

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING**  
**CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT**  
**URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2008**

1. At 1:06pm, Chairman Stephen C. Osman called the special meeting to order. The following were in attendance:

Commissioners:

Stephen C. Osman, Chairman  
James I. Nixon, Vice Chairman  
Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer  
Edward J. Fuhrman  
Robert S. Robins

Staff:

Gerrie Post, Executive Director  
Rachel Goldberg, General Counsel  
Durelle Alexander

2. Agency Administration

(a) **Strategic Planning** – It was noted that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (Commissioners Fuhrman & Robins and Executive Director Post) has been meeting since last September to identify priorities and potential long-term goals for the URC. The Committee's four initial conclusions are as follows:

- (i) There is considerable interest in pursuing the development of a new strategic focus and range of initiatives for the Agency.
- (ii) The Commission members want to continue doing what they are doing but be more proactive and play a more significant role in the growth and development of Stamford.
- (iii) It is not necessary to engage in a "classic" Strategic Plan but the Commission should be more focused in defining its vision and/or goals plus strategic priorities and initiatives.
- (iv) The Commission should block out 45 minutes of each regular meeting and devote that time to strategic planning to define its direction.

Commissioner Fuhrman then outlined six possible alternatives/directions in which the Agency might proceed:

- (i) Do nothing but continue what is currently being done, seeking to have a positive impact on the growth and development of Stamford's city center/downtown.
- (ii) Expand the Commission's role and positive impact beyond downtown into the other geographic and/or "quality of life" areas of Stamford. [In response to this suggestion, Attorney Goldberg reviewed the Agency's limitations under state statutes.]
- (iii) Build upon the current role and strategic planning work to date, frame a vision of what the URC believes Stamford can and should become and how the URC members, individually and collectively, could work to make this happen. [Attorney Goldberg noted that a large part of this is being accomplished through the City's Master Plan.]
- (iv) Collaborate with other Stamford organizations, including the City, to develop/sharpen a vision of what is sought for Stamford and assist in working to make that happen.
- (v) Build upon what is being done currently by the selection of individual initiatives that are deemed to have a positive impact on Stamford rather than going through the strategic planning process.

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- (vi) Wait for such a vision and plan from the City or from the State Department of Economic & Community Development and participate as deemed appropriate.

Commissioner Fuhrman emphasized the importance of “knowing where you’re going.” Discussion ensued. Commissioner Robins responded, “I find vision from specifics ... from identifying specific projects and specific areas of interest. My personal interests are in historic preservation and the enhancement of education along with the advancement of visual arts as well as cultural development.” Chairman Osman said, “I think we should find things of interest that might benefit the City, see if we want to participate and to what extent.” Commissioner Mellis said, “I am more comfortable with a broader concept of our vision that might be narrowed down to an area of specific interest that might support that vision. We should have a good idea of what the URC should and can achieve, and subsequently identify how we might best achieve that.” Commissioner Nixon said, “I personally like to look at the big picture to ensure that a specific project fits in overall.”

Attorney Goldberg suggested, “You need to get back to the ‘overall framework’ – what the Agency will look like, what you want the Agency to look like, and identify projects secondarily.” Commissioner Fuhrman said, “In determining our vision for what we want the URC to become in the future, in five years or in ten years, topics for discussion might include: (i) priority strategic goals; (ii) assessment of strengths, expertise and capabilities; (iii) criteria for focus; (iv) strategic initiatives to achieve goals/vision; and (v) measurements.”

Executive Director Post said, “You already have a statutory framework and a mission statement. Everything is there for you to build on. You need to determine what you want to concentrate on and work to make it happen.” Commissioner Fuhrman read the mission statement into the record (copy attached as part of these official minutes) and noted that it does not specify what we want the Agency to look like. He also suggested seeking the best way to leverage individual talents of the Commissioners. Attorney Goldberg noted “that there is no end product to the current mission statement.”

Discussion continued. Attorney Goldberg suggested setting a framework/criteria against which all potential projects would be weighed. Commissioner Mellis said, “Looking 10 or 15 years into the future of the URC, I want to be comfortable with the direction and design guidelines we’ve selected.” Commissioner Nixon added, “I think you have to identify goals for each specific mission/project. How will you accomplish them? How will you define success or failure? Specifically, a goal, a timeframe, and action to make it happen.”

