

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

December 13, 2022, 6 p.m.,

Legislative Chambers

**Re Application of the Arapahoe Group, LLC,
for Change of Zone from RP, R0 and RM-0 to BC
with Special Development District Designation
for a Mixed Use Development Along Arapahoe Road,
LaSalle Road and Farmington Avenue.**

A p p e a r a n c e s :

Town Council Members Present:

MAYOR SHARI CANTOR

LEON DAVIDOFF

ALBERTO CORTES

DEBRA POLUN

CAROL BLANKS (via telephone)

BEN WENOGRAD

LIAM SWEENEY

MARY FAY

MARK ZYDANOWICZ

DALLAS DODGE, ESQ.

Assistant Corporation Counsel

RICK LEDWITH

Town Manager

ESSIE LABROT

Town Clerk

A p p e a r a n c e s: (cont'd)

ALTER & PEARSON, LLC

701 Hebron Avenue

Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033

By: ROBIN PEARSON, ESQ.

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1 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** We are now
2 at 6:00 o'clock. And I want to welcome you
3 all to the 6 p.m. public hearing.

4 This is an application of the
5 Arapahoe Group, LLC, for a change of zone
6 from RP, R0, RM-0 to BC, with special
7 development district designation for a
8 mixed-use redevelopment along Arapahoe Road,
9 LaSalle Road and Farmington Avenue.

10 We'll begin with a rollcall,
11 Ms. Labrot?

12 **MS. LABROT:** Ms. Blanks? Is
13 she there?

14 **COUNCILOR BLANKS:**
15 (No response.)

16 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Just Carol
17 has COVID, and so she is calling in and
18 watching.

19 So Carol, are you there?

20 **COUNCILOR BLANKS:** Yes.

21 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you.
22 Okay. Carol is here?

23 **MS. LABROT:** Ms. Cantor?

24 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Here.

25 **MS. LABROT:** Mr. Cortes?

1 COUNCILOR CORTES: Here.

2 MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff?

3 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.

4 MS. LABROT: Ms. Fay?

5 COUNCILOR FAY: Present.

6 MS. LABROT: Ms. Polun?

7 COUNCILOR POLUN: Here.

8 MS. LABROT: Mr. Sweeney?

9 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Here.

10 MS. LABROT: Mr. Wenograd?

11 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Present.

12 MS. LABROT: And

13 Mr. Zydanowicz?

14 COUNCILOR ZYDANOWICZ: Here.

15
16 (Technical difficulties: 6 p.m. to 6:01 p.m.)

17
18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. All
19 right. Thank you for bearing with us.

20 So I just do want to remind
21 people that there actually is an increase in
22 COVID in our community, around. So we really
23 want to keep this room at the seating
24 capacity, not standing.

25 And there is an overflow room,

1 and I will go through the directions, but
2 we're headed into the holidays and it would
3 be great if people will be here and remain
4 healthy.

5 So before we begin the
6 presentation from the Applicant I'd like
7 provide everyone the rules of procedure for
8 the conduct of this public hearing.
9 Obviously, there is a significant amount of
10 public interest in this application.

11 And so we've set up just at
12 the end of hall -- go out the door and take a
13 left, at the end of the hall there's a big
14 open space. That's our auditorium and we
15 will have a screen there set up. And there
16 is ample seating in the room and the hearing
17 will be shown on the screen.

18 If you signed up to comment
19 and are unable to secure a seat in these
20 Council Chambers, please watch in the
21 auditorium. You may also come to Council
22 Chambers when it's your turn to comment.

23 I would also like to also note
24 that the hearing is being broadcast live on
25 YouTube Channel WCI, and you can view that

1 from anywhere with an Internet connection.

2 There are two sign-up sheets
3 available. I'm sure you've see them outside
4 the Council Chambers -- one for people who
5 wish to speak and favor of the application,
6 and another for people who wish to speak in
7 opposition to the application.

8 We will begin by receiving a
9 presentation from the Applicant. At the
10 conclusion of the Applicant's presentation we
11 will first call members up from the public to
12 speak in favor of the application.

13 I understand there's a group
14 of residents with a protest petition in
15 opposition of the application. After those
16 in favor speak we will invite the petitioners
17 to make a brief presentation as well. We
18 will then call up members of the general
19 public who have signed up to speak in
20 opposition to the application.

21 And to allow everybody the
22 opportunity to speak we ask that you limit
23 your comments to three minutes unless you are
24 a duly authorized representative of a group,
25 in which case you can speak up to five

1 minutes.

2 We will then provide the
3 Applicant with an opportunity to rebut or
4 address any comments made by the members of
5 the public, and then we will move to the
6 Council for questions. We will alternate
7 among us. We will each go through the
8 Council and have ten minutes to have
9 interaction, and then we will go back around
10 if necessary.

11 I also want to note that there
12 is another public hearing that was scheduled
13 for tonight that is unrelated to this
14 proposed ordinance, related to the CBDH
15 district. And because we expect this hearing
16 to go quite late, it wasn't really fair to
17 that applicant.

18 We have moved -- we're going
19 to continue that public hearing until
20 Wednesday, December 21st, at 6:15. So if
21 you're here for that public hearing we will
22 not be taking testimony tonight -- but I
23 don't know if there is anybody.

24 I'd also like to remind all of
25 you that we are a wonderful community, and

1 everybody is motivated to do what they think
2 is best on behalf of the whole community and
3 we are respectful of each other, and we are
4 all neighbors. And we vary in our
5 viewpoints, but we're all doing this for the
6 right reasons.

7 So no person can interrupt the
8 hearing or render disorderly conduct. So we
9 will ask members of the public to leave if
10 there's any interruption while people are
11 speaking.

12 Again we want to hear from all
13 of you, and the more interruption we have
14 we'll have to stop and recess. So I
15 appreciate your respect and your interest and
16 your commitment to the community of West
17 Hartford.

18 And with that, we will start
19 with the presentation from the Applicant.

20 MS. PEARSON: We would like to
21 be able to have the lights off so they can
22 see the screen. Is that not possible?

23 Is that too dark for the
24 audience?

25 VOICES: Yes.

1 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Okay. We
2 will put the lights on and do the best we
3 can.

4 **MS. PEARSON:** How about on
5 this side? Are we able to turn the lights
6 on?

7 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** We're good.
8 We can see it right now with the contrast.

9 There might be a slide where
10 we might need to darken the room briefly.

11 **MS. PEARSON:** Good evening,
12 Madam Mayor, members of the Town Council and
13 members of the public. My name is Robin
14 Pearson. I'm an attorney with the firm
15 of Alter & Pearson in Glastonbury,
16 Connecticut, and I'm pleased to be here this
17 evening on behalf of the Applicant.

18 The Applicant is the Arapahoe
19 Group, LLC. And this group of individuals
20 either already owns part of the property that
21 is encompassed in the proposed SDD site, or
22 has an agreement to purchase pieces of that
23 site.

24 The principals in this group
25 are Jim Manafort of Manafort Construction.

1 Also Harris and Bruce Simons who are West
2 Hartford born-and-raised individuals, and
3 very dedicated to the Town of West Hartford,
4 and the numerous properties that they also
5 own in West Hartford; as well as Mark Lewis
6 who is the principal in many of the -- all of
7 the Lexham Group entities which own the other
8 parcels that comprise this SDD application
9 site, and that's all laid out in the
10 affidavit of interest that is in the
11 application materials that you've received.

12 While Mark is not born and
13 raised in West Hartford, he's a Connecticut
14 resident, but I would note that they are
15 currently one of the larger taxpayers between
16 the numbers of properties that they own in
17 Lexham. And I believe that they currently
18 are providing over \$1.3 million a year in tax
19 revenues to the Town of West Hartford.

20 And I introduce all of them
21 this way and underscore their involvement
22 because the site means a lot to them. The
23 vitality of the Center is extremely important
24 to them, both because they care as West
25 Hartford residents, but also because their

1 businesses are affected by how well West
2 Hartford is both perceived by the outside
3 world and is appreciated by those who either
4 have businesses of their own in West
5 Hartford, or are living in West Hartford and
6 enjoying all the benefits of the Center.

7 So what we are presenting
8 tonight I think it's fair to say is a truly
9 exciting two-building residential development
10 for the Center of West Hartford. The new
11 buildings that are proposed, the first one is
12 a 25-unit rental building which is in the
13 forefront of what you're looking at right
14 now.

15 It is rental. It will also
16 accommodate four affordable, or if you will,
17 price restricted units in this building. Of
18 those 28 units 4 of those will be price
19 restricted.

20 They will be price restricted
21 at 80 percent of the area median income.
22 They will be price restricted for four years,
23 and this certainly goes to meeting a real
24 need that we all recognize is something that
25 is desirable to have in West Hartford, which

1 is more affordable housing for people who
2 wish to live and play in this community.

3 The building to the left
4 tucked behind the rental structure is a
5 proposed 58-unit -- or 58 homes, because
6 these are proposed to be condominium units,
7 which means it's homeownership. 58
8 individuals would be able to locate
9 themselves, buy a unit and live in the Center
10 primarily within the area of the site more
11 central to that part of the site that is
12 currently used for surface parking.

13 Underneath the four stories of
14 rental housing in that corner building is
15 approximately 3500 square feet of commercial
16 use proposed. We do not have a tenant at
17 this moment. It would be retail or a
18 restaurant, but in any event as you can see,
19 it provides a very vibrant feel and use at
20 that lower level of the building.

21 So for that reason we
22 definitely feel this is going to be a
23 wonderful addition to the vitality of the
24 Center, and we will certainly talk about that
25 more as we go through our presentation.

1 So again I want to
2 underscore -- and you'll see that further as
3 we go into overviews of the parcel in
4 question. The site itself is 3.41 acres.
5 It's a very sizable parcel in the Center of
6 West Hartford. One wouldn't think there
7 would be an area that would be open for
8 development in this very built-up area of the
9 town -- but it is 3.41 acres.

10 And the area for which the
11 buildings themselves will be located is
12 surface parking, and it's surface parking
13 that now serves the three large commercial
14 buildings and two smaller commercial
15 buildings on this, on this property.

16 We are proposing to rezone the
17 project site to a BC zone which is a business
18 commercial zone, and to overlay on that
19 rezoning a special development district
20 approval, which as the Council is familiar
21 with, will restrict the uses, the building
22 and the site design features to be only and
23 exactly as are shown on the plans that we
24 have submitted as they might be amended,
25 should you approve this application.

1 So you can obviously impose
2 conditions on the development, but whatever
3 the Council decides -- and if they approve
4 the application, that and only that can be
5 constructed on this site.

6 Another exciting and
7 innovative component of this application is
8 the fact that it is the very first
9 application to come before you and request
10 the use of a zoning amendment that was passed
11 back in 2017.

12 It's Section 177-16.6 of your
13 regulations, and it was adopted after a very
14 rigorous process that the Town Council and
15 the town administration undertook with
16 utilizing the Planning Department's expertise
17 and the input of numerous constituents
18 throughout the town of West Hartford,
19 including many neighbors in this area, to
20 provide a framework by which an applicant
21 when looking at a BC zone project can request
22 certain changes to the standards of the BC
23 zone, in particular the floor-to-area ratio
24 calculation, and that is a calculation that
25 has to do with the massing of buildings.

1 And in that regulation -- and
2 we'll go through it a little more, in a
3 little more detail as we go further -- there
4 are items that an applicant can suggest as
5 part of an application such as providing
6 public parks and public spaces,
7 architectural -- historical/architectural
8 components. Affordable housing has to reach
9 a certain level to be able to do this, and
10 private garage parking for the uses on the
11 site, as well as public art and other
12 aspects.

13 We have prepared an
14 application that requests some relief from
15 the FAR related to the use of a public -- not
16 a public. I'm sorry, a private parking
17 garage on the site to accommodate all of the
18 parking needs, except for those of the rental
19 units which will utilize an affiliated Town
20 Center Garage across the street -- but also
21 public spaces in terms of a public park and
22 access to the site in order to present this
23 application with an FAR that will conform to
24 the 1.25 that's allowed for a BC zone.

25 And I think that's important

1 when you consider also as you go through your
2 deliberations the fact that the Design Review
3 Advisory Committee was probably in terms of
4 its issues -- and it does have issues, we
5 acknowledge that with the application -- had
6 to do with the mass.

7 We're going to explain to you
8 why we feel we've addressed all those
9 concerns adequately, but again I think it's
10 important to keep in mind that we do meet now
11 the FAR requirement of the BC zone, which is
12 1.25 and we're at 1.24 with this
13 application -- as long as the credits are
14 available and are authorized by you through
15 the SDD process to apply towards our FAR
16 calculation.

17 So with that I'd like to
18 mention we will provide you with the signed
19 affidavit. The signs were posted and have
20 been kept up as required on the site.

21 We also note for you that the
22 application includes a request for a fee
23 waiver. This is our second application for
24 this site. The first one was withdrawn in
25 November of this year after we received a

1 recommendation that was not favorable from
2 DRAC. And we knew we wanted to address
3 DRAC's concerns before coming back to this
4 Council for consideration of the application.

5 We did file everything and we
6 did pay a fee at that time of \$26,714 for an
7 application fee. And we have a waiver before
8 you to ask that an additional -- now because
9 this proposal is smaller -- an additional
10 \$25,323 would not be required.

11 So we're happy to keep the
12 past fee on the record and ask that the
13 requirement for an additional fee be waived,
14 certainly given the size of the fee and the
15 fact that we followed it very quickly with an
16 application that addresses the concerns that
17 DRAC had raised.

18 Our presentation format is
19 going to be as follows. Jeff Fitzgerald will
20 speak first. He's -- well, actually he's
21 going to speak after me, but he's going to --
22 I'm going to go through some of the zoning
23 aspects. He's going to speak as really the
24 lead designer on this project.

25 He's a land-use

1 designer/planner with Bohler Engineering
2 right here in town. He's very familiar with
3 the site. His office is right above it.
4 He's going to talk about existing conditions,
5 and really envision the potential of this
6 development to totally reimagine what is now
7 a huge and unproductive area of parking in
8 the heart of the Center, and turn it
9 basically into a beautifully designed,
10 sensitively landscaped and diverse
11 residential community with public amenities
12 and with, as I mentioned before, a little
13 commercial excitement added.

14 He will go through the
15 benefits, environmental benefits of the
16 stormwater management plan, and he will talk
17 about construction phasing and our parking
18 arrangements including the benefit to area
19 businesses and the neighborhood of both the
20 limited amount of surface parking we're going
21 to be providing -- but now the covered
22 structured private garage that's going to be
23 on our site, but which we are offering to
24 make open to the public after hours and on
25 weekends.

1 And we anticipate this would
2 be a very positive benefit for businesses in
3 the area, and also for the neighborhood in
4 that it will take cars off the street that
5 might otherwise park in neighborhoods,
6 especially as they're visiting the
7 restaurants in the area.

8 Using his local -- his
9 land-use expertize he's going to tell you why
10 we believe that the layout and design we have
11 proposed is appropriate to the context of the
12 abutting properties in the Center as a whole.
13 He's going to be followed by our traffic
14 consultant. That's the McMahon Traffic firm.
15 Maureen Chlebek is here. She's a regional
16 manager with McMahon, and she will review the
17 results of the traffic studies that have been
18 prepared as part of this application.

19 We acknowledge that today --
20 and this is directed to the neighbors in
21 particular -- that neighbors on Arapahoe and
22 Woodrow Street are experiencing more traffic
23 than they've experienced in the past,
24 particularly as a result of the change in the
25 direction of traffic flow on LaSalle Road.

1 And I'm sure that they feel
2 that any additional traffic to be generated
3 by this development or any other development
4 is probably unacceptable as far as they are
5 concerned from the perspective of living on
6 those streets.

7 It's a difficult task Maureen
8 has, but she is going to explain to you and
9 to them why there will be no discernible
10 difference in the roadway and intersection
11 functions as a result of our proposal.

12 She speaks as a traffic
13 engineer, and frankly nobody likes to believe
14 what a traffic engineer has to say, but she
15 will go through an objective analysis for you
16 and for the neighbors, and we hope it will
17 help to settle some of the concerns that you
18 have.

19 Obviously, we know the Town is
20 undertaking a comprehensive traffic
21 evaluation using Stantec as a consultant. We
22 just want to put on the record here for the
23 neighbors and for the Council that the
24 Applicant is committed to working with the
25 Town to make off-site traffic calming

1 improvements in that area if it turns out
2 that that is something that that would be
3 helpful.

4 And you know the bottom line
5 is, leaving everything as it is on our site
6 with the bulk of our site dedicated to
7 surface commercial parking is really not a
8 desirable option, but it is one that would
9 mean there would be no additional traffic on
10 those neighborhood streets.

11 But we don't think that's the
12 best thing for the Town, or even for the
13 property values of the neighbors who live
14 close to this site -- and will be very
15 concerned, I'm sure, about what additional
16 traffic generation might mean for them. But
17 her analysis does support the ability of the
18 streets to safely accommodate our parking
19 projections.

20 She will be followed by Matt
21 Mrva, our landscape architect with Bohler
22 Engineering. He'll take you through the
23 design of the incredible amount of
24 landscaping proposed between the public park
25 on the west of our site that we are going to

1 install, the public alleyway improvements
2 that will make connections with LaSalle Road
3 to our site, and the mostly native plantings
4 and specimen trees that are going to be used
5 to both enhance the views of the development
6 while also buffering it from area properties,
7 and you can see that as we go through our
8 renderings.

9 He will talk about the public
10 nature of the spaces around the buildings,
11 improve -- certainly through the
12 incorporation of the suggestions by DRAC, the
13 recommendations they made for us to create a
14 sense of place. He also will mention for you
15 the pedestrian amenities that are
16 incorporated as part of that review.

17 He'll be followed by our
18 architect, and that's Seelan Pather. He is
19 going talk about the design evolution of this
20 building, the condominium building as well as
21 the building on the corner. He will discuss
22 the changes we've made in response to DRAC.

23 He will describe for you
24 really the truly unique construction and
25 nature of the materials, the high-quality

1 materials that are used in this building and
2 the fact that when and if this is constructed
3 we feel very confident that both of these
4 will be a testament to the design review
5 process in Town, and also be standout
6 buildings architecturally within the context
7 of our center.

8 We also have with us this
9 evening our outreach consultants. Duby
10 McDowell and Rebecca Brockway are here,
11 should have any questions for them. You've
12 receive the updated outreach report that we
13 filed. I believe the date was December 6th.
14 It included some additional outreach into the
15 community, a little further than we've gone
16 before.

17 I don't think that we need to
18 go beyond what we've provided for you in
19 those documents, but they're here to answer
20 questions. And you're going to hear from a
21 lot of neighbors, and hopefully a lot of
22 people in support of the application also.

23 So rather than us reiterate
24 what their comments were, you're going to
25 hear it from them directly.

1 Don Poland is here. He is a
2 planner and a holder of a PhD in urban
3 planning. He is with the firm of Goman+York.
4 He prepared an impact assessment, which you
5 have in your materials. We are also not
6 going to ask Don to speak tonight given the
7 number of people who are going to be here.
8 But I'd just like to outline for you the
9 major bottom line findings that he made in
10 his report, and the report was dated
11 October 27th.

12 He estimates -- and his
13 reasoning is in there. It's a fairly complex
14 analysis that he undertook -- that the total
15 development cost of this development will be
16 \$61,537,615. The building permit fees alone
17 which will be direct one-time payments to the
18 Town of West Hartford will be \$617,808.

19 We project that year in and
20 year out, if this is approved, the real
21 estate and personal property taxes will be
22 \$1,661,755 per year, with a net fiscal impact
23 when you figure in, you know, town services
24 and such of approximately \$1,000,661 a year.

25 So he can answer any questions

1 you have on that, but it is a sizable
2 development. It will be a sizable cost to
3 build, but the benefits once constructed, we
4 think, will also be sizable in terms of the
5 contribution to the community and the ability
6 to provide a diverse housing site with both
7 high-end condominium uses next to rental
8 units which also include price restricted
9 units within that complex.

10 So with that, I'd like to
11 leave this rendering of what we think LaSalle
12 Road will look like with the building
13 completed on the corner and the condominium
14 building on the left, and move on to the
15 property, the zone change map.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Can you
17 make sure that you state your name and who
18 you're speaking for, where you work, or
19 why --

20 MS. PEARSON: I didn't do
21 that?

22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: You did,
23 but as each team member moves up.

24 MS. PEARSON: Oh, as each
25 team -- oh, okay.

1 Okay. Why don't you just go
2 back one more, quickly.

3 You know, it would be a good
4 thing just to locate this site for you. What
5 you're looking at right now is Arapahoe Road
6 on the left-hand side of the site and -- oh,
7 okay.

8 Is that on there?

9 Just very quickly that shows
10 you the development site itself. The corner
11 at Arapahoe and LaSalle, which is in the
12 lower left-hand corner, that off-white
13 building is the proposed rental structure.

14 The two buildings to the right
15 of it going to the north are 65 LaSalle Road,
16 which is the Webster Bank building, and then
17 next to that is the 2743 LaSalle Road. We --
18 I've been referring to it as the Union
19 Kitchen building just for locating it on
20 LaSalle Road.

21 If you go up to the upper
22 right-hand corner you'll see that included on
23 our site is another commercial building.
24 That's 1001 Farmington Avenue. That is the
25 Claypen building. There's a realtor in

1 there. There's an office above, but it's a
2 commercial structure that's included as part
3 of our site. It is one of the Lexham
4 properties also. The two bottom properties
5 on LaSalle Road are owned by Lexham.

6 And you can see that -- well,
7 you can't see from this. So I'm going to go
8 back to the zoning map now -- if you would,
9 Jeff?

10 Okay. The red outlines there
11 is the outline of the special development
12 district parcel. It includes five parcels.
13 It includes the three existing large
14 commercial buildings, the one on Farmington
15 Avenue and the two on LaSalle Road. And it
16 also includes properties that right now in
17 the pale yellow is a property that Lexham has
18 acquired. It is vacant at the moment.

19 It was originally built as a
20 single-family structure and it is now -- was
21 a commercial use at that location. There we
22 do not own that next property, or have a
23 right to purchase it. The property to the
24 left, going west towards the west side of the
25 site, that's an existing commercial use.

1 And then further to the left,
2 opening on LaSalle -- on Arapahoe Road is an
3 existing commercial structure originally
4 built as a single family, but is used
5 commercially now. And that will be included
6 in our site. Should the application be
7 approved the Arapahoe Group will acquire that
8 property.

9 There are a couple of things I
10 think you should keep in mind looking at this
11 zoning map. The first is that the pink is
12 all BC zoning, commercial zoning.

13 You'll note that the bulk of
14 our site has a brown piece in the middle.
15 That is RP zoning. There is also RP zoning
16 to the left of our property. That is the
17 back of the Lavery building site, but on
18 Farmington Avenue is BC. And to the left of
19 the Lavery site with a crosshatch line over
20 it -- thank you, Jeff -- all the way back,
21 that is what is now MT Bank and the Solinsky
22 EyeCare building, commercial building.

23 Back in 1997, I believe it
24 was, I worked with an applicant to get that
25 property changed from a residential zone to

1 BC to accommodate what was then the First
2 Bank of West Hartford.

3 Yes, there was a lot of
4 opposition back then, concern for creeping
5 commercial into the residential zones to the
6 west -- but as we hope will be the case,
7 should you approve this application, that
8 commercial use has become an important
9 architectural and commercial use fixture in
10 our community. People are used to it, people
11 use it. It works.

12 So that's important to note
13 that BC zone -- and we are proposing to
14 change our site that's not already BC, change
15 the RP zoning to BC -- is already much
16 further to the west of our property and
17 closer, much closer to the residential
18 neighborhood than we are to the west of us.

19 Across the street on Arapahoe
20 Road there is a portion -- the BC zone comes
21 up to about halfway in the middle of the
22 piece we are not inquiring. So what we're
23 asking for here is to extend the BC a little
24 further to the west. It is certainly not as
25 far to the west as the BC on the northern

1 side of our site, and it's just a little bit
2 further west than of the existing BC on the
3 southern part of Arapahoe.

4 I will also note and Jeff will
5 mention it -- can you show where it is --
6 that currently we have commercial use, a
7 driveway that comes in off of Arapahoe to
8 access all of that surface parking area
9 that's behind our site.

10 So to some extent there's
11 already commercial traffic at that location
12 coming into our site, and we're going to
13 eliminate the commercial parking -- I'm
14 sorry, commercial traffic that goes in at
15 that point with this development, and we'll
16 talk about that a little bit further.

17 So I just wanted to underscore
18 for you that this site -- we're going to show
19 you how it's going to be buffered in terms of
20 landscaping and putting the larger of the
21 buildings into the center of the site, and
22 how it's going to be buffered by the
23 commercial buildings that are on the exterior
24 so that you'll have minimal views of the
25 larger of the two buildings into the site.

1 You will be able to see it
2 most clearly from Arapahoe Road, but we're
3 already significantly buffered by virtue of
4 the commercial properties between us and even
5 the BC zone to the west of us. And I think
6 for all those reasons the zoning arguments
7 make sense with regard to this application.

8 So I'd like you to keep in
9 mind a couple of overall concepts as we go
10 through this presentation. I think the first
11 one is that we believe this is very exciting,
12 and that it is a game changer for how this
13 part of the Center feels.

14 Some may not like the rules
15 changing that much, but we think it's an
16 extremely positive addition for ultimately
17 the entire West Hartford community, not just
18 the Center, and will ultimately be
19 appreciated by the neighbors on Woodrow, and
20 hopefully on Arapahoe also. It will add
21 vitality, and I think we've done everything
22 to make it as hospitable a design for
23 existing businesses and homes, and in the
24 area.

25 But the thing I wanted to keep

1 in mind is really that perfect or
2 perfectionism -- I'd say perfect is the enemy
3 of good. We know we have to convince you
4 this is a worthy application to approve in
5 light of a negative referral from the Design
6 Review Advisory committee, and we'll talk
7 about that later. They had a lot of
8 positives to say. Ultimately, in that final
9 decision they said it was a very difficult
10 decision to make. And one member did change
11 over to be part of the positive
12 recommendation.

13 But is this an absolutely
14 perfect application? I'm not sure if I've
15 ever had an absolutely perfect application
16 come before you. There are always people who
17 say for one reason or another it's not going
18 to work -- but it's a very good proposal for
19 West Hartford. We believe that so strongly,
20 and we hope by the time we're finished you
21 can share that also.

22 And when DRAC looked at it,
23 and certainly when they issued the first
24 recommendation which was not a positive one,
25 they said the main things we're concerned

1 with are massing, not the height. They
2 specifically said it wasn't the height of
3 this proposed condominium building that
4 bothered them. Three out of the five
5 specifically said that, and the other two
6 didn't say otherwise.

7 It's the mass. They felt that
8 the proportion of the condominium building
9 was perhaps, as they said, too much for the
10 site. We disagree and we're going to show
11 you why we think that is not the case now,
12 but more importantly they also said you have
13 to give that building room to breathe.

14 You have to make space at the
15 base of that building. It has to be a place
16 where people want, whether they're living
17 there or the public going to the building,
18 that they want to go and feel comfortable.
19 That it's a comfortable space, that it
20 creates a sense of place, and we made changes
21 to make that happen.

22 And I think with that, at this
23 point I'd like you just to keep that in mind,
24 and understand that this application that
25 you're seeing now does do that and takes

1 great advantage of the public space amenity
2 incentives that are in your regulation now at
3 Section 177-16.6.

4 So with that, let's get into
5 the many gritty. I think that covers
6 everything we want you to keep in mind as you
7 go through this application. So I'm going to
8 turn it over to Jeff Fitzgerald, and he's
9 going to identify himself for the record.

10 JEFF FITZGERALD: Thank you,
11 Robin. Good evening. I'm Jeff Fitzgerald,
12 Professional Engineer and Certified Planner
13 with Bohler located at 65 LaSalle Road, West
14 Hartford, Connecticut. I am really, really
15 excited to present this very important
16 project to you all tonight.

17 Why is it so important to me
18 and to everyone in this room? Many reasons.
19 It proposes to address a major urban planning
20 flaw in what is a nearly flawless block of
21 LaSalle Road. That is a product of the
22 'seventies, the Webster Bank parking lot that
23 is presently at this location.

24 You know, the real beauty of
25 LaSalle Road starts when you go past the back

1 of Music & Arts because that's a little bit
2 of a dead space, but you immediately -- at
3 that point it's alive, and on both sides of
4 the street, and it feels great. That's where
5 you achieve that sense of place, and we'll
6 get into that in a bit.

7 And it works all the way down
8 until at this point you hit the parking lot
9 for Webster Bank and that goes away. This
10 addresses that, and by the placement of this
11 there it really creates the completion of the
12 street opposite Bricco.

13 Number two, not only does it
14 fix that missing tooth in the smile of
15 LaSalle Road, it does so with an absolutely
16 gorgeous mixed-use building anchoring the
17 corner of LaSalle Road and Arapahoe with a
18 stunning first-floor restaurant, with
19 restaurant retail space and 25 apartments
20 above. A very small mixed-use building; you
21 don't see a lot of people building 25-unit
22 apartments that are as spectacular as that,
23 but here we are.

24 This is important, and by
25 placing it there it helps screen the parking

1 that we're providing behind and also screen
2 the larger building that we're proposing
3 behind 65 LaSalle and this. So it's very
4 effective in doing that.

5 Number three, it provides
6 important environmental improvements by
7 removing a massive urban heat island source,
8 which is the gated parking lot behind 65
9 LaSalle, and replaces it with three levels of
10 covered parking underneath this footprint.

11 The goal of the United States
12 Green Building Council and green buildings
13 everywhere is to get rid of surface parking
14 and put it inside where it's not exposed to
15 stormwater. In this case it's covered, and
16 it's covered by a clean roof and a green
17 rooftop garden, and a one-story pool deck
18 here. So you're essentially eliminating what
19 is a sea of runoff coming off of all the cars
20 that park there on a daily basis, and
21 discharges untreated to the West Hartford
22 storm system.

23 And in this case, when you
24 park your cars inside, any drippings inside
25 are captured by the internal drains inside

1 the garage routed through an oil rinse
2 separator into public sewers, and that's very
3 minimal -- but none of it gets into
4 stormwater. So that's a key improvement to
5 this area on an environmental basis. And
6 I'll get into other aspects of stormwater
7 quality that we're doing on the surface lots
8 that will remain.

9 Number four, it proposes 58
10 high-end condominium units on four floors
11 above this parking in this building. This is
12 not stick-built apartments like you see going
13 up pretty much everywhere in the state. This
14 is steel frame over concrete clad in high-end
15 finishes, cast stone, brick, hardwood
16 detailing, floor to ceiling windows. You'll
17 see some of the images with this, and the
18 ceiling -- we'll get into the architectural
19 details, but this building, you saw the
20 imagery of the corner building. This, this
21 building is spectacular as well.

22 Number five, this building
23 will bring 58 homeowners to West Hartford
24 Center, 58 homeowners making a significant
25 investment into downtown who will bring more

1 feet on the street and who will care about
2 their town and their neighborhood.

3 Who will these owners be?
4 More than likely successful retirees who want
5 to live in a spectacular walkable downtown,
6 as opposed to soccer moms or typical
7 residential homebuyers in this case.

8 So either way these 58 homeowners
9 will not have a discernible impact to traffic
10 and roadway network, and Maureen will bring
11 that up. It's important to recognize, it's
12 58 condos which as compared to a lot of
13 commercial uses is a very low trip generator.

14 And from a smart growth perspective
15 this is a great place for housing. It's
16 walkable to nearly everything. It's well
17 designed and thought out in every way.

18 As the PZC Commissioner Gomes
19 pointed out at our last meeting before they
20 approved us, she said, multifamily housing is
21 not incompatible with single-family housing
22 in general in this case, and I think that's
23 really important to say.

24 Housing like this if done well,
25 density if done well matters, and is very

1 important. And from a smart growth
2 standpoint this is precisely the place for it
3 to be when you have the opportunity to
4 eliminate a sea of parking.

5 So how did we get to this plan? It
6 started with the outline of the land that
7 Robin described. And Beinfeld, Seelan and
8 his team really were the initial planners on
9 this. And you see here the condition that I
10 described, a whole lot of parking.

11 And this block in general behind
12 the street is just a lot of very aged
13 blacktop. Like I said, urban heat island
14 effect all day long. And the missing tooth
15 in LaSalle Road's great smile right here on
16 the corner, Webster Bank parking.

17 So to do a development here -- and
18 I'll point out a couple things about this,
19 that here is the access drive that Attorney
20 Pearson mentioned here. That is a commercial
21 access. Every workday me and the rest of the
22 employees at 65 LaSalle and some at 2743, and
23 at 1001 pull in this lot here.

24 And in the wintertime you leave
25 headlights on coming down here and you drive

1 down here. So that will be replaced with --
2 you'll see when I go back to the site plan
3 that will be replaced with a commercial
4 garage that will be only entered from this
5 side at a level that is essentially below
6 grade on the west side -- because this site
7 from this line here to the entrance of the
8 building on the side loses a complete story
9 in elevation.

10 And I'll point out in a minute the
11 building we're proposing is a five-story
12 building on this side, and a six-story
13 building only on the east side.

14 So the goal is we're here to
15 address this parking and be able to replace
16 this parking on site -- and how are you going
17 to do it? There's a lot of spaces there, 133
18 gated. So you have to do that with an
19 efficient parking structure, and that's what
20 we've proposed.

21 And then to fill in this gap in the
22 smile -- but you need to provide parking for
23 Webster Bank, because that's the most
24 successful Webster Bank in the state, and
25 it's highly used. And they are very careful

1 about their surface parking. So we needed to
2 provide easy accessible surface parking
3 screened from the experience on LaSalle, and
4 we're doing that, and you'll see that in the
5 presentation.

6 Our initial plans -- and here's the
7 view here, what really -- where I lose my
8 appeal on LaSalle Road is the experience.
9 You know, nothing feels good standing on the
10 sidewalk. So our initial plan that we
11 brought to a DRAC workshop looked like this
12 where, you know, we had entry.

13 This was in early one. We had the
14 entry over here, but we want to have
15 dedicated access to the 58 condominium users
16 above. And so we're proposing that as a
17 separate ramp drive up here, and the DRAC did
18 not like that.

19 They felt it kind of didn't work
20 with the buildings that were remaining. At
21 that point we didn't own this piece here, but
22 the other things we wanted to address -- and
23 I did mention it, is we really wanted to
24 address this alley here, which is something
25 that I'll get into.

1 So with this in mind we then -- and
2 this is the alley. We really felt that right
3 now this is a lost opportunity. It has no
4 terminating vista here. At night it is a
5 foreboding place. When you look down here
6 it's a trash dumpster. I've been on this
7 street for 20 years, and at night it always
8 feels a little sketchy down there.

9 It is currently used as the access
10 to the rear back of house of this building,
11 and the drive-through for Webster Bank.

12 So how does our building address
13 this? This is an example of how. This is an
14 image of an isometric that shows clearly how
15 we took the DRAC's initial thought, which was
16 that the building was too big and it was too
17 tight.

18 So we took off 16 feet at the south
19 end -- I'm sorry the east end, and we put the
20 entrance drive to the residential on the far
21 western end, which like I said, is already an
22 elevated foot above. And you end up with a
23 building that looks like this.

