

TO BE READ INTO THE RECORD:

Shelley Michelson

Dear President Curtis and Members of the Stamford Board of Representatives,

When one thinks of New England towns and cities, a vision emerges of a town green with an historic, beautiful and well maintained town hall. What do you see when you come into Stamford? No town green, no beautiful seat of government, but an old, deteriorating corporate building that houses our government functions, a building that is difficult to access and very unwelcoming. As the very unattractive concrete physical symbol of our administrative functions, Stamford's Government Center is the perfect embodiment of the City's attitude towards its historic buildings and the "repurposing" of its previous beautiful town hall. Approaching Stamford from either north or south, a driver or Metro-North commuter is overwhelmed by a dense urban jungle of tightly knit buildings lacking any discernable design standards or land use controls. Welcome to Stamford!

The building at 35 Crescent Street was a school for nearly seventy years, beginning in 1900. When a fire occurred in 1969, the City wanted to raze the building, but the community rallied to the defense of the building and convinced the City to convert it into a different community asset: a community center.

The Mayor's office and the Planning and Zoning Boards' prevailing attitude towards these historic buildings, including the Glenbrook Community Center, seems to be: how can we monetize them? Let's sell them to developers for whatever we can exact and we'll change the zoning to whatever the developer desires. Future tax revenue always seems to be more important than services to the community and the community at large never benefits from these added revenues via property tax relief.

It's high time for our government to take pride in our history and what is left of it! As an urban planner and a municipal credit professional, **I implore you to oppose the sale of the historic Crescent Street Property.** Its façade is beautiful and I am sure a use can be found that benefits the entire community instead of turning it over to private interests for residential use.

In considering the ongoing use of this building, a series of questions should be considered.

- How hard did the City try to find a community use for this building before abandoning it?
- Why did the City fail over the years to maintain the building properly such that the purpose of the building could not be continued without considerable rehabilitation?
- How will the services previously provided in this building (preschool and afterschool services, summer camp, substance abuse services, exercise classes for senior citizens and other age groups) be replaced for the community?
- Is the sale price appropriate? Apparently, one appraisal returned a value of \$1.8 million, but the purchase price is listed at \$700k.

When you research users' ratings of the services that they were provided within the building, you will find that 19 of the 20 individuals who used services provided in the building and responded on one website rated their experiences in the 4-5 star categories. Importantly, the Chamber of Commerce gave the services 4.6 stars.

Converting this historic building into apartments is a slap in the face to the Glenbrook community and reflects the City's obsession with transit-oriented development. How many residents will actually be riding Metro-North to work?

Stamford has seen a tremendous building boom for residential use. Affordable housing is a laudable goal, but it should not supersede the need for community services. Why are we not considering community benefit as the proper use of City-owned properties?

As a resident of Stamford for more than forty-five years, I have seen the sale, abandonment and demolition of many, many city-owned buildings. The ones that remain have been the object of severe capital neglect, including the beautiful historic building on Haig Avenue and most recently, the Hunt recreational complex on Courtland Avenue. The condition of the City's schools is the result of decades long very poor maintenance practices. The

accumulation of capital neglect is now taking its toll on our students, teachers, administrators and taxpayers. **We must develop a healthier, more neighborhood-focused mindset on maintenance of our capital assets and community benefit must be the chief consideration.**

Please deny this sale.

Thomas J. Metz

To the members of the Board of Representatives; I am a seven year resident and property owner in the Glenbrook neighborhood. I am also a graduate Civil Engineer. I enthusiastically support the proposal to develop the property at 35 Crescent Street.

The existing building is quite old and in the middle stage of decay. It has been vacant for over two years and will continue to decay and decline in value if it is not developed in the short term. I support the current development plans as they will improve the appearance of the building, improve its value to the city and return it to the Grand List as a tax payer. Also, the building's proximity to the Glenbrook MNR station will make it a very valuable residential property.

I respectfully submit the above comments to the BOR with the suggestion that the proposal be approved. It is good for Stamford and the Glenbrook community.

Zdenka Zeman

Hello. My name is Zdenka Zeman. I've lived in Glenbrook for 33 years and for many of those years I've been on the board of GNA.

I am very excited about the new opportunities for a real community center. Previously I voted in support of the 51 units and a community room, thinking something is better than nothing. We were not aware of other possibilities.

After reading the detailed proposal by Rev. Michael Thomas, I can't support the 51 units any longer. I hope the new proposals will be considered and one of them approved. We have a lot of new apartment buildings in Glenbrook and I am sure all those people will be happy to have such a great Community Center near by. Thank you.

