

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CHARTER REVISION COMMITTEE

From Rep. Figueroa

Changing the Board of ethics from being appointed by the mayor and the board of representatives to become elected officials by the people. Their terms should run like the mayor and board of representatives.

From Rep. de la Cruz

Attached is City Charter Sec. C6-40-1 Powers and Duties of Zoning Board. It does not include consideration of the environment among the duties of the Board.

CITY CHARTER

Sec. C6-40-1. - Powers and Duties of Zoning Board.

The Zoning Board is authorized to regulate the height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures; the percentage of the area of the lot that may be occupied; the size of yards, courts and other open spaces; the density of population and the location and use of buildings, structures and land or trade, industry, residence or other purposes; and the height, size, location and character of advertising signs and billboards. Said Board may divide the City into districts of such number, shape and area as may be best suited to carry out the purposes of this Chapter; and, within such districts, it may regulate the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration or use of buildings or structures and the use of land. All such regulations shall be uniform for each class or kind of buildings or structures throughout each district, but the regulations in one district may differ from those in another district, shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and shall be designed to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population and to facilitate the adequate provision for transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements. Such regulation shall be made with reasonable consideration as to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City.

Attached is the section from Public Act 21-29 listing the duties of the Zoning Board. The act now includes protection of the environment and other resources among the duties.

Public Act No. 21-29

(2) Be designed to (A) lessen congestion in the streets; [to] (B) secure

safety from fire, panic, flood and other dangers; [to] (C) promote health and the general welfare; [to] (D) provide adequate light and air; [to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population and to] (E) protect the state's historic, tribal, cultural and environmental resources; (F) facilitate the adequate provision for transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements; [. Such regulations shall be made] (G) consider the impact of permitted land uses on contiguous municipalities and on the planning region, as defined in section 4-124i, in which such municipality is located; (H) address significant disparities in housing needs and access to educational, occupational and other opportunities; (I) promote efficient review of proposals and applications; and (J) affirmatively further the purposes of the federal Fair Housing Act, 42 USC 3601 et

(Emphasis Added)

Sec. C6-40-1 should be revised to reflect these added requirements of Public Act 21-29.

From Rep. Mays

Recommend postponing vote on charter revision until 2024.

Rationale: Section C1-40-5 of the current City Charter provides: "To the extent permissible under applicable state law, the Board of Representatives shall endeavor to schedule the referendum on any proposed charter amendments or revisions to coincide with a general election at which either the Mayor, state officials or federal officials are to be elected." That is obviously relevant to the issue of whether the vote should be in 2023 or 2024. The public turnout for the 2023 election is expected to be less than 20% of registered voters. It will be greater than 65% in 2024, thus allowing much greater public input on proposed charter revisions.

The BoR President may only nominate candidates for all committee memberships, subject to majority vote by the full BoR.

Rationale: This prevents committee assignments to be determined by only one person and would avoid the potential of the President "stacking the deck" to support his/her personal agenda. This would allow for BoR discussion on the qualifications for candidates to serve on specific committees and could help avoid potential conflict of interest issues.

Reduce the size of the BoR from 40 to 20 representatives with only one representative from each district.

Rationale: Our BoR is too large and out-of-scale for the size of our city. No city of the size of Stamford has such a large board or city council. The size of our board makes for protracted meetings as well as potential confusion as to who is representing each district

From Rep. Adams

- 1). Please update the charter with a definite description for proposing condominiums as land owners. For example if I have 200 hundred condominium owners that sit on a plot of land which is 200 ft by 200 ft that includes parking, office, recreation and gym what percentage of the property do the 200 hundred condominiums own out of the plot of land which is 200 ft by 200 ft?
- 2). If the condominium developer build 22 condominiums and the developer put the land in a land trust what percentage do the condominiums own when the land is in a trust?
- 3). If the developer build the condominium and then lease the land back to the condominium association for 99 years what percentage of the land do the condominium owners own?
- 4) What is the magnitude of change that the charter revision is willing to make at the request of the City of Stamford Legal counsel?

From Rep. Ley

Section C8-30-10(b)(4)

Delete the requirement for a joint public hearing in its entirety. Because:

1. Both boards have ample opportunity for the public to participate and the public has made its views known quite well on various mid-year capital items. The turf fields at Stamford High is an example - the parents used our existing means of public participation to make their views well known.
2. There's only one joint public hearing between the two boards now, during budget season. They're extraordinarily difficult to schedule and the revised charter already requires two more.

Section C8-20-9(b)

Charter revisions propose to remove the 5% cap on the Rainy Day Fund. This cap should stay in place. The City has many reserve funds besides the Rainy Day Fund. The school construction fund is a prominent example. Through long practice and custom, monies put into the Rainy Day Fund are effectively untouchable. Conversely, monies put into other reserve funds eventually gets spent, and hence why we should cap the Rainy Day Fund. The ratings agencies look at our total reserves, not just the Rainy Day Fund.

From Rep. Weinberg

Originally Submitted by Mayor Simmons *

- Change the budget process from annual to biennial
- Add a Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (“DEI”) and create a Cabinet-level Director of DEI
- Change the swearing-in date for incoming Mayors from early December to early January

Originally Submitted by Mayor Martin *

- Separate the Office of Operations’ regulatory functions from its operational functions
- Do not make any changes in the mayoral appointments process
- Create a seven-person Pension Fund Management Board (1 each from BOR, BOF, Director of Administration, and 4 mayoral appointees), with each Pension Board having 1 ex officio member
- Reduce the size of the Board of Representatives from 40 members representing 20 districts to 26 members representing 13 districts

Originally Submitted by Mayor Pavia *

- Simplify the Land Use permitting process by eliminating administrative silos
- Require leaders of professional departments (e.g., Engineering) to have administrative experience as well as technical experience
- Create a Cabinet-level Director of Operations Management position to review and update each department’s practices and procedures

* Source: Elected Officials Committee of the Charter Revision Commission, Minutes of the 11/03/2022 Meeting