



TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

Subject Property: 1151 Blue Hills Avenue

Application Type: Zone Map Change and Related Master Plan

Prepared by: Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building & Land Use



Proposal Summary

The First Baptist Church of Hartford (First Cathedral), in partnership with Grow America, has submitted an application for a Zoning Map Amendment and accompanying Master Plan for the 40.5-acre property located at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue. The applicant is requesting to rezone the site from its current split PO (Professional Office District) and R-15 (Residential) designations to the Design Development Zone II (DDZ-II) to support a coordinated, multi-phased redevelopment of the underutilized areas of the Cathedral campus.

The purpose of the proposal is to expand the Cathedral's community-focused mission beyond religious programming by introducing affordable and mixed-income housing, a licensed daycare facility, and a workforce empowerment center, while preserving existing worship facilities and improving pedestrian connectivity. The proposed plan repurposes the largely unused auxiliary parking lot and athletic fields to create a more balanced campus that integrates residential, childcare, employment support, and worship uses within a master-planned development framework.

The project is organized in four phases, beginning with affordable housing development and followed by the mixed-use daycare/residential building, a church addition for workforce counseling and training, and a Cathedral storage/overflow parking facility. All work is designed to remain outside protected wetland and conservation easement areas.



Design Development Zone (DDZ) and (DDZ-II)

Zoning Regulations Sec. 5.6

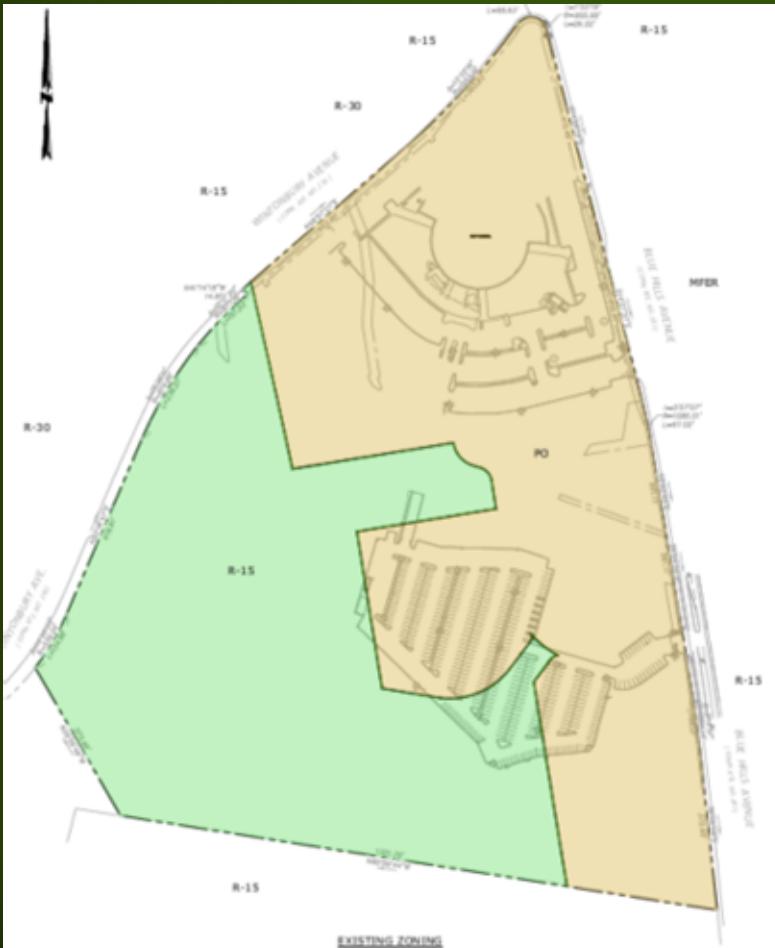
Purpose

- Intent: The creation of a combined work, service, shopping, retail and residential environment that promotes the maintenance of quality open space, reduces the traffic generation that occurs when the uses are separated, enhances the quality and proximity of facilities to employees and retains the character of an area and its suitability for particular uses is beneficial because it will reduce traffic, pollution and congestion which would arise from disparate and piecemeal development and will provide an enhanced living and work environment for the residents of the Town.

