STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025
(With corrections from the December 2, 2025 Meeting)
REGULAR MEETING
VIA THE INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL
6:30 P.M.

TEAMS MEETING
Meeting ID: 252 634 701 761 8
Passcode: pP7u4Ta2

Stamford Planning Board Members present were: Voting Members: Jennifer Godzeno, Chair; and Ravi Subramanian, Secretary. Alternates: William Levin (Joined at 6:42 p.m.) and Chester Salit. Absent: Jeremy Linder, Vice Chair. Present for staff: Lindsey Cohen, Associate Planner.

Ms. Godzeno called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

Ms. Godzeno introduced the members of the Board and staff present and introduced the first item on the agenda.

***PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES*:**

November 5, 2025 (Capital Budget): After a brief discussion Mr. Salit moved to ***APPROVE*** the Planning Board Regular Meeting Minutes of November 5, 2025; Mr. Subramanian seconded the motion, and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 3-0 (Godzeno, Salit and Subramanian). (Mr. Levin was ineligible to vote as he was not present at the November 5, 2025 meeting.)

Ms. Godzeno noted that an updated 2026 Meeting Schedule was sent to everyone and asked if there were any other changes; there was no response.

Ms. Godzeno introduced the next agenda item.

***SUBDIVISIONS*:**

1. **SUBDIVISION #4059 - 188 EMERY DRIVE (2 LOTS):** Applicant is proposing to subdivide this 1.0098-acre parcel into two (2) lots, which is commonly known as 188 Emery Drive. The property is located directly southwest of the intersection of Emery Drive East and Knobloch Lane with Emery Drive East at the eastern property boundary and Knobloch Lane at the northern property boundary. The property is in the R-20 District (Single-Family).

Ms. Godzeno read the legal notice into the record as follows:

LEGAL NOTICE
PLANNING BOARD
THE CITY OF STAMFORD

Notice is hereby given that the ***STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD*** *has received the following application for the subdivision of property into two (2) parcels for review at its November 18, 2025 meeting conducted via the Internet and/or Conference Call at 6:30 p.m. This item may be moved to a future meeting time and date at the discretion of the Planning Board.*

Subdivision #4059 - Janice & William Mark Linnan - 188 Emery Drive East (2 Lots): Applicant is proposing to subdivide this 1.0098-acre parcel into two (2) lots, which is commonly known as 188 Emery Drive (Assessor #001-1147). The property is located directly southwest of the intersection of Emery Drive East and Knobloch Lane with Emery Drive East at the eastern property boundary and Knobloch Lane at the northern property boundary. The property is in the R-20 District (Single-Family).

Copies of the above-referenced application along with information on how to attend the meeting will be available on the Planning Board's website.

The hearing may be continued to such time and place as will be announced by the Planning Board. Hearing impaired persons wishing to attend the meeting who require an interpreter may make arrangements by contacting the City of Stamford's ADA Coordinator at (203) 977-7993 or email: CHughes1@StamfordCT.gov at least two (2) working days prior to the meeting.

ATTEST: JENNIFER GODZENO, CHAIR
STAMFORD PLANNING BOARD

Dated at the City of Stamford this 10th day of November 2025.

The property is in the RES1 (Residential - Single-Family) Future Land Use Category. This category is defined as low-density residential areas primarily dedicated to single-family detached homes. This subdivision is aligned with the intention of the category because it splits an oversized lot into two zoning-compliant lots allowing for one additional single-family home on one lot and the maintenance of the existing home on the second lot.

The Application was referred to the Transportation Traffic and Parking Department (TTP), Health Department, Fire Marshal, Environmental Protection Board (EPB) staff and Engineering Department. Each department provided comments and have no concerns with the subdivision of property proceeding. Each department will have additional opportunities for review and comment on actual building plans before a single-family house is ready to be built and occupied.

The Applicant is proposing a 10% open space set-aside (4,400 sq. ft.) where only 10% is required. The 10% covers an area of flagged wetlands and area upland of the wetlands. Staff find this application of conservation easement area appropriate.

The existing lot is a corner lot with two frontages. The existing house has a driveway off Emery Drive East. The new lot will be fronting Knobloch Lane and will be accessed via Knobloch Lane so no access or utility easements will be required.

