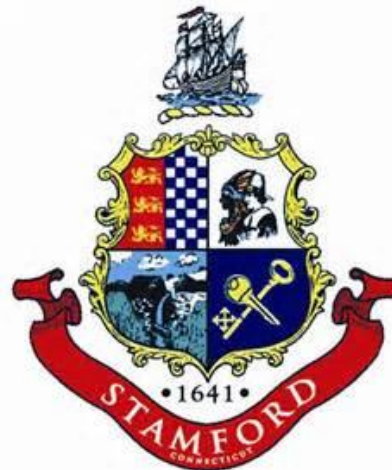


# City of Stamford

## Land Use Bureau

# FY 2017-18 Budget Presentation



Ralph Blessing,  
Land Use Bureau Chief



# Services Provided

Program (s)	Services Provided (include Volume - if applicable)
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 – <i>Critical</i> )
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>- Prepares 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 (S – <i>Basic Services</i>)</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 – reduces Flood Insurance Premiums for Stamford residents (S)</li></ul>



# *Other Department Resources*

<i>Project</i>	<i>Resource</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Status</i>
Below Market Rate Program Review	Consultant	Review current BMR regulations and processes to improve program performance	Awarded; completion date: Sept. 2017
South End Neighborhood and Historic Preservation Plan	Consultant	Develop inventory and needs assessment for South End; provide recommendations for zoning and urban design, housing affordability, historic preservation and mobility	RFP issued; Consultant selection expected by April, 2017
Drainage Manual	Consultant	Develop regulations and process for implementation of federally mandated stormwater control measures	RFP issued; Consultant selection expected by April, 2017



# 2016-17 Highlights

## ***Accomplishments***

- Boatyard approved!
- Started review of ZB procedures
- Addressed ALL zoning complaints
- Started implementation of MS4
- Started planning processes for Boccuzzi Park and Veterans Park
- Zoning Fee increases approved
- Improved access to software and technology (Illustrator, GIS)
- Submitted grant applications for a total of a total of \$ 1 million

## ***Challenges***

- Building permit process and coordination with Building Dept.
- View Permit implementation
- Lack of SOPs
- Zoning Regulations need update, relatively few as-of-right approvals



# ***Department Challenges***

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

- Cost is driven by demand for services by developers, homeowners and neighbors, many of which are required, and are increasing
- Additional legal requirements, e.g., MS4

## ***Budget Scenarios***

- Budget reductions would lead to backlog in application review and enforcement action
- Additional funding would lead to faster application review and better response to complaints and enforcement issues
- Additional funding would allow to provide better planning services, including for other City agencies



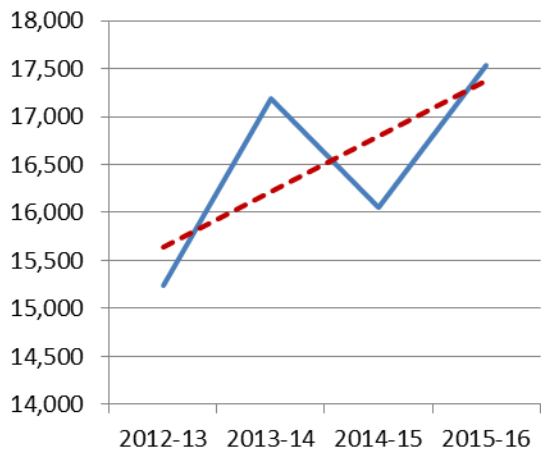
# Performance Metrics – Zoning Enforcement

**Staff: 3 Zoning Inspectors + 1 support staff (unchanged)**

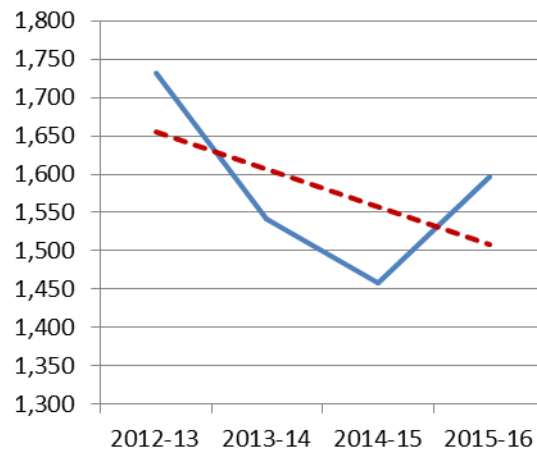
**Revenue FY 2015-16: \$421,150 (+\$39,150)**

