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2 JOINT HEARING BETWEEN

3 WEST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

4 AND

5 WEST HARTFORD TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

6 - - - - -

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9

10 VOLUME 2

11 JUNE 14, 2004

12 West Hartford Town Hall

13 50 South Main Street

14 West Hartford, Connecticut

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23 Reporter: Sandra V. Semevolos, RMR, CRR, LSR #00074

24 Brandon Smith Reporting Service

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Hartford, Connecticut

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04-06-14

1 A P P E A R A N C E S:

2 For Blue Back Square Development:

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4 777 Summer Street
5 P. O. Box 15858
Stamford, Connecticut 06901-0859
(203) 327-2000

6 By: MICHAEL J. CACACE, ESQ.

7
8 DAY, BERRY & HOWARD, LLP
CityPlace I
Hartford, Connecticut 06103-3499

9 BY: JOSEPH L. HAMMER, ESQ.

10

11

FOR THE TOWN:

12

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD
13 50 South Main Street
West Hartford, Connecticut 06107-2431
14 (860) 523-3171

15 BY: JOSEPH O' BRIEN, ESQ.
Corporation Counsel
16 PATRICK G. ALAIR, ESQ.
Deputy Corporation Counsel
17

18 Present for Town Council:

19 Jonathan A. Harris, Mayor
Scott Slifka
20 Joseph Verrengia
Barbara Carpenter
21 Kevin M. Connors
Charles T. Coursey
22 Maureen K. McClay
Art Spada
23 Carolyn Thornberry
Timothy Brennan
24 Barry Feldman, Town Manager
Norma Cronin, Town Clerk
25 Ronald R. Van Winkle, Dir. of Community Services
Denise Lorenz, Dir. of Library Services

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S (Continued)

2 Present for Town Plan and Zoning Commission:

04-06-14

3 Tanya Meck, Chairperson
David Brown
4 Leon Davidoff
John Begley
5 Booker T. DeVaughn
Theodore M. Doolittle
6

7 Also Present:

8 Richard Heapes, Partner
Street-Works, LLC
9 Development and Consulting Group
30 Glenn Street
10 White Plains, New York 10603

11 John D. Plante, PE
Eric D. Henry, LEP
12 Langan Engineering and Environmental Services
555 Long Wharf Drive
13 New Haven, Connecticut 06511

14 Michael Klein, Biologist and Soils Scientist

15 Norm Goldman, Principal
Desman Associates
16 80 Scott Swamp Road
Suite 201
17 Farmington, Connecticut 06032

18 Peter H. Guldberg, CCM
Tech Environmental, Inc.
19 Reservoir Place
1601 Trapelo Road
20 Waltham, Massachusetts 02451

21 Bruce Hoben, AICP
Planimetrics, LLC
22 31 Ensign Drive
Avon, Connecticut 06001
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1 (Hearing commenced at 6:40 p.m.)
2 MS. MECK: I'd like to reconvene this
3 public hearing which opened June 10 on the various
4 applications that are pending before this joint public

5 hearing of the Town Council and the Town Plan and
6 Zoning Commission. If everyone will begin by joining
7 me in the pledge of allegiance.

8 (Pause.)

9 MS. MECK: Mrs. Cronin, will you do the
10 roll call, please.

11 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Verrengia sitting for
12 Mr. Bouvier.

13 MR. VERRENGIA: Here.

14 MS. CRONIN: Mrs. Carpenter.

15 MS. CARPENTER: Here.

16 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Connors.

17 MR. CONNORS: Here.

18 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Coursey.

19 MR. COURSEY: Here.

20 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Harris.

21 MAYOR HARRIS: Here.

22 MS. CRONIN: Mrs. McClay.

23 MS. McCLAY: Here.

24 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Slifka.

25 MR. SLIFKA: Here.

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1 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Spada.

2 MR. SPADA: Here.

3 MS. CRONIN: Ms. Thornberry.

4 MS. THORNBERRY: Here.

5 MS. CRONIN: And Timmy Brennan, the
6 Council alternate.

7 MR. BRENNAN: Here.

8 MS. CRONIN: And for the Town Plan and
9 Zoning Commission, Ms. Meck.

10 MS. MECK: Here.

11 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Brown sitting for
12 Mr. Roach.

13 MR. BROWN: Here.

14 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Davidoff.

15 MR. DAVIDOFF: Here.

16 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Begley.

17 MR. BEGLEY: Present.

18 MS. CRONIN: Mr. DeVaughn.

19 MR. DEVAUGHN: Here.

20 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Daniels. Mr. Daniels,
21 I thought I saw. Mr. Doolittle.

22 MR. DOOLITTLE: Here.

23 MS. CRONIN: Thank you.

24 MS. MECK: At this point, at the
25 beginning of our public hearing, I would like to turn

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1 the microphone over to our mayor, Mr. Harris for some
2 opening comments. Mr. Harris and I will take turns
3 doing some of the introductory comments, but we've
4 decided that because we are getting so good at our
5 pieces that we will just keep the same pieces on each
6 subsequent night. Mr. Harris.

7 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Ms. Meck. As
8 you are seeing here symbolically laid out with the

9 alternation of speaking, and of course with the
10 alternation of chairing, I chaired the first night,
11 Ms. Meck will chair tonight. It's representative of
12 the fact that we have two bodies that will be
13 conducting this hearing jointly. We are doing this to
14 give everyone, both the members of the body and perhaps
15 more importantly members of the public a better,
16 clearer, more efficient forum for understanding what
17 appears to be a very complex project.

18 Ms. Meck, who is chair of the TPZ, and I
19 of course will be alternating, as we said and as a
20 further reflection of the quality of the two bodies,
21 you will see that we have alternated seating between
22 the Council and the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.
23 During the hearing though we will proceed as if we are
24 one body, so any motions, questions, other things that
25 occur will happen as one sort of seamless web between

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1 the two bodies unless there is some unusual
2 circumstance, because of course each of the bodies, the
3 Council and the Town Planning and Zoning Commission has
4 jurisdiction over various parts of this application
5 which we had outlined on the first night, so unless
6 there is some unusual circumstance which requires
7 something separate from one of the bodies, again, we
8 will be meeting as one, and I would now like to turn it
9 back over to the chair tonight, Ms. Meck, to describe
10 the hearing process.

11 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Harris. Some
12 of you who are here and for those of you who are
13 watching on Channel 5 this evening know that we set out
14 some parameters as to how the public hearing will
15 proceed, and we are going to do that at the beginning
16 of each public hearing to let everybody know who maybe
17 has not heard, remind them what those procedures will
18 be over the course of the month of June.

19 As has been the practice both of the
20 Council and TPZ in West Hartford and in other
21 municipalities, the applicants have been asked to
22 proceed first, and indeed last Thursday they began
23 their presentation. We expect them to present their
24 entire proposal to us and provide us with the necessary
25 information to allow us to consider each of the

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1 applications before both the TPZ and the Council. This
2 includes presentations many times by town staff
3 regarding some of the items such as the master
4 agreement, the bond ordinance, special services
5 district ordinance, and other matters which would be
6 traditionally presented to us by staff. Following the
7 presentation and its conclusion, the Council and TPZ
8 members will have the opportunity to ask questions,
9 which they may have, of the applicants and of Town
10 staff. I will encourage members of both bodies sitting
11 here this evening to please hold their questions until
12 the end of the presentation whenever possible so that

13 we can move this along.
14 Next will come the public comment
15 portion of the hearing, which I know everybody is very
16 interested in. This portion will not begin until
17 sometime next week, as we expect the initial
18 presentations to take perhaps three hearings in total.
19 Public Comment will probably not commence until
20 Wednesday, June 23rd, at 6:15; however, the schedule
21 can change depending on the applicant's presentation
22 and on the number of questions and the length of
23 questions presented by the Town Council and the Town
24 Plan and Zoning Commission. We will inform you of
25 those changes to the schedule as they occur and as we

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1 know what that schedule will be we.
2 Understand that many of you view this
3 hearing as your opportunity to tell us what you think,
4 and it certainly is, but it is also the applicant's
5 time to explain the proposal. Many of you already have
6 information, but as of last Thursday, those of us
7 sitting here in front of you have not had that
8 information. We've taken great effort not to be part
9 of the preliminary discussion so that we can come with
10 an open mind and listen to this proposal in its
11 entirety. It would do us little good to hear your
12 comments before we've had a full grasp of the proposal
13 and this is our second night of doing so and informing
14 ourselves. If we haven't asked our own questions, it

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15 makes it difficult for us to understand your questions
16 and your comments. So we appreciate you bearing with
17 us as we hear the full presentation.

18 Although we won't get to the public
19 comment portion this evening, I do want to take a
20 minute to tell you how we will proceed when we get
21 there, so you can plan accordingly. We are going to
22 ask the members of the public to try to be brief, as we
23 expect there is a lot of interest in public comments.
24 In order to allow everybody who wishes to do so the
25 opportunity to speak, experience from prior hearings

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1 tells us that many people will want to repeat the same
2 comments, and that's certainly your right. We just
3 ask, again, that you be brief and to the point wherever
4 possible to allow your fellow citizens to make comments
5 as well. In order to accomplish this and get everybody
6 on the record who wants to speak on this issue, we will
7 have four minutes to speak, and we will have a timer
8 monitoring that four minutes for you. Speakers who are
9 representing a group of people will be given seven
10 minutes. If you can't complete your remarks in the
11 time allotted, we will certainly allow you to come back
12 at the end of the hearing when everybody else has had
13 an opportunity to speak and continue your comments, if
14 that's what you so choose to do.

15 I will also make a mention of something
16 I didn't mention when I talked last Thursday, that

17 there will be a sign-up sheet available half an hour
18 before each public hearing when we get to the public
19 comment portion of the public hearing, so please sign
20 up. If we don't get the whole way through that sheet
21 that night, then we will begin with the top of that
22 sheet the following night. We will go to the top of
23 the sheet for the next evening.

24 As an alternative for waiting for your
25 turn to speak, we will also be expecting comments and

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1 written testimony from the public. You may submit them
2 to the Town Clerk Norma Cronin in her office, which is
3 Room 312 on this floor. You can bring them with you
4 and submit them at the public hearing or you may e-mail
5 them to NCronin, C-R-0-N-I-N, at WestHartford.org.

6 I want to reassure everybody here that
7 your comments, if they are written comments, will be
8 taken just as seriously and weigh just as heavily as if
9 they were presented to us in person at the hearing.

10 As the tentative hearing schedule
11 suggests, we all expect this to be a very long public
12 hearing which will run late into several evenings over
13 several nights. As we get tired and as you all get
14 tired, we certainly expect that everyone will have
15 their patience taxed from time to time, and I simply
16 ask that everyone recognize that we are all here to
17 consider these applications as fully and as wholly as
18 we possibly can. We expect that everyone will remain

19 courteous and respectful of others throughout the
20 entire process.

21 And with that, I would like to briefly
22 turn this back over to Mr. Harris for some follow-up
23 comments. Mr. Harris.

24 MR. HARRIS: Thank you, Ms. Meck.
25 Following the public comment portion of the hearing

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1 process, we will give the applicants an opportunity to
2 respond to public comments to try to complete the
3 circle, and any additional questions that we have here
4 as one body sitting, the Council and Town Plan and
5 Zoning, will be posed to the applicant at that time.

6 We will close the hearing at that point
7 and of course as separate bodies adjourn for open
8 deliberations amongst the members of that body on the
9 pieces of the application that we have jurisdiction
10 over. I want to actually thank members of the public
11 for being very sensitive to what we had talked about
12 the first night, and that is that we are sitting as
13 independent arbiters. While the Town, our
14 administration has worked with the developer for many,
15 many months to be able to present this application and
16 this opportunity to our citizens, we as the
17 decision-makers have necessarily, by requirements of
18 state law and ethics, taken a step back to make sure
19 that we are independent arbiters of the decision-making
20 process. And so far I will have to say, after asking

21 people not to come up and give us comments outside the
22 hearing, the public has been tremendously receptive and
23 understanding of that, and it's very frustrating to us.
24 I know all of us sitting here, especially my fellow
25 councilors who I talked to leading up to the process,

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1 you know, you want to have opinions, you want to
2 interact. This is a huge matter for our Town, but
3 nonetheless, because of the constraints of law, we
4 haven't been able to do that.

5 So thank you very much for being
6 understanding on that, but again, if you have any
7 comments, questions, anything, on the public hearing
8 process, you can sign up, and as Ms. Meck said, we will
9 take written testimony. Every single piece of written
10 testimony, letters that we received thus far,
11 Mr. Slifka had put on the record the first night, and
12 we will continue to do so. In addition, I want to
13 remind the public that we passed a resolution on the
14 Council side months ago that said, any comment that was
15 received during the two full days of the Town meeting,
16 the public hearing in essence before this official
17 zoning process that the developer was putting on would
18 be incorporated into the record.

19 So all of your comments will be heard,
20 and again, I just want to remind everybody that thank
21 you to Channel 5 for broadcasting tonight, and all of
22 these proceedings will be broadcast live so that people

23 in their living rooms can, in a relaxing manner, sit
24 back. We don't have the Lazy Boys that we like here,
25 but you might have them at home, to be able to watch,

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1 listen, understand and of course comment.

2 So with that, I will turn it over to
3 Ms. Meck, our chairman.

4 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Harris. As I
5 mentioned at the beginning of this comment period, we
6 are continuing our public hearing. We did have quite a
7 few hours of testimony on June 10, and we continue that
8 now. I would like the applicant, if he is ready, to
9 proceed.

10 MR. HEAPES: Certainly. Good evening,
11 Madam Chair, Mr. Mayor, members of Town Council, and
12 Town Planning and Zoning Commission. It's nice to see
13 you again. Seems like just yesterday, at least to me
14 it does. I want to remind you for one second what at
15 least we tried to do last Thursday, and that was to
16 describe just what Blue Back Square is. We talked
17 about it in terms of some long-term town goals, to
18 have a project that connected to the center, the
19 existing center, to have a mixed-use project, and
20 neighborhood, not a stand-alone, single use project, to
21 have a way to incentivise private sector investments on
22 that piece of the center, and of course, the
23 longstanding goals of consolidating the Board of Ed and
24 the Town administrations and to expand and add to the

25 new library. We talked about what uses we would

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1 propose to go there and how they were generated and
2 have an understanding of the center's market. We
3 talked about how big it is, how tall it is, what it
4 should look like, architecture, store front, signage,
5 et cetera, all under the guise of, what is it.

6 Tonight I want to talk about, how do we
7 do that? What are the things you have to do to make
8 what is it happen and make it real. We are going to
9 talk about zoning and try to be clear just what exactly
10 these zoning changes and application changes we are
11 proposing. We are going to talk about the site in
12 terms of some engineering, drainage, how the site
13 actually works, entrances, service, et cetera. We are
14 going to talk about a wetlands issue that came about
15 because of the possibility of a new park for the town.
16 I'm going to walk through parking, which I know is a
17 source of great interest, and even though you are not
18 interested in it, we will talk about traffic. I'm sure
19 somebody might be interested in traffic. We will talk
20 about some environmental issues. It is a dirty site.
21 It is not a clean site.

22 And finally, we will then begin to put
23 both what is it and what we are proposing in the
24 context of your previous planning efforts, and with
25 that, we will proceed on.

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1 MS. MECK: Thank you.

