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**CITY OF STAMFORD**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
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**(FINAL) Minutes of the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC)**

Date: Regular meeting held: October 5, 2021  
Location: Via Zoom  
Present: David Woods, Barry Hersh, Elena Kalman and Dee Davis Davis.  
Absent: Rebecca Shannonhouse.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**I. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair, David Woods.

Mr. Woods announced that Rebecca Shannonhouse was not able to attend this meeting and take the minutes. Lesley Capp, our Assistant, has agreed to write up the minutes.

Mr. Woods also announced that Claire Fishman has been appointed to the Commission as an Alternate and invited Ms. Fishman to introduce herself and she made a brief statement about her background.

**II. Approval or Corrections to August 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes.**

Ms. Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of the last HPAC meeting on August 10, 2021. Mr. Hersh seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

**III. New Business.**

**A. 670-690 Pacific Street & 171 Henry Street**

*Owners:* Pacific Street Fire House, LLC (670 Pacific); Tabernacle of Grace Church (648 Pacific); FHP 1, LLC (686 Pacific); South End Pacific, LLC (690 Pacific); and Henry Street Stamford, LLC (171 Henry).

*Applicant/Presentation:* Raymond Mazzeo, Redniss & Mead

Informal presentation and preliminary review of project in progress.

Mr. Woods stated this item is not being voted on and there is no resolution to be made. This is an informal presentation for the Commission to provide preliminary comments. Mr. Woods introduced Mr. Mazzeo.

Mr. Mazzeo made some brief comments and explained that he wanted to introduce the project and the team and listen to the Commission's questions and better prepare the Commission for when the application is referred by the Zoning Board for the November meeting. Mr. Mazzeo then introduced Andres Hogg, Mario Lozano, and Enrico Gessaroli (all of Hogg Holdings); Jason Klein, Carmody Torrance Sandak Hennessey, LLP; and Terry Adams, Board of Representatives.



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Mr. Mazzeo made an extensive presentation providing details on the project and answered questions from the Commission.

Mr. Woods asked for clarification on use of Section 7.3 and if further restoration is planned for the three properties identified which are listed as part of the South End Historic District and use of the bonus amenities.

Mr. Mazzeo answered yes to seeking use of Section 7.3 and yes to restoration of the three historic properties. Mr. Mazzeo then provided further details on Section 7.3 use and the restoration of the three properties.

Mr. Woods asked about the existing firehouse stating the Commission already granted approval of that and restoration is proceeding under BLT ownership. Would your team be taking ownership and use the restoration of the firehouse for Section 7.3 bonuses?

Mr. Mazzeo replied yes but stated any bonuses from the firehouse on its own would not be so relevant as the entire project.

Mr. Woods asked for clarification about the restoration of the two-family home on Henry Street with regards to Section 7.3.

Mr. Mazzeo stated that structure would be renovated but the use would not change. It would still remain a two-family home but still working on the level of restoration for the building. Mr. Mazzeo

Mr. Woods asked about the existing church and how much restoration would be required to qualify for Section 7.3; how the church might change over time, change in use or change in how it would be accessed in order to support a change in use.

Mr. Mazzeo explained the church is being left to the ownership team and experts as to what is appropriate to be done for restoration but not exactly sure what the steps would be. In terms of ownership, Hogg Holdings would own the entire site except for the church property. They will be entering into a zoning lot agreement with the ownership team and so from a zoning standpoint could look at the entire project. Development rights could be transferred from the site as a whole but the church will maintain ownership of their property, building and operation. The church will be co-applicants with us and will be part of the restoration.

Mr. Gessaroli provided further details about the restoration of the façade of the church, firehouse and Henry Street house. Mr. Gessaroli stated they would be providing further specific details about what will be proposed for the restoration.

Mr. Woods asked about who would have the obligation on the part of the church to keep the restoration and the quality of the church at a higher standard that is required under Section 7.3. Typically the owner owns both the property and agrees to restore it because of that granted extra units but will own as a complete entity. Mr. Woods stated clarification may be needed from Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief and/or Vineeta Mathur, Acting Principal Planner.



