

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3rd, 2006

1. At 9:12AM, 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
Edward J. Fuhrman
Robert S. Robins

Staff:

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

Absent:

Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer

Other Attendees

Jeremy Wilkening, Project Director, Corcoran Jennison
Marc Garofalo, Project Director, Corcoran Jennison
Joe Schiffer, Herbert S. Newman & Partners, C-J Architect
Erin Hastings, Herbert S. Newman & Partners, C-J Architect
Greg Thompson, ICON Architecture, C-J Architect

2. Southeast Quadrant

- (a) **Park Square West Phase II/Review & Approve Schematic Design Plans** – Attorney Goldberg reminded the Board “this is decision-making time. In accordance with the extension granted, we need to approve or reject, approve in part, or reject in part, the proposed plans in writing by the close of business on Monday, October 9th.”

Mr. Wilkening said, “We’re going to present the changes to the retail plate, the interior, the trash, the loading and where that’s going, and the repercussions of moving things. Then we plan to talk about the exterior, the building itself, and the parking garage design revisions.”

Mr. Thompson said, “The last time we were here there were some comments about the ground floor plate of the building; specifically, having more transparency to the building and increasing the width of the retail exposure in the back of the building.” The architect showed a re-configured plan increasing the width of the lobby area and relocating the stairway to the front of the building. He continued, “What this has done is open up the south face of the building quite dramatically. Also, in increasing the width, we have introduced more glass on the south side of the building to increase the transparency through the building. By relocating that stairway, then we have the opportunity for the commercial tenant to potentially share the trash service entrance to the building.”

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Discussion ensued re: the service/loading area. It was the sense of the Board that the Redeveloper be required to submit an amended ground floor plan locating the retail loading area at the widest point to the east immediately adjacent to the residential trash and loading area.

The next issue addressed was the mezzanine. Mr. Thompson said, "Programmatically we need the mezzanine space although actually, it's a second floor, not really a mezzanine." Chairman Osman asked, "How high is the ceiling height of the first floor?" Mr. Thompson responded, "About 22-feet, but in the back portion where the services will be happening and where the second level above with some residential units is located, that ceiling is about 11-feet." Attorney Goldberg expressed concern about an 11-foot height. She said, "That whole southern wall is going to have trucks parked constantly all day long that are 13 or 14-feet high. You're going to defeat the whole objective of having the transparent glass because you are rarely going to be able to see through." The Chairman added, "As I recall, Herb Newman had proposed that we make this a place ... a significantly high place ... and this new proposal has negated the concept of a see-through, double height arcade." Executive Director Post asked, "What's the point of having this really nice see-through part of the building if it's not high enough to make it look like something unique?"

It was noted, for the record, that the Commission believes and asserts that what they approved in the conceptuials was a 22-foot floor-to-floor height. Discussion continued re: the height & usage of the mezzanine and the elimination of the original concept of an arcade. It was the sense of the Board that all plans showing a mezzanine level be rejected. Further, that the Commission has clearly verbalized the position that the ground floor must have a minimum floor-to-floor height of twenty-two (22) feet as shown in the approved Conceptual Plans & Schematic Design Documents identified in the LDA. The Commission also expressed a willingness to discuss using part of the mezzanine space as an exercise facility if the design were satisfactory. Commissioner Robins and Chairman Osman asked the architects (a) to locate a place they could visit to physically see what the proposed plans might look like, and (b) to put together a set of three-dimensional plans. It was noted that the current scheme is very similar in concept height-wise and width-wise to the Stamford Government Center Lobby and the second floor mezzanine.

Mr. Schiffer addressed issues pertaining to the façade of the building. He said, "This is the same image we had previously, but what we're showing here is the completion of the glass façade that wraps continuously around the west end of the building on the upper six stories." Attorney Goldberg asked, "What's happening at the top of the building?" Mr. Hastings responded, "A screen-like element, a large metal trim that creates a cornice – what you're looking at is a window-height (approximately 6-feet) of fencing around the open space/play areas on the roof."

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Chairman Osman said, "That was a significantly important concept of what that top was and I don't really see what it is. We'll have to take a closer look at that." Mr. Schiffer responded, "The details of that are still being developed. It's fundamentally a steel frame with aluminum wrapping, sub-divided into smaller panels." It was noted that the idea of the cornice was worked on by URC Design Advisor Alan Plattus. In response to the proposed changes, Chairman Osman advised Cor-Jen "when you change something, you have a responsibility to tell us." Attorney Goldberg added, "When you (the redeveloper) come back to us with design development drawings, you have an obligation contractually when you submit that set to tell us anything that's changed from whatever we approved."

Revised plans for the western elevation were not available. In this regard, the redeveloper verbally indicated that the top six floors of the west elevation façade would be treated with precisely the same wrap-around glass treatment as the north and south elevation facades. It was the sense of the Board that schematics/plans submitted to date which show the west elevation façade of the residential structure not be approved. The Commission also indicated that the re-designed grade-level west elevation façade must reflect a glass design similar to the other ground floor building elevations and that the balance of the west elevation façade should maximize the amount of glass.

Adding awnings to the ground level of the residential structure was also discussed. The redeveloper indicated its intent to incorporate the awning design on all four (4) sides of the residential structure. It was the sense of the Board that the redeveloper be required to submit documents incorporating the additional awning design and that schematics/drawings currently not indicating this change be rejected.

The final item addressed was the exterior design of the parking garage. Opening up the solid wall proposed on the southern exposure was discussed. Attorney Goldberg said, "If you move the property line ten (10) feet on the south side, the Building Code which requires that to be a solid wall won't be applicable." The Commission asked that the current design be modified to mirror the angled treatment at the top of the elevator and stair tower of the Summer Street Garage. It was the sense of the Board that the re-design also show a portion of the parking garage as having a glass façade. It was noted that, should the conflict with the abutting property owner be resolved before the pre-cast was ordered, portions of the southern facade of the garage be opened up to the greatest extent possible.

In response to questions from the redeveloper and the architects about the sequence of events and what would be happening next in terms of process, Attorney Goldberg said, "The Executive Director will take the Board's decisions today, draft the formal correspondence accepting in part or rejecting in part the schematic plans that have been submitted."

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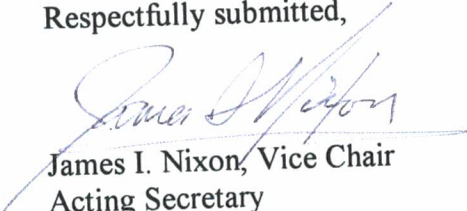
Attorney Goldberg continued, "The Board members will each see a copy of the correspondence and be polled for formal approval. When each of you sign off, the correspondence will be forwarded to Park Square West, to be received prior to close of business on Monday, October 9th. Cor-Jen will then submit the west elevation, in its entirety, and the garage reconfigured on the south side to show the openings we've discussed. From the time they submit that, we will have thirty (30) days to respond." Attorney Goldberg suggested that the Commission might want to retain its own consultant to review the submission at this time.

3. Adjournment

The regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 12, 2006 at 6:00PM is cancelled. There will be a special meeting on Tuesday, October 24, 2006 at 8:30AM.

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 11:17AM.

Respectfully submitted,


James I. Nixon, Vice Chair
Acting Secretary