2 MR. HEAPES: Working with me tonight,
3 the good news is you won't have to listen to me for
4 four hours. I do have a number of consultants. I
5 guess we should go through the drill of organizing
6 ourselves. We will be using the screen tonight,
7 however you choose to do that, if you want to swivel
8 around. I have a number of consultants tonight who
9 we've worked with in other places at other times who
10 are really, as you will see, a fantastic team of
11 experts, in all the fields, parking, traffic,
12 environmental. You are going to enjoy hearing from
13 them, and this is the list of folks you are going to
14 hear from tonight, in addition to myself.

15 We are going to start with, you'll
16 recall we started with where is the site starting with
17 the Crowley Chevrolet site, and you'll remember that
18 we've added to the Crowley Chevrolet site the three
19 apartments and condominiums and the American Legion
20 facility to create kind of the basic kernel of the
21 site, and then we talked about our application which
22 takes in quite a bit of property, both town owned for a
23 number of uses.

24 What I'm going to do is ask Joe Hammer,
25 from DBH, our zoning attorney, to come up and walk you

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1 through what are the different zoning things that we
2 are doing to accomplish this, but I want to make clear
3 why we are doing all of this. It is very important.
4 At the end of the day, we want this property to behave,
5 to look like, to act like, to be like the whole center.
6 We want streets, roads, public spaces, sidewalks,
7 parking, like in the existing center, to be owned and
8 managed by the Town. We want private buildings sitting
9 on their lots to be owned and managed by those private
10 uses. We want the public facilities, be they the
11 library, police station, Town Hall, to be owned and
12 managed by the town.

13 We want in the future an alignment of
14 issues, no matter what they are, from sweeping snow, to
15 putting flowers out, to holiday walk, for it to be the
16 same on both sides so the whole center behaves legally
17 and from a land use perspective in the same manner.

18 So I'll turn it over to Joe and I'll
19 hand you this.

20 MR. HAMMER: Good evening, Mr. Mayor,
21 members of the Town Council, Madam Chair, members of
22 the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. I'm Joe Hammer
23 from the law firm of Day, Berry & Howard, and I
24 practice in the land use area.

25 Tonight I'd like to briefly address for

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2 applications that are before your two bodies. There
3 are a number of applications, as you know, the details
4 are set forth in the applications and the supporting
5 materials that we've submitted, and you've heard some
6 descriptions of what we are proposing as well.

7 Tonight I want to talk about some of the
8 actions that we are asking you to take in connection
9 with these applications, and we think this would be
10 helpful as we go from last session's general overview
11 of the project to tonight's testimony by several
12 consultants.

13 First, if you just look at this drawing
14 that's up there, that shows you existing Special
15 Development District number 36, which consists
16 basically of the municipal campus south of Memorial
17 Road, including the Town Hall, the police station, the
18 large open parking area. It includes another parking
19 area on the east side of Raymond Road, also in blue,
20 and then on the north of Memorial Road, it includes the
21 Board of Education office building and the library.

22 What we are proposing as part of these
23 applications is to end up with three Special
24 Development Districts. The first action that we are
25 asking you to take is to modify SDD number 36 by

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1 removing some of the property that's in it today and
2 including it in two new SDDs. Specifically, we are
3 asking you to remove the Board of Education building

4 from SDD number 36 and including it in a new SDD
5 designated number 113, which you can see also shown at
6 lot 2 on that drawing, along with certain other
7 property that's contained in the Isham block bonded by
8 Memorial, Isham and Raymond Road and including the old
9 Crowley Chevrolet property. Those will all be part of
10 proposed SDD number 113, which will be the Blue Back
11 Square SDD.

12 We are also asking that you remove the
13 library, which is shown as lot 1 in the orange-brown
14 color up at the top left, from existing SDD 36 and put
15 that in proposed SDD number 114 along with other
16 property from the Isham block and from the Crowley
17 Chevrolet site that's also colored in that orange-brown
18 color. Revised SDD 36, at the bottom in the light
19 color will continue to contain the Town Hall. It will
20 continue to contain the police station. There will
21 still be an open surface parking lot. It will also
22 contain a new public parking garage designated the
23 South Garage, and then on the east side of Raymond
24 Road, it will include the old parking lot which will be
25 turned into a Town park.

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1 Under SDD number 113, which is in the
2 purple color, that will basically be the privately
3 owned components of the Blue Back Square development
4 and will contain several mixed use buildings and
5 related improvements as well as a portion of the Blue

6 Back Square public gathering space. The other portion
7 of that bridges on to SDD number 114.

8 And turning to 114, most of the property
9 in 114 at the top will be owned by the Town of West
10 Hartford. It will include municipal uses, such as an
11 expanded library, a portion of the Blue Back Square
12 gathering place, Webster walk, which is a pedestrian
13 connection, a pedestrian walkway which will connect the
14 square to South Main Street, and it will also include
15 the proposed North Parking Garage, which is being built
16 on a portion of the Crowley site.

17 The Town will acquire the North Parking
18 Garage from the developer. This SDD number 114 also
19 will contain the proposed small retail building that
20 you've heard referenced that will be in the rear of the
21 library owned by the Town and leased for commercial
22 retail use.

23 And finally this SDD will contain the
24 new American Legion building, which you can see labeled
25 up at the very top right on lot 4, and that parcel and

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1 building will be owned by the American Legion.

2 Next I'd like to show you the proposed
3 zone changes. In conjunction with the SDD actions that
4 we are asking you to take, we are also asking that you
5 change the underlying zoning designation of two pieces
6 of property from their present BC designation to CBDH,
7 and that would basically consist of, on the southern

8 part of Memorial, the existing Town campus. The parcel
9 that will be conveyed to the developer for Buildings C
10 and D, we are asking that that be rezoned to CBDH and
11 then the old Board of Education office building on the
12 north side of Memorial, we are asking that that be
13 rezoned to CBDH as well, and as I've indicated earlier,
14 they will both be contained in SDDs.

15 In addition, I'll just point out to you
16 that the Isham block, although the underlying zone
17 designation there is already CBDH, presently there is
18 no SDD there, and we are asking that you create one, so
19 that would then be SDD/CBDH.

20 Finally, in conjunction with the SDD
21 application, we are asking that you approve the various
22 new uses, new buildings, public and private
23 improvements, as well as modifications to the existing
24 improvements throughout all three of these SDDs, all of
25 which are set forth on the plans and supporting

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1 materials submitted with the application, and you've
2 heard some discussion, and we will hear more discussion
3 regarding that proposal.

4 I also would note for you that the
5 Council is being asked to act on three waivers as part
6 of the SDD application. First, we are asking that you
7 waive the provision of traditional style off-street
8 parking in its entirety for all of the lots within all
9 three of the SDDs that we are proposing, and this is

10 given the availability of off-street parking in the
11 proposed public parking garages, off-street surface and
12 below ground parking, as well as on-street parking that
13 is sufficient to serve the needs of the development and
14 all three SDDs, and you will be hearing tonight from a
15 consultant, an expert on parking, who will describe
16 that to you in more detail.

17 Secondly, we are asking that you waive
18 yard setback landscaping and other requirements of the
19 zoning regulations for the lots in all three SDDs, as
20 necessary, to permit the construction of the proposed
21 buildings and other improvements as they are shown on
22 the plans.

23 Finally, we are asking that you waive
24 the traditional type of off-street loading spaces as
25 necessary to permit the construction of the proposed

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1 buildings and other improvements as shown on the plan
2 submitted, and again, we are offering a loading
3 arrangement which we believe does adequately serve the
4 proposed development.

5 I'd also like to mention to you that
6 under the CBDH regulations, the Council is also being
7 asked to take three additional actions. First, we are
8 asking you to increase the maximum lot coverage of all
9 buildings in SDD 113, the Blue Back Square private SDD,
10 as well as SDD 114, which will contain the North
11 Garage, the Legion and the Library. We are asking that

12 you increase the coverage from 50 percent to that area
13 that remains after provisions for yard requirements and
14 parking are met, and as I mentioned, we are seeking a
15 waiver of the yard and parking requirements as part of
16 the SDD application. Upon approval of such a waiver,
17 the maximum coverage would be as shown on the plans
18 submitted.

19 Second, we are asking that you increase
20 the floor area ratio or FAR, for SDD number 113, again,
21 the middle Blue Back Square SDD, from 1.25 to the
22 ratios shown on the plans that we have submitted, all
23 of which are in compliance with the CBDH requirements.

24 And finally we are asking that you
25 increase the permissible height of buildings in SDD

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1 113, the middle SDD, from four stories to the heights
2 shown on the plans submitted as to those buildings
3 which exceed four stories.

4 Next I'd just like to turn briefly to an
5 existing lot plan and basically the area that's in the
6 bluish-turquoise color is currently in private
7 ownership, the Crowley Grody site. There is some
8 condominiums and apartments, and there is also the home
9 of the American Legion that are contained in that
10 block, and there are currently several lots of record.
11 The green is the publicly-owned property, the library
12 and the Board of Ed north of Memorial and then south of
13 Memorial the rest of the Town Hall campus.

14 Through this application, we are asking
15 that you create a subdivide of these properties
16 exclusive of existing streets into seven new and
17 reconfigured lots, and as to the Town parcels, that are
18 being subdivided, frankly subdivision may not be
19 required as to those, but we have applied for it anyway
20 because this is a unified development, and we thought
21 that it would be easiest to understand, in terms of
22 presenting it as a whole. So we've done that, and we
23 are asking that you create a total of seven lots as
24 labeled on this graphic, some of which will be owned by
25 the Town, some of which will be owned by the private

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1 develop as color coded.

2 We are also asking that you establish a
3 new public street, which is labeled New Street, that
4 will run from Raymond Road to Isham Road, and that you
5 also approve the associated rights of way with that
6 street. We are asking that you expand certain existing
7 rights of way that are also shaded, although it may be
8 a little bit difficult to read. You can see some on
9 the south side of Memorial, and then there is some on
10 the west side of Isham, but they are shown more
11 clearly, I think, on the underlying plans that we've
12 submitted. We are asking that you essentially make the
13 right of ways bigger in those instances. We are asking
14 that you establish new and amend existing building
15 lines. And then at the end of this process, I would

16 just note that the existing structures that are there
17 on the Isham block on lots 3, 4 and 5 will be removed
18 and replaced with new structures, and then lot 2, which
19 presently contains the Board of Education offices, all
20 but the facade on that building is going to be removed
21 as well and replaced with a new building. And again,
22 all of this is shown in detail on the plans that have
23 been submitted to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission
24 as part of the subdivision application.

25 Special use permits, if we can just turn

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1 to those briefly. There are a number of special use
2 permit applications, some were directly by the Town,
3 some more directly by the developer, but briefly let me
4 just walk you through those.

5 First of all, we are applying for an SUP
6 for a proposed theater, which you can see labeled there
7 in the red, in the old Board of Ed building. That will
8 be approximately 24,300 square feet in size, and a
9 maximum of 1,000 seats. We are asking that you approve
10 that theater in a way that would allow either five or
11 six screens, provided that the theater stays within the
12 square footage and overall seating capacity.

13 We are also asking to change the
14 underlying zone of that particular parcel to CBDH from
15 its existing BC, as I mentioned earlier. Again, the
16 theater proposal is shown in more detail on the plans.

17 Next, the American Legion up on the top
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18 right in pink, we are asking for a special use permit
19 for a private nonprofit membership club for the Legion
20 for a new building for them on a portion of the old
21 Crowley Chevrolet parcel. That will be as it is now at
22 its present location, a social club, serving food and
23 alcohol, offering some recreational activities such as
24 pool and darts and containing a social hall for rental.
25 Again, that's shown in more detail on the plans.

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1 On what I will refer to as the north
2 municipal campus, the area owned by the Town, there is
3 another application pending before you for that to
4 approve certain municipal uses which include the North
5 Parking Garage, which will be owned and operated by the
6 Town, the library addition, the creation of the public
7 walk known as Webster walk and the public square known
8 as Blue Back Square. Even though the latter two items
9 are not shaded, I believe you can see them between lot
10 1 and lot 2. And again, that's shown on the plans in
11 more detail.

12 South of Memorial, you are being asked
13 to approve an SUP for the South Parking Garage, again,
14 to be owned and operated by the Town for a
15 reconfiguration of the surface parking lot on that
16 municipal campus, for a Town park over on the east side
17 of Raymond Road, and for the relocation of the Board of
18 Education offices into the existing Town Hall building.
19 Again, that's shown in much more detail on the plans.

20 I will just add, I don't have anymore
21 slides for you, but I will just add that there is also
22 a wetlands application pending in front of the TP and
23 Z, and that's for the proposed Town park on the east
24 side of Raymond Road. We are proposing to remove
25 pavement and create an existing -- excuse me, transform

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1 the parking lot into a park. There will be no work in
2 the wetlands or in a watercourse, but some work in an
3 upland review and buffer area.

4 Finally, I would like to just briefly go
5 over a couple of easements, several easements. These
6 are part of the Master Agreement or the proposed
7 contract between the developer and the Town, and even
8 though they are not part of the applications that I've
9 just discussed, I think it's important that you have an
10 overview of what types of easements are involved, since
11 that's certainly something that will be certainly
12 before the TP and Z and also the Council. Again, there
13 are a number of them, some go in favor of the Town,
14 some in favor of the developer, and they give each
15 certain rights over each other's property. More
16 information as to these easements is contained in the
17 Master Agreement and the exhibits.

18 Generally speaking, the North Garage,
19 which we were looking at earlier, which will be next to
20 the American Legion, there will be an easement through
21 the North Garage and under the new street that's being

22 built up there for access to the private parking garage
23 that will be built under Building B and for the
24 installation and maintenance of access ways,
25 directional signs and the access control system for

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1 Building B.

2 In addition, because of the relationship
3 of the North Garage and the American Legion building
4 essentially touching each other, there will be
5 reciprocal easements for building support and common
6 walls. There will be easements to the Town for
7 construction, maintenance and encroachment of a portion
8 of the North Garage over the new American Legion
9 building. It will actually be built over a portion.
10 There will be easements to the Legion to maintain and
11 replace utilities and for a rooftop and mechanical and
12 telecommunications equipment serving the Legion
13 building.

14 In terms of the South Garage, there will
15 be easements to the developer there that will allow
16 access through the garage and over the municipal
17 parking lot for access to the private garages under the
18 office buildings on parcels C, D, as well as easements
19 for access ways, directional signs and access control
20 systems for the garage. There will also be an access
21 through the south campus in order to get to the
22 Building D loading dock and another easement for
23 pedestrian grade level access from the South Garage to

24 Building C. And then to the Town, there will be access
25 and maintenance easements over the driveway from

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1 Memorial Road that will be used to enter into the South
2 Parking Garage as well as for the area behind Building
3 D. And then some assorted common wall support and
4 encroachment easements. There will also be some
5 temporary construction easements that will allow
6 construction activities, and then some access and
7 maintenance easements in the future, as may be
8 necessary, upon the construction and location of all
9 the buildings in the development.

10 Finally, there is other easements which
11 I will not go into having to do with access,
12 maintenance, building projections, overhangs and access
13 to perform certain activities pursuant to the proposed
14 contract between the Town and the developer. There is
15 one other land use application, I'm not going to go
16 into detail, but it's the relocation of the statue,
17 which I think you've heard referenced previously, and
18 then I would just note for you that we have provided to
19 the Town Clerk a paper copy of Mr. Heapes' slide
20 presentation from the last hearing, and we have also
21 distributed to each of you, I believe, a list of
22 consultants which contains the qualifications and
23 resumes of all of the speakers that you will be hearing
24 from tonight. Thank you.