24 And so I'm going to zoom in here
25 and just make sure everybody understands. So

1 on the west side this is a five-story
2 building. The top floor parking and then
3 four floors of residential above of which the
4 top floor, that fourth -- that top-floor
5 residential is a penthouse. So it's set back
6 here. And again, this, the four floors are
7 set back from the footprint of the garage.

8 Why does the garage have to be
9 bigger? Because it's defined by the
10 dimensions of the parking bay which is, you
11 know, an 18-foot parking space, 24-foot drive
12 aisle and 18-foot space. And you're kind of
13 held to that if you want efficient parking
14 inside there -- and you'll see when we get to
15 that.

16 So that shows how the building is
17 on the west side, and halfway across
18 the south side a five-story building. And
19 then on the eastern exposure only a six-story
20 building. And on the west side, which faces
21 the residential neighborhoods to the west,
22 it's really just two 65-foot wings that come
23 off of that and a one-story pool deck in the
24 middle.

25 And that's an important thing that

1 I've -- we've had a hard time expressing I
2 think along the way, because we always didn't
3 have all the great graphics that we have with
4 us tonight during the process of getting up
5 to this point.

6 So this is our site plan rendered
7 up. Again, where at this point here was a
8 driveway to that parking lot, it's now just a
9 residential drive that is dedicated to the
10 top floor of parking here, that, that first
11 floor above grade at this point that serves
12 only the condominium owners.

13 All the commercial parking that
14 will be provided on the entry-level here and
15 the grade -- below-grade level parking will
16 be accessed at this point, and this will also
17 serve as a pickup and dropoff aisle to the
18 entrance to the condominium, which is right
19 here -- and you'll see some great damages of
20 that, great for Uber picking up.

21 You see -- and Matt, our landscape
22 architect will get into the cobblestones that
23 we're proposing in this parking area here.

24 You see the creation of two great
25 plazas here, the main one next to Union

1 Kitchen here with some catenary lights
2 proposed, and then a plaza here in front of
3 the entrances to Webster Bank and the parking
4 for that Webster use, and the walkways, the
5 pedestrians routes getting there.

6 Part of the project, too, is to
7 realign -- you can see here the existing
8 crosswalk opposite Becker's. It will now be
9 opposite this -- this, the existing alley
10 there. And that will be part of any
11 improvements that take place on LaSalle Road,
12 and we will be doing that.

13 You see the pool deck, and I will
14 get into that. You see the pocket park. As
15 part of our project we've purchased this last
16 piece of land here in order to create this
17 driveway entrance and to create this, this
18 public park; suitable for neighbors, a great
19 place to go in and take the dog and just sit
20 and read. A nice spot.

21 Important to note here -- I'm going
22 to talk through -- this is the footprint that
23 I talked about of the garage, the full extent
24 of it. This is the residential levels; one
25 through three are the purple footprint, and

1 then even set in further than that is the
2 purple footprint shown here, which is the
3 penthouse level.

4 So the ceiling will show there's
5 lots of -- there's rooftop activity here.
6 There's a rooftop garden proposed here. Matt
7 will get into that a bit.

8 And again, very important is this,
9 this alley which now becomes an alley with a
10 destination. It turns into a really
11 spectacular court that you'll see here has
12 the opportunity to provide some exciting
13 back-of-house space for the Wurst Haus there,
14 and the restaurants, Union Kitchen that use
15 this here, and cleans up what is presently
16 just a functioning back of house.

17 I think it's a very important thing
18 to point out at this time that the
19 building -- I think it's very important to
20 point out that what I said before about the
21 condominiums being homeownership is really
22 key, because they will have a vested interest
23 in the maintenance of this area in
24 perpetuity, as any homeowners association
25 would.

1 And by putting a condominium
2 ownership here you create -- you recognize
3 that this is a transitional property. And I
4 feel it fails as that, as a commercial
5 parking lot at present, but by putting in
6 what is really a passive back of an apartment
7 building with an elegant pool deck,
8 landscaping along the property line here, it
9 actually provides a barrier, a transitional
10 separation between the excitement and
11 accompanying noise on LaSalle Road and the
12 rest of the neighborhood to the back. And
13 that's certainly not achieved by the parking
14 that's there now.

15 And I'm going to get into the other
16 great advantage of this, is that this parking
17 structure presently will be allowed to be,
18 evenings and weekends, allowed to be public
19 parking. So it provides excellent extra
20 parking very proximate to the heart of the
21 action on LaSalle Road.

22 So I talked about the benefits of
23 the stormwater improvements by virtue of just
24 putting the parking beneath the building, and
25 beneath a clean roof and a green roof in

1 rooftop gardens. In addition, we have some
2 surface lots that are going to be rebuilt and
3 new surface drainage infrastructure that's
4 going in.

5 And in order to provide stormwater
6 quality improvements in this area we've got
7 several techniques all coming together to
8 provide a big improvement where, like I said,
9 out there at present there is none. There is
10 no stormwater quality facilities at all.

11 So in the far northeast where we
12 have -- we're maintaining the existing
13 surface lot for 1001 Farmington Avenue, we
14 will put in a new basin here and a
15 bio-retention basin that basically will
16 capture sheet flow from here and have a high
17 level overflow.

18 So you get a little green garden.
19 I'll show you what that looks like in a
20 second -- a little green planted area that
21 can have some infiltration and get rid of
22 sediment, essentially act as an urban
23 sediment forebay before stormwater goes
24 through and out into the system.

25 For this parking lot here where I

1 talked about where the Uber dropoff area
2 would be for in this, this parking for
3 Webster Bank, we're proposing a couple
4 Filterra Bioscapes -- which is basically like
5 a street tree box that you see in an urban
6 place, but stormwater can come in and filter
7 and that is captured by an under drain where
8 it connects into the street system.

9 But before it goes into the street
10 system, before any of these lines that we're
11 showing go into the West Hartford treat
12 system, we've got hydrodynamic separators.
13 There's four. There's four proposed -- one,
14 two, three, four typical CDS units, the swirl
15 concentrators. And I'll show you on the next
16 page what these look like.

17 That's, like I said, the Filterra
18 Bioscape. It's like a street tree box, a
19 planted box. It will have some azaleas and
20 fountain grasses in it, and it's designed
21 along this, the main sidewalk that leads up
22 the front through the parking lot that has
23 street trees on the opposite side.

24 So that's a typical Filterra box.
25 So we'll have a couple of those. That's the

1 bio-retention basin that I talked about, and
2 then the swirl concentrator hydrodynamic
3 separators that we're employing to achieve
4 that stormwater quality in that fashion.

5 I want to talk now about the scale
6 of our development as it relates to the
7 development surrounding in West Hartford
8 Center. And we feel that is not out of place
9 at all. Like I said, it has to be of a
10 certain size to allow us to build the
11 important small apartment building. That's
12 not a profitable -- that doesn't work on its
13 own, because you have to replace the parking.
14 It has to happen somewhere. So it has to
15 have a scale to make it to allow this to
16 happen to be able to replace the parking.

17 But black this line here is really
18 the footprint of our proposed big building.
19 This is the footprint of the mixed-use
20 building on the corner. As you look around
21 it's -- kind of, you compare it to, like,
22 Town Center and some of the Blue Back
23 structures and Town Hall, where we are right
24 now, and Memorial Garage, it's not really out
25 of scale with that.

1 In fact, here's how it looks with
2 those wings of the residential and the green
3 roof like that. So again, remember this is
4 only one story on the west side. And then
5 the U-shape five-story and six-story, and
6 this five-story here.

7 So it's similar in size to the S.K.
8 Lavery building, and we're all aware that
9 there are plans in the works -- I've seen
10 some of a five-story building going in here.
11 We'll see what happens with that, but it's
12 certainly not out of scale with this block
13 and the way these blocks come together. And
14 in our case it's, you know, carefully placed
15 behind LaSalle, behind the buildings on
16 LaSalle.

17 So I also want to point out, if you
18 take that exact footprint and you drop it on
19 the Memorial Garage you can see it's one bay
20 of parking wider and narrower. So it's not
21 really out of scale to that, and both of
22 these are about the same distance off the
23 street that they're behind; 187.5 in the case
24 of Memorial garage, and I think 188 in the
25 case of our building here.

1 But the key difference is that --
2 I'll show the way Memorial sits behind the
3 Blue Back buildings. The key difference is
4 that that's purely parking, and you can see
5 that it's parking -- where Seelan and I will
6 get into it little bit.

7 Our building is a lot more elegant
8 and attractive. And our, instead of a wide
9 road leading to it so that you see a big
10 parking structure, we have it pretty much
11 screened except for that little alley. And
12 what we have at the end really creates a nice
13 terminating vista, and I'll show you that
14 here.

15 This is what we're dealing with at
16 present. Like I said earlier, kind of
17 foreboding.

18 This is what we're looking at in
19 the finished result where you can really
20 create a place that works, not only at day,
21 but works really well at night. And having
22 the building lit in back and this well lit,
23 it really creates a place.

24 And we'll include signage so that
25 people will know that there's parking back

1 there and to get there. And it is a place
2 that really can bring activity to downtown
3 West Hartford.

4 So again, things that I was talking
5 about -- this, this will show how effective
6 we screen our parking here. I don't know if
7 you noticed it, but that the first bit of
8 parking, the first row on this side is
9 underneath the building here. So it's
10 screened by this wood louver which Beinfeld
11 uses excellently.

12 The building is, I think,
13 spectacular. The windows, the rooftop, the
14 penthouse floor on this apartment building,
15 really amazing for a 25-unit apartment
16 building. I feel it works really well with
17 the scale of -- as a planner with the scale
18 of 65 LaSalle, and makes that building which
19 seems dated feels not so dated -- I can say
20 because I've worked there, but it's a great
21 building.

22 This is what I love the most.
23 There's no -- I can't think of a building in
24 town that has this high ceiling of a modern
25 building and the fenestration around the

1 whole thing like this -- and the ceiling,
2 we'll get into that further.

3 I'm going to gush a bit about this
4 building. Again, really interesting building
5 where you see the steps. The treatment that
6 they did on the windows here, these
7 condominiums, again floor-to-ceiling windows,
8 a very residential scale. That was a comment
9 that was incorporated from Design Review.
10 The original plans has more square windows --
11 then looked back, and these were really
12 changed to a really elegant window rooftop
13 setup here.

14 I'm going to click through these a
15 little bit more.

16 This building, the things I love
17 about this -- the entryway, the wow factor
18 when you walk into the elevator lobby, a
19 two-story entry. This is really unlike
20 anything that's being built in town.

21 The use of the Brazilian hardwood
22 louvers on the parking below, the real brick,
23 the metal detailing on this stuff, the
24 balconies. I'm excited to have this come
25 into our neighborhood.

1 This is the back plaza where you
2 would enter, enter and exit as a person
3 parking here and going out, heading out to
4 LaSalle Road would be coming out this way.
5 You'd pull your car in down here. Arapahoe
6 Road is down in the distance here. You'd
7 pull in and exit through this plaza -- a
8 pretty spectacular plaza.

9 Here's another look at that
10 entryway, into that entry and exit from the
11 car park.

12 Keep going through this.

13 I'm going to talk a bit now about
14 the parking and how this will work. Bear
15 with me one second.

16 This is an important view. We
17 haven't seen this before. This is basically
18 a view of the building from the top, from the
19 S.K. Lavery building showing that this is the
20 face that will face Farmington Avenue. But
21 you won't really experience it from
22 Farmington Avenue because it will be behind
23 all the buildings where Zohara is and
24 Claypen, and all that. And I'll show you
25 that.

1 And this shows those two wings with
2 the one-story pool deck here.

3 And this is another important view
4 from the parking lot behind S.K. Lavery of
5 what the back of the house will be. Again,
6 one story of parking deck exposed on that
7 side, and then four stories of residential of
8 which the penthouse is stepped back. So this
9 is only -- it's less than 70 feet wide, this,
10 these wings. So it's not really out of scale
11 to any of the apartments that you guys have
12 seen before. But this is, again, steel and
13 concrete construction. This is of a quality
14 of construction that you haven't seen in
15 recent years here in West Hartford.

16 Okay. So a total of 224 spaces
17 exist at the project site. Of these 224
18 spaces, 11 are behind 8 Arapahoe, which is
19 one of the houses that were converted to
20 business here and is being acquired by our
21 development team and being part of the new
22 replacement parking for Webster Bank. So we
23 don't need to replace those eleven spaces
24 because the use is going away.

25 This leaves 213 existing spaces

1 that will be rebuilt, reconfigured or
2 replaced by the surface parking and in the
3 new three-level parking structure that I
4 described, being at the Center Park Place
5 condominium. So like I said the number of
6 spaces that needs to be replaced is 213.

7 Just how the parking is in this
8 building? The lower floor, this is
9 completely accessed by the ramp below. This
10 is 57 spaces at the lowest floor completely
11 below grade.

12 Then 80 spaces; this is the
13 entry-level on the east side where you would
14 go down to below or park on this level. It
15 has 80 spaces.

16 This is the elevator lobby up to
17 the condominium.

18 And then I'm going to show you the
19 condominium level which has, like I said, the
20 entrance on the upper floor has 81 spaces
21 here plus 12 spaces at 1001 Farmington
22 Avenue.

23 So these 81 spaces here plus six of
24 these spaces here behind Farmington Avenue
25 provide 87 spaces, which is enough to meet

1 the condominium, 58 units at 1.5 spaces per
2 unit.

3 The 25 units of apartments on this
4 corner will be parked at the Town Center
5 Garage which is just across the street behind
6 Bricco. And we will have a lease for a
7 minimum of 30 spaces in the Town Center
8 Garage and up to 50 if as needed. There are
9 many available spaces in the Town Center
10 Garage and there have been for decades.

11 This is an exhibit showing the
12 placement of building B and Town Center
13 garage where, like I said, an agreement is
14 being established between the Town Center
15 Garage and the Applicant for the use of a
16 minimum of 30 spaces, and up to 50 primarily
17 for building B residents. And I feel that
18 that's an excellent use of what you can see
19 even on a busy day is a very underutilized
20 Town Center Garage.

21 So actually, before we do that I'm
22 going to just talk about the permanent
23 parking operation once this is developed. In
24 this garage area here, level zero and level
25 one, that's the lowest level. And the level

1 one of the new garage will be designated for
2 Lexham tenants. That's the tenants of 65
3 LaSalle, 1001 Farmington, and actually at
4 2743 -- during the day, and then open to the
5 public night and on weekends as pay to park.

6 Level two, again with the entryway
7 coming through here, parking is exclusive to
8 the condominium units above, but private
9 access from Arapahoe and through access to
10 the rear surface lot of 1001 Farmington
11 Avenue.

12 Webster Bank parking will be
13 provided on the new lot, on the new surface
14 lot to the west of the corner building in
15 this area here, and then apartment renters
16 will park at Town Center Garage as part of
17 the long-term lease that I just described.

18 And finally, I'm going to talk
19 about construction traffic management. The
20 construction traffic flow inbound to the
21 route will be South Main Street to Ellsworth
22 Road, to LaSalle Road to Arapahoe Road, and
23 the reverse for outbound.

24 This route is indicated on the Hall
25 route and temporary parking diagram on sheet

1 C601 of the plan set that we submitted, and
2 signage will be installed to restrict
3 construction traffic from traveling westbound
4 on Arapahoe Road.

5 The interim parking that we're
6 proposing for this development is as follows.
7 Lexham's tenants cars, excluding Webster
8 parking lot, will move to Town Center Garage
9 for about one year on a temporary basis, or
10 the construction duration of the parking
11 structure aspect of the condominium building.
12 Webster parking lot will remain in operation
13 as long as possible and at least until
14 construction of the parking structure is
15 complete.

16 Number 8 Arapahoe Road may be
17 utilized for interim parking depending on
18 staging, lay down and construction parking
19 needs -- that's over here -- by the
20 construction manger for construction of the
21 parking garage.

22 Upon completion of the parking
23 levels of the condominium buildings Lexham's
24 tenants' cars will be allowed to return from
25 the Town Center Garage and move in to park in

1 level zero and level one of the new
2 structured parking.

3 In preparation for the demolition
4 of the buildings at 8 and 12 Arapahoe Road in
5 construction of the garage and condos above
6 it, the condo site will be enveloped in
7 construction fencing except to allow access
8 for parking garage levels to zero and one.

9 Number 8 and 12 Arapahoe Road, and
10 the westernmost driveway on Arapahoe Road are
11 opportunities for use as construction access,
12 depending on staging, lay down, and
13 construction parking needs by the
14 construction manager for construction of the
15 condominiums above the parking structure.

16 Construction of the corner
17 apartment building will begin and likely
18 overlap with the construction of the
19 condominiums, and the surface parking lot
20 west of the corner apartment building will be
21 constructed last.

22 So that completes my presentation.
23 Now you guys have been very patient. Thank
24 you. I'm going to hand it over to Maureen
25 from McMahon who will discuss the traffic in

1 more detail.

2 MAUREEN CHLEBEK: Good
3 evening, and thank you for the opportunity to
4 present. My name is Maureen Chlebek. I am
5 representing McMahon Associates, an Ullman
6 Company.

7 As Robin indicated, I am the
8 New England Regional Manager for McMahon.
9 I'm a registered professional engineer in the
10 State of Connecticut. I have over 38 years
11 as a traffic engineer in experience, and I
12 specialize in transportation planning and
13 traffic engineering.

14 So what I'd like to do is to
15 walk you through the traffic study that we
16 conducted and some of the results that we
17 came up with for the proposed site. So to
18 begin, our study area consisted of five major
19 intersections in the area, three of which
20 occur on LaSalle Road.

21 So if we start from the south,
22 we have LaSalle Road at Ellsworth, Ellsworth
23 Road and then moving northerly we hit
24 Arapahoe Road which begins the one-way
25 section of LaSalle and that extends northerly

1 to Farmington Avenue, which is a signalized
2 intersection.

3 We have two intersections on
4 Woodrow Street, Arapahoe Road to the south,
5 and Farmington Road to the north. So we
6 collected counts. We started this study back
7 in December of 2021. We collected counts
8 both in December of 2021 and June of 2022.
9 We focused our counts on the weekday morning
10 peak period and the weekday afternoon peak
11 period. And the reason we selected these
12 times is because it was the time of the day
13 when the combination of existing street
14 traffic and traffic expected to be generated
15 by the site in combination would be the
16 highest.

17 So with these counts we
18 drilled down to a peak hour in the morning
19 and a peak hour in the afternoon, and that
20 became the basis of our analysis. We also
21 projected the traffic out to represent 2024,
22 which would be -- assumed to be the build
23 year.

24 So next we went on to estimate
25 how much traffic would be generated by the

1 proposed site, and we used national data that
2 is compiled by the Institute of
3 Transportation Engineers, and it's arranged
4 by land-use types. So the land-use codes
5 that were applied to this study were a
6 multifamily housing, a mid-rise building, and
7 a retail land-use.

8 We projected the traffic based
9 upon the number of units and the square
10 footage of the retail building, and we found
11 that the proposed site is expected to
12 generate less than 60 peak hour trips in
13 each, the a.m. and p.m peak hour. So a trip
14 is a one-way movement. So you know, either a
15 trip entering or a trip exiting.

16 So in total had, you know, 60
17 or less in the peak hour. And if you take a
18 moment to think about that, that's about one
19 trip a minute added to the street network in
20 this area.

21 We purposely were very
22 conservative in our traffic analysis. When
23 we could take credit for things, we bypassed
24 it in order to have a conservative analysis.
25 So for example, we are definitely in a

1 walkable area. Many of the trips by the
2 residents at the proposed site are walkable.
3 We didn't take any credit for walkable trips.

4 Also we didn't take credit for
5 pass-by trips or internal trips, which would
6 be, you know, trips between the retail and
7 the residential portions of the site.

8 We also adjusted our count
9 data for the COVID factor. So as many of you
10 know, once we were hit with the pandemic
11 traffic volumes began to go down. So we did
12 a historic look-back on what the traffic
13 volumes were pre-pandemic and adjusted up 11
14 percent on our traffic volumes.

15 So collectively with all of
16 these different factors we feel like we're
17 representing a very conservative analysis
18 here. Also our analysis is based upon the
19 street network as it exists today, and the
20 one-way movements that are in place today.

21 So at this point when the
22 trips were distributed to the street system
23 we went on to conduct a capacity analysis for
24 those major intersections. So when we do a
25 capacity analysis what we're really

1 estimating is what the vehicle delay is at
2 the key intersections based upon the given
3 roadway conditions and traffic volumes.

4 Level of service is ranked A
5 through F, and we have to think of it
6 differently than we think of grade school
7 grades. Like, typically A through D is
8 acceptable. Once you hit level of service E
9 you're reaching long delays and starting to
10 reach capacity of the street network. And
11 once you're into level of service F, you're
12 exceeding the capacity.

13 What we found out here, we
14 estimated a no-build and a build condition in
15 2024, and we compared those results. So if
16 we start with the signalized intersection, in
17 the morning peak hour that intersection
18 operates at level of service B, and in the
19 afternoon peak hour it operates at level of
20 service C. With the new traffic from the
21 proposed site we maintain those overall
22 levels of service.

23 Similarly, at the four
24 remaining study area intersections, which are
25 all un-signalized, level of service with the

1 proposed site traffic remained at level
2 service C or better.

3 So the study area
4 intersections are operating well from a
5 traffic perspective. There are not long
6 delays at these intersections. The queues
7 that resulted at these intersections did not
8 change substantially with the new traffic
9 from the proposed site.

10 And so lastly, we looked at
11 the sightlines, at the site driveways, and we
12 compared the site distance in each direction
13 at the driveways with the national standards.
14 And it found that each of the driveways meets
15 or exceeds both intersection, sight distance
16 and safe stopping sight distance.

17 So you know, with these
18 results we were feeling very good about the
19 low impact that the traffic will feel in this
20 area based upon this site. You know again,
21 it's a low generator. We're estimating about
22 one new trip a minute, and that's on the
23 whole street network. That's not just on one
24 street. We're not degrading levels of
25 service. We're not extending the queues at

1 the study area intersections.

2 We do understand that there is
3 a study being done on the West Hartford
4 Center infrastructure master plan. And as
5 Robin indicated, the proponent will continue
6 coordination with the Town. They're
7 interested in working with the Town on any
8 street improvements that may be put forth in
9 that study, particularly in terms of traffic
10 calming.

11 So with that I will pass it on
12 to the next presenter. Thank you.

13 MATTHEW MRVA: Good evening.
14 My name is Matt Mrva from Bohler. I work
15 with Jeff Fitzgerald. I'm a registered
16 landscape architect.

17 We've been working on the
18 project with the team, and we're excited to
19 just quickly present some of the landscape
20 architectural features of the project and
21 kind of walk you through what some of the
22 objectives were and how we got to the plan
23 that you see before you tonight.

24 Jeff already went through
25 quite a few of the components here, but just

1 from an landscape architectural standpoint
2 one of the goals was to really try to
3 complete the streetscape at the edges of the
4 project, at the corners along LaSalle and
5 Arapahoe, and to really continue the street
6 tree pattern that had already been
7 established on those roads, and fill out the
8 block.

9 As Jeff had mentioned
10 previously, as we're doing with the
11 architecture, we are also trying to do with
12 the landscape architecture and really create
13 a vibrant street edge utilizing decorative
14 lighting, continuing the lighting pattern
15 that you see in the downtown with the
16 decorative posts and fixtures, and then
17 street trees and grates along that edge.

18 We're utilizing several
19 different species of trees, but throughout
20 the site just from a numbers standpoint we're
21 proposing 29 new street trees, 15 ornamental
22 and flowering trees, over 150 evergreens
23 between corniferous and arborvitae, 190
24 deciduous shrubs, 180 evergreen shrubs, over
25 400 perennials, and 70 ornamental grasses.

1 So we're creating a lot of
2 interest at the street level. We've focused
3 a lot on kind of the top down and the
4 parking, but I just wanted to start to
5 describe what's happening at ground level and
6 on some of the terraces here from the
7 landscape standpoint.

8 As Jeff went through
9 previously, you know, we are working on
10 making connections from the streets into the
11 site. This is a view from LaSalle into the
12 newly configured alley that's going to have
13 more of a pedestrian priority. Obviously,
14 we're eliminating cars from this alley and
15 creating space that can used to spill out
16 from the restaurants, and from a pedestrian
17 standpoint to connect to the condominium
18 building beyond.

19 So we've got some
20 before-and-after views that we've described
21 previously, but you know, providing benches
22 and specialty paving, brick pavers and
23 banding, and string lights overhead so that
24 it feels safe at night, but interesting
25 during the day as well with some color at

1 ground level and opportunities for seating.

2 Just a view of the same space
3 at night here as well.

4 Continuing around the corner
5 to Arapahoe, we've talked previously about
6 the pocket park. This is just a view of that
7 park space from Arapahoe looking back up
8 towards the condominium building here.

9 So you can see that we've
10 provided for, kind of, a lushly planted
11 seating area completely open to the public
12 and then a pathway up to a secondary
13 residential entry here. But again all of
14 this space would be available to the public
15 for their use.

16 Continuing down Arapahoe to
17 kind of the main pedestrian entrance to the
18 condominium building, you can see we've
19 provided a nice generous wide sidewalk here
20 through a landscaped screened area that
21 really tries to minimize the view of the car
22 and enhance the pedestrian priority at that
23 edge. So really providing a lot of screening
24 to that building beyond through the use of
25 the street trees and understory plantings

1 that we're providing here.

2 Continuing further down the
3 street towards the apartment building.
4 Again, just another view in there. We talked
5 about the cobble treatment previously. So
6 that the spaces adjacent to that pedestrian
7 spine, the parking spaces would be a
8 cobblestone like material, a stamped concrete
9 that would have the look and feel of cobble
10 and really, you know, further enhance that
11 feel of that being a pedestrian priority,
12 kind of plaza space, almost an auto court as
13 the front entrance to the condominium
14 building there.

15 I just wanted to compare sort
16 of the previous plan. Before we had received
17 some recent comments from the Design Review
18 Committee back in September. This was the
19 initial plan. We got some great feedback
20 from them, which we incorporated into the
21 updated site plan that you see here.

22 And some of the main feedback
23 was really to try to enhance some of the
24 streetscape and pedestrian realm in front of
25 the condominium building. So if you compare

1 the previous access walkway that I was just
2 showing you in perspective view -- we used to
3 have about a seven-foot-six wide pedestrian
4 way down to the front entrance here.

5 You can see we've widened that
6 out to about 13 feet now. We're providing
7 lighting along that edge, and we've reduced
8 the size of some of those parking spaces to
9 allow for, again more of a pedestrian
10 priority to enlarge the plaza space with the,
11 sort of, Uber pickup and dropoff that Jeff
12 had mentioned previously here. So we really
13 think that's going to help enhance that from
14 a pedestrian standpoint, and create some
15 great space for people to walk through.

16 Also one of the comments we
17 received from Design Review Committee was
18 really that the building, the condominium
19 building needed a better base. It needed a
20 better space for people to kind of walk out
21 of the building and decompress before they're
22 confronted with the parking area that was
23 right up against the building here.

24 You can see the previous
25 condition we only had about five feet from

1 the edge of the building out to that parking
2 aisle. We now have about 21 feet. So a
3 significant change by reducing that building
4 footprint by 16 feet has really allowed us to
5 do some great things with streetscape and
6 landscape along that edge.

7 More of an enhanced welcoming
8 plaza treatment at the front entrance. You
9 can see here this is a pedestrian entrance to
10 the garage.

11 We've provided some seating
12 features here, and I'll show you some 3D
13 perspective views of that in a second, but a
14 great place, you know, if you're trying to
15 meet someone and parking in the garage.

16 You can sit here and wait and
17 decide where you're going to go to dinner as
18 you walk down to LaSalle Road, down to the
19 bottom of the page here. So really trying to
20 create a bit of a destination right in this
21 zone here.

22 Just some perspective views
23 that kind of reinforce what I was just
24 describing. In the upper right corner you
25 can see the key plan here. So this is

1 looking kind of from the alley between the
2 new residential apartments and the bank.
3 We've got the crosswalk paving treatment that
4 leads people to the front door of the
5 condominium building here. And then this is
6 a view down that entry that I just described,
7 the widened sidewalk, the main entrance to
8 the condominium building.

9 The images I'm showing here
10 focus more on the landscape, less on the
11 architecture. The renderings that Jeff had
12 shown earlier and that Seelan is going to
13 show shortly focus more on the actual
14 materials that will be on the buildings.
15 This is really for the massing, but just to
16 show you the streetscape.

17 And if you compare this to
18 where we were streetscape-wise before those
19 DRAC comments, the red dashed line you see
20 here was the previous edge of that building.
21 So this was really the only streetscape that
22 you were seeing. So now we've created a much
23 more generous edge along that, that
24 pedestrian access there.

25 Looking further down, down

1 that view, again the Webster Bank building
2 here on your right, the proposed condominium
3 building here and pedestrian entrance on your
4 left. And you can see the former line of
5 that, that building wall was right along this
6 edge. So a significant increase in landscape
7 zone and pedestrian zone in front of this,
8 this structure.

9 And then we get back into that
10 space that I had mentioned earlier, which is
11 really kind of a shared space between
12 pedestrians and automobiles -- that the
13 circular area within here is access for the
14 bank drive-through, but that will be
15 separated from the pedestrian access by these
16 bollards and a curb, which you can see the
17 planters and some of the seating features
18 that we're providing to create that
19 destination at the end of the alley.

20 You can start to see some of
21 the spill out space from the Union Kitchen
22 Restaurant, the potential here that Jeff had
23 mentioned earlier, and how we're screening
24 that with understory plantings from the
25 parking area. So really creating much more

1 of a lush environment back there from what
2 you currently see today.

3 And this is a view looking
4 back down the alley toward LaSalle. So
5 before we were looking up the alley, but this
6 is looking from the residential condominium
7 building back down that alley and showing
8 the, you know, potential outdoor seating.

9 This can be significantly
10 enhanced. We can provide additional
11 screening here if the tenant desired that,
12 but just really wanted to show you what the
13 potential is for that space there.

14 Again, the paving treatments,
15 we're talking about precast pavers and
16 banding that will really enhance the feel of
17 this plaza and create that kind of shared
18 space that we're looking for here. And
19 ultimately we will have that amenity that we
20 described as being that place to wait for a
21 friend to gather and have that destination
22 outside of that, that entrance.

23 At the upper levels of the
24 building -- I just wanted to zoom in here.
25 Jeff had mentioned previously that the pool

1 deck sits on top of that third parking level
2 here so that the units themselves would look
3 out onto this pool deck.

4 There would be an amenity
5 space inside the building here that would
6 spill out onto kind of a multiuse terrace
7 here. This could be, you know, an outdoor
8 space to do yoga or have spill out from an
9 event inside; a covered area next to the pool
10 and opportunities for seating all around that
11 deck, again with landscape on that, that deck
12 level.

13 And then at the upper roof --
14 so this is on top of the sixth story here.
15 This rooftop garden would be accessed from
16 elevators on either side here; opportunities
17 for outdoor seating on this rooftop level,
18 fire pit, potential rooftop garden spaces.

19 These could be herb gardens,
20 pollinators species gardens up here. The
21 restaurants down at street level could
22 utilize this area potentially to grow herbs
23 that could be used in the kitchens. A really
24 neat opportunity up here for kind of a shared
25 space that would be usable as a garden area

1 as well.

2 So just kind of wanted to walk
3 you through many of the levels on site here.
4 I think Seelan is going to get into a little
5 more detail on the architecture, but from a
6 landscape architectural standpoint I just
7 wanted to reinforce some of the ideas that we
8 kind of touched on in Jeff's presentation.

9 Thank you.

10 SEELAN PATHER: Thank you,
11 Matt. Good evening. My name Seelan Pather
12 I'm a principal with Beinfield Architecture.
13 We're the architects on this project.

14 This is an image from
15 Arapahoe. Our office is a design driven
16 practice that has studied and delivered many
17 multifamily projects over the last 20 years
18 or so, always trying to add value in the
19 current environment we're in.

20 When our office starts a
21 residential project we ask two questions.
22 How? Do we create a sense of place? And how
23 do we create a sense of community?

24 West Hartford is evolving with
25 Blue Back Square and beyond at establishing a

1 vibrant community that lives up to the
2 often used phrase, "live, work, play."

3 This project seeks to both
4 reinforce and take advantage of that vibrant
5 dynamic, and LaSalle Road will become the
6 most important amenity for the new residents
7 of the proposed buildings. I want to stress
8 that LaSalle Road and the area around it is
9 the amenity. We're excited to be in this
10 neighborhood.

11 In turn, our project aims to
12 become part of the community by providing
13 parking for the nightlife on LaSalle Road and
14 bringing homeowners -- condo owners in this
15 case, to the area.

16 So I'll start with the larger
17 vision for the project. The project intends
18 to deliver 58 condominium units and 25
19 apartment units with associated parking
20 amenities. There's two primary planning
21 concepts. The first -- now to switch to the
22 next slide.

23 The first was to place the
24 condominium building at the portion of the
25 site that offers the most length and breadth

1 in this area.

2 The second planning concept
3 was to fill in this corner. This is an
4 important open planning concept, to create a
5 street wall. This is what this building
6 does.

7 This is a five-story building.
8 It's four stories with a recessed first
9 story, a glazed transparent base -- and
10 you'll see that, see that in the renderings.
11 And this is a sixth-level building -- I say
12 six levels, because it's technically five
13 stories built into the land. So it's five
14 stories at the back, and reveals itself to be
15 six stories at the front.

16 Both buildings have a defined
17 and curated relationship to the surrounding
18 streets. The buildings at the corner of
19 LaSalle and Arapahoe is transparent for the
20 majority of its base and entirely engages the
21 corner. The intent is for the restaurant to
22 spill out in this corner, into the landscape
23 areas that Matt has created.

24 The condominium building is
25 set back from the streets and has two

1 designed pedestrian walkways that lead onto
2 LaSalle, LaSalle Road.

3 The condominium building also
4 has a landscape park in this area that
5 extends to Arapahoe. The architectural
6 design intent is for both buildings to have
7 forms appropriate to the site context and to
8 have residential characteristics that is
9 derived from the abstracted New England
10 vernacular of traditional New England brick
11 buildings.

12 The architectural design has
13 evolved during six Design Review Advisory
14 Committee meetings, and the version in this
15 submission has been improved by the process.

16 So onto the plans. So I'm
17 just going to walk you through the plans and
18 give you a feel for how the building lays
19 out.

20 This is the basement. It's
21 entirely buried. You don't see it. It's an
22 expensive build, but because of the reasons
23 we've mentioned we need the parking. So we
24 have to build it. It's entirely buried and
25 it doesn't reveal itself at any point to the

1 outside.

2 This is level one. Here you
3 see the condo building at the heart of the
4 site. Here you see the concept again of the
5 street wall, completing that street wall.
6 The design concept that was important for us
7 here as we thought about the layout was the
8 energy that a building creates, and the
9 energy that permeates LaSalle Road.

10 And the way we think about it
11 is that the energy that is here -- if you've
12 ever been here at night you feel that
13 energy -- permeates into the space via these
14 walkways, these curated walkways that Jeff
15 and Matt have created. And in turn, the
16 building and its architecture -- and we hope
17 we've done it justice -- creates an energy
18 that permeates back into LaSalle Road. So
19 this is a very good relationship, this way
20 we've done the design was.

