



Wednesday, October 12, 2022

Dear Stamford Residents:

The City of Stamford is in receipt of the independent report produced by the engineering firm Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc (WJE), which was tasked with investigating the partial collapse of a parking structure at the Allure building, an apartment complex owned by the developer Building Land and Technologies (BLT) and located at 850 Pacific Street, Stamford. At my request, the City also contracted with WJC to conduct additional building assessments of properties constructed during the same time period by the same builder to ensure public safety.

The following is an overview of the steps the City of Stamford took over the past eight months in response to the partial collapse:

- On February 1st, 2022, first responders were alerted to a partial collapse of a parking structure at the Allure apartment building. That day, City officials were in contact with first responders, BLT officials, and the engineering firm Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc (WJE).
- On February 5th, WJE launched an on-site independent forensic investigation of the cause of the collapse.
- In the weeks and months that followed, my administration continued to receive daily briefings and updates regarding the collapse and safety of the Allure and the ongoing investigation.
- On February 22nd, Chief Building Official Bharat Gami provided an overview of the Building Department process to the Board of Representatives' Public Safety and Health Committee. At this meeting, Mr. Gami spoke about the work permit history at Allure Apartments, the inspection process for new major projects, and incident management and coordination with BLT. At the same hearing, City Engineer Lou Casolo updated committee members on the investigation and communications with BLT.
- On March 1st, I sent a letter to the Board of Representatives describing the steps the Mayor's Office, in conjunction with the Departments of Operations and Public Safety, had taken since February 1st. Those steps included the hiring of WJE, daily briefings, and meetings with BLT officials. The following week, Mr. Gami presented to the South End NRZ outlining the function of the building department and current developments in the South End. He also addressed issues of concern with the Allure and other developments in the South End.
- On March 18th, I sent a letter to BLT requesting an action plan. I indicated that the action plan needed to include a list of properties in which Henderson and Rogers and Baker Concrete were designers or contractors on any aspect of the building. I also asked for information on new properties for buildings under new ownership previously constructed by BLT as well as: design plans, show drawings, built plans, copies of all special instructions, right of access permits, access to building maintenance records and reports for WJE. Finally, I requested information on furnishing of all necessary non-destructive testing of exposed concrete slab surfaces.
- On March 25th, I wrote a letter to BLT requesting access for WJE to conduct inspections of additional BLT-built buildings. On March 30th, the former Director of Public Safety, Health, and Welfare submitted a public safety report that included a detailed timeline of the micro-events that occurred the day of the collapse, the national fire incident reporting system, and the 911 communications incident detail report.
- On March 30th Mr. Gami sent a letter to Tim Yahn of BLT stating that the City of Stamford would not issue a permit for demolition until the City received the NDT/GPR test results.



- On March 31st Director of Operations Matt Quinones, City Engineer Lou Casolo, Chief Building Official Bharat Gami, and Associate Principal for WJC John Cocca presented to the Board of Representative's Land Use and Urban Redevelopment Committee and provided an update on the investigation into the Allure collapse, expanded inspections, and the repair permit.
- On May 24th, WJE submitted a status review letter to Lou Casolo that stated upon completing the visual investigation and document review, the firm did not find any evidence to suggest an underlying structural issue at the Allure, P6, The Escape, or the Opus buildings. Furthermore, upon receiving the complete GPR scan from the Allure and Escape, and a review of two broken PT strands identified at the 2nd level of the parking garage, WJE would conduct a review and issue a report.

WJE has since completed its investigation of the Allure partial building collapse, and its limited assessments of additional properties that have been developed by BLT in Stamford utilizing similar construction, designs, and/or construction teams.

Following WJE's investigation and assessments, my administration has submitted the findings to the State Building Official and submitted a claim with the State of Connecticut, Department of Administrative Services, Department of Transportation, Office of the Attorney General, and Department Consumer Protection Agency. These reports have been published on the City's website along with the correspondence referenced above.

Additionally, the Director of Operations and Chief Building Official have conducted an internal review of processes related to construction permit approval and have documented action steps the City can implement moving forward to ensure compliance with state and local building policies and codes. The City's website has a dedicated page with information related to this investigation for the purposes of transparency.

I am confident that this investigation was completed effectively and thoroughly. I thank the Board of Representatives for the attention that it gave to this matter and for its shared commitment to the safety of Stamford residents.

Sincerely,

Mayor Caroline Simmons