25 MR. HEAPES: Thank you, Joe. I'll bet

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1 you didn't notice the one brilliant thing that we did
2 in all of that, because I just noticed it. We didn't
3 pick a name for New Street, and I will leave that to
4 you with our track record. So all of that is what it
5 takes to just make this land use look like the rest of
6 the center.

7 I want to move on now to some of the
8 site issues and introduce John Plante from Langan.
9 John is both our site engineer and has helped me
10 interpret a number of traffic issues. You will recall
11 that really our number 1 objective with the site had to
12 deal with the grade and the fall of the grade, as you
13 come down Memorial to Isham down there in the valley,
14 back up to Raymond. We had said that we had hoped to
15 really increase and fill really throughout the district
16 so that at the end of the day it was essentially a flat
17 walkable place. Every sidewalk, every street in this
18 entire district and park would be easily accessible, no
19 stairs, no ramps, et cetera, and then we would take up
20 the remaining elevation difference in Webster walk and
21 up on Memorial. That's really what drove, many, many,
22 many of the site decisions, and I'm going to have John
23 kind of speak to you about some of the specifics, where
24 is loading, where do you enter garages and how that
25 system works. But the goal of the site work was really

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1 to create a flat, walkable part of the center. John.

2 MR. PLANTE: Thank you, Richard. Good
3 evening. As Richard said my name is John Plante. I'm
4 an associate with Langan Engineering Environmental
5 Services. We have seven offices nationwide, and I work
6 out of our New Haven office, and I am somewhat local.
7 I live across the river in Glastonbury, so I come over
8 and visit quite often. So I'm fairly familiar with
9 West Hartford. I've worked closely with Richard and
10 the design team to make sure we could integrate their
11 design goals, their planning design goals into reality
12 of making a site work. And I'd just like to go over
13 with you some of the project specifics related to the
14 civil engineering on the project.

15 Any site needs access to roadways. We
16 are proposing, as Richard has indicated, to raise up
17 the intersection of Isham and Memorial about 6 feet,
18 make a walkable space. Memorial and Isham will
19 continue to function as they do today essentially in
20 the same locations. Public streets will remain public
21 streets. New Street, as Richard mentioned, is located
22 at the top of the page here, and this might be a little
23 easier, again, a public street, we will be constructing
24 that street. What that does is allows access to the
25 North Garage and the Building B portion of the site,

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1 again, a public street.

2 Raymond Road will continue to exist
3 where it is today. We are proposing to overlay Raymond
4 Road from Isham all the way down to in front of the
5 police station. We will be reconstructing Memorial and
6 Isham to go along with that increase in grade, so you
7 will get new streets out of this, new public ways.

8 Access to the parking. Memorial and
9 Isham will now become a four-way intersection. The
10 approach on Isham and the driveway here will be stop
11 sign controlled. This is located essentially at the
12 same location as the existing driveway into Town Hall,
13 and what this new driveway will be is access into the
14 South Parking Garage, as well as access to the drop-off
15 area for the residential Building D. This access will
16 be both for patrons of the garage, public as well as
17 access through here for the underground parking
18 underneath the Healthtrax building and the underground
19 parking underneath the residential building, so those
20 rights and easements that Joe just mentioned will be
21 for those private -- that private access through the
22 public garage and down underneath these buildings.

23 The North Garage will have two access
24 points, one off Isham at this location and one off New
25 Street at this location. The grade there, the

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1 difference between New Street and Isham is such that

2 this comes in at a lower level, and this is at a higher
3 level. Again, similar to the South Garage, access for
4 the parking underneath Building B will be through the
5 North Garage and underneath New Street through a
6 structure, a passageway into that structured parking
7 underneath Building B.

8 There will also be that teaser at grade
9 parking in Building B. That will be accessed off of
10 Raymond Road, and there will be 28 spaces in that
11 location to serve the retail component there.

12 The municipal lot will be reconfigured
13 from where it is today. The number of parking spaces
14 will be equivalent to what's available today. As
15 Richard said, he's got a tattoo with that number on it,
16 535.

17 Access to the municipal parking lot will
18 be from essentially two locations. On Raymond Road,
19 access is pretty much the same location where the
20 access to the police station parking lot is today. You
21 will be able to come in and access the parking lot as
22 well as a reconfigured access onto South Main to create
23 a four-way intersection with Ellsworth, and I'll talk a
24 little bit more about that later when I get into the
25 traffic component about what that means. But

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1 eliminating the access out onto Burr, so at the end of
2 the day here, there will be no longer any access from
3 the municipal lot out onto Burr so that it will remain

4 residential and the parking remain there, but
5 eliminating that access.

6 This will also serve, the municipal lot
7 will also serve as a secondary access into the South
8 Garage at this location, so there will be two points of
9 access into the South Garage, off the public way of
10 Memorial in the driveway here, and through the
11 municipal lot into the garage in that location.

12 Parking for this auditorium will remain
13 the same, and the circle, the handicapped parking, that
14 will remain the same as part of this project. Loading
15 and trash facilities, unlike the rest of the center,
16 this will be different as part of this project. All
17 those activities will take place interior to the site,
18 behind loading dock doors. All trash and loading and
19 unloading facilities will take place inside the
20 building. I'd just like to walk you through where
21 those will take place. Building A, the retail
22 building, there will be a driveway into the loading at
23 this location. There will be two truckloading bays and
24 dumpster facilities within that. Building B, that will
25 be located off of New Street. In approximately this

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1 location are two loading facilities and dumpster
2 locations, compactor locations.

3 Building D will have a single loading
4 bay off of Raymond Road in this location, and Building
5 D will have a single loading bay at this location with

6 access through the municipal parking lot with the
7 little driveway connection right there. These loading
8 facilities are adequate for the design or anticipated
9 uses for the site.

10 Utilities. We have adequate utilities
11 in the area. We've discussed at length with a number
12 of utility companies what they have and what we
13 anticipate the need to be. We've talked with the MBC
14 about the adequacy of the water and sewer. I think
15 there is a letter in the record pertaining to that. We
16 will be undergrounding all overhead utilities on
17 Memorial and Isham, and all proposed utilities will be
18 underground.

19 We've also agreed to coordinate with the
20 Town and Whole Foods, coordinate during our
21 construction, in an attempt to underground the
22 overheads on the west -- the east side of Raymond Road,
23 outside our project limits. There will also be the
24 need for utilities, Richard will coordinate that, the
25 public and private need for easements as we move

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1 forward with finalizing the design.

2 Drainage. Pretty much maintaining the
3 existing drainage systems in the roadways, just
4 adjusting structures to fit the redesign of the
5 roadways, raising the structure as we raise the
6 elevations of the road, but maintaining the existing
7 lines, the existing flow patterns. Everything from

8 this area, from the westerly side of Town flows through
9 this area and eventually out into Trout Brook. We will
10 be maintaining those flow patterns. There is a very
11 detailed report that was submitted as part of the
12 application.

13 One of the main components and benefits
14 of this project, we feel, is the improvement to the
15 water quality. Today in this whole 20-acre site, there
16 is zero water quality treatment being provided.
17 Essentially it's one large parking lot today with the
18 Crowley piece and the parking lot for the municipal
19 lot, all of this is untreated, flows into Trout Brook
20 with no water quality treatment.

21 In the nature of Blue Back Square with
22 increasing the building footprints just in itself will
23 improve water quality, as it's going to be roof water
24 as opposed to water that hits pavement with vehicles on
25 it, oils and residue and such, so that in itself will

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1 improve water quality, but will also, the two parking
2 structures, all the drainage from within the
3 structures, except for the roof level, will be treated
4 and outletted into the sanitary sewer system, and the
5 municipal lot today, where there is no treatment, it
6 just ties into the system on Burr street. We are
7 proposing two state of the art, it's called Vortech
8 units, large water structures that provide large water
9 quality treatment. We are providing that at two

10 locations where we exit the site, so all the water from
11 the municipal lot will now have water quality
12 treatment. So a significant positive impact on water
13 quality as a result of the project.

14 We will also, because of the size of the
15 site, we will be required to obtain a general permit
16 from the DEP for construction activities, and what this
17 is is an extensive checklist and inspection procedures
18 that will be part of our project and with all erosion
19 set controls will meet the Connecticut guidelines and
20 your Town regulations.

21 That's really a quick overview of the
22 site, but what I'd like to go to now is -- Richard
23 would like to say something first.

24 MR. HEAPES: A couple of things that may
25 have crossed over that are quite interesting about this

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1 versus how a more organic place works. In all of this
2 area, we've been able to do something really
3 interesting and unique. There are only eight -- excuse
4 me, four -- one, two, three -- four entrances to
5 parking structures. Normally if this were developed
6 over time, you might expect to see an entrance to this
7 structure here on the street, one here, another one to
8 this garage. You can have as many, in a normal
9 fashion, as eight or nine missing teeth, I call them,
10 on the sidewalk, which is a big -- go to Hartford, a
11 lot of missing teeth in the sidewalks in Hartford, but

12 because of the kind of joint planning effort, we are
13 actually able to go to below grade of the structure and
14 get access to that building, access to this building,
15 access to all the underground parking through the
16 basement of the building, so that really in this whole
17 kind of four-block area, there are only four missing
18 teeth, none of them on the primary kind of sidewalk
19 pedestrian experience, so that's a really interesting
20 opportunity both because of the joint planning and the
21 interesting topography.

22 Another interesting feature is that
23 there is really only one service, another missing tooth
24 in the smile, if you will, one service bay required for
25 each block, and secondly, it will have doors on it. We

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1 are specifying the same kind of glass doors you have on
2 the firehouse on Brace. They will be, you know,
3 storefront like; they will be pleasant to walk by, but
4 there is only one service, one here, there, there and
5 there, again on what might kind of be the back of the
6 building to impact the issue of trucks and loading and
7 service, et cetera.

8 Now, the advantage that we have that the
9 Center doesn't have is because of one management
10 structure and through one set of leases, we can manage
11 the timing and organization of when people do pick up
12 and delivery, when they pick up trash, et cetera. So
13 we have some management tools that you don't normally

14 have in a situation like this where we can organize the
15 impact on that. It's really important in terms of
16 residents living here and time of day for trash pickup,
17 et cetera, it's very important to make sure that that's
18 not happening during peak traffic hours, so these are a
19 couple of tools that are just the result of single
20 management, single ownership and kind of strategic
21 planning that you might not normally see. It will have
22 a huge effect on the site. So whether you are walking
23 along the sidewalks, particularly along Memorial and
24 Isham; you won't have to walk past the parking garage
25 entrance; you won't have to worry about getting run

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1 over if you have your kid in your hand; you won't have
2 to worry about a truck backing up in the middle of
3 these blocks. So not only will it be safe, it will
4 certainly be more sightly than you might expect in this
5 amount or kind of urban development.

6 MR. PLANTE: The wetlands permit
7 pertains to the creation of the park across from the
8 police station. The existing site, as we all know, is
9 a parking lot for the police station, for the former
10 courthouse and a stockpile area for DBW at this point.
11 What causes us to come before you is that a portion of
12 that area, about one acre from the top of the existing
13 slope over to this blue line here, is in the upland
14 review area of the Trout Brook resource area. There is
15 no physical wetlands there, but Michael Klein, our

16 environmental scientist, will discuss where that line
17 comes from. But what we are doing, we are proposing to
18 remove all that pavement, remove all that activity,
19 remove the cars from that area and create a green
20 space, a green park with some trees and vegetation, a
21 fence at the top of the slope, again creating a park.
22 We are going to -- we are proposing to raise the grade
23 to get it to relate to the rest of the project. Today
24 it's stepped down in various levels, so we are going to
25 bring that up to relate to the rest of the project.

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1 And we will also, as part of this, on
2 either side of Memorial Road extension, complete the
3 gateway to this area of the Center with some landscape
4 features at those corners. We feel that this activity,
5 the creation of an open space park, is a great solution
6 to improving this area, a great neighbor to a resource
7 area, and that there is no impacts on the resource
8 area, and that this is a -- there is no other
9 reasonable or feasible and prudent alternative in
10 creation of this park in relationship to the wetlands
11 itself.

12 I'd just like to turn it over to Michael
13 Klein to give you his insight on what he found and his
14 view on this wetlands application.

15 MR. KLEIN: Good evening. My name is
16 Michael Klein, I'm a biologist and soils scientist. My
17 home and office are here in West Hartford. I have, I

18 think, the distinction of probably being the briefest
19 speaker you'll hear from tonight. I've been a
20 consulting wetlands scientist and soils scientist in
21 Connecticut for about 27 years now.

22 This is a little bit of an unusual site
23 from the standpoint of identification of a wetland
24 resource. As I'm sure everyone knows, Trout Brook
25 traverses the eastern portion of the site flowing from

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1 north to south, and probably everyone also is aware
2 that Trout Brook flows in a flood control channel
3 through that area, so the soils and the watercourse
4 itself have been highly modified. The natural wetland
5 soil features and other features by which we delineate
6 these resources are not really present. There is an
7 ordinary high water mark along Trout Brook, so that
8 that allows you to determine the limit of the
9 watercourse.

10 Wetlands, as TPZ and Wetlands Commission
11 know, are defined by soils in Connecticut, but there
12 are no traditional poorly drained or very poorly
13 drained soils on this site. However, Connecticut has
14 kind of a unique wrinkle in its wetland definition. It
15 also includes flood plain soils. Those soils are
16 identified by physical structure of the soil profile
17 which no longer exists at this site because of the work
18 that was done to install the flood control project.
19 Therefore, in situations like this, what we typically

20 use is some engineering criteria to identify those
21 areas that are subject to flooding on a relatively
22 frequent basis, and typically we've used a 50-year
23 return frequency flood elevation. That's a flood that
24 has a 2 percent chance of occurring in any one
25 particular year, and any area below that elevation

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1 would be considered a fluvial flood plain soil and
2 subject to regulation. That's shown in the dash green
3 line just west of Trout Brook right there. It's a
4 straight line because the channel was modified for
5 engineering purposes for flood control purposes to be
6 straight to allow maximum conveyance of flow in this
7 area. It's at elevation 77, if anyone really cares
8 about that. That allows us to identify not only the
9 resource area itself, which would be between the green
10 line and the eastern bank of Trout Brook, but also the
11 upland review area, the Town regulating 150 feet
12 outside of the resource area for potential adverse
13 impacts.

14 The proposal, as you know, is to remove
15 the existing municipal parking lot that lies between
16 Raymond Road and Trout Brook, regrade that area, and
17 landscape it for a public park. I just want to
18 reiterate, there is no activity proposed within the
19 wetlands or the watercourses but about an acre on this
20 site, and roughly speaking about 50 percent of it lies
21 within the upland review area and therefore a wetland

22 permit is required.

23 As I mentioned and as I'm sure you are
24 all aware, Trout Brook does not provide typical wetland
25 functions in this area. It's primarily a flood

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1 conveyance function, and it's a moderate quality
2 aesthetic resource, particularly since the improvements
3 that have occurred over the last 20 or 30 years or so.
4 There are some very, very minor areas of overbank
5 storage. The surrounding land use is urban. There is
6 little natural vegetation in the area. There is a row
7 of existing white pines and small saplings at the top
8 of the slope, roughly in this area now. And below that
9 point, it's just a stabilization seed mix, so that area
10 won't erode during flooding.

