



State & Commerce Committee - Board of Representatives

Rodney Pratt, Chair

Committee Report

Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: Republican Caucus Room, 4th Floor, Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The State & Commerce Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Pratt and Committee Member Reps. Miller and Watkins. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps. Custis, Fedeli, Liebson and Summerville. Also present were President Skigen and Rep. Zelinsky; Thomas Madden, Director of Economic Development; Lou Ursone, Curtain Call; Peter Brook, Ballet School of Stamford; Angela Whitford, Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County; and Angelica Durell, Intake Music Organization of Stamford.

Chair Pratt called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. SC29.040	REVIEW; Establishing a Stamford Arts Commission. 12/02/16 – Submitted by Pres. Skigen and Rep. Zelinsky	REPORT MADE

President Skigen explained that the Community Catalyst Conversations (the “CCC”) is a joint effort among the Ferguson Library, the Interfaith Council and UConn to bring items of significance before the community for discussion. One of the topics was the arts in Stamford out of which came the general idea of an arts commission where arts organizations in the City can discuss common issues and calendaring. This proposed ordinance is the result of that discussion as well as input from a group created by Marti Etter.

He is aware that there is probably no funding for this, although the Economic Development Office and IT Department can help do a calendar, which can be updated.

Mr. Madden stated that he put some extra money into his budget for support of the Commission and that the need for an Arts & Cultural Commission was recognized in the Economic Development Plan for the City .

Committee members discussed with the invited guests:

¹ Video Time Stamp 00:01:15

- the value of the arts to the City, including money generated which is returned to the community
- the difficulty of getting out information about the arts in Stamford
- Stamford is the only major city in Connecticut not to have an arts council/commission
- The need to bring the arts to the residents of Stamford
- The lack of space and resources for the arts
- The possible competition between an umbrella organization seeking funds and the individual organizations seeking funds and the advantage of being able to speak as one voice.
- The City will provide minimal funding of this organization

There being no quorum, the Committee decided to continue this item until 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 6, 2017.

- ²2. [SC29.041](#) REVIEW; Update on Harbor Point Tax Increment Financing "TIF" District. **REPORT MADE**
12/27/16 – Submitted by Rep. Pratt

Mr. Madden distributed the [attached materials](#). He explained what a TIF district is:

- The Stamford TIF district is the area in red on the map.
- The Stamford TIF was the first one in the state
- TIFs are used to help finance public improvements that cities can't usually afford
- He is the Mayor's representative to the TIF
- Harbor Point is the majority owner at this point, but as they sell off their properties, will own less
- The Stamford TIF was used to create special obligation bonds
- It uses projected future revenue to pay off the bond, so the bonds have a lower rate
- Districts have to enter into an interlocal agreement with the city

Committee members discussed with Mr. Madden how the boatyard property might become included within the TIF.

- Any development on the 14 acres would require an evaluation of the impact on the rest of the development, which the developer would have to pay for
- With TIF, the increase in value is assigned immediately, even if the land is still vacant
- The development should pay for any infrastructure improvements
- BLT can apply to have the Boatyard included in a TIF, but the City has the discretion to accept it or not

Mr. Madden further explained that:

- The City must consider any development permitted under the Zoning regulations
- The City is hoping to require more analysis that addresses advantages to the City of developments

² Video Time Stamp 00:46:55

- The process to expand the TIF would be either an application to the City to expand the district or create a new, adjacent TIF. These would require State approval and City approval to amend the interlocal agreement
- The only infrastructure left to be developed within the TIF are some roadways/sidewalks
- The increase in value goes to finance the infrastructure during the duration of the bonds, and then goes to the City
- The anticipated value is applied before the property is developed
- There are other areas in the City for which a TIF might be appropriate

Chair Pratt adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rodney Pratt, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).