

Committee Members: Bill Rock, David Salik, Thomas Logan - Clerk, Edward Scinto - Chair, Thomas Galvin Cotter, Thomas Gloersen – V. Chair, Scott Corner, Patrick Gribbon, ~~Alan Minter~~, Jonathan Ackley, James Tucciarone. *Alternate Members:* Henry Halverson, Reese Mitchell

Waterfront Harbor Management Commission
Special Meeting — November 22, 2016

Members Present - Bill Rock, Edward Scinto, Thomas Gloersen, Thomas G. Cotter, Patrick Gribbon, Henry Halverson, Jon Ackley, Reese Mitchell

Others in Attendance: — Administrator Geoffrey Steadman, Point Stratford Renewal, LLC principle John Gershman

I. Chairman Scinto called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in room 213 of Stratford Town Hall, 2725 Main Street, Stratford, CT 06615.

II. Waterfront Zone Change

Mr. Rock read the charge of the WFHMC in connection with the Waterfront aspect and Water dependent aspect. This significant project application was not referred to WFHMC as required. Require waterfront-water dependent use (active or passive) definition was not clear.

Mr. Gershman presented a synopsis of the plan to get the structure for the zoning process put in place by creating an overlay zone. He said the Town should exempt the site from current zoning regulations and encourage vertical growth and parking structures instead of parking lot. The property (SAEP on Main Street) is 77 acres (1 million and a half square feet). The master plan would become the blue print if approved, transforming mixed-use projects. The current buildings will be razed. Ancillary water dependent uses. These are tidal mudflats – not in the best interest to propose a marina. He stated that he encourages WFHMC to recommend an overlay district to the Zoning Commission for this project.

Mr. Steadman showed an aerial map of the site.

Questions/comments/discussion: re: the proposed Waterfront Redevelopment District (WR District) Regulation for the SAEP, WHMC's Waterfront Vision for the property, the status of environmental remediation affecting the property, and the WHMC's previous motion approved November 8, 2016 concerning this matter.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. GLOERSEN, SECONDED BY MR. MITCHELL TO PROVIDE COMMENTS TO THE ZONING COMMISSION AND THE APPLICANT AS DISCUSSED WHICH INCLUDED:

1. The WHMC understands that the proposed WR District is an overlay zoning district intended to apply to the SAEP property. The WHMC has a long history of encouraging beneficial mixed use redevelopment of this property with substantial water-dependent components and public amenities for access to the Housatonic River.

2. The WHMC supports establishment of an overlay waterfront zoning district to facilitate redevelopment of this property in a manner consistent with the Stratford Harbor Management Plan. The requirements of the WR District should be consistent with the Plan's goals and recommendations as summarized in the WHMC's document "A Waterfront Vision for the Town of Stratford." A copy of the Vision document should be provided to the Zoning Commission. That document calls for redevelopment of the SAEP guided by a vision of redevelopment providing a coastal destination of national and regional significance.
3. The WHMC recognizes that redevelopment of the property is contingent in large part on environmental remediation of both land and water areas, and that the U.S. Army is responsible for remediation of the water areas. Also, the WHMC understands that a concept for environmental remediation of the contaminated sediment in the Housatonic River has not been agreed to by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and U.S. Army.
4. The intent of the WR District regulation concerning water-dependent uses should be strengthened. Instead of only "establishing the highest priority and preference for water-dependent uses," the regulation should make clear that redevelopment shall provide for substantial water-dependent uses consistent with the Connecticut Coastal Management Act, Harbor Management Plan, and Plan of Conservation and Development, including, to the extent feasible, active water-dependent uses supporting recreational boating in addition to public access facilities. The WHMC recommends that consideration should be given to establishment of marina facilities; docking facilities to accommodate visiting recreational boaters, transient vessels such as ferries and excursion vessels, and commercial fishing vessels; boat service and rental facilities; and other facilities identified by the WHMC.
5. The intent of the WR District regulation concerning the historic character of the property should be strengthened. Instead of only an intent to "recognize the historic and distinguished aviation history of the area," the regulation should make clear that redevelopment shall incorporate elements of that history as an integral part of project design and that redevelopment shall include history-based elements to educate the public and attract visitors to the property.
5. The WHMC is concerned that redevelopment planning for water-dependent uses is not being coordinated with environmental remediation planning by the U.S. Army and DEEP. The WHMC strongly recommends immediate coordination of redevelopment plans with environmental remedial action plans to ensure that such remedial action plans provide for future development of water-dependent boating facilities, including deep-water access in appropriate locations for marina and docking facilities. The WHMC is concerned that without such early coordination, opportunities for establishing active water-dependent uses along the shoreline of the one of the most significant waterfront redevelopment sites on the Connecticut shore may be lost.
6. In addition to the reference to incorporating "smart growth techniques and green technology," the regulation should require that redevelopment incorporate sustainable Low Impact Development strategies with best management practices to manage, reduce where feasible, or otherwise control storm water runoff into the Housatonic River.

7. The intent of the WR District regulation concerning public areas should be strengthened. Instead of only an intent to incorporate “the extension of a waterfront greenway and public areas” that would eventually connect with other areas of the Town, the regulation should make clear that redevelopment shall include facilities and amenities for safe and substantial public access to the Housatonic River; utilize the seaplane ramp and the property’s entire Housatonic River shoreline; be effectively linked to other public areas and facilities; and be developed in coordination with implementation of the Stratford Housatonic River Greenway.

8. The WR District regulation should make clear that all future redevelopment plans, insofar as those plans will affect the Housatonic River, shall be reviewed by the WHMC for consistency with the Harbor Management Plan as required by the General Statutes and the Stratford Town Code.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. Adjournment — Hearing no further business, A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. COTTER, SECONDED BY MR. ACKLEY TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Cabral. Secretary