

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Thursday, March 13, 2003

1. Chairman Stephen C. Osman called the meeting to order at 6:07PM. In attendance were:

Commission

Stephen C. Osman, Chairman
Eric M. Wormser, Vice Chairman
Joel P. Mellis, Secretary/Treasurer
James I. Nixon
Neal M. Jewell

Staff

Laszlo Papp, Executive Director
Rachel Goldberg, General Counsel
Durelle Alexander

2. Approval of Minutes

(a) **February 13, 2003 Regular Meeting** - Commissioner Mellis made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nixon and carried by unanimous vote.

(b) **February 21, 2003 Special Meeting** - Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nixon and carried by unanimous vote.

3. Announcements

None.

4. Correspondence

None.

5. Stamford Urban Transitway Project/Presentation by City Staff

Assistant City Engineer/Project Manager Louis Casolo, Jr. and Project Coordinator Laura LaBosky introduced themselves and noted that they have been working directly with URC General Counsel Rachel Goldberg. Mr. Casolo said he would be giving a brief overview of the transitway project and began by showing a slide of the proposed project area (copy attached as part of these official minutes). When asked about funding, Mr. Casolo replied, "Ninety-nine percent of the funding to go forward with the project, estimated to cost \$45.5 million, is in place. It's an 80/20 split, 80% coming from the Federal Transit Administration and 20% from the City." Mr. Casolo then reviewed the project's organization, its consistency with federal, state and local plans, and its purpose and need, noting the following:

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING MARCH 13, 2003 - PAGE TWO:

- The 1929 SWAN Report identified the need for an east-west connector south of the railroad tracks
- The Stamford inter-modal transportation is the busiest station on the Metro North commuter rail besides Grand Central Station in NYC
- Inadequate facilities for east-west traffic flow
- Inadequate link from the east coast's primary highway artery to the principal rail corridor
- Inadequate access to the Transportation Center, existing and new parking garages

Mr. Casolo continued, "Although we are talking about a stretch of road that is only $\frac{3}{4}$ miles long running east-west between Atlantic Street and Elm Street, it will be a direct link between the Stamford inter-modal transportation center, Interstate 95, and neighborhoods to the east and the southeast. There will be two travel lanes in each direction for traffic with left-turn lanes on approaches to intersections, pedestrian and bike lanes, and high occupancy vehicle lanes." An estimated project schedule was discussed and is attached as part of these official minutes.

Mr. Casolo then discussed relocation, saying that about 70 properties will be affected - approximately 25 businesses and approximately 75 families. "Public involvement in the process will be important here," Mr. Casolo said. Lists of impacted properties, with photographs, will be made available on the City of Stamford's web site at <http://www.cityofstamford.org/Engineering/UrbanTransitway/RightOfWay/main.asp>. Public Information Sessions will also be arranged in the future to discuss specific details of the right-of-way acquisition and relocation processes and procedures.

Following discussion, Mr. Casolo outlined the URC's role in the transitway project, listing the following under major acquisition services:

- prepare & adhere to master schedule
- title searches
- appraisals & review appraisals
- public outreach programs
- negotiations
- condemnation proceedings (as may be required)
- relocation services
- coordination with project related activities

In conclusion, Mr. Casolo read the following partnering statement into the record: "The Engineering Bureau has the engineering and construction experience to complete capital projects on time and within budget but does not have the expertise in real estate acquisition and welcomes

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING MARCH 13, 2003 - PAGE THREE:

the solid performance that the URC has demonstrated in our City. The Bureau encourages the foundation of cohesive partnering with the URC and its subcontractors. Partnering will draw on the strengths of each organization to identify and achieve reciprocal goals. The objectives are effective and efficient contract performance to complete the Project within budget and on schedule.”

When questioned about next steps in the process, Mr. Casolo responded, “Finalize URC Inter-Agency Agreement; i.e., resolve insurance needs, determine schedule of activities and review the URC fee proposal. Then the FTA makes a determination of significance and authorizes the project to move into final design (anticipated date is April 2003).

Commissioner Nixon asked, “What’s the concept with respect to other areas of development? What’s going where the buildings are that are moved or modified?” Mr. Casolo responded, “It’s outside of the scope of the project to start thinking about those activities but what I think the City will have in front of them will be a roadway, a corridor. There’ll be additional land on each side of the corridor. There’ll be parcels that may not conform to local zoning requirements for development unless they’re combined with other parcels. There is going to be post-roadway planning and reshaping of those areas to suit the City’s needs.”

