

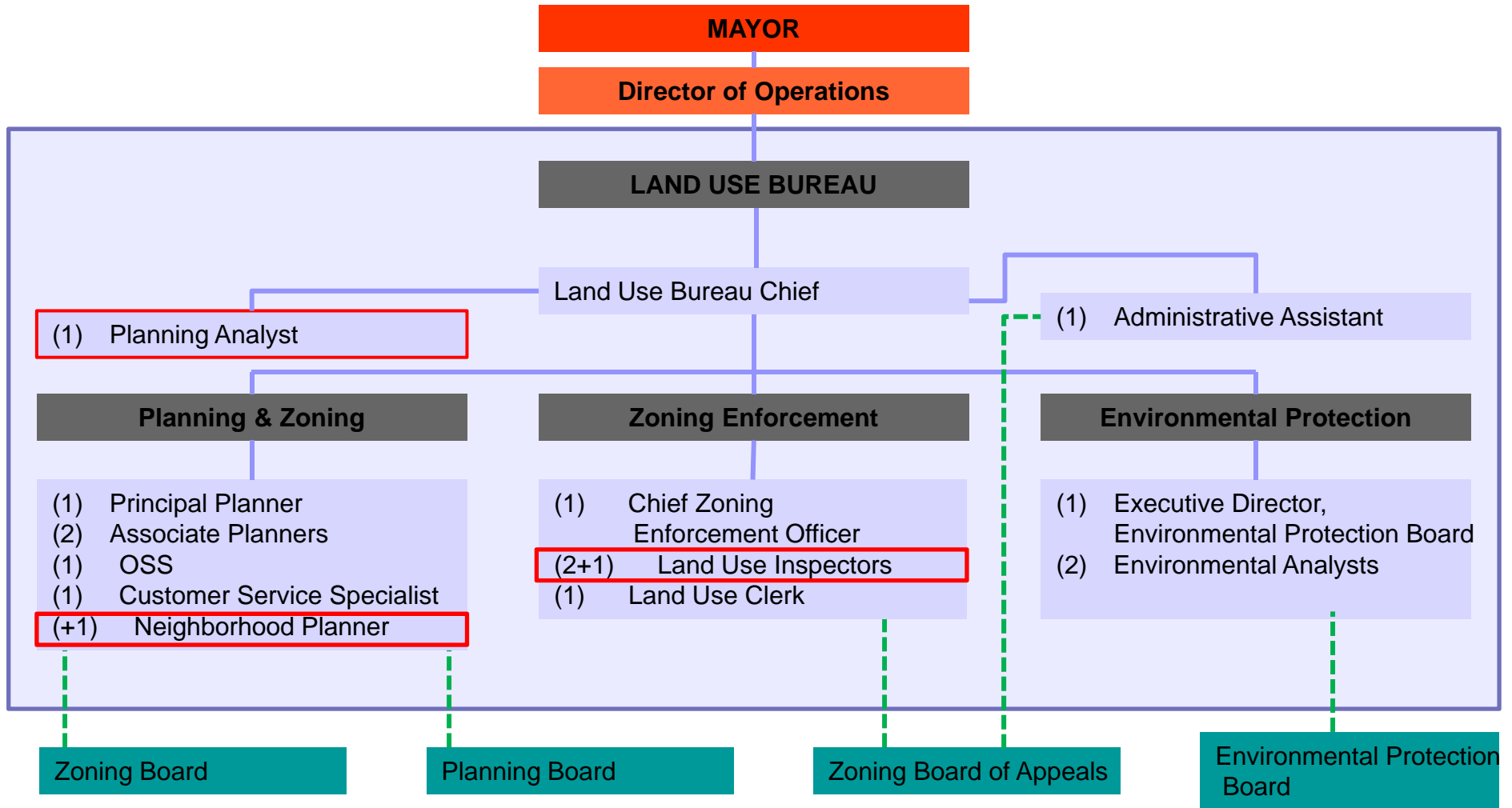
# City of Stamford Land Use Bureau

## FY 2018-19 Budget Presentation



Ralph Blessing,  
Land Use Bureau Chief

# Department Overview



Land Use Bureau and Divisions  
 Boards

Reports to  
 Provide technical and organizational support

Planned / proposed staff changes



# Services Provided

Program (s)	Services Provided
Land Use Administration	Administrative support for the City's four Land Use Boards – Zoning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, and Environmental Protection Board (C – Critical)
Planning and Zoning	Provides technical support to the Planning and Zoning Boards and prepares plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Review applications for Zoning Text and Zoning Map changes, Special Exceptions, Site Plan Review, and other (C)</li><li>- Review subdivision application (C)</li><li>- Prepare City's Capital Budget (C)</li><li>- Prepare and amend, if necessary, the Master Plan (C)</li><li>- Review and update Zoning Regulations (C)</li><li>- Prepare neighborhood, parks and other plans (C)</li><li>- Provide information on population and development trends, including Census preparation (S – Basic Services)</li></ul>
Zoning Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Issue Zoning Permits, as part of the building permit process (C)</li><li>- Investigate zoning violations and enforce Zoning Regulations (C)</li></ul>
