

September 2, 2022

Honorable Town Council
Town of West Hartford
50 South Main Street
West Hartford, CT 06107

SUBJECT: 27-43 & 53-65 LaSalle Road, 8 & 12 Arapahoe Road and 1001 Farmington Avenue - SDD #156

Dear Councilors:

At its meeting held on Thursday, September 1, 2022, the West Hartford Design Review Advisory Committee gave consideration to the following item:

27-43 & 53-65 LaSalle Road, 8 & 12 Arapahoe Road and 1001 Farmington Avenue – Formal referral associated with an application filed on behalf of The Arapahoe Group, LLC the intended partial owner, developer and operator of a proposed mixed-use residential and commercial infill development on 3.4 acres of land fronting on Arapahoe and LaSalle Roads and Farmington Avenue. The proposed development includes five properties and contemplates the demolition of two existing buildings on Arapahoe and the construction of two new buildings containing 85 multifamily housing units and 3,500 s.f. of new commercial space along with associated site amenities including a parking garage, surface parking, landscaping and public areas. (Initial Study Session on 1-19-22, additional study sessions on 2-24-22, 3-24-22 and 5-5-22; formal referral on 9-1-22)

After a review of the application and its related exhibits and after consideration of the applicant's presentation and staff technical comments, the Design Review Advisory Committee acted by **unanimous vote to NOT RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of the subject application finding it inconsistent with our Committee's performance criteria.

While the Committee sincerely appreciates the applicant's active participation in the design review process, including multiple study sessions, and acknowledges the significant amount of time and effort put into the professionally prepared plans, the DRAC notes that there was not a material change in the overall concept or scale of the project as a result of the review process.

The Committee does support certain elements of the application, in particular the placement of a new mixed-use building on the corner of LaSalle and Arapahoe which strengthens the streetscape and the inclusion of pocket parks. These positives, however, are overshadowed, by the overall size, scale and placement of Building A, the larger condominium / parking garage building on the property.

Accordingly, during its discussion and deliberation on this matter, the Committee specifically noted the following inconsistencies with its performance criteria:

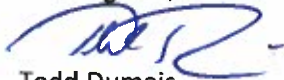
1. The scale and mass of Building A is not compatible with the site or adjoining buildings and does not accomplish an appropriate transition with the streetscape.
2. The mass and placement of Building A does not create a visually pleasing or coherent site design.

3. The scale, architectural design and proportions of Building A are not compatible with the neighborhood.
4. As currently presented, the design does not foster a sense of place that fits within West Hartford Center, the abutting properties and the community.

For these reasons, the Committee cannot offer a positive recommendation on this application as currently designed but does encourage the applicant to consider an alternative design that addresses the concerns and/or supports a more limited application that includes a development proposal for a corner-only building.

The Design Review Advisory Committee appreciates the opportunity to be an integral part of the SDD review process and thanks the Town Council for its consideration of these comments.

Best regards,



Todd Dumais
Town Planner / DRAC Secretary

C: Rick Ledwith, Town Manager
Duane Martin, Director of Community Development
Jeffrey Gebrian, DRAC Chairman

Essie Labrot, Town Clerk
Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel
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