- *Information requests and complaints continue to increase sharply*
- *Zoning applications have seen a significant uptick from previous FY*
- *Backlog of Zoning Complaints resolved*

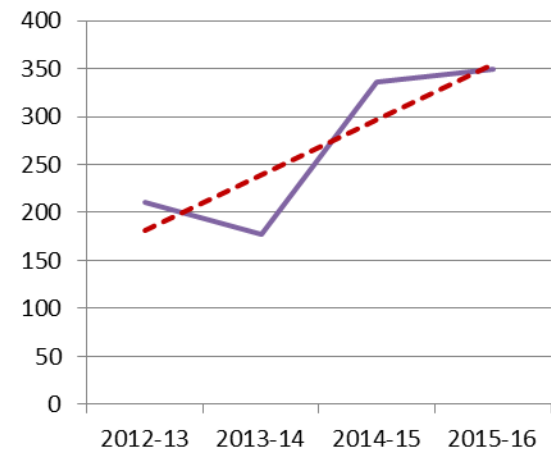
**Information requests received**



**Permits Issued**



**Complaints resolved**





# Performance Metrics – EPB

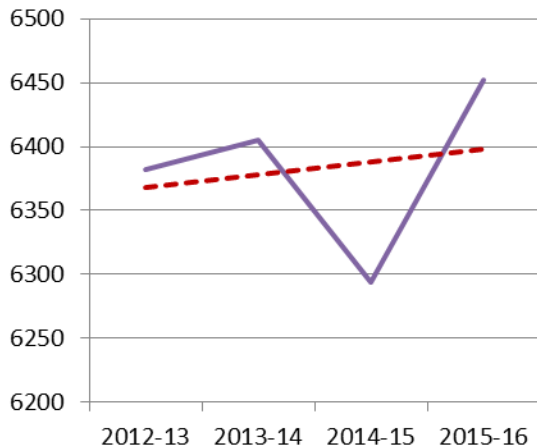
**Staff: 2 Environmental Planners / Analysts\***

**Revenue FY 2015-16: \$41,487.05 (+\$8,487.05)**

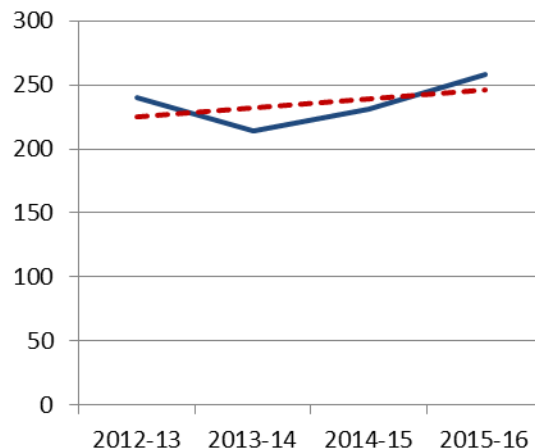
\* One additional analyst hired as of 2/2017

- Number of permit applications remains high
- Customer service requests and enforcement activities are increasing
- MS4 requirements expected to have significant impact on EPB workload

