



Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee – Board of Representatives

Nina Sherwood, Co- Chair

Carmine Tomas, Co-Chair

Committee Report DRAFT

Date: Wednesday, April 23, 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, de la Cruz, Grunberger, Matheny, Mays, and Summerville. Also in attendance were Reps. Blank, Boeger, Figueroa, Goldberg, Graham, Morson, Vandervoort, and Walston; Burt Rosenberg, Assistant Corporation Counsel; Lou Casolo, City Engineer; Leah Kagan, Director of Economic Development; Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief; Eric Kruger, Vice President of Facilities Development and Operations at UConn Health; Sean Vasington, Director & University Landscape Architect, University Planning, Design & Construction at UConn, and Jennifer Orlikoff, Campus Dean & Chief Administrative Officer at UConn. Absent or excused were Reps. Campbell, Camporeale, and Kuczynski.

Co-Chair Tomas called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LU31.043	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 12/09/24 – Held at Steering 01/22/25 – Recommitted to Steering 10-0-0 02/27/25 – Recommitted to Steering 10-0-0 03/19/25 – Recommitted to Steering 9-0-0	Motion to recommit 8/0/0

Attorney Rosenberg clarified that the provisions of the State statutes, city charter, and city code:

- The charter grants the Corporation Counsel authority to settle legal claims, not limited to lawsuits, subject to the Mayor's approval and within appropriated funds.
- Funds for the escrow account were appropriated from the Risk Management Settlement Reserve, contrary to claims of improper appropriation.
- Counsel for BLT confirmed escrow funds are allocated to two specific projects, not the

Garden Street project.

- There is no legal basis in the code or charter to pause the widening of Garden Street based on committee questions.
- The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) does not authorize converting Garden Street to a two-way street; this authority lies solely with the Board of Representatives.
- The expenditure was for settling a legal claim, not a contract under the purchasing ordinance, making Board approval irrelevant.
- The \$3.7 million claim and its appropriation are valid, as funds were taken from the Settlement Reserve.
- No violation of ordinances occurred regarding the project or escrow fund deposit.

An offline discussion will be held with Attorney Rosenberg and Director Barnes.

A motion to recommit Item 1 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood, Reps. Adams, de la Cruz, Grunberger, Matheny, Mays, and Summerville in favor).

2. [LU31.053](#)

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.

03/05/25 – Submitted by Rep. Cottrell, Campbell, and Sherwood

03/19/25 – Recommitted to Steering 11-0-0

**Motion to
recommit 8/0/0**

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

Director Blessing provided a summary of the purpose of the proposal:

- Address limited resources and high land costs affecting cultural and educational institutions in Stamford, especially downtown and the South End.
- Strengthening support for cultural and educational institutions as economic and social contributors to Stamford's well-being.
- Key objectives of the University and Research Overlay District (UROD):
 - Expand UConn and attract other academic institutions to the city.
 - Encourage affordable faculty and student housing, enhancing local economic activity.
 - Promote the growth of existing cultural venues and attract new ones.
 - Overlay district adds new rules while maintaining underlying zoning; residential areas within the overlay remain residential.
 - Provides bonuses for eligible uses (university-related or nonprofit cultural uses).
 - Allows the transfer of development rights to support expansion goals.
 - Defines the UROD's location, primarily downtown and the South End.
- The provisions and bonuses apply exclusively to the listed eligible uses, with a key exception for historic preservation allowing for the transfer of development rights for historic structures.
 - Increased density: Up to 25% above underlying zoning.
 - Larger building footprint.
 - Taller buildings within reasonable limits.
 - Affordable housing requirements met via faculty/student housing.
 - Reduced or eliminated parking requirements in downtown/train station areas.
 - Allows transfer of unused development rights from historic or eligible sites to a receiving site within the overlay district (UROD).

- Prevents tearing down underbuilt historic or cultural structures by enabling transfer of leftover development rights.
- Safeguards restrict transfers to locations within the UROD and require receiving sites to exceed one acre while maintaining zoning requirements.
- Location criteria for UROD:
 - The area chosen for proximity to train station to accommodate commuter students and faculty from UConn.
 - UROD boundaries are set within a 1.5-mile radius of the train station to accommodate commuter students and faculty.
 - UROD boundaries are set within a 1.5-mile radius of the train station to accommodate commuter students and faculty.
- Bonuses (e.g., increased density, affordable housing provisions, etc.) apply only to new developments or commercial-to-eligible-use conversions.
- Existing residential buildings are excluded from these bonuses to prevent displacement.
- Affordable faculty/staff housing: Rent capped at 30% of salary or 80% of area median income.
- Affordable student housing: Rent capped at levels defined by the current Below Market Rate (BMR) program.
- UConn, as a state agency, is tax-exempt and not directly impacted.
- Benefits focus on public-private partnerships to ensure sites receiving bonuses pay property taxes without abatements.
- Measures are in place to prevent misuse of bonuses (e.g., short-term academic uses not qualifying for long-term benefits).

Campus Dean Orlikoff added:

- UConn is positioned as a potential destination campus within the university system.
- It hosts nearly 3,000 students, including 2,500 undergraduates and 350 graduate students.
- The university offers 15 undergraduate programs and 8 graduate programs.
- Housing across 7 locations in Stamford, accommodating about 650 students.
- Notable locations include Washington Boulevard, Franklin Street, Prospect Street, Harbor Point, and others.
- There is no cafeteria; a meal plan integrated with eight local restaurants allows students to use their UConn IDs for meals at \$13 each.
- Access to over 5,000 internship opportunities for students, creating a mutually beneficial relationship with local employers.
- There was a 15% increase in students last year, with a goal to expand to 5,000 students in 10 years.
- Signature programs attracting out-of-state students include business and digital media/design programs.
- Expanding master's programs in areas like business, public administration (MPA), social work (starting 2025), and nursing certificates to support workforce development.
- Faculty, staff, and students actively contribute to local businesses, boosting economic activity in Stamford.
- Employment includes 66 full-time staff, 84 full-time faculty, 110 adjunct faculty, and 13 temporary staff.
- Presence enhances economic development, providing companies with a pipeline of skilled future employees through UConn Stamford.

A motion to recommit Item 2 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Co-Chair Tomas, Co-Chair Sherwood, Reps. Adams, de la Cruz, Grunberger, Matheny, Mays, and Summerville in favor).

Co-Chair Tomas adjourned the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carmine Tomas, Co-Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).