

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING**  
**CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT**  
**URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2008**

1. At 8:35am, Chairman Stephen C. Osman called the special meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Commissioners:

Stephen C. Osman, Chairman  
James I. Nixon, Vice Chairman  
Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer  
Edward J. Fuhrman  
Robert S. Robins

Staff:

Gerrie Post, Executive Director  
Rachel Goldberg, General Counsel  
Durelle Alexander

Also Attending:

John L. Lindell, F.D. Rich Company  
Chris Cerreta, F.D. Rich Company  
Attorney Michael J. Cacace, Cacace, Tusch & Santagata  
Attorney Donald R. Gustafson, Shipman & Goodwin

2. Southeast Quadrant

- (a) **Park Square West Phase II** – No report at this time. A Design Sub-Committee meeting with Corcoran Jennison is scheduled for 1:00pm today.
- (b) **Re-Use Parcel 36** - Attorney Michael Cacace addressed the Commission regarding the zoning applications. Attorney Cacace said, “When we went before the Zoning Board several months ago with the plan approved by the Commission, there was push-back from the Zoning Board on three main issues: (i) the size of the proposal; (ii) the height of the proposal; and, (iii) the parking as it related to the overall layout and design of the building. The proposal before you today is substantially different than the original in terms of addressing these three issues while retaining some of the creative aspects of the original proposal. Specifically, the height on the proposal that’s being presented is well over 100 feet shorter. Secondly, although the housing density at approximately 50 units is about the same, they are much smaller units – more in the 500 square foot average per unit range – which addresses one of the concerns of the Zoning Board. They felt that some of the larger two and three bedroom units in the original proposal lent themselves to having more than one vehicle by the occupants of those units with a greater likelihood that one or more of those vehicles might remain parked during the day when there was to be shared parking between the commercial portion of the building and the residential. Third, as to the parking, I would note that we have fewer units, we have smaller units, and yet we’re maintaining the same amount of available parking spaces.” Attorney Cacace noted that the number of parking spaces that would be available during the day and at night is substantially more than the demand that their parking expert (Tighe & Bond) and Pro-Park, their proposed operator, indicate will be needed. He continued, “I think the Zoning Board’s primary issue was with the logistics of how the cars would be parked and the mechanics of moving these cars around during peak hours.”

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The Zoning Board also expressed concern that there would be back-up generators for the elevator service since this would be an entirely valet/elevator-operated building in terms of its parking. In response, Attorney Cacace said, "We are prepared to put this into the zoning regulations as a requirement."

Attorney Goldberg noted that she had asked for a copy of the revised draft of the zoning text/language in advance of today's Commission meeting. Mr. Lindell responded, "It is being revised and edited and we will get it to you as soon as it is completed." Attorney Goldberg also noted that the Commission had asked for evidence that this revised scheme had financing, which has not been provided.

Mr. Lindell showed a new rendering of the proposed project, "The Luxe," located at the corner of East Main and Greyrock. He said, "It's about 130 feet shorter than the last project – 163 feet to the top. The base of the building is exactly the same configuration, layout and use with a residential lobby, a commercial lobby and retail space on the ground floor. There is valet circulation under the building and two car elevators with three floors of parking that contain 97 parking spaces in total. Above the parking are two office floors and the amenity floor, which remain exactly the same. Above this are 50 units that average approximately 500 to 515 square feet – a mix of studios and one bedrooms. We made the units small for two reasons: (i) in the current market, we feel there is a demand for studios and ones; and, (ii) it addresses the Zoning Board's parking concern that the two and three bedroom units would call for more than 1.25 cars. The balconies on the upper floors have been eliminated. Other than that, the façade and all the materials remain exactly the same from our first presentation." Chairman Osman asked, "Could you put in balconies?" Mr. Lindell responded, "Realistically, no. The way you add balconies is to pull the building in and if you do that, you lose units."

Commissioner Fuhrman asked, "If you take this new project back to the Zoning Board, do you think you've addressed all their fundamental issues and concerns?" Attorney Cacace responded, "There were a number of miscellaneous comments during the Zoning Board's discussion that I would classify as 'second tier' concerns which we think we have addressed. One Zoning Board member did mention they would like to eliminate the commercial space. In response, I can tell you that it is the commercial portion of the building that drives the project financially. Another concern was the methodology of computing the housing density and how that affects the Below Market Rate (BMR) calculation and computation. We proposed an alternate scheme for that and received positive feedback at staff level. Issues like this have been addressed. This is a substantially reduced project in terms of density and, frankly, I think the Zoning Board will like it." Mr. Lindell added, "Following discussions with the City's Principal Planner Norman Cole regarding BMR, we have offered 110% of the requirement either on-site or fee in lieu of to satisfy the increased density requirement for the BMR units. Discussions and refinement of the actual language are on-going."

