



Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee – Board of Representatives

Virgil de la Cruz, Co-Chair

Bradley Michelson, Co-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Wednesday, July 1, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Meeting took place remotely at <https://zoom.us/j/95599593761>.

The Land Use-Urban Redevelopment Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Co-Chairs de la Cruz and Michelson and Committee Member Reps. Cottrell, Florio, Graziosi, Lee, Lion, Sherwood and Summerville. Also present were Reps. Adams, DePina, Jacobson, McMullen, Miller, Patterson, Stella and Zelinsky; Kathryn Emmett and Cynthia Anger, Law Department; Sandy Dennies, Acting Director of Administration; and Jim Travers and Garrett Bollela, Transportation, Traffic and Parking Bureau.

Co-Chair Michelson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. LU30.042	RESOLUTION: Commemorative Naming of the Intersection of Stillwater Avenue at Smith Street Anthony Pellicci Corner, in Recognition of Anthony Pellicci's Contributions to the Local Community. 06/02/20 – Submitted by Reps. DePina, Wallace, Pratt, Curtis, Stella, Zelinsky and Graziosi.	Approved 9-0-0

Committee members discussed this item with the invited guests. Items discussed included:

- Whether the City can give a commemorative name to a corner
- Anthony Pellicci did a great deal for the City
- This is not changing the legal names of the streets
- The area is already known as Boxer Square
- It is appropriate to name a corner; a segment can be a corner per the Law Department
- Mr. Pellicci was involved in the creation of the park known as Boxer Square 25 years ago and was instrumental in getting the donation of the statue
- Should the corner across from Boxer Square be designated?
- Is Boxer Square a vanity name or an unofficial name? It does not appear to have been approved by the Board of Representatives
- Boxer Square has no sign designating it as Boxer Square
- The submitters of the resolution asked that it not be held
- The petition was signed by the property owners abutting the intersection
- Renaming the street rather than the corner would require signatures from additional property owners

A motion to hold Item No. 1 was made, seconded and failed by a vote of 3-5-1 (Reps. de la Cruz, Cottrell and Lion in favor; Reps. Michelson, Florio, Graziosi, Lee and Sherwood opposed; Rep. Summerville abstaining).

A motion to approve Item No. 1 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 9-0-0 (Reps. de la Cruz, Michelson, Cottrell Florio, Graziosi, Lee, Lion, Sherwood and Summerville in favor).

2. [LU30.043](#) RESOLUTION; Approval of Director of Administration's Final Report and Directing that the Washington Boulevard and Pulaski Street Widening Project be Carried Out **Approved 6-1-1**
06/02/20 – Submitted by Mayor Martin
06/23/20 – Approved by Board of Finance

Ms. Dennies reviewed the Director of Administration's Report with the Committee.

- The report addresses the value of damages and assessment of benefits
- 4 Pulaski Street (partial taking):
 - 5,676 ft² from 274 Washington Boulevard would be added to 4 Pulaski Street and the City would acquire 2,658 ft²
 - The owner has already initiated the development process with the Buildings Department and the taking would make the owner lose development rights; by getting the additional square footage, the owner would not lose development rights
 - In exchange, the owner would receive no additional funds for the taking
- 274 Washington Boulevard (full taking)
 - This is a very narrow property with no driveway or on-street parking
 - If took the front of the property, the back ½ would be land-locked
 - The house is currently vacant
 - The suggestion was to take the entire property
 - The affordable housing bonus would not apply because there is no driveway or parking
 - The appraised value is \$595,000; the City offered a premium value of \$810,000
- 256 Washington Boulevard (partial taking)
 - 2 units would be unfavorably impacted by the taking
 - 6,617 ft² from 274 Washington Boulevard would be added to 256 Washington Boulevard and the City would acquire 938 ft²
 - This would address the complex's current parking issue (they are currently encroaching on adjacent properties)
 - The owners of the 2 units would be paid \$7,944 each for their loss of value
 - The City would rebuild the wall outside those units to ensure safety and also install shrubbery
- 21 Pulaski Street (full taking)
 - Full acquisition of this property is required in order to widen the turning lanes and increase the turning radius
 - The widening of the lanes would impact the footprint of the structure
 - The damages are based on the median value of 2 appraisals - \$762,500
 - The City has offered the owner a premium value of \$1,000,000 plus \$50,000 for tenant relocation

