he reiterated that LEED is the only building rating system with third party review, and that is why it was referenced in the draft amendment.

The Chairman, Mrs. Dell thanked the staff, Robin Stein and Erin McKenna, for their work in developing the amendment and also thanked Erin's husband Nigel Holmes for preparing the graphics.

There being no further members of the public wishing to speak on the application, The Chairman closed the Public Hearing on application MP413 at 8:30 PM.

Regular Meeting

The first item discussed was the review of the 2022/12 Capital Budget. Mr. Stein reported on the actions taken by the Board last week resulting in a net budget figure of \$36,417,374. It was agreed that the Board would make reference to the equipment and vehicles moved to the short term accounts, in the budget message. It was also agreed to reference projects that bring in revenue, projects that rank low on the rating but could be completed in a year and the infrastructure needs of some of the outside agencies.

Mrs. Fishman urged the Board to include \$70,000 for the Digital Video Security System at the South End Branch and the Harry Bennett Branch. The Board agreed to move this item up to FY 2011/2012. Mrs. Dell and Mr. Stein explained that they had been unable to get further clarification on the status of approved projects that were not included in the \$35 million bond issue. The Board members expressed concern over trying to develop a "priority" list of projects not to exceed \$20 million. It was agreed that the Chairman should meet with the Mayor to review this and other issues relating to the capital budget.

Following a discussion on the Capital Budget, the Board approved the following sets of minutes:

- Meeting of 6/1/10
- Meeting of 9/28/10
- Meeting of 10/5/10
- Meeting of 10/19/10
- Meeting of 10/26/10

There being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Dell adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theresa Dell, Chairman
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.