



## ***Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee – Board of Representatives***

Nina Sherwood, Co- Chair

Carmine Tomas, Co-Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Place:** *This meeting was held remotely.*

The Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Campbell, Camporeale, de la Cruz, Grunberger, Kuczynski, Matheny, Mays, and Summerville. Also in attendance were Reps. Boeger, Cottrell, Figueroa, Goldberg, Moore, Morson, Pierre-Louis, and Walston; Burt Rosenberg, Assistant Corporation Counsel; Ben Barnes, Director of Administration; Richard Evanko, Chairman of Urban Redevelopment Commission; Leah Kagan, Director of Economic Development; Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief; Emily Gordon, Liaison to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund; Robert Corbett, Associate Vice President of University Planning, Design, Construction and Real Estate; Mark Diamond, Economic Development Commission Secretary, and Alex Ryckman, Director of Asset Management for The Wolff Company.

Co-Chair Tomas called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Co-Chair Tomas moved to take the agenda items out of order. There were no objections.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. <a href="#">LU31.043</a>	REVIEW; Widening of Garden Street between Henry Street and Dock Street. 08/12/24 – Submitted by Rep. Adams 08/21/24 – Recommitted to Steering 8-0-0 09/18/24 – Held by Committee 10/24/24 – Recommitted to Steering 11-0-0 11/20/24 – Recommitted to Steering 8-0-0 <a href="#">12/09/24 – Held at Steering</a> <a href="#">01/22/25 – Recommitted to Steering 10-0-0</a>	<b>Motion to recommit 9/0/0</b>

A motion to recommit Item 1 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 9-0-0 (Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood, Reps. Adams, Campbell, Camporeale, de la Cruz, Kuczynski, Matheny, and Summerville in favor).

2. [LU31.050](#)

REVIEW; of the CT HB No. 5474 – specifically in regards to reviewing a “new” State law passed on October 1, 2024 explicitly authorizing municipalities, by vote of their legislative bodies to adopt an ordinance regulating the operation and use of short-term rental properties.

01/08/25 – Submitted by Rep. Graham

**01/22/25 – Recommitted to Steering 10-0-0**

**Motion to  
recommit  
10/0/0**

A motion to recommit Item 2 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 10-0-0 (Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood, Reps. Adams, Campbell, Camporeale, de la Cruz, Grunberger, Matheny, Mays, and Summerville in favor).

3. LU31.051

REVIEW; Status of Sale of 0 West Park Place 02/03/25  
- Submitted by Rep. Sherwood

**Motion to  
recommit  
9/0/0**

Assistant Corporation Counsel Rosenberg explained his initial involvement:

- Included drafting the original purchase and sales agreement.
- Provided the committee with a memo explaining delays caused by the purchaser's compliance with city requirements (permits, zoning regulations).
- Delays were primarily due to the City's inefficiency in granting permits and meeting zoning and planning requirements.
- Extensions granted through amendments were authorized by the initial agreement and approved by the Urban Redevelopment Commissions (URC) Board.
- Recent approvals have been granted by the Planning Board.
- Further developments and responses are expected to come from present Commission members.
- The URC cannot hold property in their name per State Statute Section 8-138.
- Title to property acquired by URC is issued solely in the municipality's name.
- While the city is the nominal owner of the property, the URC effectively owns it.
- Upon sale, the proceeds go entirely to the URC, not the City.

Economic Development Commission Secretary Diamond discussed the property status:

- Multiple extensions were granted to the developer for due diligence, but obligations were not fulfilled.
- Over the years, the property value doubled (from \$2.82M in 2017 to \$4.23M in 2022), but it is being sold for \$2.3M, less than half its appraised value.
  - Extensions contributed to a loss exceeding \$2M on the sale.
  - 2017: Property appraised at \$2.82M.
  - 2019: Purchase proposal for \$2.5M with a \$250K non-refundable deposit; not finalized.
  - 2020: Letter of intent for \$2.3M with a \$100K non-refundable deposit; not signed.
  - 2021: Purchase and Sale Agreement signed for \$2.3M but due diligence was not completed within six months.
  - 2022: Developer requested multiple extensions, despite the property being reappraised at \$4.23M.
- The property is in the Columbus Park historic district, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Chair Evanko added:

- COVID-19 caused delays in approvals, appraisals, and general processes.
- Delays were a significant factor during this period.

A motion to recommit Item 3 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 9-0-0 (Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood, Reps. Adams, Campbell, Camporeale, de la Cruz, Kuczynski, Matheny, and Summerville in favor).

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|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 4. <a href="#"><u>LU31.053</u></a> | REVIEW; Status of 1201 Washington Boulevard, Resident Relocation Plans and Potential Conversion to UConn Dorms as well as the future plans of the University of Connecticut (UConn)- University and Research Overlay District.<br>03/05/25 – Submitted by Rep. Cottrell, Campbell, and Sherwood | <b>Motion to recommit 11/0/0</b> |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|

***As a Secondary Committee: Housing/Community Development/Social Services***

Chief Blessing outlined the relocation plans:

- The Below Market Rate (BMR) requirement and residential use is linked to residential usage.
- If a building switches to non-residential use, the BMR requirement is removed.
- No penalties in zoning regulations for changing building use.
- Conversion back to residential triggers the BMR requirement.
- With the current zoning trends in Stamford empty office buildings are often converted into residential spaces, which acquire a BMR requirement.
- Zoning regulates building usage, height, setbacks, etc., with idiosyncratic rules.
- Residential multifamily dwelling units have a BMR requirement; dormitories do not.
- Dormitories are classified based on student occupancy and are leased per bed, not as apartments.
- Dormitories offer financial aid eligibility advantages compared to private housing.
- Universities aggregate housing for students and use revenue to pay lease costs.
- Typical dormitory arrangements are two students per bedroom.
- Dormitory housing costs approximately \$13,000 per year per student.

Associate Vice President Corbett addressed the current situation:

- The deal has not closed yet, but it's expected to close soon (this week or next).
- Specific details for tenants were unavailable during earlier meetings due to the fluidity of the situation.
- Tenants were informed their leases would not be renewed at the end of their term.
- Tenants could leave early without penalty or request extra time, but all must vacate by April 2026.
- Individual arrangements are being made since lease terms vary.
- There are nine BMR tenants who have been privately consulted to address their unique needs.
- BMR units will cease to exist due to the change in building usage.
- Wolf Company has no legal obligation to assist BMR tenants but is committed to helping them.
- BMR tenants can stay until April 2026 while alternate housing is arranged.
- The company plans to provide housing comparable to current arrangements and cover any rent differences until the completion of the Burlington Coat Factory building, scheduled for late 2026.

- BMR tenants will be offered preferential treatment to move into the new building once it's ready.
- No one waiting for housing in other buildings will lose their place or be "bumped" due to Boulevard tenants' relocation needs.
- There is no unified waiting list for BMR units, each building has its own waiting list.

Director Ryckman added:

- Internal discussions are ongoing to address nuances and finalize plans for BMR residents.
- A letter was sent to BMR residents this week outlining the plan.
- A contractual agreement will be established detailing landlord and tenant obligations for the gap period.
- Residents will receive plenty of notice about their options to review and discuss the contract.
- The goal is to ensure clarity and ample time for engagement if residents have questions or concerns.
- Despite increases in area median income and BMR rates, rents will remain flat until residents vacate the Boulevard.
- The company will cover any incremental costs (e.g., utilities, parking) in market-rate apartments during the gap period.
- Residents will continue to have uncovered parking spaces at no cost.
- Residents must actively apply to waitlists for available housing.
- The company cannot apply for apartments on behalf of residents.
- Assistance will be provided for moving expenses and application fees for new housing.
- Commitment to make the transition as smooth as possible, despite the temporary nature of support.

A motion to recommit Item 4 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 11-0-0 (Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood, Reps. Adams, Campbell, Camporeale, de la Cruz, Grunberger, Kuczynski, Matheny, Mays, and Summerville in favor).

Co-Chair Tomas adjourned the meeting at 11:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carmine Tomas, Co-Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).