

## Schedule B – Project Narrative & Statement of Findings

### Introduction & Site History

At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Glenbrook was a “decidedly middle class” neighborhood.<sup>1</sup> Many homes in existence at that time were rented by employees of the manufacturing or public utility industries. Maple Tree Avenue was emblematic of these demographics. In 1911, Francis A. Bartlett (pictured below) purchased the property located at 31 Maple Tree Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut (the “Property”), a few years after founding the Stamford-based company Bartlett Tree Experts.



Mr. Bartlett later sold the Property to Edward Irvine Rudd, a local engineer and public utilities employee. Mr. Rudd was an active member of the Stamford community, serving as chair of the Stamford Town Plan Commission for ten years. Mr. Rudd constructed a single-family residence on the Property sometime between 1921 and 1922 (the “Historic Home”) depicted below.



Since the construction of the Historic Home, Maple Tree Avenue has developed into a multifamily neighborhood. Neighboring properties include:

1. Maple Court Condos at 9 Maple Tree Avenue (20 units)

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<sup>1</sup>“The History of Glenbrook,” pg. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Bartlett Tree Experts, “Bartlett’s History,” available at <https://www.bartlett.com/bartlett-history.cfm> (last visited December 1, 2023).

2. Olde Glenbrook Mews at 21 Maple Tree Avenue (7 units)
3. Maple Manor Estates at 27 Maple Tree Avenue (7 units); and
4. Gray Stone Court at 35 Maple Tree Avenue (6 units).

In 2021, 31 Maple Tree LLC (the “Applicant”) purchased the Property. The Applicant was drawn to the Property by the historic nature of the Historic Home, which features many of its original, exterior features, such as its siding and general arrangement.<sup>3</sup> Other improvements to the Property include a paved driveway that effectively extends through the length of the Property, and associated off-street parking areas.

### **Project Area and Development Site**

In total, the Property is 14,125 sf and is within the R-5 Zone. The Property is surrounded by several parcels utilized for multifamily purposes as noted above. The Property is designated as Category 3 (Residential – Low Density Multifamily) and is bounded in yellow in the aerial image below.



### **Description of Proposed Development**

The Applicant proposes to rehabilitate the Historic Home located on the Property into a two-family structure. The Applicant also proposes constructing 4 3-bedroom townhomes behind the Historic Structure (the “Proposed Addition”). Each townhome will include a private, enclosed

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<sup>3</sup>See Historic Assessment of 31 Maple Tree Avenue, Stamford, CT prepared by Daryn Reyman-Lock, Ph.D (the “Historic Assessment”).

garage with enough room to accommodate 2 vehicles. Two 2-bedroom homes are proposed to be located within the Historic Home. The Proposed Addition will be comprised of an asphalt shingle roof, vinyl siding, and a stone base along its front façade. As noted in the enclosed Historic Assessment, the Proposed Addition will feature windows and doors that match those found on the Historic Home. The Proposed Addition is depicted in the below elevation.



Enhanced site landscaping and storm water systems are also proposed.

Approval of the proposal will ensure that the Historic Home remains a part of the Maple Tree Avenue streetscape as it has for the past 100 years. In accordance with Section 8 (formerly Section 7.3) of the Zoning Regulations of the City of Stamford (the “Zoning Regulations”), the Applicant will execute a Historic Preservation Façade Agreement ensuring the preservation and maintenance of the Historic Structure.

The Property is within walking distance of the Glenbrook Metro North Train Station, providing easy access to public transport for future residents of the proposed redevelopment. The Property is also close to the businesses and restaurants located along Glenbrook Road and Crescent Street. This centralized location will likely encourage pedestrian, rather than vehicular travel to and from the Property.

### **Requested Approvals**

To facilitate this proposal, the Applicant seeks approval of the following applications:

- (1) An application to include the Historic Structure located on the Property on the Cultural Resources Inventory pursuant to Section 8.B.2.c. (formerly Section 7.3.B.2.c.) of the Zoning Regulations of the City of Stamford (the “Zoning Regulations”);