Rev. Shelley Donaldson

I would like to speak highly in favor of the proposal for the new housing in the Glenbrook community. As a pastor, I work with many in this city who are experiencing housing instability and insecurity, as well as those who are experiencing outright homelessness. It is our responsibility, whether we be people of faith or not, that we care for our fellow community members because that is what makes a strong community. By providing more affordable housing, we also set the standard for other communities who are struggling with a housing shortage on just how they can repurpose buildings and lots to ensure that not only do people have safe and affordable housing, but that our communities are enriched by them. The sale of this property would be a step on the right direction to ensure that we are caring for our neighbors and our community. - Rev. Shelley Donaldson, First Presbyterian Church (aka the Fish Church)

Honorata Kazmierczak

To the Members of the Board of Representatives,

I'm a Vice Chair of the ADA Advisory Council and an independent Disability Rights Advocate. I'm a former Teacher and retired due to blindness caused by a genetic condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa

I'm in favor of the proposed development on 35 Crescent St
This morning I participated in a meeting with the developer and the architectural firm during which they have provided satisfactory answers to my questions related to incorporating ADA accessible units for disabled individuals. They were assuring that the building and the designated units will at least meet if not exceed ADA standards and will be constructed under the newest building codes.

I am in favor of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Honorata Kazmierczak

A.D.A. Advisory Council

I.D.E.A.S.

Cell: 860-620-3128

Phillip A. Magalnick,

Members of the Stamford Board Of Representatives,

I provide this written statement in lieu of my personal appearance with respect to the 35 Crescent St. proposed development.

Currently, I serve as co-Chair of the Stamford ADA Advisory Council, Member of the Council for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Strategies

For the City of Stamford, and Vice-Chair of the State of Connecticut Rehabilitation Council – Department of Aging and Disability Services – Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind. formally, I served on Mayor Simmons' transition team, and held local, State, and National leadership Roles with the National Federation of the Blind

Post a 20 year career with the City of Stamford, after losing my eyesight, I've served as an advocate for the blind and disabled since 2009. I have appeared and testified before members of Congress, the Connecticut General Assembly, and the Stamford Board of Representatives.

My initial concerns regarding the development of 35 Crescent St., frankly centered around the inclusion of accessible apartments for residents and visitors with disabilities. additionally, I was interested in whether or not the community rooms, open to the neighborhood, and green spaces were likewise going to be fully accessible to persons of all abilities. After a meeting this morning with the developers including their architect, I can fully support this development project. I am not only satisfied that their proposal does indeed reflect the requirements of The Americans with Disabilities Act, but all three gentlemen demonstrated A palpable understanding and appreciation for the needs and rights of the disabled. Additionally, I came away from our meeting with A true feeling that the developer is attempting to create a true community, a fabric woven of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

Revitalizing a community, creating opportunities for affordable and accessible housing, and a developer with the right mindset makes this a win – win.

As a blind Life-Long resident of The City Of Stamford, notwithstanding my positions, I wholeheartedly support this redevelopment project for 35 Crescent St.

Respectively,

Phillip A. Magalnick, JP
Justice of the Peace
77 Knox Rd.
Stamford, CT 06907
203-912-5783

Evelyn Simpson

Good evening. In light of the recent proposal submissions for the property at 35 Crescent Street, I am requesting that the BOR table the approval for the purchase and sale agreement between the City and the Crescent Housing Partners until these proposals can be reviewed and discussed. These proposals seem to be more in line with the needs of the Glenbrook Community without adding to the already increasing congestion of the Crescent Street and Glenbrook Road intersection area. There are now already two new apartment buildings in the section of town, and the impact on the roads from them will not be felt until all those residents have moved in.

While affordable housing is needed in the community, building a four-story, 51 unit structure on that lot may not be in the best interests of the community. I wonder if it is becoming the norm in residential areas of the city to construct apartment buildings that are four stories and lack adequate parking. 75 parking spaces do not seem sufficient for 51 units, a day care and a community space. The City appears to accept the notion that people need fewer cars in certain areas, yet the crowded streets belie that notion.

I have heard of at least one large property that might be up for sale, and I am very concerned about a precedent that allows for taller, more densely packed structures without adequate parking. Again, I respectfully ask that you hold off on the approval of the sale until the new proposals have been vetted.

Thank you for your time,
Evelyn Simpson

Frosty Blakeslee

To whom it may concern: The history of Glenbrook needs to be Preserved. In the past 24 hours we (my spouse , Robert) and I been informed about other interested parties wanting to purchase 35 Crescent St.. ie less housing more social support services.we feel it is imperative to "Vet" ,,research & look into these other options. Because this Neighborhood needs a community center where children from Stark and Stamford H.S. can go after school instead of the woods behind Brooklawn Ave.and Center St..This area could use a similar place/ campus like the Boys and Girls club. We need to look at needs of our future generations.Looking at new offers for 35 Cresent St. would be best for our community. Do we want more traffic congestion in Glenbrook? DoNot Vote tonight on 35 Cresent St. till we look at other options . Thank You

Jordan Force

Hi,

I know this is late, but I got caught up in some stuff at work today and didn't have time to write this until now. I'm writing in support of LR31.024, the sale of 35 Crescent Street for development into Affordable apartments. The city needs more affordable housing, and this seems like an easy opportunity to create more while restoring an old building.

If you could share this with the reps tonight I would appreciate it,

Jordan