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Mr. Gessaroli explained they are entering into a contract with the church and buying the rights to the church. One of the provisions of the contract will be they need to abide by any HPAC resolutions in order to proceed with renovations.

Mr. Mazzeo explained the zoning lot agreement is a fairly new regulation and requires all parties to enter into a zoning lot agreement that stipulates both where the development rights are being deployed and what development rights if any remain with each individual piece of the development. The conditions of the special permit will be outlined in the Zoning Certificate of Approval and all parties to the approval and responsible for it. The ongoing future obligations will be spelled out in the Zoning Lot Agreement and that will get reviewed by both the Zoning Board and the Law Department and will be filed with the Land Records along with the Zoning Certificate.

Mr. Woods stated he had no further questions and turned it to the Commission for their questions.

Mr. Hersh asked to see the picture of the two-family home on Henry Street and asked if it was currently occupied.

Mr. Mazzeo answered he believed so.

Mr. Hersh asked if the purpose of keeping this structure was to hold the continuity on Henry Street?

Mr. Mazzeo stated there were several reasons in keeping it. One was for the historic value as it is the first in a row of similarly designed structures and it also serves as a buffer to the neighborhood to the east to hold back large-scale development and keep the character of the neighborhood down the block.

Mr. Hersh asked about the driveway next to the firehouse and if it will be used.

Mr. Mazzeo explained there is a driveway now and there will be a few parking spaces against the firehouse and the driveway will be a one-way out. The tenants of the house will come through from Pacific Street the same way the tenants of the new building will come. They will come through the garage of the new building to the four spaces behind the house and the driveway will be a one-way out for everyone.

Mr. Hersh asked about the neighbor right behind the project.

Mr. Hogg answered that it is a family-owned factory currently in use.

Ms. Kalman stated they probably were not too concerned about this project.

Ms. Kalman asked about Henry Street and having a 5 ft. buffer between the house and the driveway and 5 ft. green space? Next to the windows, there is not supposed to be parking/driveway and should be a 5 ft. buffer.

Mr. Mazzeo stated the driveway will remain as is and will not be changed.

Ms. Kalman asked if the driveway is being pushed towards the firehouse?



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Mr. Mazzeo stated they are trying find a balance for parking for all the tenants.

Ms. Kalman asked about the elevation of the entire property and repeating some of the architectural elements on a large-scale may not be noticed. It seems the new building looks overwhelming for the neighborhood compared with the buildings immediately to the left and right.

Mr. Mazzeo explained that taking the allowable development rights from those properties and moving them to another portion of the site. That portion of the site is going to have more “stuff” on it. When you have a zone that allows 4 and 5 stories and half the site is limited to 1 and 2 stories and not utilizing the allowable footprint on those individual properties, when those property rights are extracted, which are the incentives for preservation, there will end up being something larger on the rest of the site.

Mr. Hogg asked to show pictures of buildings a block away, which shows larger and taller buildings than what is being presented. Everything that has been built within the last 20 years are taller. Our building is same height at Yale & Towne building.

Mr. Mazzeo confirmed they are in scale with the Yale & Towne building and stated they would welcome any suggestions that would either detract or enhance the building size.

Ms. Kalman asked how close to the street is the new construction? Will it be in line with the church or in line with the building in the corner?

Mr. Mazzeo explained they are not necessarily in line with each other already. The zoning wants the street-front to be activated so the new building will be in line the front steps of the church. The V-C zone says it should be as close to the street as possible, which is 15 ft. off of the front curb line and that is what we have. There is a 10 ft. wide sidewalk, which is made of a 4ft. amenity strip where the tree lines, parking meters, etc. are placed and then a 6 ft. clear, sidewalk and another 5 ft. for landscaping between the sidewalk and the building.

Ms. Kalman asked if there is a plan for street trees. Mr. Mazzeo answered, yes.

Mr. Hersh asked about the total acreage owned or control. Mr. Mazzeo stated it is just under an acre.

Mr. Hersh asked if there will be 61 units plus 3 spaces? Mr. Mazzeo answered, yes and the two-family home.

Mr. Woods asked if Ms. Davis or Ms. Fishman had any questions.

