

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2012

1. At 6:05pm, Chairman Jackie Heftman called the special meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Commissioners:

Jackie Heftman, Chairman
Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer
Christopher D. Meek
Taylor R. Molgano

Staff:

Rachel A. Goldberg, Interim Director
& General Counsel
Celeste Johnson, Chief Learning &
Operating Officer, Reinventing Stamford
Durelle Alexander

Attendees:

Milton Puryear, Executive Director, Mill River Collaborative

Commissioner Mellis made a motion to address the agenda items out of order. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Molgano and carried by unanimous vote.

2. Southeast Quadrant

(c) **Selection of OTHRA representative** - Noting that former chairman James I. Nixon needed to be replaced as a board member of the Old Town Hall Redevelopment Authority (OTHRA), Attorney Goldberg gave a brief overview of the committee, its current status and responsibilities. Commissioner Mellis will be the URC's designee, subject to a meeting/discussion with OTHRA Chair Tim Curtin.

3. Mill River Corridor

(a) **Planning Proposal from Mill River Collaborative** – Attorney Goldberg reported that the Collaborative had asked the Commission to renew its \$30,000 a year grant; further, that the Commission had authorized the expenditure for one year subject to a review of the federal regulations and the Collaborative planning activities by Attorney Goldberg and Mr. Puryear. Attorney Goldberg said, “There is a potential desire to plan the connection in the Southeast Quadrant between the Mill River Park, principally the Archstone site from Broad Street to 1010 Washington Boulevard where the entry is along West Park Place. The Southeast Quadrant line ends on the west side of the sidewalk on Washington Boulevard so we can expend our federal dollars to plan in that space.” She continued, “We have received a revised proposal requesting \$40,000 that includes some additional funding that would be for consulting work, but this is still purely a planning study.” Mr. Puryear noted that the additional \$10,000 includes adding the services of a traffic consultant to advise on user counting methodology, forecast pedestrian demand, and develop presentation materials. Following discussion, it was the sense of the Board that Attorney Goldberg be authorized to write up a contract for a formal proposal to present at the next Board meeting.

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4. Reinventing Stamford

(a) **Status Report** – Ms. Johnson reported on the following:

- *Main Street Collective* – Following meetings with Community Economic Development Fund (CEDF) CEO Donna Wertenbach, CEDF has scheduled a workshop tonight at the Government Center to take applications from businesses that employ fewer than fifty employees, offering them low cost term loans at 4% interest. CEDF is hoping these loans will help create and retain jobs in Connecticut.
- *Eco-Arts* – Economic Development Director Laure Aubuchon has asked Ms. Johnson to put her original concept for *Reinventing Stamford*, Eco-Arts and the Eco-Arts Trail, on hold to support StamfordLights, a weekend of neighborhood activities scheduled to attract people to different city-wide events September 22-23. These events will culminate with the illumination of the Stamford Transportation Center, a project for which the City has received \$155,000 from the Connecticut Office of the Arts.
- *Pathways & Smart Streets* – Ms. Johnson reported that the topic for the Town Hall meeting scheduled at UConn on May 23 will be “Pathways & Smart Streets,” with table discussions on “Connecting Neighborhoods” and “Livable Communities.” *Reinventing Stamford* will be able to leverage the existing grassroots organizations that have been working with bicycle friendly and people friendly initiatives. Speakers will include David Kooris, Vice President and Director of the Connecticut office of the Regional Plan Association; Jim Travers, Director of Transportation, Traffic & Parking for the City of New Haven, and Josh Benson, the New York City official who heads their bicycle and pedestrian-friendly initiatives.

Chairman Heftman asked, “After May 31, what do you see as the impetus going forward?” Ms. Johnson responded, “The first stage of my plan is the Town Hall meeting where the break-out table sessions will get everyone thinking about their chosen topic. The next stage will be a series of community/neighborhood meetings taking place over the summer, meetings in June, July and August, in as many communities as we can make this happen. These will be followed by another Town Hall meeting in September or October to determine what everyone is saying is important to them. I think it comes down to talking about recommendations about what’s desired and how Stamford can achieve its potential.” Attorney Goldberg said, “After the Town Hall meeting, we will have the opportunity to see the response from the community and be better able to determine the importance of *Reinventing Stamford* moving forward.”

Attorney Goldberg reported that when Ms. Johnson had inquired about the use of the remaining “Pivot Point” brochures which were believed to be in storage at the printers, it was discovered that the former Manager of *Reinventing Stamford* had instructed the printer to dispose of them.

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It was the sense of the Board that Attorney Goldberg send a letter to the former Manager expressing the URC's disappointment and concern with his actions.

At 7:03pm, Commissioner Meek made a motion to go into Executive Session to specifically discuss contract negotiations re: Park Square West/Trinity (agenda item #2a) and Re-Use Parcel 38 (agenda item 2b). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Meek and carried by unanimous vote. Durelle Alexander was excused from Executive Session. No motions were made and no votes were taken. At 7:37pm, Commissioner Mellis made a motion to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Meek and carried by unanimous vote.

5. Agency Administration


(a) **Budget** – Attorney Goldberg will meet with the Budget Committee (Commissioners Mellis and Meek) and prepare a budget to present at the next meeting.

6. Adjournment

Due to scheduling conflicts, the next regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 14, is cancelled. There will be a special meeting on Thursday, June 21 at a time to be determined.

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Mellis made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel P. Mellis
Secretary/Treasurer