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MINUTES OF THE ZONING BOARD  
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING,  
HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2014, 7:00 P.M.,  
4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER  
BUILDING, 888 WASHINGTON BLVD,  
STAMFORD, CT 06901**

Present for the Board: Thomas Mills, Barry Michelson, Rosanne McManus, William Morris, David Stein and Joanna Gwozdzowski. Present for staff: Norman Cole, Land Use Bureau Chief and David Killeen, Associate Planner.

Mr. Mills called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

1. **Application 214-26 – ZONING BOARD, CITY OF STAMFORD, Text change,** to ADD Section 7.7 entitled: Special Stamford Transportation Center Platform and Commuter Parking which would apply to all properties zoned C-L or M-G and located within an established boundary of the Transportation Center to require any future development, redevelopment and/or alterations of buildings to apply for a special exception of the Zoning Regulations and establish special parking standards in order to promote parking, traffic flow and commuter access near the Stamford Transportation Center.

Mr. Mills opened the Public Hearing on this application. Mr. Michelson read the Planning Board referral letter into the record and asked that the Planning Board referral discussion be put into the record. Mr. Michelson read the text amendment for the record.

Mr. Mills asked if anyone from the public wanted to comment.

Thadea Sheridan, 42 Gurley Road, spoke in support and read from a letter for the Stamford Board of Realtors. Stamford needs convenient parking for commuters; don't increase commute time. We need a transportation center that works and the Zoning Board needs to have oversight regarding parking.

David Watkins, District 1 Board of Reps, 1763 Shippan Avenue, spoke in support of the application.

Kieran Ryan, District 1 Board of Reps, 345 Stamford Avenue spoke in support. He said Stamford needs a local oversight role. This issue is a big concern with the public.

Jim Cameron, resident of Darien spoke in support. He was on the State Commuter Council. Responses to the DOT RFP were kept secret. The Zoning Board needs to have control of development on State land.

Steve Loeb, 2241 Shippan Avenue, spoke in support. He was attracted to Stamford by low taxes, Yacht Haven Boatyard and convenient commute to New York (he submitted written comments into the record). State land is zoned M-G; doesn't permit residential hotels or office buildings.

Theodore Setzer, 21 Westscott Road, spoke in support. He commutes to New York. The easy commute was a locational decision; there's not enough parking now. Don't move parking farther from the Station.

Annie Taylor, 219 Old Long Ridge Road, spoke in support. Stamford needs a convenient commuting environment to support the City's economy.

Kevin Daily, 18 Oaklawn Avenue, spoke in support. This is needed to protect the City from the State; don't let the State dictate.

Jack Halpert, 77 Cricket Lane, spoke in support. The public needs a strong voice for the State to listen.

Paula Kroll, 80 Winding Brook Lane, spoke in support. She's a realtor and commuter convenience is important to the City.

Tammy Langalis, 11 Indian Spring, spoke in support. She's a realtor and the Zoning Board needs to take a strong stand to protect commuters. Adding only 270 spaces is too few. The waiting lists are long in other Fairfield County towns.

Terry Moore, 55 Rock Rimmon Drive, spoke in support. Asked the Board not to make the commuting experience harder.

Melissa Bontemps, 255 Strawberry Hill Avenue, spoke in support. The two year waiting list prevents her from employment opportunities in New York.

Sam Abernathy, 710 Riverbank Road, spoke in support. The current parking is ideal; covered with direct access to the station. Don't change it.

Sally Kraus, 100 Morgan Street, spoke in support. She described the history of parking at the Station. Safety is important; don't make women walk ¼ mile to their cars at night.

Mr. Morris had a question. The Planning Board refers to jurisdiction of Zoning. Is all the land State owned? Mr. Cole said no. On Manhattan Street, the parcels are private.

Ms. McManus asked Staff to copy Zoning Board members on legal questions being asked by the Planning Board of the law department.

Mr. Mills closed the Public Hearing on this item at 8:02pm.

2. **Application 214-24 – TWO YALE & TOWNE, LLC, 115 Towne St**, Applicant requests Zoning Board approval to amend the approved Final Site Plan to allow signage at 115 Towne Street in an SRD-N district.

Mr. Mills opened the Public Hearing on this application. Mr. Michelson read the Planning Board referral letter into the record.

Attorney Amy Souchuns explained that this sign permit was denied by the Zoning Enforcement Officer, appealed to the ZBA and upheld and appealed to the Superior Court and upheld.

Mr. Cole said this matter was also administratively considered and denied by the Zoning Board.

Attorney Souchuns said there was no formal application and testimony for the Zoning Boards administrative decision. The SRD-N is governed by Article III, Section 9K, 5.j Signage, by the C-N standards and by the Design Guidelines for Yale and Towne, revised to February 2009.