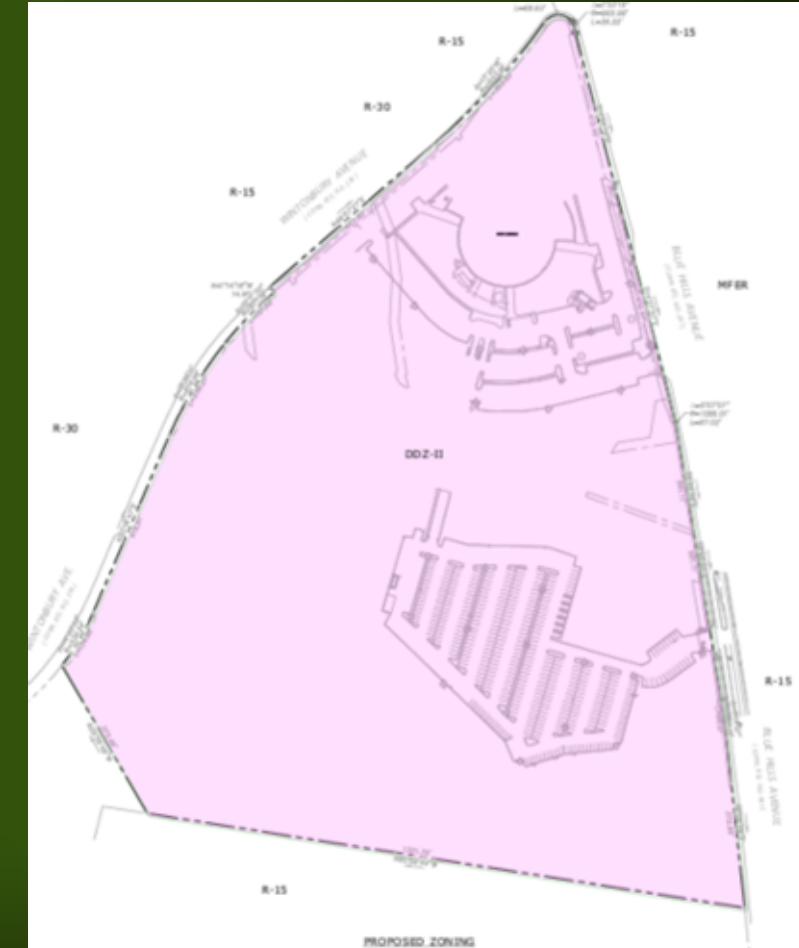


Proposed Zone Change

Existing Zone (R-15 & POD)