Ms. Fishman requested to see the pictures of the façade of the building and asked if all of the windows could be curved like the church? Ms. Fishman stated she felt it would give the building a softer appearance.

Mr. Hogg discussed some design options, which could be implemented and would show at the next meeting.



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Ms. Davis asked about the front door and bricked-in arches of the church, if it would be possible to redesign the façade of the church.

Mr. Hogg explained that they are not buying the church and do not own the church so do not have the rights. They are working on an agreement with the church to work on the design of the façade.

Mr. Hersh commented on the Transfer Development Rights, which is new in Stamford and different than some other areas where you have to merge the parcels into one rather than keeping ownership and in a sense are your partner but referred to as the applicant which includes the church. As we represent the City and the church is part of the City; maybe they can come to a meeting. We want the church to flourish and do well and have the building be as historically and aesthetically pleasing as possible.

Mr. Hogg agreed with Mr. Hersh. Mr. Hogg explained they are trying to buy the rights, which will provide the church with funds but they do not have the right to tell them how to allocate those funds.

Ms. Kalman stated the Commission is granting Section 7.3 and the bonuses from Section 7.3 are not connected to the funds from the purchase of the Development Rights and those bonus funds should be used for restoration purposes.

Mr. Hogg stated he understood and said that is why they have Lynne Drobbin on the team to consult.

Mr. Gessaroli provided further explanation on the details of the renovations related to the Section 7.3 bonuses.

Mr. Hogg stated he sees Ms. Kalman's point and will try to find a balance with the church restoration. They also have to finish what BLT started on the firehouse and restore the two-family house as in the pictures.

Mr. Woods asked if there were any further questions or comments. There was no response.

Mr. Woods asked to see the façade elevation of the new building. Mr. Woods commented he was not in favor of the 7-stories and agreed with the rest of the Commission's comments on the scale of the building overall but felt the actual size of the windows does not help the cause. There is no scale that addresses the brick industrial-looking building especially the top story windows. The 6th & 7th floor windows seem huge and the windows on the tower elements seem to be as large as a doorway. Mr. Woods stated he commends breaking up the façade into the three-tower elements, which breaks up the scale of the façade but the windows seem way over scaled. In older industrial building, typically lower floor windows were larger but the large windows in residential section seem out of proportion and easy to miss in line drawings. Once on site, it may not be well received by your firm or the community.

Mr. Hogg stated he sees the point and that is something they will work on.

Mr. Woods stated he was hesitant to open up the discussion to the public as this is an informational meeting for the Commission. Mr. Woods asked Mr. Mazzeo if was comfortable with allowing the public to speak and he responded, yes.



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Mr. Woods allowed Judy Norinsky, President, Historic Neighborhood Preservation Association, who asked about parking and neighborhood traffic.

Terry Adams, Board of Representatives, District #3, made comments on parking and neighborhood traffic.

Mr. Woods called for any further public comments. There was no response.

Mr. Woods stated he had a list of items to submit and he asked Mr. Mazzeo if he could go through them and Mr. Mazzeo responded, yes.

The questions submitted were:

- Use of Section 7.3 bonuses.
- How the church would be renovated under Section 7.3
- How Henry Street House would be renovated under Section 7.3
- Driveway of the Henry Street house
- Street landscaping particularly the parking lot along Henry Street and street sidewalk improvements.
- 7-story scale; scale of the windows; façade treatment; use of brick; use of more arched motif.
- Driveway and the tenants and how the driveway will be redone.

Mr. Woods asked Mr. Mazzeo if that was everything discussed? Mr. Mazzeo responded, yes.

Mr. Woods asked the Commission is there was missed? There was no response.

Mr. Gessaroli stated this is not a 7-story building; it is a 6-story building for building code and the height comes from stairs and bulk heads for stairs to access the roof.

Mr. Woods felt this was a misrepresentation of what the building looks like on the drawings.

Mr. Hogg stated for the next meeting they would bring renderings that will show the volume. The elevations that reach out; it's a flat elevation and shows in a way like a 7-story building but has huge amount of setbacks that were worked with from the beginning from Floors 2 through 6 and the 7th story has setbacks, grade and terraces throughout the entire 7th floor.