The Applicant submitted a plot plan to establish building length and cited prior approvals for Infiniti and Franklin Street (RMS) signage. There is nothing in the regulations regarding the height of signs.

Mr. Mills asked what were the proposed illumination.

Ms. Gwozdziowski asked how bright would it be and is there a comparable sign.

Mr. Stein said the C-N standards are modified by the design guidelines.

Attorney Souchuns said they agree the C-N standards apply but they don't prohibit the sign.

Mr. Mills asked if anyone from the public wanted to comment.

Terry Adams, President of the Southend NRZ, Board of Representatives and State Legislature said the applicant's argument would allow any sign anywhere and would impact residential neighborhoods. He thinks the size is too large.

Attorney John Freeman said the Infiniti sign was not illuminated when BLT owned it. This building has now been sold. The sign helps market the units.

Mr. Mills said he would like to continue the public hearing on this item until December 8, 2014 and closed further discussion.

3. **Application 214-27 – RMS MAIN STREET LLC & RIPPOWAM PARK COMPANY, LLC, Text change**, to Amend Article III, Section 9I, Mill River District (MRD) 3d. Usable Open Space; 3f. Building Setbacks; 4d. Signage; 5a. Below Market Rate Dwelling Unit Requirements; 7a and e. Mixed-Use Commercial Development and 8. Application Review Procedures.
4. **Application 214-28 – RMS MAIN STREET LLC & RIPPOWAM PARK COMPANY, LLC, Map Change**, Applicant proposes to change approximately 58,916 s.f. of property located at 896, 902, 908 & 914 Washington Boulevard, 135 & 159 Main Street and 8 Relay Place, Block #3, from C-G to MRD-D.

5. **Application 214-29 – RMS MAIN STREET, LLC & RIPPOWAM PARK COMPANY, LLC, 896, 902, 908 & 914 Washington Blvd; 135 & 159 Main St; 8 Relay Place, Special Exception, General Development Plan and Final Site & Architectural Plans, Coastal Site Plan Review** requesting approval of Special Exceptions, General Development Plans and Final Site and Architectural Plans and Coastal Site Plan Review to construct a 6.5 story mixed use building with 8,760 s.f. of ground floor restaurant/retail space with 122 residential units above with indoor and outdoor amenity space, parking and landscaping improvements on property located in a proposed MRD District.

Mr. Mills opened the Public Hearing on this application. Mr. Michelson read the Planning Board referral letter into the record.

Attorney William Hennessey introduced the consultant team, explained the review process including the pre-application and URC plan amendment with referral to the Board of Representatives and Planning Board. They've been in consultation with the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission. He explained the four applications and described the site plan which includes retail and 122 units of housing of which 11 units are BMR. He described parking and building amenities.

Attorney Lisa Feinberg described the text amendment application. Attorney Hennessey explained the sidewalk widths and changes to Rippowam Park. He also presented Traffic Engineer, Mani Poola's comments.

Mr. Mills asked if anyone from the public wanted to comment.

Ronald Brown, 14 Relay Place was present on behalf of the owner of a 6-family residence on the east side of the street, Mr. Scalzi. They expressed concerns with the demolition impacting the tenants.

After further discussion, Mr. Mills continued the public hearing on this application until the next meeting, December 1, 2014 at 7:00pm in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Cafeteria.

Mr. Mills took a brief recess at 10:32pm and resumed the meeting at 10:40pm.

### **REGULAR MEETING**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

##### **Minutes of November 17, 2014**

After a brief discussion, Mr. Michelson moved to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Ms. McManus and the motion was approved 5:0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris, McManus and Stein).

#### **PENDING APPLICATIONS:**

1. Application 214-07 – WEST SIDE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, LLC, 1937 West Main Street
2. Application 214-08 – WEST SIDE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, LLC, 1937 West Main Street LOT B-2
3. Application 214-21 – KEVIN ROMANO, 965 Hope Street, Special Exception and Final Site and Architectural Plans (*hearing scheduled for December 8, 2014*)
4. Application 214-25 – LUIS DIEGO LORET DE MOLA, Text change (*hearing scheduled for December 8, 2014*)

Mr. Mills tabled discussion on these applications to the next meeting scheduled December 1, 2014 at 7:00pm in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Cafeteria.

