



Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee – Board of Representatives

Virgil de la Cruz, Co-Chair

Vacant., Co-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Wednesday, October 30, 2019
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor Government Center, 888
Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Co-Chair de la Cruz and Committee Member Reps. Cottrell, Lee, Lion, Sherwood and Summerville. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps. Graziosi and Michelson. Also present were Rep. Adams, Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau; Jim Travers and Garrett Bolella, Traffic, Transportation and Parking; and about 25 members of the public.

Co-Chair de la Cruz called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LU30.030	RESOLUTION; Creating a South End Historic District Study Committee. 06/03/19 – Submitted by Rep. Adams and Zelinsky 06/10/19 – Moved to Pending 09/25/19 – Held by Committee 6-2-0	Held 5-0-0

A motion to hold this item until invited guests are available was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 5-0-0 (Reps. de la Cruz, Cottrell, Lee, Lion and Sherwood in favor).

2. LU30.032	RESOLUTION <u>and approval of public hearing</u> ; Authorizing the Acquisition by Negotiation or Eminent Domain of Rights of Way for the Washington Blvd and Pulaski Street Widening Project. 10/10/19 – Submitted by Bureau Chief Travers	Held 4-1-0
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Mr. Travers reviewed the details of the proposed project with the Committee. He explained that the City started the project for the widening of Washington Boulevard 10 years ago, but did not complete it. The City put the requirement to complete the project on the developer of the Charter Communications building, assuming the City can acquire the properties necessary. The work is required prior to Charter obtaining a CO for the second tower. The street widening proposal will normalize the traffic coming out of the traffic circle.

Comments and questions raised by the Committee included:

- The proposal does not involve any taking of the rectory/Duncan Fife property
- The taking of 21 Pulaski needs to be the entire property because the work would require the taking of part of the house
- Every effort is made to negotiate a purchase/sale, rather than do a taking
- Traffic will get worse if the road is not widened
- This is \$1.9 million of road work which the City put on Charter

- Charter is not being asked to purchase these properties
- This will improve the flow of traffic
- It would be better if Charter purchased the properties rather than having the City do a taking
- This solution was not designed by a developer, but was designed by the City more than 10 years ago
- The Land Use Boards should do a traffic study for new buildouts; the traffic won't be any worse than when Pitney Bowes was there
- The TT&P bureau should bring this to the NRZ
- The people who live in the new developments are residents and taxpayers
- Increasing traffic flow improves the quality of life for the entire City
- The Committee will be holding a public hearing
- Eminent domain is a hammer
- An ordinance was enacted by the 29th Board of Reps that provided for Land Use Boards to engage independent experts, at the applicant's expense, if the Land Use Board did not have confidence in the reports presented by the applicant, e.g. a Land Use Board and have an independent party prepare a traffic study at the developer's expense
- Did the developer try to communicate with the property owners prior to this?
- This plan predated the current development and would have been discussed even if the property were still an empty lot
- The TT&P bureau solves problems as funding becomes available
- There is no need to widen the road
- What preceded this; did the Developer seek and fail to acquire the property and then come to the City?
- What will the City do with the property at 21 Pulaski not needed to widen the road?
- This is a 10 year old plan to fix a problem; Charter Communications was not on the radar when this plan was developed and is not responsible for the traffic
- The City will pay for the land acquisition and Charter will pay the \$1.9 million for the roadwork
- The City did not budget for this roadwork
- Why is 340 Washington not included? Who owns this?
- This is the 1st step in the process, the Administration has to return to the Board of Finance and the Board of Reps for approval of any deal for or taking of the affected properties
- The goal of reducing traffic is worthwhile
- Charter will get its building either way; if the City does not acquire the properties, Charter does not need to do the roadwork
- There needs to be a commitment that the remainder of the property at 21 Pulaski will be for public use and not transferred to Charter or a developer
- The questions raised at this meeting need to be answered prior to the next meeting

A motion to hold this item was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 4-1-0 (Reps. de la Cruz, Cottrell, Lion and Sherwood in favor; Rep. Lee opposed).

Co-Chair de la Cruz adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Virgil de la Cruz, Co-Chair

This meeting is on video ([Pt 1](#) & [Pt 2](#))