

AMENDED (JANUARY 7, 2016)
200 TYLER STREET SUBCOMMITTEE
(BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2015

The 200 Tyler Street Subcommittee held a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 29, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. at the East Haven Senior Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512.

Chairman Paul Carbo called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and proceeded to ask everyone to stand for pledge of allegiance.

Item #1:

Roll Call:

4 members present (1 absent –Charles Lang), quorum was present.

Item #2:

Correspondence.

None.

Item #3:

Approval of the December 23, 2015 meeting minutes.

Chairman Carbo asked the members of the commission if they had received and read the minutes from the December 23, 2015 meeting, all had. Chairman Carbo then asked if there were any corrections, questions, omissions, there were none. Chairman Carbo asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the December 23, 2015 200 Tyler Street Subcommittee meeting.

Vice-Chairman Limoncelli made a motion to accept the minutes from the December 23, 2015 200 Tyler Street Subcommittee meeting, Commissioner Asid seconded the motion.

Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

Item #4:

Discussion of using 200 Tyler Street for private developer/mixed community use including a cultural arts center.

Mr. Sal Brancati, Town of East Haven Economic Development Coordinator, provided to the 200 Tyler Street Subcommittee a private developer packet which is on file in the Town Clerk's Office, and available upon request.

Mr. Brancati prefaced his presentation with a statement: "Town Staff such as himself do not give opinions on what should or should not be done with the property, Mr. Brancati's only function is to provide the Subcommittee with the requested information, it will ultimately be up to the Subcommittee, then Board of Finance, and Town Council to decide the future of 200 Tyler Street".

Mr. Brancati gave an overview of the packet. The informational packet detailed a developer turning 200 Tyler Street into 55 and over housing. Mr. Brancati stated there is a market in the Town of East Haven for 55 and over housing, as evidenced in informational packet on file in the Town Clerk's Office. He said there would be 105 units at maximum, which would consist of studio, one, and two bedroom apartments. There would be amenities for the residents such as wellness center, and community rooms. The rental fees would vary; \$880.00 per month for a studio apartment, \$950.00 per month for a 1 bedroom apartment, \$1,200.00 per month for a 2 bedroom apartment. Mr. Brancati envisioned retired teachers, police, fire, nurses filling these apartments. The cost to the developer to renovate the property would conservatively be twenty-eight million dollars. Mr. Brancati indicated there would be no subsidized housing, nor any Section 8 housing at this property; this can be negotiated into the agreement. The developer can apply for building funds through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, which can then be used as subsidy monies the developer can use to keep rents below market value.

Mr. Brancati discussed the Town would never give up ownership of the pool or the gymnasium. He stated as part of the stipulation of either selling or long term leasing the property, the private developer would had to renovate the pool and the gymnasium to the Town's specifications, which conservatively would cost the developer three million dollars. Once the renovations were completed the developer would deed the pool and the gymnasium back to the Town. Mr. Brancati stated it was never the intent, nor will it ever be, for the Town to give up ownership of the pool and the gymnasium.

Mr. Brancati stated this plan would garner the Town \$231,000.00 in new taxes, save the Town an estimated \$270,000.00 per year in maintenance to property, with these two figures combined, the Town would see a net financial gain of \$501,000.00 per year.

Chairman Carbo asked if the developer is limited to the footprint of the existing building, or can additions be built. Mr. Brancati stated as part of the Development Agreement,

the Town can negotiate with the developer to not allow any additional structures if the Town saw fit to do so.

Vice-Chairman Limoncelli asked Mr. Brancati would be the author of the Development Agreement, Mr. Brancati replied Town Attorney Joseph Zullo would be the author, but recommendations from the Subcommittee would be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Asid questioned the financial aspect of the private developer option. Commissioner Asid wanted a clarification of the cost of renovating the pool and gymnasium and the building itself. Mr. Brancati reiterated it would cost the developer conservatively three million dollars to renovate the pool and the gymnasium to the Town's specifications, plus, conservatively an additional twenty-eight million dollars to renovate the building itself; thus, costing the developer conservatively, **thirty-one million** dollars (*Crctd from from thirty-three million dollars by Clerk Gravino) for the whole project.