Committee members discussed this item with the invited guests. Items discussed included:

- The City would not have to come back to the Board if this were approved, but would have to get updated appraisals, perform title searches and continue to negotiate with the parties
- The offers made by the Mayor will not expire; the Mayor has said he will stand by these offers; the appraisal amounts determine what gets deposited into Court
- The "developer" mentioned under 4 Pulaski Street would be the owner's developer
- Nobody would be able to live in 21 Pulaski after the widening of the road, because the front of the structure would be taken; the taking impacts the footprint of the structure

- At 256 Washington, the City would rebuild the wall and make the front physically appealing; the non-conforming use will be mitigated by additional parking, although it would not make the front yard conforming; the property owner would be able to get a variance from the Zoning Board, since the non-conformance is not caused by self-action but by City action
- The owners of the 2 condos at 256 who will be impacted will receive funds because the value of their properties will be reduced
- There will be no safety issues because of the wall the City will build
- The potential land swap addresses the non-conforming density requirement; since the structure is already built, there is no zoning impact
- The vacant parking lot to the south of 256 Washington Blvd on which the property is encroaching is owned by BLT; the swap would solve the encroachment problem; the City does not know if there is any arrangement between the condominium and BLT regarding the encroachment and nobody from the City has spoken to BLT about this; this will become an issue for 256 Washington when BLT chooses to use the property
- The impact to 256 Washington of the taking is \$44,500
- Plan B is more expensive than Plan A
- The lack of parking at 256 Washington is not an issue for taxpayers
- If the City only took the front of 274 Washington Boulevard it would be difficult to do anything with the property
- Without the swap the City would pay more for the rights of other properties
- Instead of impacting 3 properties significantly negatively, the City is being a better citizen; this is an effort to make the other 2 properties more whole
- Plan B is more expensive but most fair to adjoining property owners
- The City looked to see if 274 Washington Boulevard could be used in any other way and determined it did not make sense to take the front of the property
- The development of the parcel is challenging due to access issues; the bonuses relate to the value of the property; the historic bonus would be for a historic property if the owner agrees to preserve it
- The litigation costs under the original plan might have been higher because of the taking away of development rights
- The construction costs are to be paid by Charter Communications
- Under the Director's report, the City will pay \$1,875,888 for all 4 properties
- There are many properties in Stamford that are legally non-conforming and have variances because the hardship is not self-imposed
- The goal of this project is to solve a major traffic problem; the solution of the parking problem at the church is ancillary
- The Condo and Church are in agreement with this plan
- At the Director's public hearing, only the owner of 274 Washington came forward
- Plan B is an attempt to address concerns raised by Board members regarding the development rights of the church and the frontage of the condos
- Under the direction of the Board, the City has been working to try to reach an agreement with the parties and may have an agreement in principle as to 274 Washington Blvd
- The City might come back to the Board depending upon the results of the negotiations, but there are circumstances in which the City does not need to come back to the Board
- The funds were appropriated as part of the capital project
- The notice of the public hearing was published 3 times in the Stamford Advocate and sent by registered mail to all interested parties
- The City has a state statutory obligation to continue to negotiate
- If the Board holds or fails to go forward with the resolution, the process stops
- The Board has the authority to decrease damages or increase benefits in the report
- The appraisals took into consideration the development potential and highest and best

- use of the properties in their current condition
- Mr. Chery has sent an appraisal to Rep. Sherwood during the meeting – Ms. Anger stated that this appraisal is based on assemblage value, but the property has no assemblage value because BLT has no interest in assemblage; it is based on a flawed assumption

A motion to approve the resolution, approving the Director of Administration's report, was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-1-1 (Reps. de la Cruz, Michelson, Cottrell Florio, Lee and Lion in favor; Rep. Sherwood opposed; Rep. Summerville abstaining). (Rep. Graziosi had technical issues and was unable to vote)

Co-Chair Michelson adjourned the meeting at 11:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bradley Michelson, Co-Chair

This meeting is on [video](#)