21 Just terms of use, if you
22 wanted to rent a building -- rent a unit in
23 building B, or you wanted to buy a condo in
24 building A you would drive up here. I'd show
25 you why you would know -- and you see the

1 renderings, why you would know this was the
2 entrance.

3 There would be visitors
4 parking, or future resident parking in this
5 area. You would be received in this lobby
6 with offices, and then so on, meant for
7 reception of people who are going to rent or
8 buy.

9 If you were going to use the
10 building at night for parking, you would come
11 in again off Arapahoe and then you would
12 enter the building here into this parking
13 garage. You would go down this ramp into the
14 basement, and you would come up this elevator
15 if you needed to use an elevator. And as
16 soon as you came up the elevator you would
17 see clearly that the way you get out onto
18 LaSalle Road is via this route.

19 You'll see in the renderings
20 that we created a termination point, a place
21 making point. And Matt has alluded to it and
22 you'll see it again in the renderings here.

23 This is the entrance to the
24 condo building. This is the entrance to the
25 apartment building.

1 Go to the second level.

2 So the important item on the
3 second level again -- this is just a parking
4 level -- is that it's only for the
5 condominiums. So the access drive that leads
6 up from Arapahoe at this point -- Arapahoe is
7 higher here. So this drive, the incline of
8 this drive is less than we had it when we had
9 it in this area. Let me explain that.

10 DRAC also had move -- and we
11 moved it, and there was an agreement to
12 purchase this property to facilitate that.
13 And you enter this driveway up into the
14 second level, and that's only for the
15 condominium owners. So you don't see any
16 public coming up this driveway -- well,
17 that's not the intent anyway. And that's the
18 pocket park that Matt has described.

19 Up into the third floor. This
20 is a typical residential unit layout. It's a
21 typical layout, double loaded corridors,
22 trash rooms with trash chutes for easy -- as
23 I said, it's a highly amenitized residential
24 floor, two elevators and your staircase.

25 An important note here is that

1 the layer cake process for reducing the
2 height from Arapahoe starts here. This area
3 is set back about ten feet from the face of
4 the apartment.

5 And then we have an amenity
6 about 2200 square-foot amenity in this area,
7 about 8,000 square foot of amenity on this
8 deck. So the idea is that for people who are
9 downsizing, for people who are looking for
10 options to from living in a bigger home in
11 West Hartford, this is ideal and we'll try
12 and make this place feel like a home.

13 This is the sixth floor. So I
14 said that the layer cake started here, and
15 you see again the sixth floor is set back
16 from the face of the building for
17 architectural purposes and massing purposes.

18 The units -- sorry. I just
19 want to make this clear, this white is where
20 it's set back. This is the outside of the
21 floor below.

22 The units are larger.
23 Typically apartment units are smaller than
24 this. These are meant to be homes. That's
25 why they're larger, and our office has been

1 researching condo apartment trends
2 pre-pandemic and post-pandemic. That's our
3 business. That's what we do. We will take
4 the care to provide residential products that
5 add value to your community.

6 This is the roof. Just to
7 reiterate the point that Matt made, that open
8 space is important to healthier living. And
9 you can just imagine someone having, growing
10 vegetables up on this roof, having a view to
11 West Hartford and enjoying the open air and
12 that being part of their living experience
13 every day.

14 And onto the architecture.
15 I'm probably going to say this twice, but we
16 are proud of where we ended up with the
17 architecture. The comments that we
18 eventually received from DRAC regarding
19 design specifically were very positive and I
20 think on record.

21 So the idea behind this
22 building, the architectural idea behind this
23 building was for it to be a floating brick
24 box. Again, an abstracted New England brick
25 building, simplified and somewhat modern, but

1 traditional at the same time.

2 For a glassy lower floor,
3 hopefully we get the right tenant. Hopefully
4 that adds value to your community. People
5 will spill out into these sidewalks and it
6 will complete that corner. Again, an
7 important open planning concept.

8 We paid attention to the
9 details, more so than we would normally do at
10 this phase in the project because we were
11 forced to, and that was rewarding. You'll
12 see here the lintel to the brickwork
13 resolved; the idea that it is a traditional
14 steel lintel. The way that the Juliet
15 windows were formed, with the residential
16 scale of them and then the balusters turning
17 into the steel frames/jams of these windows.

18 Real -- this will be real
19 brick. We might use thin brick. When we use
20 thin, it's still real brick. We use all the
21 corners to make it look the way that you want
22 in terms of the real detailing.

23 This comes to mind because it
24 was a specific DRAC comment. We wanted to
25 make this element that was a baluster for the

1 roof above also a cap to the building, but I
2 think that's successful as well.

3 So whether it's used a few
4 times again -- also is curated, and that's
5 what this building is.

6 This is a view from Arapahoe
7 that we were looking at just a little bit
8 ago. And you can see this building is set
9 back a long ways, about 150 feet away from
10 Arapahoe in this plane. Because of that,
11 though, we wanted to create the type of
12 architecture in the corner that draws your
13 eye in and says, hey. You've arrived. This
14 is a sense of arrival.

15 So this, this element we took
16 time and care with. I'll speak more about it
17 actually when we get to the blowups, but you
18 see this building is set further back.

19 There's a lot of space around the building
20 now, again in response to DRAC comments.

21 These buildings, these buildings are similar,
22 but not the same. They speak to each other
23 architecturally, but the colors are
24 different. The materials are different and
25 it adds to the vibrancy of the composition of

1 the buildings.

2 And we like where we ended up with
3 this building also. This corner element was
4 a story higher. We reduced it during the
5 DRAC process. The idea was it would be
6 somewhat of a light box, a beacon if you
7 will, that would mark that you have arrived
8 in the space.

9 There's always room for drama with
10 a product like this, a two-story entrance
11 vestibule, a concept that we had
12 architecturally. It may be abstract to
13 describe it, but it was like cutting into an
14 object and the object revealing itself to be
15 something else. So whenever you cut the
16 plane, it reveals itself to be wood.

17 So whenever you cut the front plane
18 it reveals itself to be wood, and when you go
19 into the building it's wood. Now hopefully
20 we can pull it off in the final details.

21 But again, we took care. There's
22 the layer cake I was explaining. One
23 recess -- I'm sorry if I'm moving fast with
24 the mouse. I'll slow down -- and the second
25 recess at the higher level.

1 Again, brick, aluminum cladding,
2 wood reveals; so a series of materials that
3 make up the architecture, and the
4 architecture's massing is broke up both
5 vertically and horizontally. I described
6 vertically by the layer cake effect. And
7 horizontally you can see we've taken the mass
8 and broken them up by these balconies here.
9 So it's not one long mass.

10 A point about construction. This
11 is -- this type of building where our office
12 does a lot, and we could build this building
13 all day every day in a podium style building,
14 which is stick, five-story stick over
15 concrete, but we're not going to.

16 The quality of materials that our
17 clients have committed to dictate that this
18 will be concrete and either light gauge or
19 heavy, or heavy steel above to increase the
20 quality of the building. And all the
21 materials are true from the actual real brick
22 to the cast stone in this area.

23 This is a detail shot of the
24 termination point as you come up between
25 Union Kitchen and the Webster building.

1 Again, placement. I'd like to thank DRAC for
2 making the suggestion, because it made the
3 project better. We pulled the building back
4 16 feet.

5 Matt described this area as a
6 place -- we show as a fountain. Matt shows
7 as a planter. The point is we want it to be
8 a focal point.

9 And this is the entrance into the
10 garage. So you would arrive here, or you
11 would leave here as part of the energy, like
12 I said, that either projects from the
13 building to LaSalle Road or from LaSalle to
14 the building.

15 Again, you see the attention to
16 detail, the wood recesses, the balcony is set
17 back ever so slightly so that you get the
18 modulation of the building. And also the
19 spanner panels, maybe second spanner panels,
20 metal and setback.

21 Each of these units will have
22 balconies or terraces up there, you see. The
23 upper floors will have terraces to enjoy the
24 outside. The next two shots are -- the next
25 two images are just models and I want to

1 clarify that they're not rendered. Right?
2 So these are just purely off our software
3 intended to show just the massing of the
4 building from the west side in this case --
5 is that right? The west side.

6 And our top floor is here -- one,
7 two, three, four, five. And that's what we
8 meant by the building reveals itself. That's
9 six stories only on -- this portion of the
10 building is set back well away from the road,
11 as Jeff indicated.

12 Five stories on this side, and two
13 65-foot wide blocks, as opposed to one
14 uniform block.

15 This is a view you'll never see.
16 It's taken over the Lavery building, but we
17 wanted to show that we kept the architecture
18 going. We didn't say, oh, this is the back
19 of the building. We're going to stop.

20 Right?

21 So the only point of this image is
22 to show that the architecture continues. The
23 architectural styling continues. It doesn't
24 reduce even though you don't see this view.

25 And to make that clear, this is a

1 view from Farmington. A little further up
2 Farmington in front of Luna Pizza. And this
3 is the extent of what you can see of the
4 building.

5 And as you go closer to LaSalle
6 Road, you obviously are not able, because the
7 view changes.

8 So I'd like to close by saying we
9 went through this DRAC process. So I think
10 we had one vote in favor and three against
11 with DRAC, and we were approved by TPZ,
12 though. But the DRAC process improved the
13 design. And again, at the end of the DRAC
14 process they complemented the architecture.

15 It was an extensive process, six
16 meetings, and I want to show you some of
17 the -- just a sampling of what I mean by the
18 building evolved, the project evolved.

19 This you've seen before, but this
20 is the 16-foot cutback. So that was
21 significant. We took this entire front
22 portion of the building off to reduce the
23 massing. And then we have iterations of both
24 buildings, but the one that stuck out to me
25 when I was putting this presentation together

1 was the evolution of the building on the
2 corner.

3 So this is where we started -- and
4 I won't dwell on these. I'll just flip
5 through them. These are some of the
6 iterations. All during that process just
7 trying to find out what the best building --
8 what the best buildings, types of buildings
9 to put into this project, types of
10 architecture, the type of planning.

11 A lot of work, a lot of thought
12 went into it with the support of our clients
13 and design team.

14 And we ended up here, something
15 we're very proud of. Thank you.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Attorney
17 Pearson, while you're walking up -- it's been
18 just about two hours. So we would really
19 like to get to public comment.

20 So if we could?

21 MS. PEARSON: Madam
22 Chairperson -- and Madam Mayor, would you
23 prefer that we go to comment now, and then we
24 can pick up?

25 The only thing I wanted to go

1 through were some other DRAC comments, make
2 the findings that we normally make, which are
3 also already set out in our application
4 letter. I'd be happy to do that after the
5 public has a chance to speak.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. I
7 think that would be helpful.

8 MS. PEARSON: That's okay. In
9 terms of the informative aspect of the
10 application, in terms of allowing everybody
11 to truly understand what it is that's being
12 proposed we have ended. We have completed
13 that part of our presentation. Thank you.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
15 I'm sure that will be appreciated.

16 So just as a reminder, you
17 need to state your name and address for the
18 record.

19 And we were going to start
20 with people that are supportive of the
21 project just because there's a presentation
22 from the petition candidate wanting to
23 petition the residents. I want to make sure
24 that that is in.

25 And so then we will open it up

1 to everybody, but we're going to stick to
2 three minutes so everybody has the
3 opportunity to speak. We have 40 people
4 signed up -- that's two hours of comments.

5 And I would appreciate if you
6 have a comment and you agree you can say you
7 agree rather than repeating the comment.
8 That would be, I think, respectful of
9 everybody.

10 And again, we want to hear you
11 all -- and if you agree, wonderful. State
12 that. And if you have any new points please
13 bring them up.

14 So we will start with the
15 support.

16 Thank you so much.

17 All right. And I am going to
18 state the person that is called up, and then
19 the first on deck and the second on deck.
20 I'm going to take my old gymnastics tools
21 here.

22 So the first person was Ronni
23 Redman, but she scratched out -- I think.
24 And I apologize because some of these are a
25 little scratched.

1 The second just says, Berman,
2 20 Brookline Road. And again you state your
3 name and address for the record. On deck,
4 Jennifer La Forte. And then on deck, Jen
5 Searls.

6 EVAN BERMAN: Good evening.
7 My name is Evan Berman and I live at 20
8 Brookline Drive here in West Hartford. Thank
9 you all for coming out tonight. I think our
10 town is fantastic, that we have this many
11 people interested in such a project.

12 I want to note that I am in
13 favor of this project and in favor of the
14 application changes before us tonight. As a
15 homeowner living within walking distance of
16 West Hartford Center, a local business owner
17 and a licensed realtor I can tell you
18 firsthand that there's a strong need for
19 condominiums right here in West Hartford
20 Center.

21 I want to share a few simple
22 real estate statistics with you very briefly.
23 I looked up these stats this afternoon. In
24 the past 365 days there have been only seven
25 condos that sold in the Heritage building at

1 Blue Back Square. The average days on market
2 of those condos were only 45 days, and one of
3 them took 98 days, which of course raised the
4 average up.

5 And the average list price to
6 sale price -- so in other words, what they
7 listed at and what it sold at was 98 percent,
8 meaning that there's a need there and that
9 there's a desire for folks to live there.

10 I also looked at single-family
11 homes within a half a mile radius of the
12 corner of Arapahoe and LaSalle Road, and also
13 365 days. And within that timeframe there
14 were 46 sales in that area. The average days
15 on market for those sales was only 13 days,
16 and one of them took 124 days to sell, which
17 would have dropped our average to just 10
18 days.

19 The average list price to sale
20 price was 108 percent, again indicating that
21 there's a desire for folks to live in this
22 area.

23 These simple numbers show me
24 with my experience and my knowledge of the
25 area that without a doubt there's a need for

1 housing in the Center, and there's a very
2 strong market for housing in West Hartford
3 Center.

4 As a matter of fact, living in
5 West Hartford we should all know that we have
6 very limited space for new homeownership
7 here, and we need that people come to our
8 area, people want to be in our area.

9 Our Center needs more
10 properties for people to buy. Our Town needs
11 more properties for people to buy. There are
12 very many buyers out there who want to live
13 in West Hartford Center and enjoy the
14 lifestyle that are town has to offer. Many
15 people want to be right where the action is.

16 The features that this
17 development have to offer are fantastic and
18 will be desirable to many people. It will
19 offer a great connection to the Center, as we
20 all know, along with allowing a great
21 lifestyle to those that desire to live
22 there -- and of course, for the people that
23 are lucky enough to buy there, because there
24 are only 58 units available.

25 The development and the sale

1 of the condos will obviously increase our tax
2 base, and the local businesses will benefit
3 as well. Our town has so many great features
4 including great schools, great parks, great
5 golf courses, shopping and dining
6 experiences, and the draw will continue for
7 many years to come.

8 We need the housing to
9 continue to allow our town to grow and to
10 prosper. I see no better use for the
11 intended space -- I see no better use of the
12 intended space that the development to be
13 development of housing.

14 And I want to thank you all
15 for your time and ask you to support this
16 proposal. Thank you all very much.

17 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
18 Mr. Berman. Jennifer La Forte is next. Jen
19 Searls after that, and then Austin Hersh.

20 JENNIFER LA FORTE: My name is
21 Jennifer La Forte. I live at 12 Montclair
22 Drive. Good evening, Mayor Cantor and Town
23 Councilmembers. I'm a West Hartford resident
24 living within walking distance of the Center.
25 I'm here tonight to voice my support for the

1 Arapahoe's Group application for a zone
2 change at Arapahoe and LaSalle Roads.

3 I believe the addition of the
4 proposed condominiums and apartments, Center
5 Park Place and 75 LaSalle will be a plus for
6 West Hartford Center, and the Town overall.
7 The businesses, the restaurants, the farmers
8 market, the new Trout Brook Trail, and stores
9 are all part of what makes the Center and
10 Blue Back Square vibrant and a place where
11 people want to spend time.

12 West Hartford offers residents
13 the liveliness and excitement of an urban
14 setting with the warmth of a smaller
15 close-knit community. I believe this balance
16 has come about due to thoughtful planning,
17 particularly over the past 25 years.

18 As our town continues to grow
19 it's important that we continue this legacy
20 of smart growth with intention. Additional
21 living spaces will enhance the Center and
22 West Hartford. The renderings of the
23 proposed development showcases a strong
24 architectural aesthetic and the condos and
25 apartments flow well visually with the rest

1 of the Center.

2 I also like the idea of
3 building something on used concrete areas. I
4 encourage you to support the application for
5 the proposed development. Thank you for your
6 time this evening.

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
8 Ms. La Forte. Jen Searls is next. Austin
9 Hersh -- or Harsh, and the Billy Grant.

10 JENNIFER SEARLS: Good
11 evening. My name is Jen Searls, and I live
12 at 34 Pilgrim Road. Good evening, Mayor
13 Cantor and Town Councilmembers. I came
14 tonight to voice my support for the
15 application for zone change, and to ask for
16 the Council's support for this change in this
17 development.

18 I followed along the journey
19 of this development and I see the proposed
20 condominiums and apartments is a really
21 positive change for West Hartford. The
22 development appears to be thoughtfully laid
23 out and aesthetically pleasing. I love the
24 green space and walkways that fit right in
25 with the walkability of the Center, and

1 they're certainly more attractive and more
2 ecofriendly than a giant asphalt parking lot.

3 There's a lot to love about
4 West Hartford as both Evan and Jen have both
5 said. I've raised six kids in this town and
6 I plan to stay here once they're all grown.
7 A development like the one proposed at
8 Arapahoe and LaSalle would be fantastic, not
9 only for young professionals who want to live
10 in the Center, but also for those of us of a
11 more advanced age that are looking for
12 convenient attractive housing close to the
13 vibrancy of the Center.

14 Further, as a taxpayer it
15 sounds to me that the proposed development
16 would add to the Town's tax base, and the
17 existing businesses would benefit from the
18 additional foot traffic, all of which I
19 believe benefits the Town and it's citizens.

20 I thank you for your time and
21 I urge your support for this development.

22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
23 Ms. Searls. Austin Hersh, Billy Grant, and
24 then Nick Stambulos.

25 AUSTIN HERSH: Hello,

1 everyone. My name is Austin Hersh. I live
2 at 3 Pelham Road in West Hartford, right next
3 to the Center, and I am in favor of the
4 application change before you.

5 So as a neighbor of the
6 proposed development I'm excited West
7 Hartford will add the much-needed residential
8 buildings in our awesome Town Center. People
9 are eager to live in West Hartford,
10 specifically close to the Center. It's a
11 vibrant area with awesome shops and
12 restaurants, and really just a great spot to
13 walk around.

14 Currently the West Hartford
15 real estate market doesn't have anything like
16 the proposed development. West Hartford
17 residents and those looking to move here will
18 find the apartments and condos to be a great
19 addition, as being able to walk out your door
20 and have the town's best restaurants and
21 shops steps away is really one heck of an
22 amenity.

23 Most potential property buyers
24 want to be close to the Center, and this
25 development fills the void since houses close

1 to the Center, as mentioned before, really
2 don't come on the market very often.

3 So in a slightly different way
4 the proposed development area, in my opinion,
5 is currently underutilized and really a
6 wasted space in the Center -- which really,
7 in my view, as we're developing our community
8 should be utilized to its fullest potential.
9 It will not only provide additional housing
10 options for West Hartford Center residents,
11 but it will also be a very attractive upgrade
12 from a half empty parking lot that most folks
13 honestly really don't even know how to
14 access.

15 This addition will also
16 improve the flow of the Center, as we've seen
17 with the designs with the new lighted
18 walkways and pocket park, which will connect
19 the building to the rest of the Center.

20 And furthermore, it will
21 provide a much-needed boost for our local
22 businesses with increased foot traffic
23 resulting in higher sales to help, you know,
24 combat high-rent, you know, costs that
25 they're facing.

1 As we've seen, there's, you
2 know, likely tonight to be plenty of
3 controversy about aspects of the development,
4 you know, parts that people maybe don't like.
5 You know, change always brings controversy no
6 matter how beneficial it might be.

7 I'm sure folks are worried
8 about increased traffic, but I understand
9 however the development will actually, you
10 know, improve parking. It might help
11 alleviate the heavy parking on our
12 neighborhood streets.

13 You know, and as our town
14 grows more traffic is really a natural
15 byproduct. Right? But this development
16 should actually mitigate that problem with
17 the proposed flow of the design that we saw
18 tonight, making access to the property as
19 unintrusive as possible.

20 And as I mentioned before, new
21 residents won't have to drive to enjoy the
22 Center. They'll just walk down the street
23 and they can support our local businesses.

24 I've also heard concerns the
25 new building may look a little too modern and

1 not fit into the historical look of the
2 Center. I think after seeing the design
3 tonight maybe that changed some opinions, but
4 I'm sure as a whole we can agree that new
5 modern looking buildings with, you know,
6 green space and just great architecture will
7 definitely look a lot more attractive than a
8 large awkward parking lot, and not to mention
9 the development will add to the Town's tax
10 base, a benefit for all of West Hartford
11 taxpayers.

12 To conclude here, as someone
13 who grew up in West Hartford and has since
14 moved back to raise my family, I'm proud of
15 our Town and I hope the town leadership stays
16 focused and open-minded to ensure West
17 Hartford continues to be one of the best
18 places to live in Connecticut for decades to
19 come. Allowing this development to come to
20 fruition will be a positive step for that
21 mission.

22 Thank you.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
24 Mr. Hersh. And then we have Mr. Billy Grant.

25 WILLIAM GRANT: Hello,

1 everyone, and thank you for having me. Thank
2 you, Mayor. So I am in favor of this project
3 and I am a resident. I live at 110 Foxcroft,
4 and I've owned and operated Restaurant
5 Bricco. We are now in our 27th year of
6 business. I think I might be the
7 longest-running restaurant in the Center.

8 And I think the project is
9 beautiful. It's going to bring more foot
10 traffic to the project -- to the Center, and
11 I think it's really going to help the
12 business.

13 Although it may appear a lot
14 of our -- the bigger restaurants and bigger
15 business in the Center are doing well -- we
16 have a great Center, but this is going to
17 bring more foot traffic and help us on some
18 off days. And it's also going to help some
19 of the smaller businesses in the Center that
20 aren't as fortunate as I have been. So I am
21 definitely in favor of the project.

22 So thank you very much.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
24 Mr. Grant. Then we have Nick Stambulos, and
25 then Chris Conway. And then second on deck,

1 Mike Grant.

2
3 (No response.)
4

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. If
6 Mr. Stambulos is not available we will go to
7 Mr. Conway. Then Mr. Grant and then
8 Austin -- I have 3 Pelham. I don't know what
9 the last name is. I'm sorry. Oh, that is
10 Mr. Hersh. So Austin? There's two different
11 addresses. Sorry about that.

12 Okay. And then after that,
13 Kim Carol.

14 CHRISTOPHER CONWAY: Good
15 evening Mayor and Town Councilmembers. For
16 the record my name is Christopher Conway.
17 I'm the President and CEO of the West
18 Hartford Chamber of Commerce, whose office is
19 at 948 Farmington Avenue.

20 On July 7th Mark Lewis and
21 James Manafort met with the Chamber's
22 economic development committee and provided a
23 detailed overview of the proposal for the
24 redevelopment of the parcel at Arapahoe and
25 LaSalle Road, at the time called 75 LaSalle

1 **Road and Central Park Place.**

2 **It answered questions. The**
3 **economic development committee voted to**
4 **recommend. The Chamber's executive committee**
5 **fully endorsed the proposal, which they did**
6 **at their July 12th meeting.**

7 **The Chamber believes that this**
8 **proposal will specifically enhance West**
9 **Hartford's business climate and generally add**
10 **to the Town's well being.**

11 **We have recently seen new**
12 **multifamily activity in town, but demand**
13 **still lags behind supply. The proposed**
14 **redevelopment of Arapahoe and LaSalle will**
15 **provide a very desirable option for young**
16 **professionals and empty-nesters looking to**
17 **live and stay in town. The new mixed-use**
18 **building will also provide new customers for**
19 **businesses in the Center and Blue Back**
20 **Square, for new residents just a short**
21 **walking distance away.**

22 **Additionally, the proposal**
23 **includes 3500 square feet of retail space for**
24 **a business. It is estimated that the**
25 **building will generate 10 to 23 new permanent**

1 jobs in town.

2 Seventy-five LaSalle Central
3 Park Place also helps meet the goals outlined
4 in the Town's Plan of Conservation and
5 Development by providing multifamily
6 buildings within the transitional zone
7 between commercial districts and residential
8 neighborhoods.

9 For these reasons the West
10 Hartford Chamber of Commerce requests that
11 the Town Council approve 75 LaSalle, Central
12 Park Place.

13 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
14 Mr. Conway.

15 Then we have Mike Grant. And
16 Jim Carroll? After that, Michelle Maresca,
17 and Jason Wang.

18 JAMES CARROLL: Hi, Madam
19 Mayor, Council. Thank you very much. My
20 name is Jim Carroll. I live at 250 Griswold
21 Drive, in West Hartford, 06119. I'm in favor
22 of this project.

23 I've lived in West Hartford
24 most of my life; graduated from Hall -- I
25 don't have to tell you what year -- some of

1 you did. My wife and I raised our children
2 here, graduates of Hall. My grandparents
3 built a house here in 1935. And my
4 parents -- my father grew up here.

5 And I just mentioned that
6 because I feel like I'm invested in the town.
7 I love the town, and I think what the Council
8 has been doing has been fantastic managing
9 and implementing I think, for lack of a
10 better word, smart growth.

11 For the past 20 years maybe
12 I've been paying attention. We've had
13 exponential growth, meteoric growth and the
14 Council has done a really good job managing
15 that and the administration of Mr. Ledwith as
16 well.

17 I think the project is
18 fantastic. I think it's a win for everyone.
19 I think it's a win for the residents that are
20 nearby. I think it will improve property
21 values. I think it's terrific for the
22 businesses in town, the restaurants in town
23 and all those people that come from all
24 around to eat here and be entertained.

25 If I'm in New York -- and so

1 when asked where I'm from, I say,
2 Connecticut.

3 They say, where?

4 I say, West Hartford.

5 They say, I love that place.

6 If I'm in Boston the same thing happens only
7 they say it's wicked awesome. They really
8 like -- they like West Hartford. I like West
9 Hartford and I think this is a terrific
10 project, and I hope the Council will see it
11 forward. Thank you very much.

12 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
13 Mr. Carroll. Michele Maresca.

14 MICHELE MARESCA: Thank you.
15 I see my writing isn't clear. It's Michele
16 Maresca, 111 Orchard Road. Before I give any
17 comments tonight, I just wanted to point out
18 that as well as being a West Hartford
19 resident, I'm also a real estate lawyer.

20 And as a real estate lawyer my
21 firm has actually been working with the
22 developer entity for this project in various
23 capacities, none of which involve the
24 land-use application before you tonight --
25 but that's not why I'm here tonight.

1 I'm here tonight as a
2 resident. I think I've heard everyone say so
3 far how much they love our town -- and I do.
4 I love this town. I chose to live here. I
5 grew up in Connecticut, moved away. And when
6 I came back I was looking for a place that
7 had a vibrant downtown area and a really good
8 sense of what it wanted to be, and I found
9 that in West Hartford. And it's for that
10 reason that I really love this project.

11 This project is an extension
12 of what West Hartford is. It's a
13 well-designed, well-thought-out community and
14 this is just a natural progression of what
15 already is here.

16 I'm going to, you know, adhere
17 to your thoughts about not repeating
18 everything you heard tonight. There are so
19 many good reasons why this project will only
20 help to enhance this community, but for me
21 perhaps the biggest reason why is because it
22 takes us a step further in terms of finishing
23 LaSalle Road and that beautiful design and
24 plan that had been started so many years
25 before.

1 So, yeah. I think that's
2 where I'll end my comments, but I thank you
3 for your time. And I'm obviously in support
4 of the project, and I ask that you all
5 consider approving it. Thank you.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
7 Attorney Maresca.

8 Jason Wong -- or Wang. I'm
9 not sure.

10 JASON WANG: Hello.

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Come on up.
12 And then Cindy Shafer Sendak.

13 JASON WANG: Hello. Thanks
14 for your time. My name is Jason Wang. I
15 live in 194 Four Mile. I support the
16 Arapahoe project. I would welcome more
17 people to enjoy our wonderful town and our
18 quality of life. I know that supporting new
19 construction is never incredibly popular, but
20 I hope you'll consider my views.

21 One big-picture reason I
22 support the proposal is we face a lot of
23 challenges as a society, and I know denser
24 housing is more sustainable. I think that we
25 need to build denser walkable, bike-able,

1 less car-dependent communities and I think
2 that's good for our health and for social
3 isolation, and for climate change, and our
4 dependence on oil. And for those reasons I
5 really support putting more people closer to
6 town.

7 On a more local level I
8 support the proposal because West Hartford
9 Center is just a great place to live and I
10 think others deserve to enjoy it as much as
11 we do. I think we enjoy enormous benefits by
12 living within walking distance to the Center.

13 You know, we can take a stroll
14 to the library, get lunch, get coffee, get
15 groceries all within a short walk. We can
16 split a bottle of wine and, you know, don't
17 have to worry about driving home. And we can
18 walk or bike to our kid's daycare and their
19 schools. And I think we enjoy a big premium
20 on our home values, too, because it's such a
21 high demand area. So we experience a lot of
22 benefits.

23 And if you look on Zillow
24 there are no homes for sale right now within
25 walking distance of the Center. And so I

1 support the right of others to enjoy our
2 lifestyle that we're so lucky to have, and I
3 think it would be wonderful to have more life
4 on the street, more children's voices, more
5 young professionals, more empty-nesters, and
6 just more smart people with smart ideas.

7 You know, I think traffic will
8 always be a concern, but I think it's such a
9 walkable area that it won't be as big of a
10 concern as, you know, single-family zoned
11 areas.

12 And so overall I support this
13 development. I think it's the right thing
14 for our Town. Thanks for your time.

15 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you
16 Mr. Wang.

17 Cindy Shafer, Matthew Ye and
18 then Alan Carera.

19 And Mr. Dodge.

20
21 (No response.)

22
23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: So I don't
24 see Cindy. Matthew Ye and Alan Carera.

1 (No response.)
2

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. And
4 that's all on the sign-up sheet. We will
5 circle back for if you haven't, but those
6 people that signed up I want to get to them.

7 So we will go now to -- I'm
8 not sure if the presentation -- is this from
9 David Meehan and Shawn London. Yeah? So if
10 you're coming up together, I don't know --
11 but again, sensitive to time for everybody.
12 And just being sensitive, that there's a lot
13 of people that would like to speak.

14 DAVID MEEHAN: Okay. Thank
15 you, everyone. I know it's been a long
16 evening. So we're going to try to be
17 efficient -- but we also appreciate, you
18 know, the time here.

19 And again, for starters my
20 name is Dave Meehan and I live at 24 Woodrow
21 Street with my wife, my new newborn daughter
22 who -- well, she's 19 months old, and also
23 our golden retriever Daisy, who I think at
24 times I will admit has caused traffic
25 problems in the Center because people like to

1 stop and actually, you know, make comments
2 and try and pet her. So we apologize in
3 advance for that traffic congestion.

4 So thank you, Town
5 Councilmembers for what you do, for your
6 volunteerism here in this role. It means a
7 lot, and we know it takes a lot of time and
8 effort -- so that we're very grateful for
9 that.

10 I guess, you know, out the
11 gate here -- and I should just state, you
12 know, we have -- and we'll be bringing up
13 here -- we do have a petition. It
14 encompasses about, I believe, roughly 240 or
15 so folks who have signed who reject this
16 petition.

17 But I want to be kind of clear
18 here that, you know, this is, you know,
19 rejecting this specific petition. Speaking
20 for myself and also of the group, this is a
21 group of people that realize, you know, this,
22 this parking lot as it is now isn't the best
23 use of that property. We understand it. And
24 we, most people think there should be some
25 development there.

1 That's not really where the
2 push-pull comes here. You know, we realize
3 that, you know, there there is a development
4 that probably should take place here, but I
5 guess I want to -- and when we bring up the
6 petitions momentarily, I do want to take a
7 moment to -- so again, formally, yes, there
8 is this rejection of this specific draft of
9 what is before us, but I also want to take a
10 moment to define the "we."

11 The "we" is, you know, roughly
12 two hundred and, I believe, fifty or so
13 petitions. That's 250 voters. I heard the
14 opening remarks earlier, some financial
15 numbers about, you know, this developer, I
16 maybe -- I may have misheard. I thought I
17 heard something about 1.2 million of tax
18 revenue or something like that, that was
19 provided.

20 Well these, the people that
21 signed this petition rejecting this, their
22 tax revenue is over \$2 million. Okay? So my
23 only point there is just saying there,
24 they're both meaningful. I'm not trying to
25 get into a tit for tat there on it, but it's

1 a meaningful amount.

2 It's 250 voters. It's 250
3 citizens that are here who want to see some
4 development, but they want to have their
5 voice heard.

6 You know, I wanted to -- when
7 thinking of this earlier, I wanted to come up
8 with an opening quote and I started to think
9 of my grandfather who's from Boston and went
10 to MIT as an engineer.

11 And one of the quotes that he
12 did share with me was that, you know, if you
13 don't like change you're going to hate
14 extinction. Right? And he's right. Right?
15 I mean, he's right. He was right a lot of
16 times. He did have that boston accent, but I
17 won't try and, you know, repeat that.

18 But he's right.

19 And so I think the good news
20 is you all are doing the right thing as far
21 as all these other developments that have
22 taken place. Right? We've got the Park
23 Road, the covent. There's about 300 units
24 coming on board there. We've got Trout Brook
25 recently approved. That's, you know, 200

1 units or so, give or take.

2 On Farmington Ave, there the
3 Byline, something like 50. We've got
4 hundreds and hundreds of new units coming in
5 here.

6 So I think when people look
7 back, you know, I don't think they're going
8 to -- I don't think we have to worry about
9 extinction. I think we're doing the right
10 thing. You know, we're doing smart growth.

11 And what's nice about all
12 those developments is that the traffic
13 flow -- you heard me say the names. Right?
14 I said Park Road. I said Farmington. I said
15 Trout Brook. Those developments all have
16 their traffic flowing in and out of major
17 roads. That's where we start to have some
18 challenges here.

19 This flows onto a residential
20 road. This flows onto Arapahoe. They're
21 proposing to actually literally knock down
22 residential houses to make this happen. So
23 we're going to talk a little later about DRAC
24 and buffer zones, but in our mind if you have
25 to actually knock down residential houses to

1 make your traffic flow, it feels like a
2 buffer is being eroded here and DRAC happens
3 to agree.

4 And I wanted to just -- I know
5 I said the future is bright. It's really
6 important for us, because a lot of us here
7 were here five years ago in 2016. It's
8 really important for us to just briefly,
9 briefly touch upon how we got here, because I
10 think it's really important, including the
11 vision statement, you know, the West Hartford
12 vision statement and guiding principles that
13 I'll bring up momentarily.

14 And maybe I'll tempt my
15 technology skills to press the button.

16 Okay. All right. So good to
17 know that I can pull it off.

18 So here, here we are. You
19 know there was a development similar to this.
20 I initially wrote down -- similar to this
21 back in 2016 from the same developer, except
22 it's not. This is actually bigger. Okay?

23 So some of you here were on
24 the Town Council at that time. That was a
25 unanimous vote for the FAR requirement. It

1 was Republicans and it was Democrats that
2 said, time out. We're not ready for this.

