



Issued December 12, 2025

DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
*****SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES*****
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025
ROOM 400, TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT

Call to Order/Roll Call: 4:30 P.M.

DRAC ATTENDANCE: Chair: Ray Giolitto; Committee Members; Rick Conary, Liz Pang. Alternate: Jim Lawler

ABSENT: Angela Cahill, David Hines, Brian Flemming and Jenna McClure

Staff: Brian Pudlik, Senior Planner and Robert Gosselin, Associate Planner

REFERRAL FROM THE TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION:

1. **1678 Asylum Avenue:** Application (SUP #1482) of the University of Saint Joseph, requesting approval of a Special Use Permit for an approximately 5,800 sf addition to the entry area of the existing Pope Pius XII Library, with associated site work, grading, drainage, and utility improvements. Application also includes parking improvements across various parking lot areas throughout campus. (*Informal Study Sessions on 8/1/25 & 9/11/25*).

B. Pudlik – Senior Planner – Introduced the item and reminded the Committee of the prior study sessions for the project. Noted that the proposal being presented is largely consistent with the one presented at the 9/11/25 study session.

B. Swain – Project Architect – Provided a high-level overview of the project and the University's objectives.

T. Barker – Project Architect – Provided a site orientation and noted some of the existing conditions such as existing pedestrian routes, the existing features of the building being modified and the features that are not changing, including the windows, the exterior building walls and the HVAC units.

In order to provide context for the design language of the propose project, Mr. Barker noted that the majority of the buildings on campus are classical Georgian with some newer buildings that have begun to introduce modern attributes such as glass curtain walls.

With respect to the proposed project, Mr. Barker stated the following:

- ***The objective of the project is to convert an unsightly loading dock area to a vibrant welcome center for the University***
- ***The work on the existing building will be to refresh the brick structure by painting the windows and gladding the foundation wall with a limestone finish***

- *A new 1200 square foot addition will be built onto the existing brick building to serve as a primary entry. It will be made up of glass curtain walls with interior louvers and exterior canopies to mitigate direct sun from reflecting into the space.*
- *A brick screen wall will be built adjacent to the glass entry to hide existing mechanical equipment.*
- *A two-tiered plaza will be built – one tier of hardscape and a second of grass pavers.*
- *A ramp and stairs will connect the parking lot to the new building entry.*
- *Extensive landscaping is proposed throughout the project area.*

R. Conary – DRAC member – Questioned whether additional site lighting might be necessary along the path located east of the building. Mr. Barker stated they would review whether additional may be necessary.

J. Lawler – DRAC member – Made a motion to recommend approval of the project to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. In making the motion, Mr. Lawler stated that the proposed project is compatible with the existing architecture throughout campus and that the project will be a huge benefit to the University by providing an important welcome center and focal point when entering campus. Mr. Lawler went on to express appreciation in the design team's willingness to work with the Committee and was receptive and responsive to critiques made during the prior two study sessions.

L. Pang – DRAC member – Was the second on the motion.

Vote: 4-0 – Unanimous recommendation to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission

REFERRAL FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL

2. Application of 2558 Albany Avenue, LLC, owner of 2558 Albany Avenue, for an amendment to existing Special Development District (SDD) #23. The application seeks to amend the approved plan by demolishing the existing buildings for future development opportunity.

B. Pudlik – Senior Planner – Introduced the application and explained its limited scope

R. Pearson – Project Attorney – Reiterated that the scope of the application is simply to remove all buildings on the property and backfill the foundation. Attorney Pearson went on to say that should the property owners decide to pursue future redevelopment of the site, it would require a new SDD application and would therefore come back before the Committee for review and referral.

R. Giolitto – DRAC Chair – Asked whether the driveway would remain. Attorney Pearson stated that it would.

J. Lawler – DRAC member – Stated that given the state of the existing building, which is in extreme disrepair, this is a beneficial project.

R. Conary – DRAC member – Made a motion to recommend approval to the Town Council. In making the motion, Mr. Conary stated that the application is consistent with the Committee’s Performance Criteria.

L. Pang – DRAC member – Was the second on the motion.

Vote: 4-0 – Unanimous recommendation to the Town Council

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

3. None

COMMUNICATION

4. Review and Adoption of the 2026 DRAC Regular Meeting Calendar

Motion: Pang; Second: Conary, Vote: 4-0

ADJOURNMENT: 4:53 PM – Motion: Pang; Second: Conary, Vote: 4-0

Cc: Rick Ledwith, Town Manager
Dallas Dodge, Corporation Counsel

Duane Martin, Community Development Director
Leon Davidoff, Town Clerk