



Legislative & Rules Committee – Board of Representatives

Benjamin Lee, Chair

Elise Coleman, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: This meeting was held remotely.

The Legislative & Rules Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Lee, Vice Chair Coleman and Committee Member Reps. Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Lee, Lion, Miller, Nabel and Zelinsky. Also present were Reps. Adams, McMullen, Saftic, Sherwood, Stella and Summerville; Burt Rosenberg, Law Department; Jon Gottlieb, Rippowam Corporation; Sandy Dennies, Director of Administration; and Thomas Madden, Economic Development Director.

Chair Lee called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Invitee(s) or Designees
1. LR30.098	ORDINANCE <u>for public hearing and final adoption</u> ; Concerning a Tax Abatement Agreement Among the City of Stamford and LHT4 Limited Partnership and the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford for 34 Below Market Units Located at 31-97 Custer Street (Odd Numbers Only), Stamford, CT. 09/09/20 – Submitted by Mayor Martin 09/22/20 – Approved by Committee 8-1-0	Approved 7-0-0
2. LR30.100	REVIEW; Sale of Unused City Properties. 09/24/20 – Submitted by Mayor Martin 09/29/20 – Approved by Planning Board 10/08/20 – To be Considered by Board of Finance	Report Made & Held

Chair Lee opened the public hearing. There being no members of the public present wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

A motion to approve Item No. 1 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Lion, Nabel and Zelinsky in favor).

Ms. Dennies explained that the Mayor is proposing to sell three city-owned properties and is seeking the input of the Planning Board, the Board of Finance and the Board of Representatives prior to preparing the RFPs. The proposed properties are 229 North Avenue; 35 Crescent Street; and Haig Avenue properties totalling 5.5 acres. The Planning Board approved all three properties. The Board of Finance expressed concerns regarding the sale of the Haig Avenue property, noting that if the City needed to build a new school, there are very few city-owned properties available.

Representatives discussed the proposal with Ms. Dennies and Mr. Madden. Items discussed included the following:

- The historic value of the old air defense building should be kept
- The density of the Haig Avenue property should not be too high
- The current building is an eyesore
- The zoning should remain as it is
- These comments will be brought back to the Mayor for discussion
- Haig Avenue has valuable green space that should be preserved
- The Glenbrook Community Center should retain community use
- All 3 properties were discussed as housing with a goal of 30% affordable housing
- The developments need to be consistent with surrounding housing
- Development of affordable housing will decrease property values
- Affordable housing is needed in Stamford; Stamford needs people of all incomes and all income groups contribute to the City
- Smaller homes would destroy the value of the neighborhood
- This is the very beginning of the process
- If property needs clean up, the City would take advantage of brownfield funds prior to selling
- Historic preservation needs to be included in the RFP
- The RFP should be shown to committee members when possible
- It is not feasible for the City to continue to own the Crestview property;
- Daycare and childcare should be continued at the Glenview Community Center
- Affordable housing doesn't need to be next to public transit
- Affordable housing doesn't affect housing prices
- Affordable housing would be a benefit to the neighborhood

A motion to hold Item No. 2 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Fedeli, Florio, Jacobson, Lion, Nabel and Zelinsky in favor).

3. [LR30.101](#) APPROVAL; Amendment of the Rules of the Board to Add Subsection V.D.6 Concerning Voting During Remote Meeting Authorized by State of Emergency. 10/07/20 – Submitted by President Quinones **Held, as Amended, 7-0-0**

Clerk Nabel explained that during Zoom meetings, not everyone can be seen, therefore roll call votes can become problematic. Members are given 3-4 opportunities to respond. If people call or text, the accuracy of the vote can be questioned.

Committee members discussed whether there is a need for this revision:

- There is a need to be crystal clear about who is present and who is not during voting
- This rule would not impact people participating by telephone, who would continue to participate in the meeting
- People need to be able to hear one another
- The technology needs to be improved
- The Board needs to be flexible for people with technology issues
- The default under Roberts' Rules is that people may not vote through a 3rd party
- A text message can't be preserved as part of the record
- The rule change makes clear that a member must notify the clerk when they are present; the current rules already require members to be able to hear one another

A motion to amend Item 3 to adopt the second page of [Rep. McMullen's Revised Proposed Amendment](#) was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 5-1-1 (Reps. Lee, Florio, Lion, Miller and Nabel in favor; Rep. Coleman opposed; Rep. Jacobson abstaining).

A motion to amend the proposed rule change to delete from E.1.a “or if by video conference, see and hear each other debate and vote” was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 5-1-1 (Reps. Lee, Florio, Lion, Miller and Nabel in favor; Rep. Coleman opposed; Rep. Jacobson abstaining).

A motion to add the phrase “As applicable, members may vote by means of electronic participation in the telephone or video conference.” was made and seconded and subsequently withdrawn.

It was noted that using the chat function will not solve the problem for people who are not able to be on their computers.

A motion to hold Item No. 3 in order to get input from the Legal Department was made, seconded and approved by vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Florio, Jacobson, Lion, Miller and Nabel in favor).

4. [LR30.097](#) REVIEW; Possible Ordinance Creating Stamford Senior Commission. **Held, 7-0-0**
09/01/20 – Submitted by Reps. Coleman, Pratt,
Sherwood, Stella, Curtis, Zelinsky and Quinones
09/22/20 – Report Made & Held by Committee 8-1-0

A motion to hold Item No. 4 was made, seconded and approved by vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Lee, Coleman, Florio, Jacobson, Lion, Miller and Nabel in favor).

Chair Lee adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Benjamin Lee, Chair

This meeting is on video.