3 And so they come back. They
4 said, you know, work with the community.
5 Let's figure out what -- what's right for the
6 Center and what's not. And then let's
7 advance this. Okay?

8 So this development is
9 actually bigger. This is, you know, six
10 stories. I think that previous development
11 might have been four or five, give or take.
12 But so -- okay. As that happened, you know,
13 it was voted down unanimously. The smaller,
14 the smaller project -- and then it was, I
15 would say, a wonderful, comprehensive -- and
16 I think I even heard the attorney for the
17 developer reference this -- we had a group
18 where we had staff from the Town. We had
19 residents. We had business owners. We had
20 every representation. We hired a consultant.

21 We had public workshops. We
22 had online surveys where thousands and
23 thousands of people from the Town, in the
24 Center and outside, you know, gave their
25 feedback on what should be, you know, this

1 updated Plan of Conservation and Development.
2 And we formed this West Hartford vision
3 statement and guiding principles that the
4 Town Council formally approved.

5 Okay? So this is not -- a lot
6 of what I want to share today is going to be
7 data and quotes. I'm going to try and do
8 less about how I feel. I want to just show
9 the data and then let you all decide.

10 So here we have this vision
11 statement. Right? Now, I won't read the
12 whole thing for the sake of time, but when
13 you go -- but I ask all of you and everyone
14 here -- we have handouts -- to give this a
15 read.

16 When you're making the
17 decision today, read this -- and one could
18 argue, read this and read the draft report.
19 And if you still think it's the right thing,
20 then, you know, you're entitled obviously for
21 that.

22 So a couple of points we
23 bolded here within the West Hartford vision
24 statement approved by the Town Council. We
25 talked about the attractive look and feel of

1 the Center and its integration into the
2 surrounding neighborhoods is a unique
3 strength and benefit to the Town. Okay.

4 Guiding principles -- and I'm
5 just going to hit upon the first three here.
6 Maintain and enhance the character of the
7 Center and its pedestrian-friendly nature,
8 historic elements and diverse range of
9 architectural styles while preserving the
10 existing open feeling and presence of natural
11 life.

12 Okay. Encourage appropriate
13 development and redevelopment of the Center
14 to be consistent with its character and
15 current commercial boundaries. Specific
16 consideration should be paid to transitional
17 buffer areas where commercial uses are
18 adjacent to residential to ensure a
19 contextually sensitive design, an appropriate
20 scale, height and setback that enhances and
21 complements the quality of the neighborhoods.

22 We use the words "specific
23 consideration" for that buffer. Okay?
24 Interesting.

25 Last bullet here that I'll

1 emphasize, manage traffic and partner to
2 reduce impacts on the surrounding
3 neighborhoods and enhanced safety, mobility
4 and convenience for businesses, residents and
5 visitors.

6 Last bullet point I
7 highlighted, utilize neighborhood outreach
8 and engagement as part of all future town
9 efforts to implement these guiding
10 principles.

11 I read the notes of the Town
12 Council when this, this was approved and it
13 was celebrated by the Town Council saying
14 this was a collaborative effort. You know,
15 this makes it almost a little easier for
16 future decisions because we kind of know the
17 playbook. This is the playbook. So I just
18 wanted to highlight that.

19 Okay. Now fast forward -- now
20 COVID happens and, you know, it's two years
21 ago. And we understand, you know, LaSalle --
22 listen. We were in chaos. Right? LaSalle
23 ended up being, you know, shifted to a
24 one-way traffic to help the restaurants. It
25 was for the greater good. Right?

1 I mean, no one could dine
2 indoors. It was the right thing at the time.
3 The Town Manager did tell us at the time it
4 was only going to be temporary. Fair enough.
5 I guess no one knew what lied ahead.

6 Now, a lot of times with these
7 developments -- I realize, you know,
8 neighborhoods come before you and they worry
9 about future traffic problems. And they say,
10 this might create a future traffic issue.

11 What's different today? We
12 already have a traffic issue. We are already
13 broken as far as traffic in our neighborhood,
14 and I want to give you the data.

15 The data on this map here is
16 the town survey traffic count that the Town
17 did. So this wasn't the neighborhood. This
18 wasn't a third party. This was the
19 engineering staff came out and counted the
20 traffic flowing on these streets.

21 What I'll a highlight here --
22 and I don't have a pointer. Hopefully you
23 can see that top road is Farmington Ave. You
24 can see on the right is LaSalle, and then you
25 can see cutting down the middle there is

1 Woodrow Street.

2 So the traffic report that was
3 provided by the Town, you know, the town
4 engineering team back to the neighborhood
5 said that as a result of the one-way street
6 of LaSalle going northbound, as a result of
7 those sub-diverters that were put on Four
8 Mile -- you can see here, over here, you
9 know, Four Mile and Newport and some of these
10 other streets, as a result of that we now
11 have on Woodrow up to 2,500 cars per day
12 traveling on a residential road. That's
13 volume. That's data. That's not my opinion.

14 Now, the neighboring streets
15 have between 250 or 400 cars per day
16 traveling on those streets. So Woodrow
17 before any development happens has ten times
18 the traffic volume.

19 Now you know it's not even
20 just a volume game. The speed tracked by the
21 Town Council traffic survey showed a peak
22 travel of 63 miles per hour on Woodrow.
23 That's not easy, actually. I mean, that's,
24 you know, 63 miles per hour. That's
25 dangerous.

1 Now a qualitative element to
2 this, which now I can't quite justify with
3 numbers, is there's the qualitative of the
4 travel of the vehicles -- it's loud. It's
5 ATVs. Just the other day I actually saw the
6 ATVs making a return. I thought it was like,
7 you know, I thought we were done with that.

8 They went flying down Woodrow,
9 went through every stop sign, the gang, the
10 whole gang and they were proud and loud. So
11 there's a volume element to this as well.
12 But -- okay. I can't put that on paper
13 apparently.

14 But here's the other element I
15 want to say with this, you know, with this
16 map here. When you look at the reason why
17 those sub-diverters were put in on Four Mile,
18 it was the right decision in that we had a
19 safety issue.

20 You had cars going, cutting
21 through on Boulevard, on Four Mile and
22 accidents were happening. A bus got hit.
23 Right? We're talking bad stuff. Well you
24 know, these reckless drivers that were
25 traveling northbound on Four Mile, now they

1 can't go through Four Mile.

2 It's not like they went away.
3 Right? So what happened is they now cut down
4 Boulevard and say, well, I'm going to keep
5 going. Nothing is going to stop me. I'm
6 going to go northbound on Woodrow and cut
7 through -- and Kevin, my colleague will talk
8 later.

9 We have 30 kids, give or take
10 in this, in this concentrated area. We
11 literally have a bus stop where that 63 miles
12 per hour sits -- that's a bus stop with kids.
13 Okay? That's not my opinion. That's data.
14 And so we're sitting here with this
15 northbound traffic that's at an all-time
16 high -- southbound traffic, now to pivot to
17 that, the southbound traffic that cuts down
18 Woodrow goes down a Arapahoe and gets their
19 cup of coffee at Starbucks.

20 I mean, it's that's just --
21 the alternative is waiting at two stoplights.
22 That's not what's happening. People are
23 going to Bricco's, you know, Billy Grant's
24 place. None of them anymore can come down
25 southbound on LaSalle.

1 I said for the past two years
2 our neighborhood has been rather patient
3 about this. We are now at a point where
4 we're having good conversations with the town
5 engineering department. It's not -- we're
6 not anywhere near the end state here, but
7 there's a lot, a lot of dialogue going on to
8 this. And it's just -- it's that one of the
9 core reasons before we even have this new
10 development, now, let's layer in this new
11 development.

12 Say what you want about, you
13 know, traffic studies -- what you believe,
14 what you don't believe. I think -- let me
15 ask what, you know, feels right for you all?
16 Now within that, that big block is right
17 there. There's only going to be two roads.
18 You know they want to come onto Arapahoe.
19 They can either go to Woodrow or they can go
20 to LaSalle. So think about whatever the view
21 is on how many people are coming in and out
22 for commuting, friends visiting, and what
23 have you now.

24 I'm going to drop the word
25 "Amazon." How many Amazon vehicles are you

1 thinking are going to be coming day to day
2 for these nice new, you know, 80 luxury
3 apartments? People who can afford it. And
4 if it's going to be the retirees, I guess,
5 you know -- I don't know who's going to be
6 the perfect demographic. We're going to see
7 UPS trucks, Fedex trucks, delivery of food,
8 Whole Foods. That's not captured in the
9 traffic study, as far as the traffic study
10 that was provided by the developer.

11 The developer showed a traffic
12 count that was during the two thousand -- I
13 think winter of 2021, you know, peak COVID.
14 You know, maybe not the perfect time to
15 measure, you know, when we're all locked in
16 our house. That might not be the perfect
17 point.

18 But let's put it there. This
19 is your data. This is your data. We're
20 already broken. We want to have some form of
21 development here. But boy, the traffic is
22 the headliner. But let me let me pivot to,
23 you know, it doesn't end there.

24 So we have DRAC. And what's
25 interesting here is that, you know, we

1 highlighted here the traffic, and then -- so
2 now we get to DRAC.

3 I have the letter up here.

4 You know, I heard the attorney
5 for the developer kind of frame her summary
6 or perspective on why, you know, what DRAC
7 said, what they didn't say. Here's the
8 letter. This is December 15th -- of December
9 5th. I'm sorry.

10 This is the sixth meeting with
11 DRAC. This is their third rejection of this
12 development. This is not my opinion. This
13 is -- now DRAC, as you all know, the Design
14 Review and Advisory Committee. I heard the
15 Chairman of your TPZ committee say to his
16 members, these are the smart folks, I guess,
17 wicked smart, like we're talking about from
18 Boston. Right?

19 I mean, these are engineers
20 and architects that the Town has to help in
21 these specific situations. That's the main
22 reason why we have them here. This is their
23 purpose. They do this every day. They don't
24 have a stake in the game as far as not in my
25 backyard. It's their objective view.

1 I'm going to summarize the
2 four bullet points. I'm going to mention
3 what they say here, which to me are just very
4 compelling. And then again, this is their
5 third time rejecting this.

6 The scale and mass of building
7 A is not compatible with the site, or
8 adjoining buildings, and does not accomplish
9 an appropriate transition to the streetscape.
10 The mass and placement of building A does not
11 create a visually pleasing or coherent site
12 design.

13 DRAC is saying this site
14 design is incoherent, the scale and
15 proportions of building A remain incompatible
16 with the neighborhood. Their choice of words
17 don't leave a lot of room for interpretation
18 here. So I'm not even going to really weigh
19 in on the incompatible with the neighborhood
20 after -- after their six meetings with this
21 developer.

22 As currently presented, the
23 overall design does not foster a sense of
24 place that fits within West Hartford Center,
25 the abutting properties, and the community.

1 Now this is scathing to me. Okay?

2 Now in going through this,
3 there are two, you know, there are a few
4 words that -- at least that I don't see on
5 here. I don't see the word "ginormous," or I
6 don't see the words "terrifying building,"
7 which is good -- until you get to the TPZ
8 meeting when the one of the members -- and I
9 attended the TPZ meeting -- the staff, you
10 know, the staff members that were here was
11 here, Rick was here. Todd Dumais was here.
12 This was a corporate TPZ member.

13 This is ginormous. This is a
14 terrifying building.

15 Okay. I kind of lean most on
16 the traffic. Okay? That that's why I'm here
17 before you today. I think it's interesting
18 to hear objective views from DRAC members,
19 TPZ board members about this development.

20 Now just to start winding this
21 up here -- because I really appreciate your
22 time -- I think there's a couple of
23 interesting elements to this. While I'm
24 talking about draft, you know again, we're
25 talking about 250 people here, you know, that

1 are objecting on this petition. Amongst them
2 all, they are people who are near the Center.
3 There are people outside the Center. There
4 are business owners.

5 And in fact, one of the
6 letters that have been sent to the Town
7 Council is from CookShop Plus Owner James
8 Hines, who's right there on LaSalle. I asked
9 him his view. It's documented on paper.

10 And this was his view. He
11 said, Dave, I completely agree with the
12 rejection letter by West Hartford's Design
13 Review and Advisory Committee. He went on to
14 state the four bullets that I've already
15 stated.

16 And this is a business owner.
17 Right? So I asked him, I said, so, James,
18 this would be a windfall. I mean, feet on
19 the street, business economics.

20 And he said, you're right.
21 You're right. He said, it is going to
22 enhance my financial profit, and I care about
23 financial profit -- but he said, Dave, I care
24 about the community profits.

25 Now here's a business owner

1 who said, I care about the community profits.
2 I don't see, you know, there's a certain cost
3 to revenue that you have to be mindful of.
4 And I thought that's, you know, the
5 developer, what they're showing today is
6 old-school capitalism.

7 You know, it's bottom line
8 profit. It's for developments for affordable
9 housing. It's focused purely on the
10 bottom -- the new age of capitalism is
11 supposed to have an element of caring about
12 the community. I thought that was completely
13 refreshing, that a business had that holistic
14 view, and that's what we want in a partner.

15 And I want to highlight one
16 other element, too. You know, as far as the
17 dialogue that we've had, I am thrilled to
18 hear from the attorney today from the
19 developer, this willingness to talk about
20 traffic calming measures regardless of what
21 happens today. That I'm being sincere when I
22 say that. I applaud that.

23 Let's have that conversation.
24 Whatever happens today, let's have that
25 conversation. I'll be there for that,

1 because here's what -- the outreach so far
2 from the developer is this. Okay?

3 Now you can talk about these
4 other developments -- S.K. Lavery, they've
5 had people come out. They've taken DRAC's
6 feedback and changed their design. They've
7 come out to the neighborhood, sat with me and
8 ask for our feedback. The public feedback
9 and conversation that we've had with this
10 developer is the, sorry, we-missed-you tag
11 that they left on our door. That's it.

12 And they did this after they
13 already submitted their proposal. Now S.K.
14 Lavery, as you all know, hasn't even
15 submitted their proposal yet and they've had
16 numerous conversations with neighborhoods.
17 That's the way you do it. That's community.

18 I've heard the word
19 "community" several times today. That's the
20 right -- the vision, the guiding principles.
21 That's what this is about. I'm very
22 confident that if we reflect upon these,
23 listen to what DRAC says, I think we'll come
24 out with the right answer, but with an eye
25 towards a collaboration where we have some

1 form of development.

2 And then last but not least --
3 and this is another point here I wanted to
4 highlight, that the Chairman of TPZ said
5 during the meeting there, and I should note
6 other members of TPZ highlighted concerns
7 about the traffic reports. They didn't quite
8 believe what they were reading.

9 But here's the most -- one of
10 the more important points I heard from the
11 Chairman of the TPZ who voted against this.
12 So now we've got the TPZ Chairman voting
13 against this, DRAC voting against this
14 numerous times. We've got people thinking,
15 you know, terrifying, ginormous. We have a
16 meaningful public segment here voting against
17 this.

18 But the most important part --
19 one of the more important parts I heard was,
20 why right now? Here we are, we have this
21 infrastructure plan that we're in the third
22 inning, the fourth inning, fifth inning. We
23 haven't figured that out yet. What are we
24 going to do with LaSalle? Is it going to go
25 green space? Is it going to go two-way? Is

1 Memorial going to cut and come through?

2 We haven't figured that out
3 yet. And so the Chairman sat in that chair
4 and said to his fellow members, we're going
5 offsidess here. To make this decision now on
6 one of the largest developments when we
7 haven't figured out the West Hartford
8 strategy, gotten the consultant report back
9 yet -- we're jumping offsidess.

10 And he also noted that to not
11 approve DRAC when DRAC, you know, is already,
12 you know -- I mean, to disregard DRAC when
13 they've already not approved this is a flawed
14 system. He said, we have a process for a
15 reason. We should respect the process.

16 So with that I will hand it
17 over to some of my colleagues here that --

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
19 Mr. Meehan. Now we will -- I think we'll go
20 to the sign-up sheet. Right?

21 DAVID MEEHAN: No, I had one
22 other colleagues that had -- we do appreciate
23 the flexibility, two hours on the front end.
24 So one or two of my colleagues.

25 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Sorry. I

1 didn't know there was -- okay.

2 DAVID MEEHAN: Oh, no. That's
3 great. Thank you. Todd?

4 TODD PARKER: I'll keep this
5 short. Thank you. My name is Todd Parker.
6 I live at 21 Arapahoe road. And thanks to
7 the Town Council for listening to the
8 community and caring about doing the right
9 thing in the Center.

10 Arapahoe Road is home to six
11 families with many young families. There's a
12 group home for people with disabilities just
13 two doors down from this.

14 As Dave covered, our road is
15 already very busy with cars using it as a
16 high-speed cut through to the Center,
17 especially now that LaSalle is one way.

18 This proposed development
19 funnels all traffic from 85 multifamily units
20 and 3500 square feet of retail onto Arapahoe
21 Road. There's no other example of a large
22 development funneling all their traffic onto
23 a residential road -- and for good reason.

24 According to the developers'
25 latest traffic study, this will add 540 daily

1 trips to our already busy street, but somehow
2 cause negligible impact. If you find that
3 hard to believe, the Town's TPZ Committee
4 also question the validity of that study.

5 Common sense would say this
6 would make our problems much worse. Adding
7 cars will push the traffic, parking and
8 safety issues we struggle with every day to a
9 breaking point.

10 If the Town approves the
11 development here, they must make Arapahoe
12 Road a dead-end street and push traffic onto
13 a commercial street like LaSalle. If LaSalle
14 can't handle the traffic, how can we expect
15 an overloaded residential street to shoulder
16 this burden?

17 Most importantly, I want to
18 talk about the scale of this project,
19 specifically the large condo building.
20 You'll notice tonight that the developers
21 have shown beautiful renders of the building
22 in isolation, but went far out of their way
23 to avoid showing this at street level from
24 the Center or Arapahoe Road.

25 Like many of you, I wondered

1 how large this building really is. To figure
2 that out for myself I pored over the project
3 drawings. Based on the plans I calculated
4 the average building height is around 70
5 feet, when you take into the account the mass
6 of the rooftop deck -- but keep in mind that
7 the elevator tower on this is a whopping 78
8 feet tall. For reference, the Town Center
9 Garage is only 60 feet.

10 I then located the four
11 corners of the building from the blueprints,
12 and I was surprised to see that it's pretty
13 much right at the fence line of the houses on
14 Arapahoe Road -- and you saw that tonight in
15 their presentations. There is no residential
16 buffering. This is right in our backyards.

17 To show the height as
18 accurately as possible I needed to photograph
19 an object 70 feet in the air over the corners
20 of the building to scale the drawings
21 accurately. After some failed attempts using
22 a balloon and measuring tape -- it doesn't
23 work -- I ended up launching a drone at each
24 corner and hovered it at 70ft while my wife
25 took photos from Arapahoe Road.

1 By capturing multiple points
2 we could finally see how big this actually is
3 from street level. You're probably as
4 shocked as I was at how much it towers over
5 Arapahoe Road.

6 And elevation isn't doing us
7 any favors either. You heard this tonight as
8 well. According to the developers' own
9 diagrams, the building lot sits on a hill 10
10 to 12 feet higher than Arapahoe Road, which
11 makes it look closer to 80 feet from our
12 front yards. I think we can all agree with
13 DRAC that the scale and proportions of this
14 are incompatible with a residential
15 neighborhood.

16 The three buildings in front
17 are currently zoned as a residential office,
18 which is meant to provide a buffer between
19 commercial and residential zones. Since
20 these are now owned by this developer,
21 approving this project will essentially annex
22 this and Arapahoe Road into a commercial
23 zone. Any notion of a buffer is wiped out by
24 approving this project.

25 We also did the same analysis

1 from LaSalle Road near Division West. So
2 this is the view that you would see when
3 you're eating dinner. With a higher grade
4 here I only used 60 feet as the building
5 height. And you can see yet again this looms
6 over the quaint row of shops and restaurants
7 that make West Hartford Center such a draw
8 for visitors. Is this really the future we
9 want for the Center?

10 At least now I understand why
11 these kinds of real world views weren't shown
12 by the developer tonight. Now, maybe you
13 think I'm exaggerating a bit by these images,
14 but this mockup provided earlier by the
15 developer tells the same story.

16 Look. When you place a
17 70-foot building on a hill surrounded by
18 mostly one and two-story buildings, it's
19 going to look out of place. It's that
20 simple. The developers don't want you to see
21 the full impact of this massive condo
22 building that is the heart of this project.
23 That's why their proposal shows carefully
24 cropped views that obscure most of the
25 building's mass with lush foliage that will

1 take decades to grow in. That's why they
2 spend so much time showing the much nicer
3 apartment building on LaSalle that's
4 appropriately scaled for the site.

5 This developer hasn't
6 addressed important concerns from residents,
7 DRAC and TPZ around the core issues of scale,
8 buffers, traffic and parking. On December
9 5th DRAC voted four to one against this
10 project. They are the Town's experts in
11 design, and they said very clearly that the
12 scale of this project doesn't fit the Center.

13 But here we are again tonight
14 with developers pushing for approval with the
15 Town Council, despite the stacks of letters
16 and petitions from residents and DRAC's
17 strongly worded objections that this will be
18 harmful to the Center.

19 The Town is actively working
20 on a master plan to create a vision for how
21 we want to grow the Center in the coming
22 decades. If this project is approved, it
23 will deeply undermine that work.

24 So why are we even considering
25 this massive project before we formulate a

1 holistic plan for the Center? Why are we
2 voting on a project that doesn't have the
3 support of DRAC, and has major traffic and
4 parking questions left unanswered?

5 The Council holds the power to
6 keep this project in check and set a clear
7 precedent for responsible growth. I urge the
8 Town Council to vote no tonight. Let's
9 finish the master plan, then decide if and
10 how this project fits into our vision, not
11 the other way around.

12 Thank you for your time.

13 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you
14 Mr. Parker.

15 So we will now go to the
16 sign-up sheet again. State your name and
17 address for the record, and three minutes to
18 speak -- and we appreciate that.

19 And if you can say if you
20 agree with something, confirm that you agree.
21 And if you can avoid repeating it would help
22 make sure everybody gets a chance before it
23 gets too late.

24 Okay. So Shawn London and
25 then I'm going to also say the two on deck,

1 Beth Willett and Emma Fichera -- or Christine
2 Fichera and then Emma Fichera.

3 SHAWN LONDON: Thank you,
4 Ms. Mayor, and to the members of the Town
5 Council, and everyone who's been hanging in
6 there. My name is Shawn London. I'm from 91
7 Four Mile Road. I'm 20-year resident of West
8 Hartford.

9 And I want to say, to be
10 clear, that we are not against development of
11 the Center. We realize that this is why
12 we're all here. We're a group of people who
13 have chosen to live in these neighborhoods
14 because we want to take advantage of the
15 vibrancy that the Center has to offer.

16 We were supportive of Blue
17 Back Square back in the day. We welcome and
18 encourage development that is thoughtful and
19 takes into consideration the neighborhoods
20 that coexist around the Center, neighborhoods
21 where parents teach their children to ride
22 their bicycles, where children walk to and
23 from school, couples stop to chat with their
24 neighbors while out on a stroll with their
25 dogs -- a neighborhood, which as the town

1 website itself proclaims, is a great place to
2 live.

3 We've neither seen nor heard
4 from these purported outreach coordinators
5 who supposedly reached out to the
6 neighborhood. The developer's representative
7 who used the words "soccer moms" in a not
8 flattering way reveals just how disconnected
9 they are from the reality of West Hartford,
10 which is a town of soccer moms and dads.

11 The developer's representative
12 in this very meeting has acknowledged our
13 concerns about the increased traffic burden
14 on these residential streets, so it's no
15 longer up for debate. It's fact. Everyone
16 agrees that this is a problem.

17 I don't think we've heard
18 anything more ludicrous tonight than the
19 assertion that the residents of 80-plus
20 high-end dwellings are going to move into the
21 Center magically without their cars. Even
22 the residents who don't own cars will be
23 dependent on ride sharing services such as
24 Lift and Uber that will use these residential
25 roads in a town where alternative

1 transportation is limited or nonexistent.

2 I'm not a traffic engineer,
3 but the estimate of one vehicle trip per hour
4 from this development seems at the best
5 wildly optimistic, and at worst completely
6 disingenuous and not believable.

7 Instead of having traffic
8 routes leading to LaSalle or Farmington
9 Roads, the developers are putting their
10 profits over the safety of the adjoining
11 neighborhood. The proposed development
12 systemically disregards the reality of the
13 consequences imposed on our neighborhoods.
14 No plan for a sustainable path forward for
15 our neighborhood has been presented to us.

16 While brushed off, we have
17 very real concerns about the greater pressure
18 on municipal services due to high volume
19 traffic of these residential streets. No
20 amount of tax revenue generated by this
21 development will be able to undo the harm
22 unleashed on the affected neighborhoods.
23 While we welcome development, it must be
24 thoughtful with all anticipated consequences
25 proactively accounted for.

1 When a school bus full of
2 children is broadsided at the intersection of
3 Four Mile and Boulevard -- just three blocks
4 away from this development, I might add, the
5 Town finally responded in the very definition
6 of reactive town planning. This cannot be
7 the case this time around.

8 There will be no corrective
9 actions possible once the development is
10 approved and the buildings are in place.
11 There will be no ability to put the genie
12 back in the bottle in this case. Development
13 and tax revenue look great on paper and are
14 to be desired so long as respect is given to
15 the existing fabric of the community.

16 As elected officials, we
17 understand you must weigh a multitude of
18 factors when making these decisions. We hope
19 that you are representatives of the voters
20 who live in the immediate neighborhood and
21 will account for our opinions, because we are
22 the ones who are going to bear the burden of
23 your decisions.

24 Please do not let the legacy
25 of your time as elected officials be the

1 destruction of the neighborhood surrounding
2 the Center. Thank you very much.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
4 Mr. London.

5 Ms. Willett and then Christine
6 Fichera and Emma Fichera.

7 BETH WILLETT: Good evening.
8 My name is Beth Willett. I live on 92 Four
9 Mile. I actually live across from
10 Dr. London, who just passionately spoke
11 before all of you.

12 I want to thank all the
13 Councilmembers that are here. I want to
14 thank all the public that's here. I think it
15 speaks volumes about this town that everyone
16 is here on this, and it speaks about the
17 community and the process -- and those are
18 the two things I want to speak about.

19 This Town developed a process
20 in 2017. Mr. Meehan did a very good job in
21 outlining what that particular goal of the
22 Town is, and I don't think that this
23 particular project fits the goals.

24 I don't think that this
25 particular project has met the Town's DRAC.

1 The Town set this group up as an expert to
2 guide us. I have seen the process from many
3 small businesses, other businesses growing in
4 this town, and individuals who have been
5 provided guidance by DRAC have benefited.

6 But this entity does not seem
7 to want to benefit from the guidance, does
8 not seem to want to put forth a plan that
9 involves the community. I know that they
10 have said they've done outreach, but it seems
11 that that outreach was done in July and
12 August.

13 Summertime -- who's home in
14 the summertime? Knocking on someone's door
15 the middle of the summer, I guarantee you
16 you're not going to get most of West
17 Hartford.

18 And I also guarantee when
19 you're outreaching people, when you initially
20 come to their door and ask them for feedback
21 on a project which they have limited
22 information on, that they aren't going to be
23 able to provide you with much guidance. I
24 live two blocks away from this. I never saw
25 a flyer. I got one mailing from them with a

1 drawing.

2 They did no meeting for the
3 whole community to put together and show
4 their plan. Those are very helpful things to
5 the community members, but they didn't want
6 to make that outreach -- and we can see why
7 they don't want to make that outreach. And I
8 will show you this is why they don't want to
9 make that outreach.

10 This building is massive. It
11 does not fit in with the community, and you
12 must take that into factor. This is one of
13 the most important parts of this, the process
14 and the community; and they have failed to
15 comply with those two things, the process and
16 involving the community.

17 I think that we can all agree
18 that a parking lot space is not valuable to
19 the Town, but there's been many areas of this
20 town that are parking lots and they've come
21 to you with proposals. And you guys have
22 turned them down because individuals haven't
23 complied with DRAC.

24 They haven't complied with the
25 community outreach. They haven't met the

1 burden of making a space for the community.
2 They have not met those burdens. That is why
3 I ask that you turn them down tonight. I
4 don't think that it's a bad thing to add
5 community space here, to add condos, but I
6 don't think we have reached/met the design
7 potential that this project needs.

8 It's in the Center. It is one
9 of the centerpieces of this town, this
10 particular property, and it should be
11 appreciated. It should be well thought out,
12 and I don't think we've met it.

13 I mean, even you heard the
14 architect talked about the details of the
15 floating brick building. That's a great
16 description. He talked about how they were
17 forced to find added details to the windows.
18 I don't think that should be a bad thing to
19 require requirements.

20 There are a lot of great towns
21 in Connecticut where you have to meet these
22 standards, and there's a reason that you have
23 to meet the standards. It's because you're a
24 part of the community, and the community
25 wants you to fit in. And there's a process.

PRESIDENT CANTOR:

**Ms. Willett, you've reached
your three minutes.**

BETH WILLETT: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.

**Christine Fichera, Emma
Fichera, and then Kevin McMahon.**

**CHRISTINE FICHERA: Hi, I just
want to let you know I'm taking Emma's three
minutes as well. Hi, my name is Christine
Fichera. I live at twenty --**

**PRESIDENT CANTOR: No, you
can't. Each individual -- if you're
representing a group you can have five
minutes, but you need to be authorized, a
beneficial group.**

**CHRISTINE FICHERA: Oh, I see.
Okay. I misunderstood. All right.**

**My name is Christine Fichera.
I live at 21 Arapahoe Road. Thank you very
much to the Town Council for all your hard
work and all you do for West Hartford. And
thank you, all, everybody who's come tonight
during this busy holiday season. I know many
people who would have liked to be here**

1 tonight, but had school concerts and other
2 holiday happenings that kept them from
3 coming.

4 I first want to start off by
5 echoing what others have said. I'm not
6 opposed to development in the Center. I
7 support development that balances the needs
8 of the community, safety of the neighborhoods
9 and economic development of the Town. The
10 Arapahoe Group's proposed development does
11 not meet these standards.

12 The proposed plan is
13 completely out of scale with the area, will
14 increase the footprint of the commercial
15 zone -- commercial center zone into a
16 residential neighborhood and will add
17 dangerous amounts of traffic into a
18 neighborhood that's already burdened with
19 exponentially more traffic than surrounding
20 streets.

21 The condo building that
22 they're proposing to build will be the
23 tallest building in the Center looming over,
24 as we've seen from the pictures, LaSalle and
25 residential Arapahoe Road.

1 DRAC, the experts of our Town
2 that we rely on to reveal building plans for
3 the purpose of making recommendations,
4 several times voted not to recommend this
5 application. They found that the scale, mass
6 and proportion of the condo of building was
7 not -- quote, not compatible with the site or
8 adjoining building, was incompatible with the
9 neighborhood, and does not foster a sense of
10 place that fits within West Hartford Center.

11 The developer has chosen to
12 disregard these findings along with the
13 standard application process of getting a
14 DRAC recommendation, and instead has
15 bulldozed their application through to a
16 hearing. To give you an indication of how
17 rare this is, the Chair of the Planning and
18 Zoning Committee stated that he had never
19 known of any other application that had gone
20 through to a hearing without a DRAC
21 recommendation.

22 DRAC's recommendation is so
23 important that in our Town's guiding
24 principle document, the Plan of Conservation
25 and Development, it states twice that the

1 Town should support and utilize the expertise
2 of DRAC in the planning and land
3 development's review process.

4 If the Town Council disregards
5 DRAC's finding and allows this development to
6 go forward it will, as the developer's
7 attorney said, be a real game changer because
8 it will completely undermine DRAC's authority
9 and the Town's entire planning and land
10 development review process.

11 Speaking of the POCD, there
12 are several fundamental issues with the
13 proposed development that are inconsistent
14 with the POCD. The most egregious of these
15 is the destruction of the buffer zone between
16 the commercial center and the residential
17 neighborhood.

18 The two houses that the
19 developer plans to demolish along with the
20 parking lot are all zoned to provide a buffer
21 between the residents and the commercial
22 zone. The POCD clearly calls for an increase
23 in and protection of buffer zones. In
24 rezoning the parcels it also expands the BC
25 center zone onto a residential street and

1 will, in fact, expand the center to be
2 directly across the street from a residential
3 house. And the POCD says that we should --
4 I'll just say it's small, but basically we
5 shouldn't do that.

6 Another very important point
7 of the POCD --

8 PRESIDENT CANTOR:

9 Ms. Fichera, you're at three.
10 So please wind down. Thank you.

11 CHRISTINE FICHERA: It says
12 that we need to protect and enhance the
13 quality of West Hartford's well established
14 residential neighborhoods.

15 I would say that destroying
16 houses to rezone property into a commercial
17 zone on a residential street does not protect
18 or enhance my neighborhood.

19 And well, in conclusion, I
20 urge, I hope, thoughtful, responsible
21 residential development will come to the
22 Center and I welcome our new residents and
23 neighbors. In the meantime, I respectfully
24 urge the Town Council to reject the petition
25 of the Arapahoe Group.

1 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you,
2 **Ms. Fichera.** Kevin McMahon is next.

3 **EMMA FICHERA:** Oh, I'm Emma.

4 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Oh, you're
5 **Emma.** Oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

6 **EMMA FICHERA:** She was going
7 **to speak for me, but I've got a voice of my**
8 **own.**

9 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Okay.

10 **EMMA FICHERA:** I lived on
11 **Arapahoe Road. I'm Emma Fichera, and I live**
12 **at 127 Brace Road. I lived on Arapahoe Road**
13 **for 35 years.**

14 **And I only have one question**
15 **for the Council. If you lived at 21 Arapahoe**
16 **Road, would you like this project in your**
17 **front yard? Would you like the traffic**
18 **coming and going on your street and into**
19 **Woodrow, and LaSalle? Would you feel**
20 **comfortable with that?**

21 **Would you feel comfortable**
22 **with it if it were in your backyard? We do**
23 **not feel comfortable with this development.**
24 **I suggest that you vote no.**

25 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you,

1 Ms. Fichera. Now Mr. McMahon, and then Anna
2 Boelitz and then Kim Grose.

3 KEVIN MCMAHON: Kevin McMahon.
4 No relationship to the traffic consultant,
5 just to point that out. I live at 95 Woodrow
6 Street. I just wanted to spend a little more
7 time on this map, and I just would like to
8 point out three numbers.

9 If you remember anything I say
10 tonight, three numbers; 63 miles per hour.
11 Right? That's over one week time period.
12 Right? One week somebody was doing 63 miles
13 at 1:30 in the morning -- just before the
14 restaurants closed in the center. Right?
15 Just mere steps from that 63 circle, 30 kids,
16 up to 30 kids every day get on the school
17 bus -- mere steps.

18 This doesn't count any of the
19 many pedestrians that access the Center
20 through Woodrow and through Arapahoe. Right?
21 2500 cars. It's not just a question of
22 speed. It's a question of volume. And this
23 is now. This development will add hundreds
24 of more cars on either Arapahoe and on
25 Woodrow.

1 The other thing I want to
2 mention is some of you may have seen a letter
3 I wrote to the We-Ha.com about the "Up"
4 house, Mr. Fredrickson and the "Up" house.
5 This is the "Up" house. Right? This is the
6 house that is surrounded by the big building.
7 Right? This is the house that
8 Mr. Fredrickson floated away to Paradise
9 Falls. Why? Because his neighborhood is
10 gone.

