

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2007

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

Commission:

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

Staff:

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

Other/UBS:

George V. Carey, Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate
Stephen Peters, Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate
Richard Schroeder, Senior Critical Systems Manager
Edward Kinsman, General Manager, Cushman & Wakefield at UBS
Michael S. Galle, Director Client Solutions, Cushman & Wakefield at UBS

Other/PSWII:

Marc J. Garofalo, Project Director, Corcoran Jennison
Jane Freeman, Esq., Cacace, Tusch & Santagata

Commissioner Mellis made a motion to address the agenda items out of order. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nixon and carried by unanimous vote.

4. Gateway District/Review of UBS Proposal – Attorney Goldberg reported that several months ago, the architects for UBS brought in proposed plans to expand the electrical and mechanical infrastructure at their 677 Washington Boulevard facility. She said, “The concern raised for me was the reduction/elimination of ground floor retail space that was originally planned for along North State Street in Phase I. The retail space has never been occupied but the Commission and the Downtown Special Services District had hoped this space would be used to create additional light and activity – eyes on the street – for the pedestrians walking from the train station down Washington Boulevard.”

Mr. Schroeder said, “UBS is in the process of completing the engineering design of the infrastructure upgrade, electrical and mechanical, that would basically increase the amount of capacity that we have for the building. What we have done during this design phase was allot some of our equipment to go into what is now slated as first floor retail space.” Chairman Osman asked, “Where would you put the electrical & mechanical equipment if you don’t put it there?” Mr. Schroeder responded, “That’s the problem. This is very large equipment and we can’t find another space to accommodate the amount and size of the equipment we are putting in.” Commissioner Mellis asked UBS to address the noise implications. It was noted that “this is a static system with a very light hum.” Attorney Goldberg asked, “Could you locate it on the Phase II (parking lot facing Atlantic Street) site?” Mr. Schroeder responded, “The problem there would be with the electrical distribution.”

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Commissioner Robins asked, "What due diligence have you done in investigating the prospects for effective commercial use of this retail area?" Mr. Galle responded, "This space was marketed from June or July of 2002 through mid-2004. It's a challenging retail spot because it's a one-way street and there is no parking available to the general public with that space. A lot of different people looked at it – a coffee shop, a furniture retail place, a couple different small financial/banking institutions – but it didn't work for them because of the parking restraints." It was noted that the space has not been on the market since 2004. Commissioner Mellis asked, "I am still puzzled that initially, it was designated for retail and nothing has changed over the last couple of years. What makes it undesirable now? Has there been a change of circumstances?" Mr. Galle responded, "Since 9/11, and the space was designated prior to that, there certainly is a security concern about locating directly under the UBS trading floor."

Mr. Galle noted that currently Morton's is in conversations with UBS to increase the amount of space they have. He said, "Morton's is now looking at coming in and changing their restaurant/bar space – opening it up and changing the décor so it's not really a men's room but geared more toward men, women and families." Attorney Goldberg asked, "Would they agree to make the façade more transparent? The difficulty we, the Commission and the City, have had in general with Morton's is that you don't see in or out and the louvered panels in some of the windows do not really allow any significant light onto the street." Mr. Galle responded, "We haven't seen the plans yet. They came in with a group of architects and it's our understanding that they want to lighten it up, change the décor and bring more light into the restaurant to provide a more inviting atmosphere."

Attorney Goldberg asked, "Is there any current information that you can share on a time-frame for Phase II?" Mr. Carey responded, "It's not on the horizon. We're leasing space in Stamford that's already been built in Stamford Forum and elsewhere." Chairman Osman asked, "Is there another space you could put retail?" Mr. Carey responded, "Not at this time." The Chairman continued, "When we approved UBS, I don't think we envisioned a non-active environment with someone coming from the train station walking all the way down the street before there is any light or retail activity. One of the planning goals for that area was to provide some activity so the pedestrians from the railroad station at night would feel more comfortable and to reduce those plans for activity is a concern for all of us."

Commissioner Robins asked, "Is there anything further you can say or do to alleviate our concerns?" Mr. Carey responded, "I can only say that we need the expansion that the equipment brings us. And this is the only thing we could come up with that doesn't interfere with the Phase II building when and if we build it." Attorney Goldberg asked, "Is there another way to create the façade although without the activity we had hoped for, but to provide light and interest?" Discussion ensued. Commissioner Robins said, "Perhaps you can do something to make that area that people walk along more attractive, put in more detail, things of interest that would make people feel more comfortable."

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It was the sense of the Board that UBS come back to the Commission with a proposal to open up and lighten the area without the retail element in place. Executive Director Post noted that there is a UBS Sub-Committee (Commissioners Fuhrman & Nixon). The Sub-Committee will schedule a meeting when UBS has something to present.

2. Southeast Quadrant

(a) **Park Square West Phase II Status Report** – It was noted that contract discussions are on-going. Executive Director Post reported that the PSW Sub-Committee is continuing to review the project and is not prepared to make a recommendation at this time. It was also noted that the Zoning Board has approved Park Square West's application for zoning relief.

At 9:20AM, Commissioner Fuhrman made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations re: Park Square West Phase II. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robins and carried by unanimous vote. Attorney Goldberg and Executive Director Post participated in the discussion. No motions were made and no votes were taken. At 10:35AM, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried by unanimous vote.

3. Mill River Corridor

(b) **Mill River Collaborative/Proposed Agency Contribution** – Discussion on a proposal submitted by Mill River Project Coordinator Milton Puryear was tabled at this time. The Chairman asked the Commission to think about a plaque recognizing the URC for its contributions to the Mill River Project, and where it might be placed. This item will be on next month's meeting agenda.


The remaining agenda items were tabled.

6. Adjournment

The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 8, 2007 at 6:00PM.

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 10:40AM.

Respectfully submitted,


Joel P. Mellis
Secretary/Treasurer

CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT, URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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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 9th Floor of the Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, Connecticut, on Thursday, February 8, 2007 at 8:30AM.

AGENDA:

1. Roll Call
2. *Southeast Quadrant
 - (a) Park Square West Phase II
 - (i) Status Report
3. *Mill River Corridor
 - (a) Archstone/Re-Use Parcel 21
 - (i) Status Report/Extension
 - (b) Mill River Collaborative
 - (i) Proposed Agency Contribution
4. *Gateway District
 - (a) Review of UBS Proposal
5. *Agency Administration
 - (a) Ratification of AHAC Mission Statement
6. Adjournment
 - (a) Discussion – Next Meeting Agenda
 - (b) Confirmation – Next Meeting Date

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