Commissioner Wormser asked, “Are there going to be sidewalks?” Mr. Casolo responded, “Yes, there’ll be sidewalks, there’ll be the bike lanes, there’ll be the designated busway during peak periods and then there’ll be just the regular travel lanes. One thing that’s going to be studied during the final design is the ITS, the Intelligent Transportation System re: signalization, message boards, etc. that would be controlled from our Traffic Control Center here.”

Chairman Osman thanked the transitway staff “for all their effort and for an excellent presentation ... enabling the Commission to better understand all the aspects of the proposed transitway project.”

Commissioner Mellis asked, “Given the fact that there is federal funding, after the roadway is completed, what influence if any of a continuing nature will we have with the federal government, perhaps in going forward after the completion ?” Mr. Casolo responded, “The FTA wants us to succeed. They really want this to be a successful project. They want to be able to ensure that we get as much funding as we’re entitled to. If the project moves along successfully, I would hope that they would look toward Stamford as a responsible grantee and, if there’s other monies available, the logical thing with a job like this would be to continue it. For instance, we actually have a preliminary engineering study out on the street now for Myrtle Avenue improvements.”

Mr. Carl Lupinacci, a member of the South End NRZ (Neighborhood Revitalization Zone), a group that meets on the second Tuesday of each month, asked if a member of the Engineering Department and the Urban Redevelopment Commission could speak to his group at either the May or June meeting.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING MARCH 13, 2003 - PAGE FOUR:

He said, "Our association has been very supportive of the project. It's just that a lot of the people who have businesses there along the roadbed are concerned about when it's going to happen, whether they should look for another place, whether they should be making repairs, and so forth. The time-line seems to have changed over the last couple of years so the property owners are most concerned about timing." Attorney Goldberg responded, "One of the first tasks that we've been asked to undertake once we have an agreement in place is to establish an acquisition and relocation time schedule." The Chairman said that the Commission's Stamford Urban Transitway Task Force members (Joel Mellis & Jim Nixon), as well as Attorney Goldberg, would certainly attend the NRZ meeting as well as any others. Mr. Casolo also agreed to attend but suggested waiting until June when "we will have a better commitment on time-lines."

6. Southeast Quadrant

(a) **Park Square West** - Executive Director Papp reported that Marty Jones, President of Corcoran Jennison Companies, is preparing a response to the URC's previous memo. Following receipt and distribution of her response, a Sub-Committee meeting will be scheduled.

7. Agency Administration/Committee Reports

(a) **Archstone** - Nothing new to report.

The remaining Committee Reports were tabled.

8. Old Business

None.

9. New Business

Chairman Osman reported that at a Stamford Partnership meeting that he attended on this date, a presentation was made re: an Affordable Housing Task Force which they have. The Chairman said, "We have been the Agency in the City who has really done significant work on affordable housing and gotten the ball rolling. For this reason and for what we could contribute, I would like to assert the Commission's role in joining and working with this Task Force." Commissioner Wormser noted that he, on behalf of the URC, was part of such an affordable housing task force when Mr. Ed Schwartz was still director of The Stamford Housing Authority. Commissioner Wormser volunteered to work on any future committees involving affordable housing.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING MARCH 13, 2003 - PAGE FIVE:

At 7:20PM, Commissioner Mellis made a motion to go into Executive Session to specifically address Agenda Item 6(b) - Litigation and Agenda Item 5(b) - Stamford Urban Transitway Project personnel. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jewell and carried unanimously.

Durelle Alexander was excused from the meeting at this time. Attorney Goldberg participated in the discussions. No motions were made and no votes were taken.

At 7:42PM, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wormser and carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment

The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 10, 2003 at 6:00PM.

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Nixon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:44PM.