11 The place where he grew up
12 which he loved is gone, destroyed. This is
13 what a condominium of this size -- again, not
14 opposed the development, but we need to
15 develop in a smart way, not just more growth,
16 smart growth.

17 And the final thing I'll
18 mention is to the people who developed the
19 petition to oppose this proposal spent
20 countless hours, spent -- knocked on and went
21 to doorstep after doorstep to try to have
22 conversations with their neighborhood about
23 what was needed.

24 And the developer did none of
25 that, did not seek our feedback -- and only

1 in a way to really get information from us.
2 So for all these reasons and for the reasons
3 that others have pointed out, I urge you to
4 reject this proposal. Thank you.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
6 Mr. McMahon. Anna Boelitz, Kim Grose and
7 then Tom Dayton.

8 ANNA BOELITZ: Hi. Of course,
9 I have some petitions to hand out before I
10 start my comments -- and there are several
11 hundred. They're bundled with -- some of
12 these are the ones I think that are closer to
13 the lines.

14 And this is all of the other
15 petitions of many, many people who are asking
16 the Town Council to vote no today.

17 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Please
18 state your name and address for the record?

19 ANNA BOELITZ: My name is Anna
20 Boelitz. My house is on Arapahoe Road, 25
21 Arapahoe Road.

22 And first I want to say thank
23 you to the Town Council, staff, TPZ, DRAC.
24 We're all here today because we love West
25 Hartford. We have so much in common. So I

1 just want to say that. It's such a hard job
2 and I truly all do appreciate it.

3 I also want to say this isn't
4 fear of change, fear of growth, fear of
5 development. Everyone I've talked to,
6 everyone who has signed the petition wants
7 development, and they want development in
8 these lots. A lot of people who said they,
9 that they want you to vote yes sort of
10 generically want development.

11 We're pretty specific and
12 we're very supportive of development.

13 Ms. Pearson was right. This
14 is a game changer. This is a precedent the
15 size of an aircraft carrier coming to a
16 neighborhood near you, 250,000 square feet of
17 development spewing traffic right into a
18 residential neighborhood that's already
19 bearing a lot of traffic.

20 A six-story exception, which
21 isn't contemplated in the zoning regulations.
22 It's just, you know, an exception ignoring
23 POCD, ignoring process -- which isn't just a
24 process. It's a process that lands the
25 highest quality developments here. They get

1 vetted. They get scrubbed before it lands on
2 your desk. Your job is about to become a
3 whole lot harder if everyone starts ignoring
4 that process.

5 This is a precedent to rezone
6 homes on the street to the BC zone, to BC,
7 which allows all of those as-of-right things
8 in a BC Zone and four-story developments
9 right where those little houses are right now
10 that they called commercial buildings -- but
11 they're houses.

12 This is very different from
13 others that are approved and in the pipeline;
14 Children's Museum, 934 Farmington Avenue,
15 S.K. Lavery; West Hartford Inn -- all of
16 those add great things, density, diversity of
17 housing, mixed use, affordable housing. They
18 help our businesses, which is super
19 important, but they're at the Center and not
20 on top of the historic very successful Center
21 which is our brand as a town. We don't want
22 to ruin that.

23 They are all on major roads on
24 lots that already allowed density and height
25 and they don't destroy the buffer zone, don't

1 spew traffic into residential neighborhoods.
2 It's also different because the Children's
3 Museum, for example, got really great reviews
4 from DRAC and TPZ.

5 To approve this, the Town
6 Council has to make a number of legal
7 findings. They have -- you have to stay
8 under 177.16.6, Section 177-44. You have to
9 find that it's -- you'll all read this, I'm
10 sure before you vote, but it has to be
11 contextually sensitive. It has to take into
12 account the height and setback requirements
13 of adjoining properties in more restrictive
14 zones. It doesn't do that.

15 That adequate parking exists?
16 It doesn't. They have to
17 borrow parking around the corner. Who's
18 going to use that?

19 That the development is in
20 harmony with the open feeling and natural
21 light within the public realm of the
22 district? It's the most massive thing
23 around.

24 That is in harmony with the
25 actual or permitted development of adjacent

1 properties? By definition it is not --

2 PRESIDENT CANTOR:

3 Ms. Boelitz, you're at three
4 minutes. So can you wind down, please?

5 ANNA BOELITZ: Absolutely. We
6 all want something built on those lots, but
7 if the only way Mr. Lewis and Mr. Manafort
8 can do that is by violating a very long list
9 of guidelines and goals in the POCD and the
10 vision statement, it's the wrong proposal in
11 the wrong space.

12 Luckily, there are plenty of
13 other developments approved and in the
14 pipeline that meet all of these goals and
15 that had been approved by DRAC and TPZ, that
16 it's a ton of development that's in the
17 pipeline. And we should celebrate that and
18 thank you for the legacy of that in our Town.

19 We don't have to say yes to
20 something that does not work and that
21 destroys the neighborhood in order to get all
22 the things that all the people who support
23 this proposal view as their goals. And so
24 that's what I want to say.

25 And I want to ask the Town

1 Council to vote no today. It's not a vote
2 against development, but it's a vote against
3 this particular one until everyone comes
4 together and comes to a better proposal.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
6 Ms. Boelitz.

7 ANNA BOELITZ: Thank you.

8 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Next up is
9 Kim Grose and then Tom Dayton. And then on
10 deck is Joe Visconti.

11 KIMBERLY GROSE: Good evening.
12 First of all, I'd just like to thank the Town
13 Council for letting me speak this evening.
14 My name is Kim Grose, and I reside at 1704
15 Boulevard in West Hartford -- obviously.

16 Boulevard hasn't been highly
17 represented here this evening, however I felt
18 it was necessary to be here given that my
19 backyard abuts Pelham Road, which is inching
20 closer and closer to the Center.

21 I come from this from a point
22 of safety -- and actually, I'm a field hockey
23 mom. And it's important to me that my child
24 is safe in this town, that I feel safe in
25 this town, and that all of my community feels

1 safe walking in this town.

2 As I said, our home backs up
3 to Pelham Road. So we're very close to the
4 Center and Woodrow Street, which currently
5 sees a large volume of traffic due to the
6 changes made to Riggs, Newport and Four Mile.

7 On my walk up this evening I
8 counted 30 cars in the 5-minute walk it took
9 me to get from my house to Arapahoe. We have
10 resided at this address for 14-plus years and
11 enjoy the convenience of being able to walk
12 to the Center to grab a bite to eat, get some
13 exercise or support our local merchants.

14 Unfortunately, over the last
15 few years we have experienced an increase in
16 traffic -- which can be a good and a bad
17 thing -- that has resulted in treacherous
18 walking conditions. The number of cars that
19 do not stop at the stop sign coming from
20 Ellsworth from South Main to take a right on
21 LaSalle is outrageous -- add to the speed at
22 which drivers go through these side streets
23 with no regard for the residents living there
24 is pretty sad.

25 I've personally experienced

1 situations where you can't cross these
2 streets because no one stops to allow you to
3 do so. I also had an experience very
4 recently where we crossed at Becker's and
5 were almost hit by a car who didn't want to
6 stop to wait for someone to back into a spot.

7 So by adding additional cars
8 to the mix, we're asking for more irritated
9 and impatient drivers.

10 Adding a five to six-story
11 complex, whether it's condos or apartments,
12 with additional drivers is not conducive to
13 the current infrastructure. There will be an
14 increase in traffic on Arapahoe, LaSalle,
15 Woodrow, Ellsworth, Farmington and South Main
16 Street.

17 In addition, I've read that
18 the thought is that those who work in the
19 Center want to live in the Center and will
20 reside in this complex.

21 What? These individuals who
22 work in the Center cannot even afford to pay
23 to park in the Center, and I know that
24 because they park in front of my home on
25 Boulevard every single day.

1 We are kidding ourselves if we
2 think everyone who moves in will be doing all
3 of their business in the Center, or working
4 from home. We have underutilized parking
5 garages as it is today. In addition, this
6 is -- a residential neighborhood with a
7 complex of this size is completely out of
8 scale, and changes the character of the
9 Center and the feel for the residents who
10 live there.

11 Will the current water and
12 sewage systems be able to support this
13 building? If not, who's paying for that?

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Ms. Grose,
15 you are at over three minutes. So if you
16 could wind down? Thank you.

17 KIMBERLY GROSE: Yeah. In
18 summary, although we know growth will happen,
19 it needs to be done thoughtfully and with
20 consideration for the surrounding community.

21 I urge the Council to reject
22 this petition to build these, this building.
23 Thank you.

24 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
25 Ms. Grose. Tom Dayton is next, Joe Visconti,

1 and then Kim Hudson.

2 THOMAS DAYTON: Good evening.
3 My name is Tom Dayton, and I'm a soccer dad
4 from in the past. I'm looking over at Dallas
5 Dodge -- and his team always beat our team,
6 because he's a big guy. And my son was a big
7 guy too, so it was always interesting.

8 At any rate, I live at 59
9 Woodrow Street. I've been there for 43
10 years, my entire married life. My wife
11 Janice and I continue to support the growth,
12 and love the Center and we want reasonable
13 development.

14 And I'll tell you that the
15 proposal by Lexham -- I guess, Arapahoe was
16 very good. I wish I had that two or three
17 weeks ago. However, I am totally confused.
18 What I want to talk about, I right now do not
19 support this current application. There are
20 too many issues that need to be resolved and
21 a lot of them have already been mentioned. I
22 don't want to repeat them. I'll just take
23 some time -- but I want to point out a couple
24 of things.

25 The DRAC doesn't support the

1 current design. I'm an engineer by trade,
2 analytical. I believe that the DRAC must
3 believe in this and, you know, they have to
4 sign off on this. And I don't have enough
5 detail to understand it, but I do know they
6 wrote down major show stoppers.

7 You saw all the list.

8 Everybody knows the mass and the size of the
9 building. There's something wrong here, but
10 I would not move forward with anything. If I
11 was building a power plant and my design
12 engineers told me that it, you know, that
13 half of them -- or all of them turned it
14 down? I'd say, fine. We're not building it
15 until they agree.

16 So that's a showstopper to me.

17 Then I did sit in on the TPZ
18 meeting, and I did hear -- it was funny,
19 because I kind of felt like, oh, they're
20 going to turn it down. Because it has all
21 these crazy things they were saying about the
22 project.

23 And the ginormous -- the
24 design is ginormous. You know, ginormous. I
25 looked it up in the dictionary and that says

1 it's larger than huge. And I'm like, okay.

2 I get it.

3 Another -- and this person
4 accepted it, and said yes. The building
5 terrifies me. Holy gee. The building
6 terrifies me?

7 I actually looked at it. It
8 looks like a very pretty building. I just
9 don't know if it's in the right spot.

10 Now this one I understood.
11 This may be the straw that broke the camel's
12 back. And by the way, the camel are the
13 residents of the adjacent streets, Arapahoe
14 and Woodrow.

15 It very may well -- and the
16 big issue to me is traffic, it's all about
17 traffic. But then the TPZ Chairman, the
18 Chairman was the one guy that turned it down.
19 And he noted that he's never seen an
20 application get this far when the developer
21 was so out of sync with DRAC.

22 And I'm like, okay. What's
23 going on here? So the DRAC and TPZ -- I'm
24 not sure. I question -- I'm only, like, a
25 week into understanding this thing, but it

1 doesn't seem right to me. I'm not sure what
2 the heck's going on.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Mr. Dayton,
4 you're also over three minutes. So wrap it
5 up. Thank you.

6 THOMAS DAYTON: Okay. Can I
7 conclude?

8 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes.

9 THOMAS DAYTON: Okay. Let me
10 go to the conclusion, because I didn't get
11 into the traffic. I believe the next steps
12 are we have to get the DRAC and developer to
13 either agree or forget it. That's one step.

14 Number two, we've got to
15 finish this center infrastructure master plan
16 that will provide guidance for the future
17 development. We need to finalize decisions
18 on what direction LaSalle Road is going to
19 go, and we have to solve the Arapahoe and
20 Woodrow traffic problem. It exists now even
21 before this thing is built.

22 And for 43 years I sit on my
23 front porch and I count, count the cars. I
24 live between Ellsworth in Arapahoe, and we
25 play a game watching all the cars go through

1 the stop sign. And we count how many will it
2 take for them to go through the stop sign.
3 It's unbelievable. You know? And they drive
4 pretty fast, too.

5 Okay. Thank you very much.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
7 Mr. Dayton. Mr Visconti, and then Kim
8 Hudson, and then Lisa Campo.

9
10 (No response.)

11
12 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. So
13 we'll go to Kim Hudson, Lisa Campo, and then
14 Paul Driscoll.

15 KIMBERLY HUDSON: Hi. Good
16 evening. My name is Kim Hudson and I live at
17 17 Woodrow Street with my husband and my
18 15-year-old son.

19 I want to thank you for
20 honoring this process which allows residents
21 to voice their concerns. My family and I
22 have only moved to West Hartford a year and a
23 half ago, but we have been residents of
24 Connecticut since 1999, and we've always
25 loved coming to West Hartford Center.

1 We love the neighborhood feel
2 that the Center has, the ability to walk to
3 restaurants and shops and the quaintness of
4 the area that comes from having smaller
5 buildings. It is these things that give it
6 the quintessential New England feel.

7 I feel that this current
8 proposal from Arapahoe Group is out of scope
9 for the area that it serves. It will
10 considerably change the character of the
11 Center due to its size. And as mentioned
12 previously in detail, this proposal goes
13 against the Town's own vision statements and
14 guiding principles.

15 I ask you to think about what
16 draws people to live in West Hartford Center
17 and consider the precedent that this project
18 would be setting. I urge you to vote no on
19 this proposal and ask the developer to
20 rethink their plan such that aligns with the
21 Town's vision statement.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
24 Ms. Hudson. Next is Lisa Campo, Paul
25 Driscoll and then Christopher Walkuk.

1 Okay, Lisa? No?

2
3 (No response.)

4
5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. Paul
6 Driscoll?

7 AMANDA DRISCOLL: Amanda
8 Driscoll. Can I go in his place?

9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes. Just
10 state your name and address for the record.

11 AMANDA DRISCOLL: Hi. I'm
12 Amanda Driscoll. I live at 9 Arapahoe Road.
13 I live in the house directly across from one
14 of the ones outlined here that's planned to
15 be demolished and replaced with a driveway
16 where cars will go in and out all day long to
17 fill the 94 residential spaces that will be
18 inside here.

19 I moved here from Boston just
20 after 15 years in Boston in 2018. So I know
21 that development can be very good, but I did
22 move here because of the balance that the
23 Center offers.

24 I agree with the concerns
25 tonight about traffic, and I support the idea

1 of improved traffic flow on the street, be it
2 with a cul-de-sac or one-way direction. I
3 have a kindergartner in my house who walks to
4 the bus stop to go to Duffy. It's right at
5 that 63 mile-an-hour intersection. I know
6 that my neighbors walk to Sedgwick, and I
7 feel that the construction and the duration
8 of this project alone might go on for a very
9 long time and affect an entire generation of
10 kids in the neighborhood and how they use the
11 sidewalks, the sidewalks that took about a
12 whole season to put out just last year.

13 So, knowing that that project
14 took about four months, I can't imagine how
15 long this will go on. So after seeing the
16 construction traffic pattern tonight I was
17 moderately horrified to see that all of those
18 vehicles will be going straight down Arapahoe
19 and out through the residential neighborhood.

20 So please, as you vote
21 tonight, carefully consider the -- it sounds
22 corny, but the kids who are going to be
23 riding their little scooters down the
24 sidewalk, and how many years of disruption
25 there will be and how much fear there will be

1 with parents knowing that there will be these
2 massive vehicles coming through leading to
3 greater traffic on our street for years to
4 come. Thank you.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
6 Ms. Driscoll.

7 Then we have Christopher
8 Waluk. And on deck, Shannon Waluk. And then
9 Sheila Julian.

10 CHRISTOPHER WALUK: So Shannon
11 won't be joining us. She's my wife. She had
12 to go relieve a babysitter at a school night.

13 Go Duffy Dragons.

14 Chris Waluk, 41 Woodrow. I
15 oppose the proposal as it stands now for the
16 many, many reasons that my neighbors have
17 voiced. So I'm not going to take up the full
18 three minutes.

19 I will say a comment that my
20 dad used to always say as a mason. You don't
21 hire a plumber to fix your chimney. And DRAC
22 seems to be the experts in the Town that sort
23 of help us figure out what makes sense and
24 what doesn't. I just urge the Council to
25 kind of take their advice into consideration

1 when you vote. Thank you.

2 Thank you Mr. Waluk. Sheila
3 Julian or Bulian. And then Richard Camargo,
4 and then Emily and Mike Seltzer.

5 Okay. Sheila? I have an
6 address of 151 Four Mile.

7 RICHARD CAMARGO: Okay. Yeah,
8 I'm Richard Camargo.

9 Am I jumping the gun here?

10 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes, you
11 may go -- I guess.

12 Sir, name and address for the
13 record? Thank you.

14 RICHARD CAMARGO: Okay.
15 Richard Camargo, 85 Four Mile Road -- and my
16 daughter, 11 Arapahoe Road.

17 And one of the major issues is
18 traffic. But has everybody mentioned it?
19 Two things I just want to point out is that
20 all you hear is about people come into town,
21 friends, neighbors and everything and
22 everybody -- and saying, what a great place
23 to have dinner. What a great place just to
24 kind of walk around.

25 I don't think the magnitude of

1 that building is going to give you a sense of
2 quaintness, of just tranquility, of an
3 environment that is just reaching out way
4 beyond the cuteness and the quaintness of
5 Arapahoe and all the other streets.

6 Another point, too, before I
7 stop is the amount of money that people have
8 spent in the last two or three years paying
9 for these homes on Woodrow, Four Mile, and
10 just go on Arapahoe -- it has increased
11 tremendously.

12 My guess, if you put something
13 like that up there, I think you're going to
14 see some people leave and I don't think that
15 the values are going to hold.

16 Thank you very much.

17 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
18 Mr. Camargo.

19 Emily and Mike Seltzer, 11
20 Arapahoe.

21 LISA CAMPO: Sorry. I guess
22 you called me when I was out. Lisa Campo.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Oh, okay.
24 Yes.

25 LISA CAMPO: Lisa Campo, 161

1 Four Mile Road. And so for 39 years I've
2 lived one block from the Center, and for 26
3 years I've lived two blocks from the Center.
4 So I really know it very well. And I'm
5 dismayed to see kind of how busy it's gotten
6 and I, you know, there's a lot of other
7 projects in the pipeline.

8 I think this building is
9 massive. I think that we need to take a beat
10 here, and let's not do something that we
11 can't reverse.

12 I'm so impressed by the owner
13 of the CookShop who said that he wasn't
14 looking at, you know, how many more sales he
15 was going to get here. Our restaurants are
16 doing just fine. We don't need this much
17 more foot traffic coming into the area.

18 What I am concerned with as a
19 realtor of 30 years in West Hartford and
20 predominantly in this area of West Hartford,
21 is that these property values are going to be
22 affected. Even four or five years ago when I
23 sold on Arapahoe and sold on Woodrow, people
24 would say to me, I heard a rumor, you know,
25 and I had to explain to them that yes, there

1 is a possibility that this, there is going to
2 be a project here.

3 And they'd say, well what's
4 the scope going to be? You know, I've heard
5 it's going to maybe be large. And they
6 didn't buy. You know nobody wants to have
7 something like this.

8 People want a residential
9 neighborhood, and that's what they want. And
10 I know on Bishops, and then just outside of
11 the Center -- I think it may be on Arlington,
12 they did some condo buildings there. They
13 knocked down some residential houses and did
14 some condos.

15 People don't want to look out
16 of their home and see a different kind of
17 building. They like similar houses. So it's
18 absolutely going to affect their value. I
19 feel so bad to people that I've sold houses
20 to in the last few years.

21 Also the traffic patterns --
22 you guys are talking about Arapahoe and
23 Woodrow. Let's extend this out a little bit.
24 Pelham Road is going to get slain through
25 this, that everybody's going to be coming

1 onto the highway to try and get home, and
2 they're going to cut down either Ellsworth or
3 Pelham. And those are quaint little quiet
4 streets.

5 And Four Mile, I live on the
6 block closest to Sedgwick. They did the
7 calming traffic pattern right after that
8 school bus got hit, and two weeks ago a drunk
9 driver coming out of the Center just decided
10 to go right across -- even though huge signs
11 saying you can't go through -- hit the curb.
12 Broke the curb into all these pieces, went
13 over the bushes.

14 You know, my wife and I walk
15 there all the time. It is not safe. I have
16 to tell people, oh yeah, that house over
17 there. Yes, that has had three cars crash
18 into it. You know? A mother holding a brand
19 new baby sitting on her sun porch, the car
20 went into that.

21 So you're going to add more
22 people, more traffic into this already, you
23 know, a hotbed here. It does not seem a good
24 thing. And you know --

25 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Ms. Campo,

1 you're over three minutes. So if you could
2 wind down?

3 LISA CAMPO: My feeling is,
4 just because you can doesn't mean you should.
5 So I ask that you don't support this project.

6 Thank you.

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.

8 Emily and Mike Seltzer, Jasper
9 Kan and then -- I'm not sure what that says,
10 but John Nicole Seft -- Set. Okay. Jasper
11 Kan? No?

12
13 (No response.)

14
15 PRESIDENT CANTOR: John
16 Nicole.

17 A VOICE: Jasper is coming.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.
19 Sorry.

20 JASPER KAN: Hi. Thank you
21 for your time. My name is Jasper Kan and I
22 live at 36 Woodrow Street. Before they had a
23 map of the kids that live on that area. So I
24 actually live on Woodrow and Arapahoe -- my
25 house is right at the corner.

1 And I have three kids, eight,
2 six and two. And I literally see a lot of
3 traffic going right down Arapahoe going
4 towards LaSalle. And they -- they're racing.
5 I mean, I see that. I can hear the engines
6 rev up, and they go right down. So my
7 biggest concern is traffic. So there's
8 already a big traffic problem on Woodrow and
9 that whole area.

10 And my doorbell camera, it
11 picks up all the cars going back and forth.
12 It just sets it off, and I can see how many
13 cars. I have videos of it. So my main
14 concern is, all the traffic here is coming
15 into a small residential street entering
16 these, you know, 85 new units.

17 And so I don't think any
18 consideration has really been made about how
19 the traffic will impact the current residents
20 and then there's, you know, everyone knows
21 about the existing traffic issues. So I just
22 want to make sure that that is clearly laid
23 out.

24 And thank you for your time.

25 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,

1 Mr. Kan.

2 John Nicole, and that address
3 is 147 Four Mile.

4 A VOICE: He's not here.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. And
6 then Richard Burt and Rob Johnson?

7
8 (No response.)

9
10 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No? Okay.

11 Pam Burt.

12 A VOICE: He might be in the
13 other room, the overflow room.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.

15 We'll go back and --

16 A VOICE: I think here comes
17 Mr. Johnson.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. Rob
19 Johnson?

20 ROBERT JOHNSON: I'm coming.

21 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.

22 Great. Thank you.

23 ROBERT JOHNSON: I'm here.

24 PRESIDENT CANTOR: All
25 right -- running.

1 **ROBERT JOHNSON:** Good evening.
2 Thank you, members of the Council. I'm Rob
3 Johnson, 27 Pelham Road. And I am a West
4 Hartford resident. I was raised here, lived
5 here until I left college and then left for a
6 bunch of years and came back and raised my
7 family. And so I've been here most recently
8 about 20 years.

9 And tonight you've heard a
10 lot -- right? You've heard a lot of details
11 and a lot of data. I'm here really just to
12 ask you to put yourselves in the shoes or the
13 homes -- rather, of the folks that live in
14 the immediate area of this proposed
15 development.

16 Like you, many of us in this
17 neighborhood moved to West Hartford, or moved
18 back to West Hartford in my case, because it
19 was a safe community, great schools, great
20 police force, great fire department and many
21 other great services.

22 And like you, we enjoyed the
23 charm and the convenience that the Center
24 brings, but perhaps unlike you we happen to
25 have bought homes in an area that will be

1 directly impacted by this development, a
2 development that's going to bring increased
3 traffic and buildings larger in size than
4 we've ever had in the Center ever.

5 So if you think about a
6 similar change to your neighborhoods, how
7 would you feel about adding 85 or more homes
8 to your area, with 85 or more cars coming and
9 going each day on your street? There's
10 suddenly a big building looming over your
11 home giving strangers a view into your
12 backyard.

13 When we bought our homes a
14 development like this was not a
15 consideration. It wasn't in play. And the
16 opposite argument I've heard to this, even
17 going back to Blue Back, is that your home
18 value is going to see a rise because of this.
19 And to that I'd say, yeah, that's probably
20 true over time -- debatable, but probably
21 true.

22 But most of us didn't buy our
23 homes with investment return as the primary
24 goal. It's a primary residence. So like
25 many in West Hartford, we want a safe

1 neighborhood, a great town, a great location
2 where we could raise our kids, walk to stores
3 and restaurants, walk our dogs and cross
4 streets safely and get to know our neighbors.
5 So with that, I'm just here to simply ask
6 you -- I know you've got a lot in front of
7 you.

8 It's not an easy decision, but
9 I just want you to consider as you think
10 about this, please try to imagine yourself
11 living in a house on Arapahoe or Woodrow,
12 Ellsworth, Pelham, and how that -- how this
13 development might impact you and how you'd
14 feel about that?

15 I know how I feel about it,
16 and I would just ask that you vote against
17 it. And ask the developers to please go back
18 to the table and come back with something
19 better that's more befitting of the size and
20 scale of our neighborhood.

21 So thank you for your service
22 and your consideration. Have a good night.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
24 Mr. Johnson.

25 Pam Burt and Amanda Driscoll.

1 RICHARD BURT: Hi, I'm Richard
2 Burt. I'm speaking -- Pam is my wife. We're
3 at 44 Woodrow. I don't think I have anything
4 new to be said. I think I support -- I just
5 want to come here as part of our
6 neighborhood.

7 Again, we've lived next door
8 to each other. We're on the corner of
9 Arapahoe with Woodrow, and I really just want
10 to comment traffic is a major, major problem.
11 So I'm surprised. I'm surprised by the
12 traffic study. It doesn't seem correct --
13 but I can really vouch for, I can tell you
14 late at night you've got people going 60, 70
15 miles an hour going around the corners.

16 I was out there, you know, on
17 Monday morning out there shoveling snow on
18 Monday morning and I saw people whipping
19 around the corner and having problems with
20 the snow there.

21 So again, I think traffic is a
22 major problem for us there. It's a nice
23 neighborhood. There's a lot of young
24 children in the neighborhood. It's a
25 wonderful neighborhood. You see them running

1 around. They're biking. They're playing.
2 So I'm just more concerned if you put in
3 this, this development what it's going to do
4 to the traffic.

5 And then again, we've talked
6 about the aesthetics in the neighborhood. I
7 do think from, even from our side, if you
8 look at where we are sitting and where other
9 folks are sitting, it's just not the most
10 aesthetic looking piece.

11 So again, I ask you and urge
12 you not to support this, this project and
13 move forward until some of these things have
14 been resolved. So thank you.

15 Thank you for letting me talk.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
17 Mr. Burt.

18 Well, Amanda Driscoll spoke,
19 but Pat? I don't know if Pat is here?

20
21 (No response.)
22

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. Next
24 up I'm going to do the last three that have
25 signed up. Linda DiNapoli, Margaret Glynn

1 and then Nancy Jensen.

2 LINDA DiNAPOLI: Okay, I
3 haven't seen you folks in a while -- but I
4 did spend 6 and a half years here. So I'd
5 like to remind you all, you have rules. You
6 made me follow them. So I'd like you to
7 follow them.

8 Also, I'd like to remind the
9 audience that a number of these people on the
10 Council, the majority party have been serving
11 since Moby Dick was a minnow. So you might
12 want to keep that in mind when you get ready
13 to vote the next time so that things will
14 change.

15 I went to the DRAC meeting and
16 I have a great deal of faith in Mr. Gebrian
17 who's the Chairman. I also have my good
18 friend in the audience Lisa Campo, and I will
19 say ditto to everything she said.

20 She lives in the neighborhood.
21 I couldn't be farther away from this project,
22 however as a heads-up, Council, I live near a
23 huge track of land on Trout Brook that's
24 going to be coming up.

25 And if you want to turn it

1 into Tiananmen Square, you go ahead and
2 propose something as big as this over there,
3 and I will be the first one to lay down in
4 front of the construction equipment.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
6 Ms. DiNapoli. Margaret Glynn. And then
7 after Margaret, Nancy Jensen.

8 MARGARET GLYNN: Good evening.
9 I'm Margaret Glynn. I live at 145 Brace
10 Road. I've come there as a baby in 1945, and
11 so I'm very familiar with the town and love
12 it very much.

13 West Hartford deserves
14 architecture, not the crushing mediocrity of
15 these five-story masonry boxes. I would
16 rather see a high-rise residential tower if
17 it gave back -- if it has a small footprint
18 on the location of what you called a heat
19 island behind Lavery's -- if it gave back to
20 the Town open space all around and under it;
21 the urban park, which our town really needs.

22 The gothic towers of European
23 towns were tall, but they gave focus and
24 beauty to the low-rise homes and shops of the
25 surrounding towns. We need beauty space and

1 light, not alleys and back-of-house spaces,
2 and wow factors on what really are soviet
3 style blocks.

4 Members of the Town Council,
5 here the quality of life of West Hartford is
6 in your hands. Please reject this proposal
7 and demand urban design that West Hartford
8 deserves. We don't need a five-story street
9 wall. We don't need -- and we do need an
10 urban park, and I hope you will consider that
11 and give thought to open space and not be
12 afraid of high-rise buildings.

13 They can be beautifully
14 transparent and well designed and the
15 egress -- the entrance and exit of this
16 project could be right onto Farmington Avenue
17 from that location behind, you know, the big
18 parking lot behind Lavery's, and not affect
19 Arapahoe Road and Woodrow, and all that, that
20 nice quiet neighborhood that I've always
21 admired.

22 Thank you very much.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
24 Ms. Glynn. And next is Nancy Jensen, and
25 then we will ask if there's anyone else.

1 And then I want to take a
2 brief break before the Applicant comes back.

3 NANCY JENSEN: My name is
4 Nancy Jensen and I live at 65 Riggs Avenue.
5 My first involvement with West Hartford was
6 50 years ago when I was employed by the West
7 Hartford Public Schools and I was a school
8 psychologist there for close to 40 years,
9 because even after I retired I continued to
10 work on a consulting basis there.

11 And I love this town. I love
12 the community, the diversity and the
13 amenities that we have. I bought my house 39
14 years ago, and when I first moved here I
15 moved here from New York -- you might tell
16 from my accent.

17 And somebody said to me, what
18 do you miss most from living in New York?
19 And I said being a pedestrian. Well, I can
20 be a pedestrian here.

21 And I agree with all of the
22 things that people talked about when they
23 presented the quantitative analyses, the data
24 about the traffic and everything else.
25 There's no doubt about it. They have data on

1 their side, but I want to talk about
2 something different, something that's more
3 qualitative -- and that's aesthetics. So
4 forgive me, because I don't have a prepared
5 talk, but I do have some talking points that
6 I want to address.

7 First of all, I agree with the
8 women before me. While the architectural
9 designs are very beautiful and stunning, and
10 I love those details of the metal and the
11 wood, they don't fit West Hartford. They
12 look like -- there was an old song probably
13 in the 'fifties -- Little Boxes Made of Ticky
14 Tacky.

15 But these are not made of
16 Ticky Tacky. They're high-end materials --
17 but they're boxes. And somebody has
18 mentioned at one point that the Center is
19 dated. Well, maybe that's part of the charm
20 of it. I don't mean that we maintain what's
21 old and no longer functional, but to keep in
22 mind that when we look to come up with some
23 kind of an architectural design that
24 incorporates the improvements we need, that
25 makes better use of that hotbed of parking

1 lot, whatever it is that they call it, and
2 they do it with a different kind of
3 sensitivity.

4 You know, there was an
5 article. I think it was in the New York
6 Times recently that talked about the
7 architecture that we have now that's modern
8 and sleek -- is cold, and it creates these
9 alleyways and shadows.

10 What you have in Europe are
11 high-rise things, but they give you vision
12 and vista. Are we going to have something
13 like, you know -- well, if we could have
14 Paris buildings that would be very nice.
15 They're kind of pretty rectangular, but you
16 get the idea.

17 I think that everything that
18 DRAC has said is true. The scale is not
19 compatible with the site, the mass and
20 everything else. And I want to say something
21 else. The idea that we're going to support
22 this with seniors with lots of money; we will
23 not have children laughing in the streets.

24 One of the draws of West
25 Hartford, it's a town for families. People

1 come here for the education system. I've
2 worked in it for years. It is one of the
3 best there is. I've worked with some of the
4 best people that you could ever find in the
5 business, and that's what people come for.

6 We don't have ocean views or
7 vistas. We have services. We have a
8 library. We have arts. We have many
9 wonderful things. Coming to the Center is a
10 place for neighbors to meet neighbors.

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Ms. Jensen,
12 you're over three minutes.

13 So if you can wind down?

14 NANCY JENSEN: Yes, I will
15 wind down. I can.

16 It's hard to stop, but I will.

17 I encourage the Town Council
18 to vote no. And I tell you that I do go to a
19 gym with silver sneakers, and you have to be
20 at least 65 to go silver sneakers. When I
21 brought the petition there everybody -- and
22 there were men and women there who said that
23 they couldn't believe that this was going to
24 happen because they felt it's like killing
25 the goose that produces the golden egg.

1 This is a treasure that we
2 have. Don't exploit it to the point of
3 spoiling what the qualitative aspects that
4 make it so appealing are. And I leave this
5 with you. Thank you.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
7 Ms. Johnson. Is there anybody else in the
8 audience that has not signed up and would
9 like to speak? Step on up.

10 Name and address for the
11 record?

12 MATTHEW YEE: Hello. My name
13 is Matthew Yee. My address is 75 Pearl
14 Street in South Hadley, Massachusetts.

15 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Sorry --
16 yeah, you were signed up but I read your name
17 wrong. I'm sorry. I apologize --

18 MATTHEW YEE: Yeah. Sorry.
19 It definitely didn't come up --

20 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No, that's
21 fine.

22 MATTHEW YEE: I'm happy to be
23 here and hear the opinions of both sides, and
24 listen to what this community has to say
25 about this project.

1 I am an operation manager for
2 Bean Restaurant Group. We own and operate
3 the Wurst Haus and Union Kitchen. We entered
4 the space a couple years ago, and it's been
5 fantastic -- and that's kind of one of the
6 things I just want to talk about, is West
7 Hartford has a truly fantastic food scene.

8 The retail scene, the food
9 scene, it's been growing and growing, and
10 growing. Almost 16 years on the nose I
11 celebrated my 21st birthday at a restaurant
12 which was my favorite at the time, Max's
13 Oyster Bar. And it was one of the best meals
14 I ever had, and I know that contributed to my
15 family's wanting to move into this space in
16 this town.

17 Because what we see here is a
18 lot of talented chefs, a lot of passionate
19 operators, investors willing to back them and
20 bring new establishments, and in turn retail
21 to this town. This project will do nothing
22 but help benefit that trend.