Leonard D'Andrea, D'Andrea Surveying & Engineering, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After some discussion, Mr. Levin made a **motion to *APPROVE* Subdivision #4059** with the following conditions recommended by the Environmental Protection Board (EPB) in a memorandum from Jaclyn Chapman, Environmental Analyst, dated September 15, 2025, to Lindsey Cohen, Associate Planner and the landscaping and screening conditions recommended in a letter submitted by Mario P. Muselli, Esq., representing Itai & Sigal Zarmi, dated November 12, 2025:

1. Work shall conform to the following submitted plans and documents:
   - Plan entitled "Topographic Survey Prepared for Mark Linna & Janice Linnan - 188 Emery Drive East, Stamford, Connecticut" prepared by D'Andrea Surveying & Engineering, P.C. - certified by Robert L. Liddel Jr., CT LS #15775 - dated August 14, 2025.
   - Plan entitled "Subdivision Map Prepared for Janice Linnan & William Mark Linnan - 188 Emery Drive East and Knobloch Lane, Stamford, Connecticut" prepared by D'Andrea Surveying & Engineering, P.C. - certified by Robert L. Liddel Jr. - dated August 19, 2025.
   - Plans entitled "Conceptual Development - 188 Emery Drive East, Stamford, Connecticut" prepared by D'Andrea Surveying & Engineering, P.C. - Conceptual Development Plan - Sedimentation & Erosion Control Plan - Notes & Details - Sight Distance Plan - certified by Leonard C. D'Andrea, CT PE #14869 - dated August 14, 2025.
   - "Drainage Summary Report" prepared by D'Andrea Surveying & Engineering, P.C. - 188 Emery Drive East - certified by Leonard C. D'Andrea - dated August 14, 2025.
   - "Wetland and Watercourse Delineation", prepared for Mark and Janice Linnan, 188 Emery Drive East, Stamford, Connecticut, prepared by William L. Kenny of William Kenny Associates - dated April 8, 2024.
2. Submission for EPB staff review and approval of a standard Conservation Agreement consistent with the conservation easement areas shown on D'Andrea's "Subdivision Map" dated August 19, 2025. The applicant shall execute and file the approved agreement concurrently with the filing of the final subdivision map.
3. The conservation easement area established under the terms of the Conservation Agreement shall be field staked

with permanent markers prior to issuance of a building permit and the start of site activities. Iron pins and EPB approved conservation signage shall be installed along the easement boundaries at turning points and intervals of no less than 100 feet.

4. Engineering Department approval of the stormwater management design shall be obtained prior to issuance of a building permit and the start of any site activity.

5. Final civil, landscaping, and other related plans shall be subject to review and approval of EPB staff prior to issuance of a building permit and the start of any site activity.

6. Submission of a performance bond or certified check or other acceptable form of surety to secure the timely and proper performance of erosion and sedimentation controls, drainage, and landscaping. A detailed estimate of these costs shall be supplied to EPB staff for approval prior to the submission of the performance surety. The performance surety shall be submitted to EPB Staff prior to issuance of a building permit and the start of any site activity.

7. Property boundaries shall be staked in the field by a Connecticut licensed surveyor prior to the start of any site activity.

8. All sediment and erosion controls, including a high visibility construction fence along the edge of the conservation easement area, shall be installed and approved in writing by EPB staff prior to the start of any site activity.

9. Upon the completion of construction activities on each lot and prior to the receipt of EPB authorization for a final certificate of occupancy, all associated disturbed earth surfaces shall be stabilized with topsoil, seed, and mulch, sod, or other suitable alternatives. The stabilization requirement applies not only to lawn and landscape space, but to all gutter outfalls, driplines, walkways, drives, land areas under exterior stairs and decks, etc.

10. All drainage, grading, final stabilization measures, and other engineering elements shall be completed under the supervision of a Connecticut registered professional engineer/surveyor with an improvement location survey (surveyor) and written certifications (engineer) submitted to EPB staff prior to endorsement of a certificate of occupancy and release of surety.

11. Submission of a standard City of Stamford drainage maintenance agreement to ensure the full and property function of all drainage structures prior to EPB endorsement of a certificate of occupancy and release of surety.

12. Installation of a permanent landscape screening consisting of giant arborvitae or skyrocket juniper (or equivalent) along the common northwesterly boundary line from the location of the shed to the stone wall.

13. During construction of the new single-family dwelling, the Zarmis would like the erection of an 8-foot fence from the edge of the flagged wetlands (Flag #3 on your Topographic Survey dated August 14, 2025) to the 24-inch maple at Elevation 159.

