

CITY OF TORRINGTON



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To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Jeremy Leifert, AICP, City Planner JL
Date: December 21, 2022
Subject: 8-24 Referral, Proposed Lot Line Revision of City Land, Hogan Drive and Petricone Drive and the proposed sale of 9.83 acres of land of the former East School Property owned by the City of Torrington, Assessor's Map 139/002/010

At their December 5, 2022 meeting, City Council voted to make two referrals to the Planning and Zoning Commission under Connecticut General Statutes section 8-24:

1. To review a proposed lot line revision between two adjacent City-owned parcels consisting of the former East School Property (215 Hogan Drive, MBL 139/002/010) and the Joe Ruwet Playground property (219 Petricone Drive, MBL 139/003/028).
2. To review a proposed sale of 9.83 acres of the former East School property to EdAdvance as outlined in the minutes of the special joint meeting of the City Council, Board of Finance and Board of Education on December 5, 2022 (attached) as revised on the maps referenced in this memo.

The Board of Education and City Council, with the review and advice of Corporation Counsel Vic Muschell have negotiated successfully with EdAdvance for the purchase of 9.83 acres of the former East School property including the adjacent parking lots. Drawings were submitted showing the proposed new property lines titled "Compilation Plan prepared for Land of City of Torrington, Hogan Drive and Petricone Drive, Torrington, Connecticut" by Hrica Associates, Litchfield, Connecticut. Dated October 26, 2022. 2 Sheets. The City will retain 21.2 acres of property under the new proposed boundaries of the Joe Ruwet Playground. This property transfer will benefit both the Board of Education, who will no longer retain maintenance responsibilities, but will continue to partner with EdAdvance to offer student services to the City. EdAdvance will benefit by owning the building and no longer leasing from the City for the use of the building.

The proposed revisions to the lot lines between the two properties referenced above as well as the sale of 9.83 acres of the former East School property and building complies with zoning regulations and is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development.

I recommend that the Planning and Zoning Commission vote to make a favorable recommendation and report to the City Council under the requirements of CGS 8-24 regarding the above referenced lot line revision and property sale.

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL & WPCA
BOARD OF FINANCE AND
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
City Hall Auditorium / Zoom
December 5, 2022

A **SPECIAL JOINT MEETING** of the City Council and Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), the Board of Finance, and the Board of Education for the City of Torrington was held at the City Hall Auditorium on Monday, December 5, 2022. Present at the City Hall auditorium were Mayor Elinor Carbone, Corporation Counsel Victor Muschell, City Councilors Drake Waldron, and Anne Ruwet, Board of Finance members Chris Beyus, James Wright, Laurene Pesce, Deborah Iannacito, and Christopher Anderson, and Board of Education members Fiona Cappabianca, John Kissko, Ellen Hoehne, Edward Corey, Cathy Todor, and Glenn Burger. Also present at City Hall were Superintendent Susan Lubomski, Public Works Director Ray Drew, Acting Fire Chief Dave Tripp, Tax Collector Launa Goslee, Deputy Public Works Director – City Engineer Paul Kundzins, Treasurer Dan Farley, Facilities Director Jamie Sykora, and Building Committee Co-Chair Ed Arum. Councilors David Oliver and Paul Cavagnero joined via Zoom. Also joining via Zoom were Comptroller Robin Stanziale, Building Committee Co-Chair Mario Longobucco, and Director of Information Technology Gerry Crowley. Councilors Keri Hoehne, Armand Maniccia, Board of Finance member Mark Buska, and Board of Education members Jessica Richardson, Gary Eucalitto, and Susan DePretis were absent.

Mayor Carbone opened the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Discussion

Superintendent Susan Lubomski explained to the Boards that the Torrington Board of Education has been a partner with Ed Advance for many years, and since 2019 they have helped run the special education, expulsion, and transitions programs out of East School, so selling the school to them would make sense. She said that having these programs right in town saves them on the cost of transportation and provides a comfort level to the students. Ms. Cappabianca further explained the benefit of selling East School to Ed Advance is a huge cost saving to the Torrington Board of Education. She said that they have a place to house students who are expelled from school and need the same hours as regular students. She went on to say that with the ongoing maintenance issues with the school and other repairs Ed Advance is willing to take on. Mayor Carbone went over the terms of the proposed contract from Ed Advance to purchase East School. She mentioned that Ed Advance would make a \$500,000 payment to the City of Torrington upon transfer of title, along with paying for half of the cost for obtaining a land survey, honoring the arrangements established between the Board of Education and Ed Advance for year 4 in their lease, and adding a new 10-year agreement between Ed Advance and the Torrington Public Schools which would include an annual tuition discount of 20% for students for the first 5 years and then reduced to 10% for the next 5 years. She went on to say that over the course of the next 10 years, the savings will roughly be 10 million dollars. Mr. Beyus wanted to ensure that the terms of the contract would remain the same if Ed Advance were to sell the building within the next two years, Ms. Cappabianca stated that the contract stated the specific programs that would be covered, that they would have to be notified yearly as of December 31st of any changes that are being made, and that after the 10 years they will still honor spaces for students. Atty. Vic Muschell reiterated that the services are what the contract is covering and not the building itself, and he will ensure that it is written in the contract that if they move, those same levels of services will still be provided. Jeffrey Kitching, the Executive Director of Ed Advance, let the Boards know that they need to be based in Torrington because that's where they are most needed. Mr. Beyus asked about the renovation plans for East School, Mr. Kitching let him know that the renovations will be done in phases, with phase 1 being the high-priority items that need to be addressed. Mr. Anderson wanted to ensure that the \$500,000 would be earmarked for the Board of Education come the budget season, Mayor Carbone assured him that it would be and that it would be considered a one-time revenue payment.

East School – Vote by the Board of Education

On a motion by Mr. Corey, seconded by Mr. Burger, the Board of Education voted unanimously to return the East School building to the City of Torrington effective as of the date of the transfer of title to Ed Advance.

East School Referral to Planning & Zoning Commission – Vote by City Council

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to refer to Planning & Zoning Commission for a Section 8-24 review of proposed lot line revisions to two City of Torrington properties. Property A: Joe Ruwet Playground, Map Block Lot (MBL): 039/003/028, and Property B: Former East School, MBL 139/002/010 as detailed on Map #0873.

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to refer to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a Section 8-24 review of the proposed sale of the Former East School, MBL 139/002/010 as detailed on Map #0873.

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Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Beyus, the Boards voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk*

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK