

**MINUTES OF THE ZONING BOARD PUBLIC  
HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING, HELD  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2013, 6:00 P.M.,  
4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER  
BUILDING, 888 WASHINGTON BLVD,  
STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT 06901**

Present for the Board: Thomas Mills, Bill Morris, Barry Michelson and Joanna Gwozdzowski.  
Present for staff: David Killeen, Associate Planner

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Mills called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Mr. Mills seated Alternate Joanna Gwozdzowski.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Michelson moved to change the order of the agenda, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and unanimously approved 4 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris and Gwozdzowski).

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Application 212-27 – Yale & Towne SPE, LLC (Y3)** - review additional information to relocate a garage entrance and to grant approval of the following: 1) Final Site Plan and Architectural Plan approval for development on the block identified as Y3 below to construct 252 residential units, and 315 parking spaces, landscaping, drainage, roadway and utility improvements; and 2) Coastal Site Plan approval, on a 20.35 acre site at 500 Pacific Street, located entirely within the block bordered by Canal, Market, Pacific and Henry Streets, which property is zoned South End Redevelopment District, North, Block 84, which property is zoned SRD-N South End Redevelopment District – North (*discussion of proposed South-end/Downtown Jitney Service*).

**Discussion of Proposed South End/Downtown Jitney Service**

Attorney John Freeman told the Board that packages of materials had been delivered Friday afternoon for their review. BLT has reviewed their collected data from tenant surveys regarding tenant jitney needs and have discussed with DSSD proposed routes. Attorney Freeman reviewed current routes and provided an overview of handout materials and maps with the Board. He summarized that they currently run 5 buses on a 30-35 minute route which results in approximately 655 trips per week. They reviewed their 2008 study estimating that of the 1,300 total residential units they thought 30% ridership was needed however, reality is nowhere close to that. A visual review of ridership shows 17 riders per trip. Attorney Freeman also phoned David Lee at CT Transit who has a similar route, Bus 26, which is a ½ hour loop from the train to downtown and CT Transit says they estimate about 10 people per trip providing 25 trips per day totaling 250 people per day.

Mr. Mills asked if BLT had a sense of the reverse commute; trips from the train to BLT properties. Attorney Freeman said 50/50 commuters are going from the train to the residences and from the train to the office complexes (Starwoods, etc). This is consistent with their surveys.

Attorney Freeman also discussed that the City has completed the purchase order/contract with the FTA to purchase new buses and then they hit the Government shutdown with furloughed employees and the purchase is temporarily on hold. Once approved, they expect the buses will arrive in 120 days. To supplement temporary routes, they propose to run two vans to comply with the 15 minute interval wait and then use the buses when they arrive on a long term program. The discussions with DSSD show they agree on the routes but BLT shows 12 stops and DSSD shows 15 stops.

Sandy Goldstein, President Downtown Special Services District (DSSD), described their proposed compromise with BLT to improve the jitney enterprise; take away stops and add more stops later in the day near entertainment and restaurant areas. Ms. Goldstein described two concerns: 1) jitney versus van because riders won't use a van due to seating congestion and difficulty of getting into the vehicle and 2) need a marketing plan because if people don't know about the service it's doomed to failure.

Mr. Michelson asked what the difference is between a van and jitney. John Ruotolo, VP Operations DSSD described the jitney has 24 seats with 2 seats on each side of a center aisle opposed to a van which has rows of seats similar to airport shuttles with sliding side doors to enter.

Carl Kuehner, President BLT, told the Board that BLT uses a mixed fleet to meet shuttle demands all over Stamford which fluctuates: vans, jitney's and a trolley. He expressed concern about how much attention is being spent on this 120 day bridge of time between the new buses being ordered and their delivery date. He stated that BLT never agreed to be in the position to assume the potential liability of shuttling patrons to and from downtown bars.

Ms. Goldstein reminded the Board that in 2007 when the original South-end development was proposed, it was touted as an improvement for the entire downtown and South-end area by incorporating one jitney running a ½ hour route to shuttle people to and from the train, restaurants, entertainment and living units.

Mr. Morris asked for someone to outline the differences between the BLT plan and the DSSD plan. Attorney Freeman stated the differences are between the number of trips per day and the cut off hour of service.

Mr. Mills asked if there was a copy of the original TOD proposed map route. Attorney Freeman discussed the TOD map and the three routes. Martin Levine provided a summary of the 2008 Harbor Point Zoning Board approvals specific to shuttle conditions and the Josh Lecar memo addressing jitney stops, routes and cut-off times. There were no conditions on "standard of service". Mr. Levine discussed why routes were selected: based on wide

enough streets to prevent traffic jams. He believes the DSSD and BLT are close to reaching a consensus of route and stops and said the DSSD could agree to a 30-minute headway.

Mr. Mills asked for a photo of the ordered buses and how many passengers it would hold. Discussion continued regarding the number of vehicles, number of hours of service, labor expenses and South-end parking demand ratio.

Ms. Gwozdzowski asked Ms. Goldstein what her concerns are with the marketing plan. Ms. Goldstein said it's a big unknown at this time. Attorney Freeman said they propose a website outlining the route, flyers and a concept that needs to be discussed and approved by Zoning Staff.

Discussion between Ms. Goldstein and Attorney Freeman and Carl Kuehner on routes and stops. Mr. Michelson and Mr. Mills mediated discussion between the two parties on the various topics: routes, stops and cut-off time.

Mr. Mills asked the parties to continue to tweak the specifics and to set up a physical meeting to continue the discussion. Attorney Freeman asked if they come to a consensus and provide the requested jitney plan, could BLT be allowed to get a foundation permit and start work.

DSSD will get an answer from their Board by October 11, 2013 and submit documents to the Zoning Staff.

Brief discussion on conditions the Board would approve.

The Zoning Board proposes to amend their approval of Y3 and in return to grant approval of BLT's request to seek a foundation permit (only), with the following conditions:

1. The proposed jitney service route will be based on the combined routes submitted by the Downtown Special Services District (DSSD), dated October 7, 2013. This particular schedule involves 215 trips per week.
2. There will be fourteen (14) stops on this route, as agreed between BLT and DSSD.
3. The jitney service will be operational in no more than 120 days, with a target start date of February 14, 2014.
4. To provide this service, BLT will utilize either a new jitney bus that is on order through the City or the bus that was featured in the sample graphic advertisement submitted by BLT for the October 7, 2013 Zoning Board meeting.
5. BLT will submit a detailed Marketing Plan for the jitney service for approval by Zoning Board Staff (Board?), based on the Fuss & O'Neill outline of September 6, 2013.
6. This jitney service will be undertaken on a pilot basis for a nine (9) month period during which time BLT will document ridership on the various routes and seek input from DSSD. At the end of nine months (11/14/2014), BLT will report to the Zoning Board on strengths and weaknesses of the jitney service and commit to continuing the

- service as approved or suggest an alternate route/schedule for Board approval, offering reasons therewith.
7. In addition to evidence of full compliance with other relevant conditions of approval for the Y3 development, approval of a building permit will be contingent on proof that the combined South-End/Downtown jitney service pilot program is fully operational and that the marketing plan has been approved and is in place.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Mills adjourned the meeting at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Michelson, Secretary  
Stamford Zoning Board