

MINUTES OF PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC
HEARING #3460 THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2006,
4TH FLOOR CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD, STAMFORD, CT

Present for the Board were: Duane Hill, Chairman; John Garnjost; Theresa Dell; Claire Fishman; Jeffrey Curtis; and Jay Tepper. Present for staff: Robert M. Stein, Jr., Land Use Bureau Chief.

The Chairman, Mr. Hill, opened the meeting at 7:05 PM. Mrs. Dell read the legal notices for both applications.

Master Plan Applications:

- a) **MP-389 – Antares Stamford Waterfront Manager LLC, Antares Walter Wheeler Drive SPE, LLC, Antares Yale & Town SPE, LLC, 52 Mason Street, Greenwich, CT to amend a portion of the Master Plan. Present Master Plan Land Use Category #15 INDUSTRIAL-General. Proposed Master Plan Land Use Category #12 MIXED-USE-Overlay.**
- b) **MP-390 - Antares Stamford Waterfront Manager LLC, Antares Walter Wheeler Drive SPE, LLC, the Strand/BRC Group, LLC, 52 Mason Street, Greenwich, CT to amend a portion of the Master Plan. Present Master Plan Land Use Category #13 MIXED-USE-Shorefront. Proposed Master Plan Land Use Category #12 MIXED-USE-Overlay.**

Since the two applications were related, Mr. Hill asked that the presentation consider both. Attorney William Hennessey, Andy Altman, and Katherine Madden presented the application. Mr. Hennessey explained that it was a large and transformative project equal in scope to the original Downtown URC Project. However, unlike the URC Project, the Antares development of 80 acres was a totally private project with no residential dislocation and limited commercial displacement. They estimated that it would take 10-12 years to complete the project. They reviewed the existing uses and the brownfields condition of the sites. They explained that the “Admiral Wharf” land is cut off from access to the water by the hurricane barrier and therefore is not a water dependent site. However, the applicant plans to enhance the public access to the water above that which was approved for the original Admiral Wharf project.

Mr. Altman explained that the applicant hopes to connect both to the Downtown and to Long Island Sound with the proposed development. They also hope to provide a model of smart growth and transit oriented development. He noted that most of the proposed development is within a 10 minute walking distance of the Transportation Center and that the center of Downtown was moving south toward the Transportation Center. He also said that the proposal consisted of a variety

of mixed-use developments and was based on the master Plan's "city beautiful" concept with open space and pedestrian oriented corridors.

Ms. Madden stated that the development proposal was supportive of major infrastructure investments including the Transportation Center and the Urban Transitway. She said the goal was to enhance the civic realm, provide for diversity, connectivity, and walkable environment. She added that there were significant challenges to be overcome including existing brownfields, adjacent noxious uses, access under the RR/I-95, lack of amenities and use/density restrictions. She provided examples of development from other cities including Providence, Portland (Maine), Richmond, Savannah, Charlestown, Watertown and Pittsburg.

Mr. Altman stated that the proposed development was all oriented around new and connected open space. He said that they were proposing five distinct neighborhoods. Regarding the Yale and Towne area, he added that it was not on the waterfront and was surrounded by industrial uses. He said that they therefore needed to create an attractive mixed-use community and that housing alone would not be successful. This would have to include a critical mass of services and retail. They hope to preserve the Henry Street buildings. Regarding the "Harbor Point Square" on the waterfront they hope to have mixed-use neighborhoods with attractions during the day and evening. He added that they planned to turn the Hurricane Barrier into an asset by providing access and views to the water. Mr. Altman added that they planned on developing 6 million square feet with 4,000 housing units, 900,000 square feet of commercial space including retail, hotel and office. They will also provide a 1.5 acre school site and are trying to purchase the B and S Carting property.

Phil McCain, President of CTE, spoke in support of the proposal. He said that the development proposed is comprehensive, provides links to the Downtown, meets the objectives of the South End residents, and provides on-site affordable housing and retail for the residents and as destination retail.

Rev. Dick Schuster of St. Lukes Life Works also spoke in support. He said that the proposal conforms to the NRZ and is responsive to the needs of the community.

Joe McGee of the Business Council also spoke in support. He said that the development will help provide a balance between housing and jobs and will link Downtown to the South End. He added that developing the waterfront will provide quality of life amenities that are desired by the corporations.

Frank Mercede spoke in support saying that the proposed mixed use development would provide a sense of identity.

Three other members of the public also spoke in support.

Attorney John Leydon, representing Mario Lodato, spoke in opposition. He stated that the protection of the vitality of the Downtown was the key issue. He said that he was concerned over the amount, and type of retail proposed. He said that his client would oppose "destination" retail and that infill retail sites should be developed first.

Robert Wilson, architect, stated that although the plans proposed by Antares represented smart growth, he was concerned over the impact on the Downtown. He said that "destination" retail would hurt the Downtown.

Attorney Mike Cacace spoke in representation of the DSSD. He asked how the proposal complies with the Master Plan and Zoning Regulations. He said that the Antares proposal fails to promote flex space and clean industry as set forth in the Master Plan. He added that the Downtown does not extend into the South End and that the proposed retail could be counter to the goal of requiring significant retail to be developed in the Downtown. He concluded by saying that his client did not oppose the Antares development but was very concerned about the retail component.

Mr. Hennessey, in closing, stated that proposed are Master Plan and not zoning amendments. He said that the proposal complies with the Master Plan objectives.

The Chairman, Mr. Hill, stated that the hearing would be continued to October 3, 2006 at the same time in the Government Center cafeteria.

There being no additional business the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Duane Hill, Chairman

Note: These proceedings were recorded on tape and are available for review during regular business hours.