Respectfully submitted,

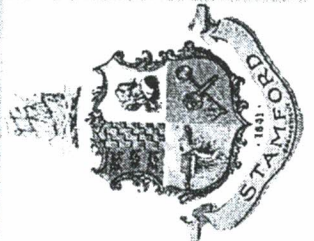
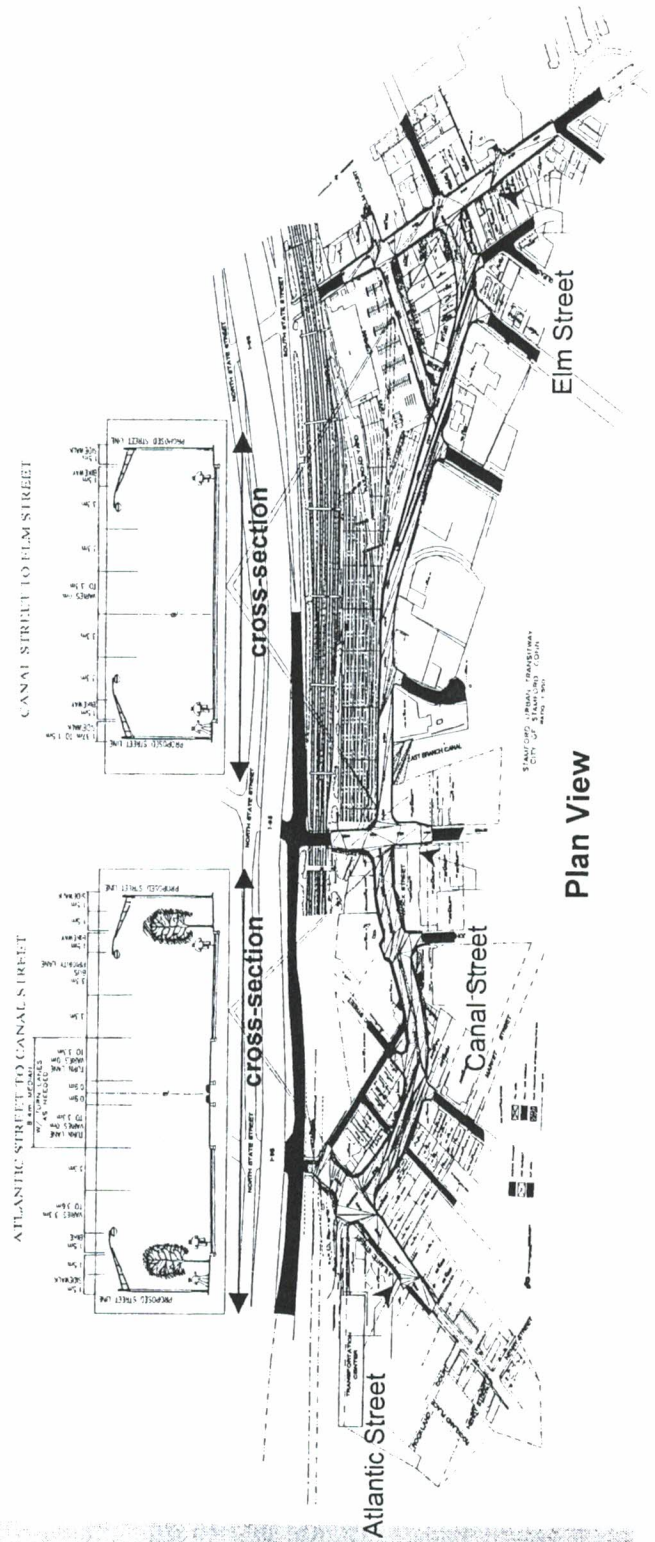


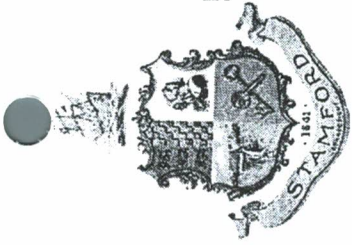
Joel P. Mellis
Secretary/Treasurer

CITY OF STAMFORD STAMFORD URBAN TRANSITWAY

Project Overview to URC March 13, 2003

Engineering Bureau





Estimated Project Schedule

- Preliminary Design –
 - Completed - November 2001
- FTA Determination on Final Environmental Assessment - Spring 2003
- Final Design
 - Spring 2003 - Start
 - Winter 2004 - Completion
- Property Acquisition and Relocation
 - Spring 2003 - Start
 - Winter 2004 - Completion
- Construction
 - Spring 2005 - Start
 - Spring 2007 - Completion