



Legislative & Rules Committee – Board of Representatives

Phil Berns, Chair

Sean Boeger, Vice-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Thursday, July 27, 2023
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: *This meeting was held remotely.*

The Legislative & Rules Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Berns, Vice Chair Boeger, and Committee Member Reps. Cottrell, Fedeli, Pierre-Louis, and Sherwood. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps Jacobson, Matheny, and Miller. Also present were Reps. Goldberg and Summerville; Bill Napoletano, Director, Tax & Revenue Collections; Burt Rosenberg, Assistant Corporation Counsel; and Jon Gottlieb; Rippowam Corporation.

Chair Berns called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LR31.054	ORDINANCE <u>for publication</u> ; Concerning a Tax Abatement Agreement among the City of Stamford and Oak Park 1 Limited Partnership and the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford for 61 Below-Market Units Located at Ursula Place, Stamford, CT. 06/27/23 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons	Approved 5-0-1

Committee members discussed Item No. 1 with the invited guests. Items discussed included the following:

- Oak Park is the Housing Authority's oldest development, built in the 1940s.
- The Housing Authority has received tax credits and capital funding from the State and other sources, as well as funds from the City, both fee-in-lieu and capital funds to undertake the first phase of the redevelopment of the site.
- Oak Park is too deteriorated and has too many site problems such as flooding to just repair the buildings.
- A three-phase redevelopment is planned for Oak Park. The first phase will be the demolition of 60 units and the building of 61 units. All the remaining current units will hopefully be replaced in the second and third phases, for a total of 166 units, which is the same number as are there now. The new units will be bigger, more modern and conserve more energy.
- 40 off-street parking spaces will also be added, which will alleviate a parking problem that has existed.
- By removing the old buildings and building new ones, areas that flood will be avoided, and those areas will be turned into detention basins and passive recreation areas, alleviating the flooding problem.
- The affordability level will be increased for some residents and remain the same for others. Currently the income eligibility under the State program under which Oak Park was built is 80% of the area median income ("AMI"). This will be changed to comply with the low-income housing tax credit regulations to cap income eligibility at 60% of the AMI.

Additional subsidies will allow them to lease a significant number of units to people at or below 25% of the AMI.

- These are mainly 2- and 3-bedroom townhouse units, but there will be one 26 unit, 4 floor multi-family building, which will contain handicapped accessible apartments, community space, and the security and management offices. The accessible units will all be elevator accessible, and the laundry rooms will be in that building and will have better parking access. By creating the multi-family building less of the site will be used for construction, so that parking can be added without increasing run off from the site.
- All residents will be temporarily relocated. No one will be displaced. In anticipation of this project, they have not been leasing vacant units for several years, and now have over 40 vacant units, which have been freshened up to use as temporary housing. In addition, some families received section 8 vouchers and will be assisted in finding offsite housing. These residents will be able to return if they wish after the construction. All relocated residents who remain on site will have priority to go back into new apartments. The Housing Authority will cover all moving expenses, etc.
- The tax abatement documents calls for the tax to be calculated under the shelter rent formula, under which 10% of tenants rent payments is paid minus any owner- occupied utilities. Heat, hot water, electricity will be tenant paid, so the only deduction from the 10% would be water and sewer payments by the owner.
- The project will begin at the end of the property that begins on Cove Road, because that is where they have had flooding problems. This will also be less disruptive to the residents.
- The ownership of the buildings is changing from Charter Oak Communities to Oak Park 1 Limited Partnership to get the low-income housing tax credits. Webster Bank is the limited partner, but the day-to-day operations remain under Charter Oak Communities.
- The 98-year term commences at the closing.
- Flooding will be mitigated because the buildings and parking lots will be away from the area that floods, and the flooded area will be turned into detention basins and passive recreation areas; water channeling materials will also be installed to channel the water into the existing storm water system. If the project receives State Payment in Lieu of Taxes (“PILOT”) funds in the future, that money would flow through to the City in lieu of the taxes on the development of if the City receives PILOT funds directly, that would be credited against the obligation under the shelter rent formula.
- All families who requested Section 8 vouchers are being assisted in applying for the vouchers and will be assisted in finding housing by their private leasing agent.
- There was discussion at the Tax Abatement Committee of changing the basis for the tax calculation from shelter rent to a percentage of the tax basis for the tax abatement agreements. That would be permitted under State law but was not done for this phase of the project.
- This project has never paid taxes before to the City, so this is new revenue to the City.

A motion to approve Item No. 1 was made, seconded, and approved by a roll call vote of 5-0-1 (Reps. Berns, Boeger, Cottrell, Fedeli, and Pierre-Louis in favor; Rep. Sherwood abstaining).

Chair Berns adjourned the meeting at 7:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Phil Berns, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#)