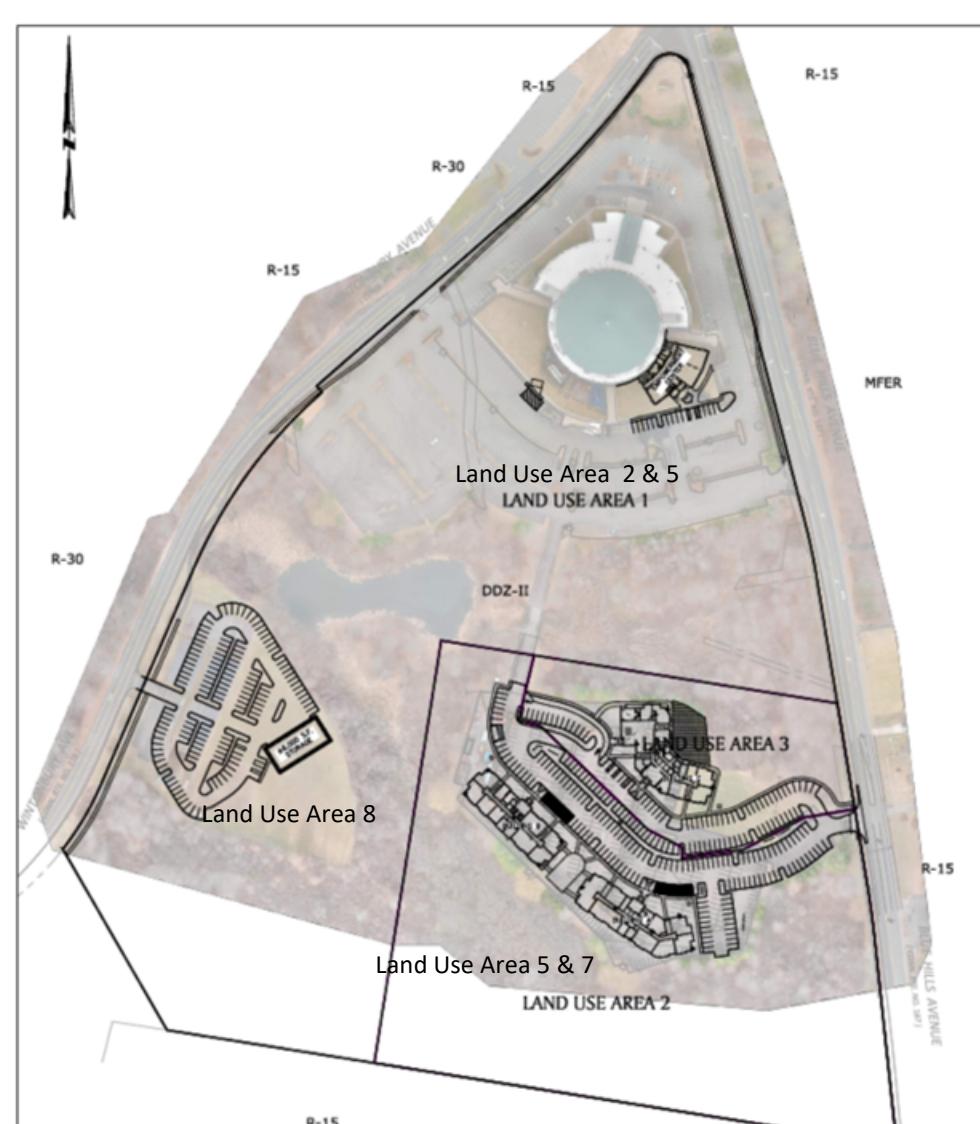
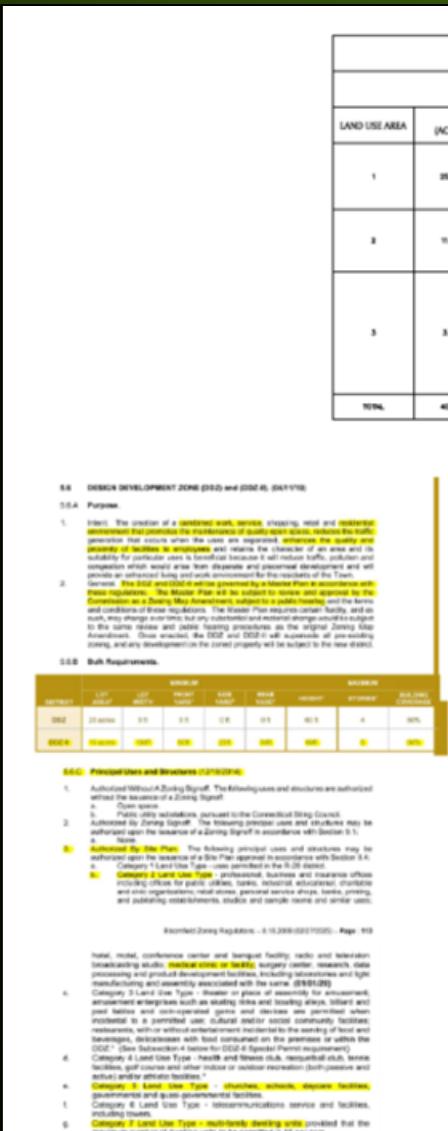


Proposed Zone (DDZ-II)





Related DDZ-II Master Plan





Applicable Land Use Type Zoning Regulations Sec. 5.6.C

Category 2

professional, business and insurance offices including offices for public utilities, banks, industrial, educational, charitable and civic organizations; retail stores, personal service shops, banks, printing, and publishing establishments, studios and sample rooms and similar uses; hotel, motel, conference center and banquet facility; radio and television broadcasting studio; **medical clinic or facility**; surgery center, research, data processing and product development facilities, including laboratories and light manufacturing and assembly associated with the same.

