

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2005

1. At 6:05PM, Chairman Stephen C. Osman called the regular meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Commissioners:

Stephen C. Osman, Chairman
James I. Nixon, Vice Chairman
Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer
Neal M. Jewell
Edward J. Fuhrman

Staff:

Rachel Goldberg, General Counsel
Durelle Alexander

2. Approval of Minutes

- (a) **May 12, 2005 Regular Meeting** – Commissioner Mellis made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried. Commissioners Jewell & Nixon abstained.
- (b) **August 11, 2005 Regular Meeting** – Commissioner Nixon made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mellis and carried. Commissioners Osman & Jewell abstained.
- (c) **September 8, 2005 Annual Meeting** – Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried. Commissioner Mellis abstained.
- (d) **September 8, 2005 Regular Meeting** – Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried. Commissioner Mellis abstained.
- (e) **October 7, 2005 Special Meeting** – Commissioner Fuhrman made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nixon and carried. Commissioner Jewell abstained.
- (f) **October 12, 2005 Special Meeting** – Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried by unanimous vote.
- (g) **October 19, 2005 Special Meeting** – Commissioner Fuhrman made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was approved by Commissioner Mellis and carried. Commissioner Jewell abstained.
- (h) **October 20, 2005 Special Meeting** – Commissioner Fuhrman made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was approved by Commissioner Mellis and carried by unanimous vote.

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

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5. Southeast Quadrant

- (b) **Stamford Housing Authority (SHA)** – Attending the SHA presentation were: Richard Fox, SHA Executive Director; Vin Tufo, SHA Development Coordinator; Rick Redniss, Land Use Consultant, Redniss & Mead, and Joe Schiffer, Architect, Herbert S. Newman & Partners. Mr. Redniss said, “This is where everyone wanted this building to go. We’re talking about *The Advocate* parking lot at the corner of Tresser Boulevard and Clinton Avenue, a site to be acquired for residential assisted housing under the Mill River Corridor Project Plan.” Chairman Osman asked Mr. Redniss to describe the proposed use further. Mr. Redniss said, “In this case, it is affordable housing, part of the relocation housing from Hope VI.” Mr. Tufo added, “These are one-bedroom units for people of any age who may have basic needs for life assistance which will be provided in the form of counseling. There will be a Case Manager in the building to help residents get access to services, health care, and things like that.” It was noted that this population is currently living at Fairfield Court.

Mr. Redniss continued, “This building does not require the regulation change that we passed. It actually has less density than the maximum allowed. This property could take under your present or prior zoning 125 units an acre – 74 units. We are asking for 60 units with 20 parking spaces to fulfill the Hope VI goals of the Fairfield Court revitalization.” Mr. Redniss then introduced project architect Joe Schiffer to continue with the presentation.

Referring to a site plan, Mr. Schiffer said, “I want to show you the footprint of the proposed building and the orientation of the face of building toward Tresser Boulevard, which keeps the parallel relationship to the Government Center, the parking and existing buildings. In the basic planning, we looked for the most efficient use of this site and determined that a 6-story building would clearly make sense. The first story has general public uses for the various services for the residents as well as some other office space for use by the Housing Authority. We’ve arranged it in such a way that it fully conceals the parking needs (27 spaces). The facade is stretched along Tresser in six stories and the parking is all behind it, slightly under the building. The main pedestrian entrance to the building is off Clinton. There are five residential floors, with 12 units on each floor.” Mr. Schiffer continued, “In designing the building, we revisited the basic design guidelines established for the Mill River District. These were very sound and successful and fundamentally include: trying to make the ground story open and public as much as possible; giving a distinct sense that there is a ground story that is different from the stories above, and finishing the building against the sky. What we’ve done in massing this building is to try and take a very simple shape and break it up so that the elements you see are more in keeping with a house scale.”

Discussion followed. Commissioner Mellis asked, “Since this parking lot is larger than the prior space considered and given the need in Stamford for affordable housing, why not build a larger building?” Mr. Tufo responded, “This is an integral phase of our Hope

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VI development of Fairfield Court and there is a certain program we are trying to complete here. Beyond that, we have also developed subsidies that don't exceed the sixty units. Also equally important for a population of this nature, we really don't want to over-build. We don't want to make it so dense that we have too large a population in one area that might create a burden on the neighborhood." Chairman Osman asked, "Would it be possible to integrate some other type of housing with this?" Mr. Tufo responded, "It would be difficult to market this type of project to a market rate or moderate income population. We really want a secure building that is oriented specifically to the people needing assistance and receiving services." SHA Executive Director Fox added, "What we don't want is to negatively impact this site from a management point of view."

Attorney Goldberg asked about timing. Mr. Tufo responded, "We'd like to be in the ground by September of 2006 and would then anticipate completion in 2007." Attorney Goldberg also asked, "Will there be an outdoor gathering area?" Mr. Tufo responded, "Yes, but it has not been designed yet."

Following further discussion, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to authorize the Chairman, upon receipt of a referral from the Zoning Board and assuming the application is in the same form as presented on this date, to approve the Stamford Housing Authority's proposed plans for *The Advocate* parking lot site. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuhrman and carried by unanimous vote.

5. Southeast Quadrant

- (a) **Re-Use Parcel 36 Status Report** – Attorney Goldberg reported that she had received a telephone call from Tom Rich's attorney, Donald Gustafson, who noted that his client is still working on updating the construction numbers. He asked to be placed on the December meeting agenda.
- (c) **Block 9 Parking Garage Status Report** – Attorney Goldberg reported that the pre-cast is scheduled to be delivered to the site tomorrow; further, that following delivery, Konover estimates 40 construction days to completion.
- (d) **Park Square West Phase II**
 - (i) Status Report: Attorney Goldberg reported that there are two final issues to be resolved in the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) negotiations. Corcoran Jennison is preparing a presentation to explain their position in more technical terms.
 - (ii) Litigation: Attorney Goldberg reported that there is a motion to dismiss pending before Judge Lewis, who has 120 days to issue a decision.

7. Stamford Urban Transitway Status Report

Attorney Goldberg reported that 90% of the parcels have been acquired; further, that the appeal period is over on this date. Approximately a dozen appeals have been filed and two have been settled.

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At 6:55PM, Commissioner Mellis made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Agenda Items 6(a) personnel; 5d(i) PSW negotiations; and 5d(ii) PSW litigation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jewell and carried by unanimous vote. Durelle Alexander left the meeting at this time. Attorney Goldberg participated in the discussions. No motions were made and no votes were taken.

At 8:25PM, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mellis and carried by unanimous vote.

8. Old Business

None at this time.

9. New Business


None at this time.

10. Adjournment

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 6:00PM. The Commission is also planning a holiday luncheon for Wednesday, December 14th at 12:30PM.

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 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Joel P. Mellis
Secretary/Treasurer