

March 20, 2023

VIA HAND & ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Ms. Vineeta Mathur
Principal Planner
City of Stamford
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, Connecticut 06901

**RE: ZB Appl. 222-23 & 222-24
68 Seaview Avenue, Stamford, CT (the “Property”)
Seaview House LLC (the “Applicant”)
Supplemental Application Materials**

Dear Ms. Mathur:

As you are aware, our firm represents the Applicant in the above referenced applications (collectively the “Application”) that are pending before the Zoning Board. The public hearing opened on September 28, 2022, and was immediately continued with no presentation made. After that, the Application was then continued multiple times with no substantive presentation made or public comment received. Since September 28, the Applicant has been collaborating with various consultants and City officials regarding several components of the proposed development involving flood zone matters. These discussions have centered on issues resulting from the Property being located in both the FEMA AE and VE Flood Zones. In response to issues raised by both the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) and City officials, the Applicant offers the following responses and has made the following changes to the proposed development. The proposed changes are minor in scale and extremely technical, but greatly improve safety for residents at the Property, residents in the surrounding residential developments, and emergency responders.

1. The Marina Building and Main Building Are Two Structurally Separate Buildings

One issue which has been the subject of debate is whether the small Marina building, located in the northeast corner of the Property, is part of the larger office building or if it is its own separate structure. The Applicant is adamant that it is a separate structure that has been blended cosmetically so that it looks like it is integral to the Main building structure. As is evident from correspondence from DeSimone Consulting Engineers dated March 3, August 31 and October 26, 2022, the Marina building sits on its own foundation, is of a different construction type, and is connected to the Main building only by virtue of pliable expansion joint at its roof level. Moreover, it has its own separate entrance disconnected from the rest of the Main building and its own separate electrical and HVAC systems. Further, it is located quite a distance from the Main building lobby. The function of this building is to simply act as a small office space for the marina adjacent to it.

It is important that the buildings be considered separate because the Marina building is marginally located within the VE Flood Zone. The balance of the site improvements (as explained below) are in the AE Flood Zone. Rules and regulations regarding modifications to structures in the VE Flood Zone differ from those in the AE Flood Zone. If the Marina building and the Main building were considered a single structure, then the entire Main building would be deemed to be in the VE Flood Zone and it would not be economically possible to make the building comply with the Flood Zone Regulations. Thus, any improved use of the Main building, even as an office building, would not be feasible. Recent discussions with the City have centered on recognizing that DeSimone's analysis is correct and that the buildings are in fact separate; the Applicant's focus should be modifying the Marina building to ensure that if there were a flood event which caused damage to that building that it would not adversely affect the Main building or occupants of the Main building. DeSimone has studied the issue and determined that the Main building structure can withstand any debris loads shed by damage to the Marina building. Beyond that, the Applicant is amenable to a condition of approval requiring that prior to the issuance of a Building Permit for conversion of the Main building to residential use, that a Building Permit be obtained to modify the Marina building to mitigate and reduce the potential for severe damage to the Marina building. This will likely be accomplished by way of the installation of flood vents.

2. Shaving the Edge of the Main Building

Having determined that the Marina building is separate, discussion turned to the proper categorization of the Main building. The FEMA flood line separating the VE Zone from the AE Zone lies generally on the extreme eastern part of the Property; essentially up against the boardwalk area. The small amount of at grade Floor Area on the Main building is clearly located in the AE Zone, as are all of the footings and foundations of the Main building. As the submitted plans indicate, the Applicant proposes that all the ground floor elements of the Main building be raised between 2' and 4' so that the building achieves complete compliance with current FEMA regulations for the AE Flood Zone. There is a small anomaly in the interaction between the existing Main building and the FEMA flood line separating the AE and VE Flood Zones. This occurs in the extreme northeastern corner of the second-floor parking deck where there is a small, triangulated area of the second-floor parking deck that is approximately 100' long and is 3' at its widest point. The FEMA VE flood elevation in this area is 15'; however, the elevation of this minor encroachment is 26.9'. In other words, this transgression over the FEMA line separating the VE from the AE Flood Zone occurs more than 11' above the highest flood height established by FEMA.

