

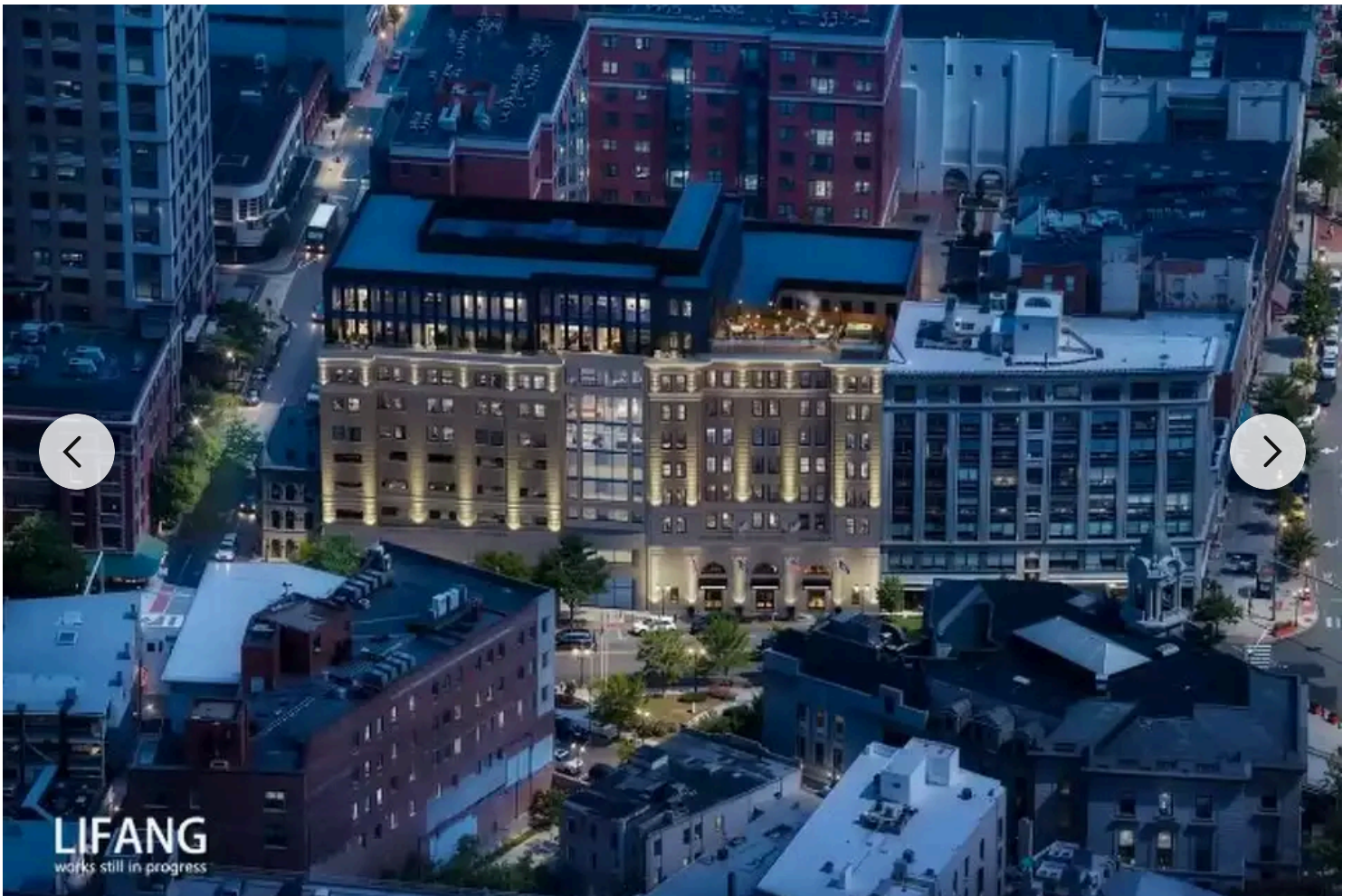
NEWS

Former Stamford Trust Co. building could gain 2 stories to become 149-room hotel, new owners say

By **Robert Marchant**, Staff Writer

Dec 23, 2024

 Gift Article   



A new hotel is being proposed for the downtown district in the Stamford Trust Co. building on Main Street.

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STAMFORD — Plans for a 149-room hotel at the site of a former bank and office building in the city's downtown include a two-story addition, rooftop amenities, an upscale restaurant, meeting space and extensive onsite parking.



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The plans to convert the old seven-story Stamford Trust Company structure [at 300 Main St.](#) into a hotel and restaurant got some positive comment from the city Planning Commission, which voted to approve the plans and move the project on to the Zoning Commission.

Planning Commission member Ravi Subramanian asked whether the proposed two-story addition would have a negative visual impact on the surrounding area, noting "it looks — on paper at least — very nice."

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William Hennessey, an attorney representing the development team, said the addition would be well under the city height limits for the downtown area.

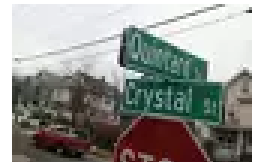
While the proposal would raise the roof line of the building from 80 feet to 116 feet, "I would say it would have no impact, and it's all allowed by zoning," he said.

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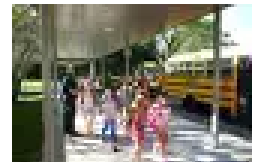
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The original building was designed by the firm of Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, who designed [the Plaza Hotel](#) and [the Dakota building](#) in New York City before his death in 1918.

Hennessey said the proposal would preserve the old structure and add vitality to the city's downtown.

"It's firing on all cylinders," he said.

The old bank building was built in the late 1920s with a modern addition added in 1984. The new plan contains parking for 140 cars, Hennessey said, which he called a "blessing" for the hotel plan, since it would provide ample parking for the venture and meet the zoning code's requirements. The plan also calls for 1,500 square feet of meeting space.

The proposal's two-story addition to the modern building would provide space for additional rooms and rooftop amenities that have become standard at high-end hotels, the attorney said. The Planning Commission would need to approve the two-story addition; the proposal would also be sent to the Zoning Commission for additional approvals.

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The potential operator of the hotel has not been named. The downtown area and nearby neighborhoods have more than a half dozen hotels currently operating, in various sizes.

The old Stamford Trust Co. was planned to continue as office space by previous owners. The coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent drop-off in commercial office space changed the plans for the site, the commission was told.

F. D. Rich Co. purchased the 101,143-square-foot building for \$7 million earlier this year, according to city land records. The previous owner was Twenty Lake Holdings, a Stamford-based real estate investment firm.

"The office market at this time, and the office market for buildings of this era, is very, very weak," Hennessey said, so conversion into a hotel seemed like a good prospect. He said the proposed hotel would add "activity and vibrancy."

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The project is being put forward by developer Tom Rich, a longtime developer in the city. Hennessey said Rich was known for "innovation and thoughtfulness."

A stylish restaurant would be built inside the old bank lobby on the ground floor, Hennessey said, where a huge bank vault still stands.



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Dec 23, 2024



Robert Marchant

REPORTER



Robert Marchant is a veteran newsman who covers public safety and public policy for the Greenwich Time. Marchant holds a master's degree in history from Columbia University and is the author of a book on urban history.

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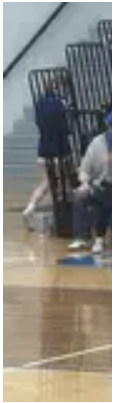
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