



## ***Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee – Board of Representatives***

Bradley Bewkes, Chair

Nina Sherwood, Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Wednesday, April 19, 2023  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Place:** *This meeting was held remotely*

The Land Use/Urban Redevelopment Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Bewkes, Vice Chair Sherwood, and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Campbell, de la Cruz, Garst, Grunberger, Matheny, Mays, Summerville, and Tomas. Also present were Rep. Boeger; Thomas Cassone, Corporation Counsel; Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief; and Susan Halpern, South End Historic District.

Chair Bewkes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
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### ***Possibly in Executive Session:***

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| 1. <a href="#">LU31.019</a> | REVIEW; Status of Property at 21 Pulaski Street.<br>07/06/22 – Submitted by Rep. Adams<br>07/28/22 – Report Made & Held by Committee 10-0-0<br>09/01/22 – Report Made & Held by Committee 9-0-0<br>11/03/22 – Held by Committee 11-0-0<br>02/22/23 – Held by Committee 7-1-0 | <b>RECOMMITTED<br/>TO STEERING 11-<br/>0-0</b> |
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Mr. Cassone explained that the status of this item has not changed. To or three weeks ago at the site, he met with representatives of Charter and Attorney Hennessey, representing BLT, who are going to come up with a possible solution. They have a meeting scheduled for May 3, 2023. BLT owns the building and the land. Charter has a lease with an option to purchase but the parcel at issue is not part of that transaction. Charter would like to connect their facility with the South End. Any use of the property for more than 3 months will come to the BOR for approval.

A motion to recommit Item No. 1 to Steering was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote (Reps. Bewkes, Sherwood, Adams, Campbell, de la Cruz, Garst, Grunberger, Matheny, Mays, Summerville, and Tomas in favor).

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| 2. <a href="#">LU31.026</a> | REVIEW; Smoke Shop Signage - Violations by Current Retail Locations and Possibility for Additional Regulations.<br>01/04/23– Submitted by Rep. Gilbride<br>02/22/23 –Report Made & Recommitted to Steering by Committee 8-0-0 | <b>HELD</b> |
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Chair Bewkes stated that the Committee had been informed prior to the meeting that Item No. 2 would be held.

3. [LU31.029](#)      ORDINANCE for publication; Adopting a New Fee      **RECOMMENDED**  
Schedule for Land Use Applications.      **TO STEERING 10-**  
03/17/23 – Submitted by Director Blessing      **1-0**

Mr. Blessing explained that the last time these fees were increased was in 2018. Costs have increased since that time. The increases are in the 10-20% range. The CPI increase since 2018 is 18%. There are also some new fees for work the Land Use Bureau has done but not charged for in the past which requires significant work. For example, the renewal/extension of a permit requires a hearing. In addition, fees will be waived for some applications for affordable housing more than the required 10% BMR housing, as well as deeply affordable housing. One of the goals of these increases was also to cover the costs of the two new proposed Land Use Bureau positions, one of which has now been cut by the Board of Finance. These fee changes are expected to generate \$235,000 in revenue.

In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Blessing explained that the pre-Application review fee would apply to applicants who want to present a potential project to the Zoning Board to get their input prior to submitting the proposal. This would not cover individuals who come in for guidance on how to file an application.

Committee members stated that they would like to see comparable fees from similar sized cities as well as how this revenue would fit with the budget of the bureau. Mr. Blessing noted that in 2018 the department did survey the fees in other municipalities and the comparison was not very useful because some fees were higher and some were lower, and items were grouped differently.

A motion to recommit Item No. 2 to Steering was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 10-1-0 (Reps. Bewkes, Sherwood, Adams, Campbell, de la Cruz, Garst, Grunberger, Matheny, Summerville, and Tomas in favor; Rep. Mays opposed).

4. [LU31.030](#)      RESOLUTION; Amending Resolution No. 4085      **APPROVED 5-3-3**  
Creating a South End Historic District Study        
Committee.        
04/04/23 – Submitted by Rep. Bewkes

Chair Bewkes explained that he has proposed this resolution because two members of the South End Historic District Study Committee have resigned and the original resolution named the members of the committee and because Corporation Counsel has said that the Board does not need to give the committee a deadline by which to file their report.

Rep. Adams reviewed the timeline the committee must follow once the final report has been filed.

Mr. Blessing expressed concerns that he has received letters in opposition to the proposed district from approximately 40% of the property owners in the proposed district, which would prevent approval by 2/3 of the owners in the district. He noted that property owners are living with uncertainty as to whether their properties will be in an historic district and deserve a timeline as to when the process will be completed. He noted that no resident or property owner in the proposed historic district will be on the committee now that Ms. Barney and Mr. Tomas have resigned.

It was noted that the language of the resolution does not track the language of CGA §7-147b,

which requires that the report must be filed with the Planning Board and the Zoning Board. A motion to amend the resolution as follows was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE 31<sup>ST</sup> BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT:** the Study Committee shall have no deadline to transmit its final report to the State Historic Preservation Office, the Planning Board, [the Zoning Board](#), and the Board of Representatives

It was noted that the statute does not require the members of the Committee to live in the district. Committee members discussed the need to allow the process to go forward and have residents decide on whether they want this proposed district.

A motion to approve Item No. 4, as amended, was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 5-3-3 (Reps. (Reps. Bewkes, Sherwood, de la Cruz, Garst, and Matheny in favor; Reps. Adams, Grunberger, and Mays opposed; Reps. Campbell, Summerville, and Tomas abstaining).

Chair Bewkes adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bradley Bewkes, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).