This strange circumstance sparked a fair amount of debate and discussion, as some believed that this sliver required the Main building to meet the VE Flood Zone standards which, as stated above, is completely unfeasible and would have relegated the building to a lesser use which did not require investment of capital because the FEMA regulations limit the amount of capital improvement on a non-compliant structure. Instead, the Applicant has determined through investigation that since the footings and foundation of the structure are outside of the VE Flood Zone and the transgression over the line separating the VE from the AE Flood Zone is substantially higher than the flood waters could ever reach, the Main building is considered to be in the AE Flood Zone. We include an Elevation Certificate issued by the project engineer indicating so.

In connection with this issue, our original submittal shows that the Applicant's initial solution was to simply shave a small piece of the concrete slab on the second-floor parking deck.

However, after submittal of the Application, it was determined that the Main building is constructed out of post-tensioned concrete. Thus, “shaving” the concrete slab would cut the tension cables embedded in the concrete floor and the base of the crash wall at the end of the parking decks, in effect compromising the structural integrity of the entire building. Therefore, the Applicant no longer proposes to “shave” the northeastern corner of the building as it is neither feasible nor necessary. This change is reflected in the enclosed revised plan sets.

3. Dry Emergency Access During 1% (100 Year) “Perfect Storm” Events

While the above matters took significant time to resolve, they do appear in fact to be somewhat academic, even esoteric, in nature. Conversely, substantial and critical importance is achieving “safe access” for residents of the Main building and any emergency responders. From the time of the project’s inception, the Applicant recognized providing safe access was critical and could only be achieved by improving Seaview Avenue by raising it. At its present height, modeling conducted by RACE Engineering indicates that during the “Perfect Storm”¹ event, stormwaters (including top of wave action) could reach 30” in depth at the low point of Seaview Avenue. In addition to the Property, three other properties have driveways which need to access Seaview Avenue. These properties are the Marina Bay Condominiums, the Moorings Apartment, and the Halloween Yacht Club. It is of note that the Halloween Yacht Club sits on City property and operates by virtue of a lease. The location of the existing buildings on the Moorings Apartment and Marina Bay Condominiums limit the height to which Seaview Avenue, in its present location, can be elevated because tapering of the additional height is required. As originally submitted and thereafter refined, the Applicant’s engineers were able to raise Seaview Avenue approximately 15”. This achieved the height sufficient to reach so called “Still Water,” but would not provide “dry access” in the event there was wave action associated with the “Perfect Storm.” The City objected notwithstanding that it did provide sufficient clearance so that emergency vehicles with a 15” clearance could access the Property and could gain better access to both Marina Bay and the Moorings, and as such was a dramatic improvement over the existing conditions.

The City insisted the Applicant continue to explore options so that it could achieve “dry access.” Numerous options have been discussed over the past several months, and the Applicant is happy to report that it can achieve “dry access” during the “Perfect Storm” by shifting the existing roadbed of Seaview Avenue slightly to the east. This achieves “dry access” along the entirety of Seaview Avenue for the Property’s benefit, as well as for Marina Bay Condominiums and the Moorings Apartment residents; and importantly, for any emergency responders during a bad weather event. As an added benefit, there will be enough dimension at the end of Seaview Avenue so that there could be an area where a driver could turn a vehicle around, as opposed to the current situation where the road simply ends and a driver must do a three-point turn in the middle of the road. Another added benefit is the opportunity to take each of the drives (that is, the Applicant’s, Marina Bay Condominium’s, the Moorings’, and the Halloween Yacht Club’s) and rework them with new landscaping, pavement so it is not only safer and more functional, but also more attractive. The Applicant’s proposal for this area is depicted on the enclosed plans dated

¹ For purposes of this letter, a “Perfect Storm” event occurs for a two-hour period of time during a 1% (100 year) storm event when there is a full moon, Long Island Sound is at high tide, and wind direction pushes water west toward the property.

January 30, 2023, prepared by Eric Rains Landscape Architecture and the Roadway Regrading Plans prepared by D'Andrea Engineering & Surveying, P.C.

