



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

Mitchell Kaufman, Chair

Salvatore Gabriele, Vice Chair

# **COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Date:** Thursday, July 1, 2010

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Place:** Democratic Caucus Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard

The State & Commerce Committee met as indicated above. Present were Vice Chair Sal Gabriele and Committee member Reps. Heaphy, Lombardo and Molgano. Absent or excused were Committee member Reps. Kaufman, Sklover and Summerville. Also present were Laure Aubuchon, Director of Economic Development; Jeanette Brown, WPCA; and State Representative Carlo Leone.

Vice Chair Gabriele called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
1. SC28.004	REVIEW; economic development plan for small businesses; annual reports?	<b>Report Made</b>

Ms. Aubuchon explained that she does not yet have a formal economic development report. The City has hired an intern to collect information to be provided on the website so that small business are aware of what is required of them to open and conduct business in the City, such as permitting requirements. She will provide the committee with a report on the Enterprise Zone as well as the status of development projects. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Aubuchon stated that it would be helpful for businesses if the various City boards could distinguish their roles from one another, so that the process of being approved did not appear serendipitous. She agreed to update the committee in a few months.

2. <a href="#">SC28.005</a>	REVIEW; status on South End economic development progress.	<b>Report Made</b>
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Ms. Aubuchon stated that there is a great deal of activity in the South End. She detailed the various projects and when they anticipated completion, as shown on the [attached sheet](#). In addition, Ms. Aubuchon noted that the Waterside School is expected to open in 2012. There is also the potential for a hotel to open in the South End. In response to questions from the committee, Ms. Aubuchon explained that

- the proposed commuter parking spots at Gateway would be in place before the work on the Stamford Transit Center took place. Mr. Leone noted that the

Stamford delegation was able to prevent the diversion of the \$35 million currently earmarked for the renovation of the parking garage at the Transit Center.

- All of the proposed housing units in the South End are rental units
- Only small retail is currently being planned, along with one restaurant
- There is increased interest in the Clair Building and Old Town Hall

3. SC28.010 REVIEW; status of dredging of Holly Pond. Report Made

Representative Leone and Jeanette Brown explained that

- this is an ongoing project which was begun 8 years ago, at which time \$400,000 was available, but the cost was \$1 million. This money is currently available. They have since obtained an additional \$500,000, but over time the cost of the dredging has increased to \$18 million because of the increased buildup.
- They sought assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers, who proposed returning to its natural state. Because of the impact on local owners, they reconsidered the project
- There is a need to present a plan to the DOT in order to avoid diversion of the currently available funds
- There is an additional \$500,000 available in bonding
- They brought in Jeanette Brown to see what could be done with the property with the funds available and used the initial \$500 to hire a consultant.
- The consultant came up with a sustainable solution involving some dredging, channeling and constructed wetlands which will build up vegetation and wildlife
- The cost of this solution is approximately \$5 million.
- They hope that Stamford and Darien can agree to this plan and to use the currently available funds for design and permitting
- Once there is a feasible plan and the preparatory work is completed, they will seek additional funds from the Army Corps of Engineers or federal grants
- They plan to hold a public meeting about this plan

### As Secondary Committee

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| 1. <a href="#">A28.062</a> | <u>Economic Development Commission</u> |                     |
|                            | Francis J. Browne, Esq. (R)            | Repl. Haines        |
|                            | 1700 Bedford Street #204               | (Term Exp. 12/1/07) |
|                            | Stamford, CT 06905                     |                     |
|                            | Term Expires: 12/01/10                 |                     |
|                            |  | Committee           |
|                            |  | Approved            |
|                            |  | 4-0-0               |

A motion to approved this appointment was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote. (Reps. Gabriele, Heaphy, Lombardo and Molgano in favor.)

Vice Chair Gabriele adjourned the meeting at 7:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Salvatore Gabriele, Vice Chair