23 And I think that continuing to
24 bolster and uphold that trend is really
25 critical, because what we've seen in other

1 markets is if that trend starts to slow, it
2 stops. If it stops, doors start closing and
3 the town changes and we have actively seen
4 this in other markets.

5 But I know it's been a long
6 night and there's a lot of opinions. I just
7 wanted to say that I do love this town, and
8 did prior to us owning restaurants here.
9 I've frequented restaurants and retail all
10 the time. So thank you for your evening.

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
12 Okay. Appreciate it. All right.

13 So come on up.

14 JAY STANGE: Mayor Cantor,
15 Councilmembers, Town Manager Ledwith, I'm Jay
16 Stange, 177 Auburn Road here in West
17 Hartford.

18 And I didn't sign up to speak
19 tonight because I wasn't sure when I would be
20 back. I ran out after the meeting started to
21 go see my daughter sing at Morley Elementary
22 School in the choir concert tonight -- and I
23 came back.

24 And I think that that's
25 interesting, because actually on this

1 project -- I'm not sure if I am on the
2 support or the oppose side, because this
3 project does a lot of things that I want in
4 our town. It is a place in -- our town is a
5 place that has room for more people, but my
6 concern is that I don't think West Hartford
7 has room for more cars.

8 And so this summer when I
9 learned about this project, I called up
10 Mr. Lewis. And I said, hey. I just read
11 about your project. You're going to put a
12 bunch of walkable, you know, apartments and
13 rentals and condos on a surface parking lot.
14 That clicks all my boxes for this town. I
15 think that's a wonderful idea.

16 And I talked with him a little
17 bit more. I found out that he was actually
18 going to add more parking spaces. So going
19 from about 200 to, at that time, maybe it was
20 contemplated about 275 parking spaces. So
21 it's a net increase in parking.

22 And I think that that's
23 something that the Town and Town Council
24 really needs to think about right now. Are
25 we going to make room in this town for

1 people? Or are we going to make room in this
2 town for parking cars?

3 Right now -- last night
4 Stantec presented at the Bike-Ped Commission
5 meeting. They have an inventory, 5,000
6 parking spaces exist in the study area that
7 they're doing for the master plan,
8 infrastructure plan. So from Trout Brook
9 over to Woodrow, and from Farmington over to
10 the other end of the study area -- it's a
11 short space, 5,000 parking spaces.

12 And those spaces are
13 underutilized even on peak, peak points of
14 the week, like Saturday night or Thursday
15 night. So I want to support this project and
16 I really respect a lot of the values that the
17 architects and the representatives put
18 forward today, and I want you to vote yes for
19 this project -- but not tonight.

20 I think that we can do better.
21 I told Mr. Lewis that he was running up
22 against the DRAC issue because he was trying
23 to put too much parking in this building.
24 And I said, isn't your bottom line going to
25 be better if you don't have to spend so much

1 money on parking?

2 And he didn't really
3 understand what I was trying to say, but I'm
4 really trying to say from my heart that I
5 love this town also. And I think it's really
6 important that we make space for more people,
7 but consider very carefully whether or not
8 we're going to make space for more cars in
9 West Hartford.

10 And parking cars is an
11 invitation to bring cars, and that you'll
12 hear in the future if you will wait on this
13 decision until you can have the counsel of
14 your consultant Stantec that is going to be
15 presenting in the next couple of months, then
16 I think we can make a better decision and we
17 can have a better project for the Arapahoe
18 group, and a better project for our Town and
19 the right decision about whether we want more
20 people or more cars.

21 Thank you so much.

22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
23 Mr. Stange.

24 Is there anybody else that
25 would like to speak to this?

1 Yes, we would like also to
2 make sure that the we have the presentation
3 that David Meehan, Mr. Meehan shared. So if
4 we can have that presentation sent to the
5 Council via email, that would be good.

6 Okay. We're going to take a
7 quick bathroom break, and then we're going to
8 invite the Applicant back to rebut. And then
9 we will go to the Council for questions.

10 So we'll see you back in --
11 we're going to do seven minutes, ten o'clock.

12
13 (Pause: 9:53 p.m. to 10:06 p.m.)

14
15 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. We
16 are coming back to the public hearing. So if
17 you please -- please let us hear. So if you
18 have other conversations, please step
19 outside.

20 And we will bring the
21 Applicant back up. I think they are in the
22 house.

23 Okay.

24 MS. PEARSON: Are you ready
25 for us, Madam Mayor?

1 PRESIDENT CANTOR: We are.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. PEARSON: Okay. I think
4 what -- and I'm going to ask Jeff Fitzgerald
5 to chime in as we go through this. We didn't
6 have a lot of time to sort of organize our
7 comments in response to what we heard this
8 evening.

9 You did hear a lot of people
10 speak in support, a lot of people who think
11 this is a residential development at this
12 location. The mix of rental and condominium,
13 and with the buildings as designed would be
14 extremely beneficial for this location and
15 for the Center, and ultimately for everybody
16 else in the area.

17 You also heard a lot of people
18 say -- I think it's fair to say that the
19 biggest issue is traffic, and the second
20 issue is the size of the condominium
21 building. There were some people who also
22 said, though it was minor, a number of
23 people, that they thought overall the
24 architectural design of both buildings really
25 didn't work.

1 So let's take them one at a
2 time. Let's talk about traffic first. The
3 issues that the neighborhood are experiencing
4 are existing issues. The question for the
5 Town Council is going to be whether or not
6 the additional traffic projected to be
7 generated by this development will have a
8 significant impact on those existing
9 conditions.

10 You are doing a Stantec
11 comprehensive study that is going to look at
12 the possible solutions to meet the existing
13 concerns. And we have already pledged to you
14 that we would be willing to do whatever we
15 can to help resolve the issues that are
16 existing issues.

17 And one of the things that
18 immediately came to mind, and my team has
19 already offered this to the town
20 administration, is we'd be willing to add and
21 pay for speed bumps.

22 A big issue that we heard was,
23 you can't believe how fast people are going
24 down Woodrow. I know from experience that
25 speed bumps do slow people down. So you have

1 our commitment that we would be willing to
2 work on that and add those to the street as
3 appropriate.

4 Someone else also mentioned
5 that it might even be appropriate on
6 Arapahoe. I don't know if that's the case,
7 but if it is, that's something we can look
8 at. Jeff?

9 JEFF FITZGERALD: And that's
10 also something that we would be working with
11 the Town Planning and Development staff and
12 engineering staff to determine whether a
13 simple speed hump is appropriate or if it
14 needs to be a raised speed table, or a raised
15 crosswalk.

16 There's traffic calming
17 measures that we can implement here that
18 really will address that, and maybe encourage
19 people to -- who are commuting on a regular
20 basis to take more thoroughfares and not the
21 back roads to get there.

22 MS. PEARSON: Like LaSalle.

23 JEFF FITZGERALD: Exactly.

24 MS. PEARSON: Construction
25 traffic is not going up Arapahoe. We just

1 want to put that on the record, that is not
2 allowed to go up Arapahoe.

3 JEFF FITZGERALD: Construction
4 traffic will be turning off of LaSalle onto
5 Arapahoe and then immediately into the site.

6 MS. PEARSON: Immediately into
7 the site. It's not going to go --

8 JEFF FITZGERALD: So yeah,
9 it's kind of using the same commercial
10 entrance.

11 MS. PEARSON: Also in terms of
12 traffic accessing the site once the
13 development is built out, we're actually
14 moving the commercial entrance further closer
15 to LaSalle road.

16 So where Arapahoe currently
17 experiences, you know, somewhere between 200,
18 214, something like that, you know,
19 traffic -- parking spaces are available for
20 the businesses that currently lease the three
21 commercial buildings on the site. Commercial
22 access now will be at the driveway closest to
23 LaSalle. So that's an improvement for
24 Arapahoe already.

25 Yes, there will be the

1 residents, the homeowners in the condo
2 building. And there are for 58 units
3 there -- will be able to go in at a driveway
4 into that parking garage, but even that is a
5 driveway location that is further to the east
6 than the current driveway is. So all of that
7 is a benefit for those neighbors.

8 Yes -- Jeff is going to pass
9 around also for you just copies of the
10 renderings that we submitted so that you can
11 have them for your deliberations.

12 With regard to the traffic
13 projections, you have an engineering report
14 from the Engineering Department that
15 indicates -- that came in today, that they
16 have accepted all of the traffic analysis
17 that our consultant has done, which means
18 that the traffic figures that we've used and
19 the opinions our traffic expert reached at
20 the conclusion of that presentation, that has
21 all been confirmed by the Town's engineering
22 staff.

23 And Duane Martin, as you know,
24 has a great deal of traffic experience.

25 Anything else on traffic? So

1 the bottom line is any kind of development on
2 that site will in the future -- because you
3 hear a lot of people say other development
4 might be okay, but this is not -- any
5 additional development on that site is going
6 to generate more vehicles, anything.

7 So you could deny this and it
8 won't get built, and you'll still have a
9 parking lot there and you'll still have the
10 commercial traffic that goes in and out
11 closer to the more residential neighborhoods
12 to the west -- but if anything else goes in
13 there, it's going to generate more cars.

14 So the question is, are the
15 vehicles to be generated going to be
16 inappropriately deleterious for that
17 neighborhood? And our traffic consultant
18 says, no.

19 The peak hour time, you're
20 going to have one vehicle trip per minute at
21 the most, and that's what it averages out to
22 over an hour of peak time. And I'm not going
23 to do the stand here and tick off 60 seconds
24 with the cars going by.

25 Yes, it's more vehicles, but

1 frankly in our traffic consultant's opinion
2 it's not something you're going to be able to
3 say, oh, yes. There is more traffic at, you
4 know, that peak time. And it's clearly
5 obvious, because you're not going to have an
6 impact at the intersections. There will just
7 be one more car a minute that is going to go
8 by.

9 I'd like to also add that the
10 analysis our traffic expert did is extremely
11 conservative. It doesn't take into
12 consideration the fact that people would be
13 residing at this location because of the
14 ability to walk to a lot of the activities
15 that they might otherwise get in a vehicle
16 and travel to.

17 It doesn't take into
18 consideration the fact that for the 28 units
19 in the apartment building their vehicles are
20 going to be parked across the street at Town
21 Center Garage. So they're not even directly
22 accessing in and out on the site where they'd
23 be living. Their access is in the Town
24 Center Garage by virtue of an agreement, a
25 draft agreement that we have provided you for

1 your consideration.

2 The only other comment -- I
3 thought it was an interesting one from the
4 last speaker. I think it was a Mr. Stang who
5 said, you know, we should wait. We should
6 wait before this development is acted on
7 until a final analysis is made of traffic
8 conditions in the area.

9 But I'd just like to say that
10 we've given you the worst-case scenario in
11 our analysis, because if there is some sort
12 of change in the future all it would do is
13 lessen the impact on Woodrow and Arapahoe
14 above and beyond what we have shown you here.
15 And that worst case scenario, even though
16 it's more cars, does work from a traffic
17 consulting objective standpoint.

18 And Jeff, any other comment on
19 that?

20 JEFF FITZGERALD: I'd like
21 just add to comments of Mr. Stang, where he
22 said the net increase in parking is not good.

23 We're replacing the existing
24 commercial parking that's on there. 65
25 LaSalle is a four-story office building full

1 of people on a daily basis, and the same
2 thing with what includes Webster Bank, very
3 busy places.

4 So we have to -- in order to
5 develop on this site we have to replace that
6 parking. We're doing that with the structure
7 that we've talked about in detail.

8 MS. PEARSON: And that's from
9 both a zoning standpoint and a lease
10 standpoint.

11 JEFF FITZGERALD: Correct.

12 MS. PEARSON: So they are
13 accounting on it, and that is the parking
14 that's already required to be provided for
15 those buildings.

16 JEFF FITZGERALD: But for
17 the -- I talked about for the condominium, we
18 provide the parking for those owners in the
19 structure. Like I said, we have those
20 spaces.

21 For the apartments we're not
22 building new parking. We're talking about
23 leasing the spaces that are going unused
24 today and have been for years in Town Center
25 Garage.

1 Again, our traffic study takes
2 that traffic to the corner of Arapahoe and
3 LaSalle where that apartment building is
4 going up, however at present time the access
5 to Town Center Garage is off of South Main
6 Street. So the traffic for in and out for
7 those apartment car users would be not on
8 Arapahoe.

9 So that's a fine point that,
10 you know, will have an actual reduction in
11 traffic by the way it's set up now. You
12 know, the Stantec study, there's a lot of
13 things that can change. So based on right
14 now, the worst case it would be better
15 than -- your thing.

16 MS. PEARSON: But again, that
17 underscores the conservative nature of our
18 analysis. The traffic analysis was done, and
19 it also is responsive in a way to what
20 Mr. Stang said, let's utilize existing
21 parking facilities and not add more parking
22 spaces right on the site. So this, this
23 responds to that.

24 He also said that otherwise he
25 thought it was an absolutely great use for

1 this location.

2 And we'd like to move on now
3 to the other issue, which is the mass of the
4 building. We do not deny that the
5 condominium building is a large structure,
6 but I want you to keep in mind a couple of
7 things. First, DRAC was not upset with the
8 height of that structure at all. They were
9 concerned about the mass, which is FAR of the
10 building on the site.

11 And originally -- and there
12 were two negative recommendations, not three.
13 Originally, for the application that we
14 withdrew they said, you've got to make it
15 smaller, and you've got to put more area
16 around the base of the building to give that
17 base of the building an opportunity to
18 breathe.

19 And you have to make more of a
20 sense of place at the base of that building
21 so that people, the public coming in
22 particularly through those alleyways are
23 going to find it inviting. And at the end of
24 the alleyway they're going to see a door to
25 go into, and they're going to feel like

1 they're moving.

2 So they said, the vitality has
3 to go not just us, our residents, homeowners
4 in that condo building taking advantage of
5 the vitality on LaSalle, by virtue of that
6 alleyway, but it also has to be an inviting
7 alleyway to a place and a place that's
8 comfortable with lots of landscaping and
9 seating and, you know, ease of enjoying the
10 area for those who are coming in from LaSalle
11 to our parking garage, or to the building
12 itself.

13 And so we did that. We sliced
14 off parking. We got rid of some parking. We
15 sliced off the parking at the bottom. That's
16 when we moved everybody over to Town Center
17 Garage for the apartment complex. And we
18 created -- added in an additional 16 feet of
19 width, which improved that whole area at the
20 base of the building; shrunk driveway
21 entrances, added landscaping, moved doors so
22 that when you look down that alleyway now you
23 see the entrance to the garage.

24 We did all of those things,
25 and we went back to DRAC. And I will tell

1 you that the -- after we filed the revised
2 application. And I will tell you that DRAC
3 this time said it was a very hard call for
4 them.

5 One member changed his mind
6 and said, you've convinced me. This makes
7 sense. He said, I don't find the
8 relationship of this building to the
9 residences on the other side inappropriate.

10 In many ways he likened it to
11 the Delamar, which abuts single-family
12 residences on Raymond Road. And that's the
13 whole Raymond Road area, multifamily and
14 single family that goes down to Park Road --
15 Park Street? Park Road.

16 So he changed his mind and he
17 voted for it. DRAC also at that meeting
18 said -- and I do have one quote. Just so you
19 know this -- I'm thrilled with -- this is the
20 mover of the motion to make the negative
21 recommendation.

22 And he says, first, I'm
23 thrilled with the building on the corner, and
24 I think I speak for most of us that we are
25 really delighted with the design. It's

1 gorgeous. Anybody would want that in a
2 heartbeat on the corner of LaSalle. So you
3 know we support that fully.

4 So there is a development
5 there and someone else said, well, why don't
6 you just build that and leave the rest of it,
7 you know, as it is?

8 And the answer to that is, we
9 can't do that because we have to replace all
10 of that parking that is currently on the
11 surface that serves the existing office
12 buildings. You can't take away their
13 parking.

14 It's -- first of all, it's
15 required by zoning, and even that parking is
16 less than is required by zoning, but it's a
17 prior existing nonconforming situation
18 because those buildings were built eons ago.

19 And you can't do it because of
20 the contractual relationships for those
21 buildings on LaSalle and also 1001 Farmington
22 Avenue. They all use that surface parking.
23 So you've got to put it somewhere. So where
24 do you put it?

25 We were asked to put it

1 underground. That was a big ask. It's very
2 expensive, but it's the only way to be able
3 to develop that site, is to put the parking
4 underground. And a little bit -- overbuild
5 structured parking with the development on
6 top of it. And remember, height wasn't an
7 issue.

8 So we were able to lop off one
9 row of underground parking, one bay, and we
10 made that building smaller as a result of
11 that -- but you can't make it any smaller,
12 because you can't -- you have to be able to
13 pay for all that structured underground
14 parking and. You pay for that by having
15 something that is beautifully done, but is
16 going to have a return, i.e., the condominium
17 units that are on top of it.

18 So we reduced the number of
19 condominium units when we did that -- and we
20 still think we can make it work, but you
21 can't build underground parking with just the
22 little thing of residential above it.

23 So we set the building back as
24 it went up, but you can't make it work if you
25 can't pay for the underground parking. And I

1 assure you, that 28-unit building on the
2 corner does not pay for underground parking
3 for any of those businesses. So that's our
4 conundrum. That's the that's where we are.

5 So DRAC also said to us, well,
6 why don't you buy all of the houses? And we
7 said -- and they also said, why don't you
8 bring the bigger building closer to Arapahoe?
9 Frankly, we didn't think that was a great
10 idea to begin with, but it's something DRAC
11 suggested we should do. They like bigger
12 buildings on the street.

13 So bring it up to Arapahoe.
14 We felt that that would be less disruptive
15 for the neighborhood and keeping it in the
16 middle of the site where it can be hidden by
17 both the buildings along LaSalle -- you've
18 got something to say?

19 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah.

20 MS. PEARSON: Along LaSalle
21 and Farmington Avenue, but also hidden by all
22 the lush landscaping that we're going to put
23 in.

24 And you have something else
25 you want to say?

1 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah. Jeff
2 Fitzgerald with Bohler. A lot of the
3 opposition tonight, including Mr. Meehan
4 said, DRAC doesn't want you tearing down
5 these single-family houses on Arapahoe. We
6 heard that from people who were referring --
7 you got to listen to your experts.

8 They requested that we change
9 it to -- when you do a five-story building up
10 on Arapahoe, and similar to the one we have
11 in the corner, fully extend it down and keep
12 surface parking in the back. And that's not
13 smart growth. It's not ecologically
14 friendly --

15 MS. PEARSON: In our opinion.
16 In our opinion.

17 JEFF FITZGERALD: In my
18 opinion, it's not good planning. That
19 five-story building up close would appear to
20 be much more gigantic because it's right on
21 top of you where, we have it set back and
22 it's got a nice -- the perspective is
23 appropriate. And so, that was a thing I
24 wanted to point out.

25 The other thing that

1 Mr. Meehan said, which I want to point out is
2 not accurate, is he said our traffic, traffic
3 studies and our trip generation doesn't
4 include deliveries from Amazon and Whole
5 Foods -- which it absolutely does.

6 The Institute of
7 Transportation Engineers, when they do counts
8 and they determine what a typical unit will
9 generate traffic, they take into
10 consideration, just not the people who drive
11 in and out, but deliveries and other things
12 that support them as well.

13 MS. PEARSON: So getting back
14 to that. DRAC was of mixed mind. I mean,
15 they did -- the mover of the motion to
16 recommend denial with regard to the condo
17 building said, and I quote, it's a killer
18 design. It's gorgeous. People want to pay
19 top dollar to live in that, and that was with
20 regards specifically the condo building.

21 So it's not that it's an
22 unattractive building. They were just
23 concerned with its mass on the site and asked
24 why we couldn't buy -- why we can't do that,
25 move everything up to Arapahoe?

1 And we said, because we don't
2 have a blank slate for a site. We have, you
3 know, that cutout with that, that
4 single-family structure that's used for
5 commercial purposes, that office -- it's an
6 office building. The gentleman is very happy
7 where he is. He doesn't want to sell.

8 I mean, it wasn't that we
9 didn't approach them. It's just he likes it
10 there. He wants to stay on Arapahoe. He's
11 not opposed to the project. He supports the
12 project, but he's not going to sell.

13 So we can't do it.

14 We have site constraints here,
15 including the existing office buildings that
16 other developments don't have. Trout Brook
17 didn't have it. The Science Center site
18 didn't have it. They had a clear sight.

19 So DRAC had said, well, why
20 can't you take the buildings down on LaSalle
21 and move all of this up to LaSalle? They're
22 existing fully leased office and commercial
23 buildings with restaurant uses in them.

24 It doesn't work for this site.

25 So we are where we are. We

1 can not do anything because we're not going
2 to build the corner building, because we
3 can't pay for it. So we're not going to do
4 anything.

5 We're either going to not do
6 anything, or we're going to be able to do
7 this with the question of, is that building
8 too big? We don't think it is, and we think
9 it's buffered.

10 TP and Z went through the same
11 thing. Yes, Ms. Gillette did say, that's a
12 ginormous building, but she went back and
13 forth and ultimately she supported it, and so
14 did other people and they talked about
15 change. You know change is hard.

16 You know things are changing,
17 and ultimately they were satisfied except for
18 the Chairman. And I think I've been able to
19 show you why I'm not sure the rationale about
20 zoning that he espoused I don't think makes
21 sense, because BC is already closer to the
22 neighborhood to the west, anywhere near where
23 we're going to be in terms of bringing BC
24 down Arapahoe.

25 He did say something else I

1 wanted to address, but you put your thought
2 on?

3 JEFF FITZGERALD: Just to
4 defend DRAC's position is they operate as a
5 body advisory, but they also have a
6 different -- our presentation to DRAC is in
7 typically 30-minute increments at four
8 o'clock on a Thursday where, when we were
9 here at Planning and Zoning we presented an
10 elaborate presentation, and they discussed it
11 and debated for two hours on it, which is --

12 MS. PEARSON: Well, we didn't.
13 Staff presented.

14 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah,
15 exactly. Exactly. The staff presented an
16 elaborate presentation. Then they
17 deliberated on it for several hours.

18 And it's that kind of thorough
19 review of everything that I feel like DRAC
20 doesn't get the opportunity to, because they
21 have a lot that they're going through. And
22 at the same time when they asked for things
23 like, it would be nice if it had a little bit
24 more breathing room on the Farmington Avenue
25 side because you're there -- from building

1 and siting it, when you look at that plan for
2 the building and siting it there, that's the
3 north side.

4 So you're not casting any
5 shadows on just the back of houses and
6 buildings there. It's appropriate to sit it
7 high, not leaving dead space where vermin and
8 everything -- we want to have a building
9 where it's controllable, safe up to the
10 things. And then the front yard where you
11 see all the action, have that controllable
12 and safe.

13 So we don't want to have --
14 push it forward and just create dead space
15 back there, but that's a detail I think TPZ
16 understood.

17 MS. PEARSON: You have to know
18 how much we respect DRAC's review, and we
19 have worked with them and made, you know,
20 Mr. Pather went through the number of changes
21 we've made.

22 We're never going to get to
23 where -- we can't get to where they would
24 ultimately want us to be and have this
25 development go forward. It can't happen.

1 But that said, we do respect
2 their comments. And they respected what we
3 did, and they also respect that you are the
4 final zoning authority making this decision.

5 It's not DRAC.

6 It's not -- believe me, we
7 don't like coming here without a DRAC
8 positive recommendation, but DRAC does not
9 decide these applications. And DRAC does not
10 have to consider everything else that you
11 have to consider when deciding this.

12 Indeed, when they made the
13 first negative recommendation under the
14 larger proposal, the Chairman said at the
15 end -- when I basically said, oh, that's a
16 blow.

17 And he looked at me and he
18 said, well, it's only a referral. And the
19 guiding hand, the approving hand is with the
20 Council, and there's a lot to show them. And
21 you have other -- another committee, to which
22 he was referring to, TP and Z.

23 But I do think this is
24 difficult, and there was agreement, murmuring
25 agreement by other members. Everything is

1 difficult, but we have some wonderful
2 applicants, applications, including
3 yourselves, wonderful submissions.

4 This one we felt was just --
5 is a bit too much, and that's what it comes
6 down to. Is it a bit too much, or is it
7 okay? Ultimately are we going to -- in the
8 same way, you know, the Delamar didn't have
9 opposition, but it was also a huge building
10 adjacent to a single-family residential
11 house. You don't think of that, because
12 you've gotten used to it because it's there.
13 It works. Everybody loves it.

14 Sometimes I ask if people know
15 about -- is Hampshire House six or
16 seven tall -- it's very tall, but if you were
17 to ask people in this town if we have a
18 high-rise condominium complex in town, they
19 would say, of course not -- but it's been
20 sitting there since the 'fifties.

21 These, you do get used to how
22 these feel. And I think we've given you --
23 oh, the other thing is we do believe that the
24 analysis -- and I credit the opponents with a
25 very good analysis for you. We do believe

1 that's not -- that's the first drawing and
2 not the second drawing. So it's a bit
3 larger.

4 And we did show you views from
5 Arapahoe looking straight on, and we did show
6 it to DRAC. But the building, I thought the
7 views had showed -- the view from Farmington
8 Avenue was telling in that you had 65
9 LaSalle, the Webster Bank building -- the big
10 glass building was also up above the
11 buildings on Farmington Avenue, but you're
12 used to it. You're used to having that in
13 your mind's eye vision.

14 We do believe that the same
15 thing will be true of this building, and the
16 benefits so much outweigh the negatives. We
17 can work with the Town on traffic. The
18 traffic that will be generated is not going
19 to, from a traffic standpoint, be too much
20 for that road. The use itself is a very
21 positive one. You're putting residential use
22 including home ownership in that condo up
23 against residential uses.

24 It's going to act as a buffer
25 to all of the back-of-the-house activity

1 along LaSalle road, including those
2 restaurants and the noise that emanates from
3 the back of those restaurants, from the
4 street life that is going on on LaSalle; all
5 of that reverberates up through now that
6 surface parking lot. It will be stopped. It
7 will not go into that neighborhood.

8 So with that, unless -- is
9 there anything else we should be mentioning
10 that you can think of? I'm looking to the
11 team.

12 JEFF FITZGERALD: I was just
13 going to mention one comment, one comment
14 from the public said -- Ms. Boelitz, that
15 nothing here follows the Plan of Conservation
16 and Development -- where we had a
17 commissioner at TPZ say this checks off so
18 many boxes in the POCD.

19 So the goals that they set
20 when they wrote that, had that POCD done.

21 And just it was great to get
22 the restaurateurs coming in and saying,
23 support this. We hear people say the
24 restaurants are doing fine, just adding the
25 feet on the street seven days a week is a

1 healthy thing for all walkable towns, and
2 from a planning standpoint that's the goal.

3 You want to keep it safe, you
4 want to keep it walkable, and you want to
5 keep it alive seven days a week.

6 MS. PEARSON: And I just might
7 underscore that that's also very positive for
8 the retailers. You know retail needs people,
9 feet on the street in our community to
10 support the retail life that we have.

11 So I have a couple of
12 housecleaning things before we just settle
13 out. You do have the DRAC recommendation,
14 that was four to one oppose.

15 You do have the TP and Z
16 recommendation. That was four to one in
17 favor.

18 You have an engineering report
19 confirming all of -- we've answered all the
20 engineering issues and the traffic issues.
21 We do have -- I want to leave with you a
22 statement which goes through the compliance
23 with the Plan of Conservation and
24 Development. I've set out all the ways in
25 the application letter that I felt that we

1 complied with the Plan of Conservation and
2 Development.

3 You also have in the Town Plan
4 and Zoning Commission a letter report to you.
5 They raised a couple more that I missed that
6 they said our reasons why they can support
7 this wholeheartedly.

8 We also have, I mentioned to
9 you that we would talk about the FAR criteria
10 and how we are proceeding with this
11 application under that new section that you
12 adopted back in 2017. That was a result of
13 the vision study.

14 It said if you provide certain
15 things, public parks, public ways, public
16 space, you get to double that area that
17 encompasses those public parks, public areas,
18 public spaces in terms of a deduction from
19 your FAR calculation. Meaning, by that own
20 regulation in the BC zone your building can
21 be bigger. Your FAR, your mass can increase
22 because you get to offset the public
23 amenities that you've provided.

24 It also said that you can
25 deduct all private structured garage parking

1 levels, and that's what we've done here as
2 either below ground or up to a story above
3 the grade of the site. And we've done that,
4 and that also allows our building to be
5 bigger because we're including something that
6 you wanted.

7 You wanted structured parking,
8 so we don't have surface parking -- and we
9 did that, and that's why our building can be
10 more massive than it might otherwise be.

11 There's one more criteria.
12 It's -- I talked about public space, the
13 public parking garages and infill
14 development. And we have an area of 4,536
15 feet, square feet that we were also able to
16 exclude from the calculation of FAR because
17 it's the commercial area under the corner
18 building, and that was something you wanted
19 to see.

20 So that allows us to take that
21 square footage from that and add it to the
22 mass of the building that we're proposing.
23 So we meet those criteria, and there are a
24 number of standards you have to look at when
25 you decide whether or not to let us avail

1 ourselves of that.

2 Our FAR is at 1.24. With the
3 application of those criteria we do comply
4 with the 1.25 FAR of the BC Zone, which is
5 the zone that we're applying for and under
6 which this would be developed.

7 So when you look at the
8 standards that you have to consider at
9 177-16.6V2 I believe, and I set it out in
10 what I just passed out, that the presentation
11 perspectives and renderings provided support
12 a finding that the design is contextually
13 sensitive and appropriate in scale, given all
14 of the reasons we've provided you why we
15 think that is so.

16 Height was never determined to
17 be a concern for DRAC and the setbacks
18 provided for this development, particularly
19 regarding a larger building allow it to fit
20 appropriately into the context of the various
21 street views by which it will be appreciated.

22 We have -- the second criteria
23 B, does adequate parking exist to serve the
24 development and public parking is available?
25 The answer to that is, yes. We do meet the

1 requirements and we're also giving the Town
2 something else, which is public parking at
3 off hours and on the weekends.

4 Is the development in harmony
5 with the open feeling and presence of natural
6 light within the public realm? And that
7 means the park, the area around the base of
8 the building, the alleyways. We do believe
9 we have met that criteria.

10 Is there appropriate bicycle
11 and pedestrian amenities existing? We have
12 all of that included in our application. We
13 have pedestrian seating through the
14 alleyways, pedestrian seating at the base of
15 the building, pedestrian seating in the park.
16 We'll have space for bicycles in the
17 buildings themselves. Clearly, it's a
18 walkable location, an eminently walkable
19 location.

20 So I think this proposal,
21 giving us more mass in exchange for those
22 features, has been met with this application.

23 Is there anything else I want
24 to add before we close?

25 Oh, we didn't answer any of

1 your questions. Is there anything that you
2 have?

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No, no, no,
4 no. We have to go through questions.

5 But just to follow up on
6 your -- the FAR, I did not see that.

7 MS. PEARSON: I added it.

8 PRESIDENT CANTOR: You added
9 it?

10 MS. PEARSON: Well, it is in
11 your plans. So it's on sheets A006 and A007.

12 I agree that the text is
13 small, but if you look at that chart -- but
14 it shows you exactly what the areas are for
15 where the FAR was given to us. And I can go
16 through that quickly.

17 The infill development part
18 was the 4,563 square feet to be excluded that
19 relates to the commercial use in the corner
20 building.

21 The public space, we have
22 11,121 square feet of public space. That's
23 in the chart. We get to -- the incentive is
24 to include public space in your development.
25 And if you do that under that regulation, you

1 get to detract twice the amount of the public
2 space from your calculation of FAR. So we
3 got to exclude 22,242 square feet.

4 It is on that sheet.

5 And with the private parking
6 garage we are able to exclude most of the
7 three floors of parking underground, halfway
8 under or halfway up -- and the level, the
9 third level of parking. And that amounts to
10 112,443 square feet that we could exclude
11 from FAR, which again means the building can
12 look bigger. It can be bigger, so it is.

13 So with that, I'm looking at
14 my team to say, is there anything else that
15 we want to add?

16 No one's jumping up.

17 So we conclude our
18 presentation. Thank you.

19 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
20 And we are going to go to questions, and then
21 you can make a couple closing remarks.

22 But we're going to start to my
23 left with Deputy Mayor Sweeney.

24 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Thank you,
25 Madam mayor. And thank you to the Applicant

1 and for the community for chiming in tonight.

2 I have just one overall
3 question on the overall project that has kind
4 of gone back and forth in my head -- and it
5 hasn't really been talked about.

6 We've had so much new
7 development in town and all of it has been
8 apartments. And in fact, I think Attorney
9 Pearson, you have come here and told us that
10 apartments are the way developers are making
11 money, and that's a better use of the land to
12 make money off of.

13 Why are we doing condos here?
14 And why are we splitting it between
15 apartments and condos?

16 We've been talking a lot about
17 how the Applicant is investing in this, and I
18 just -- to me this seems almost kind of
19 retrofitting going back to condos as opposed
20 to having apartments. And it also takes away
21 from the opportunity to further do any more
22 affordable units in that space.

23 So I just kind of want to
24 better understand that.

25 MS. PEARSON: Okay. Let me

1 try and answer it. And then I'm going to ask
2 whether any of our ownership has anything
3 they want to add to that.

4 I will direct you to the fact
5 that the Plan of Conservation and Development
6 talks about diverse housing opportunities. I
7 think, as you just outlined, there's a
8 difference between a rental use and a
9 homeownership use -- not that zoning
10 recognizes it.

11 It's all multifamily under the
12 zoning code, but there's a different
13 individual for each. There are people -- you
14 heard a realtor testify this evening that the
15 market for condominiums, there's a need for
16 condominiums, he said.

17 He said that people want to
18 own and live in the Center, that the
19 Heritage, which is the Blue Back condominium,
20 has very brisk sales, which in his mind
21 indicates there is also a need for that.

22 You heard a lot of people who
23 talked about having homes in the neighborhood
24 and who want to live in homes, homeownership,
25 in other words. So we also feel that -- and

1 someone else said that the market values of
2 those single-family homes have certainly gone
3 up around the Center.

4 And we feel very strongly that
5 people would also want to purchase, not
6 necessarily in a single family, but another
7 diverse option different from either rental
8 or the single family would be to be part of a
9 homeowner community and have much of your
10 needs taken care of, you know, communally,
11 but you still have your own place to do with
12 as you wish, you know, to put your wallpaper
13 up and to do homeownership.

14 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: I mean, I
15 understand why someone would buy a condo.
16 I'm trying to figure out why for such a
17 significant investment someone wants to do
18 condos in place of apartments, because
19 it's -- just based on, again, just
20 presentations that, you know, we've had with
21 you, the applicants have always talked about
22 that apartments are much more of a
23 moneymaking scenario for them.

24 And that's what I'm trying to
25 figure out in this case since it is, as we've

1 talked about, this is one of the biggest
2 pieces of land in the town. Why does the
3 Applicant want to do condos and apartments?

4 And mostly condos?

5 It just seems against the
6 economic trends that we've seen with recent
7 developments, with everything is going to
8 apartments.

9 MS. PEARSON: Well first of
10 all, I'm not sure that I've ever actually
11 said that -- but that's beside the point.

12 I would say that developers
13 may want to build rental because they don't
14 build to the quality that we're proposing to
15 build.

