



## ***State & Commerce Committee – Board of Representatives***

Fred Pierre-Louis, Chair

Jonathan Jacobson, Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 2, 2022  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Place:** *This meeting was held remotely.*

The State & Commerce Committee met as indicated above. In attendance was Chair Pierre-Louis, Vice Chair Jacobson, and Committee Members Rep. Goldberg, Miller, and Sanford. Excused were Reps. Ley and Pratt. Also in attendance were Reps. Cottrell and Nabel; Frank Petise and Luke Bittenwieser, Transportation Bureau; Bridgette Fox and Lauren Meyer, Mayor's Office; Matt Quinones, Director of Operations; Loren Nadres, Director of Economic Development; Alex Rodriguez, Save Our Sound; Emily Gordon, Land Use Bureau and three members of the public.

Chair Pierre-Louis called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
12.	<a href="#">SC31.006</a> ORDINANCE for publication; Amendment to <a href="#">Chapter 214, Article V</a> , of the Code of Ordinances, Outdoor Dining, to Expand Outdoor Dining Into Parking Spaces and the Roadway. 02/09/22 – Submitted by Frank Petise	Held 5-0-0

Item # 2 was taken up out of order. Mr. Quinones, Mr. Petise, Ms. Nadres, and Mr. Bittenwieser reviewed the [attached](#) presentation and there was discussion. Some points included:

- The pandemic allowed expansion of outdoor dining areas into public right-aways including parking lanes.
- Over 130 parking spaces in Stamford were transformed into dining areas.
- The proposed amendment to the ordinance tries to accomplish firming up the existing ordinance to allow for continued success with outdoor dining, while addressing some the current challenges with permitting.
- Stamford's current ordinance pertains to sidewalk cafes. The proposed amendments involve regulating outdoor dining in the street areas, also called "streeteries".
- It will allow for permitting to expand into parking spaces, streamline a fee structure to make it more equitable and clear, and balance the needs of residents who live nearby.
- It will further limit noise hours and raise fines around violations.
- There will be a freeze on the permit fees for the first year, then start in 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> Video Time Stamp: 00:02:08

- Traffic does not appear to be negatively impacted and there is ample parking in the city garages.
- There will be specific hours and months that the streeteries will be allowed.
- Access for All (A4A) should be involved in developing this ordinance.
- It will be more ADA compliant because it will remove some outdoor dining off of the sidewalks.
- It is important to insure the safety of diners. Different types of barriers are currently used such as concrete planters, buffalo water containers, and bike racks.
- Stamford will generate approximately \$65,000 in revenue based off past permit fees.

A motion to hold Item #2 to give the Committee more time to review the ordinance was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 5-0-0 (Reps. Pierre-Louis, Jacobson, Goldberg, Miller, and Sanford in favor).

- <sup>23</sup>. [SC31.007](#) RESOLUTION; Declaring a Climate Emergency. **Held 5-0-0**  
 01/05/22 – Submitted by Reps. Cottrell, Jacobson and  
 Berns  
 01/10/22 – Held at Steering

Item #3 was taken up out of order.

Rep. Cottrell reviewed the resolution and Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the [attached](#) presentation. Some points included:

- Rep. Cottrell stated that this resolution gets the City of Stamford actively involved in stemming the tide of the effects of climate change. It starts the conversation and acknowledges that as a city we do want to work on this.
- Ms. Fox stated that Mayor Simmons supports this resolution and is very committed to climate issues. This resolution highlights events that have happened in Stamford over the past several years and how it has impacted its citizens. It is important to do what we can to help the climate locally.
- This resolution acknowledges that some work has been done to reduce emissions in the past 15 years and we are moving in the right direction as a country.
- Rather than articulating every specific goal, it suggests aiming to be a carbon neutral city by 2030, and sets up a framework to make sure all City department heads will be actively engaged in working towards this goal.

A motion to hold Item #3 to give the Committee more time review the resolution was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 5-0-0 (Reps. Pierre-Louis, Jacobson, Goldberg, Miller, and Sanford in favor).

- <sup>31</sup>. SC31.005 REVIEW; Increasing the Transportation System in the **Held 4-0-0**  
 West Side by Adding Buses or Trolleys.  
 01/05/22 – Submitted by Rep. Stella  
 01/27/22 – Held by Committee 3-0-1

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<sup>2</sup> Video Time Stamp: 00:39:34

<sup>3</sup> Video Time Stamp: 01:10:35

Mr. Petise and Mr. Buttenwieser reviewed this item and there was brief discussion.

- Mr. Petise has spoken with Barry Diggs at CT Transit specifically about the West Side. The ridership numbers are frequently looked into. CT Transit is always open to making changes to improve service. Mr. Diggs would be happy to speak at the next Committee meeting to discuss this in detail. There have not been comprehensive bus route changes in Stamford in a long time.
- The Stamford bus model is based on a pulse point scheduling system from the Stamford Transportation Center, where all the buses leave at the same time.
- There is no East Side to West Side bus service in Stamford. That traveling involves transferring buses at the Transportation Center.
- One of the big challenges in the West Side is that the main bus route is split, going up one way on Stillwater Avenue and coming down the opposite way on West Main Street, so taking that round trip involves different bus stops.
- There needs to be ease and safety getting to the bus stop, such as sidewalks.

A motion to hold Item #2 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 4-0-0 (Reps. Pierre-Louis, Goldberg, Miller, and Sandford in favor).

<sup>44</sup>. [SC31.001](#) REVIEW; City of Stamford's Legislative Priorities. **Report Made**  
12/08/21 – Submitted by Rep. Miller  
12/29/21 – Held by Committee 6-0-0  
01/10/22 – Moved to Pending

Ms. Fox reviewed the [attached](#) presentation and there was a brief discussion.

*Economic Development priorities:*

- Stamford's three key economic development goals for the future are Innovation, Business Retention, and Business Attraction.
- The focus is on developing a city that is forward-thinking, vibrant, and environmentally friendly.
- The city has applied for the State Innovation Corridor Grant.
- A priority is to keep large companies rooted in the Stamford community, and to attract and support small businesses. The Mayor is actively seeking funds to help small businesses recover from the pandemic.

*Infrastructure priorities:*

- The Mayor is working with the Operations and Engineering Departments to focus on road and bridge repair.

*Responsive government:*

- The key issues right now are the West Main Street Bridge, The Long Term Facilities Plan, FixIt Stamford, and Citizens Service hubs (meeting with residents in different neighborhoods to discuss concerns).
- It is very important to keep the lines of communication open between residents and the City government.

The Mayor understands the urgency of the West Main Street Bridge situation, and wants the opportunity to hear what exactly are the residents' and business owners' concerns. Ms. Fox will send the Committee an update of who they have met with over the past two weeks regarding this issue.

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<sup>4</sup> Video Time Stamp: 01:21:45

Chair Pierre-Louis adjourned the meeting at 8:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fred Pierre-Louis, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).