

MINUTES OF PLANNING BOARD REGULAR
MEETING #3461 TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2006
7TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM, GOVERNMENT
CENTER, 888 WASHINGTON BLVD., 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 7:30 PM.

Master Plan Applications:

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.

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.

Mr. Stein introduced the Planning consultants, John Shapiro, Charles Starks and Rob Lane (Preiss, Phillips and Shapiro, and Regional Plan Association). Mr. Starks reviewed the Memo the consultants had prepared that examined the issues relating to the Antares proposed development in the South End. John Shapiro stated that the MOD (MP Category #13) required a higher level of planning to meet the objectives of the Master Plan. He said that among the key issues were:

1. Retail—amount and type
2. Demand on community services
3. Infrastructure requirements
4. Quality of the Amenities

He further reviewed the need to analyze the urban design, streetscape, access to the waterfront, parks/open space, classroom space needs, linkages to the train station and downtown, density and intensity of development, environmental sustainability, brownfields, preservation of cultural facilities. He added that the B & S Carting site was the “lynchpin” of the South End. In addition the applicant should provide information on the cost, timing of the infrastructure improvements as well as a cost sharing plan.

Rob Lane said that the proposed plan acknowledges the key linkages to the Downtown and waters edge. He said that the plan failed to explain how it would propose the adaptive reuse of industrial properties and that it did not appear to meet the Master Plan objective of stepping down in density from north to south. He said that it was important to see the relationship to the Transitway. The applicant should also explain who is paying for the corridor and open space improvements. He suggested that the open space/parks should be deeded over to the City and questioned whether the "tear drop" park would be sufficiently inviting to the residents of the South End.

Mr. Lane emphasized the importance of developing design guidelines and a review process. He cited Vancouver as an example of good design.

Mr. Hill stated that there was no current mechanism in place for design review. Rob Lane mentioned Battery City which had detailed design guidelines and an independent review body.

Mr. Garnjost and Mr. Tepper asked about infrastructure needs and costs. Mr. Shapiro suggested that a fiscal impact study could be commissioned to evaluate the costs once the applicant and city agreed upon the infrastructure needs and timing.

Mr. Tepper and Mrs. Dell asked about the potential retail impacts on the downtown and other neighborhoods. Mr. Shapiro stated that the proposed amount of retail space, 500,000 was equal to a small downtown. He added that size of the retail uses is probably more important than the specific uses, since retail is constantly changing. In addition the board will have to understand the implementation of two separate retail centers. He said that should there remain a gap between the retail concerns of the downtown and the Antares' proposal; the Planning Board should consider commissioning an independent retail market study to help mediate the differences. He added that given the investment and land necessary to develop a large scale retail center, it would be unlikely that a precedent would be set for such centers in other neighborhoods.

MP-388 - Proposed Text Change upon application of Stillwater Partners, LLC., AT. AL.

Mr. Stein reviewed the testimony provided at the Public Hearing. Mr. Garnjost expressed concern as to whether housing would in fact enhance existing industrial uses. Mrs. Dell said that the amendment could lead to the erosion of the few existing industrial sites. The Board members suggested that the language be modified to read "Infilling new residential development may be allowed by Special Exception by the Zoning Board where it serves to promote the maintenance and viability of existing industrial/flex type uses." Mr. Curtis moved to approve the amendment as modified. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed four to one with Mr. Hill, Mr. Garnjost, Mrs. Fishman, Mr. Curtis voting in favor and Mrs. Dell opposed.

Minutes for Approval January 31, 2006

Mr. Garnjost moved to add this item to the Agenda. Mrs. Dell seconded the motion and it passed with all members voting except for Mr. Curtis.

Mrs. Dell moved to approve. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed with Mrs. Dell, Mr. Garnjost, Mrs. Fishman, Mr. Tepper and Mr. Curtis voting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted
Duane Hill, Chairman

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