16 You're right. Could you build
17 something that's nowhere near as nice and
18 maybe make it rental? Yes, you could. But
19 you can't build the quality building that's
20 being proposed here as a rental building.
21 You don't use those kinds of materials.

22 And anything that I've looked
23 at recently that has been constructed, it's a
24 different type of construction. You've got
25 steel construction here with the highest-end

1 materials on the exterior of that building.
2 You wouldn't do that for a rental. But may
3 I -- yes, please?

4 HARRIS SIMONS: First of all,
5 thank you --

6 MS. PEARSON: You've got to
7 identify yourself for the record.

8 HARRIS SIMONS: My name is
9 Harris Simons. Sorry. Great question, by
10 the way.

11 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Thank you.

12 HARRIS SIMONS: And I think
13 part of it from a fundamental standpoint,
14 there's two issues. One is the economics.
15 The economics work better because there are
16 no condos. We need to have people live
17 there.

18 I'm not going to live in an
19 apartment. I'm really not. I'm 61 years
20 old. I don't feel like living in an
21 apartment. I want to have a place. I don't
22 want to go to, you know, I don't want to be
23 in Florida. I want to be here.

24 And you know, it's a choice of
25 housing for me that gives me, you know, an

1 utter convenience.

2 The second thing is structured
3 parking is so freaking expensive. You know
4 what I mean? I don't if you can use that
5 word. You know, we're all here. We're all
6 friends.

7 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: It's
8 eleven o'clock. You're okay.

9 HARRIS SIMONS: Okay. All
10 right. We can't even come close to paying
11 for it even if we wanted to with apartments.

12 The other thing is, do you
13 think we have enough apartments? All we hear
14 about is another apartment project, here an
15 apartment project. And you know, I don't
16 know where all these people are coming from,
17 but I will tell you on my peers that want to
18 stay here, they're looking for a housing
19 choice.

20 This is a housing choice to
21 live in West Hartford. I hear all the
22 traffic issues. We can work with the people
23 to solve it, but this is a quality project.
24 And you know, my family -- and I'm not, you
25 know, we love living here. I've lived here

1 my whole life, 61 years; my brother, the same
2 thing.

3 We keep reinvesting in your
4 town. We love this town. And we, we're
5 designing something with Mark Lewis and the
6 Manafort's. This is great construction and
7 you're getting it from local West Hartford
8 people.

9 So to answer the question in
10 the shortest possible way, economics are
11 driven by the need. There's no need for
12 condos. There's enough apartments in town,
13 and you've got structured parking. And the
14 way to pay for structured parking is you need
15 condos.

16 We're not building office
17 buildings. We're not building a hotel, but I
18 want you to be aware that Delamar Hotel right
19 now, it's packed tonight, that big building.
20 And they could sell a lot more rooms. And
21 those rooms are sold to people who are
22 walking around, going to the restaurants and
23 it's a vital market.

24 The last thing I want to do --
25 and I probably talk too long, but --

1 MS. PEARSON: No.

2 HARRIS SIMONS: You sure?

3 MS. PEARSON: Yeah.

4 HARRIS SIMONS: Oh, I like
5 you. I actually like you.

6 The transition is such a big
7 deal. What we're doing is if -- have you
8 seen the film of what it's like at eleven
9 o'clock. If any of you guys, you want to
10 walk out on a Thursday night with my brother
11 and I and see what's happening in the market?
12 Let's not, like, make this a nightclub city.

13 Let's get people living there.
14 They're going to have the same needs and
15 desires as everybody on Arapahoe, and to keep
16 this place safe and secure. I'm going to buy
17 a unit. Some of my -- our partners are going
18 to buy units. We want that kind of quality
19 construction.

20 The only way to pay for it
21 with structured parking is to have condos.

22 MS. PEARSON: Thank you.

23 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: That was a
24 great answer. I appreciate it. And just one
25 last one. So on page 9 -- and I'm sorry that

1 took such a long time to get to that, but on
2 page 9 of the new layout that you guys
3 have -- which is beautiful, it appears there
4 is no place for trash.

5 MS. PEARSON: Are you saying
6 page 9 of these renderings?

7 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Page 9
8 of -- yeah, the handout you guys just all
9 gave out.

10 And that is the back of the
11 restaurant. And as you guys demonstrated in
12 your presentation --

13 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Can you
14 just be just be a little more specific, since
15 I don't have that, Lisa's rendering?

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes, and I
17 can even take a screenshot and send it to
18 you.

19 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: So Carol,
20 it's a picture of the renderings of the
21 project. And in the back of it is --

22 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Is that the
23 project part?

24 PRESIDENT CANTOR: One minute,
25 Carol. Carol, I will take a screenshot and

1 send it to you. Hold on.

2 MS. PEARSON: Is that one of
3 the things we already showed on the
4 presentation?

5 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: It is.

6 MS. PEARSON: It should be.
7 These are photos of what we
8 showed on the screen, also.

9 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Sure, but
10 I'm just trying to present it to you as such.

11 So on what you just handed
12 out, on page 9 it shows the back of what is
13 now Union Kitchen, and basically -- I think
14 that's 45 LaSalle. Is that right?

15 Anyway, the restaurant side of
16 this.

17 And in the back of that what
18 is right now, back there is trash delivery,
19 et cetera?

20 JEFF FITZGERALD: Uh-huh.

21 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: There is
22 none of that on here. So I just kind of
23 wanted to have a better understanding of how
24 you would get deliveries and take out the
25 trash there, since it's kind of -- assembles

1 right back into that nice area that you guys
2 just told us.

3 JEFF FITZGERALD: It's --
4 you're referring to the page labeled as page
5 9, which is like the third one from the back,
6 I thought.

7 And in that perspective, the
8 trash for that is behind this bump out. You
9 don't see it in this thing. On the left side
10 of the page there's a bump out that exists on
11 the back of the building.

12 And I would request that you
13 look at the actual ninth page in this set,
14 which I believe is our C701, the landscape
15 plan, which is a site plan -- which I had up
16 a lot.

17 It's this plan here with the
18 building in purple. It's the overall site.

19 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Okay.

20 JEFF FITZGERALD: But if I
21 could point out to everybody -- yeah, I could
22 reconnect up if you want me to take the time,
23 which might be the best?

24 PRESIDENT CANTOR: That's
25 fine.

1 JEFF FITZGERALD: But while
2 I'm doing that, on that site plan there's
3 trash shown on the far north end of the site
4 at that, in a large trash enclosure that
5 we've added.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Carol,
7 we're putting it back on the screen.

8 So just one minute. Okay?

9
10 (Technical difficulties: 10:59 p.m. to 11 p.m.)
11

12 JEFF FITZGERALD: So trash
13 that is currently -- if you look at, if
14 you're in the back of house there, it sits at
15 the end of this, of this appendage. And when
16 you saw the view it was taken from here, and
17 you just saw this side.

18 There's rollout trash and
19 recycling here, and then we've got a large
20 masonry enclosure with doors here that has
21 two large trash things as well as grease for
22 the Thai restaurant, et cetera. And the
23 other restaurants, they grease for the
24 under-counter grease with -- it's covered,
25 so.

1 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: And then
2 trash and delivery comes off of Arapahoe into
3 there?

4 JEFF FITZGERALD: Trash pickup
5 will come in off of here, turn around, come
6 out. There's also trash located in this
7 location for this building here and recycling
8 bins underneath that cover behind the
9 louvers.

10 And the trash for the large
11 building will be inside, and it gets wheeled
12 out by the trash hauler.

13 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Thank you,
14 Madam Mayor. And I appreciate the Applicant
15 all saying that you will work with the Town
16 on potential speed reducing.

17 I don't know where, Mr. Dodge,
18 how we would put that into some sort of
19 addition -- but I mean, it's obviously
20 probably not for this evening, but something
21 that -- we'd love to see something before we
22 take a final vote.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you
24 Mr. Sweeney. Now we'll go to Ms. Fay.

25 COUNCILOR FAY: Thank you,

1 Mayor Cantor. I just had a couple of
2 questions. I've actually got several, but
3 they're all related. What are the rents for
4 the apartments projected to be, market rents?

5 MS. PEARSON: I have no idea.
6 I don't know if our client does. I'm
7 looking. I don't -- probably not. No,
8 they're shaking their heads. They haven't
9 resolved that yet.

10 COUNCILOR FAY: Okay. All
11 right. Great.

12 MS. PEARSON: However, I will
13 add that -- recall that there will be four of
14 those are price restricted and affordable at
15 people who earn 80 percent or less of the
16 area median income.

17 COUNCILOR FAY: Yeah. I had
18 the same question for the condos. So if you
19 don't know the apartment rents, you probably
20 don't know the condos either.

21 MS. PEARSON: No. The joy,
22 should this be approved, will come when they
23 have to start costing out this in reality,
24 and then they'll decide, I guess, what the
25 cost of the units will be.

1 COUNCILOR FAY: Okay. And
2 then I was going to ask about the condo fees,
3 too. I remember first that's what I was
4 looking for.

5 And then in terms of the
6 maintenance where you've got the common
7 areas, it's quite a bit of space. Is that
8 included in the condo fees? Or is that
9 something else?

10 I know it's dedicated to the
11 properties, but you've kind of outlaid it
12 like a park like thing that anybody who's
13 walking through with a cup of coffee can sit
14 there, or whatever.

15 MS. PEARSON: The Applicant
16 will be responsible for maintaining the open
17 areas and walkways and the park. We will
18 have to decide exactly how that's allocated
19 between the -- it's probably going to be a
20 cost to the homeowners association, but we
21 haven't gotten that far. So we'd have to
22 work that out, but it will be our
23 responsibility.

24 And just to underscore,
25 remember another benefit of condominiums,

1 those are going to be homeowners there.
2 They're going to want make sure everything
3 is, you know, totally clean and it's taken
4 care of because that's their front yard and
5 their backyard.

6 COUNCILOR FAY: Yeah, that's
7 actually the other aspect of the project that
8 I really like, is that they are condominiums
9 and there's fostering homeownership and
10 longevity and all those good things that
11 we're looking for in terms of a community.

12 And then my last question is
13 probably -- is regarding the FAR calculation.
14 And maybe it was my misunderstanding of how
15 that's applied with the changes when you take
16 credit for underground parking and things
17 like that.

18 Here you guys are taking
19 credit for the apartment storefronts, but
20 that goes to the FAR of the condo complex.

21 Did I misunderstand that?

22 MS. PEARSON: That's very good
23 question.

24 COUNCILOR FAY: Okay.

25 MS. PEARSON: This is one

1 special development district site. So the
2 FAR goes -- is relative to all development
3 within that special development district.

4 So when you calculate FAR you
5 have to calculate the existing floor area,
6 size of the existing buildings as well as the
7 proposed buildings. And that FAR For the
8 entire site, 1001 Farmington Avenue, the two
9 buildings on LaSalle that already exist --
10 yeah, and the two new buildings all have to
11 come in within 1.25 percent.

12 And it works because it's a
13 big site. It's 3.41 acres.

14 COUNCILOR FAY: Okay. Thank
15 you.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
17 Ms. Fay. Mr. Davidoff?

18 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Thank
19 you, Madam Mayor. Since I've been sitting
20 here since the Earth's been cooling I do
21 appreciate the remarks of those who spoke in
22 favor of all the development they've noticed
23 in the last 25 years. That's something that
24 I think some of us take a lot of pride in, in
25 how we've done things.

1 So I do have some questions
2 relative to process and to decisions of other
3 boards. In your presentation this evening,
4 you did not talk about community outreach.
5 The opponents to the project did.

6 So I'd like for you to outline
7 the steps that you took to communicate with
8 the abutters to the project, what kind of
9 dialogue was set up, the frequency, the
10 responsiveness.

11 Usually when we're at this
12 point in the decision making, it's rare that
13 we see a large public turnout in opposition,
14 and it's rare that we see petitions in
15 opposition to an application at this point in
16 the process.

17 It does happen. We take it
18 seriously. We encourage open dialogue. I
19 think we all come to this table open minded
20 to listen to to get all the viewpoints. I
21 think that's why we have been successful in
22 our zoning decisions.

23 So since I didn't hear that in
24 your presentation, I think it would be
25 important for us to hear as a Council about

1 the community outreach that you performed
2 with respect to this particular petition.

3 MS. PEARSON: I'm happy to do
4 that. I would just like to note that I've
5 been involved in a number of applications in
6 not the so distant past -- unless I didn't
7 quite understand your question -- where even
8 with significant community outreach, such as
9 the Steele Road project, where we still had,
10 I don't know, three nights of hearings, two
11 nights of hearings, 400 people opposed.

12 I mean, just because you
13 initiate -- and that was a very strong
14 community outreach process also. Just
15 because you initiate it, it doesn't mean
16 people are satisfied. They still have their
17 concerns as is appropriate.

18 The same thing was true of
19 other ones that have happened recently. I
20 assume that was true of the Trout Brook and
21 the Hampshire House, opponents to it. And
22 I'm sure there was community outreach
23 involved with that. So it does happen.

24 And you can't -- you can
25 answer questions but you don't, you know, can

1 we solve the concerns that people have for
2 traffic on Arapahoe and Woodrow Street? I
3 don't think we'll be able to do that unless,
4 you know, we're able to make some
5 improvements in the future.

6 So those issues are still
7 going to be there, but I'd like to -- Duby,
8 are you available? I'd like our -- and
9 Rebecca? To come on up.

10 And so the McDowell Group
11 helped us on reaching out to the community.
12 The process was undertaken before we filed
13 the application. Don't forget there was a
14 prior application also. So there's been
15 outreach during both of those processes.

16 And I'd like to turn it over
17 to them to describe what they've done. Thank
18 you.

19 DUBY MCDOWELL: Thank you.
20 I'm Duby McDowell, and my colleague Becca
21 Brockway. We first got involved in late May,
22 and one of our first tasks was setting up a
23 website so that anybody who had any questions
24 would have an opportunity -- and that
25 includes the press -- would have an

1 opportunity to go to the site and see what
2 the plans were like, see some details and
3 have an ability to ask questions on the
4 website.

5 So that was one of the first
6 things we did. I'm going to have Becca talk
7 about just some of the outreach, the door
8 knocking, I guess we'll call it.

9 REBECCA BROCKWAY: Hi.
10 Rebecca Brockway. We then reached out
11 through the Town to have the 500-foot abutter
12 addresses and sent in initial correspondence
13 to that, those homeowners, property owners
14 directing them that there's a website setup,
15 that we will be out.

16 If you want contact right away
17 here's our information. You can also go to
18 the website. And in the website there's --
19 you can directly e-mail us and we will get
20 back to you.

21 Then in Late June, early July,
22 August myself and Amanda Green, we walked, we
23 knocked on all those doors. If someone was
24 not --

25 MS. PEARSON: And would you

1 just explain who Amanda Green is?

2 REBECCA BROCKWAY: Amanda
3 Green is with Figure Eight. She works with
4 the Applicant.

5 We walked and we talked, and
6 if someone was not there we left behind
7 information on how they could reach us. From
8 that we gathered the information, which is in
9 your report.

10 We also, through that, we did
11 set up a few Zoom meetings or sitdown
12 meetings depending on what the property owner
13 wanted, what they preferred. And we met with
14 them and answered their questions. And if we
15 were unable to answer those questions, we
16 would find out the answers and get back to
17 them.

18 We also reached out to the
19 business owners through the West Hartford
20 Town Business Association, and through the
21 West Hartford Chamber and did meetings with
22 them as well.

23 DUBY MCdOWELL: And one other
24 aspect of the community outreach is via the
25 news media. And so we had extensive

1 conversations with Ronni of We-Ha.com. The
2 Hartford Courant did a big article. I mean,
3 that's one of the many ways that you reach
4 people, and the social media that springs
5 from that.

6 REBECCA BROCKWAY: In early
7 December, late November, early December we
8 went farther out beyond, beyond that 500 feet
9 and we did Four Mile Road from Farmington
10 Avenue to Woodrow to see if there were
11 additional information that we could give out
12 or talk, or direct them to where they could
13 find out information if they were looking for
14 anything in particular.

15 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Thank
16 you. It's important to get that on the
17 record. So I appreciate that. I do have one
18 other question.

19 So I've given a lot of thought
20 to looking over this plan. And it seems to
21 me that -- I don't know if this has been
22 explored or could this be explored, but to
23 have the traffic exit your site just to make
24 a left turn out of your site onto Arapahoe
25 Road to be close to LaSalle Road so that none

1 of the traffic leaving your site ever goes up
2 Arapahoe, or would ever need to go down
3 Woodrow. Has that been explored?

4 If so, what were your
5 findings? What were your concerns? Is that
6 something that still could be evaluated?

7 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah, we've
8 talked about that as a solution to a lot of
9 the questions or the comments that have come
10 up during the whole process and in meeting
11 with engineering staff.

12 The problem is, it's hard to
13 enforce that. And you don't want to, you
14 know, putting restrictions where some people
15 may want to go that way and find it difficult
16 to go the other way on, you know, to go for a
17 Sunday drive and making an illegal turn, that
18 that is a problem.

19 But we've explored that.
20 We've offered that. We might -- we would
21 consider it. It's just in talking with staff
22 that were -- they thought it would be hard to
23 enforce.

24 MS. PEARSON: I would like to
25 just add something. I just checked with my

1 client again and, you know, we did offer it.
2 And we'd be willing to do it if the
3 administration felt that that was useful. We
4 could do that, yeah, but that's --

5 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Well, as
6 a rule follower -- okay? The sign says, no
7 right turn. Okay? I'm not making the right
8 turn.

9 MS. PEARSON: Right. And it
10 could certainly dissuade the rule
11 followers --

12 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Right.
13 And so I do believe that the people who
14 reside on your property would get the
15 impression quite readily if we were enforcing
16 it, seeing people leaving that were your
17 owners of the property making right turns out
18 of the driveway. That would be very easy to
19 identify the violators. Correct?

20 So I don't think that would be
21 an issue. I did explore with town staff --
22 I'll share with you. I thought that possibly
23 Arapahoe Road could be either dead-ended or
24 have an emergency gate put on it so that
25 emergency vehicles could be the only ones to

1 go through, so that traffic was not coming
2 into the Center from Arapahoe Road. Okay?

3 I got a lot of reasons as to
4 why that was not a feasible thing, but I do
5 think what I just discussed does sound
6 reasonable. It removes any additional
7 traffic that could be generated on the site
8 from going into the neighborhood.

9 And I think that with that,
10 and along with speed calming measures along
11 Woodrow -- where I would agree we've removed
12 the parking from that street on both sides
13 and that has given people the raceway effect.
14 Okay? Of disregarding speed limits and stop
15 signs, and I don't think it's unique to
16 Woodrow, ignoring stop signs. I believe
17 it's -- I think it's townwide. It's Hartford
18 Countywide. I think it's statewide.

19 I don't understand this, but
20 it just seems to be an issue. People seem to
21 be in a rush, and they don't think that it
22 applies to them. So I'll stop, you know,
23 giving a sermon here, but I think we need to
24 be very cognizant as the new neighbors in the
25 block. We don't want to make life worse for

1 those who are already there.

2 And to be a good neighbor we
3 need to find workable solutions to say,
4 listen, we want to be in your neighborhood.
5 We don't want to negatively impact your
6 quality of life. So what can we do to make
7 this happen?

8 So that's why I've been trying
9 to think out of the box with respect to
10 possibly just having a left turn only out of
11 your site.

12 JEFF FITZGERALD: I think that
13 as you as you describe it. And I think it
14 makes a lot more sense than when we, you
15 know, we thought about it, but I think we
16 didn't fully vet it. And we presented it as
17 an option, but it never really got discussed.

18 But it makes great sense right
19 now, especially as, you know, for people who
20 want to head west you have a signalized
21 intersection at LaSalle and Farmington making
22 that a much safer movement.

23 So I do support that.

24 MS. PEARSON: So we have put
25 it on the record that we would be willing to

1 do that.

2 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: And
3 lastly, we haven't really explored whether or
4 not we would be able to open LaSalle to main
5 street. Okay? That little portion there.
6 That's still under study and investigation.

7 There's a little driveway
8 there that gets you to that, to the Town
9 Center Garage. So that's another way for
10 people to get up to a main road. So I think
11 there's a lot of moving pieces here, but I
12 think we have to think within the box.

13 Now as somebody who has
14 served -- this is the last thing, Ms.
15 Mayor -- as Chairman of the TP and Z for
16 three years, and served on it for almost
17 seven years prior to my service here on the
18 Council, I appreciate the constraints that
19 anybody serving on TPZ had to make with
20 respect to the decisions.

21 They did not hear from the
22 applicant. They heard from town staff with
23 respect to the details and had to make the
24 determination whether or not to make a
25 referral based on what they heard from town

1 staff without really getting into a dialogue
2 as we're able to do this evening. So, for my
3 former colleagues or fellow colleagues on
4 that board, I appreciate the time that they
5 make. And we do value their opinion.

6 With respect to DRAC, those
7 are people who are well respected in their
8 particular fields who sit down and know more
9 about architecture and engineering than I'll
10 ever know in my lifetime.

11 And their opinion, while it
12 was contrary to what you wanted to hear this
13 evening, it's a very important part of the
14 process for us to hear what their
15 concerns/objections were, what things they
16 thought you hit, and you hit the target with.
17 I think that's very important to have on the
18 record.

19 And as a whole, I think our
20 entire body will be better served by the fact
21 that we do have this deliberative process in
22 the planning stage of what the buildings look
23 like, and how they relate with respect to our
24 zoning code and our Plan of Conservation and
25 Development.

1 So thank you.

2 MS. PEARSON: And if I just
3 may echo something on that? There is no
4 question but that this is a better project as
5 a result of that DRAC process. They were
6 right. They were right to make that original
7 negative recommendation, and we responded.

8 And maybe we haven't gotten
9 everything, but this is a much better project
10 for that review process, and they get all the
11 credit.

12 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
13 Thank you, Mr. Davidoff. And I just want to
14 say that I did share with you that that was
15 my idea on the road -- but that's okay.

16 All right.

17 I'll go to Mr. Zydanowicz and
18 then Ms. Blanks, you're on deck, because I
19 know you're here.

20 COUNCILOR ZYDANOWICZ: Thank
21 you, Madam Mayor. So I wasn't chaired with
22 that -- but I did have left only traffic
23 written down.

24 And while you were discussing
25 that I wrote one-way traffic, because that

1 eliminates the rule breakers and rules. So
2 if you made that one way, there's really
3 no -- I mean, that rule in itself is kind of
4 a standard. You know you're not going to
5 stop the 61 mile an hour at 1:30 in the
6 morning because that's, you know, that's
7 going to happen. But unfortunately -- but
8 yeah, so I had one way on there, too. So I
9 thought something maybe like that.

10 My comments today are going to
11 be kind of addressing our constituents and
12 the residents that came out today, because I
13 love this process and it's important to us.
14 It's important to me.

15 And someone said the natural
16 progression of We-Ha, if you don't like
17 change you'll hate extinction. Right? And
18 that kind of resonated with me. I had never
19 heard it that way before -- but that's true.
20 And when we go back into, like you know, West
21 Farms Mall, that was going to be the death of
22 the Center here back in the 'seventies.
23 Right? The Center wasn't going to survive
24 West Farms Mall.

25 And then when we were building

1 Blue Back Square West Farms was against it
2 because Blue Back was going to was going to
3 be detrimental to them. So you have a full
4 circle right there.

5 And you know, Blue Back had
6 its oppositions. You had politicians coming
7 in on horseback opposing. It was a big deal.
8 And I would wonder if any of those people out
9 there today would say that Blue Back was a
10 bad decision. Those same people that came
11 here back in the day, was that a bad
12 decision? I don't know. You know, I doubt
13 it because it's part of our fabric now here
14 in West Hartford.

15 And the Steele Road project, I
16 didn't know you helped me with the 400
17 opposed, three nights -- I knew it was a big
18 deal. I would venture that all those people
19 in opposition, what that Steele Road project
20 is now. You know?

21 And I've been thinking about
22 this for a long time and I've been on other
23 zoning pieces that we've collectively voted
24 on. And what does traffic look like? You
25 know, what does traffic look like?

1 Well, it looks like Cigna and
2 MetLife getting out at 4:30 in the afternoon,
3 coming down Mountain Road, backed up a mile
4 from Route 44 up Mountain Road. Holidays
5 around the mall, restaurants getting busy on
6 a Thursday night, parades, mitten runs,
7 Hartford Marathons -- previously UConn,
8 St. Joe's, school's getting out at 2:15.

9 That's traffic.

10 It's not the development that
11 they put on Mountain Road near my house where
12 Gledhill used to be with the new homes there.
13 That's not adding more traffic to my
14 neighborhood. And so those are the kind of
15 things that when we look at what traffic
16 looks like -- what did we hear today from
17 them?

18 In my mind we heard that
19 there's a traffic problem downtown previous
20 to this. They don't come to complain so much
21 about the building. They came to complain
22 about the traffic there. And I think we have
23 to respond and I think we are and have. And
24 we've got a plan in place.

25 You know, mentioned left-hand

1 turn one-way only. I think these are some of
2 the things that will help with that process.
3 Right? Because we really have to look at
4 that. A town, it's our responsibility to do
5 that. Right? The safety, the ability to
6 transverse safely through neighborhoods so
7 that there those neighborhoods stay vibrant.

8 So we have to look at that.
9 We sat on one very similar that had traffic
10 issues there too, and we as a Town have to
11 look at it.

12 So it's interesting. I
13 understand it and I really do appreciate it,
14 but there's other projects around town that,
15 you know, there was -- across from Bob and
16 Sally's, there was a home there that they
17 knocked down and they put on something
18 similar that you're putting on the corner.
19 It's all office buildings.

20 I don't know if there was
21 opposition to that. I certainly was opposed
22 to it, but now I love it. So those are the
23 things that change. Someone mentioned
24 Hampshire House being in scale in comparison,
25 and then when you did the bird's eye view of

1 everything, it kind of made sense.

2 It has to be transformative.
3 I think so. I think West Hartford needs
4 projects like this going forward, and we
5 talked about the guiding principles again
6 with the buffer zone and things like that.
7 This is actually buffered by a lot of
8 buildings, and I found that to be
9 interesting, too.

10 That you know, I understand
11 that those, those homes on Arapahoe are
12 concerned about it. I get their concerns,
13 but still those concerns exist right now and
14 we have to address those.

15 And I do like that the owners
16 that you are, will they be included in the
17 neighborhood? The owners are going to want
18 to take care of the neighborhood, too,
19 because that, that's what we talked about
20 there.

21 PRESIDENT CANTOR:

22 Mr. Zydanowicz, just this is a
23 public hearing. So if you have questions for
24 them --

25 COUNCILOR ZYDANOWICZ: I'm

1 sorry. I just -- I really want to address a
2 lot of public concerns.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No, that's
4 fine. And I just wanted to ask you, do you
5 want town staff -- I see our Director of
6 Community Services and our Town Engineer are
7 here. If you wanted to --

8 COUNCILOR ZYDANOWICZ: I was
9 just, maybe just the one-way and then we have
10 to have that plan, you know, for LaSalle.

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: I know
12 we're in a process -- but maybe you can come
13 up.

14 MR. LEDWITH: Through you,
15 Madam Mayor to Mr. Zydanowicz. So we are in
16 the process of Stantec -- as everyone knows,
17 and we've heard many times tonight, is in the
18 process of assisting us with the center
19 infrastructure project.

20 And as part of that they are
21 doing an evaluation of traffic. We have
22 received a draft memo from them addressing
23 the traffic issue on LaSalle, Woodrow,
24 Arapahoe that we're reviewing right now. And
25 we would -- without question we are going to

1 assist our neighbors on Woodrow and on
2 Arapahoe and help mitigate the issue, but we
3 need to review that memo in detail.

4 You know, as part of this
5 study, we're looking at LaSalle, you know,
6 right now as one way going north. Do we
7 leave it one way going north? Do we leave it
8 one way going south? Do we convert it back
9 to two-way, or do we close it altogether?

10 Those are some of the options
11 that are being considered, and until we kind
12 of get into the weeds of some of those
13 decisions we won't know exactly what we will
14 end up doing for Woodrow.

15 We did meet with the neighbors
16 on Woodrow and Arapahoe back in September and
17 then our Engineering Department performed a
18 survey for the neighbors over the last couple
19 of months, and we're reviewing that
20 information -- some of the information, some
21 of the details that came out, came out of
22 that survey were speed humps that we talked
23 about tonight, semi diverters like we have on
24 Four Mile, Newport and Riggs, as well as the
25 raised table at the intersection of Ellsworth

1 and Woodrow.

2 So that will all be part of
3 our decision making process and we will have,
4 you know, before the shovel goes in the
5 ground if this project were to be approved,
6 we will have addressed the traffic issue on
7 Woodrow.

8 COUNCILOR ZYDANOWICZ: Thank
9 you. So bottom line is I guess your
10 presentation answered all -- or most of my
11 questions. I just had what the constituents
12 were talking about. So I'm done. Thank you.

13 PRESIDENT CANTOR: I just
14 wanted to make sure that you were getting
15 your questions answered, if you needed.

16 COUNCILOR ZYDANOWICZ: No,
17 that's all right. No, I'm done.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: So I guess
19 we're all set. Okay. Thank you.

20 Okay. Carol?

21 COUNCILOR BLANKS: My turn?

22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes, your
23 turn.

24 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Thank you.
25 thank you. Through you, Madam mayor. I just

1 have two quick questions. First off, I want
2 to thank the Applicant for the presentation
3 tonight led by Attorney Pearson. You always
4 do a good job.

5 I also want to thank all of
6 the community members that came out whether
7 you were in support or opposed. And
8 especially I want to thank the two West
9 Hartford natives that are part of this
10 application as well. And I also want to
11 thank my Council colleagues for hanging in,
12 in this late hour.

13 So my question is for the
14 Applicant. Around the pocket park I'm just
15 concerned about that inviting space, and how
16 will the trash be maintained? I know it is
17 your responsibility, but I'm hoping that you
18 make it easy for people to dispose their
19 trash in the receptacle, and not just in that
20 beautiful space that you plan on putting
21 together, or you're proposing.

22 So that's one question.

23 I'll pause.

24 MS. PEARSON: Oh, okay. Do we
25 have anything specific, Matt or Jeff, on

1 trash management right there? I know we can
2 certainly include it, but do we have anything
3 now?

4 MATTHEW MRVA: Matt Mrva with
5 Bohler, Landscape Architect. As we stated
6 before, I think that's all going to be part
7 of the maintenance that the Applicant will be
8 responsible for.

9 So trash receptacles, emptying
10 those, that would be part of the maintenance
11 program based on the overall site just as
12 though that were private space. It will be
13 open to the public, but maintained by the
14 Applicant.

15 MS. PEARSON: But we will look
16 at, I assume, whether or not there would be a
17 trash receptacle right there?

18 MATTHEW MRVA: Right.

19 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
20 Carol?

21 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Okay.

22 Thank you. I have two other questions, so
23 please bear with me. The second question is
24 regarding the Webster Bank drive-through. So
25 right now I understand that that space is

1 going to be closed off, and all customers
2 will enter from the Arapahoe side.

3 So my concern is now that
4 activity is going to be pretty heavily
5 populated between pedestrians for building A
6 as well as building B. So can you just kind
7 of walk me through, because when I did look
8 through the application, I really didn't see
9 how the cars are going to enter into the bank
10 drive-through and then exit out?

11 That's my second question --
12 and then I have one more.

13 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah, that's
14 a great question. I'm going to pull up the
15 site plan here with me. One second.

16 So the drive-through will
17 function pretty much the same way it does
18 now. Give me a second. I don't think this
19 completely shut down.

20 There we go.

21 So you will access the
22 drive-through by coming in off of Arapahoe.
23 And then in this plaza you can see here the
24 curved line, flush curved line here with
25 bollards behind it that outline the turn to

1 get into the drive-through which is under the
2 overhang here.

3 And then you'll exit in the
4 same way you do now back out the same way you
5 came in. Where right now cars enter through
6 this alley and then make a tight left turn
7 there.

8 So you can see it's not a
9 super difficult movement. It's not a super
10 crowded drive-through. It does get use,
11 though, and it's pretty good, modern --
12 there's plenty of stacking room underneath
13 it. It's all being maintained as is.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Hey, Carol,
15 is that it?

16 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Okay.
17 Thank you. One more question. So for the
18 building B that's going to be on the corner
19 of Arapahoe and LaSalle, and for the
20 apartment residents, I believe in your
21 presentation you stated that their parking is
22 going to be located in the town garage
23 parking.

24 So my question is, is there
25 going to be a dropoff designated spot for

1 those residents who have groceries, or
2 perhaps may be moving an item of furniture,
3 or things of that nature?

4 JEFF FITZGERALD: There is,
5 you know, there's parking available for -- in
6 these, in this parking lot here off of
7 Arapahoe that can be used for dropping off.
8 There's also spaces, as you can see here,
9 underneath the building and back a couple
10 spaces, and two accessible spaces.

11 So that can be used as well
12 as, you know, available on-street parking on
13 a short-term basis. Town Center Garage is
14 just to the east of this Bricco building on
15 this side.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Carol, do
17 you want a followup?

18 COUNCILOR BLANKS: I do have a
19 followup, and it's basically just with
20 signage going into the proposed building, of
21 the lot.

22 I'm just looking at your
23 rendering. They're very, very beautiful and
24 pretty and whatnot, but I just didn't really
25 see any good signage in terms of pedestrian

1 safety and traffic safety when folks will be
2 pulling in and exiting out. Because you're
3 going to have a combination of pedestrians
4 walking. You're going to have motorists
5 coming in and out. You're going to have the
6 bank activity.

7 So I'm just hoping that your
8 stop signs or what have you guiding people,
9 you know, how to be safe and to drive
10 carefully in mind of pedestrians, that is
11 part of your plan going forward?

12 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yes.

13 COUNCILOR BLANKS: And I'm all
14 set, Madam Mayor.

15 JEFF FITZGERALD: Those are
16 great points. And as Matt pointed out, it is
17 a pedestrian priority area that's used for
18 parking cars and accessing the lot behind
19 2743, which is for tenants, and for accessing
20 the drive-through.

21 We also will be including
22 wayfinding signage that we will work with the
23 town staff to get parking in, you know, the
24 signage should direct people to the public
25 parking and the hours for that. So we are on

1 board with making this as safe a pedestrian
2 space while still accommodating the cars that
3 it needs to. And you know, I think we can do
4 that. And the design with engineering, we're
5 reducing lane widths on the second, on this
6 second aisle to 20 feet, which again slows
7 cars down even more.

8 So it's designed to be a safe
9 area for pedestrians.

10 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
11 Carol. Thank you, Ms. Blanks.

12 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Thank you.

13 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
14 All right. So we'll go to
15 Mr. Cortes.

16 COUNCILOR CORTES: Thank you,
17 Madam Mayor. I would like to thank the
18 developer and everybody that's worked to make
19 this possible for this presentation. You
20 guys did a great job.

21 Down to the to the traffic
22 analysis. You know, usually I hear these
23 traffic analyses and to me they don't make
24 sense. And I thought it was very thoughtful,
25 you know, especially figuring in the COVID

1 numbers and adding that percentage. I
2 thought that was important for me to hear.
3 So I want to put that out there.

