Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee – Board of Representatives & State & Commerce Committee

Harry Day, Chair
Paul Esposito, Chair

Patrick J. White, Vice Chair – Land Use/UR Committee
Eileen Heaphy, Vice Chair – State & Commerce Committee

Joint Committee Report

Date: Thursday, March 26, 2009
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room , 4th Floor, Government Center, 888 Democratic Blvd., Stamford, CT

The Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee met indicated above. Present were Chair Day and Vice Chair White and Committee Member Reps. Franzetti, Gabriele and Mitchell. Absent/excused were Committee Member Reps. Boccuzzi, Diamond, Lombardo and Summerville. Also present were Reps. Esposito, DeLuca, Heaphy, Mallozzi and Rauh

With respect to Item 2 of the Agenda, the State and Commerce Committee also met as indicated above. Attending as members of that Committee, in addition to Chair Esposito, were Vice Chair Heaphy and Reps. Day, DeLuca, Mallozzi and Rauh. Absent/excused were committee members Diamond, Fedeli, Lombardo, Skigen and Summerville. Also present were Reps. Franzetti, Gabriele and Mitchell.

Also attending were Ann Brown and Laura Labosky of Engineering, and Rachel Goldberg and Kip Bergstrom of the URC.

Chair Day called the meeting of the Land Use—Urban Redevelopment Committee to order at 7:35 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LU27.060	RESOLUTION; **and public hearing & referral to Planning Board**; authorizing the acquisition by negotiation or eminent domain of rights of way for Phase II of the Stamford Urban Transitway Project.	**COMMITTEE APPROVED 3-2-0**

Chair Day opened the public hearing; there being no one from the public present to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Goldberg reviewed the project, showing maps that depicted properties that would be taken.

Committee members inquired as to the status of the takings, and Ms. Goldberg replied that she has had preliminary discussions with all parties, and feels this phase will be as successful as Phase I, where agreements were reached with 80% of the property owners.

Chair Day noted that because of the large federal grants for this program, there is a federally mandated overlay of protection for property owners in addition to the protections required by our Charter. He added that it is safe to say that as many people have embraced this project as resisted it.

Rep. White stated he is still opposed to the project in general.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 3-2-0 (Reps. Day, Franzetti and Mitchell in favor; Reps. White and Gabriele opposed).

2. LU27.056	REVIEW; City of Stamford development and economic review – URC Presentation.	**REPORT MADE**

Co Committee: State & Commerce

Chair Day invited State and Commerce Committee Chair Paul Esposito to call his committee's meeting to order, and Mr. Esposito did so. Chairs Day and Esposito then introduced Mr. Bergstrom and invited him to address the two Committees.

Mr. Bergstrom stated he was the former and first Economic Development Director for Stamford until May 1998; he returned to Stamford in July 2008 as the Executive Director of the Stamford Urban Redevelopment Commission.

Mr. Bergstrom is spearheading a project called "Reinventing Stamford." He gave an overview that is covered in the attached three documents: 1) First Impressions, Stamford After 10 Years; 2) Five Changes Shaping Stamford's Competitiveness; and 3) Reinventing Stamford, Redefining the Recession. (The third document updates the Five Changes document in that it was prepared prior to the financial meltdown.)

Some key points Mr. Bergstrom made were:

1. The goal of "Reinventing Stamford, Redefining the Recession," is for Stamford to come out of the recession in a stronger place than before it entered into it.

2. Stamford's history: 1840s was a manufacturing era; 1930-40s brought about a research facility era; in the 1970s it became a corporate

headquarters city; in the 1990s, it became a reinsurance, hedge fund and financial services city.

3. A widely-discussed concept is that of FIRE & ICE (Fire – financial, insurance, real estate; ICE – Innovation, community and entertainment). Stamford needs to move from FIRE to ICE.

4. Stamford reflects the evolution of New York City.

5. Stamford needs to become a resilient city.

6. The catastrophic failure of the global financial system will lead to lesser rewards for those who work in that field (a field that drew a disproportionate amount of talent); new talent will now be drawn to other areas).

7. Climate change is a challenge for Stamford as a coastal city.

8. The current population of students are not being prepared to be Stamford's future workers. Retaining young professionals is a challenge (Stamford needs to be more "*sticky*").

9. The current structure of local, state and federal governments is outmoded, as exemplified by the response to Katrina.. We will need networks of civic entrepreneurship to deliver high quality, more citizen-driven public services at a lower cost.

10. There will be a market for resilient, interactive and distinctive places.

Mr. Bergstrom will be holding four forums during the course of 2009 that will cover 1) Talent issues; 2) Transportation and transit communications; 3) Firms and 4) Development. The point of the forums is to discuss things that will make Stamford distinctive; cities have to find their own strengths and build from there – not copy models of other cities.

The presentation was well received by both committees. Mr. Bergstrom referred members to the website: www.reinventingstamford.com for more information on this project. Chairs Day and Esposito thanked Mr. Bergstrom.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Esposito, Chair