

Motion: Bobowski
2nd: Blatt
Affirmative: Bobowski, Blatt, Bronin, Koos, Colon, Marcroft

d. Text Amendment to the City of Hartford Zoning Regulations for Transit Oriented Development Overlay District. Applicant: City of Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission

The Commission considered text amendments to Division 24. Transit-Oriented Overlay District (TOD) and added Sections 843 through 850 (see attachment)

The following sentence was added to Section 844 - Uses permitted: That stand-alone surface parking shall be prohibited.

The following minor changes were made to Section 850 – Lot width, setbacks, height limits, and open space: (b) There shall be no minimum front, side, or rear setback requirements for any TOD principal structure, provided, however, that the commission encourages every new TOD principal structure to have the majority of its front façade built up to the front building line; added line after (c): There shall be no per acre requirement with regards to density.

Chair Bronin opened the public hearing for public comment. There were no public comments with regards to the proposal. Chair Bronin closed the public hearing.

A motion to approve the amended proposed text amendments was made:

Motion: Blatt
2nd: Bobowski
Affirmative: Bobowski, Blatt, Bronin, Koos, Colon, Marcroft

III. Regular Meeting

a. 300 Trinity Athletic Field- Site Plan Review

Chief Staff Planner Jeff Cormier presented a summary of the Site Plan Review application. The applicant proposed improvements to existing athletic fields by converting grass fields for baseball, softball and soccer, to synthetic turf and reorient the fields, and add over 5,000 sq. ft. of structure to include press boxes, dugouts and bleachers. The proposal also included drainage improvements.

Commissioner Blatt asked staff if the city had any artificial turf fields. Mark Tamaccio of Public Works responded positively.

Rob Champlain with Clark Companies, hired by Trinity College, presented the reconfiguration and synthetic turfs proposal. Trinity College representative Paul Mutone felt that the proposal would improve playability and drainage of the fields, and it would

be less maintenance required. Trinity College has struggled with being able to play on the existing fields due to rain.

Commissioners Marcroft, Koos and Bronin expressed concerns about the chemical nature of having a lot of turf in a small area. Chair Bronin referred to a July 2010 Connecticut report that had raised questions and concerns regarding the environmental effects of turf. Commissioner Koos raised concerns about possible contaminates to the water runoff, and referred to page 11 of a study.

Commissioner Bobowski referred to a 2010 State of Connecticut study on the health risk effects of artificial turf, and read that there was no known evidence of cancer causing substances in synthetic turfs.

Joe Hammer, Counsel to Trinity College, appreciated the commission's comments and concerns, but he expressed concerns about the commission review process not being in the commission's purview.

Chair Bronin was not comfortable with approving a large area of turf fields, because she felt that there is not enough evidence stating it is safe for the environment.

Commissioner Blatt felt that the commission did not have any bases to deny the artificial fields, and there is no evidence that the turf is harmful. Commissioner Blatt felt that the water runoff would improve, and that pesticides on the existing fields had a much greater concern.

Commissioners Marcroft, Koos and Bronin were not comfortable with approving artificial turf due to concerns stemming from reports submitted, as well as personal knowledge, which raised questions, and therefore they were not confident that approving it would minimize negative environmental impacts, including pollution of air and water.

Commissioners Blatt and Bobowski disagreed with the concerns raised by Commissioners Marcroft, Koos and Bronin.

Commissioner Blatt addressed water pollution concerns by pointing out that the applicant got the approval of DEEP.

Chair Bronin recommended approval of the site plan review application with the condition that no artificial turf or in-filler be used.

A motion to approve the proposal as recommended by Chair Bronin was made:

Motion: Koos
2nd: Marcroft
Affirmative: Bronin, Koos, Marcroft

Against: Bobowski, Blatt

Recusal: Colon

Motion passed

Whereas, The City of Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed an application for site plan review to improve Trinity College athletic fields at 300 Summit Street;

Whereas, The proposed project is consistent with the existing use at the site; and

Whereas, New synthetic turf baseball, softball, and soccer fields will be installed at the southern section of the Trinity College athletic complex site; and

Whereas, The proposed project improves drainage conditions and reduces surface runoff with the installation of a subsurface drainage system; and

Whereas, New dugouts will be constructed at the baseball and softball fields; and

Whereas, New lighting, scoreboards, press box's, bleachers, and fencing will be installed at the soccer and baseball fields; Now Therefore Be It Resolved

Resolved, The City of Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission hereby approves the site plan to improve Trinity College athletic fields located at 300 Summit Street as shown in the plans entitled "Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, Athletic Field Complex & Site Improvements, March 2015" prepared by Clark Companies Catella Engineering LLC, P.O. Box 464, Delhi, NY, 13753-1282; dated March 10, 2015, with the following conditions:

1. Provided, however, that no artificial turf be used in the project.
2. Applicant works with staff to identify appropriate storm water management solutions.

Resolved, This twenty-eighth day of April, 2015.

b. 872 Prospect Avenue – Elizabeth Park East Lawn Improvements

Chief Staff Planner Jeff Cormier presented a summary of the Site Plan Review application for improvements to Elizabeth Park east lawn. The City of Hartford proposed to improve park entrances at North Beacon Street, Oxford Street, Elizabeth Street and Whitney Street, and Asylum Avenue and Whitney Street. The proposal would enhance character of the park and would improve accessibility.

The commission was pleased with the proposed improvements.