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**CITY OF STAMFORD
PLANNING BOARD
LAND USE BUREAU
888 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD
STAMFORD, CT 06904 -2152**

RECEIVED

November 23, 2022

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ZONING BOARD

Mr. David Stein, Chair
City of Stamford
Zoning Board
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, CT 06902

**RE: ZB APPLICATION #222-35 - RICHARD W. REDNISS (22 1st CORP.) c/o
REDNISS & MEAD - Text Change**

Dear Mr. Stein & Members of the Zoning Board:

During its regularly scheduled meeting held on Tuesday, November 22, 2022, the Planning Board reviewed the above captioned application referred in accordance with the requirements of the Stamford Charter.

Applicant is proposing to amend Section 4.B.1.e (RA-1, RA-2 & RA-3 Single-Family Districts, Very Low Density) and 4.B.2.d (R-10, R-20 & R-7½ Single-Family Districts, Low Density) regulations to allow front yard setbacks to be 50% of the requirement when new lots created by a subdivision are impacted by a FEMA Flood Zone and/or inland wetlands.

Richard Redniss, Redniss & Mead, made a brief presentation providing details of the Text Change.

After a brief discussion, the Planning Board unanimously voted to recommended *approval* of **ZB Application #222-35** and this request is compatible with the affected neighborhoods and consistent with the 2015 Master Plan which emphasizes sustainable development including the following:

- Policy 7L.2-c - Land Use Regulations (Further identify critical natural areas)
- Policy 7N.1 - Protect natural flood barriers
- Policy 7.P - Prepare flood mitigation strategy
- Policy 7P.3 - Adapting building regulations
- Policy 7P.6 - Natural protective features

Sincerely,

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD

Theresa Dell, Chair

TD/lac



City of Stamford
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

December 13 2022

To: Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner
Land Use Bureau, Stamford

From: Robert Clausi, EPB Executive Director *RUC*

Subject: Supplemental Comments on Application 222-35
Richard W. Redniss (22 1st Corp), c/o Redniss & Mead, Inc.
Proposed Text Change regarding front yard setback on private subdivision roads

Environmental Protection Board staff submitted initial comments on this application in a memo dated December 6, 2022. In addition to these comments, EPB acknowledges the comments made by the Engineering Bureau in their December 12, 2022 memo. In particular, Engineering's bullet points #1, 4, and 5 raise additional issues of concern to EPB. Use of the Zoning Variance process by a property owner who seeks front yard relief for a lot with wetland or flood zone constraints at the rear of the lot is a more prudent approach than making the blanket amendment to the Zoning Regulations proposed by the applicant.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these additional comments.

CITY OF STAMFORD

MAYOR
CAROLINE SIMMONS

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
MATT QUINONES
Email: MQuinones@StamfordCT.gov



CITY ENGINEER
LOUIS CASOLO, JR., P.E.
Email: LCasolo@StamfordCT.gov

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

December 12, 2022

To: Vineeta Mathur Principal Planner

From: Willetta Capelle P.E. - Coordinator of Site Plan Reviews and Inspections

**Subject: Text Change
22 First Street
Zoning Application No. 222-35**

The Engineering Bureau received Zoning Text Change documents proposing to amend Section 4.B.1e (RA-3, RA-2, RA-1 Single Family Districts, Very Low Density) and 4.B.2.d (R-20, R-10, R-7 1/2 Single Family District, Low Density) regulations on lots created by subdivision exclusively accessed by private rights-of-way where the overall property is impacted by FEMA flood zone, inland wetlands, steep slopes (incline of 15% or greater) or other natural features to allow front yard setbacks on such private rights-of-way to be 50% of the requirement.

The following documents were reviewed:

- "Proposed Changes to Zoning Regulations" text dated 10/31/22
- "Project Narrative Text Change to Amend Setbacks from Private Roads" by Redniss & Mead dated 11/1/22
- "Demonstration Site A 131 Turn of River Road 40' Front Setback Exhibit" by Redniss & Mead dated 10/27/22
- "Demonstration Site A 131 Turn of River Road 20' Front Setback Exhibit" by Redniss & Mead dated 10/27/22
- "Demonstration Site B 40 Signal Road 40' Front Setback Exhibit" by Redniss & Mead dated 11/1/22
- "Demonstration Site B 40 Signal Road 20' Front Setback Exhibit" by Redniss & Mead dated 11/1/22

The Engineering Bureau does not support the proposed Text Change since there are other alternatives that have been implemented that would permit private residential development on lots with the aforementioned constraints, such as cluster subdivisions, smaller building footprints and Zoning Variance requests. Other alternatives should be considered.

In light of the Engineering Bureau's reservations, the following questions, comments and considerations should be carefully considered if the Zoning Board determines that the proposed amendment is acceptable:

- 1) Although the Project Narrative discusses reducing impacts to wetlands or increasing the distance of homes from the shore and flood zones as benefits to the front setback reduction, under this amendment, building footprints could be expanded up to the buffer and flood zone limits, which could potentially negate the benefits indicated in the Project Narrative.
- 2) Reducing the front yard setback will reduce driveway lengths which may force on-street parking. Proposed

developments with narrow roadway widths are not suitable for on-street parking and pose potential safety concerns due to limited emergency vehicle maneuverability.

3) Reducing front yard setbacks may create an adverse grading condition and lead to steeper slopes due to less distance available for driveways, as an example.

4) If regulatory setbacks can be maintained with the current setback or a setback reduction less than 50% can be maintained, what criteria controls the establishment of such a reduction? The proposed setback reduction percentage seems to be based on a singular project and warrants further review.

5) Based on the varying alignments of watercourses, wetlands, steep slopes or "natural features," uniformity of setbacks is a concern, since front setbacks could differ from lot to lot based on which lots have the aforementioned constraints.

6) "Other natural features" is a broad term and needs to be clarified to determine potential Engineering impacts as a result of the proposed amendment.

7) The Engineering Bureau reserves the right to make additional comments.

Please contact me at 203-977-4003 with any questions.

CC: Lou Casolo
Bob Clausi
Frank Petise

Reg. No. 311

From: [Buttenwieser, Luke](#)
To: [Mathur, Vineeta](#)
Cc: [Briscoe, Tracy](#)
Subject: ZB 222-35 TTP Comments
Date: Friday, December 9, 2022 12:35:29 PM

Hi Vineeta,

The Transportation, Traffic & Parking Department has reviewed Zoning Board Application 222-35 and finds it does not appear to cause adverse traffic or parking impacts.

Thank you.

Luke Buttenwieser

City of Stamford

Transportation, Traffic & Parking

888 Washington Blvd., 7th Floor

Stamford, CT 06901

Office: (203) 977-5675

Cell: (203) 356-5789

Stamford has committed to zero roadway deaths by 2032.

Learn more about [Stamford Vision Zero](#)

To: Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner

From: Kristin Floberg, Senior Planner

Re: CT Statutory Referral to WestCOG from Stamford - Attached Zoning Amendment

Date: November 10, 2022

Thank you for submitting the attached referral to WestCOG.

The opinion of WestCOG staff is that the proposal is of local interest and with minimal intermunicipal impact. Therefore, it is not being forwarded to adjacent municipalities and the regional staff is making no comment.

From: Briscoe, Tracy <TBriscoe@StamfordCT.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, November 2, 2022 12:34 PM

To: Kristin Floberg <kfloberg@westcog.org>

Subject: City of Stamford - Zoning Board -New Application 222-35

Hi Kristin,

Please see attached a new application for your review and comments.

Thanks Tracy



City of Stamford
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARD
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

December 6, 2022

To: Vineeta Mathur, Principal Planner
Land Use Bureau, Stamford

From: Robert Clausi, EPB Executive Director *RC*

Subject: Application 222-35 – Richard W. Redniss (22 1st Corp), c/o Redniss & Mead, Inc.
Proposed Text Change

Environmental Protection Board staff has reviewed the materials submitted in support of Zoning Board Application 222-35, in which that applicant proposes to amend Section 4.B.1e (RA-3, RA-2, RA-1 Single Family Districts, Very Low Density) and 4.B.2.d (R-20, R-10, R-7 ½ Single Family District, Low Density) of the Zoning Regulations to allow front yard setbacks to be 50% of the requirement when new lots created by a subdivision on a private road are impacted by natural features, such as a FEMA flood zone or inland wetlands.

EPB staff agrees that shifting residential development on newly subdivided lots farther away from inland wetlands and watercourses at the rear of lots will provide more flexibility to both design a reasonably useful residential recreational area in the back yard and allow for an adequate protective wetland and watercourse buffer. However, use of this flexibility will not guarantee that the Environmental Protection Board will approve every lot proposed for a subdivision. For instance, several of the houses shown along the south side of the road on the applicant's "Demonstration Site A 20' - Front Setback Exhibit" are still quite close to the edge of the 25'-wide wetland upland review area the EPB endeavors to preserve in this watershed. Presented a subdivision application like this, the EPB might recommend a reduction in the number of lots in the subdivision, reduced size or modified layout of some of the houses, a cluster development, etc., in order to insure adequate protection of the natural resources under its jurisdiction.

EPB staff also considers allowing increased separating distance between residential development and special flood hazard areas to be prudent, particularly in coastal flood zones with the rise in sea levels. In its role as the Stamford's Flood and Erosion Control Board, the EPB will review subdivisions in coastal and inland special flood hazard areas to confirm compliance with the Coastal Area Management Act and the City's Flood Prone Area Regulations. Public safety and natural resource protection are also factors the EPB will consider in these subdivision reviews. All of these factors may influence EPB recommendations to the Zoning Board as to the appropriateness of a proposed subdivision regardless of the depth of the front yard.

The narrative provided with the application does not define what other “natural features” besides flood zones, inland wetlands, and steep slopes the proposed amendment is intended to cover. The EPB will use the broadest possible definition of “natural features” as it reviews subdivisions that conform to the limitations of this proposed amendment.

EPB has no objection to this matter moving forward through the Zoning Board’s review process, with the understanding that subdivisions that fall under this amendment will be subject to the level of EPB review and approval described above.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.