The Planning Board ***APPROVED*** **Subdivision #4059** and found this request to be in general harmony with the neighborhood and consistent with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan RES1 (Residential Low Density Single-Family) Future Land Use Category; Mr. Subramanian seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Godzeno, Levin, Salit and Subramanian).

***ZONING BOARD REFERRALS*:**

1. **ZB APPLICATION #225-36 - JOHN F. X. LEYDON JR., ESQ. representing BE PROPERTIES LLC and G & T OF STAMFORD LLC - 27 HIGH RIDGE ROAD - Zoning Map Change:** Applicant is proposing a Map Change to 27 High Ridge Road from the current R-20 (One Family Residence) Zoning District to the C-N (Commercial - Neighborhood) Zoning District.

The Application is referred to the Planning Board by the Zoning Board in accordance with Section C6-30-10 of the City of Stamford Charter requiring applications for zoning map amendments to be referred to the Planning Board for a report on compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

On June 10, 2025, the Planning Board approved an application to amend the 2015 Master Plan category for this property from Master Plan Category #2 (Residential - Low Density Single-Family) to Master Plan Category #7 (Commercial - Arterial) for the purpose of using the landlocked property as surface parking for the nearby shopping center. The Applicant has returned with the subject Zoning Map amendment that is required to facilitate the project.

The property is in the MU3 (Mixed-Use Urban) Future Land Use Category. This category is defined as dense, walkable neighborhoods located near transit, shopping and urban amenities. These areas support a vibrant mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, emphasizing accessibility, high-density development and active streetscapes adjacent to downtown.

Under the new Comprehensive Plan, there is a renewed focus on public transit, increasing bike and pedestrian connections, and reducing designing for car dependence. With the end goal of this project making it easier to park in a busy area, the proposed project would promote car use and be antithetical to the Category in which it is located and land use patterns the City envisions for the area. Allowing for the re-zoning and eventual redevelopment could, temporarily, relieve congestion at the site and improve safety, but it is not a long-term solution.

John F. X. Leydon, Esq, along with Edward Smith, Property Owner; Matt Popp, Landscape Architect, Environmental Land Solutions and Raymond Mazzeo & David Pinto, Redniss & Mead, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Levin recommended **DENIAL** of ***ZB Application #225-36*** as this request is not in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan MU3 (Mixed-Use Urban) Future Land Use Category for the following reasons: (1) it would result in excessive tree removal and grading that currently provides a transition buffer between the commercial area and residential area to the east; (2) sufficient information has not been provided showing demand for additional parking; and (3) allowing additional parking on a currently vacant lot is not aligned with the Comprehensive Plan category for a mixed-use walkable neighborhood nor Strategy 20 which is to reduce car dependence; Mr. Subramanian seconded the motion and passed with eligible members present voting, 3-1-0 (In Favor - Godzeno, Levin, and Subramanian / Against - Salit).

2. **ZB APPLICATION #225-39 - PETER SIKORA representing RAHMATUL-LIL ALAMEEN MOSQUE, INC. - 80 LOCKWOOD AVENUE - Special Permit:** Applicant is requesting a Special Permit to allow for a House of Worship in the R-5 Zone (Multiple Family Medium Density Design District).

The proposed Special Permit is referred to the Planning Board by the Zoning Board pursuant to Section 2(C)(3)(c), Special Permit Application and Procedure, and Section 5(AA)(4), R-5 District Special Permit Uses, of the Zoning Regulations. A house of worship is a Special Permit use in the R-5 District. A few points of correction that will be made to materials in advance of the Zoning Board:

(a) The Special Permit for a club is associated with the former owners and would not be "extended to include" a house of worship. This proposed Special Permit for a house of worship would replace the old one.
(b) The accessory uses to be conducted within the house of worship are all associated with the house of worship: the kitchen will only be used by congregants and staff; communal meals will be occasional and supplemental instruction and tutoring will be religious in nature. The applicant is not proposing a public soup kitchen or after school program.

The property is in the RES2 (Residential Neighborhood) Future Land Use Category. These areas are residential in nature and currently provide a variety of housing options with neighborhood-serving compatible uses. A house of worship aligns with the RES2 Future Land Use Category because, as described in the project, it is a neighborhood-serving use. The Applicant speaks of improving the visual appeal of the building which will have a positive impact to the surrounding neighborhood and is aligned with Strategy 26, "Activate and adapt vacant properties."

