



Issued: December 13, 2021

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
*** DRAFT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES***
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022
ROOM 217, TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT**

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

DRAC ATTENDANCE: Jeffrey Gebrian, Chair; Commissioners: Hugh Schweitzer, Sheldon Crosby;
Alternates: James Lawler

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.

Mr. Dumais introduced the application. The applicant did a brief recap on the changes made to the project in response to both staff comments and comments made by the DRAC when the project was first presented on December 16, 2021. The DRAC was extremely pleased with the efforts made by the applicant to improve the project in response to concerns raised and enthusiastically supported the project with a unanimous positive referral to the Town Council.

REFERRAL FROM THE TOWN PLANNER:

2. **53-65 LaSalle Road & 8 Arapahoe** – Initial study session preparatory to the submission of a rezoning and new Special Development District application. The applicant is contemplating the redevelopment and infill of parking areas, along with the demolition of the building at 8 Arapahoe for a proposed new multiple building, multi-family residential and mixed-use development.

Mr. Dumais introduced the application. Representatives for the project made a brief presentation on the vision for the project, which included improving the streetscape on LaSalle by filling in the gap at the intersection of Arapahoe with a new building, helping to create a sense of place by turning an unused alley into publicly accessible public open space with amenities and pedestrian scaled lighting and by providing much needed publicly accessible parking for businesses in the Center through a shared parking agreement with the Town. They noted that their project will bring a very desirable alternative to the single-family homes that dominate the area around the Center, including some affordable rental units. The DRAC raised several concerns regarding the overall scale of the project and how it

would relate to the neighborhood surrounding it. They indicated that the project as presented appeared to be a “maximum volume study” that lacked architectural cohesion with neighboring buildings and that a greater effort should be made to design buildings that “reach back into the community”. Specific questions were raised regarding how the ramp would enter the proposed building from Arapahoe; whether up or down, the viability of the public open space corridor off of LaSalle and whether the parking proposed would fully replace existing parking. In addition to asking the representatives of the project to consider the concerns raised, the DRAC asked that any future presentation include a range of section views through both LaSalle Road and Arapahoe.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

3. January 13, 2022 – Motion Crosby; Vote 4-0

TOWN PLANNER’S REPORT:

4. None.

ADJOURNMENT – 5:45 p.m.

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

Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel
Todd Dumais, Town Planner

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