In conclusion, Commissioner Robins said, “The issues have been developed. I think we can reach some type of compromise by working on enhancement of our mission statement and proceeding to the next stage of how we will realize this enhancement. I would like to suggest one more discussion, at which time we would reach a conclusion to either do something or do nothing except to continue on with what we are doing.”



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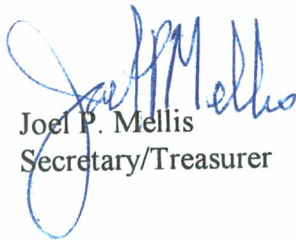
It was the sense of the Board that Strategic Planning would be placed on the next meeting agenda with the goal of reaching consensus on how to proceed.

3. Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 8, 2008 at 9:30am. This special meeting replaces the regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 14, 2008 at 6:00pm.

Having completed the business for which this special meeting was convened, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 2:48pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel P. Mellis  
Secretary/Treasurer

**CITY OF STAMFORD, CT**  
**URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Stamford Urban Redevelopment Commission provides the critical leadership for the continuing innovative revitalization of the City.*

*Working in collaboration with the community, the Commission focuses on rehabilitating blighted areas; balancing population density and socio-economic diversity; promoting convenient affordable housing; enhancing pedestrian presence; improving the availability of suitable parking; expanding the job and tax base; and ensuring the attractiveness of buildings, open areas and urban infrastructure.*

*The successful result of the Commission's activities will enhance the appeal of the City as a dynamic community in which to live, work and shop.*

**APPROVED 7/11/06**

CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT, URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**NOTICE**

A Special Meeting of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, Urban Redevelopment Commission, will convene at the Commission Offices on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Stamford Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, Connecticut, on Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 1:00pm.

**AGENDA:**

1. Roll Call
2. Agency Administration
  - (a) Strategic Planning
3. Adjournment
  - (a) Discussion – Next Meeting Agenda
  - (b) Confirmation – Next Meeting Date (*February 8, 2008 @ 9:30am*)

## URC STRATEGIC PLANNING

### DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS – JANUARY, 2008

#### Background

Last September, we embarked upon a Strategic Planning exercise to seek to determine how the Commission wanted to extend its focus, priorities and goals over the longer term and whether there was an “appetite” to engage in a full-scale Planning process or be more selective in our approach. The initial conclusions were that:

There is considerable interest in pursuing the development of a new strategic focus and range of initiatives for the Agency.

The Commission members want to continue doing what we are doing; but, importantly, be even more proactive and play an even more significant role in the growth and development of Stamford.

It was not felt necessary to engage in a “classic” Strategic Plan; but, rather, be more focused in defining our Vision and/or Goals plus Strategic Priorities and Initiatives.

We should block out 45 minutes of each regular meeting and devote the time to Strategic Planning in some fashion to define direction.

After jumping into a discussion of “supplementary” areas of interest and focus and questioning whether there was a readiness to commit to them, it seems imperative that we stop and consider how we want to proceed. The next several paragraphs outline some questions, thoughts and suggestions from the Steering Committee on next steps.

#### Some Questions and Suggestions

1. Is there an interest in continuing the pursuit of Strategic Planning at a conceptual level or is the preference to either drop the effort or move to the pursuit of specific interests and priorities?

We believe that time and effort expended now in this way to lay a conceptual approach will prove beneficial. Most significantly, it should start with thought and discussion leading to an articulation of a Vision for what we want the new URC to become over the next 5 to 10 years.

Additional areas of discussion might well be:

Priority Strategic Goals

Assessment of Strengths, Expertise and Capabilities

Criteria for Focus

Strategic Initiatives to Achieve Goals/Vision

Measurements

2. Is there agreement that “Job #1” is to continue our work to complete the major projects currently on our agenda, i.e:

Downtown Developments –PSW, Parcels 36 and 38?

Archstone site and UBS enhancements?

Support of Mill River Development

Others as presented to us?

We believe this is the correct focus and additional efforts should not divert attention from it.

3. Is there agreement that the next and most appropriate engagement is to pursue efforts to extend the same positive involvement and impact to the West Side, East Side, South Side and the broader Stamford area on the same basis as we seek to impact the Downtown area?

This is our view.

4. Do we believe that we have the time, the resources and the unique capabilities to take a proactive role—collaborative and, presumably supportive—in other areas geared toward making for a “Better Stamford?”

There is something of a mixed feeling here and one warranting discussion concerning whether or not this would be premature or diverting in nature.

5. Should we also take the time to consider whether our approach to our responsibilities and way we leverage our resources is optimum?

Yes, although the sense is a positive one.