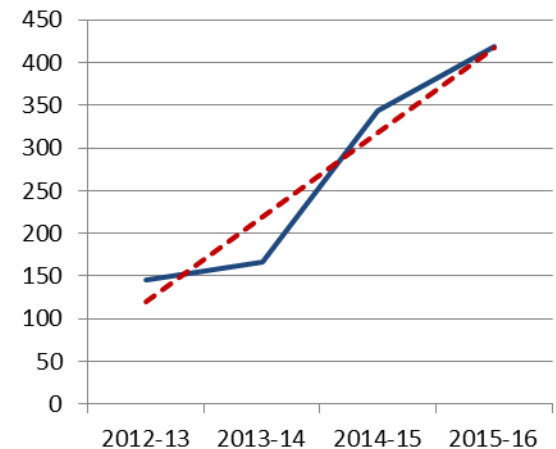
### Customer Service



### Permitting



### Enforcement



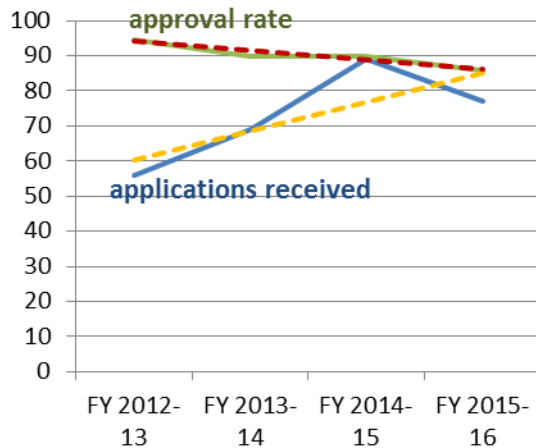


# Performance Metrics – Planning, Zoning and Land Use Administration

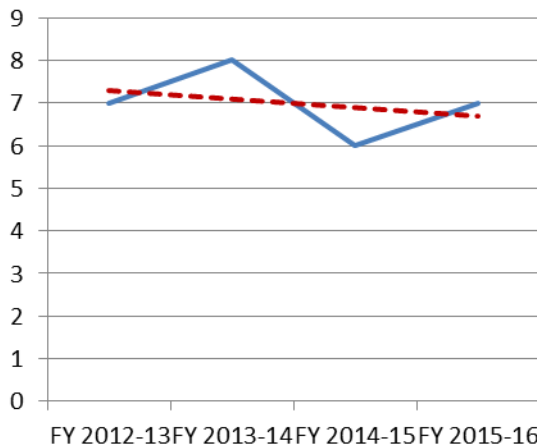
**Staff: 3 Planners, 1 Other, 2.5 support staff (unchanged)**

- Zoning applications trend higher
- Subdivision applications and ZBA applications, e.g., variances remain stable

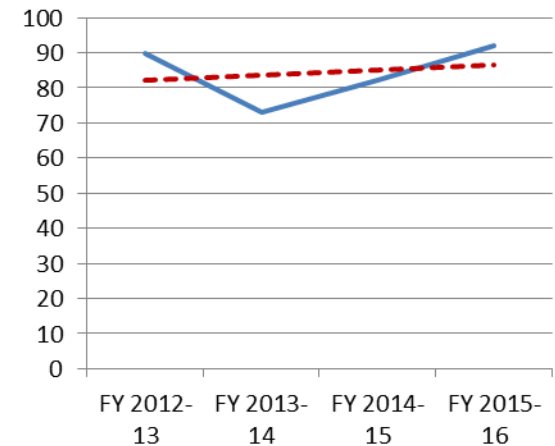
### Zoning Board Applications



### Subdivision applications



### ZBA applications







# 2017-2018 Goals

## *Land Use Bureau 2017-18 Goals*

- Improve customer service for developers and homeowners applying for building permits
  - Improve communication with Buildings Dept.
  - Address issues with ViewPermit
  - Make more information available online and increase online services
  - Develop SOPs
  - Review Board procedures
- Address complaints and information requests in a timely manner
  - Replace OSS Position with Land Use Assistant position
  - Consolidate department data bases for easier access
- Improve Management of City's BMR program
  - Implement report recommendations expected for fall of 2017
  - Program Expansion: Housing Administrator and analyst
- Provide better planning information to City agencies, applicants and public
  - Make more information available online e.g., application status, background information on a data portal



# 2017-2018 Goals

## *Land Use Bureau 2017-18 Goals (cont'd)*

- Address planning issues that impede development
  - Parking
  - Sustainability and Resiliency
  - Economic Development
  - Housing affordability
- Update Zoning Regulations
  - Close gaps in regulations
  - Adjust regs. to State, other mandates
  - Allow more as-of-right development
  - Make access to Zoning regs. easier



# Department Changes

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

- Replace OSS position for Zoning Enforcement with Land Use Assistant – *this should be budget neutral but improve customer service*
- Add Housing Specialist, see below
- [Website updates](#) (continuing)
- Process updates for Boards, divisions
- Use graduate school interns for data analysis and mapping



# ***Department Changes***

## ***Program expansion – Housing Administrator and Analyst***

Responsibility: Manage and further develop city's BMR program

Stamford BMR program has produced more than 500 permanently affordable units, but:

- No centralized placing and vetting of applicants
- Limited oversight of program

Administrator would make sure Stamford's BMR program is efficiently managed and serves eligible residents; it is expected that, in the long run, cost for this position could be partially covered by fees from BMR unit owners