

**STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD  
APPROVED MINUTES - TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING  
VIA THE INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL  
6:30 P.M.**

**ZOOM WEBINAR**

*Webinar ID: 837 0729 4739*

*Passcode: 876348*

---

---

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Voting Members: Theresa Dell, Chair; Jay Tepper, Vice Chair; Jennifer Godzeno, Secretary (Arrived at 6:37 p.m.); Michael Buccino and Michael Totilo. Alternates: Stephen Perry. Absent: William Levin, Alternate. Present for staff: Lindsey Cohen, Associate Planner.

Ms. Dell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Dell introduced the members of the Board and staff present and introduced the first item on the agenda.

**PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

**December 19, 2023:** After a brief discussion, Mr. Totilo moved to recommend *approval* of the Planning Board Regular Meeting Minutes of December 19, 2023; Mr. Buccino seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Dell, Buccino, Perry and Totilo). (Mr. Tepper was ineligible to vote as he was absent at the December 19, 2023 meeting.)

**REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION**

**SUPPLEMENTAL CAPITAL PROJECT APPROPRIATION REQUESTS:**

- 1. BELLTOWN ROADWAY - PROJECT #001389 - TOTAL REQUEST \$1,800,000.00:** Roadway safety and infrastructure upgrades to Burdick Street, Upland Road and Belltown Road including new sidewalks, new drainage structures, new crosswalks, traffic calming measures and upgraded lighting.

Luke Bittenwieser, Transportation Planner, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended approval of Belltown Road - Project #001389 with a Total Request of \$1,800,000.00. This request has been reviewed pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 and the City Charter Section C6-30-13 and finds this request to be consistent with CGS Section 8-24, and the City Charter Section C6-30-13, as well as consistent with the adopted 2015 Master Plan; Mr. Buccino seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Perry, Tepper and Totilo).

**ZONING BOARD REFERRALS:**

- 1. ZB APPLICATION #222-32(MOD) - CP VIII 100 CLINTON, LLC - 100 & 101 CLINTON AVENUE - Special Permit:** Applicant is seeking a Special Permit approval pursuant to Section 7.4.D.3 of the Stamford Zoning Regulations to make a \$12,953,280.00 contribution to the Stamford Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) in lieu of providing onsite Below Market Rate (BMR) apartments.

This project is in Master Plan Category #5 (Residential - High Density Multifamily). At its regularly held meeting on June 14, 2016, the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the original site plan for this site (ZB #216-26) and on January 24, 2023 the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of an amendment to the original site plan and a request for final site plan approval (ZB #222-32). This Application is a request for a Special Permit to allow for an almost \$13M payment to the AHTF in lieu of providing 46 on-site BMR units available to residents earning no more than 50% of area median income (AMI).

Ms. Cohen made remarks on the fee-in-lieu (FIL) option for BMR housing production:

- In the last 8 years, 71% of the BMR units have been produced on-site versus 29% through FIL or off-site. The Stamford Housing Affordability Plan calls for a more balanced mix of methods for producing affordable housing to achieve a greater variety of housing. BMR units onsite are geared toward renters making up to 50% AMI and reflect the unit sizes in the building. Apartments produced through the FIL program serve families at lower affordability levels requiring additional bedrooms and opportunities for affordable home ownership.<sup>1</sup>
- Funding the AHTF is aligned with the Mayor's Executive Order on Housing Affordability because it will incentivize affordable housing developers to seek opportunities in Stamford. FIL funds can provide financing necessary to build development proposals including affordable and deeply affordable housing opportunities, often making the proposal feasible or not. Additionally, the FIL dollars have allowed affordable housing developers to put in more competitive applications with the State. It provides the State confidence that the City is supporting the project. Planning new projects takes substantial time and money, and consistent funding in the AHTF gives affordable housing developers the confidence to proceed with their mid- and long-term plans.
- No substantial FIL payments have been made since the AHTF was opened.<sup>2</sup> There is currently \$653,140.00 unallocated in the AHTF mostly accrued through Linkage Fees. The AHTF Board is set to hear an application requesting \$750,000.00 for new supportive housing targeting households below 30% of the AMI on January 10, 2024 although there is not enough to fully fund this request. This could potentially leave the fund with \$0. Another recent project reduced their request due to low funding availability. There are at least two additional large-scale projects that are likely to apply but will need to wait until additional FIL are added to the account. If there is not enough funding in the account to support new affordable housing applications, upcoming projects may be delayed or unable to proceed.
- The proposal is in harmony with the 2015 Master Plan which recognizes that addressing housing affordability is a top priority for the City. Specifically, Strategy 6A.2 to "Create a new revitalization-focused fee-in-lieu program for meeting affordable housing requirements" and Policy 6.B states "to preserve existing and create new affordable housing."

Ms. Cohen introduced Mr. Klein.

Jason Klein, Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey, LLP, representing the applicant, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

NOTE: Written public comments were also received on this application. (Attached)

---

<sup>1</sup> Projects utilizing AHTF monies include: Park 215 that has income-restricted units as low as 25% AMI, 992 Summer Street is a senior housing development restricted to 40% AMI, 72 Franklin serves residents making 25-35% AMI, 1114 Hope Street serves families making 30-45% AMI, and 287 Washington Boulevard is an affordable homeownership development restricted to residents making 50-70% AMI.

