

STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES # 3498
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th, 2007
7TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Theresa Dell, Claire Fishman, John Garnjost, Rose Marie Grosso, and Jay Tepper. Robin Stein and Todd Dumais attended for staff.

Regular Meeting:

The Vice Chairman, Mr. John Garnjost, opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Supplemental Capital Appropriations:

Stamford Museum & Nature Center, Main Building Renovation \$14,500

Mrs. Melissa Mulrooney, Executive Director and Mrs. Maria Nakian, Board Co-President of the Stamford Museum and Nature Center presented the request to the Board. Mrs. Mulrooney provided the Board with a letter outlining the specifics of the supplemental capital appropriations: unforeseen and unplanned for upgrades to the electrical service and relocated water piping.

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the request. Mrs. Dell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Stamford museum & Nature Center, Studio Building Renovation, \$54,100

Mrs. Mulrooney, Executive Director and Mrs. Nakian, Board Co-President of the Stamford Museum and Nature Center presented the request to the Board. Mrs. Mulrooney described the request as additional expenditures because of unforeseen building deterioration and conditions related to child health and safety.

The Board had several questions about the funds covering the full permanent repairs to the building, details about the fire-rated hallway and whether or not the Museum used the Stamford Engineering Department staff in there renovation projects. Mrs. Mulrooney answered each question.

Mrs. Dell moved to recommend approval of the request. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Engineering Bureau, Citywide Roadway Corrections, \$115,000

Ben Barnes, Director of Operations, spoke to the Board to provide the context for the two Engineering Bureau and Public Services-Highways supplemental appropriations requests. He stated that a number of items were identified from public feedback after the recent storm season, including citywide drainage and roadway issues and that the he has become aware that the population wants the City to take better care of its streets and drainage systems.

After Mr. Barnes' introduction, Louis Casolo, City Engineer, and Edward Gentile, Deputy City Engineer, described the citywide roadway corrections request. Mr. Casolo stated that the request was to address problems caused by the severity of the recent storms. He further went on to say that the citywide roadway corrections would help to reduce any further impacts to property owners.

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the request. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Engineering Bureau, Citywide Storm Drains, \$430,000

Mr. Casolo, City Engineer, and Mr. Gentile, Deputy City Engineer, described the citywide storm drains request. Mr. Casolo stated that the request was directly related to the recent storm events.

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the request. Mrs. Grosso seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Public Services-Highways, Street Resurfacing, \$1,000,000

Mr. Alex Tergis, Public Services Bureau Chief, described the street resurfacing request. He stated that the City is in a losing battle to maintain its streets due to increasing costs and unforeseen weather and needs this supplemental appropriation to reduce the backlog of streets needing attention.

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend approval of the request. Mrs. Fishman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Public Services-Highways, Environmental compliance, \$600,000

Mr. Alex Tergis, Public Services Bureau Chief, described the environmental compliance request. He stated that the supplemental appropriation is for the repair and maintenance of the catch basin structures throughout the City. Mr. Tergis described the recent storm events as highlighting the multitude of catch basins that need attention.

Mrs. Grosso moved to recommend approval of the request. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Land Use Bureau, Mill River Corridor Development, \$1,344,000

Mr. Stein, Land Use Bureau Chief, described the request. He stated that this money is the City's share of the river restoration project which includes the removal of the dam, walls on the banks of the river and river dredging. Mr. Stein said that with this money in place, it will help the project move forward once Congress appropriates the federal share of funding.

Mrs. Dell moved to recommend approval of the request. Mr. Tepper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the members present voting.

Zoning Board Referrals:

ZB 206-25 David Deming, Text amendment to add new Section 7.6 for reuse of residential buildings for Real Estate Brokers Offices.

Mr. Stein briefly described the issues and history of this application. He stated that there are a number of real estate offices on the eastside of Long Ridge Road just south of the Merritt Parkway. These properties are in a residential zone and the real estate offices, as presently used, are an unpermitted use.

Mr. John Leydon, attorney for the applicant, described the specific details of the application to the Board. He presented the Board with a petition of support from neighborhood residents and described the text amendment as a good solution to buffering the residential neighborhood from the heavily trafficked Long Ridge Road and adjoining office parks. Mr. Jim Murphy, an attorney for one of the other real estate office affected by this application, said that the court case involving these offices has gone to judgment. Burt Hoffman and Brendan Leydon representing the two remaining real estate offices affected by this application, presented similar points of support and noted that this was good zoning and consistent with the Master Plan.

Several members of the Board voiced concerns over the wisdom of the approving such an amendment. Specific concerns included the court cases and the spot zoning nature of such an amendment.

Mr. Stein said that this was a tough situation and a long standing dispute. He explained that he was hard-pressed to find anything in the Master Plan that supports the application and that form a logic stand-point; it makes sense from the viewpoint of the real estate offices, however, makes for messy zoning and master planning.

Mr. Tepper moved to recommend denial of the text amendment. Mrs. Dell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously with the members present voting.

ZB 207-29 Patricia Brennan, Text amendment to add new definition Art & Antique Shops and allow in the M-G District.

Mr. Stein briefly described the issues and history of this application. Mr. John Leydon, attorney for the applicant, described the specific details of the application to the Board.

Several members of the Board expressed concerns with the proposed language of the text amendment. Mr. Stein encouraged Mr. Leydon to meet with staff and refine the language to an appropriate level and come back to the Board.

The application was then deferred to a future meeting date.

ZB 207-30 Alex Goldblum & Barry Place LLC, Text amendment to add new definition Event Facility and allow in M-L and M-G districts. (Deferred to a future meeting date.)

ZB 207-31 Barry Place LLC, Special Exception to authorize an event facility in an existing building at 1 Barry Place. (Deferred to a future meeting date.)

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Mr. Stein informed the Board that there would be no meeting next week, Tuesday, September 18th and the next meeting would be on Tuesday, September 25th, as scheduled.

There being no further business or comments, the Vice Chairman closed the meeting at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rose Marie Grosso, Secretary

Note: These proceedings were recorded on tape and are available for review in the Land Use Bureau located on the 7th floor of Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, during regular business hours.