Mr. Hersh ask what the actual height is of the proposed building?

Mr. Mazzeo stated approximately 75 ft.

Mr. Woods thanked Mr. Mazzeo for presenting this to the Commission and for his time.



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**IV. Old Business.**

**A. 36 Ann Street.** Follow up review.

Mr. Woods stated at the last meeting Ms. Kalman was asked to make some simplifications and submit them to the City. Mr. Woods thought it might be useful to review the final documentation as this was approved. Mr. Woods thanked Ms. Kalman for her work on this project and the changes made it very easy to understand and the scale and quality is more in keeping with the neighborhood. The only item not liked was the 10 inch trim on the upper store or upper gable. Ms. Kalman stated she would look at it and could reduce the size.

Mr. Woods asked for additional comments. There was no response.

**B. South End Updates.**

Mr. Woods asked if there were any South End updates? There was no response.

**C. Historic Brochure Progress.**

*Presenter:* Rebecca Shannonhouse

Dr. Woods stated he did receive a note from Ms. Shannonhouse that she is working on a grant and has been talking to the State about a brochure.

**D. Demolition Permit Applications, As Noted.**

*Presenter:* David Woods

Mr. Woods stated there were no demolition permits except for the submission of some small residential projects, which generally do not get distributed unless they pertain to the South End or in a historic district.

**E. Historic Preservation Capital Grants**

Last month we were all invited to a meeting with Todd Levine. As part of an agreement, BLT created a \$100,000.00 grant for the work along Pacific Street and the disposition of that grant money is being managed by the State Historic Preservation Office is trying to figure out how to distribute that money and have created a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee right now includes HPAC and some other interested parties. There was a note today from Todd Levine that there will be another meeting scheduled and looking for input for a meeting date. Mr. Levine also forwarded a sample application form, a grants evaluation sheet and a follow-up from the last meeting as to how the grants application process will proceed.

Ms. Norinsky stated she did send Mr. Levine some comments regarding the section under Eligible Work with concerns about using the word "repair." Ms. Norinsky felt it should be more specific. Ms. Norinsky also commented on No. 2 Maximum Amount - what issue at the property. She asked what part of the building or problem will the grant funds repair or replace.



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Mr. Woods stated he did have a general question as to how the match works. It looks confusing and need clarification as to how those are incorporated into the grant application or how the monies are distributed as part of the grant proceeds.

Ms. Norinsky said that at the last meeting a 15% match was approved.

Mr. Woods asked is that a 15% match that is required of the owner to the application amount? If there is an application for \$10,000.00 does that mean there is \$1,500.00 for the 15% match?

Ms. Davis stated that is how she read it because you have to show proof you have the funds as part of the application.

Mr. Woods asked is that on top of the \$10,000.00 or is it part of the \$10,000.00 and be reduced?

Ms. Davis thought the amount would be reduced by the match amount but that is not clear.

Mr. Woods read that there may be relief to that 15%, if one shows a hardship.

Ms. Davis said that is not defined. Why would anyone not apply for that if the qualifications are not clearly explained and should be clearly spelled out.

Mr. Hersh stated it does not require a financial statement but if you can put in 15%...

Ms. Norinsky said she thought it was on top. Mr. Hersh agreed.

Ms. Kalman asked about how the funds will be monitored to make sure the funds are put into the project and how the funds are distributed, i.e. lump sum; 50% in the beginning/50% at the end. Who will be performing inspections?

Ms. Davis stated the new committee will be responsible; jobs will be divided among the members.

Ms. Norinsky asked if the match funds would be put into an escrow account?

Ms. Davis said she read in the paperwork about how funds would be guaranteed but no mention of escrow.

Ms. Noinsky stated HPAC would not be administering any funds; SHPO and the Preservation of Connecticut would be responsible for managing the funds.

Mr. Woods called for any other comments.

Ms. Norinsky stated it was not clear who would be performing the visits and follow-up calls.

Mr. Woods agreed that specifics of the Steering Committee were not clear.





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**V. Adjournment.**

Mr. Woods adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Written by: Lesley Capp, Assistant, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

DRAFT submitted: October 15, 2021.

***Meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2021 via. Zoom.***