

Issued: December 13, 2021

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
*** DRAFT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES***
THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022
ROOM 400, TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT**

Call to Order/Roll Call: 4:30 P.M.

DRAC ATTENDANCE: Jeffrey Gebrian, Chair; Commissioners: Hugh Schweitzer, Sheldon Crosby; Ray Giolitto (item 2 only), Kimberly Parsons-Whitaker (by phone on item 2 and part of item 3). Alternates: David Hines and James Lawler (item 2 only)

Staff: Todd Dumais, Town Planner & Brian Pudlik, Associate Planner

Referral from the Town Council:

1. **12 Gove Street, 1005-1115 New Britain Ave & 5 Newington Road** – Application filed on behalf of JJJ New Britain Avenue Associates, LLC, owner of 12 Grove Street, 1105-1115 New Britain Avenue and 5 Newington Road. The stated purpose of the application is to request a change of the underlying zone for 12 Grove Street, currently zoned R-6 (One-Family Residence District) to RP (Residence Parking District) and then the designation of 12 Grove Street, 1105-1115 New Britain Avenue and 5 Newington Road to a new Special Development District (SDD) to allow for the expansion of a parking lot area to support the existing commercial properties on New Britain Avenue.

No Action. Applicant not ready to present updated plans

2. **920-924 Farmington Avenue** – Application filed on behalf of Farmington Avenue Acquisitions, LLC, owner of 920 and 924 Farmington Avenue. The stated purpose of the application is to request a change of the underlying zone for .98 acres currently split zoned BC (Central Business District) and RM-3 (Multifamily Residence District) to (CBDH) Central Business High Intensive District with a new Special Development District (SDD) designation for a proposed new mixed-use development. (*Informal study sessions on 9-2-21 & 10-14-21*)

Mr. Dumais introduced the application. The applicant presented the changes that had been made to the plans since the last presentation to the DRAC and in response to staff and Town Plan and Zoning Commission comments. The DRAC once again expressed appreciation for the applicant's willingness to make suggested changes to the plans and building design. While the applicant did propose two trees at the front of the property, as requested by the DRAC, concern remained that they should be spread out more with one being located closer to the middle of the building frontage. The applicant articulated several reasons why they placed the trees on the westerly side of the building frontage and noted that changes would not be forthcoming on this. Nevertheless the DRAC made a unanimous positive recommendation of the project to the Town Council.

REFERRAL FROM THE TOWN PLANNER:

3. **1003-1007 Farmington Avenue** – Study session preparatory to the submission of a new Special Development District application. The applicant is contemplating the redevelopment of the existing commercial building and the construction of a new residential building. (*Initial study session on 11-15-21*)

Mr. Dumais introduced the application. The applicant did a brief recap on the project before presenting some section views of the rear of the property and provided some details on the extent to which landscaping would be used in this area to screen the building from the properties to the south. The applicant also noted that crosswalks were added in the front of the building to improve pedestrian movement within the property. The DRAC remain very concerned about the proximity of the building to the southerly property line with some members suggesting that the applicant consider reducing the height of the rear building and others suggesting that the mass of the rear building be broken up by stepping the building height down in some areas and exploring ways to break up the horizontality of the building.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

4. December 16, 2021 – Motion Hines; Vote 4-0
5. 2022 Annual Calendar – Revised – Motion Gebrian; Vote 4-0

TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT:

6. None.

ADJOURNMENT – 6:40 p.m.

C: Matthew Hart, Town Manager
Essie Labrot, Town Clerk

Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel
Todd Dumais, Town Planner

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