Peter Sikora, Architect, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Levin recommended ***approval*** of ***ZB Application #225-39*** and that this request is in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan RES2 (Residential Neighborhood) Future Land Use Category; Mr. Salit seconded the motion and passed with eligible members present voting, 3-0-1 (In Favor - Godzeno, Levin and Salit / Abstain - Subramanian).

3. **ZB APPLICATION #225-41 - STAMFORD ZONING BOARD - Text Change:** The purpose of this Text Change is to make corrections and streamline the Zoning Regulations.

Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Subramanian recommended ***approval*** of ***ZB Application #225-41*** and that this request is in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan; Mr. Salit seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Godzeno, Levin, Salit and Subramanian).

4. **ZB APPLICATION #225-42 - STAMFORD ZONING BOARD - Text Change:** The purpose of this amendment to the Stamford Zoning Regulations is to update the references to the City's revised Comprehensive Plan (formerly the Master Plan). Given the Land Use categories were changed as part of the Plan update, these categories will be updated as well.

Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Subramanian recommended ***approval*** of ***ZB Application #225-42*** and that this request is in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan; Mr. Levin seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Godzeno, Levin, Salit and Subramanian).

5. **ZB APPLICATION #225-43 - SUMMER EP LLC - 1150 SUMMER STREET - Map Change:** Applicant is seeking a Zoning Map Change from the current C-1 (Intermediate Commercial) Zoning District to the C-G (General Commercial) Zoning District.

The proposed Map Change is referred to the Planning Board by the Zoning Board in accordance with Section C6-40-10 of the City of Stamford Charter that requires any proposed amendments to the Zoning Map to be referred to the Planning Board.

The property owners are converting a portion of the existing office building and infilling a portion of the parking garage to create a Child Daycare Center. The zoning map change will permit the floor area necessary for the proposed improvements and eliminate any existing nonconformity in building coverage. Rather than invoking Section 10, "Non-Conforming Uses, Building, Structures and Lots," of the Zoning Regulations that allow this infill to take place on legally nonconforming buildings, the Applicant is choosing to submit an application for a map change so the building becomes conforming.

The property is in the MU3 (Mixed-Use Urban) Future Land Use Category. This category is defined as dense, walkable neighborhoods located near transit, shopping and urban amenities. These areas support a vibrant mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, emphasizing accessibility, high-density development and active streetscapes adjacent to downtown.

In the past, Planning Board members have expressed concern about spot-zoning, which is a topic under consideration by the Zoning Board. Here the question is whether the zoning category aligns with the master plan category.

C-G is lighter in use and denser in bulk commercial district than C-I. C-G allows for university-related housing where C-I does not. C-G does not allow for things like woodworking shops, auto equipment shops, data center, or a feed store, which C-I does. C-G also allows for slightly denser development than C-I with slightly greater allowable non-residential floor area, height and building coverage. Greater residential opportunities and less noxious commercial uses in this area would support the implementation of MU3 Category. MU3 envisions dense walkable neighborhoods. The slight increase in density would be a good introduction to increasing density along Summer. MU3 also envisions a mix of uses and urban amenities. Daycare is a critical supportive amenity to working families and would most certainly activate the ground floor.

Raymond Mazzeo, Redniss & Mead, made a presentation and answered questions from the Board.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Subramanian recommended ***approval*** of ***ZB Application #225-43*** and that this request is in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan MU3 (Mixed-Use Urban) Future Land Use Category; Mr. Levin seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Godzeno, Levin, Salit and Subramanian).

***ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REFERRALS*:**

1. **ZBA APPLICATION #026-25 - EMRAN M. RAHIM - 249 FAIRFIELD AVENUE - Variance of Table II, Appendix B:** Applicant owns this 4,972 sq. ft. vacant parcel and is proposing to construct a two-family residence with four (4) parking spaces at the rear and open greenway for the front yard. Applicant is requesting an allowance for a lot size of 4,972 sq. ft. in lieu of the 6,000 sq. ft. required in the R-5 Zone (Multi-Family Medium Density Design District).