4 Some questions. The first
5 question. For electric vehicles, are there
6 stations for electric vehicles on site?

7 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah, I
8 think we're willing to do electric
9 vehicles -- that we have to figure that out.
10 They're not shown on the plan, but I think it
11 could be accommodated, a certain number
12 inside the building.

13 MS. PEARSON: Well, it's a
14 good question and it's a detail that we don't
15 have in the plans right now. We will indeed
16 be including them. They're definitely going
17 to be some in the garage and we're looking at
18 maybe putting some up top also.

19 We don't have a lot of surface
20 parking up at the top, but we do have some.
21 So we will definitely do that. You're
22 absolutely right, yes.

23 COUNCILOR CORTES: And then
24 another question. So parking is important
25 for me. If you look at my inbox right now

1 there's a lot of e-mails about this project.
2 There's a lot of e-mails about food waste.
3 And my other set of e-mails is parking.

4 So you guys talk about for the
5 rental building possibly leasing parking
6 space. There's something similar to that
7 that we have, and I'm not a fan of. So if
8 that wasn't -- that's not set in stone. If
9 that doesn't go through for that apartment
10 building, what plan do you have for parking?

11 MS. PEARSON: Oh, if I may?
12 The draft agreement that you've got right now
13 to provide a minimum of 30 spaces -- and
14 there are 28 spaces in units in that
15 building.

16 By state statute right now
17 that would require -- because they're all one
18 bedroom or less. There's a plus. That's not
19 another bedroom, though. There's one bedroom
20 plus, but it's not a one bedroom.

21 So they're all one bedroom or
22 less, so they only require one space by state
23 statute.

24 Then our experience -- and in
25 fact, you approved one for the Udolf

1 development which is right off of Main
2 Street, which was approved for rentals at one
3 per unit. And they, too, have underground
4 parking.

5 So one space per unit would
6 require 28 spaces. And the owners of the
7 Town Center Garage, it's not a town garage,
8 but it's the private Town Center Garage
9 across the street. You know, they are
10 participants. They are part of -- it's the
11 Simons. So it's the same people that are
12 part of this.

13 So they are, you know, going
14 to be leasing us those spaces. And the
15 draft, we modeled it after the one that you
16 approved for another development on
17 Farmington Avenue, but it commits for a
18 long-term period. I think the first term is
19 20 years, and then two 10-year extensions for
20 parking. So there's parking. Okay?

21 And it's in, you know, I was I
22 was looking at the distance of some of the
23 office buildings to the parking that already
24 exists in the far reaches of this site, and
25 the distance from the car in a parking lot in

1 the far end of our site to one of those
2 office buildings at the corner, for instance,
3 is not dissimilar to the distance that people
4 would be walking if their car was in the Town
5 Center Garage.

6 So I mean, it's certainly very
7 viable.

8 COUNCILOR CORTES: Well, thank
9 you for clarifying, especially the Town
10 Center Garage, you know, and the ownership.
11 And I also thank you for clarifying that.

12 And then I think you've
13 answered it already, but in regards to
14 maintenance again. Right? So that alleyway,
15 you know. So just, it looks nicer, inviting.
16 Some of the issues that we do have on LaSalle
17 Road is with, you know, later at night,
18 especially with littering and stuff that goes
19 on in these alleyways, you know.

20 So yes, it feels safer, but
21 would it be -- it could also be inviting, you
22 know, for people to hang out after they leave
23 the restaurants at closing time.

24 So is that area covered as far
25 as maintenance and cleanup? Because it is an

1 issue currently right now.

2 JEFF FITZGERALD: It's
3 currently maintained by the owner. It's a
4 driveway, private driveway. And it
5 becomes -- but it's a driveway, and it's
6 pavement and it's an old driveway, and it
7 goes across a sidewalk that's in tough shape.

8 But it will be as part of this
9 redone as a pedestrian place and maintained
10 in the same fashion it is now.

11 MS. PEARSON: Well, I think it
12 might even be maintained in a better fashion
13 given that people are living there, yeah.

14 COUNCILOR CORTES: And I have
15 a lot of comments, but I'll save that for
16 when it's time, it's time to vote -- but
17 thank you for answering my questions.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
19 Mr. Cortes. Mr. Wenograd?

20 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Thank
21 you, Mr. Cortes, for that lead in.

22 Questions. A couple of real
23 quick ones. Bike facilities, I don't see
24 them on the map, but --

25 JEFF FITZGERALD: Bike storage

1 will be inside of the buildings.

2 MATTHEW MRVA: So yeah, there
3 is bike storage -- Matt Mrva with Bohler
4 again -- within the garage, as Jeff pointed
5 out.

6 But we also have some racks
7 indicated right here along LaSalle, that if
8 you look at the enlarged plans that were part
9 of the package -- scroll down and see that.

10 So we've got some racks right
11 here adjacent to this tree. So this would
12 accommodate four bikes here.

13 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay.
14 And then you'll also have condo storage?

15 MATTHEW MRVA: That's right.

16 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: And in
17 the apartment building as well?

18 MATTHEW MRVA: I don't believe
19 we have additional bike storage there, but
20 the racks I just pointed out are directly
21 adjacent to that apartment building.

22 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: I
23 wouldn't make this as a condition, but you
24 might want to consider having some extra
25 storage in your underground area. You know,

1 people are looking for that these days.

2 JEFF FITZGERALD: Under the
3 big building, yeah, we may be able to --

4 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: In the B,
5 right. You have that one line of property.

6 Not underground, under the
7 building.

8 MATTHEW MRVA: Okay. So
9 there's the bike room right here, bike
10 storage.

11 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Very
12 good. You found it. Thank you.

13 MATTHEW MRVA: Thank you.

14 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Second
15 question, a lot of trees, obviously, as part
16 of the plan. Can you tell us what size those
17 are going to be when planted?

18 MATTHEW MRVA: I believe we
19 have them listed at two and a half to three
20 inch caliber at time of planting. So that's
21 sort of a standard. We could look at
22 increasing that, but we find that especially
23 in urban conditions like this you want to
24 have the root ball of a size that's going to
25 adapt well and be able to grow into the

1 surrounding soil on its own.

2 So trying to put in too big a
3 root ball in an area under the sidewalk can
4 get a little tricky. So we're trying to keep
5 those at a size that they will grow quickly
6 and reach their full potential.

7 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: I do
8 recall during Blue Black -- and I would defer
9 to those who were there, that one of the
10 selling points was that they were going, sort
11 of, as big as they could on trees.

12 And that certainly --

13 MATTHEW MRVA: Sure. Do you
14 recall any of the size of those listed out?

15 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: I don't
16 remember. I don't believe I remember, but I
17 do remember I wasn't around for that vote,
18 but --

19 MATTHEW MRVA: I mean, we
20 definitely want to balance that because we
21 want, you know, day one impact and to have
22 this look good. We're just also concerned
23 about long-term viability of the trees.

24 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD:

25 Understand. I mean, obviously

1 we want them to live, but --

2 MATTHEW MRVA: Right. Right.

3 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: We do
4 want to have that.

5 MATTHEW MRVA: Absolutely.

6 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Not just,
7 you know, shrubs for ten years kind of
8 problem.

9 MATTHEW MRVA: Right.

10 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: So, yeah.
11 If you can you get us that information, and
12 maybe staff can help with that in terms of
13 what is the biggest.

14 MATTHEW MRVA: Sure.

15 MS. PEARSON: We'll look into
16 it with staff.

17 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Thank
18 you. Just a clarification, the pocket park
19 on Arapahoe, that's where the current
20 driveway is? Do I have the geography
21 correct?

22 MATTHEW MRVA: Yes, that's
23 correct. The current driveway -- Jeff,
24 correct me if I'm wrong -- is right through
25 here.

1 JEFF FITZGERALD: Correct,
2 yeah.

3 MATTHEW MRVA: Can you see my
4 pointer?

5 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Yeah,
6 okay.

7 MATTHEW MRVA: So we're
8 actually pulling that driveway, you know,
9 away from that abutter.

10 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Right.
11 And I think -- so their fence is there as
12 well. Is that all on your control, or are
13 those the abutting --

14 MATTHEW MRVA: We'll have a
15 wall and a fence along that edge as well as
16 the screening/planting that you're seeing
17 here.

18 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay. I
19 could be wrong. I didn't look recently. I
20 remember a chain-link fence there. I don't
21 know if that's still there. It may have been
22 years ago.

23 JEFF FITZGERALD: Jeff
24 Fitzgerald with Bohler. The chain-link fence
25 is still there alongside the driveway that's

1 there now. So I don't know that it needs to
2 remain. I don't think it should remain. I
3 think it will be up to the two owners to
4 decide if there should be one there, but I
5 think it would be nice knowing that this park
6 will pretty much blend into the grade and the
7 lawn of the property to the side there so.

8 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: But if
9 it -- do you know if it's their fence or
10 yours now? Do you know who owns that fence?

11 JEFF FITZGERALD: I think it's
12 on our property.

13 MS. PEARSON: Mark just
14 confirmed it's on our property.

15 JEFF FITZGERALD: The
16 chain-link fence there -- yeah, it looks like
17 it's on our property.

18 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: So I
19 mean, with the cooperation of the neighbor,
20 if that's desired, I would hope that you
21 remove that fence if they want you to?

22 JEFF FITZGERALD: I would be
23 all for that.

24 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Thank
25 you. Let me see. So one, another quick

1 question. The north side driveway of
2 building A, those parking spaces, is the
3 access only through the building?

4 JEFF FITZGERALD: It's through
5 the upper level parking which is --

6 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Is that
7 the condo level?

8 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yes. So
9 it's, you access through here and then out
10 here today.

11 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay. So
12 that's overflow for the condo only?

13 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yes, and it
14 has -- and it can be spaces for certain
15 tenants in 1001 Farmington Avenue. You'll
16 need gate access to get in.

17 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay. So
18 they'll also have that access to get through
19 the condo area and parking?

20 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yes.

21 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay.
22 Thank you. Two other questions. I'll do, I
23 think, the simpler one first. Ms. Glynn made
24 a comment about Farmington Avenue access.

25 Is that something that you

1 explored in terms of getting access from
2 Farmington Avenue?

3 JEFF FITZGERALD: No, because
4 we did explore access to this parking lot
5 from Farmington Avenue. That's sort of
6 through the adjacent driveway here, but that
7 hasn't been able to be completed.

8 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay.
9 Thank you. And I'm not sure whether the
10 geography works for that or not in terms of
11 taking some of the pressure off Arapahoe.

12 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah, it's
13 you know, I haven't been able to make the
14 deal and it would be a little security issue.
15 You'd need to come in here and then take a
16 left to get in, because the grade starts to
17 fall off here as it slopes from west to east.

18 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Right.
19 Okay. And I guess the geography of the
20 parking lot --

21 JEFF FITZGERALD: We don't
22 control. We did try.

23 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Right.
24 The parking lot, there's a fence there now
25 between your property and the S.K. Lavery

1 building, that that is impossible to come in
2 through that way?

3 JEFF FITZGERALD: Correct.
4 There's no room over there. S.K. Lavery is
5 right up to the property line.

6 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Well, I
7 mean the way into their parking lot they
8 would have to approve that, I guess?

9 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah.

10 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay.
11 The last question. So it gets back to the
12 whole parking issue, and it was confusing
13 trying to go through your numbers as to how
14 many spots you had.

15 And because of that, the fact
16 that you're taking -- you're using spaces
17 over at the other garage, and yet you're also
18 sort of promoting the idea that you're going
19 to have excess spaces in building A that's
20 for the public.

21 So it seems like you're, you
22 know, you don't really have extra spaces, yet
23 you actually -- because you don't -- you're
24 not actually building the 325 or whatever.
25 You're actually building 275, and then

1 contracting for 50 at the other, so.

2 JEFF FITZGERALD: That's a
3 great question. And the nuance is that at
4 present there's 133 spaces that are accessed
5 by that driveway that are gated, and they're
6 exclusive for the use of the commercial
7 businesses at 65 LaSalle.

8 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Right.

9 JEFF FITZGERALD: When we
10 build this new building, and its new
11 structured parking the proposal is that
12 when -- for after, in the evenings after
13 business closes at, you know, six o'clock on
14 and then on weekends those spaces that are
15 now gated and no one can use will convert,
16 now that when they're in the building, will
17 convert to public parking for pay.

18 And so that that's where you
19 get the surplus that doesn't exist now at
20 all. You end up with, you know, the two
21 lower levels of that parking structure being
22 available to the public -- that that's all
23 surplus.

24 MS. PEARSON: But the nuance
25 is, if I may? For the people in the

1 apartments they've got to have 24/7 parking
2 if they wanted. So they couldn't -- there's
3 no room 24/7 for those. That's the issue.
4 That's the nuance.

5 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Okay.
6 that's the question. That was the question,
7 why? Why make them go over there when you
8 could just give them spots --

9 MS. PEARSON: Because they
10 need to have it when they want it --

11 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: -- in A?
12 And you don't have enough spots in building A
13 for them?

14 MS. PEARSON: Right. We have
15 excess only after the workday and on
16 weekends. And if I was living in one of
17 those units, that would make me very happy.

18 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: All
19 right. Okay. That, that I understand.

20 And to some extent you're
21 replacing some of the people -- the Webster,
22 the current parking lot gets some of that
23 traffic currently.

24 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yes.

25 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Maybe not

1 approved, but people park there. You know,
2 charge for them at this point -- but they --
3 obviously, it fills up at night.

4 JEFF FITZGERALD: And
5 evening -- evenings and weekends, yes.
6 People park illegally at Webster in that
7 parking lot on the surface lot, but that's
8 not --

9 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Right.
10 they're just using the ATM's.

11 All right. No -- thank you
12 for that explanation, and I understand that
13 now. That's it. I have no other questions.

14 Thank you very much.

15 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you
16 Mr. Wenograd. Ms. Polun?

17 COUNCILOR POLUN: Oh, good.
18 So now I can ask my ten questions or so --
19 just kidding.

20 I have -- first, I want to
21 thank everybody for sticking this out. I
22 think it's so impressive to see how engaged
23 our residents are. So thank you for that.
24 And thank you to our town staff who's still
25 here, and to the applicants as well.

1 I just have two questions. Do
2 you have any ownership or potential ownership
3 over the alleyway that's north of Starbucks?
4 I'm just looking at how nice those two redone
5 alleyways look, and wondering about that
6 third alleyway, if there's anything that can
7 be done there?

8 MS. PEARSON: No, it's not
9 part of our site.

10 COUNCILOR POLUN: Okay. Thank
11 you. And the second question, I know we've
12 talked a lot about traffic, which does have a
13 huge impact on the folks who live in the
14 area -- but another thing that will have
15 impact is just the construction itself.

16 How long do you expect the
17 construction to take? What is the expected
18 timeframe from start and end? And then what
19 sorts of mitigation strategies will you use
20 to help for noise, and just the visual mess
21 that construction just causes for people?
22 Thank you.

23 MS. PEARSON: Well, I'm able
24 to answer the noise issue because the Town
25 has very strict regulations on how

1 construction activity will take place within
2 the borders of the town. So we would have to
3 adhere to that, and it involves noise
4 standards.

5 So you have certain hours. I
6 don't remember what they are off the top of
7 my head, but they're only certain hours in
8 which you can conduct it. And I know it's
9 more limited on the weekend. So we would
10 have to adhere to all of that.

11 You know, any construction is
12 really -- it's a pain in the neck for anybody
13 who has to live by it, and we know that.
14 It's true. It happens for any construction
15 project in West Hartford, but strict
16 regulations by which we'll abide.

17 And then the other question
18 was, how do you minimize the impact on
19 neighbors? There are certainly -- and it's
20 in our construction detailing on our plans,
21 but there are a lot of steps that you have to
22 take like, you know, watering down the
23 driveway entrances to reduce any dust.

24 If there's not a requirement,
25 I believe there might be, though, for fencing

1 in the site to be able to obscure the views
2 so people don't have to see, you know, the
3 mess that's involved with construction
4 activities.

5 And is there anything else
6 anybody wants to add?

7 JEFF FITZGERALD: Phasing.

8 MS. PEARSON: Oh, well -- we
9 definitely will be phasing the construction
10 and there's -- we spoke about that earlier.
11 Yeah.

12 JEFF FITZGERALD: As far as
13 the timeframe goes.

14 MS. PEARSON: Oh, how long it
15 will take? That, I don't know. Do you want
16 to answer that?

17 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah. Jeff
18 Fitzgerald with Bohler. We're anticipating
19 between 18 and 24 months to do both
20 buildings. As we talked about we'd stagger
21 them and, I'd say, start with the
22 construction of the garage.

23 And the corner building is the
24 last thing, but there would be an overlap in
25 the construction of the two buildings.

1 COUNCILOR POLUN: Yeah, thank
2 you. I recognize that we have the noise
3 ordinances and you're going to abide by that,
4 but there are certain days I would imagine
5 during the construction that will be more
6 annoying for people in the area than others.

7 I'm thinking about when you
8 have to blast to get underground. And maybe
9 there's a way that you could just put the
10 word out to people. Like if you hear
11 excessive noise today, don't be concerned.
12 This is part of our construction and we're
13 trying to be as respectful as we can of --

14 JEFF FITZGERALD: No blasting.

15 COUNCILOR POLUN: No blasting?

16 MS. PEARSON: I'm hearing from
17 my team that no blasting is contemplated, but
18 even if it were there are strict blasting
19 protocols that anybody doing blasting --
20 because you have to secure a permit from the
21 Town in order to do that, and that requires
22 noticing everybody anyway.

23 But my team is saying, we
24 don't think we have any blasting.

25 JEFF FITZGERALD: We shouldn't

1 have to do any blasting there. We should be
2 able to put the basement in without hitting
3 rock.

4 COUNCILOR POLUN: Okay. Thank
5 you.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
7 Okay. Mr. Cortes.

8 COUNCILOR CORTES: Sorry,
9 Madam mayor. But there was one -- a couple
10 of things that I did forget, but one
11 important one, the alleyway. Right now is
12 one way to LaSalle Road, and people still
13 haven't figured out that it's one way, and we
14 have barriers. And they do attempt to make
15 that left turn onto LaSalle.

16 So on the alleyway, right now
17 it's currently a driveway. How about
18 installing some bollards right there just to
19 kind of deter --

20 JEFF FITZGERALD: I'm sorry.
21 I'm not getting the question. Can you start
22 again?

23 COUNCILOR CORTES: So the
24 alleyway by --

25 JEFF FITZGERALD: Are you

1 talking about this alleyway here?

2 COUNCILOR CORTES: Yes,
3 correct.

4 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yes.

5 COUNCILOR CORTES: So right
6 currently it's a driveway right now.

7 JEFF FITZGERALD: It's a
8 driveway. Yeah, it's a one-lane two-way
9 driveway.

10 COUNCILOR CORTES: So bad
11 habits are hard to break. So at night
12 someone leaving, you know, one of the
13 restaurants might think, hey, I can go back
14 there and do whatever, and drive a car
15 through there.

16 Can we put bollards in the
17 front, you know?

18 JEFF FITZGERALD: Yeah, there
19 there's bollards proposed all along here that
20 will prevent cars from coming out from this
21 area that way.

22 COUNCILOR CORTES: Yeah?

23 JEFF FITZGERALD: And keeping
24 that pedestrian priority. And then the
25 construction of a new curb and walk here that

1 would have to be jumped, a six-inch granite
2 curb in order to drive in there.

3 And furnishings and, you know,
4 and those should be adequate to keep a car
5 from trying driving to drive down there. We
6 could put a nice decorative bollard on there
7 to tie your horse to.

8 COUNCILOR CORTES: Yeah. It
9 would tear your car up, but I've seen on
10 Election Day on Charter Oak there was
11 somebody that went over the side walk up
12 there -- and I didn't think that was
13 possible, but she got stuck.

14 JEFF FITZGERALD: That's a
15 good point. Old habits die hard, and we know
16 that.

17 COUNCILOR CORTES: Yes. And
18 then one more thing along that line on the
19 left turn only, if that -- can that be made
20 so uncomfortable that you're kind of forced
21 to make a left, where if you try to make a
22 right turn it would be hard?

23 Or are there two ways going in
24 and out of the driveway, each driveway?

25 JEFF FITZGERALD: They are two

1 way, both driveways. This, this driveway
2 would be very narrow. We could explore
3 making that an even narrower left turn only
4 like a with a, you know, pork chop kind of
5 thing that we've done to restrict left turns,
6 to restrict turns.

7 Usually, it's the other way
8 around. You're usually restricting left
9 turns and encouraging rights only, but we
10 could look into that, have that to go along
11 with no left-turn signage.

12 COUNCILOR CORTES: And then I
13 apologize -- one more question. For the
14 workforce housing, is it set units? Or like
15 if you move into a workforce housing unit all
16 of a sudden you make over the 80 percent
17 median income, do you have to move out of
18 that unit and move into a different style?

19 MS. PEARSON: Typically it's a
20 year long. You have a lease, but if at the
21 end of the lease when you have to
22 substantiate your income again for the next
23 year and you don't comply, you can't stay,
24 so.

25 COUNCILOR CORTES: No, but my

1 question is, are they forced to move out? Or
2 can they pay whatever market rate --

3 MS. PEARSON: Well, no. I
4 mean, we can look at it and talk with --
5 because we can do it any way we want, because
6 this is not a requirement. Actually, it's
7 something we're agreeing to do.

8 So we can work out an
9 agreement with Corp Counsel with regard to
10 that, but normally if for instance an
11 application under 8-30G, you always have to
12 have four units that are dedicated and price
13 restricted.

14 So you couldn't leave somebody
15 in there unless you could also immediately
16 have another unit someplace else. So what it
17 would simply be is if you don't qualify for
18 the next year's lease then you can't take
19 that unit.

20 You'd have to either take
21 another unit in the building or, you know, at
22 market rate. Yeah, you can't -- you just
23 can't stay.

24 COUNCILOR CORTES: No. To me,
25 it's more of an image thing. You know? So

1 like oh those are the four affordable housing
2 units.

3 MS. PEARSON: They'll be
4 dispersed. The units, they're not going to
5 look any different, and they're going to be
6 finished the same way throughout the
7 building. There just always have to be four.

8 COUNCILOR CORTES: Thank you.

9 MS. PEARSON: Yeah. Did I
10 answer your question?

11 COUNCILOR CORTES: Yes.

12 MS. PEARSON: Okay.

13 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
14 Thank you, Mr. Cortes.

15 I just also want to thank the
16 Applicant and thank the residents for coming
17 out and for staying and being so committed to
18 making West Hartford the best that it can be,
19 and that's by bringing us all together and
20 making all the concerns and questions,
21 getting them answered and voicing them. And
22 that's not always easy.

23 I want to thank town staff who
24 have really committed a lot of time to this
25 project -- and always to us, and advising us

1 and counseling us. And all to my colleagues
2 here who do really, really great work and
3 really weigh things very carefully. So
4 because we, again all care about our
5 community and want to make it better.

6 So a couple of quick questions
7 for me -- sorry. One, somebody asked me this
8 question and it was someone that -- anyway, I
9 just want it for the record.

10 The BC Zone, having it be R0
11 and then having a BC Zone where the houses
12 are. If somebody said to me, if you make
13 that change then a storefront could go facing
14 the residential neighborhood, right in front
15 of, on Arapahoe.

16 And I said, well, it's part of
17 an SDD, so it would have to go to a council.
18 And then you potentially could have a
19 community of residents that might not want
20 that there as well.

21 So could you just --

22 MS. PEARSON: I can confirm
23 that analysis. The plan that gets approved
24 is the only thing that can be there without
25 going through this whole process again and

1 changing things and adding, to be able to add
2 something else -- unless it's an
3 administrative change, which are miniscule.
4 It's less than 500 square feet, things like
5 that.

6 But we've -- pretty much this
7 maxes out development potential on this site.
8 So unless you're taking something out you
9 can't put anything more in there. We're at
10 1.24 FAR, and the maximum is 1.25.

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: That's the
12 point that I really want to make sure that's
13 there, that there is no capacity for any
14 further development.

15 MS. PEARSON: Correct, and you
16 have to approve it even if there were.

17 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Right. But
18 there isn't the capacity. Again, if you took
19 something out maybe you could put something
20 in.

21 MS. PEARSON: You'd have to
22 remove existing square footage in order to do
23 anything else on that site of any
24 significance.

25 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Right. So

1 in effect, the buffer where that house sat is
2 now a park, and that acts as the buffer.

3 MS. PEARSON: Correct, and
4 that buffer will stay as a buffer both
5 because it's part of the plan that you
6 approve, and it's only because of that public
7 space that we get, you know, double the
8 incentive to have the building that we have.

9 If that area were to change
10 we'd be totally out of compliance, and we
11 wouldn't meet the FAR that you would have
12 approved. It just -- it won't happen.

13 It can't happen.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.

15 I know the presentation talked
16 about stormwater, and obviously that is a
17 good environmental benefit to the Town not
18 having runoff from a car, and not going into
19 our stormwater system.

20 Are there any other green
21 technologies that you're using, anything else
22 that you can talk to in the building process
23 that you know of yet that would be used?

24 JEFF FITZGERALD: I'll let
25 Seelan talk about the building stuff.

1 SEELAN PATHER: Seelan Pather
2 again, Beinfeld Architecture. Just with
3 regards to the building, Madam Chair, we
4 normally make it future proof for solar.

5 So we put in electric panels
6 in the electric room and run a conduit to the
7 roof. Any solar installation needs to be
8 vetted. So we make the -- create the
9 infrastructure to allow for that.

10 There we are incentivized by
11 utility companies to provide high energy
12 efficient systems which we'll do here also.
13 Most utility companies have an incentive
14 program, and if you go over a certain
15 percentage, if you're 15 or 20 percent more
16 than base code, you get those incentives. We
17 will be pursuing those if they exist.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.
19 Thank you. But the roof, the way it's set up
20 really doesn't allow for solar right now.
21 Correct? Is that with the design of the
22 roof?

23 Or is that -- that's just the
24 condos? That's not necessarily the
25 apartments.

1 SEELAN PATHER: No, both roofs
2 are flat.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Oh, both?

4 SEELAN PATHER: Yeah, both
5 roofs are flat.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Oh, okay.

7 SEELAN PATHER: So you have
8 space.

9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: You do?

10 SEELAN PATHER: But again,
11 that's something that has been vetted by a
12 consulted. And there has to be a return for
13 the solar.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.

15 MATTHEW MRVA: Just one quick
16 thing, too. On the landscape side we are
17 using a lot of native and drought tolerant
18 species on the plan. And the rooftop that
19 you mentioned, yes, there is room for solar
20 at the upper levels, but a lot of the roof
21 space has planting on it as well, which will
22 get taken up by plants.

23 Stormwater will get taken up
24 by plants in those roofscapes rather than
25 going into the roof drain system and down

1 into the stormwater system below. So there
2 is also that benefit as well.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
4 And I have a question on air conditioning and
5 where those condensers are, the loud
6 condensers are -- and noise.

7 SEELAN PATHER: So we've
8 already started to identify them, and you can
9 see a bank here set back and screened -- set
10 back and screened in this area also.

11 Again, trying to pull it off
12 the front corners into the rear corner.

13 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
14 And snow removal for now when, with the
15 parking lot being tight, would you expect
16 that you would lose parking if you plowed
17 snow? Would you plan on removing it, or is
18 there space?

19 JEFF FITZGERALD: There
20 there's some snow shelf areas provided. If
21 we get blizzard conditions, sometimes tight
22 little spots like this you have to remove it.

23 One of the great things about
24 three levels of parking beneath the
25 buildings, you don't have to worry about snow

1 removal for that area. So it's a much more
2 manageable area than now.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes, thank
4 you. All right. And then just one other
5 thing.

6 Farmington access -- I know
7 this is a different property owner and I
8 think you did approach the other property
9 owner to establish, and it just wasn't
10 workable.

11 Is it something that you would
12 go back -- and I missed the end of what
13 Mr. Wenograd I think had asked, and is that
14 something that you would consider? Is it
15 doable, I guess?

16 MS. PEARSON: It is something
17 we would continue to pursue if it could
18 happen.

19 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.
20 Thank you.

21 MS. PEARSON: And if that had
22 an effect -- I'm not sure that it would, you
23 know, it would probably be a change that
24 could be handled administratively with regard
25 to our SDD plan.

1 **PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.**
2 **Thank you. All right. Are there any final**
3 **questions?**

4
5 **(No response.)**

6
7 **PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.**
8 **If there are no further**
9 **questions do you want to just make a couple**
10 **of closing statements?**

11 **And we're going to be closing**
12 **the public hearing.**

13 **MS. PEARSON: You know, I**
14 **think we have gone through this to the point**
15 **of all of us being quite exhausted. We**
16 **appreciate your comments and your questions**
17 **and we appreciate the concerns that have been**
18 **raised by the neighbors.**

19 **And we do commit to working**
20 **with the town staff and with the neighborhood**
21 **on, you know, possible changes that we can**
22 **output with regard to the traffic issue.**

23 **And with that I'd just like to**
24 **rest on the presentation that we made tonight**
25 **and the plans that you have before you and**

1 ask for your approval. Thank you.

2 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
3 Attorney Pearson.

4 So before we adjourn, Madam
5 Clerk, have we received -- she's still here.

6 Have we received any comments
7 since the beginning of the meeting?

8 MS. LABROT: Yes, we did.

9 In favor we received
10 communication from Karen Johnson on behalf of
11 Charter Realty and Development Corporation,
12 in favor. And S. Jason Wang at 194 Four Mile
13 Road, in favor.

14 Those opposed, David Kvam, 11
15 Colony Road; John and Joan Nicoll Senft, 147
16 Four Mile Road; Tiffany Smetak, 64 Ridgewood
17 Road; Valerie Parafioriti, 82 Cherry Field
18 Drive; Sasha Savage did not give an address,
19 it was an e-mail; and Peter Carpenter, 127
20 Four Mile road, opposed to six stories but
21 supports four stories.

22 And that's it. Thank you.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.

24 Thank you, Ms. Labrot.

25 And also before we adjourn I'd

1 like to ask Corporation Counsel to explain
2 the significance of the protest petition and
3 the effect on the rest of our proceedings
4 tonight?

5 MR. DODGE: Thank you, Madam
6 Mayor. Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel.

7 And I do also have one
8 additional housekeeping item. I think I can
9 take one concern off of Attorney Pearson's
10 plate.

11 I did review the minutes from
12 the Council's meeting on November 9th when
13 you first read this item in, and you did vote
14 to waive the application fee at that time.
15 So the application fee is waived for this new
16 application.

17 As the Council is aware, Madam
18 Mayor, you did receive a protest petition
19 this evening. And under your town charter if
20 a protest petition is filed at the public
21 hearing for a zoning ordinance with the
22 council, against the change and signed by
23 owners of 20 percent or more of the area of
24 lots included within 500 feet in all
25 directions of the property included in the

1 proposed change, then it triggers a
2 supermajority requirement for the Town
3 Council.

4 Unfortunately, Madam Mayor,
5 you were scheduled to vote on this item at
6 your meeting, which immediately follows this
7 proceeding. However, my office and the Town
8 Planner will require some time to be able to
9 validate the signatures on the petition and
10 do the appropriate calculations to determine
11 whether the supermajority requirement is met.

12 It actually requires us to
13 review land records and determine whether the
14 signatories are actually landowners of record
15 with the respective property. So it is a
16 time intensive process.

17 So our suggestion would be to
18 postpone your vote on this matter until
19 December 21. At which time we can
20 appropriately advise you on whether the
21 supermajority requirement is triggered, but
22 for members of the audience who are here who
23 were planning on staying for the council
24 meeting, my anticipation is that there will
25 not be a vote tonight so that we can have

1 some additional time to review that.

2 However, my suggestion, Madam
3 Mayor, would be that you do close the public
4 hearing portion of this proceeding this
5 evening.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.
7 Thank you, Mr. Dodge. I mean, I don't think
8 we have a choice. Right? We have to know
9 whether -- we can't vote just to see what.

10 You know we either have to
11 vote or we don't. And so we don't know how
12 the votes are going to go, so we have to
13 wait. Correct?

14 MR. DODGE: That's what I
15 would advise, Madam Mayor.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.
17 Thank you. All right. So I am sorry for
18 those of you who waited, and we are not
19 taking the vote tonight, but we will be
20 voting on the 21st -- yeah, we have it in our
21 file, whatever. We'll figure it out in a
22 minute.

23 MR. DODGE: Madam Mayor, we
24 will announce the time. I believe it will be
25 6:30 on the 21st. And just to emphasize,

1 that will be a council meeting. It will not
2 be a public hearing.

3 The public hearing will be
4 closed this evening, so there won't be any
5 further public comment received at that
6 meeting, but that would be the Council's
7 opportunity to debate and vote on the
8 proposed application.

9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay, and
10 just again -- a cautionary procedure in
11 between now and the 21st. Could you just
12 please tell the Councilors what our roles are
13 in that time, as well as the audience?

14 MR. DODGE: Thank you, Madam
15 Mayor.

16 I know it's difficult to avoid
17 members of the public reaching out to you,
18 but just as a reminder to members of the
19 Council, because this is a quasi judicial
20 proceeding, in deference to due process for
21 both the Applicant and the proponents, and
22 the opponents of the bill, I would encourage
23 all of you to please not have any discussions
24 with anybody outside of the public hearing
25 regarding the application prior to your vote.

1 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you.
2 All right. Any questions for
3 **Mr. Dodge?**

4 **Mr. Davidoff?**

5 **COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:** Thank
6 you, Madam Mayor. Through you, Madam Mayor,
7 to Corporation Counsel. Will we be receiving
8 the request for information from town staff
9 between now and the 21st with respect to
10 changes that were suggested during councilor
11 questions?

12 **MR. DODGE:** Thank you, Madam
13 Mayor.

14 And so as always, the number
15 of -- we, both I and I'm sure the Town
16 Planner in the back was taking notes on some
17 of the questions that were asked during the
18 hearing, and we will be drafting conditions
19 of approval, that we will continue having
20 discussions with the Applicant concerning
21 that we will propose to the Council to
22 approve as part of its deliberation, or to
23 consider as part of its deliberation of the
24 application.

25 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you.

1 Thank you, Mr. Davidoff.

2 All right. And again, before
3 we adjourn I'd like to read into the record,
4 as Attorney Pearson already covered, but we
5 have to do it, too -- a letter from DRAC
6 dated December 5, 2022, recommending that the
7 Town Council not approve the application; and
8 a letter from the Town Plan and Zoning
9 Commission dated December 12, 2022,
10 recommending the Town Council approve the
11 application.

12 Is there a motion to close the
13 hearing?

14 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: So moved.

15 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Second.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Motion has
17 been made and seconded.

18 Is there any objection?

19
20 (No response.)

21
22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: All right.
23 There being no objection, the hearing is
24 closed.

25 Thank you all.

1 (Whereupon, the above
2 **proceedings were concluded at 12:17 a.m., on**
3 **December 14, 2022.)**
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 332 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing In Re: APPLICATION OF THE ARAPAHOE GROUP, LLC, FOR CHANGE OF ZONE FROM RP, R0 AND RM-0 TO BC WITH SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT DESIGNATION FOR A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT ALONG ARAPAHOE ROAD, LaSALLE ROAD AND FARMINGTON AVENUE, held before the West Hartford Town Council, at Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Room 314, West Hartford, Connecticut, on December 13, 2022.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857

My Commission Expires:

6/30/2025