

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES #3542
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17th, 2009
7TH FLOOR CONFERENCE AREA
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

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

Regular Meeting

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

Kip Bergstrom, Urban Redevelopment Director, “Re-inventing Stamford”

Mr. Kip Bergstrom, URC Director, explained the “Re-inventing Stamford” concept and passed out two summaries to the Board. He stated that the point is that the world is changing so fast and it is important to understand the changes as a community. Through civic conversation, people take ownership of ideas, Mr. Bergstrom explained. He added that on March 24 he wanted to have the first conversation at the Palace Theatre and sees this as an opportunity to attack the recession and hopes that the Planning Board will agree to be a co-convenor of the event.

Mr. Tepper said that he was concerned that too large a group of people would defeat the purpose. To which Mr. Bergstrom replied the first event would be a series of roundtable discussions with eight to ten people at each table. He further explained that the co-convening chairs would invite ten people and that the entire event would be semipublic.

Mr. Hill encouraged the Board to read Mr. Bergstrom’s piece and pass along their thoughts and ideas.

Subdivision #3984, Elm Street Corp., 2 lots, 695 East Main Street.

Mr. Stein briefly described the application to the Board, stating that the application looks more complicated than it really is. He explained that this was the Gen Re property and was essentially a lot consolidation and re-subdivision which would result in two lots. Mr. Stein added that the applicant had nothing presently planned for the site. He noted that if the Board should choose to approve the subdivision he had prepared the following list of conditions of approval:

1. Delineation of “Open Space Preserve / Conservation Area” – to be maintained in a natural state except as may be authorized by the Environmental Protection Board. The area so designated is 24,131 square feet and is shown on a map with a revision date of December 17, 2008 on file in the Planning Board office.
2. Filing of a standard “Conservation Easement Agreement” to include the area designated as “Open Space Preserve / Conservation Area.” At the time of filing of the final subdivision map, this Area shall be field staked with iron pipes at all property boundaries and turning points of the easement boundary
3. New in-ground fuel tanks shall be prohibited (note to appear on final map).

4. In accordance with CGS 8-26c, approval shall expire on February 20, 2014, unless all "work" as said term is defined in CGS 8-26c(b), has been completed by said date (note to appear on final map).
5. Subdivision reference number to be placed on final map.

Mr. Tepper moved approval of the subdivision subject to the five conditions discussed. Mrs. Grosso seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso and Tepper)

Zoning Board Referrals:

ZB 209-02 Hebrew Congregation Agudath Sholom, special exception, to construct addition to synagogue, adjust lot line & reaffirm use of property for educational purposes.

Mr. Dumais described the application to the Board. He explained that this property came before the Board a little more than a year ago for a Master Plan map amendment and a Zoning map amendment. At the time, the property was in multiple Master Plan and Zoning categories and the applicant sought to place it into one category, Mr. Dumais added. He then stated that the current referral before the Board is for a Special exception to reaffirm the ZBA's previous school use approval for the site, for a small 1300+/- s.f. addition to the synagogue and for a lot line readjustment.

After several questions from the Board about the present and future use of the school building on the site, Mrs. Dell moved to recommend approval of the special exception. Mr. Raduazzo seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso and Raduazzo)

FY2009/10-2016 Capital Budget & Program

Mr. Stein began the discussion by discussing the email he sent to the Board which summarized the additional requests and requests for project elimination received during the Public Hearing on the budget. He also explained that he sent the information to Ben Barnes who spoke with the Mayor on the requests and they both felt the Police Department plan was appropriate and that it would be appropriate to put \$500,000 into the budget for the architectural plans.

Mr. Hill then addressed the Board and asked their opinion on trying to do something to accommodate the Police Department request and how to best add in an additional \$500,000 into the budget. Mr. Tepper commented that the Board's total amount in the Budget was not sacrosanct and he had no problem adding in the additional \$500,000. He added that this is the plan for the City and their job was to not set spending priorities but to set priorities for the City's needs. Mrs. Fishman stated that she didn't believe the board should cut any items.

Mr. Hill disagreed. He stated that while their role is as planners, they must take their decisions into a broader financial and political context. Mr. Hill suggested that the Board look to find appropriate places to cut \$500,000 from the budget to make room for the Police Department request. The Board members agreed and began to look for places in the budget in which to make cuts.

Mr. Stein suggested that the Board could reduce the request for Boyle Stadium by \$350,000 this year and put it into next year. The Board members agreed.

Mr. Hill then suggested that \$150,000 be taken from the park and field improvements. He then stated that this along with the Boyle Stadium reduction would make room for the \$500,000 Police Department request. The rest of the Board members agreed.

The Board commented that the Stamford Center for the Arts requests should be done as supplement requests and not included in this Budget. Mr. Stein noted that he would include this in the new transmittal letter.

Mrs. Dell moved approval of the FY 2009 Capital Budget and 2010-2016 Capital Program with the adjustments discussed. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting, 5-0. (Hill, Dell, Fishman, Grosso and Tepper)

Old Business

None

New Business

Mr. Stein informed the Board that they would be meeting next week to hear a number Public Hearing applications; one subdivision and possibly two Master Plan amendments.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 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.