11 The proposal is to convert this parking
12 lot into a park. It obviously will improve the
13 aesthetics of the area. There are two plateaus in this
14 area, and so most of the work occurs on those level
15 plateaus. There is really no activity proposed on the
16 slopes. There is detailed sediment erosion control
17 measures that are proposed including a double row of
18 silt fence and an erosion control berm which will
19 actually prevent any water from flowing down the slope.
20 These measures will be installed prior to any removal
21 of the pavement or other activity in this area to
22 prevent any siltation getting into Trout Brook.

23 You've heard that there is a proposal

24 to -- the drainage works will improve the water quality
25 entering Trout Brook by virtue of several water quality

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1 treatment structures that are proposed. The pavement
2 will be removed. The vehicle and material storage that
3 presently occurs in that area will be removed, will be
4 replaced with a park. It's my judgment there will be
5 no adverse impact on Trout Brook resource area for many
6 of this construction.

7 MR. HEAPES: Thank you, Michael. I'm
8 wondering before we talk about parking and traffic if
9 you choose to take a break.

10 MS. MECK: Yes, Mr. Heapes. I think we
11 will take a ten-minute break and reconvene.

12 MR. HEAPES: Thank you.

13 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken
14 from 7:27 p.m. until 7:48 p.m.)

15 MS. MECK: Thank you. At this point, we
16 will continue with the presentation by the applicant,
17 Mr. Heapes.

18 MR. HEAPES: Thank you. I'd like to
19 speak for a few minutes about parking. Remember last
20 Thursday night when we talked about parking, one of the
21 initial things was that you had a pretty sophisticated
22 park once and then walk through the Center experience,
23 be it in a structure or in a lot. That was one
24 concept. The other concept was that at the end of the
25 day, we wanted to make sure that there was one parking

1 manager, one parking company essentially in the Center,
2 so that it was being managed and organized and run to
3 the betterment of the Center and in a somewhat organic
4 way and can be kind of kept in balance and in check.

5 So the question is: There is a number
6 of parking spaces on the site now, that magic number
7 535, and when we begin to take those parking spaces
8 away and add new parking, how is it that we are going
9 to do that? I would remind you of really the four
10 kinds of parking that we have talked about last Friday.
11 Number 1 was, how do we replace the existing municipal
12 parking, which was really twofold, the 535 surface
13 parking spaces that are here today on the site, and as
14 you know, on a Thursday afternoon, every one of them is
15 used in full force, and if you'll recall from Thursday
16 night, those are being reconfigured on the current
17 property, shown here in yellow to replace what is there
18 today, and then of course having free parking spaces
19 for the library on the north campus which are
20 convenient to the library. That is essentially the
21 municipal parking that is controlled but free, as it is
22 today.

23 Then there are the other parking spaces.
24 There were the private parking structures that we
25 talked about just a minute ago under Building D,

1 residential C, office B office, these two accessible
2 from this deck. These parking spaces accessible from
3 that deck.

4 To give you some numbers, there are 253
5 parking spaces essentially owned and managed for the
6 use of private users. Primarily the residents in that
7 building and that building and the office, some of the
8 key office workers and doctors in these two buildings.

9 It's important to know that those are
10 one level below grade. It's a significant amount of
11 parking below grade, and these parking structures as
12 well have one level below grade. So all the parking
13 isn't just above grade. We've tried to minimize the
14 impact of the garages, which I think is important.

15 Then there were, what I call, the public
16 spaces, which are both either metered or in parking
17 structures, that really consisted of two things. We
18 talked about having street parking or over-the-curb
19 parking adjacent to all the sidewalks. Of course, the
20 North Main angle parking spaces that are there now
21 remain, and then we are adding parking spaces along
22 each one of the sidewalk areas, and there is the small
23 parking lot on the north campus. That parking lot is
24 28 spaces, and the remaining street spaces are 83, just
25 for a kind of point of reference. That's not a

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1 surprising number. That's a little over 100. That's
2 about 10 percent of all the spaces for the public that
3 you would need and that are provided, and that's what
4 we would tend to expect, about 10 percent of the spaces
5 would tend to be on the street. Remember those parking
6 spaces really help make our sidewalks safe and secure.
7 They allow for you to cross the street, et cetera.

8 Finally was the other type of public
9 parking and the two garages, the North Garage and South
10 Garage. North Garage has a total of 463 spaces for the
11 public and the South Garage is 548 spaces. All and
12 all, you have a reconfigured 535 spaces free municipal
13 parking, and you have a total of 1910 spaces. That's a
14 reminder of where we were at. Park once and walk
15 through this district as well as the other district.

16 I'd like to introduce now Norm Goldman
17 from Desman, and Norm is going to kind of explain how
18 we got to how many we needed, how we got to valuing the
19 revenue associated with those, and really how this came
20 about. So, Norm, I give it to you.

21 MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you, Richard. Good
22 evening, Mr. Mayor, Madam Chair, members of the Council
23 and the Commission and the public. My name is Norm
24 Goldman. I am a principal with Desman Associates. We
25 are a nationally-recognized parking engineering firm.

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1 We are very pleased to have this opportunity to work
2 again with Street-Works on a major project. I happen

3 to reside in Avon. I married a West Hartford lady, and
4 she works at the Ravis building, as a matter of fact,
5 on Lasalle Road. Our offices are in Farmington, on
6 Scott Swamp Road, and we have about 110 people overall
7 in eight offices doing nothing but parking, if you can
8 believe it.

9 I'm here, as Richard said, to try to
10 explain to you how we arrived at the number of parking
11 spaces we needed in each of the facilities within the
12 Blue Back Square, and how they relate to the actual
13 demand. And in order to understand that, we have to
14 start with the concept that was used, which is a, what
15 we call a shared use analysis. There are many
16 applications of numbers to parking demand and supply.
17 If you go to a zoning code, for example, they are all
18 cumulative. They tell you how many spaces you need for
19 residential, how many you need for offices, and if you
20 have a project, you just add them up and you come up
21 with a number like 3,000 or something on this project.
22 But what a shared use analysis does is to let us
23 understand the peak periods by land use for each of the
24 components within the project, and within the day of
25 the week and within the day of the weekend, those peak

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1 periods have been laid out from the lowest to the
2 highest and they hit, as you will see in another slide,
3 the maximum.

4 We also take into account multiple
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5 destinations, and that's one of the wonderful things
6 about the mix that this project brings to you. You can
7 have someone go to a restaurant, go to a theater and
8 shop, so you have one car park for three venues, and
9 that could be over an extended period of time. So
10 we've taken into account some of those multiple
11 destinations and the one trip units.

12 Now, there are historical sources for
13 these standards. The Urban Land Institute, Institute
14 of Traffic Engineers, National Parking Associates
15 Consultants Council, of which I am a member emeritus,
16 our own company. There is also the Eno foundation and
17 several other sources that have been applied and are
18 applied throughout the states for all these parking
19 studies.

20 We talked a little bit about the Blue
21 Back Square and the parking components of Blue Back
22 Square, and they are dependent upon the square footage
23 or the measurements that we are going to use for each
24 of the land uses. There are 60,000 square feet of
25 general office, 158,000 square feet of retail, 30,000

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1 square feet of restaurants, 1,000 feet theater complex,
2 which you heard could be a five or six seat -- five or
3 six theater units, 108,725 medical, 30,000 square foot
4 health club and 70 residential units. We need to take
5 a look at each one of those components and relate to it
6 what happens and how does it generate a parking demand.

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7 When we find out what that parking demand will be, this
8 is the chart that will -- that shows you an example of
9 how we overlapped the various uses. The time of the
10 day from 6:00 in the morning to 12:00 midnight, we do
11 this for the week day, we do it for the weekend, and we
12 take the total. We also, in this case, have verified
13 some of the levels of activity by actual field count.
14 We have a column for the general offices, and they are
15 100 percent occupancy runs between 10:00, 9:30 in the
16 morning up until about 12:00. We have retail which
17 generally starts at 12:00 and runs till 3:00 p.m. and
18 don't forget this is weekday, and that's the 100
19 percent curve.

20 Now there are other numbers which we
21 have in our study that fill in the other boxes, but it
22 runs from like 40 percent and on up and down. Excuse
23 me a minute while I get myself in place here.

24 So you can see that restaurants and all
25 of the other venues and land use items, land uses are

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1 included, and what our calculation showed was that at
2 1:00 in the afternoon during the week, the maximum
3 occurrence was there for parking demand, and when we
4 looked then at the actual numbers that we were going to
5 try to supply, we had to factor them with the
6 measurements that go to each of the land uses. General
7 offices, land use is 3 point for 1,000 square feet of
8 gross leasable area during the week, and on Saturday

9 it's 1. Retail and you go down the list, and those
10 factors then are used to multiply against the land use
11 and the measurement of it to determine the number of
12 spaces that we would have to supply at the 100 percent
13 date.

14 Now, that also says that we have an
15 occupancy rate of about 90 percent for the general
16 offices and about 95 percent for the medical offices,
17 and those factors also were taken into account. The
18 result is that the weekday peak at 1:00 generates a
19 need for 1259 spaces and the Saturday peak, which also
20 happens to be at 1:00, generates a need for 1148
21 parking spaces. That's throughout the complex.

22 To respond to those various needs, I
23 don't want to be redundant with what Richard said, but
24 we have the following -- we have provided the following
25 spaces. In the North Garage, there are 463 spaces, in

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1 the South Garage 548, approximately 111 spaces
2 on-street, 134 spaces for the offices for a total of
3 1256 spaces.

4 The condo owners, which are the private
5 spaces in here, are 119 spaces. Now, that gives us a
6 total of about 1375 spaces not including the municipal
7 lot, which is adjoined to this project through the --
8 because we enter through the South Garage, and we are
9 going to control the spaces in the municipal lot and
10 access to them for the public and visitors to the

11 municipal complex and Blue Back Square.

12 If we add -- I'll go back a little
13 bit -- if we add the municipal complex to the count, it
14 goes forward, okay, oh, there it is, okay -- we
15 actually come up with the 1910 spaces that Richard
16 mentioned in his presentation. Of those, 134 and 119
17 are below the buildings and are -- the 134 are
18 accessible for the general public when they are not
19 being used by the parkers that are assigned to those
20 spaces. We are actually not assigning spaces; we are
21 cordoning off areas. So once we want to reuse an area,
22 once that demand is down, that area will become
23 available to the general public, so the general public
24 spaces and their counts flowed up and down by point of
25 demand and by the time of day.

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1 We talk about parking rates. In order
2 to get to the revenue generation for the Blue Back
3 Square, we needed to compare the rates and do something
4 that would not draw people from the existing Center
5 into Blue Back Square, vice versa, so what we did was
6 we tried to keep the rates and the time of collection
7 and the time of control the same. As you can see in
8 the existing Center, the meters operate from 9:00 to
9 5:00, Monday through Saturday. We are proposing they
10 operate from 9:00 to 7:00, Monday through Saturday.
11 It's 50 cents an hour, we are talking about 75 cents an
12 hour. Sunday would still be free. There would still

13 be a two-hour limit. The off-street facilities would
14 operate from 9:00 in the morning till 1:00 in the
15 morning, Monday through Friday in the municipal Center,
16 in the existing Center, and from 8:00 to 1:00 a.m.
17 Monday through Saturday in the new Blue Back Square
18 portion of the Center. And 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on
19 Sunday, where Sundays are free now.

20 There is also a 30-minute free period in
21 the Center now, and we are not -- we are suggesting
22 that the rate be \$1.50 for the first hour or part
23 thereof, the 75 cents each additional 30 minutes or
24 part thereof is the same, and the monthly permit
25 parkers would be paying \$100 a month in the Blue Back

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1 Square portion of the project.

2 And from these numbers then we
3 determined how many monthly parkers there are, how many
4 hourly parkers there are, by land use, and we project
5 that to a revenue level for the project. In addition
6 to the revenue for the project, we need to take a look
7 at what it's going to cost to operate and manage this
8 project, so we have approximately \$725,000 worth of
9 management costs, and again, these are Desman's
10 projected numbers for this project, but we and the Town
11 and another consultant for the Town have come very
12 close to agreeing on the total expenses. We project
13 parking revenue of just over 3 million dollars, which
14 would wind up with a net operating income of about

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15 \$2,450,000. We believe that the range is probably in
16 the 2 million to 250 million dollar net operating
17 income range, as the parking revenues get adjusted.

18 While we are on operations, I'd like to
19 take a moment and talk about how we are going to be
20 controlling this facility, the combined facilities.
21 All of the entrances to both the municipal parking area
22 and all of the Blue Back Square parking garage and
23 surface lots will be controlled. We are in the process
24 of discussing this with the Town administration now.
25 What we've come to understand is that we will try to

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1 minimize labor. We will provide an AVI, which is an
2 automatic vehicle identification type of access into
3 the Town municipal lot and into the garages so that you
4 don't have to roll down your window and stick your hand
5 out in the rain and the cold. We will have a machine
6 readable ticket that all of the other transient parkers
7 will take. Those machine readable tickets can become
8 validated when you have appropriate business at the
9 Town Hall. If you don't, you will exit through the
10 South Garage and pay a cashier in the South Garage the
11 appropriate fee, which is a totally machine readable
12 transaction.

13 Town Hall, as I said, will issue validations.
14 We don't know whether it's going to be at the
15 department yet or whether it's going to be at the main
16 information desk. Permits will be given to employees

17 and will be available to employees and people who have
18 continuing business in Town Hall. Total operating
19 costs, the maintenance cost moves up and down depending
20 upon how much of a reserve against future repairs the
21 Town wants to put in. We are helping develop the
22 appropriate budgets for that.

23 In the final analysis, acceptance of
24 these garages by the public will be determined by how
25 these garages present themselves to the public. If

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1 they are easy to get into and easy to get out of, they
2 are well lit, they are well maintained, the parking
3 spaces are easily discernible, the way finding systems
4 work, the public will accept them. This is something
5 that happens quite frequently, that we are involved
6 with projects that are the first parking garage in a
7 municipality, and it all depends upon how the parking
8 facilities are treated.

9 Lighting is a critical issue. Column
10 free construction is a critical issue, an open floor
11 plan, and the first experience the public has with your
12 parking garage and the last experience they have with
13 your parking system, it creates their vision of what
14 the Blue Back Square will be, and our intention is to
15 make that the highest level of service that we can
16 possibly afford.

17 Two copies of our report have been
18 submitted for the record, and I thank you very much for

19 the time.

20 MR. HEAPES: Thank you, Norm. Norm's
21 explanation of the shared parking idea is really
22 critical, because it directly affects how you think
23 about traffic as well. If in fact you have a trip
24 that's going to the movie theater, that is also 100
25 percent unaligned with the office worker trip, et

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1 cetera. So it's a really important strategy for
2 minimizing the amount of traffic relative to a certain
3 amount of development. Coincidentally, and we didn't
4 design it this way, but this mix of uses is probably as
5 finely tuned as any mix that I've been involved with.

6 I can also tell you that in projects
7 we've been involved with, Mizner Park in Bethesda and
8 San Jose, we've actually gone and done post-op
9 evaluations of these industry standards and found them
10 to be extremely accurate. So we have seen that these
11 aren't just a theory. We've seen how they work, we
12 understand how they work. Now, just like with the
13 leases and trash and garbage, we have a couple of
14 management tools to help this parking system work more
15 efficiently. One of the issues in this Center, are
16 people parking in the neighborhoods, and that's a
17 direct result of charging for parking often. One of
18 the things that we can do here through our leases is
19 ensure that employees, particularly of retail stores,
20 don't park on the street. We can't force them where to

21 park, but we can tell them where not to park and help
22 enforce that. So we do have some management tools. We
23 have the ability to do valet as a group rather than
24 by -- as a group of tenants rather than by merchant, by
25 merchant doing their own valet. So we have some things

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1 that we can do that can help organize and manage this
2 parking so that it really works and works effectively.

3 But really the important thing is
4 understanding that shared mix of uses, that shared time
5 frame, because that's really critical to have driven
6 into our traffic demands as well, and understanding
7 traffic.

8 John and I are going to talk about
9 traffic now in a more holistic way than perhaps you may
10 normally have thought about it, and frankly, this was a
11 place where the Town has taught us a lot over the past
12 few months. We talked Thursday night about our guiding
13 principles of traffic. These are really, I think,
14 fundamental, and this is how West Hartford, I believe,
15 and certainly the Town staff of West Hartford views
16 traffic. A lot of places you talk about traffic and
17 it's purely about increasing the volume of cars through
18 Town or on a street so people have to wait less time.
19 We found that that really isn't a very holistic
20 approach. It means cars move faster, but sometimes
21 things are less safe and certainly the quality of life
22 in that system is not maintained.

23 So our principles are really five-fold,
24 first and foremost is to maintain this kind of balance
25 in terms of quality of life character between all the

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1 issues involved with automobiles. That means first and
2 foremost, wherever possible, can we increase or
3 maximize the safety for both pedestrians and for people
4 in vehicles? Sometimes those are in conflict, often
5 not. And we will tell you about the different
6 strategies we have for that. We've mentioned some
7 already. Increasing pedestrian access, particularly
8 from either side of the Center, we talked a lot about,
9 so that you are not tempted to get in your car and
10 drive to the other side of the Center because you don't
11 want to make that trip.

12 Fourth on the list, and many people will
13 put this first, would be to maintain or improve the
14 current traffic operations. Certainly that is kind of
15 a baseline. We have to maintain the current levels of
16 service, the amount of time you work in congestion. I
17 think what you will see in our program is that we've
18 been able, through a couple of really key intersection
19 moves, to actually improve current traffic conditions
20 at a number of intersections after Blue Back Square,
21 and as a result of some things we are doing. If you do
22 those four things, keep that character, increase
23 safety, maintain and improve the traffic operations,
24 that allows you some flexibility to then begin to do

25 some things that discourage traffic from going through

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1 the neighborhoods. Probably the biggest neighborhood
2 concern we have is the use of Raymond as the means from
3 this side of the Center to get into the ramp.

4 So we've been able to add some things,
5 often referred to as traffic calming, be it parking
6 spaces, traffic islands to actually discourage the use
7 particularly of Raymond from people cutting through
8 that neighborhood to get to park in the ramp. So
9 that's really the context, how can we keep the same
10 quality of life, maintain or increase the traffic
11 improvement, pedestrian safety as a holistic system.
12 That's probably the key word here, is holistic.

13 The great thing about this zoning
14 process is we have to look at the whole system, not
15 just the intersections that the project is on, and
16 we've looked at a number of intersections, and John is
17 going to describe that process to you now.

18 MR. PLANTE: Thank you, Richard. Again,
19 my name is John Plante with Langan Engineering, and
20 those principles that Richard just discussed, as you
21 can see, it's a little different than the normal
22 traffic engineering approach, and hence my involvement
23 directly in the creation of the traffic solutions and
24 the traffic management here is it's so integral with
25 the site planning and the site design that I worked

1 closely with the traffic engineering team. I also have
2 a traffic engineering background so that that helped
3 me, but we worked directly as a team because it was so
4 integral.

5 Urbitron, a renown traffic engineering
6 firm, prepared the report that is part of your
7 application, and their experts and engineers are with
8 me tonight and will be available for any questions you
9 might have, but Urbitron has a lot of experience in
10 mixed-use developments. They've done Flushing Meadow
11 Town Center, which is a million-and-a-half square feet
12 of mixed-use similar to demographics of this project.
13 They also did Venice Marina in Brooklyn, a 200,000
14 square foot mixed-use facility, so they have a
15 significant background in mixed-use facilities.

16 As Richard said, we looked to customize
17 this traffic program. We looked at something for West
18 Hartford based on West Hartford, not some other place,
19 but what the realities were of West Hartford itself in
20 balancing those five principles. We worked closely
21 with Town staff. We developed a comprehensive
22 evaluation of actual conditions and procedures and an
23 understanding of the potential impacts of this project.
24 We spent over a year analyzing data, collecting data,
25 listening to the community, public outreach, listening

1 to your representatives, your Town staff, and then
2 reanalyzing that data and creating opportunities to
3 improve the roadway network that we have here today.

4 Again, we've submitted a very detailed
5 report, lots of numbers, some of them very confusing.
6 It's my job here tonight to try to put those in
7 perspective and in simple terms so that you can
8 understand why we are excited about the traffic
9 program, why we feel that what we are proposing, not
10 only addresses our impacts, the impacts of this
11 proposed project before you, but also solves a number
12 of issues throughout the Town that exist today, not
13 related to Blue Back Square. It helps the Town, it
14 helps this project, creates that holistic solution to
15 traffic related to the Center.

16 What did we do? We looked at 28
17 intersections throughout the Town all the way up to
18 Route 44, northern part of the town, down to Park
19 Avenue and the highway, Exit 41 and Exit 43. This plan
20 represents Farmington Avenue, South Main Street, Trout
21 Brook, Park Avenue and then all the neighborhood
22 surrounding.

23 The green circles represent the
24 intersections that we studied, and we looked at these
25 in taking counts, operations, how do they operate today

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1 and are they safe? We looked at accidents and we
2 looked at three years' worth of accident history
3 related to the downtown area and identified
4 opportunities within that downtown area where we could
5 improve upon safety, not only again, related to our
6 impacts, but impacts in situations that exist out there
7 today.

8 Trip generation is one of the places
9 where we start with understanding our impacts. As
10 Richard mentioned, mixed use is a key component and one
11 of the reasons why when you think of a project of this
12 size, it really doesn't have the impact that you would
13 anticipate from the pure square footage, because those
14 uses, just like Norm described in the parking, those
15 uses, those peak periods happen at different times
16 during the day, so they don't all coincide, and all
17 those trips arrive at one destination at one time.
18 It's not a mall where everybody arrives at one location
19 because that's all retail. You've got residential
20 people in the morning. You've got offices in the
21 morning. You've got restaurants in different peak
22 periods, so the size of the project really doesn't
23 relate directly to the traffic impact of the project.

24 Another component of that mixed use is
25 shared trips. This will operate very similar to the

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1 way the Center does today. People will come, they will
2 park, they will do multiple things. They will come and

3 visit a restaurant and then go to the movies. Or they
4 live there, they will walk to the restaurant, or they
5 will walk to the movies. This nature of a mixed use
6 really minimizes the new trip generation into a
7 downtown area like this. Unfortunately, Conn DOT
8 doesn't allow us to take that into consideration as
9 much as reality would tell you. They only allow us to
10 take credit of 5 percent of the trips generated by this
11 project, actually do two things during that same trip.
12 So they are saying 5 percent of the people who go to
13 the movies will also eat dinner. I think from a
14 practical standpoint and a realistic standpoint, we
15 know a lot of people who are going to be going to
16 those -- to the fine arts cinema will be stopping prior
17 and going to the movies and then walking over. But
18 Conn DOT only allows us to take a credit for 5 percent,
19 which we feel is low for the reality of what's
20 happening here. Again that's another factor that we
21 think will have lessened impact of what we have here.

22 We look at peak periods to evaluate the
23 impact on a roadway network. Peak period allows us to
24 look at the worst-case scenario, so we identify the
25 uses, combine those, similar to the parking, and

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1 identify what is the peak period for the project versus
2 what is the peak period of the existing roadway. And
3 when we looked at the existing system here in town,
4 throughout the town, we found that the evening peak for

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5 West Hartford was more than the Saturday peak period.
6 Generally higher. So new trips. We look at what we
7 have, we look at the different uses and get an
8 understanding of what gets generated, what trips get
9 created, new trips to the site. We reviewed this in
10 detail with Town staff, also with DOT as they have some
11 approval involvement in the project. We reviewed this
12 to get that baseline clear, to make sure everybody was
13 on the same page, everybody was in agreement. We feel
14 it's somewhat conservative. It's got a safety factor
15 in there because of the shared trip requirement of Conn
16 DOT, but that's the baseline we started with.

17 This project will have somewhat
18 different trip generation characteristics than the
19 Center, mainly due to the anchor retail that was
20 mentioned. Today there really isn't that type of
21 retailer here in the Center, so you might get more
22 people coming from a longer distance to come to the
23 Center than they do today. Because there is a CVS and
24 there is a Lux, Bond and Green in Glastonbury, you
25 know, someone where I live, we don't have to come to

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1 downtown West Hartford for Lux, Bond and Green, we can
2 go over to Somerset Square, but if there is an anchor
3 tenant that isn't in the area, we might get a larger
4 draw, and we've factored that into our numbers. We've
5 factored in those larger tenants, understanding where
6 they will come from and what direction they will come

7 from.

8 But in general, the majority of the
9 people coming to this project will be very similar
10 demographics as is coming to the Center as it does
11 today. A lot of people from the west and north coming
12 as they do today down through Farmington and down Main
13 Street. Not all trips will be coming from somewhere
14 else. It will be very similar to what it is today.

15 So what are those numbers? During the
16 morning peak hour, we anticipate 490 trips coming into
17 the site, 195 leaving. During the evening peak hour,
18 610 trips coming in, 815 leaving. These are new trips.
19 On Saturday midday peak, 1120 new trips coming into the
20 site and about 915 trips leaving the site. As you can
21 see, the Saturday midday is somewhat higher than the
22 evening peak for this site, but in combining those with
23 the existing peak periods, really the evening peak is
24 the larger of all the peak hours. We studied all the
25 peak hours, but a majority of our mitigation focused on

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1 that worst-case scenario of the evening peak, so any
2 other time during the day, any other time during the 23
3 hours the rest of the day, that impact will be even
4 less than that peak hour. So our mitigation and what
5 we are proposing that I'll show you applies to that and
6 can apply in improved situations during those other
7 periods.

8 What we also found was that the area

9 roadway network in downtown, the Center and downtown
10 West Hartford really does a great job at distributing
11 traffic. There is a number of different ways to get in
12 and out of the Center, main arterials. Local people
13 have options to get to their homes, much different than
14 say the new project out in Canton. You have one way
15 in, Route 44. All the traffic has got to use that
16 road. Here, just immediately adjacent to the site, we
17 have nine different ways to get to the site, and as you
18 start to expand, that multiplies. So the dispersion of
19 traffic and the nature of your infrastructure here also
20 does a wonderful job at dissipating that impact,
21 sending people in the directions they need to go,
22 because, you know, not everybody is coming from one
23 spot. They are going in various ways, so they don't
24 have to take one road to get there. They can go in
25 various different directions. So that also reduces the

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1 impact of what we are proposing.

2 Naturally as you get closer to the site,
3 that impact gets greater because all the trips start to
4 get concentrated, and as you'll see when I walk through
5 some of our proposed improvements, that's reflective in
6 those.

7 What did we study? We studied the
8 existing condition. We looked at the actual activity
9 that's happening out here today. We analyzed that,
10 developed that baseline. And from that, we look at the

11 no build. That situation is when we anticipate,
12 hopefully if Blue Back Square gets approved, when this
13 will be opening and operating and what will those
14 conditions be when that operation commences? It's
15 projected to be out to 2006, so we took actual growth
16 factors of what's happened in the Town the last couple
17 of years, applied that to the existing traffic,
18 projected that into 2006, to get that baseline. What
19 will happen in Town with or without Blue Back Square?
20 What will those conditions be? We've also factored in
21 Whole Foods into that equation. We've provided, you
22 know, put those traffic numbers into the no-build
23 situation. And then based on those new trips that I
24 just discussed, we added those to that no-build
25 condition and came up with what we call the build

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1 condition, 2006, what will happen; what will be the
2 impact from Blue Back Square with their new trips.

3 And we looked at this, we analyzed those
4 trips, and we developed a criteria to say, okay, what
5 impacts will we have, what needs to be mitigated, what
6 are the minimum criteria, not what we will eventually
7 go up and beyond, but what are the minimum criteria
8 that we want to maintain to make sure the quality of
9 life and the traffic operations throughout the Center
10 operate essentially as they do today?

11 And we applied those, that criteria,
12 that evaluation criteria to these guiding principles,

13 and first and foremost maintained the character of West
14 Hartford to not do something that will impose on that,
15 pedestrian safety, on-street parking, et cetera. Also,
16 safety again, pedestrians and vehicular are a very
17 important component. Pedestrian access, as we've been
18 saying throughout this presentation, is a very critical
19 component. Everything started from there. Richard
20 laid out the edict, I want wide sidewalks, you can do
21 whatever else you want to do beyond that, the
22 buildings, the roads, et cetera. But pedestrian access
23 was a key and very important component. Everything was
24 based on that, again, to become an extension of the
25 Center, the same kind of pedestrian activity that

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1 exists out there today.

2 A lot of our intersection improvements
3 are focused on the safety of pedestrians and how they
4 traverse those locations. What I'd like to just show
5 you here on this slide is, again, this is the same
6 orientation with Farmington, South Main, Trout Brook
7 and Park. These are locations throughout the Town and
8 how these intersections treat pedestrians. In green,
9 those are signals that have pedestrian phase that stops
10 all traffic. They push a button, everything stops,
11 pedestrians cross without fear of any kind of
12 interaction with vehicles.

13 The ones in yellow are where pedestrians
14 press a button, can walk across, but the alternate lane

15 of traffic or approach of traffic can move, and they
16 have to respect pedestrians crossing on the other
17 roadway approaches. What you can see, the Town has
18 done a great job at providing those type of full
19 pedestrian connections, phases throughout South Main
20 Street in the Center, and today there are two
21 locations, essentially immediately adjacent to the
22 site, one at Farmington and Main Street and one at
23 Memorial and South Main Street. Those connections are
24 there today. We are proposing to add two new
25 locations, and that's what you see up there in blue at

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1 Ellsworth and South Main Street. We are providing that
2 full pedestrian phase at that intersection, again, if
3 you remember the new driveway into the municipal lot.
4 And we will also be providing full pedestrian signal,
5 exclusive signal across from the new entrance to the
6 library.

7 During our investigation, something we
8 noticed that happens out there today, as most of us
9 are, you know, somewhat lazy, no one wants to walk from
10 the library, Board of Ed area or across from Town
11 Center building, nobody wants to walk down to Memorial
12 or up to Farmington to cross at an exclusive ped
13 crossing. People will take their lives in their hands
14 and scoot across with strollers, with themselves, to go
15 over to Dunkin' Donuts. I've done it myself, certainly
16 an unsafe situation. What we are proposing is this

17 pedestrian exclusive crossing, again, right at the
18 entrance to the library, right across from the Town
19 Center office building that really makes it a no
20 brainer to cross at that location as opposed to trying
21 to jay walk across the street. This crosswalk will be
22 very similar to LaSalle, pavers very well lit, very
23 well defined, but it will have something that the
24 LaSalle crossing doesn't have, it will have an actual
25 signal that will stop traffic on South Main Street,

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1 stop vehicles from crossing, so they can cross
2 protected across that location from the library over to
3 the east side of the Center, again integrating that
4 safety into the pedestrian access and the desire to
5 interconnect both sides of the Center.