Category 5

churches, schools, **daycare facilities**, governmental and quasi-governmental facilities.

Category 7

multi-family dwelling units provided that the maximum number of dwelling units to be permitted is 16 per acre.

Category 8

accessory uses to those permitted above including, without limitation, storage facilities in permanent structures and garages associated with the permitted uses...



Phased Master Plan

Phase 1 – Affordable Housing (Southeast portion)

- Two **5-story** multifamily buildings
- **101 100% affordable units**, serving **30–50% AMI households**

Phase 2 – Mixed-Use Residential + Daycare

- One **5-story building**
- **45 residential units** (mix of affordable + market-rate based on funding)
- **Community daycare for 90 children (3 months–5 years)**

Phase 3 – Empowerment Center (Church Addition)

- **2-story addition** to Cathedral
- **Employment training + counseling center**
- Sidewalk extension along **Blue Hills Avenue** to **Wintonbury**

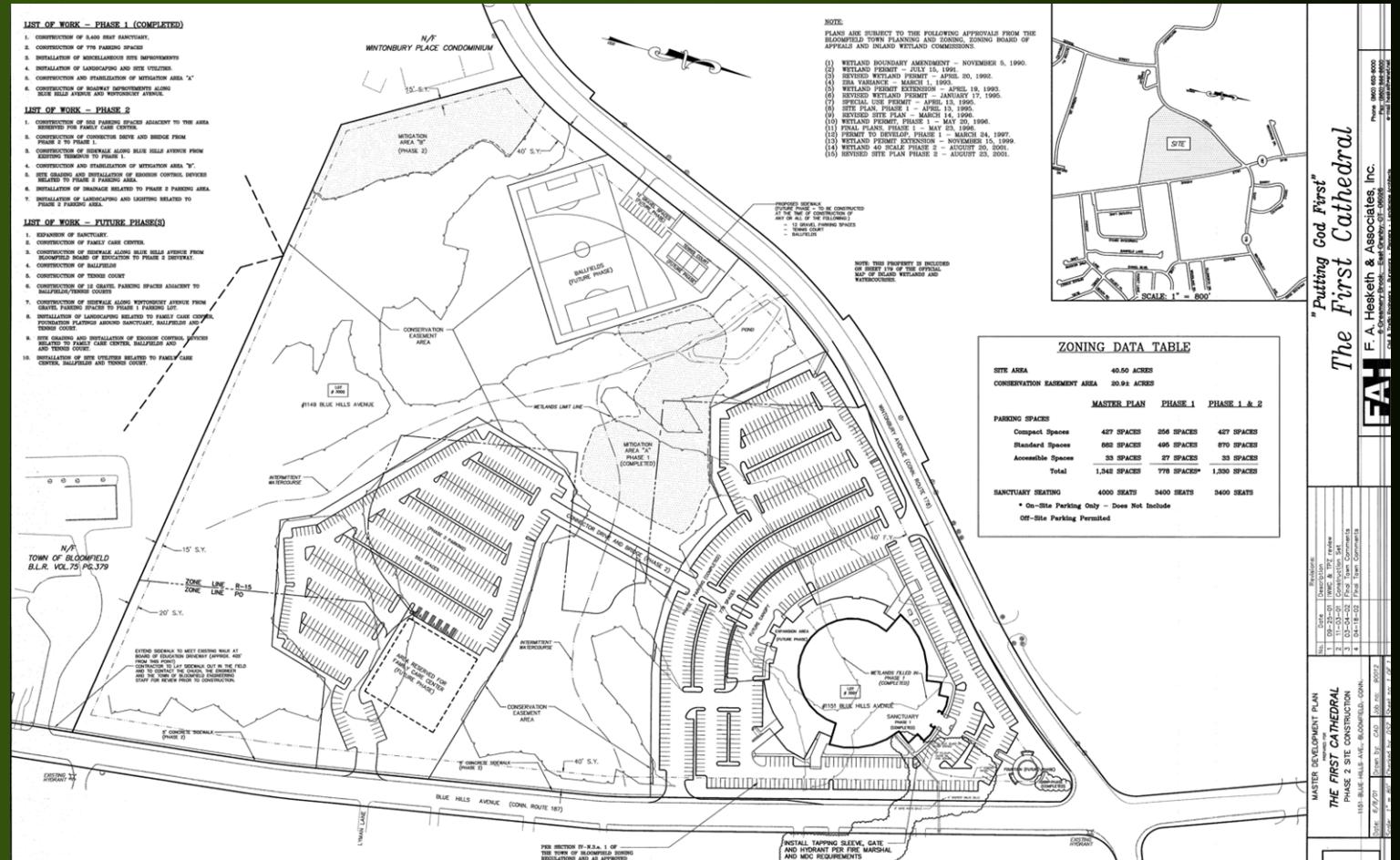
Phase 4 – Cathedral Storage + Overflow Parking (Southwest)