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Commissioner Fuhrman noted that the developer now has the option to market the project as either condos or rental apartments. Mr. Lindell said the reason for this option is to give them more flexibility in financing the project. Attorney Goldberg said, "We've previously asked for information about the demographics and your marketing plan; specifically, who would be occupying these units if they're for sale or rental, what is their income range, are they people who work in Stamford? Where do you see the market for this project?" Mr. Lindell responded, "Chris Ceretta did an informal market study to determine Stamford's rental market and for-sale market. He asked questions such as what are your fastest sellers? If you built a new building, what would you build? What size units, what mix of units? The biggest demand seems to be for smaller units and we found that some people who are currently renting one bedroom apartments in Stamford would rather be in studios. As for the demographics, I can't really answer that now." Executive Director Post asked, "What's your apartment mix? How many studios, how many one bedrooms?" Mr. Lindell responded, "Depending on what happens with elevator shafts, etc., there might be eight studios and two or three one-bedrooms per floor."

Executive Director Post asked, "How are you going to deal with parking? If you sell these units, will they be allocated one space each? Two people living in either a studio or one bedroom could have two cars. How will you handle this?" Mr. Lindell responded, "The last calculations by ITE that we used took a very conservative approach and found that the average is approximately one and a half spaces across the building. Tighe & Bond surveyed every single apartment building and every condo in Stamford and they found the parking demand across the board for units is less than one space."

Attorney Goldberg asked, "Did you look at reframing a 35-unit project in this volume, perhaps reducing the building height and having fewer floors with a more traditional arrangement?" Mr. Lindell responded, "We did look at other mixes of sizes of the building and how many units would be in the building. Fifty units is the number that really works for us and we believe this new plan with the revisions presented here today addresses the concerns of the Zoning Board."

Attorney Goldberg reiterated her belief that the Redeveloper had misread/misunderstood the Zoning Board and that, in her opinion, this proposal was very unlikely to gain Zoning Board approval.

Discussion ensued. Attorney Goldberg explained that F.D. Rich needs the authority to go to the Zoning Board with the revised project. She added, "There is a contract project that's still pending at the Zoning Board. We need to be clear that we are not, by our action today, in any way modifying the contract as it exists or the project identified in the contract. If this project is ultimately approved, we will have to go back to the Board of Representatives and the Board of Finance to have the contract amended." Commissioner Robins asked for clarification of the contract issues.

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Attorney Goldberg explained that the existing contract requires that the Redeveloper will get zoning approvals for, and specifically build, a 35-unit project and a Zoning Board denial of the proposed 50-unit project would not affect these existing contractual obligations in any way; further, a 50-unit project would require an amendment to the three-party contract among the City, the URC and the Redeveloper.

Following further discussion and based upon Attorney Goldberg's description of the contract requirements, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to authorize the Redeveloper to seek Zoning Board approval for the 50-unit project presented on this date. If the Zoning Board approves this modified project, a contract amendment will be presented to the Board of Representatives and Board of Finance. If the Zoning Board denies the proposal, there will be no change in the contract. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Nixon left the meeting at 9:35AM.

3. Mill River Corridor

- (a) **Re-Use Parcel 21/Archstone** - No report at this time. It was noted that their current extension is up March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008.

4. Agency Administration

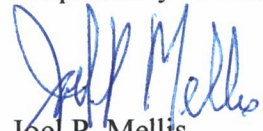
- (a) **Strategic Planning** – A special meeting, at a date to be determined, will be held to address this agenda item.

5. Adjournment

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 8, 2008 at 9:30am. This replaces the regular meeting scheduled for February 14, 2008. The March meeting date is changed from Thursday, March 13, 2008 to Wednesday, March 5, 2008 at 9:00am.

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Mellis made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 9:40am.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel P. Mellis  
Secretary/Treasurer

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**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**NOTICE**

A Special Meeting of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, Urban Redevelopment Commission, will be held in the Commission Offices on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, Connecticut, on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 8:30am.

**AGENDA:**

1. Roll Call
2. \*Southeast Quadrant
  - (a) Park Square West Phase II
  - (b) Re-Use Parcel 36
3. \*Mill River Corridor
  - (a) Re-Use Parcel 21
4. Agency Administration
  - (a) Strategic Planning
5. Adjournment
  - (a) Discussion – Next Meeting Agenda
  - (b) Confirmation – Next Meeting Date (Feb. 8, 2008 @ 9:30am)

*\*All or portions of this subject may require discussion in Executive Session.\**