



**JOINT MEETING OF
LEGISLATIVE & RULES COMMITTEE,
FISCAL COMMITTEE, and
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE -
BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Eileen Heaphy, Chair, Legislative & Rules Committee
Jay Fountain, Chair, Fiscal Committee
Randall M. Skigen, Chair, Committee of the Whole

Report of Meeting and Public Hearing

Date: Tuesday, June 17, 2014
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Legislative Chambers, 4th Floor Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The Legislative & Rules Committee, Fiscal Committee and a Committee of the Whole held a joint meeting as indicated above. In attendance were President Skigen, Chair Fountain, Chair Heaphy and Reps. Adams, Buckman, Cerasoli, Coleman, Coppola, Day, DeLuca, DePina, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Franzetti, Giordano, Giraldo, Kolenberg, Kooris, Mahoney, McMullen, McNeil, Merritt, Mitchell, Moore, Nabel, Okun, Pratt, Reeder, Ryan, Savage, Silver, Summerville, Wallace and Zelinsky. Absent or excused were Reps. Caterbone, Doyle, McGarry, Quinones and Uva. Also present were Mayor Martin; Michael Handler, Director of Administration; Chris Dellaselva, Law Department; Michael Pollard, Chief of Staff; Cindy Grafstein, Special Assistant to the Mayor; Karen Cammarota, Grants Officer; Rick Redniss, Redniss & Meade; and several members of the public.

President Skigen called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

He explained that the meeting would begin with a public presentation by the Mayor, and then Committee members would have an opportunity to ask questions. This would be followed by the public hearing. After the public hearing the Committee would go into executive session to discuss aspects of the transaction which cannot be discussed publicly. After that the Committee would return to vote on the matters on the agenda.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LR29.020	RESOLUTION and PUBLIC HEARING; approving the Purchase of 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue. 05/30/14 – Submitted by Mayor Martin 06/10/14 – Approved by Planning Board 06/12/14 – Approved by Board of Finance	Approved 7-0-0

Secondary Committee: Committee of the Whole

2. [F29.114](#) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Capital Budget); **Approved 10-0-1**
\$10,000,000.00 200 Strawberry Hill Acquisition; acquisition and related costs associated with the purchase of "200 Strawberry Hill Avenue" for an amount up to \$10,000,000.
06/04/14 – Submitted by Mayor Martin
06/10/14 – Approved by Planning Board
06/12/14 – Approved by Board of Finance

Secondary Committee: Committee of the Whole

3. [F29.115](#) RESOLUTION; Amending the Capital Budget for FY **Approved 10-0-1**
\$10,000,000.00 2014-15 by adding an appropriation of up to \$10,000,000 for the Acquisition of 200 Strawberry Hill, Stamford, CT and authorizing General Obligation Bonds of the City up to \$10,000,000 to meet Said Appropriation.
06/04/14 – Submitted by Mayor Martin
06/12/14 – Approved by Board of Finance

Secondary Committee: Committee of the Whole

Under Suspension of Rules:

4. [F29.159](#) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Capital); **Approved 9-0-2**
\$55,000,000.00 Engineering; Construction Renovation of 200 Strawberry Hill; Planning, design, engineering, acquisition, furnishing and equipping of public school at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue.
06/10/14 – Approved by Planning Board
06/11/14 – Submitted by Mayor Martin
___/___/14 – To be considered by Board of Finance

Secondary Committee: Committee of the Whole

5. [F29.160](#) RESOLUTION; Amending the Capital Budget for **Approved 10-0-1**
\$55,000,000.00 Fiscal Year 2014-2015 by adding an Appropriation of \$55,000,000 for the Construction of an Elementary School at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut and Authorizing up to \$55,000,000 General Obligation Bonds depending upon federal and state grants-in-aid.
06/11/14 – Submitted by Mayor Martin
___/___/14 – To be considered by Board of Finance

Secondary Committee: Committee of the Whole

¹The Mayor reviewed the attached Power Point [presentation](#). As part of his presentation he stated:

- The property includes a main school building constructed in 1929, a gymnasium, a residence, an athletic field, a caretakers house and a historic barn which was formerly used by Stamford Theater Works
- At the same time as the City is seeking to acquire the property, the City is putting together a school construction grant application in the event the City determines that the best use of the property is a school in order to preserve the City's options and get as much funding as possible from the State; this places the City up against a June 30th application deadline
- The grant application requires that bond funding authorizations for the construction must be in place by June 30th. This requires Board action before June 30th
- If the City can get an interdistrict school, approximately 80% of the funding would be by the State, and intradistrict, local school, the City will get approximately 28% State funding
- If the City fails to get approval for an interdistrict school, the application can still be used for a local school, but a local school application cannot be used for an interdistrict school
- The property is centrally located, and consists of an existing school with gym and cafeteria buildings, a caretaker's cottage and a historical barn
- The property is currently leased by the Stanwich School, which is vacating this summer.
- The Barn and Cottage are a National Historical Site
- It is zoned for potentially 46 single family lots, but the Master Plan allows for more
- It located near Scalzi Park and Stamford High School, in the central point of the most school overcrowding
- This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity
- The City could also use this property for additional recreational space or a swing space in the event that a temporary police station is needed, even if the school is not ultimately approved

²In response to questions from the Committee, Mayor Martin, Michael Handler and Chris Dellaselva stated:

- The State determines whether this would be an interdistrict or local school
 - The state currently has a moratorium on interdistrict magnet schools, but Stamford is an a unique position because the district is growing
 - Stamford has been successful in attracting students from outside the district to its magnet schools
- While reimbursement per student from the State for a magnet school, the State also reimburses for Stamford residents at the magnet school
- Current estimates include the possibility that there is asbestos in the property
 - Stanwich School has removed some asbestos; the City does know there is asbestos in tile
- The City believes there are no contamination issues with the property itself
- The Board of Representatives will have say over the use of the property

¹ Video (Pt. 1) Time Stamp 00:02:20

² Video (Pt. 1) Time Stamp 00:17:20

- The \$55M determination is based upon the \$75M cost of building a school similar to the Rogers School; this is based on a “worst—case scenario”
- The effect on the debt service is less than anticipated, partly because of the retirement of old debt
- The BOE will determine if this would be a K-8 school or a pre-K-8 school
- The City does not know how usable the Historic Barn is or the cost to maintain it
- This will result in a reprioritizing of capital projects, particularly as it may change BOE needs
- As part of the funding, the State will impose certain construction standards, such as square footage per student requirements
- The Sellers have represented that there are no covenants which would prohibit razing of the historic properties
- There is a contingency in the Contract that the property must be suitable for City needs
- The construction funding resolution is required for the grant application
- Approval of the funding will take almost one year
- Other options for the property include use of the recreational facilities, swing space or other possible use not yet identified
- In the long term, the Mayor believes this will be used as a school, given the current growth in the elementary school population
- The City might expand the use of the property in stages
- The Debt service information will be distributed to the Board
- The BOE will come back to the Boards with what they desire to build

³President Skigen opened the public hearing at 9:30 p.m.

- Stephanie O’Shea spoke regarding school overcrowding and the need for new schools and the need to preserve the school building on the property
- Susan Vidan also spoke of overcrowding in the schools
- Daina Schuman stated that in planning the use of the property, the Board should consider the needs of the residents in the surrounding area and possible noise issues

There being no further speakers, President Skigen closed the public hearing at 9:40 p.m.

⁴A motion by the Legislative & Rules Committee to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing the Purchase and Sale Agreement related to 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Heaphy, Day, Mitchell, Okun, Ryan, Silver and Zelinsky in favor.)

⁵A motion by the Fiscal Committee to go into executive session to discuss for the purpose of discussing the Purchase and Sale Agreement related to 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 11-0-0 (Reps. Fountain, Cerasoli, Coleman, Day, DeLuca, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Kooris, Mitchell, and Silver in favor.)