- **Private Cathedral storage building** for equipment and shuttles
- **138-space supplemental parking area** for major Cathedral events
- Additional sidewalk extension along **Wintonbury Avenue**



1151 Blue Hills Ave – Previous Land Use Approvals

- March 1993 – Zoning Board of Appeals granted a Front Yard Parking Variance on Wintonbury Avenue side (R-15)
- April 13, 1995 - TPZ approved a Special Permit and Site Plan for a church with related parking, and a family care center with related parking and accessory recreation
- May 23, 1996 - TPZ granted a waiver to allow parking in the front yard within 20 feet of the 40-foot required setback on, on portions of Wintonbury and along Blue Hills Avenue (POD)





Staff Comments

- 1151 Blue Hills Avenue meets the required characteristics to be eligible for the DDZ-II designation.
- Staff believes the proposal consistent with the goals of the existing and proposed Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) by encouraging new multi-family residential development and expanding affordable housing opportunities in Bloomfield.
- A Revised Final Master Plan shall be submitted with corrected Land Use Area Types, and a legible Table with DDZ-II bulk requirements, and proposed uses to include total amount of impervious surface in a land use area.
- All existing conservation easements shall remain unchanged.
- Staff recommends that the required sidewalks be implemented into Phase I of the project, not Phase IV.
- The Commission may want to inquire about the Phased Project Timelines.
- If this Zone Map Amendment and Related Mater Plan is approved by TPZ, the applicant shall submit all other required Land Use Approvals as required by the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission and Town Plan and Zoning Commission for each Phase of the project.



Suggested Motion for Approval

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission hereby move to approve the proposed Zoning Map Amendment from an R-15 and POD zoning districts to Design Development Zone II (DDZ-II) and the associated Master Plan for the property located at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue, submitted by the First Baptist Church of Hartford (First Cathedral), based on the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

Findings

- The proposal is consistent with the goals of the Town of Bloomfield Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), including the encouragement of new multifamily residential development and the preservation and expansion of affordable housing opportunities within the community.
- The Master Plan supports the POCD's emphasis on economic growth and community investment and enhances by incorporating residential, childcare, employment assistance, and institutional uses in a coordinated campus model.
- The phased development framework promotes orderly and sustainable growth, makes productive use of underutilized land, and preserves natural resources by avoiding disturbance to wetlands and maintaining conservation easement areas.
- The proposal provides community services and amenities that enhance quality of life for Bloomfield residents, including affordable housing, daycare, and workforce empowerment facilities.

Conditions

- Applicant shall revise the Master Plan to incorporate staff's comments/recommendations, and any additional changes as suggested by the Commission.
- Zone Change and Related Master Plan shall become effective upon filing in Land Records, and posting of the decision in the legal notice section of The Courant newspaper