Environmental Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Regulates inland wetlands and coastal areas (C)</li><li>- Reviews building and other permit applications for consistency with wetlands regulations (C)</li><li>- Flood and erosion control (C)</li><li>- Community Rating System – reduced Flood Insurance Premiums for Stamford residents (S)</li></ul>



# Other Department Projects

Projects for which consultants have been hired

<i>Project</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Status</i>
Below Market Rate Program Review	Review current BMR regulations and processes to improve program performance	Research completed
South End Neighborhood and Historic Preservation Plan	Develop inventory, demographic profiles and needs assessment for South End; provide recommendations for zoning and urban design, housing affordability, historic preservation and mobility	Expected completion late summer 2018
Drainage Manual	Develop regulations and process for implementation of federally mandated stormwater control measures	Expected completion by end of 2018
Illegal Housing Status Database	Scan City's Tax Records from 1940s to present to improve zoning Enforcement	Responses for RFP due by 3/15/2018, received 5

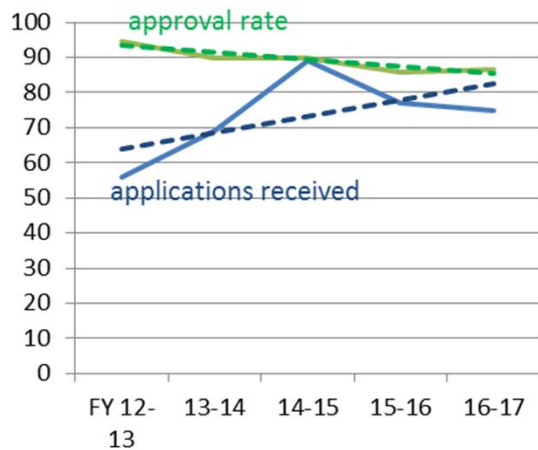


# Performance Metrics – Planning & Zoning

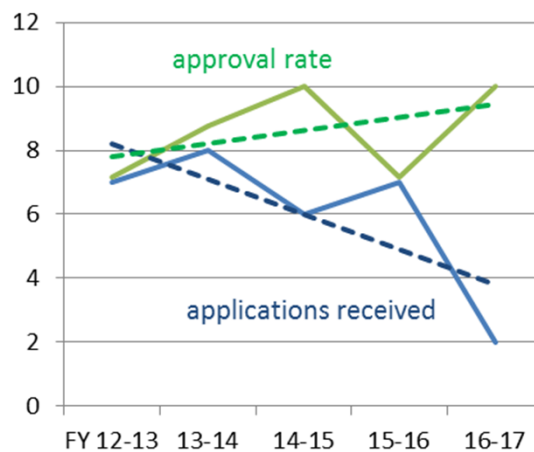
## Highlights

- Initiated South End Neighborhood & Historic Preservation Study
- Initiated review of City's BMR regulations
- Submitted \$26 million Capital budget
- Increased fees for large scale development applications
- Proposed changes to the V-C district
- Developed application standards and Development Review Guidelines
- Plans for Veterans and Boccuzzi parks