5. Application 214-30 – CITY OF STAMFORD, Text change

After a brief discussion, Mr. Stein moved to approve the text change as amended, seconded by Ms. McManus and the motion was approved 5:0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris, McManus and Stein). The text change will read as follows:

*This amendment is proposed to Amend Article IV, Section 13-G, Sign Regulations in the C-L, C-G, C-I and C-S zoning districts by amending paragraph 8 and adding a new paragraph 9 establishing standards for signage on buildings facing I-95.*

*TO AMEND Section 13, Sign Regulations regarding the C-L, C-G, C-I and C-S zoning districts as follows:*

*TO AMEND Section 13-G, paragraph 8 to read as follows:*

*8. Where a property is located in the C-I District (Intermediate Commercial District) or C-G District (General Commercial District) and abuts I-95, the abutting area shall be considered a "Front" yard for purposes of wall mounted signage. The total area of such wall signage on a building façade facing I-95 shall be restricted to one (1) square foot per linear foot of building frontage with a maximum of two (2) wall signs per such building frontage. Any such wall sign shall contain only the name or logo of the person or entity which owns the building or the name or logo of any tenant occupying at least twenty thousand (20,000) square feet of leasable floor area within the building, and shall not be used to promote any product line, service or like advertising.*

*TO AMEND Section 13-G, to add a NEW paragraph 9 to read as follows:*

*9. Where a building fronts on more than one street, one of which is I-95 or a state highway, is on a lot in excess of three (3) acres and is used exclusively for commercial purposes, the Zoning Board may authorize by issuance of a special exception wall signs to be mounted above the established roofline on a parapet façade of uniform height so long as said sign does not extend above the top of the parapet façade.*

*TO AMEND Section 13-D(g), to read as follows:*

*(g) All roof signs are prohibited except as expressly permitted under subsections G, H and L of this Section.*

6. Application 214-31 – CITY OF STAMFORD, ENGINEERING BUREAU, 83 Lockwood Avenue - Special Exception

Mr. Mills tabled discussion on this application to the next meeting scheduled December 1, 2014 at 7:00pm in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Cafeteria.

7. Application 214-26 – ZONING BOARD, CITY OF STAMFORD, Text change

The Board discussed the Planning Board referral and the request for a legal opinion.

Mr. Morris wanted to know the ownership of the building on South State Street.

Mr. Stein asked to know the Planning Board's legal question poised.

After further discussion, Mr. Michelson moved to approve the text change, seconded by Mr. Morris and the motion was approved 5:0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris, McManus and Stein). The text change will read as follows:

*This amendment is proposed to establish zoning standards and a special exception review procedure for changes to the Stamford Transportation Center and associated commuter parking facilities.*

*TO AMEND Article III, by adding a NEW Section 7.7 to read as follows:*

***SECTION 7.7 SPECIAL STAMFORD TRANSPORTATION CENTER PLATFORM AND COMMUTER PARKING***

***A – PURPOSE***

*Purpose: The Stamford Zoning Board recognizes that the Stamford Transportation Center is the busiest Metro-North station after Grand Central Terminal in New York City. The Stamford Transportation Center is an important regional intermodal transportation hub serving the region and the City of Stamford.*

*“The downtown will only stay as prosperous as it stays convenient to mass transit riders as well as to automobile drivers, and to pedestrians as well as to commuters.” (Stamford Master Plan 2002)*

***B – APPLICATION***

*The requirements of this section shall apply to all property zoned C-L or M-G and located within or partially within the area bounded as follows: commencing at the Mill*

*River and proceeding easterly along the southerly boundary of the Metro North Railroad right of way, then southerly along Washington Boulevard, then easterly along Henry Street, then northerly along Atlantic Street, then easterly along the Stamford Urban Transitway, then northerly along Pacific Street then westerly along I-95, then southerly along the Mill River to the point of beginning.*

### **C – SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUIREMENTS**

*All development, redevelopment and alterations of buildings and changes of use of those buildings and structures constituting the Stamford Transportation Center, including parking facilities on separate parcels utilized for commuter parking, shall be subject to the issuance of a Special Exception by the Zoning Board, in conformance with the application requirements and review standards of Section 19-3.2 and Section 7.2 of these Regulations and all other applicable zoning standards of these Regulations, and the following special standards:*

*The Stamford Transportation Center shall serve to enhance and facilitate the commuting experience with priority given to:*

- 1. Promoting parking, easy access and convenience for commuters and business travelers;*
- 2. Minimizing traffic and congestion at and around the Stamford Transportation Center, including access from local streets, and I-95, and provide vehicular entry to commuter garages located at the Stamford Transportation Center structure and platform;*
- 3. Providing sheltered access from the garage to the station platforms for maximum commuter convenience;*
- 4. Providing parking, to accommodate existing and future demand;*
- 5. Designing the Stamford Transportation Center station and the area around to accommodate waiting taxis, shuttle bus stops, bus stops, passenger pickups and bicycles.*

*In the event that clarifications of any of the sections, terms or conditions of this section are required, a written notice shall be submitted solely to the Zoning Board. The Board may elect to hold a public hearing. Acting in its administrative capacity, the Zoning Board shall review all notices and provide all clarifications.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Administrative review of signage, 101 Park Place; 101 Washington Blvd

After a brief discussion, Mr. Mills tabled this item to the next meeting scheduled for December 1, 2014 at 7:00pm in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Cafeteria.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Michelson, Secretary  
Stamford Zoning Board