- (2) A Text Amendment Application proposing an amendment to Section 8 (formerly Section 7.3.) of the Zoning Regulations.<sup>4</sup> The proposed amendment will grant the Stamford Zoning Board the authority to reduce or waive the regulations applicable to parking and loading spaces in yards;
- (3) A Site Plan Application pursuant to Sections 2.D. and 8 (formerly Sections 19.D. and 7.3., respectively) to permit the construction of the proposal; and
- (4) A Special Permit Application pursuant to Sections 2.C. and 8 (formerly Sections 7.3. and 19.C., respectively) seeking the following Special Permit requests:
  - i. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.4.a.2.a. (formerly Sec. 7.3.C.4.a.2.a.) of the Zoning Regulations to permit a total of 6 homes on the Property in lieu of the 4 homes permitted by right;
  - ii. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.3.a. (formerly Sec. 7.3.C.3.a.) of the Zoning Regulations to permit 1 parking space per proposed home;
  - iii. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.3.c. of the Zoning Regulations to permit the location of onsite parking within the setbacks established by Table 12.5 of the Zoning Regulations;
  - iv. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.3.c. of the Zoning Regulations (as proposed in the Text Amendment Application) to waive the requirements set forth in Table 12.6 (Minimum Distances of Parking Areas from lot Lines and Buildings) of the Zoning Regulations and permit a turnaround space in front of the Historic Home with appropriate screening;
  - v. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.4.c.(2) (formerly Sec. 7.3.C.4.c.(2)) of the Zoning Regulations to permit total Building Height of 4 stories in lieu of the 3 stories typically permitted;
  - vi. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.4.b.(1) (formerly Sec. 7.3.C.4.b.) of the Zoning Regulations to permit a Rear Yard Setback of 24.3' in lieu of the 30.0' typically permitted;
  - vii. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.4.b.(1) (formerly Sec. 7.3.C.4.b.) of the Zoning Regulations to permit a Side Yard Setback (southerly) of 10.0' in lieu of the 15.0' typically permitted; and
  - viii. Special Permit Approval pursuant to Sec. 8.C.4.e. (formerly Sec. 7.3.C.4.e.) to permit Light and Air along the south side of the Property of no less than 10.0' for the Proposed Addition and 15.5' for the Historic Home.

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<sup>4</sup>While this Application was pending, the Zoning Board approved App. No. 223-39, which amended § 8.C.3. to include a new subsection (c). This subsection permits the Zoning Board to reduce or waive the development standards of Table 12.5 (Minimum Distances of *Parking Areas* from *Lot Lines* and *Buildings*). Accordingly, the Applicant seeks Special Permit Approval pursuant to § 8.C.3 as recently amended by the Zoning Board, and as proposed in the companion Text Change.

## Statement of Findings

### 1. Site Plan Standards

The proposal is consistent with the Site Plan standards in Section 2.D.4. (formerly Section 19.D.4.) of the Zoning Regulations as follows:

#### a. Site Plan Standards

*In reviewing site plans the Zoning Board shall take into consideration the purpose of these Regulations, including the purpose of the applicable zoning district and the goals and policies of the Stamford Master Plan, the public health, safety and general welfare and convenience of the general public and the maintenance of property values. In its review the Board may modify a site plan or condition an approval to the extent necessary to conform the site plan to the following standards and objectives:*

*(a) Safe, adequate and convenient vehicular traffic circulation, operation, parking and loading, and pedestrian circulation, both within and without the site.*

*(1) The number, locations and dimensions of all vehicular and pedestrian access drives and walkways, parking spaces, drop-off and loading areas, and provisions for handicapped access shall conform to the standards of Section 12 of these Regulations, to the adopted design criteria and engineering practices of the Dept. of Traffic and Parking, and all other applicable standards. Such areas shall be constructed of suitable hard surface materials and maintained in good condition.*

The number, locations and dimensions of all vehicular and pedestrian access drives and walkways, parking spaces, drop-off areas, loading areas, and handicapped access areas conform to the applicable provisions of Sections 8 and 12 of the Zoning Regulations.

The proposal has been designed in accordance with Section 8 of the Zoning Regulations, which requires 1 parking space for each dwelling unit associated with a historic preservation redevelopment. This ratio would require 6 parking spaces for the 6 apartment homes proposed. A total of 12 parking spaces are provided on the Property. As such, each home will have access to 2 designated parking spaces. Additionally, all parking areas are set back at least 5' from the property line, but Spaces 2 and 3 will be within 5' of Proposed Units 3 and 6, respectively. The configuration of these spaces is appropriate because it will allow for additional parking while preserving the Historic Home and providing new housing opportunities for current and future Stamford residents.

*(2) The number of vehicle access drives shall be minimized and shall be located and designed to provide safe and convenient turning movements and safe sightline as determined in accordance with the Geometric Highway Design Standards of the Conn. Dept. of Transportation.*

Vehicular access to the Property will be provided along Maple Tree Avenue as shown on the enclosed plans. The width and location of the curb cut is in accordance with the applicable standards of the Zoning Regulations.