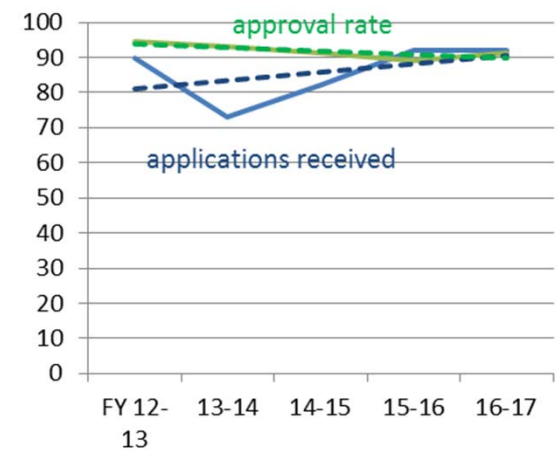
### Zoning Board Applications



### Subdivision applications



### ZBA applications



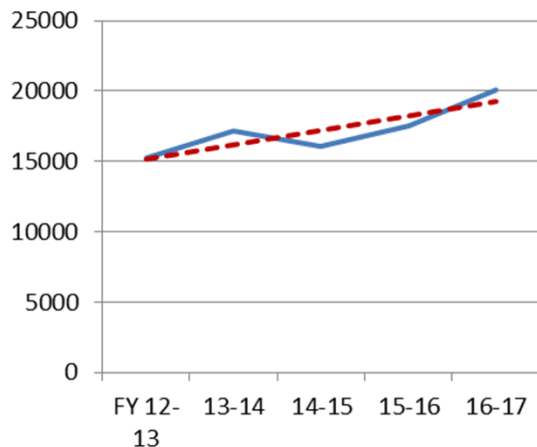


# Performance Metrics – Zoning Enforcement

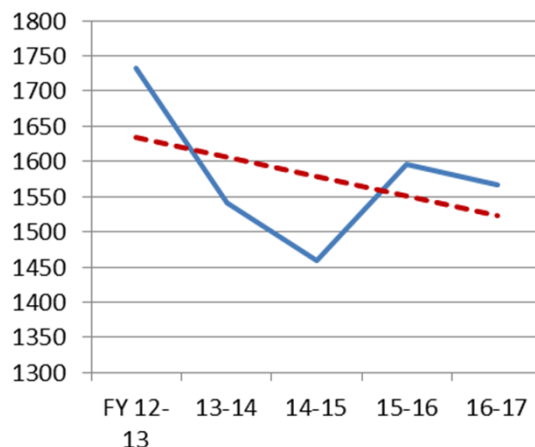
## Highlights

- Information requests and complaints continue to increase
- Initiated measures to improve zoning enforcement:
  - Closer coordination with other Depts. (Health, Fire)
  - Proposed Zoning Citations Ordinance, currently under BoR review
  - Improved tracking
  - State legislative agenda -

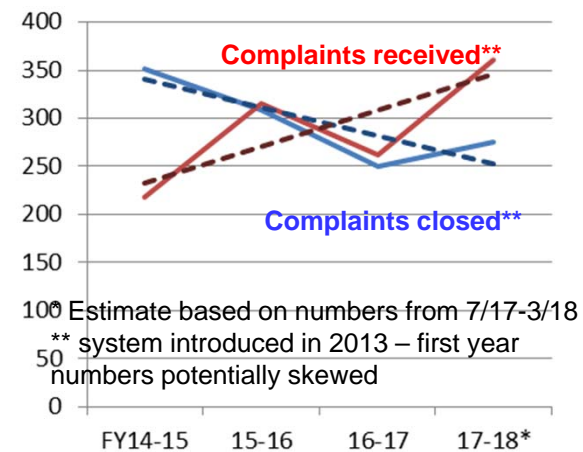
### Information requests received



### Zoning Permits Issued



### Complaints



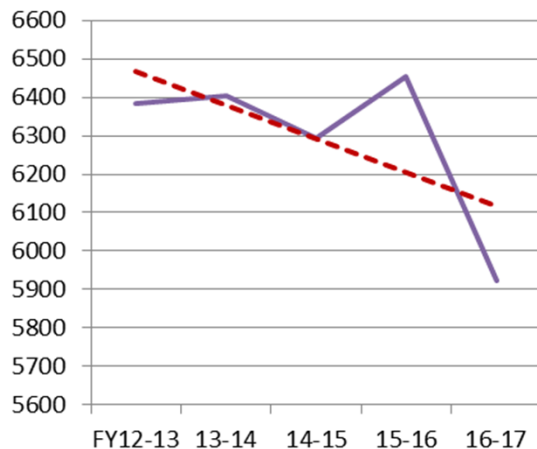


# Performance Metrics – EPB

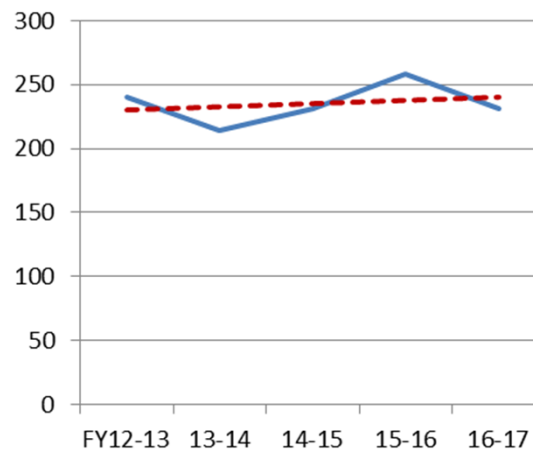
## Highlights

- Streamlined process which led to reduced number of walk-ins
- Initiated creation of Drainage Manual and necessary regulation changes to implement MS4
- Received recertification for Community Rating System which lowers flood insurance premiums for Stamford residents by 15%

