

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING MINUTES #3539
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13th, 2009
4TH FLOOR CAFETERIA
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

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

The Chairman, Mr. Duane Hill, called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Lease Agreements

Lease between City & Vincent Gilleski (dba CT Quality Transmissions, Inc.) for City lot adjacent to 80 Magee Ave.

Ben Barnes, Director of Operations, described the lease as essentially \$285.00 a month for a small parcel that was used for vehicle storage. Mrs. Dell moved to recommend approval of the lease. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso & Tepper)

Lease between Congressman James Himes & City for Office Space in Government Center.

Ben Barnes, Director of Operations, described the lease. He explained that it was for 10th Floor office space in the Government Center. Mr. Barnes stated that it was the space formerly occupied by Congressman Chris Shays and that the City was trying to get as close to market value as it could on a dollar per square foot basis. Mr. Raduazzo moved to recommend approval of the lease. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso & Raduazzo)

Lease between City & U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Office Space in the Government Center.

Ben Barnes, Director of Operations, described the lease. He stated that the current US EPA has offices on the 6th floor of Government Center, however, since the assessor's office keeps growing, needs to be moved to the 9th floor. Mr. Barnes explained that the cost of the office reconstruction would be about \$71,000 and paid back over a 5 year period. Mrs. Grosso moved to recommend approval of the lease. Mrs. Dell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso & Tepper)

The Chairman, Mr. Duane Hill, adjourned the rest of the Regular Meeting to conduct the Public Hearing. He called the Public Hearing to order at 7:45 pm and introduced the members of the Board and Staff. Mr. Hill then explained the process by which the Public Hearing was to be conducted.

Master Plan Amendment

MP-402 Richard Redniss to amend a portion of the Master Plan Map from Land Use Category 6 – Commercial – Neighborhood Business to Land Use Category 4 – Residential – Medium Density Multifamily.

Mrs. Gross read the legal notice into the record. Mr. Dumais read the following summary of the staff report:

"The above-referenced application, submitted by Richard Redniss on behalf of Charter Oak Communities to the City of Stamford Planning Board seeks to amend the Master Plan Map for an area on the north side of Stillwater Avenue from Land Use Category 6 (Commercial - Neighborhood) to Land Use Category 4 (Residential – Medium Density Multifamily). The area is approximately 1.35 acres. The area lies entirely within Master Plan Category 6 and the C-N (Neighborhood Business District) zone and consists of eight (8) parcels having addresses of 195, 197, 201, 207, 211, 215 Stillwater Avenue and 0 and 1 Colahan Street. The stated purpose of the Master Plan Map Change is to place the property into Master Plan Category 4 (Residential – Medium Density Multifamily). The applicant states that this Master Plan amendment is the first step in the Vidal Court revitalization which will create a new mixed-income community along Merrell Avenue and Stillwater Avenue, consisting of a variety of apartments, townhouses and ground floor retail. The current Master Plan Category and zoning designations prohibit residential density at the level needed for the Vidal Court revitalization and necessitate both this Master Plan Change application and the pending Zoning Map amendment application to change the property to R-M-F (Multiple Family Residence Design District). The Vidal Court revitalization project promotes the goals of the Master Plan by addressing Objective A1 – "Undertake a multifaceted approach to preserve existing and create new affordable housing" and Objective A2 – "Undertake a multi-faceted approach to promoting neighborhood stabilization", through strategies such as; A1.5 – "Promote the development of a variety of housing types" and A2.3 "Pursue homeownership as well as rental housing." In addition to promoting the overall goals of the Master Plan, this application promotes many of the goals and strategies outlined in the West Side Neighborhood plans report such as; 2A1 "Promote neighborhood revitalization in the South End, Westside and West Side," 2B1 "Promote contextual housing development and 2C7 "Promote "Main Street development along Stillwater Avenue." Given the number of goals and objectives of the Master Plan that this application will help facilitate and the positive impact it will likely have on the neighborhood, this application warrants favorable consideration by the Board."

Mr. Richard Redniss, the applicant and planner for Charter Oak Communities, described the application. He began by providing an overview of what the Stamford Housing Authority, now Charter Oak Communities, has done in the West Side Neighborhood over the past 12 years. He stated that the Vidal Court revitalization project before the Board was in 3 portions; the Planning Board application for a Master Plan map amendment; the Zoning Board application for a Zoning Map change and the Zoning Board application for a text amendment. Mr. Redniss then passed out and described several exhibits to the Board which depicted existing conditions of the area, the proposed site plans, the proposed building elevations and the proposed text and map changes. He added that this was being done in a broader context with the Stamford Hospital and was in conformance with prior Master Plans and neighborhood plans.

Several Board members expressed their concerns with aspects of the text change applications, specifically the open space changes. Mr. Tepper stated that SWRPA had concerns which could be addressed by adding the words in the City of Stamford to the proposed offsite open space text. Mr. Stein noted that he had issues with the language "the Planning Board approves lot lines" and recommend it be taken out. He also asked Mr. Vin Tufo to explain the timing of the projects.

Mr. Tufo, of Charter Oak Communities, explained the financing and timing of applications for the Vidal Court project.

Mr. Hill stated that an explanation of a broader plan for the neighborhood would be helpful to the Board to understand the context and strategy of the project. He then asked for any members of the public wishing to speak in favor of the application. Matthew Rier, treasurer of the West Side NRZ stated his support for the application. Mr. Hill then asked if there were any members of the public wishing to speak in opposition to the application. No one came forward. Mr. Hill then asked if there were any members of the public wishing to speak neither in favor of, nor in opposition to the application. Kathy Walsh of the Stamford Partnership agreed that additional neighborhood context would be helpful but stated she was in support of the limited application.

Mr. Hill closed the hearing on application MP 402 and stated that the Board would deliberate on the matter at its next meeting.

Subdivision

Subdivision #3981, Cytec Industries, Inc. For subdivision of property into 3 parcels. The property is located at the northeast intersection of Alvord lane and West Main Street having an address of 1937 West Main Street.

Mr. Craig Flarethy, principle at Redniss & Mead described the subdivision. He explained that the subdivision process mandates open space and that the EPB recommended both conservation easement and landscape maintenance agreements as part of any approval. Mr. Stein added historical context of Ferindino Report and how something like Cytec's proposal is what was envisioned in the report.

Mr. Hill asked if there were any members of the public wishing to speak in favor of the application. Greg Mercede, neighbor at 76 Progress Drive, spoke in support of the application. Mr. Hill then asked if there were any members of the public wishing to speak in opposition to the application. No one came forward. Mr. Hill then asked if there were any members of the public wishing to speak neither in favor of, nor in opposition to the application. No one came forward.

The Chairman, Mr. Duane Hill, closed the Public hearing at 8:47 pm and called the Regular Meeting back to order.

2009/10-2016 Capital Budget & Capital Program Review

Mr. Stein discussed the changes to the Capital Budget and stated he hoped the Board could vote on the recommended draft. The Board discussed the budget changes. Mrs. Dell moved approval of the draft Capital Budget. Mrs. Grosso seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso & Raduazzo)

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes of December 9th, 2008

Mrs. Dell moved approval of the meeting minutes. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso & Tepper)

Minutes of December 16th, 2008

Mr. Tepper moved approval of the meeting minutes. Mrs. Dell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the eligible members present (Tepper, Dell and Hill) voting, 3-0.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

None.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 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 7th floor of Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, during regular business hours.