



CITY OF STAMFORD
Land Use Bureau

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief, David Stein, Chair, Zoning Board
TO: Jeffrey Curtis, President, and Members of the Stamford Board of Representatives
DATE: June 3, 2022
RE: Petition to Appeal Zoning Board Approval No. 222-01

In March, the Land Use Bureau received a Petition pursuant to City of Stamford Charter sec. C6-40-9 to refer the Zoning Board's approval of application No. 222-01 to the Stamford Board of Representatives for appeal of the Zoning Board's approval. The approved application, referred to as "Clean-Up 3", amended several sections of the Zoning Regulations. The Land Use Bureau determined, and the Zoning Board concurred unanimously, that the petition is valid and, consequently, referred it to the Board of Representatives.

On May 19, 2022, the Board of Representatives Land Use Committee conducted a Public Hearing and subsequently, the Committee discussed the Zoning text amendment.

Based on the public input and the following discussion by the Land Use Committee, the following conclusions can be drawn from the Committee meeting:

1. Committee members acknowledged that majority of changes in Clean-Up 3 are not controversial and that the Land Use Bureau and Zoning Board invested significant resources in proposing the changes.
2. Many speakers from the public as well as Committee members explicitly supported changing the regulations to make it easier for Family Group Day Care facilities to open in Stamford and provide this much needed service for Stamford's working parents. The current lengthy and costly process burdens the operators of these facilities, many of which are small Women and Minority-Owned Businesses.
3. The Board's rejection of the proposed Zoning changes, which is scheduled to vote on this item on 6/6/2022, would delay the benefits of the proposed changes for Group Day Care operators and the families who depend on these services, as well as all the other beneficial changes. In addition, Charter Section C6-40-8 prohibits resubmission of a rejected text change within 12 months.
4. The primary objection from members of the public and Committee members focused on the proposed conversion of commercial office space to residential uses as-of-right. It should be noted that the City's Master and Affordable Housing Plans – recently adopted by the City's Planning Board and submitted to the State – express the need for more housing and explicitly recommend this strategy.

In order to address the opposition to conversions of commercial buildings to residential uses, the Land Use Bureau and the Zoning Board Chair are willing to commit to filing a revised text as soon as possible. This revision would make conversions subject to public hearings and would restore the previous standards. We therefore request that the Board of Representatives votes against rejecting the text amendment.

We believe that the outlined solution offers a constructive compromise and hope it provides a pathway toward future collaboration.

cc Bridget Fox, Chief of Staff
 Lauren Meyer, Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs
 Janeene Freeman, Director of Partnerships and Community Engagement
 Matthew Quiñones, Director of Operations
 Doug Dalena, Esq., Corporate Counsel