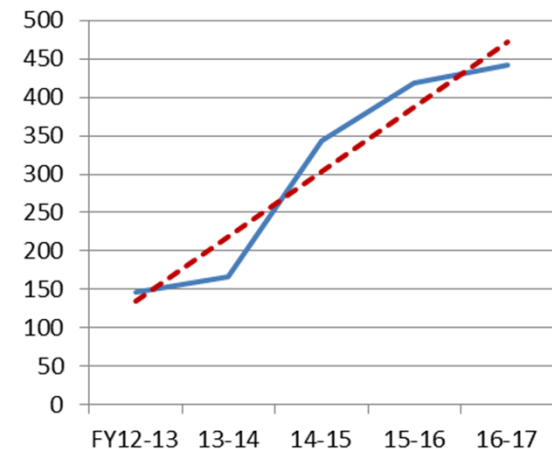
### Customer Walk-ins



### Permitting



### Enforcement





# ***Department Challenges***

## ***Key Program/Department Challenges***

- Department Cost is driven by increasing demand for required services by developers, homeowners and neighbors,,
- Additional Mandates, e.g., MS4
- Zoning Regulations are outdated, e.g., BMR, parking regulations
- Insufficient resources for neighborhood planning / review of zoning in neighborhoods – Cove, West Side, East Side, Springdale, Glenbrook
- Strengthening application review requires additional resources
- Improved Zoning Enforcement requires more staff, technical, and legal resources

## ***Budget Scenarios***

- Budget reductions would lead to increasing backlog in application review and enforcement action
- Additional funding would lead to faster application review and better response to complaints and enforcement issues
- Cuts would have long-term impact on vital land use issues: parking, development, quality of life in neighborhoods, as citizens demand better planning
- Cuts would endanger the implementation of statutory mandates such as MS4, which could lead to penalties and liability issues
- Additional funding would allow to provide better planning, including for other City agencies





## 2018-2019 Goals

- Improve customer service for homeowners and other building permit applicants
  - Improve communication with Buildings Dept.
  - Address issues with ViewPermit
  - Make more information available online and increase online services
  - Develop Standard Operating Procedures
  - Remove limit for number of daily walk-ins
- Improve Zoning Enforcement
  - Create source for legal status of housing units
  - Implement Zoning Citation Ordinance
  - Submitted request for additional Land Use Inspector position
  - Additional after hour / weekend inspections
  - Improve reporting and metrics (with Mayor's Office / anti-blight)
  - Improve coordination with illegal housing enforcement (Health / Fire Marshall)
  - State legislative agenda – mandatory fines and escalating fines for repeat offenders
- Improve Management of City's BMR program
  - Implement report recommendations



## **2018-2019 Goals**

- Provide better planning information to City agencies, applicants and the public
  - Provide information about application status
  - Provide information about complaint status
  - Provide background information to allow informed discussion of land use issues
- Address planning issues
  - Parking
  - Sustainability and Resiliency
  - Economic Development
  - Housing affordability
- Update Zoning Regulations
  - Close gaps in regulations, e.g., MS4, bike and pedestrians
  - Update Regulations, e.g., for parking, many of which date to 1951
  - Align regulations to State, Federal or other mandates and standards
  - Allow more as-of-right development for homeowners
  - Make Zoning regulations easier accessible and understandable for applicants and the public



# ***Department Changes - Staffing***

## ***Major changes planned for the Land Use Bureau include***

- Planning Analyst (priority position approved, not yet filled due to State Budget Shortfall)
  - Implement improvements to the City's Below Market Rate Housing Program
  - Analyze City's housing market
  - Provide quantitative and qualitative analysis
  - Capital Budget analysis and planning
- Neighborhood Planner
  - Liaise with Neighborhood Association and other civic groups
  - Prepare neighborhood plans
- Additional Land Use Inspector
  - Remove limit on daily walk-ins for permitting
  - Improve zoning enforcement



## ***Department Changes - Capital***

### ***622 Cove Neighborhood Study – requested \$100,000 NEW***

Analyze, and if necessary change zoning to address issues of density, development, parking and quality of life.

### ***593 Citywide Parking Study – requested \$150,000 NEW***

Assess and forecast parking needs for different areas in the City (re-)balance parking requirements with other land uses, and adapt parking and other regulations to changed parking needs

### ***Previously approved:***

### ***631 Illegal Housing Unit Status Database – requested \$150,000***

5 Responses received