- (3) *Area streets and traffic controls shall be determined to have adequate capacity to service the site without causing undue congestion or hazardous conditions.*

The Property is in walking distance to the Glenbrook Metro North Train Station, and the shops and businesses in the heart of the Glenbrook neighborhood. This convenient location will encourage pedestrian, rather than vehicular travel, in many instances. As such, it is unlikely that this modest proposal will have any perceivable impact on traffic conditions.

(b) *The protection of environmental quality, landscaping of open space and harmony with existing development. The Board shall take into consideration the following features and standards:*

- (1) *The location, height, design and materials of walls, fences, hedges and plantings shall be appropriate to the vicinity and shall suitably screen parking, loading, garbage collection facilities, outside storage areas, accessway drives, utility installations and other such features; such landscaping shall be appropriate to the general character of the vicinity and consider the proximity and nature of abutting uses and the level of use of adjoining public streets and walkways.*

900+/- sf of at grade open space is proposed. In addition, each home in the Proposed Addition will have access to a 55 sf balcony.

- (2) *All open space areas, exclusive of undisturbed natural areas, shall be suitably landscaped to the satisfaction of the Board. Site landscaping shall be performed at a minimum dollar value equivalent to one shade tree of 2.5 inch caliper for every two hundred (200) square feet of landscaped area. In multi-family developments, open space shall be designed to provide functional outdoor living and play areas meeting the needs of intended residents.*

The Applicant proposes maintaining onsite landscaping in accordance with the standards of the Zoning Regulations as further detailed within the enclosed Landscape Plan.

- (3) *Soil erosion, sediment and the release of excessive dust shall be controlled through implementation of suitable short term and long term controls in accordance with the standards and procedures of Section 9.C.*

Comprehensive Civil Plans depicting storm water, soil erosion and sediment control features prepared by D'Andrea Surveying & Engineering, PC are enclosed with this application. These plans ensure the standards and procedures of Section 9.C. of the Regulations are satisfied.

- (4) *Site development shall seek to preserve existing specimen trees, historic structures and other significant natural features of the site. Accordingly, the premature demolition and site clearance of prospective development sites is specifically discouraged and may be taken into consideration in subsequent site plan reviews.*

Approval of the application will result in the preservation of the Historic Structure that has been located on the Property since 1922.

- (5) *Artificial lighting, and site generated noise, odors, particles and other disturbances shall be controlled to avoid interference with the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties. The location, height, design and arrangement of outside lighting shall be consistent with safety such as to avoid glare on any other lot and to avoid hazards to traffic on any street.*

All artificial lighting and site generated noise and other disturbance shall be controlled and will not interfere with the use and enjoyment of the neighboring properties. Furthermore, the location, height, design and arrangement of outside lighting shall be consistent with safety to avoid glare on any other lot and to avoid hazards to traffic on adjacent roadways.

- (6) *Available public utilities shall be adequate in capacity to safely service the requirements of the site. Surface water drainage facilities shall be adequate to safely drain the site while minimizing the risk of downstream flooding and erosion. Where infrastructure capacity is judged not to be adequate the Board may accept a binding agreement to perform suitable improvements.*

A comprehensive drainage plan and drainage report is submitted with the enclosed materials. The plans illustrate the adequacy and availability of public utilities for the site. Additionally, the drainage report shows surface water drainage facilities will sufficiently and safely drain the Property while minimizing the risk of downstream flooding and erosion and adverse impacts.

- (7) *Adequate provision shall be made for emergency vehicle access, fire lanes, and safe fire flows, upon the recommendation of the Fire Marshall and the public water utility.*

Emergency first responders will be able to access the Property safely and conveniently.

- (8) *The arrangement, location, apparent bulk, architectural features, materials, texture and color of proposed buildings and structures shall establish an architectural character and overall site design compatible with the scale and general character of the vicinity.*

As stated in the enclosed Historic Assessment, the Proposed Addition is “sympathetic” to the Historic Home. Notably, the Proposed Addition will feature windows and doors to match those found on the Historic Home. Points of articulation along the façade of

the Proposed Addition further ensure the proposal is compatible with the scale and general character of other multifamily uses within the vicinity of the Property.

- (9) *Building setbacks and the configuration of open space shall be appropriate to the existing structures on adjoining properties and established patterns of use of side and rear yard areas, and to the existing physical conditions of the site.*

The Historic Home will remain in its current location. The proposed multifamily use is appropriate and consistent with surrounding multifamily uses.