6 We will also be extending Goodman Green
7 all the way down to Memorial to further try to inhibit
8 the ease of crossing that road. It will be a very well
9 landscaped median island, wide like Goodman Green and
10 tapering down to Memorial, providing not only an
11 aesthetic feature extending the green, but also a
12 safety feature, eliminating one of the things that
13 South Main Street and that area is notorious for,
14 U-turns and all the problems that go along with that.
15 So again, a safety improvement that really doesn't
16 mitigate what Blue Back Square is, but appropriate to
17 connecting both sides of those centers.

18 What I'd like to walk you through now,

19 if you could, Matt, is this is an aerial of the Town.
20 Superimposed on top of that are the proposed
21 improvements that we are looking to present and why we
22 feel that we not only address our impacts, but will
23 make significant improvements throughout the Town.
24 Safety for vehicles, one of the other
25 guiding principles. During our investigation, we found

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1 Farmington and Main Street had the highest number of
2 accidents of all the intersections we looked at. 112.
3 And we looked at it, why is this happening? Well, the
4 largest number of sideswipes, and that's due to the
5 fact that you have a large swath of pavement in a large
6 intersection, stop bars are a long way apart here, and
7 people are very confused on how they are supposed to
8 traverse through this site. So what we are proposing
9 is to restripe the interior of this intersection to
10 give a clear definition of where people are supposed to
11 go, provide left-turn lanes for those people going
12 southbound or northbound on Main Street. Today they
13 kind of stick themselves out there, and people have to
14 avoid them, and that's where those side-swipe accidents
15 occur because people are avoiding each other because
16 they really don't know where they are going. They are
17 not sure where people coming from the other direction
18 are going. So we are going to restripe that location.
19 We are going to maintain that all pedestrian phase
20 throughout this intersection to give the protection and

21 safety for the pedestrians.

22 One of the other reasons we feel that
23 this is a bit unsafe in this area, and there is some
24 confusion of where people need to go is there is a
25 little bit of that traffic island that sticks out into

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1 the intersection at this location. We are proposing to
2 cut that back and allow for clear definition of where
3 vehicles are supposed to move through. Again, this is
4 a simple traffic solution. It allows us to provide a
5 safer situation, but still again, there would be other
6 traffic solutions to improving this, but still we are
7 going to remain with the way the configuration is
8 today, again, balancing that character of West
9 Hartford.

10 One of the other areas that we are
11 looking to address safety, during the community
12 outreach, and certainly there has been a lot of
13 feedback from the residential areas, one in particular
14 on Boulevard. Today Boulevard has got a beautiful
15 median down the middle, but it has very wide swaths of
16 pavement on either side. Parking is legal on both
17 sides, but in reality very few people are parking here
18 during the day.

19 What this does is create essentially a
20 racing strip where there is no clear definition of who
21 is going where. It really is one lane, but people use
22 it as two. The speeds are higher because there is no

23 definition. We are proposing to restripe a majority of
24 Boulevard to make it clear, one lane. Encourage, still
25 encourage the use and parking on that street, but add

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1 that definition of, this is one lane, this isn't a
2 two-lane strip down through here.

3 At the intersection of Boulevard and
4 South Main, we are proposing to add this little
5 extended curb area here. You will see that throughout
6 the site in a number of locations. It's a very key
7 component to slowing traffic down, defining residential
8 areas, and reducing or improving the safety situation
9 at intersections. We are providing that bump-out,
10 protecting parking in that area. At this location, we
11 are also going to be adding restriping for three lanes
12 on the Boulevard approaches, clearly defining each
13 movement that can take place, a right turn through or a
14 left turn, again, a safety thing as well as an
15 operational improvement for the Boulevard.

16 We also feel, and I'll get into more
17 detail later, that Boulevard actually won't be affected
18 really at all for any new trips because there is no
19 need for anybody traveling to Blue Back Square to go in
20 the majority of the Boulevard from, say, Raymond Road
21 over to South Main Street.

22 If I can go to the slide. And then the
23 next principle, improving traffic operations,
24 maintaining or improving traffic operations. Certainly

25 from our impacts, Blue Back Square, we feel we can

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1 mitigate our impacts, but we've done more than that.
2 We've improved on certain situations, and I'd just like
3 to go to the aerial again to show you South Main
4 Street. All along South Main Street, again, as you get
5 closer to the project, the impact gets a little higher,
6 so we are proposing, if we can pull out a little bit
7 now, we are proposing providing a number of
8 improvements. As I said, we are extending Goodman
9 Green down to the intersection of Memorial, providing a
10 left-hand turn to go down eastbound onto Memorial.
11 Again, this gets -- turning movements out of the way of
12 through-traffic, improves safety, improves operating
13 conditions.

14 We are providing a left-hand turn all
15 along between Burr Street and Memorial. There is some
16 minor widening along South Main Street in this location
17 to provide, again, that left-hand turn, those left-hand
18 turn lanes into the municipal lot, into Ellsworth, into
19 the Town Center parking garage, where today you've got
20 two lanes going in each direction. Someone wanting to
21 take a left-hand turn blocks that left-hand lane.
22 People try to avoid them, get around them, go into the
23 right-hand lane, causes accidents, slows -- you know,
24 decreases operational capacity. We are going to be
25 proposing these left-hand turns which will be, you

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1 know, even in this location, really doesn't mitigate
2 Blue Back Square traffic, but improves all this section
3 of South Main Street, providing stacking distance to
4 allow for these vehicles turning into Town Center
5 plaza, say, in the morning, instead of clogging up
6 traffic here, they will have their own lane.

7 This also is a benefit for the
8 businesses on the west side of South Main. Today there
9 is a number of curb cuts there. People are going in
10 and out around parked vehicles, an unsafe condition.
11 We are providing that left-turn lane for the majority
12 of the length of South Main here. It gives them an
13 area of refuse to wait for gaps to cross, a left-hand
14 turn again into the municipal parking lot, and as I
15 said, the realignment of the municipal parking lot
16 driveway at Ellsworth, at a signal, not onto Burr
17 Street, and then trying to get onto South Main from
18 Burr Street. I think we've all experienced that, very
19 difficult, very unsafe. We will be eliminating all the
20 traffic coming out onto Burr Street from the municipal
21 lot, controlling it at a signal where it should be and
22 improving the operations of that whole area.

23 One of the other areas that we -- I'm
24 giving you some samples, this isn't every single
25 improvement that we are proposing, but to give you an

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1 idea of some of the improvements that we feel are going
2 to be of benefit in mitigation for our traffic but also
3 for the town. This is the section of Farmington
4 between Trout Brook and Raymond Road. Again, we are
5 proposing to widen, a minor widening along the south
6 side of Farmington Avenue, again, to incorporate those
7 left-hand turns. Left-hand turns do a number of
8 things, they improve safety, they improve operations.
9 They allow those vehicles to be stacked up there while
10 it's their -- you know, the through-vehicles get to
11 move unimpeded by somebody waiting to turn. So again,
12 this will also include modification of the signals at
13 Raymond and Trout Brook. As a matter of fact, we are
14 improving or modifying 11 signals throughout the Town
15 to improve -- to mitigate our traffic and hopefully
16 improve the traffic conditions out there today.

17 If we can go back to the slides. The
18 fifth guiding principle, and one we feel is the
19 cornerstone of why we've been successful in creating a
20 solution to not only again our traffic, but to some of
21 the existing problems, discouraging the use of
22 residential streets, particularly Raymond Road and
23 those neighborhoods, by making the arterials more
24 appealing. Today they are not appealing. People cut
25 through the residential neighborhoods because it takes

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2 intended to handle the through-traffic.

3 So if we can go to the slide, one
4 location that is certainly an existing problem that
5 I've always experienced coming in, and I come in,
6 again, from Glastonbury, I'll get off Exit 43 to come
7 into the Center. It sometimes is a nightmare. What
8 DOT has done, they had grand plans of extending the
9 connector into West Hartford. Well, they dumped an
10 unfinished project right in the lap of West Hartford,
11 right at your doorstep. Here you go, here is the exit
12 ramp from the highway. You guys deal with it.

13 There isn't enough space in between the
14 intersections, it's high volumes at this location. I
15 think we've all experienced the delays at all these
16 approaches, the confusion within there, and this is one
17 of the reasons why Raymond Road is so appealing for
18 people cutting through, because it's so difficult to
19 get through this area.

20 Well, we could mitigate Blue Back
21 Square's impact with some modifications to these
22 signals and some timing stuff, because we really aren't
23 increasing the traffic volume here that much. As I
24 said before, still a majority of the traffic coming to
25 the Center are the people that come to the Center today

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1 and a majority of that is to the west and to the north,
2 not coming off Exit 43. This is mostly commuter
3 traffic and that kind of usage. We are not adding that

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4 much traffic to this location, but what we are
5 proposing is to solve that problem. We are proposing
6 to add a double right-turn lane on the ramp to, again,
7 reduce the queuing of the people coming off the ramp
8 and widen the pavement on Park Road in this location to
9 provide a double left-hand turn onto Trout Brook.
10 Today you can get, you know, half a dozen cars that can
11 stack up here, and if you are waiting on the ramp, you
12 can't get through. You sit there, it backs up, and it
13 is just a domino effect. With this improvement, it
14 will allow traffic to get through much quicker, much
15 more efficiently. We are going to retime these three
16 signals to allow for that green time that we are going
17 to save by this improvement to be distributed and
18 reduce the queues that happen at that location. Today
19 in the p.m., on Trout Brook, 23 cars on average back up
20 there. So who wants to wait in that line? You are
21 waiting for multiple signals, multiple cycles of the
22 signals. People cut down Boulevard, come over to
23 Raymond and shoot onto the on-ramp. We are going to
24 avoid that. We are going to reduce that down to four
25 vehicles during the p.m. peak hour, a significant

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1 improvement to the operations there.

2 Of course this is a state, it's a state
3 ramp, subject to their review. We've had discussions
4 with them about what we are proposing about the
5 project, ongoing discussions, and the likelihood is we

6 probably will have to submit for a state traffic
7 permit, yes, STC permit for operations, and we are
8 working through that with them.

9 This mitigation here is also coupled
10 with some improvements on South Main. We are modifying
11 signals, adding lanes to approaches, improving the
12 conditions along South Main Street, and I'll show you a
13 graphic later that illustrates those changes, but in
14 concert with these improvements to park and the
15 improvements to making the arterials more desirable to
16 use, Trout Brook again, with the extension of Memorial
17 Road, another gateway into the Center, so that
18 connection will be direct into the western part of the
19 Center, but as part of that, we want to deemphasize the
20 use of the residential streets. And how are we going
21 to do that? We are going to add a number of features.
22 If we go up to Burr Street and the intersection of Burr
23 and Raymond, I think you saw Richard describe a park
24 that we are proposing here. Well, it's not just a park
25 on that land. We are shifting that park out further

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1 into the road, reducing the lane width and along with
2 that, providing flush pavers similar to what you
3 have -- you've been doing throughout the Town on
4 Farmington, kind of dividing the road, giving a
5 different feel to the roadway. We are going to work
6 with the Town staff and the neighbors, develop some
7 signage there and some plantings maybe to clearly

8 define that you are entering into a residential
9 neighborhood. This isn't an arterial. It's a
10 different feel than Trout Brook or South Main Street.
11 We are going to do that same kind of feature all along
12 Raymond Road, all the way through down to Park, so that
13 paver, that entering into a neighborhood feel, but we
14 are also going to retime the signals here on Park and
15 on Boulevard to make it less desirable to go through
16 Raymond Road. It's going to take longer to get through
17 Raymond Road. We are adding a signal up at the
18 intersection of Raymond Road and Memorial.

19 If we go a little further, at the
20 Memorial extension today, it operates fairly well
21 because there is really no traffic in, but again, this
22 will be a gateway into this section of the Center. We
23 are going to be adding a light there. So the trip from
24 Farmington down to park on Raymond Road will be much
25 less attractive. There won't be any need to cut

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1 through the neighborhoods when park -- when Trout Brook
2 and South Main Street will operate in a much more
3 efficient manner.

4 So those are the things we are doing.
5 What does that mean? I'd like to show you a slide that
6 puts it into simple terms. We have, again, a very
7 detailed report with lots of numbers and letters. Some
8 of you are familiar with level of service, the alphabet
9 grade. It doesn't give you a clear indication

10 sometimes of what is the impact. So I'd like to show
11 you this slide here. Again, this is the same slide
12 with Farmington and Trout Brook and South Main and
13 Sedgwick. These numbers are seconds. This is the a.m.
14 peak period. These numbers represent the average
15 change in delay at an intersection. Some of the
16 approaches may be a little bit more. Some of them, in
17 most cases, a little bit less. But what this is is the
18 average delay. When you do an analysis of an
19 intersection at a peak period, at the end of the
20 analysis, it will tell you what the delay is at the
21 intersection. This is the average delay at each one of
22 these intersections. This is the change in that delay
23 from the condition that will exist in 2006 without Blue
24 Back Square and with Blue Back Square.

25 As you can see, in the green circles,

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1 they are all decreases in delay. These are
2 improvements to the intersections. Not only with our
3 traffic, but the projected traffic of what's going to
4 happen in Town the next couple of years.

5 The circles in yellow are the increases.
6 As you can see, in support of those arterial, improving
7 the arterials, making them more desirable. You can see
8 minus 8 at Park and Sedgwick, minus 12 at Boulevard.
9 All minus numbers as you get up into the Blue Back
10 Square area.

11 You can see the significant improvement
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12 at the Exit 43 ramp, 37 seconds less of a delay with
13 the Blue Back Square project, encouraging people to use
14 Trout Brook and go into the site, and you can also see
15 the increase, the slight increase, as it will, on
16 Raymond Road. The largest in the a.m. peak period, the
17 largest increase in delay of anywhere in our project
18 study area is 7 seconds, only 7 seconds, something that
19 you really wouldn't even be able to perceive, and this
20 is only because we are, again, penalizing that
21 approach.

22 The p.m. peak period is very similar, as
23 you can see. Negative numbers all along the arterials.
24 We have a positive number here only because there
25 really isn't that much traffic coming in and out of

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1 there today. Negative numbers along South Main Street.
2 Two seconds increase at South Main and Farmington.
3 Again, a negligible unperceivable increase. This is
4 that change in delay one can expect in the overall
5 intersection. The largest increase we have here is 10
6 seconds, only 10 seconds up at Route 44 and Mountain
7 road. So you can see from this, we not only mitigated
8 our traffic, but we've improved situations throughout
9 the Town, not even based on what's happening out there
10 today, what's going to happen in three years, two
11 years, with the 2006 traffic and the natural growth
12 that is happening in Town. So we believe that this has
13 gone a long way in improving the situation that exists

14 out there today in the Town.

15 We think this customized plan holds true
16 to all these principles, maintains and balances these
17 principles while still addressing operational and
18 safety issues, you know, while maintaining that
19 character of West Hartford.

