



***Housing/Community Development/Social Services  
Committee - Board of Representatives***

Gloria DePina, Chair

Lila Wallace, Vice Chair

**Committee Minutes**

**Date:** Monday, September 21, 2020  
**Time:** 6:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Meeting held remotely.

The Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee will meet as indicated The Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee met at the above time and place. In attendance were Chair DePina, Vice Chair Wallace and Committee Member Reps. Michelson. Moore, Palomba and Roqueta. Excused were Rep. and Pratt. Also present were Ralph Blessing, Emily Gordon, Land Use Bureau; and Ellen Bromley, Director of Social Services.

Chair DePina called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. <a href="#">HCD30.016</a>	ORDINANCE <u>for final adoption</u> ; Providing for the Creation of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund in the City of Stamford.] 01/05/19 – Submitted by Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief 01/30/19 –Held in Committee 8-0-0 02/11/19 – Moved to Pending 09/16/19 – Approved by Committee 5-0-0 10/21/19 – Public Hearing Held and Approved by Committee, as amended 3-0-1 11/06/19 – Held by Full Board 31-0-0 11/18/19 – Held by Committee, as amended, 4-2-0 12/09/19 – Held at Steering 08/17/20 – Approved by Committee, as amended, 5-0-0 <b>09/08/20 – Held by Full Board</b>	<b>Committee Approved as amended 4-0-1</b>

Ralph Blessing discussed the proposed ordinance as follows:

- All items in the attached draft that are in green and red were the approved amendments made at the last HCD/SS Committee Meeting.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Whereas clause there were two technical corrections because of zoning regulations updates
- Old Language that would have prohibited money to go to the housing trust fund was removed and replaced by language that would allow this to happen
- After discussions with Jay Fountain and Sandy Dennies the Office of

- Policy and Management was replaced by Office of Administration to be appropriate custodian of the trust funds
- Clarified by the Law Department that the Trustees authorize the spending of the funds
  - Interim provisions was added to address some board members concerns regarding the composition of the Board of Trustees and to give the Board of Representatives time to reconsider
  - Confirmed the following from the law department:
    - The fee in lieu money cannot be used for rent or foreclosure assistance and can only be used for brick and water projects
    - The commercial linkage fees can be used for foreclosures and rental assistance programs
    - The housing trust funds would be subject to the City's purchasing ordinance if the Board purchases goods and services
    - Expenditures that are not purchases does not need board approvals (Example: rental assistance payments)
  - Linkage fees available balance for 2019 \$847,000
  - Fee in lieu money balance for 2019 \$865,000
  - Reached out to landlords in Stamford to see the economic impact of COVID; reached about 33% of larger rental units; 13% of renters did not pay rent or made a partial payments in September
  - The Checks and balance of the funds will be: A Board that consists of members from the Board of Representatives, Board of Finance and City agencies; Annual Reports; Everything will be in public; Housing study that defines the goals and priorities for spending the money
  - The Housing Trust fund itself creates a requirement for the money to be spent
  - The fee in lieu decision comes from the Zoning Board; part of the approving process the zoning board decides where the money goes
  - Reconfirmed the reason for the trust fund: Money comes from different places for affordable housing purposes; Linkage Fees and Housing Development fund fees; also the decision making process that the Board of Reps have in moving money to certain development projects
  - There's a legal opinion that the Zoning Board can move money into development projects without any control interference by the Board of Representatives
  - Overall the process of a Housing Trust fund will be more transparent and a more inclusive process; the Zoning Board would give up some responsibility and influence on how to spend money on affordable housing in the City of Stamford

Rep. Roqueta made a motion to amend Sec. 146-75(B) as follows *"Expenditures from the Trust as defined in Section 146-75.C must be approved by the Trustees and must be authorized as an additional appropriation pursuant to Sec. C8-30-12 of the city Charter."* Said motion was seconded.

After a brief discussion, Rep. Roqueta amended his motion as follows to Sec. 146-75(B) *"Expenditures from the Trust as defined in Section 146-75.C must be*

*approved by the Trustees and amounts over \$100,000 must be authorized as an additional appropriation pursuant to Sec. C8-30-12 of the city Charter.” Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 4-1-1(Wallace, Moore, Palomba, Roqueta in favor; DePina opposed; Michelson abstained)*

Req. Roqueta made a motion to amend Sec. 146-70 Affordable Housing Trustees as follows *“There shall be nine (9) Trustees on the Board of the Trust, seven (7) who shall serve ex officio and two (2) members of the public. The Trustees shall be the Land Use Bureau Chief or such Chief’s designee, the Chair of the Housing, Community Development and Social Services Committee of the Board of Representatives or such Chair’s designee, the Chair of the Board of Finance or such Chair’s designee, the Chair of the Stamford Zoning Board or such Chair’s designee, and the Director of Social Services for the City of Stamford or such Director’s designee, two Stamford residents who reside in housing qualifying as affordable housing as defined in Sec. 146-66 herein, who shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Representatives, and two (2) members from the Board of Representatives, one from each respected political party, each to be designated by the President of the Board of Representatives. The Land Use Bureau Chief shall serve as the Chair of the Board of Trustees. No Trustee shall receive a salary or other remuneration for serving on the Board.”*

Ellen Bromley expressed that there is presently an appropriation process that the funds can be used. This ordinance was trying to carve out a committee of experts for affordable housing purposes, its intent was not to take any power from the Board of Representatives but an alternative process.

