



Issued: May 2, 2022

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
*** DRAFT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES***
THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2022
ROOM 422, TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT**

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

DRAC ATTENDANCE: Chairman, Jeffrey Gebrian; Commissioners: Hugh Schweitzer and Ray Giolitto

Staff: Brian Pudlik, Associate Planner; Kristen Gorski, Economic Development Coordinator; Rick Ledwith, Acting Town Manager

REFERRAL FROM THE TOWN PLANNER:

1. **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. *(Initial Study Session on 1-19-22, additional study session on 2-24-22, 3-24-22)*
Mr. Pudlik introduced the proposal. Mr. Gebrian asked that the owner's design team focus their presentation on how the project relates to the DRAC's performance criteria. The design team for the project explained the importance of locating the building on the corner and that it completes the streetscape on LaSalle Road where there is currently a gap. They added that in their view, the large building in the back is contextually appropriate in scale due to its placement, which is set back a substantial distance from Arapahoe Road and behind existing buildings on LaSalle and Farmington Avenue. They noted the architecture of both buildings has evolved and drastically improved due to the team's responsiveness to DRAC's comments in prior study sessions. The design team discussed the improvements being made to the alley off LaSalle, the pocket park being created on the southwest side the property and the enhancements made to the proposed pedestrian access path to the rear building off Arapahoe. The design team presented four related concepts for the corner building, each with a different façade treatment for the upper floors of the building and asked that the DRAC provide feedback as to preference. The DRAC declined to provide a preference, but generally indicated that the overall concept for the corner building is very good. Regarding the larger rear building, the DRAC commended the team on the changes made in response to prior DRAC comments, however they remain concerned that despite improvements to the architecture, the building remains too large and out of scale for the property. With respect to the site design, the DRAC raised concerns regarding grading, particularly the steepness of slope between the pocket park/garage entry and the property at 10 Arapahoe. The DRAC also raised concerns regarding vehicle circulation at the garage exit on the east side of the building noting that there may be safety concerns with pedestrian circulation in the same area. The DRAC suggested that a substantially wider pedestrian pathway be established to connect the building entrance on the east side of the building to the entrance on the corner to address motor vehicle/pedestrian conflicts.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

2. April 21, 2022 Special Meeting – *No action taken*

TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT:

3. None.

ADJOURNMENT – 6:30 p.m.

C: Rick Ledwith, Acting Town Manager
Essie Labrot, Town Clerk

Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel
Todd Dumais, Town Planner

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