The property is in the RES2 (Residential Neighborhood) Future Land Use Category. This category provides for a diverse array of housing options from single-family dwellings to duplexes and triplexes. If looking at use alone, this project would appear to align with the Comprehensive Plan. However, the lot is so undersized that even a single-family home would require a variance (5,000 square feet is required lot area for single-family home in this Zoning District) and staff is unconvinced that a two-family home could meet zoning requirements on a lot this size. The adjoining property that the Applicant owns is either legally nonconforming or simply nonconforming with three units where only two are allowed (Zoning Enforcement is reviewing). Part of this application is to help alleviate on-street parking pressure by providing 2 off-street parking spaces on 249 Fairfield Avenue. Staff does have concerns that allowing the Applicant to develop a lot that is even undersized for a single-family home in an area the Applicant is already experiencing parking struggles, could lead to overcrowding.

After some discussion, Mr. Levin recommended ***DENIAL*** of ***ZBA Application #026-25*** as the lot is significantly undersized for the requested use and the variance is too significant with no hardship stated and that this request is not in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan RES2 (Residential Neighborhood) Future Land Use Category; Mr. Subramanian seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Godzeno, Levin, Salit and Subramanian).

2. **ZBA APPLICATION #027-25 - JONATHAN LERNER - 46 BOXWOOD DRIVE - Variance of Table III, Appendix B:** Applicant owns a single-family dwelling and is proposing to reconstruct the garage access and to redesign the drive access. Applicant is requesting: **[*a*]** a 32.8 ft. street line setback in lieu of the 40 ft. minimum allowed; **[*b*]** a 59.2 ft. street center setback in lieu of the 65 ft. minimum allowed; and **[*c*]** twenty-four percent (24%) building coverage in lieu of the 20% maximum allowed.

The property is in the RES2 (Residential Neighborhood) Future Land Use Category. This category provides for a diverse array of housing options from single-family dwellings to duplexes and triplexes. The front yard setback from the property line and street center line is to accommodate a small addition on the existing garage. While in plan-view the garage does not go out further than the house, due to the curve of the lot, this garage is closer to the property line than the existing house. These two portions of the request would not significantly change the appearance of the property. With respect to building coverage, the existing home is at 22.2% where only 20% is allowed. A 2% change in building coverage may be negligible. With respect to drainage, there is a significant reduction of *lot* coverage due to removal of a patio and removal of an illegal circular driveway and second curb cut, which is a benefit, though could be done without the variance. The home could continue to comply with the Future Land Use category with or without the variance.

After some discussion, Mr. Salit recommended ***DENIAL*** of ***ZBA Application #027-25*** as there is no indication of a hardship and that this request is not in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan RES2 (Residential Neighborhood) Future Land Use Category; Mr. Subramanian seconded the motion and passed unanimously with eligible members present voting, 4-0 (Godzeno, Levin, Salit and Subramanian).

3. **ZBA APPLICATION #029-25 - DANIELLE KOPEK SANTASIERO representing BRIDGET KOPEK - 22 HICKORY WAY - Variance of Table II, Appendix B:** Applicant owns a single-family dwelling and is proposing to add a second story addition over the existing garage footprint. Applicant is requesting: **[*a*]** a front yard setback of 33.1 ft. in lieu of the 40 ft. required; **[*b*]** a front centerline setback of 58.1 ft. in lieu of the 65 ft. required; and **[*c*]** a side yard setback of 9.7 ft. in lieu of the 10 ft. required.

The property is in the RES1 (Residential - Single-Family) Future Land Use Category. This category is defined as low-density residential areas primarily dedicated to single-family detached homes. The existing home is legally nonconforming with respect to front and side yard setbacks. The proposed variances would allow for the addition to be flush with the front of the existing house and side of the existing garage, not to exceed current encroachments in the required front or side yards, respectively. The home could continue to comply with the future land use category with or without the variance.

After some discussion, Mr. Subramanian recommended **approval** of ***ZBA Application #029-25*** and that this request is in general harmony with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan RES1 (Residential - Single-Family) Future Land Use Category; Ms. Godzeno seconded the motion and passed with eligible members present voting, 3-0-1 (In Favor - Godzeno, Salit and Subramanian / Abstain - Levin).

Next regularly scheduled Planning Board meetings are:

- December 2, 2025 - Capital Budget Review
- December 16, 2025 - Regular Meeting
- January 13, 2026 - Public Hearing-Capital Budget

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Godzeno adjourned the meeting at 10:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
November 20, 2025

Ravi Subramanian, Secretary
Stamford Planning Board

NOTE: These proceedings were recorded on video and are available for review on the Planning Board website at ***http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=20***