- (10) *No use shall be permitted that will cause or result in:*  
*-dissemination of dust, smoke, observable gas or fumes, odor, noise or vibration beyond the immediate site of the building in which such use is conducted, or*  
*-unusual hazard of fire or explosion or other physical hazard to any adjacent buildings, or*  
*-harmful discharge of liquid materials, or*  
*-unusual traffic hazard or congestion due to the type of vehicles required in the use or due to the manner in which traffic enters or leaves the site of the use.*

No nuisance or hazardous conditions are anticipated, consistent with the engineering materials provided herein.

- (11) *All buildings and grounds and other structures shall be maintained in good repair and in safe, clean and sanitary condition. All landscaping required pursuant to an approved site plan shall be installed to the satisfaction of the Director of Parks and Recreation and shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with an agreement to be made part of the application of record, which agreement shall be enforced by the Zoning Enforcement Officer, upon advice of the Director.*

The Applicants are amenable to a condition of approval requiring the execution of a Landscape Maintenance Agreement and a Drainage Maintenance Agreement prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

## **2. Special Permit Standards**

The Application complies with Section 2.C.2. (formerly Section 19.C.2.) of the Zoning Regulations as follows:

*Special Permits shall be granted by the reviewing board only upon a finding that the proposed use or structure or the proposed extension or alteration of an existing use or structure is in accord with the public convenience and welfare after taking into account, where appropriate:*

- (1) *The location and nature of the proposed site including its size and configuration, the proposed size, scale and arrangement of structures, drives and parking areas and the proximity of existing dwellings and other structures.*

The 4 homes within the Proposed Addition are in keeping with the adjacent multifamily residential use, which also maintains 4 “townhome” style dwellings immediately to the east of the Property. It should be noted that the proposal complies with the underlying Building Coverage standards of the R-5 Zone. Proposed setbacks will not adversely impact neighboring uses, will facilitate the preservation of the Historic Home and are greater than the minimum setbacks achievable under Section 8 of the Zoning Regulations. Specifically, the Applicant proposes maintaining a Side Yard Setback of 10.0’ even though Section 8 permits a Side Yard Setback of 7.5’. Similarly, the proposed Rear Yard Setback of 24.3’ is substantially larger than the 15’ achievable under Section 8. The location of all parking areas is similarly appropriate given the preservation of the Historic Home and the construction of additional housing opportunities for current and future Stamford residents.

- (2) *The nature and intensity of the proposed use in relation to its site and the surrounding area. Operations in connection with special permit uses shall not be injurious to the neighborhood, shall be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of these Regulations, and shall not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration, artificial lighting or other potential disturbances to the health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of property than the public necessity demands.*

The proposed multifamily community will have no adverse impact whatsoever on the surrounding community by reason of noise, fumes, vibration, artificial lighting or other potential disturbance to the health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of property that the public necessity demands. The Proposed Addition and rehabilitated Historic Home will enhance the neighborhood.

- (3) *The resulting traffic patterns, the adequacy of existing streets to accommodate the traffic associated with the proposed use, the adequacy of proposed off-street parking and loading, and the extent to which proposed driveways may cause a safety hazard, or traffic nuisance.*

The Property is in walking distance to the Glenbrook Metro North Train Station, and the shops and businesses in the heart of the Glenbrook neighborhood. This convenient location will encourage pedestrian, rather than vehicular travel, in many instances. As such, it is unlikely that this modest proposal will have any perceivable impact on traffic conditions.

- (4) *The nature of the surrounding area and the extent to which the proposed use or feature might impair its present and future development.*

The proposal is consistent with neighboring multifamily residential uses along Maple Tree Avenue.

- (5) *The Master Plan of the City of Stamford and all statements of the purpose and intent of these regulations.*

The Property is within Master Plan Category 3 (Residential – Low Density Multi-Family). Category 3 is “intended to provide for and protect single-family dwellings and the least intensive of multifamily developments (i.e., garden apartments or similar condominium-

type units . . . .”<sup>5</sup> The proposal, which will result in a multifamily community consisting of 6 homes, is in keeping with the overall goals of Category 3. The proposal will also further the City’s larger policy goals of preserving historic structures, and providing a diverse housing stock for City residents from at various life stages.