⁶A motion by the Committee of the Whole to go into executive session to discuss for the purpose of discussing the Purchase and Sale Agreement related to 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

³ Video (Pt. 1) Time Stamp 01:45:46

⁴ Video (Pt. 1) Time Stamp 01:58:16

⁵ Video (Pt. 1) Time Stamp 01:59:07

⁶ Video (Pt. 1) Time Stamp 01:59:45

At 9:42, the Committee went into executive session.

At 10:00, the Committee returned from executive session.

⁷A motion by the Legislative & Rules Committee to approve item LR29.020 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Heaphy, Day, Mitchell, Okun, Ryan, Silver and Zelinsky in favor.)

A motion by the Committee of the Whole to concur with the vote of the Legislative & Rules Committee to approve LR29.020 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Heaphy adjourned the Legislative & Rules Committee meeting at 10:03..

⁸A motion by the Fiscal Committee to approve item F29.114, as amended to read "ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (Capital Budget); 200 Strawberry Hill Acquisition; acquisition and related costs associated with the purchase of "200 Strawberry Hill Avenue" for an amount not to exceed \$10,000,000.00" was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 10-0-1 (Reps. Fountain, Coleman, Day, DeLuca, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Kooris, Mitchell, and Silver in favor; Rep. Cerasoli abstaining.).

A motion by the Committee of the Whole to concur with the vote of the Fiscal Committee to approve F29.114, as amended, was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote (Rep. Cerasoli abstaining).

⁹A motion by the Fiscal Committee to approve item F29.115, as amended to read "RESOLUTION; Amending the Capital Budget for FY 2014-15 by adding an appropriation not to exceed \$10,000,000.00 for the Acquisition of 200 Strawberry Hill, Stamford, CT and authorizing General Obligation Bonds of the City not to exceed \$10,000,000.00 to meet Said Appropriation" was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 10-0-1 (Reps. Fountain, Coleman, Day, DeLuca, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Kooris, Mitchell, and Silver in favor; Rep. Cerasoli abstaining.)

A motion by the Committee of the Whole to concur with the vote of the Fiscal Committee to approve F29.115, as amended, was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote (Rep. Cerasoli abstaining).

¹⁰A motion by the Fiscal Committee to suspend the rules to take up items F29.159 and F29.160 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 10-0-1 (Reps. Fountain, Coleman, Day, DeLuca, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Kooris, Mitchell, and Silver in favor; Rep. Cerasoli abstaining.)

¹¹A motion by the Fiscal Committee to approve item F29.159 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 9-0-2 (Reps. Fountain, Coleman, Day, DeLuca, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Kooris, Mitchell, and Silver in favor; Reps. Cerasoli and Figueroa abstaining.)

⁷ Video (Pt. 2) Time Stamp 00:01:18

⁸ Video (Pt. 2) Time Stamp 00:03:39

⁹ Video (Pt. 2) Time Stamp 00:05:19

¹⁰ Video (Pt. 2) Time Stamp 00:06:40

¹¹ Video (Pt. 2) Time Stamp 00:07:06

Members of the Committee commented on the short time available to the Board to make a decision on this matter. A motion by the Committee of the Whole to concur with the vote of the Fiscal Committee to approve F29.159 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote (Rep. Cerasoli abstaining).

¹²A motion by the Fiscal Committee to approve item F29.160 as amended to read “Amending the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 by adding an Appropriation of \$55,000,000 for the Construction of an Elementary School at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut and Authorizing up to ~~\$55,000,000~~ General Obligation Bonds depending upon federal and state grants-in-aid” was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 10-0-1 (Reps. Fountain, Coleman, Day, DeLuca, Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Kooris, Mitchell, and Silver in favor; Rep. Cerasoli abstaining.)

A motion by the Committee of the Whole to concur with the vote of the Fiscal Committee to approve F29.160 was made, seconded and approved by unanimous voice vote (Reps. Cerasoli and McMullen abstaining).

President Skigen adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Heaphy, Chair, Legislative & Rules Committee

Jay Fountain, Chair , Fiscal Committee

Randall M. Skigen, Chair, Committee of the Whole

This meeting is on video ([Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#))

¹² Video (Pt. 2) Time Stamp 00:13:33