In order to best integrate the proposed changes into the submitted plan set and minimize any confusion between the Applicant's initial and current proposed development, please find attached the below supplemental application materials. These materials are meant to replace any previously submitted versions. All of these materials are listed in more detail in Schedule A of the Narrative Materials (List of Submitted Plans & Reports).²

- **Road Regrading Plans (New Material)**
 - These plans outline the proposed shift of Seaview Avenue and subsequent raising of Seaview Avenue and the driveways of the two residential developments and the Halloween Yacht Club.
- **Revised Civil Plans**
 - These previously submitted plans were revised to show the portions of the Main Building not being removed and details pertaining to the widened entry driveway and portions of the relocated roadway.
- **Revised Architectural Plans & Renderings**
 - These plans show the Main Building remaining in its current structural configuration (more specifically, the portions of the Main Building are no longer being removed), along with an additional sheet detailing the proposed lobby layout.
- **Revised Landscape Plan**
 - These previously submitted plans were revised to show the new plantings on the Property resulting from the widened entry driveway. New sheets have been added showing the plantings proposed along Seaview Avenue as a result of the shifting and raising of Seaview Avenue.
- **Revised Schedule A (List of Plans), Schedules B through D (Narrative Materials), and Schedule F (Zoning Data Chart)**
 - Schedule A has been revised to reflect the most recent versions of the plans and reports associated with this application.
 - Schedules B through D have been revised to reflected the most recent roadway regrading plan and
 - Schedule F has been revised to amend the Open Space figure to reflect the portion of the balcony no longer being removed and minor typographical errors.
- **Revised Draft Flood Preparedness Plan for the Residences of 70 Seaview Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut, dated March 16, 2023**

² Please note that the following previously submitted materials are not changing: the Zoning Location Survey, the map detailing the proposed map change, the Engineering Summary Report, the Sanitary Sewer Connection Summary Report, the Flood Risk Analysis, and the Traffic Impact Study.

- The safety of future tenants is of the upmost importance to the Applicant, so the draft Flood Preparedness Plan was revised to include all forms of technology available to the general public when tracking a storm. Additionally, this revised Plan details how the Building Management will take proactive steps in preparing residents for major storm events.
- Parking Study completed by SLR, dated December 28, 2022, and entitled, “Parking Study, Mixed-Use Redevelopment, 68 Seaview Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut SLR #141.20495.00001.” (New Material)
 - This study was completed and formalized after the Applicant’s initial filings and is a required application material.
- Elevation Certificate for 68 Seaview Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut, prepared by Leonard C. D’Andrea, and dated December 29, 2022 (New Material)
 - As detailed above, this Certificate attests that the Main building is fully located within the AE Flood Zone.
- Letters from DeSimone Consulting Engineers dated March 3, August 31 and October 26, 2022 (New Material)
 - As detailed above, these letters go analyze how the Main Building and Marina Building are structurally independent of each other and are two separate buildings.
- Memorandum prepared by GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc., dated November 29, 2022, and entitled, “Proposed Improvements on Neighboring Bulkhead – Delamar Residences – Stamford, Connecticut.” (New Material)
 - This memorandum was completed at the request of residents of Marina Bay Condominiums to determine the impacts of the proposed development on the Marina Bay bulkhead. As detailed in the Memorandum, the proposed grade raise and retaining wall will not change the loading conditions of the existing Marina Bay bulkhead.
- Memorandum prepared by RACE Coastal Engineering, dated February 14, 2023, and entitled “68-70 Seaview Avenue, Stamford, CT 06902.” (New Material)
 - This memorandum and attached wave height analysis was prepared in response to DEEP comments, and details the projected wave height and flood water depth during various storm events.
- Peer Review Memorandum of the above RACE Coastal Engineering Memorandum, prepared by Harbor Engineering, LLC, dated December 16, 2022, and entitled, “Seaview House Coastal Analysis Peer Review.” (New Material)
 - This memorandum details the peer review done of RACE’s wave height analysis, with the peer reviewer stating he agrees with RACE’s conclusions.

Please let this confirm that the Applicant understands that the Zoning Board would expect that the roadway improvement be performed by the Applicant at the Applicant's expense.

As always, thank you for your consideration of the above and for your continued time and effort regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



William J. Hennessey, Jr.

Enclosures.

cc: R. Blessing – Rblessing@StamfordCT.gov
Seaview House LLC