20 As professionals, we think this
21 management plan will mitigate our impact, but will also
22 improve existing inadequacies throughout the Center,
23 and that's why we are excited about the solutions,
24 about the program that we are proposing, and why we
25 feel Blue Back Square won't have an impact on the

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1 quality of life or the operations of the existing
2 Center. Thank you.

3 MR. HEAPES: Thank you, John. Pretty
4 comprehensive plan. Let me run through it again. Not
5 only are we creating a walkable district as part of the
6 Center, we are doubling all pedestrian access between
7 two sides. Probably the thing I'm most proud of in
8 this project is that pedestrian crosswalk in front of
9 the library, because I've seen too many near misses out
10 there as well as Ellsworth. We are taking some traffic
11 off the neighborhoods. Remember Burr will not have
12 municipal traffic on it now. It will primarily be
13 residential traffic. You won't get here on Burr.
14 Helping to clarify things on Boulevard, helping to
15 discourage the use of Raymond, and most importantly,

16 which is the key to unlocking this, is the
17 reconfiguration and fixing of the ramps.

18 By the way, that's how much time you
19 will have not spent on the ramps, all the time I just
20 talked about. That's an extraordinary, I in 25 years
21 have never been able to tell this kind of traffic
22 story. It's always been trade-offs, and you had to
23 choose, you had to really give up a lot of pain to have
24 the pedestrian system.

25 I think it's a credit to what we've

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1 I learned from the Town. It's a credit to the way the
2 Town works its traffic. I think it's an extraordinary
3 traffic system and plan. So there is detailed reports
4 of course. I'm sure you'll have lots of questions. We
5 are going to finish up with a few interesting items
6 just as what's the impact. We have some environmental
7 issues on the site, air and noise, the cleanup of the
8 site, and then we will probably break after that,
9 unless you would prefer now. I'll leave it to you.

10 MS. MECK: Mr. Heapes, how long do you
11 think the next --

12 MR. HEAPES: 20 minutes.

13 MS. MECK: Let's do that and we will
14 break afterwards.

15 MR. HEAPES: Great. We have two
16 gentlemen, Peter Guldberg and Eric Henry, who are going
17 to talk about some of the environmental issues on the

18 site, both the impacts in terms of air and noise and
19 what is the condition of the site being a car
20 dealership, et cetera, and I learn how we are dealing
21 with some of those issues. So I'll give you to Peter.

22 MR. GULDBERG: Thank you, Richard. Good
23 evening, Mr. Mayor, Madam Chair and members of the
24 Council and Commission. My name is Peter Guldberg.
25 I'm the president of Tech Environmental, and I'm here

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1 to speak to you about the topics of noise and air
2 quality for Blue Back Square. There are reports on
3 both of those topics that are on the record as part of
4 this application.

5 I have 30 years of experience as a noise
6 and air quality consultant and have worked on hundreds
7 of redevelopment projects throughout the northeast. As
8 to my background, I am a certified consulting
9 meteorologist, I'm a member of the Institute of Noise
10 Control Engineering, and I serve on the Board of
11 Directors of the Environmental Business Council of New
12 England.

13 The objectives of the noise study were
14 first to measure existing sound levels day and night at
15 several locations throughout the site; secondly, to
16 acoustically model how the sound from the project's
17 rooftop mechanical equipment might affect the nearest
18 residences on Burr Street; third, to determine
19 compliance with the Connecticut DEP and West Hartford

20 noise regulations, and finally, to evaluate the sound
21 from the construction of Blue Back Square.

22 Community sound levels are measured on
23 what we call a decibel scale, and decibels have a
24 special set of mathematics to accommodate the wide
25 range of sounds that we hear in our daily lives. Every

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1 3 decibel increase in sound represents a doubling of
2 sound energy. Thus, if you start with a 70 decibel
3 sound, and you add a second identical 70 decibel sound
4 source, the total is 73 decibels, not 140.

5 A 3 decibel change is also the minimum
6 perceptible to most people, and a 10 decibel increase
7 sounds twice as loud. For example, a normal
8 conversational voice between two people that are
9 standing 3 feet apart will be 60 decibels. If one of
10 those people raises their voice and talks twice as
11 loud, then that is 70 decibels.

12 Existing sound levels at the site were
13 measured on the night of Wednesday, April 28, around
14 midnight, and again the following day around midday at
15 four locations where people will congregate in the
16 future once the project is completed. This is Blue
17 Back Square, which is the location in the site plan
18 near where the existing turn on Isham Road is. Blue
19 Back Court, or as it has been referred to most recently
20 as the Building B parking court, the site of the old
21 Chevy dealership, the new Town park which has been

22 discussed earlier in great detail on the site of the
23 Raymond Road lot, and finally the new Town Hall
24 Commons, which will be built in the existing Town Hall
25 parking lot.

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1 Those measurements show that existing
2 sound levels on the site are typical for a suburban
3 area with influences from nearby roadways. The average
4 sound levels at present are 47 to 49 decibels at night,
5 56 to 70 during the daytime. And the dominant sound
6 sources are traffic on the local roads and I-84.

7 The DEP has published noise regulations
8 that limit sound from commercial developments such as
9 Blue Back Square, and West Hartford has a noise
10 ordinance with identical sound limits. The sound from
11 mechanical rooftop equipment on a commercial site is
12 limited by regulation to certain levels at the nearest
13 off-site residential property line. For the south end
14 of the site, near Burr Street, which has relatively
15 high background levels at present, those limits are 55
16 decibels during the day and 50 decibels at night. The
17 regulations also limit sound from rooftop equipment as
18 it may affect other elements of this project, such as
19 on-site parks, public squares and developed areas to 62
20 decibels day and night.

21 Motor vehicle sound is excluded from
22 these limits as U.S. EPA regulates motor vehicle sound
23 at the point of manufacture.

24 We performed acoustic modeling of the
25 sound from the project when it will be completed, and I

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1 wanted to point out that the results are conservative
2 because we assumed simultaneous operation of all
3 rooftop equipment and ignored the sound attenuation
4 from ground absorption or vegetation that may be on the
5 site.

6 To minimize the sound from the HVAC
7 units, the design for Blue Back Square assumes either
8 low noise units or rooftop sound barriers. The
9 modeling results from our work show that the maximum
10 sound levels along Burr Street will be in the range of
11 36 to 42 decibels. Those levels are 8 to 14 decibels
12 below the nighttime residential limit. They are less
13 than existing background and average sound levels, and
14 that sound will be inaudible at the nearest residences.
15 The detailed acoustic analysis, which is in the report
16 that has been provided to you, demonstrates that Blue
17 Back Square fully complies with the DEP and the Town of
18 West Hartford noise regulations.

19 Construction sound levels were estimated
20 at the nearest residences on Burr Street to be in the
21 range of 58 to 64 decibels during the day. These are
22 average construction sound levels. And those levels
23 are close to the existing daytime sound levels along
24 Burr Street of about 60 decibels.

25 While the construction activity

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1 certainly will be audible at times off-site, the sounds
2 will be similar in character to existing roadway sound
3 levels. As the design of Blue Back Square progresses
4 and the construction scheduling is finalized, the
5 developer will work with the community to implement
6 measures that minimize the effects of construction
7 sound.

8 I now want to switch over to the second
9 topic I'm handling for you, which is air quality. The
10 objectives of the air quality study were four. First
11 of all, to summarize existing air quality, second to
12 model the seven roadway intersections around the site
13 to predict levels of carbon monoxide, third to model
14 the emissions from vehicles using the project's
15 garages, and finally to determine compliance with the
16 Connecticut and National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

17 Air quality in the Hartford region is
18 actually quite good and complies with the EPA Air
19 Quality Standards for all regulated pollutants, but
20 ground level ozone. The state of Connecticut and most
21 of the northeast exceeds the ozone standard on a few
22 summer days. Looking at EPA monitoring data from the
23 last three years, the Hartford region exceeds the one
24 hour ozone standard a total of two days per year. It
25 also exceeds the new, more stringent eight-hour ozone

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1 standard which the current administration put into
2 effect just recently on April 30th, a total of six days
3 per year.

4 EPA monitoring data shows substantial
5 improvement in air quality in our region, and there has
6 been a 96 percent decline in the number of bad ozone
7 days over the last 30 years. Connecticut DEP
8 incorporates economic growth for future years in its
9 ozone control plan. It does not track or regulate
10 individual development projects.

11 Blue Back Square is what we call a smart
12 growth project, in that it minimizes air pollutant
13 emissions because it focuses its activity in the center
14 of the community instead of encouraging longer vehicle
15 trips to outlying areas. The heating and cooling for
16 this project will only use clean fuels and electricity.
17 It will have insignificant effect on local air quality.

18 The Blue Back Square vehicle trips and
19 their associated missions were studied at seven
20 intersections, as I mentioned, and those are Raymond
21 Road from Farmington down to Memorial and Burr; South
22 Main Street from Farmington down to Memorial Burr; and
23 finally at Trout Brook and Memorial.

24 These are the intersections where
25 project traffic volumes will be greatest and project

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1 trips will diminish with distance from the site as the
2 cars diffuse out from the Center along the network.
3 This list also includes the one intersection with the
4 longest vehicle delay time in the future built case,
5 and that is Main Street and Farmington, and therefore
6 the one intersection with the greatest potential for
7 any air quality problems.

8 Following EPA guidance, carbon monoxide,
9 which is abbreviated as CO, studies if an air quality
10 problem from roadway traffic were to occur, the CO
11 standard would be the first to be exceeded. The
12 results from the air quality study show that all CO
13 levels near the intersections in the site will be
14 safely in compliance with air quality standards. Those
15 standards, by the way, have been set by EPA to protect
16 the most sensitive groups in the population with a
17 margin of safety. The existing maximum CO levels on an
18 eight-hour period near the site are in the range of 4
19 to 6 parts per million. We abbreviate that as PPM.
20 And the air quality standard is 9 parts per million.

21 In the future year, 2006, for both the
22 no-build and build case, the CO levels at these
23 intersections will be slightly lower, in the range of 4
24 to 5 parts per million. This is because the vehicle
25 population gets cleaner with each successive year from

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1 now to 2006. The differences between the no build and

2 the build cases are 1 part per million. These are all
3 conservative estimates because they include a
4 background level of 3 parts per million which is high
5 for a suburban area such as West Hartford.

6 The air quality effects of cars using
7 the parking garages were also studied and the modeling
8 results showed that the CO levels near the garages
9 would be safely in compliance with the standards as
10 well.

11 Finally Blue Back Square will have a
12 comprehensive air quality mitigation program during
13 construction. Best management practices will be used
14 to maintain a dust-free work zone, including water
15 sprays in exposed soil, wheel washing for trucks and
16 street sweeping. The entire site will be wrapped by
17 fencing that is covered with a solid tarp to contain
18 the dust on the site and to insure compliance with air
19 quality standards everywhere near the project site.

20 In summary, the Blue Back Square project
21 will comply with all air quality standards, and it will
22 not adversely affect air quality in West Hartford.
23 Thank you for your attention.

24 MR. HENRY: Good evening. Members of
25 the Council, Commission, Mayor. My name is Eric Henry.

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1 I am a project manager and geologist with Langan
2 Engineering. I'm also what you call an LEP, that
3 stands for licensed environmental professional,

4 certified with the state of Connecticut.

5 I'm here to summarize the environmental
6 issues for the site. I'll start off with the
7 environmental requirements and the regulations that
8 apply to the Blue Back Square project.

9 Environmental assessments were completed
10 for each of the project properties. The pertinent
11 regulations are what are called the Connecticut DEP's
12 Remediation Standard Regulations, or RSRs. These are
13 any remediation at these properties has to comply with
14 these RSR regulations. A key benefit of the project is
15 the cleanup of the long vacant private parcel, AKA, the
16 Grody property, which is in the -- if you look on the
17 board over here, it's in the northeast corner of the
18 project.

19 Two key points are that one, the Town
20 will be fully indemnified for any environmental
21 condition on this North Garage parcel. That's the AKA,
22 the Grody parcel, and two, that the environmental
23 remediation will be conducted in accordance with the
24 DEP, the DEP regulations, the RSRs. We will talk a
25 little bit about the nature of the contaminants that we

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1 have, that we found on these properties within the
2 project. The primary parcel of concern is the Grody
3 parcel. This has been extensively studied. We've also
4 found a minor issue on the Board of Education property,
5 that's where the Building A is going to go. It's

6 actually in the parking lot of the current Board of
7 Education property. It's related to a former tank.
8 Both the Grody and the Town-owned Board of Education
9 parcels are subject to the Connecticut Transfer Act,
10 which insures that the remediation will be conducted in
11 accordance with the RSRs, the regulations I just cited.

12 At the Grody parcel, there are
13 underground storage tanks that have been used
14 historically to store petroleum products such as
15 gasoline, diesel fuel, waste oil. These types of
16 contaminants are consistent with historical use of the
17 property, as an automobile dealership and a vehicle
18 repair shop.

19 As for the Town-owned BOE property, the
20 Board of Education property, I'm sorry, we have
21 identified a limited release from a former gasoline
22 tank. It is important to note that because of the --
23 because the identified contaminants are relatively
24 common, so in turn are the planned remediation measures
25 to deal with these.

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1 I'll talk about the remediation, the
2 plan remediation for these parcels. Remediation of the
3 Grody and the Board of Education parcels is the
4 obligation of Blue Back Square Development, the
5 developer. First, I'll focus on the Grody parcel,
6 where there are three key elements to the remediation
7 plan. The first element is excavation of contaminated

8 soils. Those will be transported to a licensed
9 facility for recycling and disposal. The second is the
10 installation of a sub-grade ventilation system to
11 insure that there is no future impact, and as a safety
12 measure, an ongoing safety measure at the North Garage.
13 Please note that both of these measures, the excavation
14 and the installation of the ventilation system will be
15 completed during the construction phase of the North
16 Garage.

17 The third element for the Grody parcel
18 is long-term groundwater monitoring. This is to verify
19 the effectiveness of the remedial action and to
20 demonstrate continuing compliance with the regulations.
21 For the Town-owned Board of Education parcel, the
22 intended remediation is very similar to what we've
23 outlined for the Grody parcel. For this property, we
24 plan to excavate the impacted soils and then complete a
25 long-term groundwater monitoring program to demonstrate

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1 compliance.

2 To summarize, all remediation will fully
3 satisfy the DEP standards. Thank you.

4 MR. HEAPES: Thank you. I think what
5 I'd like to do is, we have one more segment which kind
6 of wraps things together. I would suggest that we take
7 a break and come back. We will introduce that and go
8 on from there.

9 MS. MECK: We will take a ten-minute

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10 break and reconvene then.

11 (Whereupon, a brief recess was
12 taken at 9:15 p.m. until 9:34 p.m.)

13 MS. MECK: I'd like to reconvene this
14 public hearing, please. Are you ready? Mr. Heapes,
15 when you are ready.

16 MR. HEAPES: Thank you. We started
17 Thursday night with the Town giving an introduction
18 about how this fit into the long term, some 20-year
19 conversation about the things the Town would like to
20 do.

21 We'd like to finish our discussion
22 tonight with a little review of how this does fit
23 within the policies of those past 20 years and the
24 planning, and to do that we've asked Bruce Hoben of
25 Planimetrics to give the final discussion.