Mr. Blessings emphasized that this ordinance does not take away the power of the Zoning Board to give fee in lieu money directly to developers. The responsibility of the Housing Trust Fund is to convince the zoning board that the Housing Trust Fund is a better way to decide where the money should go. Nothing in the ordinance can change the decision of where the fee in lieu money goes because it’s statutory. This body is an executive body not a policy making body. The Policies should be made by the Board of Representatives, the idea behind the Trust fund is to execute the policies that someone else defines and this process is the affordable housing plan.

*Said motion was seconded and failed by a vote of 2-4-0. (Moore and Roqueta in favor; DePina, Wallace, Michelson and Palomba opposed)*

Req. Roqueta made a motion to amend Sec. 146-70 Affordable Housing Trustees as follows *“There shall be seven (7) Trustees on the Board of the Trust, six (6) who shall serve ex officio and one (1) member of the public. The Trustees shall be the Land Use Bureau Chief or such Chief’s designee, the Chair of the Housing, Community Development and Social Services Committee of the Board of Representatives or such Chair’s designee, the Chair of the Board of Finance or such Chair’s designee, the Chair of the Stamford Zoning Board or such Chair’s designee, and the Director of Social Services for the City of Stamford or such Director’s designee, and a member of the Board of Representatives who shall be*

*designated by the President of the Board of Representatives, the one (1) member of the public shall be a Stamford resident who resides in housing qualifying as affordable housing as defined in Sec. 146-66 herein, who shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Representatives. The Land Use Bureau Chief shall serve as the Chair of the Board of Trustees. No Trustee shall receive a salary or other remuneration for serving on the Board. Five (5) Trustee members or more shall constitute a quorum.”* Said Motion was seconded.

After a discussion Rep. Palomba asked for an amendment to the motion as follows: *“There shall be seven (7) Trustees on the Board of the Trust, five (5) who shall serve ex officio and two (2) members of the public. The Trustees shall be the Land Use Bureau Chief or such Chief’s designee, the Chair of the Housing, Community Development and Social Services Committee of the Board of Representatives or such Chair’s designee, the Chair of the Board of Finance or such Chair’s designee, the Chair of the Stamford Zoning Board or such Chair’s designee, and the Director of Social Services for the City of Stamford or such Director’s designee, and two (2) members of the public who shall be Stamford residents who resides in housing qualifying as affordable housing as defined in Sec. 146-66 herein, who shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Representatives. The Land Use Bureau Chief shall serve as the Chair of the Board of Trustees. No Trustee shall receive a salary or other remuneration for serving on the Board.”* Said Motion was seconded, and approved by a vote of 5-0-1 (Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor; DePina abstained).

Rep. Roqueta Made a motion to amend sec. 146-75(C)(1)(g) by striking the word “Landlord”. Said motion was seconded. A motion to amend original motion was made and seconded as follows: *“Rental Assistance Programs. Programs that provide financial or other support to renters focused on low income households and non-profit organizations who act as Landlords providing affordable housing for low income households.”* Motion failed by a vote of 3-3-0 (Wallace, Moore, Roqueta in favor; DePina, Michelson and Palomba opposed)

Rep. Roqueta made a motion to amend Sec. 146-71(A) to add at the end *“and audio and video recorded”*. Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0. (Depina, Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor)

Rep. Roqueta made a motion to amend Sec. 146-74(C)(5) to change the word “the” to “those” to read as follows: *“Identify strategies and programs to address the prioritized needs, including goals and benchmarks for assessing the success in addressing those needs”* Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0. (Depina, Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor).

Rep. Roqueta made a motion to amend Sec. 146-74(D) to add “Town Clerk Office” and to read as follows *“The SAHP shall be adopted by the Stamford Planning Board pursuant to Sec. C6-30-4 of the City of Stamford Charter The Plan shall also be posted on the City of Stamford website for public inspection and shall be available in hardcopy at the City of Stamford Land Use Bureau and*

*Town Clerk Office for review during normal business hours.” Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0. (Depina, Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor)*

Rep. Michelson made a motion to amend Sec. 146-75(C)(3) to change second “*no for profit*” to “*not-for-profit*”. Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0. (Depina, Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor)

Rep. Michelson made a motion to amend Sec. 146-75 (D) to add “Town Clerk Office” and to read as follows “*The Board of Trustees shall, at the end of each Fiscal Year, prepare a Report, listing all expenditures and projects supported in said Fiscal Year, how they address affordable housing needs and priorities in accordance with the Stamford Affordable Housing Plan and how they meet the criteria of Sec. 146-75.C. Said report shall be completed and submitted to the Planning Board, the Board of Representatives, the Board of Finance and the Director of Administration by no later than September 15 of the following Fiscal Year. The Report shall also be posted on the City of Stamford website for public inspection and shall be available in hardcopy at the City of Stamford Land Use Bureau and Town Clerk office for review during normal business hours.*” Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote 6-0-0. (Depina, Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor)

Rep. Michelson made a motion to amend Sec. 146-71 (C) to change quorum from three to five and to read as follows “*C. The presence of at least five (5) Board members constitutes a quorum.*” Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote 6-0-0. (Depina, Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor)

A motion to approve this ordinance as amended (amendments made by the committee and Ralph Blessing) was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 4-0-1 (Wallace, Michelson, Moore, Palomba and Roqueta in favor; DePina abstained)

Chair DePina adjourned the meeting at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gloria DePina, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).