

**TRANSIT CENTERED DEVELOPMENT
STEERING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING APRIL 22, 2010**

Members Present: Denise Nelson, Michael Vickerelli, , Daniel Pato, Robert Galello, Thomas Yemm (arrived 8:30 p.m.), Mary Young, Paul Corvino, and Councilman Stephanie Philips.

Others Present: David Killeen (Town Planner), Steven Cecil (The Cecil Group), Duncan Yetman (CED Director), and Councilman Matthew Catalano.

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m., in Room 213 of the Stratford Town Hall, 2725 Main Street, Stratford, CT.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2010 MEETING

- UPON MOTION BY MS. YOUNG AND SECONDED BY MR. CORVINO, THE FOREGOING MINUTES WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

B. MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2010 WORKSHOP

- Chairman Nelson asked that the Minutes be corrected to reflect that there are only three possible sites for the station and parking garage: the current location on Main Street, Station Area East or Station Area West .

- UPON MOTION BY MS. PHILIPS AND SECONDED BY MR. GALELLO, THE FOREGOING MINUTES, AS AMENDED, WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

3. CONSULTANT'S REPORT

- Mr. Steven Cecil of The Cecil Group, distributed his agenda to the Committee. Mr. Cecil advised that he is working on the draft report, but he needs direction from the Committee about the various options. In his opinion, the biggest challenge to transit center development is "stewardship over time." Developers need to be assured that the Town leadership will support the development of a transit center over a long period.

- Mr. Cecil commented that the groups at the last workshop had a lot of good ideas for developing mixed use, residential, streetscape improvements, etc., but their ideas did not necessarily complement each other. One interesting theme that emerged at the workshop was that residents did not seem to object to moving the station in order to allow for more "village center" infill. Mr. Cecil emphasized that the I-95 interchange and the railroad station are strongly tied to transit development. The problem is that people want a train station in the Town Center, but they don't want all the traffic that comes with it. The location now being proposed for the parking garage is too congested. Mr. Cecil has come up with an idea. You can't have two train stations in Stratford, but you could have two parking areas: one with access off of I-95 for out of towners using the station, and a smaller parking area within walking distance for residents. The station itself could easily be moved down to the Station Area East

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location (Stratford Square). The station and parking areas could then be connected with improved pedestrian walkways. Main Street would then be opened up for mixed-use development (3 stories with retail, office or services on first floor and residential above).

The Committee also discussed Barnum Avenue improvements. The lots are shallow with the buildings near the street. They could be spruced up with façade to give them a “Main Street” look. The larger properties on Barnum with parking lots in front can be redeveloped through zoning incentives. There is not a lot of investment in asphalt. Barnum Avenue can support 4 story development with tapered building heights on the residential side.

Public perception is key. The Committee wants to proceed on the premise that it is building upon the work of the Parking Garage Planning Group and not abandoning everything. Mr. Vickerelli suggested that instead of saying “move” the station, we should explain that we are “extending” the platforms and adding a crossover. People are already parking near Bally’s and walking to the station. Mr. Cecil suggested moving the parking there in stages. Surface parking at Stratford Square now would relieve the traffic downtown. The actual parking garage can be built later when there is more money.

Lastly, Mr. Cecil talked about an armchair tour vs. self-guided tour to visit developments in Boston. The Committee was in favor of spending a day in Boston and asking the Mayor and members of the Parking Garage Planning Group to go. However, a website tour would also reach more of the general public.

Mr. Cecil plans to have a draft report to the Committee via e-mail by May 13.

4. ADJOURNMENT

- Upon motion by Mr. Corvino and seconded by Mr. Galello, the Committee adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail J. Nobili
Secretary