The proposal is also in keeping with the following goals and policies found in the Master Plan:

- **6.3 – Historic Preservation:** “Encourage [the] preservation and rehabilitation of significant historic structures through special use permits and density incentives.”<sup>6</sup>

The proposal utilizes the incentives contained in Section 8 of the Zoning Regulations to facilitate the rehabilitation of the Historic Home.

- **6A.1:** Balance new development with preservation of existing residential communities.<sup>7</sup>

The proposal balances the development of new homes with the rehabilitation of a residential structure originally constructed 100 years ago.

- **6.C.2:** Promote development of a variety of housing types. Create a mix of housing units that 1) includes housing suitable for families with children; 2) promotes housing prototypes that respect and complement the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood; 3) maximizes the use of cost-effective construction methods; and 4) promotes flexible housing models for the elderly in locations that are accessible to transit.<sup>8</sup>

The proposed development will result in the construction of 4 3-bedroom homes and the rehabilitation of the Historic Home into 2 2-bedroom homes. All 6 proposed homes are in keeping with the variety of residential uses along Maple Tree Avenue, are appropriate for families with children and will add to the diversity of Stamford’s housing stock.

- **“Policy BGS1:** Create vibrant, mixed-use centers that are pedestrian and transit-friendly” in the Glenbrook neighborhood.

The Property is within walking distance of the Glenbrook Metro North Station and the various commercial uses in the heart of the Glenbrook community. As such, future residents will have ample opportunity to utilize pedestrian (rather than vehicular) modes of transportation.

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<sup>5</sup>Master Plan, pg. 192.

<sup>6</sup>Master Plan, pg. 163.

<sup>7</sup>Master Plan, pg. 133.

<sup>8</sup>Master Plan, pg. 134.

- “Policy BGS3: Preserve and protect neighborhood character and quality-of-life”<sup>9</sup> in Glenbrook.

The rehabilitation of the Historic Home is in furtherance of protecting the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

### 3. Section 8 Standards

The Application complies with Section 8.C.1. (formerly Section 7.3.C.1.) of the Zoning Regulations as follows:

*An application for Special Permit under this Subsection shall be required to meet the criteria of Section 2.C.2 and the following findings and conditions:*

- Proposed use and site plan are compatible with and implement the objectives and policies of Stamford's Master Plan;*

The Property is within Master Plan Category 3 (Residential – Low Density Multi-Family). Category 3 is “intended to provide for and protect single-family dwellings and the least intensive of multifamily developments (i.e., garden apartments or similar condominium-type units...”<sup>10</sup> The proposal, which will result in a multifamily community consisting of 6 homes, is in keeping with the overall goals of Category 3. The proposal will also further the City’s larger policy goals of preserving historic structures, and providing a diverse housing stock for City residents from at various life stages. The proposal furthers other goals and policies of the Master Plan as analyzed above.

- Proposed use and site plan are superior to a plan conforming to the standard dimensional requirements and use standards of the underlying zoning district and will not impair the future development of the surrounding area;*

The setback, height and density standards of the R-5 Zone would prevent the construction of an addition that is both sympathetic to the Historic Home and provides a right-sized number of homes on the Property. Adequate Light & Air will be provided and will further facilitate the preservation of the Historic Home. Section 8.C.3.c. will allow the Applicant to provide each proposed home with 2 parking spaces, while at the same time constructing additional housing to serve City residents.

- Proposed use and site and architectural plans serve to rehabilitate, restore, Critically Reconstruct, or preserve Historic Structures or Sites, and meet the HPAC guidelines for Historic Preservation (once they are recommended by HPAC and adopted by the Zoning Board), or the appropriate Standards and Guidelines of the Secretary of the Interior, as amended from time to time and published on the National Park Service website, as applied by HPAC and the Zoning Board; and*

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<sup>9</sup>Master Plan, pg. 147.

<sup>10</sup>Master Plan, pg. 192.

The proposal will result in the preservation of the Historic Home located on the Property. As a condition of approval, the Applicant will execute a Historic Façade Easement in accordance with Section 8 of the Zoning Regulations.

*d. The loss of said Historic Structure or Historic Site would be detrimental to the neighborhood character, Local Historic District or the cultural and historical heritage and identity of the City of Stamford.*

The 100+/- year old Historic Home is tied to meaningful individuals who have contributed to the history of the City of Stamford. According to the enclosed Historic Assessment, the Historic Home “retains much of its original architectural character on the exterior.”

### **Conclusion**

The proposed preservation of the Historic Home and construction of the proposed addition are in furtherance of the City’s preservation and housing goals.