Chairman Carbo asked Mr. Brancati why it cost less to renovate the property for 55 and over housing than it would to turn it into municipal center. Mr. Brancati stated the footprint of the building lends itself easier to housing than to municipal offices.

Questions were raised concerning the Historical Society, the Teen Center, and the Arts Commission. Mr. Brancati stated there were a few options on the table; the Board of Education could be closing schools, he envisioned these three organizations utilizing one of the schools, or, there are rooms above the gymnasium or behind it, which could also be utilized to house these organizations.

Commissioner Asid questioned who controls use of the closed school buildings, Mr. Brancati replied, "once the school is closed, the building becomes the property of the Town and therefore the Town controls the use and or sale of the building". This type of proposal would have to be brought before the Town Council for approval. Vice-Chairman Limoncelli stated we should not be looking at using a closed school at this time to house these organizations given the fact it is unknown as to if and when there will be school closings. Vice-Chairman felt the Subcommittee should concentrate on finding available room within 200 Tyler Street.

Chairman Carbo asked Mr. Brancati if he had a breakdown of types of apartments in other 55 and over buildings in Town, Mr. Brancati stated no, but he could provide it for the Subcommittee.

Item #5:

General discussion of overall disposition options.

Vice-Chairman Limoncelli asked Subcommittee Clerk Gravino if the letters to the surrounding residents had been mailed detailing meeting schedule, including the two public hearings being held on January 12, and January 20, Subcommittee Clerk Gravino deferred the question to Mr. Brancati.

Mr. Brancati stated even though the Subcommittee asked for letters to be sent out, he believed by sending out letters to only people within a 1,000 square foot radius, it would ignore people in other parts of the Town. Mr. Brancati believed all residents of the Town are impacted by this decision, not just those living near property. Mr. Brancati stated the meeting schedule has been added to the Town's Community Calendar, meeting reminders are on the Town's website. Subcommittee Clerk Gravino stated a public notice hearing will appear in the East Haven Courier on January 7, 2016 detailing the January 12 public hearing, and another a week later for the January 20 public hearing. Town Attorney Zullo stated all residents of the Town receive the Courier so that was an excellent way of spreading the word concerning the scheduled public hearings. Subcommittee Clerk Gravino stated she would put an announcement concerning the public hearings on Patch.com. Vice-Chairman Limoncelli suggested Chairman Carbo write a letter to the editor discussing the public hearing dates to ensure as many residents are aware as possible.

Vice-Chairman Limoncelli asked if the 55 and over housing option was the one approved, would East Haven residents be offered priority, Town Attorney Zullo stated legally you can not state East Haven residents have priority over non Town resident citizens. Mr. Brancati did state as part of the Development Agreement, it could be negotiated East Haven contractors are used, also the Town will benefit from the available construction jobs.

Mr. Brancati reiterated for the Subcommittee and the public in attendance the three options on the table:

1. Educational use- the Board of Education declined the use of the building.
2. Municipal use – this option is still on the table.
3. Private developer (55 and over housing) – this option is also still on the table.

Vice-Chairman Limoncelli indicated according to the schedule, not including the two public hearings, there are only four meetings left at which to discuss and formulate a proposal because the Mayor had indicated he expects the Subcommittee's recommendation by February 2, 2016; this means the January 25 meeting is the final meeting. Town Attorney Zullo stated another meeting if necessary could be scheduled; he will contact the Senior Center Coordinator for available dates.

Town Attorney Zullo wanted to assure the Subcommittee he has negotiated Development Agreements, and there are many tools, which can be used to protect the Town such as benchmark dates, fall back clauses. The Development Agreement is a blank canvass with which to use whatever leverage wanted during negotiations.

Chairman Carbo asked if there were any other questions or concerns from the Subcommittee, there were none.

Item #6:

Adjournment.

Chairman Carbo asked for a motion to adjourn the December 29, 2015 200 Tyler Street Subcommittee meeting.

Commissioner Asid made a motion to adjourn the December 29, 2015 200 Tyler Street Subcommittee meeting, Commissioner DeLucia seconded the motion.

Voice Vote: All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy Gravino
200 Tyler Street Subcommittee, Clerk