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1 MR. HOBEN: Good evening, Commissioners
2 and Council members. I'm Bruce Hoben, I'm with the
3 firm of Planimetrics. We are located just over the
4 mountain in Avon. We are a land use consulting firm.
5 We do work throughout the state of Connecticut. We
6 pretty much specialize in working with municipalities
7 in updating their plans of development and rewriting
8 their zoning regulations, their subdivision regulations
9 and doing special area studies.

10 I've been in this business for over 30
11 years. Prior to becoming a consultant some 17 years

12 ago, I worked as a planning director for the Town of
13 Farmington and before that as a Town planner in Avon.

14 I've been asked tonight to put in
15 context the Blue Back Square plan in terms of does it
16 make sense from a land use perspective. Now, certainly
17 anybody can have an opinion on that, but I think to
18 have an informed opinion, you want to go to some
19 standards and some sources. I would suggest that the
20 first thing we look at is whether or not the plan as
21 proposed is consistent with the Town's plan of
22 conservation and development. Having gone through
23 that, we then look to zoning and the stated purposes of
24 zoning and the guidelines of zoning to see if it makes
25 sense in that context, and finally because the Special

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1 Development District takes such an important role in
2 this overall plan, we should examine whether or not
3 that's an appropriate vehicle for implementing the
4 plan.

5 You all know you've got a very long
6 history of planning, an aggressive history, if you
7 will. I'm not going to go through all these plans, but
8 I did and I've submitted a written report that pulls
9 out the relevant aspects of them. I would point out
10 that as a result of some almost 40 years of planning,
11 some five themes jumped out at me, especially related
12 to the Center. First of all, the Town knows that a
13 varied tax base is very important. They know that

14 because they want to produce the types of services they
15 produced over the years and that costs money, and to do
16 that, you need a good tax base.

17 The Town also knows that you don't have
18 vacant areas that you can just move into. That's not
19 an option. The only way you are going to get more
20 growth, more diversified growth is to intensify uses in
21 areas that already have commercial use.

22 The Center has always been viewed as a
23 significant economic asset for the Town. It's got
24 access. It's got infrastructure, it's got available
25 land, it's underutilized. And from '72 forward, it's

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1 been recognized that portions of the Center certainly
2 are underutilized. Clearly aesthetics is a very
3 important issue in the town. It has been from day one.

4 If we look at the current plan that was
5 adopted in 1997, and pull out some of the policies,
6 objectives and statements, and then compare those
7 things with Blue Back Square, I think we can get some
8 sense of whether or not the plan as proposed is
9 consistent with the current plan, that is, the plan
10 that was adopted in 1997.

11 One of the economic development
12 objectives stated in the plan is that there should be a
13 strengthening and diversifying the community tax base,
14 and you do this by promoting new development in
15 underutilized commercial and industrial districts.

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16 Another thing you've heard before I
17 started speaking, I think, tells you the story about
18 what's taking place where, the nature of the
19 development, and the fact that it meets with, it
20 clearly meets with this objective. There is an
21 investment of over 110 million dollars. It's 570,000
22 square feet of mixed-use space and the area for which
23 it is proposed is underutilized at the current time.

24 Another statement in the plan is that to
25 encourage higher economic utilization of commercial and

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1 industrial properties, this should be done where the
2 physical and land characteristics, traffic conditions
3 and infrastructure can really support it.

4 Again, I think you've heard from
5 speakers that came up here before I started that we
6 certainly have the infrastructure that can accommodate
7 what is being proposed, that there is a mixed-use
8 development being proposed, and that the Raymond Road,
9 Isham Road area is underutilized. Clearly it's on the
10 mark in terms of -- Blue Back Square is on the mark in
11 terms of this particular statement from the plan.

12 Another objective of the plan states
13 that to improve and promote the visual harmony of the
14 commercial area by encouraging continuity of street
15 level uses, facades, streetscape materials, signage and
16 furnishing. You've got very detailed plans that have
17 been submitted that control signage, streetscape,

18 amenities, storefront design. Clearly these guidelines
19 and standards exceed what's in your zoning regulations.
20 And the comprehensive approach that melds all these
21 standards into an overall plan is one that really tells
22 me that that particular objective is being met head on.
23 There is a suggestion that you need to
24 continue to support the physical quality and diversity
25 of West Hartford Center so as to encourage its

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1 continued economic vitality. This almost speaks
2 directly to the Town and the actions that they should
3 take, and I think that perhaps the substantial program
4 that's being undertaken, it's being undertaken because
5 of a partnership between the Town and the developer.
6 It results in redevelopment of the Center. It results
7 in businesses being proposed and to be put in place
8 that are going to complement rather than compete with
9 the existing Center, and of course, the governmental
10 buildings and uses are going to continue to have a very
11 strong role in the Center.

12 When we get through looking at these
13 various statements in the plan, can we conclude that
14 the plan as proposed is consistent with the Town's plan
15 of conservation and development? I think that the plan
16 clearly takes the major themes from the plan of
17 conservation and development, that is mixed-use
18 development, pedestrian-oriented development, high
19 quality and attractive development, and development

20 that complements the existing Center and integrates all
21 these themes into a comprehensive plan for not only
22 complementing but reinvigorating the Center. It's
23 clearly consistent with what the plan of development
24 says should happen in the Center.

25 I will go through the zoning

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1 regulations, and as I said, pick out some statements
2 that give us some guidance as to whether or not the
3 plan as proposed is consistent with the zoning. I
4 think that that got misplaced, but I might as well
5 cover it. No, I'm going to skip it, if you don't mind.

6 Is the proposed developmental plan
7 consistent with the purposes of the zones within which
8 its located, the central business district and the
9 central business district high intensive? Well, the
10 purpose of these districts is to encourage the
11 concentration of a wide variety of stores, services and
12 activities. We've got 570,000 square feet of mixed-use
13 development, and again the governmental buildings
14 continue to play a very strong role, so in terms of the
15 purpose of the zone, just from those two observations
16 alone, we can come to the conclusion that the purpose
17 is met.

18 Zoning regulations also give us some
19 other guidance in terms of when it's appropriate to
20 establish the central business district high intensive
21 zone, and it says it should be done when you want to

22 encourage pedestrian-oriented use on the street level
23 and residences and professional offices are appropriate
24 for providing the compatibility with the retail uses by
25 locating them on the upper floors. With street level

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1 exposure to destination retail, specialty retail,
2 restaurants, entertainment, it clearly predominates in
3 the site plan, if you've got a couple of minutes to
4 look at it, almost everywhere with the exception of the
5 parking garage and perhaps the VFW exposure, you've got
6 the street level exposure that you want with the
7 activities that you need to keep the Center a vibrant
8 place for pedestrians. The upper floors are
9 compatible, but uses that need not be on the street
10 level floors.

11 Is the high density designation for
12 portions of the Center appropriate and how do we make
13 that judgment? Well, we look at surrounding uses. We
14 have to determine whether or not there is adequate
15 infrastructure, and we have to determine whether or not
16 it complements the existing scale of the Center. I
17 would note that the CBDH is being proposed in areas
18 that abut the existing central business district center
19 zone, so that from that perspective, it's compatible
20 with the adjacent land uses. We've heard testimony
21 that the infrastructure is adequate. The addition of
22 on-street parking and the parking garages ensure that
23 we've got sufficient parking. You've heard about the

24 traffic improvements. And I think the scale of the
25 Center is reinforced because the plan picks up on the

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1 major elements of this Center, the large trees, the
2 wide sidewalks, the pedestrian friendly environment,
3 the streetscape, the amenities. So from the
4 perspective of whether or not the central business high
5 intensity district is appropriate, I think that we can
6 come to the conclusion that it is.

7 The Special Development District is
8 being proposed as, you know, another layer, if you
9 will, implementing this plan, and the purpose of the
10 district is to encourage a variety and flexibility in
11 land development, and it's got to be in harmony with
12 the Town's plan of conservation and development. We've
13 been through the conservation and development stuff
14 that I just talked about. How does, is it from the
15 perspective of providing another layer of control and,
16 if you will, flexibility, does the development district
17 zoning approach help out? It clearly does.

18 You are aware that both the BC and the
19 CBDH zones require a whole bunch of uses as of right.
20 Someone can walk in with a set of plans, get a sign-off
21 from the Town planner in terms of site plan review, and
22 the next step is to get a building permit.

23 Well, imagine if that were to happen for
24 all the separate parcels that are underutilized in the
25 Center right now. There is no way that you can even

1 come closer to getting the project that is being
2 proposed. You couldn't do it because you wouldn't have
3 all those properties under one ownership. You couldn't
4 do it because it wouldn't be any incentive for
5 individual property owners to cooperate with each
6 other.

7 Because there has been an assemblage of
8 property, because the Special Development District tool
9 is being used, you are going to end up with a plan
10 that's going to be clearly superior to anything you
11 could get were you to use the standard zoning approach.
12 So I think it's very clear that the Special Development
13 District is a most appropriate tool to use in terms of
14 the development of the Center.

15 The questions that I posed at the
16 beginning were: Is the project proposed consistent
17 with the plan of conservation and development for the
18 Town of West Hartford? The answer is yes. Is the
19 proposed development plan consistent with the purposes
20 of the central business district-high intensive
21 district as well as with the purposes of the central
22 business district zone? The answer is yes. And is the
23 Special Development District an appropriate means for
24 guiding the proposed development? Again, the answer is
25 yes.

1 I need to offer just a personal
2 observation here. I've been doing this stuff for about
3 35 years, and I have yet to be as impressed with a
4 project as I am with this one. I am impressed with the
5 scope of the project. I am impressed with the details
6 of the project. I am impressed with the scale of the
7 project. But most of all, I'm impressed with the
8 diligence of the developer in discovering those things
9 that are most important for the Center and making sure
10 that they got put into this plan. You've got a winner
11 here. From a planning perspective, you couldn't do
12 better. That's my presentation. And thank you very
13 much.

14 MR. HEAPES: Thank you, Bruce. If I
15 could, let me just spend a couple of minutes
16 summarizing what we talked about tonight. We talked
17 about the need to do some zoning and site work to
18 achieve a goal at this part of the Center, in terms of
19 land use, ownership, operations, maintenance would look
20 like every other part of this Center, sort of one
21 pattern of these uses for the Center.

22 Number 2, we talked about the site, who
23 was really driven by two things, creating a walkable
24 district. It's flat with wide sidewalks that
25 accommodates the same pedestrianism as the other part

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1 of the Center, and accommodating a new park through the
2 use or the application of a wetlands permit.

3 We talked about a parking system that's
4 owned by the same management authority, the Town as the
5 other part of the Center, and it's based on the same
6 park once and walk on the sidewalk system that today's
7 Center was.

8 We talked about an extraordinary traffic
9 plan that actually makes half the Center more
10 pedestrian friendly, adds more than an acre of new
11 sidewalks, connects to the existing Center across Main
12 Street at two places, while at the same time improving
13 the traffic situation at many intersections and
14 discouraging traffic through the neighborhoods.

15 We showed you that we understand and are
16 responsible for many of the implications, including
17 existing conditions, such as environmental conditions,
18 and future conditions, such as noise and air control,
19 both through construction and on the buildings, and I
20 think finally we've helped put in context the source of
21 this project in your own dialogue, over 20 years that
22 it's taken us several months to learn about.

23 If I were to summarize what you may have
24 heard the last two days, I will tell you that there is
25 nothing we are proposing as a development team that we

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1 haven't done before. This is not some grand experiment
2 to be put on your town. I hope that through the course

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3 of this discussion you can see just the little
4 slightest inkling of the thoroughness and the expertise
5 of ourselves and/or consultants and how serious we take
6 these issues. We take every one of them very serious.
7 I hope that you've heard that not only have we done
8 this before, we do these one at a time. You can't get
9 them right being part of some institutional program.
10 We are committed to that. My partners are committed to
11 that, and I hope first and foremost you heard that we
12 were committed to working with you on your five goals.
13 We are committed to getting the library expanded and
14 added to as an anchor in the Center. We are committed
15 to getting the Board of Ed consolidated with the Town
16 administration here as you are. We are committed to
17 over 100 million dollars of investment on the east
18 side, one of your goals, private investment, private
19 sector investment, and we are committed to doing it in
20 a mixed-use fashion that creates a new neighborhood
21 that first and foremost in every way we can possibly
22 think of connects to the existing Center. That's our
23 goal. I believe that's your goal.

24 I want to first and foremost thank
25 everyone on TV and watching TV tonight, all the

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1 citizens who have been so generous with their comments,
2 that have helped us get to this point, and certainly
3 thank you for your attention, and we will look forward
4 in the next two nights of continuing this conversation,

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5 and I can't wait to see you on Wednesday night.

6 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Heapes.

7 Before we recess for the evening, I'll just make one
8 comment, and that is to thank you for your presentation
9 and thank all the consultants that have joined you here
10 this evening, and I will say that although this
11 evening's presentation perhaps was not as flashy or as
12 captivating as Thursday's presentation, I can say that
13 I personally, and I believe I speak for a good number
14 of the people sitting up here with me this evening,
15 welcome the chance to review in great detail the actual
16 details behind some of those flashy pictures and
17 captivating graphics, and I know that for many of us
18 this made us understand the project in a way we
19 couldn't have just from that overview, so I thank you
20 for that detailed explanation.

21 I will just add on a personal note and
22 what I found perhaps most rivoting this evening is that
23 I've always tried to time my trips to West Hartford
24 Center to run errands in a time that I thought was good
25 and that I could find a parking space, and so what was

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1 particularly interesting to me was your traffic peak
2 flow analysis, which validated the reason that I can't
3 find a parking space because I have been making those
4 trips consecutively at 1:00 in the afternoon.

5 So I thank you for that as well. Before
6 we recess for the evening, Mr. Harris, do you have any

7 additional comments.

8 Mr. Heapes, you had submitted to the
9 Town Clerk the Power Point presentation from last
10 Thursday night, will that also include the Power Point
11 from tonight's presentation or can you make that
12 available to us?

13 MR. HEAPES: I will do that tomorrow.

14 MS. MECK: Okay. With that, I'd like to
15 thank all of you for joining us --

16 MR. VERRENGIA: I just have one
17 question.

18 MS. MECK: Yes, Mr. Verrengia.

19 MR. VERRENGIA: I don't know if this is
20 working. We are in receipt of the developer's traffic
21 study. I know that Tom was going to do one also. I
22 was just wondering maybe through you, through the Town
23 Manager, if we have that study, and also I believe
24 there was another economic study that was going to be
25 done.

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1 MS. MECK: Mr. Feldman.

2 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, hopefully
3 Wednesday we will cover those topics and even more.

4 MS. MECK: And Mr. Feldman, you'll make
5 those studies available for our review as well.

6 MR. FELDMAN: Yes.

7 MS. MECK: Thank you. Any further
8 questions before we recess? With that, we will recess

9 for this evening and reconvene on Wednesday, June 16 at
10 6:15. Thank you.

11 (Public hearing concluded at 9:54 p.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE

2 I hereby certify that the foregoing 115 pages are
3 a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of
4 my original stenotype notes taken of the Joint Hearing
5 between West Hartford Town Council and West Hartford
6 Town Plan and Zoning Commission, which was held at West
7 Hartford Town Hall Auditorium, 50 South Main Street,
8 West Hartford, Connecticut, on June 14, 2004.

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Sandra V. Semevolos
RMR, CRR, LSR # 00074
Certified Court Reporter

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