<sup>2</sup> Three FIL payments were approved by the Zoning Board recently but have not been paid into the fund yet: \$2.3M for 68 Seaview Avenue, \$10.7M for 3 Landmark Square and \$1.8M for 210 Long Ridge Road. Developers are required to pay FIL before receiving their building permit, should the approved projects proceed. Staff is currently reviewing this project, 100 Clinton, in a pre-building permit review and is thus confident that the \$13M payment under consideration would be paid.

After considerable discussion about BMRs, affordability in the Downtown area and the Mill River corridor, and the importance of having BMR units on site while also acknowledging the importance of funding the AHTF, Ms. Godzeno recommended **approval of ZB Application #222-32(MOD)** with the recommendation that a percentage of the required BMR units (47) be provided onsite at 65% to 80% AMI and the balance of the requirement would be paid as fee-in-lieu into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. (Ms. Godzeno’s suggested calculations were that 12% of the units be provided at 80% AMI or 8% of the units be provided at 65% AMI, which would be equivalent to about one-half of the AHTF contribution [\$6.5 - \$7M] and leave the balance to be placed into the Trust Fund) and this request is in general harmony with Master Plan Category #5 (Residential - High Density Multifamily); Mr. Buccino seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Perry, Tepper and Totilo) (Mr. Perry also voted In Favor.)

**2. ZB APPLICATION #223-44 - PACIFIC HOUSE, INC & MICA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LLC - 66 STILLWATER AVENUE - Site & Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses, Coastal Site Plan Review and Special Permit:** Applicant is proposing the construction of an eighteen (18) unit deeply affordable residential building along with associated landscaping and parking. The proposal requires a Special Permit to permit substantial new construction in the V-C District, Site and Architectural Plan and Requested Uses review, and Coastal Site Plan Review. The property is located within the V-C (Village Commercial) Zoning District.

This project is in Master Plan Category #6 (Commercial - Neighborhood Business). Pacific House is a non-profit that has been serving Stamford since 1982. This site is conveniently located across from 41 Stillwater Avenue where Pacific House was recently approved for a larger supportive housing development including 39 supportive apartments and 2,000 sq. ft. of space for their corporate offices. Like 41 Stillwater Avenue, this proposal at 66 Stillwater Avenue is not only deeply affordable housing, but also supportive housing that will serve individuals and families with disabilities and special needs. There will be a small administrative office on the ground floor for supportive services.

The surrounding land uses include low- to medium-density multifamily housing and commercial users including retail, restaurants, barbershop and similar service businesses. Across the street is 57 Stillwater Avenue, a market-rate residential building with 45 rental units. The site is in an area where residents can be less reliant on a car for everyday needs. The site is less than 0.5 miles from the Stamford Transportation Center, less than a mile from Downtown, close to the Yerwood Center and nearby restaurants, retail, and service. It is well served by local bus routes and sidewalks. Usable open space includes lawn, planted area and children’s play space.

This Master Plan Category calls for residential developments to not exceed 17 dwelling units per acre. This recommendation does not align with what is permitted in the underlying zoning, which allows up to 32 units on this site. This recommendation also does not align with a key tenant of this Category which is to provide for and promote pedestrian-scaled “Main Street” environments. Increasing density increases the pedestrian-scaled environment. Finally, this recommendation does not align with neighboring buildings on Stillwater Avenue within this Category (e.x., 57 Stillwater Avenue, 48 Stillwater Avenue and 62 Stillwater Avenue all exceed 17 units per acre).

This Application is aligned with the intent of Master Plan Category #6 (Commercial - Neighborhood Business). This Master Plan Category is intended to provide for and promote pedestrian-scaled “Main Street” environments. The design of the proposed building (articulation of stories, use of materials, and position towards the street with parking in the rear) supports a pedestrian-scaled “Main Street” environment. The density of the building also supports the “Main Street” environment and is aligned with the surrounding densities and the following policies and strategies:

- WS1.3: Support the efforts of the West Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) and other neighborhood associations working to improve the overall quality-of-life for the residents and workers of the West Side and Waterside neighborhoods.

- 6C.2: Promote development of a variety of housing types.

Ms. Cohen made introductory comments and introduced Mr. Mazzeo.

Raymond Mazzeo, Redniss & Mead, along with Jennifer Broadbin & Larry Kluetsch, Pacific House, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After some discussion, Mr. Tepper recommended **approval** of **ZB Application #223-44** and that this request is in general harmony with Master Plan Category #6 (Commercial - Neighborhood Business). The Board felt that this is a perfect site for this project and liked the fact that there are other facilities close by. Mr. Totilo seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 5-0 (Dell, Buccino, Godzeno, Tepper and Totilo).

**LAND USE BUSINESS:**

1. Invitation to attend the Zoning Board's January 22, 2024 Public Hearing for a joint session on a pre-application review of a Zoning Map Change Application.

Ms. Cohen stated that this item has been pulled as it was a bit premature and will be on a future agenda.

Next regularly scheduled Planning Board meetings are:

- January 23, 2024 (Regular Meeting & Public Hearing)
- January 30, 2024 (Regular Meeting)
- February 13, 2024 (Regular Meeting)

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Dell adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
January 11, 2024

Jennifer Godzeno, Secretary  
Stamford Planning Board

**NOTE:** These proceedings were recorded on video and are available for review on the Planning Board website at [http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=20](http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=20)