



Legislative & Rules Committee – Board of Representatives

James Diamond, Chair

Arthur Layton, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Monday, September 15, 2008
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The Legislative & Rules Committee met as indicated above. Present were Chair Diamond and Vice Chair Layton and Committee Member Reps. Heaphy, Esposito, Zelinsky and Mitchell. Absent/excused were Committee Member Reps. Berns, Day, Lodato, Lombardo and Mitchell. Also present were Reps. Adams and DeLuca.

Chair Diamond called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Chair Diamond opened the public hearing on Item No. LR27.077; there were no members of the public present to speak so the public hearing was closed.

Chair Diamond opened the public hearing on Item No. LR27.075; Messrs. Tom Young and Jack Halpert spoke in favor of the ordinance. Chair Diamond closed the public hearing.

Chair Diamond opened the public hearing on Item No. LR27.076; Messrs. Tom Young and Jack Halpert spoke in favor of the ordinance. Chair Diamond closed the public hearing.

Chair Diamond opened the public hearing on Item No. LR27.078; no one was present from the public to speak and the public hearing was closed.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. <u>LR27.077</u>	RESOLUTION; <u>for public hearing and final adoption</u> ; approving a lease agreement between the City of Stamford and The Boys & Girls Club of Stamford, Inc. for the leasing of a parking lot located immediately south of 347 Stillwater Avenue.	COMMITTEE APPROVED 6-0-0

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Diamond, Layton, Heaphy, Esposito, Mitchell and Zelinsky in favor).

2. [LR27.075](#) PROPOSED ORDINANCE; **for public hearing & final adoption**; amending Section 220-8 B. of the Code of Ordinances, Senior Citizens and Disabled Property Owners Tax Abatement; to provide for increased income limits and increased exemption in the fair market value of the residence for both the abatement and the deferral program. **COMMITTEE APPROVED 5-1-0**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 5-1-0 (Reps. Diamond, Heaphy, Esposito, Mitchell and Zelinsky in favor; Rep. Layton opposed).

3. [LR27.076](#) PROPOSED ORDINANCE; **for public hearing and final adoption**; amending Section 220-13, Article V of the Code of Ordinances; Additional Veterans Property Tax Exemptions to provide for increased income limits. **COMMITTEE APPROVED 5-1-0**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 5-1-0 (Reps. Diamond, Heaphy, Esposito, Mitchell and Zelinsky in favor; Rep. Layton opposed).

4. [LR27.078](#) PROPOSED ORDINANCE; **for public hearing and final adoption**; amending Section 220 Taxation, Article X, Property leased to Charitable, Religious or Nonprofit Organizations, Section 220-33, Application Procedures to allow for the off-site signing and notarization of the required documents. **COMMITTEE APPROVED 6-0-0**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Diamond, Layton, Heaphy, Esposito, Mitchell and Zelinsky in favor).

5. [LR27.079](#) REVIEW; whether Section 200 of our ordinances, which provides for tax abatement and deferral for married couples, needs to be amended to conform to the recent state statutes governing civil unions. **REPORT MADE**

Chair Diamond reviewed the memo from the Legislative Aide, Valerie Rosenson, and stated that he spoke with Sybil Richards, Deputy Corporation Counsel, who felt that the State explicitly mandates all municipalities to include participants in civil unions in the enabling legislation.

Rep. Zelinsky felt that the Committee should take no action. Rep. Heaphy said the Committee might want to explore passing a resolution that would express the Board's desire to include civil union participants in all programs/benefits that apply to married couples.

Chair Diamond reviewed the research memo from the Legislative Aide, Valerie Rosenson, which concluded that the State civil union statute did not expressly include municipal ordinances. He also reported that he spoke with Sybil Richards, Deputy Corporation Counsel, who felt that amendments to our tax abatement ordinance is not required, because the City will treat parties to a civil union who apply for this benefit as if they are married and will approve the application. Ms. Richards also told Chair Diamond that there are many other city ordinances which refer to married couples which also could be amended.

Representative Mitchell questioned the need for amending this ordinance if it is not necessary. Rep. Zelinsky felt that the Committee should take no action. Rep. Heaphy said the Committee might want to explore passing a broad resolution that would express the Board's desire to include civil union participants in all programs/benefits that apply to married couples.

Chair Diamond felt that the Committee should not undertake such a broad approach, and because the tax abatement/deferral ordinances were within the Committee's purview. He stated that it would be appropriate to put on next month's agenda the proposed amendment to the tax abatement ordinances which was prepared by Valerie Rosenson.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Diamond, Chair