

AD HOC REPORT – SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX

OCTOBER 19, 2006

Chairman Calandrino called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. In attendance were committee members Cutsumpas and Visconti. Also in attendance were Dennis Elpern, Director of Planning and Zoning, Antonio Iadarolo, Director of Public Works, Wayne Sheppard, Director of Economic Development, Mayor Mark Boughton, Ted Haddad, Sr. and Tony Rizzo, Jr., the petitioners, Ted Haddad, Jr., Tony Riberio and Art Mannion. Also in attendance were Trombetta, Rotella, Johnson, Diggs, Negasheth, Perkins and Saracino, ex officio.

Mr. Calandrino stated that preliminary information has been received by this committee regarding a proposal from a group of investors seeking a long-term lease from the City for the purpose of constructing a “Civic and Recreational Center” on the 13.1 acre site owned by the City at the intersection of Old Ridgebury Rd. and Reserve Rd.

Mr. Haddad, Sr. stated that the intention is to privately finance this facility. In order to do that, the petitioners need to have the opportunity to pursue and engage in a due diligence period. If the study proves feasible and makes sense for the community, the petitioners would like to go forward with construction which would take about 24 months.

Mr. Elpern read the preliminary proposal that was handed out. The proposal is for a 99-year lease at \$1.00 a year. Prior to executing the lease, the group proposes that an option be agreed to for a period of fifteen months, during which time the group would complete their studies and plans. The City would agree not to entertain other proposals for the site during this time period. The lease would then be executed in accordance with terms mutually agreed to by all parties.

Questions and discussion followed. Some of these questions were:

Mr. Calandrino asked what will this fifteen month study consist of?

Mr. Haddad, Sr. stated that before they spend any more money, a feasibility study would be done of the surrounding area as well as filing the necessary applications.

Mr. Riberio showed and explained the proposed lay out maps of the 100,000 square foot facility.

Mr. Haddad, Jr. explained the entertainment inquires that haven been received to date for this facility. Some possible examples are: soccer, arena football, hockey, skate boarding games, concerts, circus, Disney on Ice, conventions, home, building, remodeling and car shows, graduations, meetings, museums and others. Mr. Haddad, Jr. stated that this fifteen month study would help properly size this facility.

Mr. Cutsumpas was concerned about the O’Neill Center, the current ice area, downtown Danbury, the Convocation Center at WESCONN and the future open space.

Mayor Boughton gave an overview of the total historyh of the property in regard to the baseball stadium. He also explained the past economic spin-off the downtown facilities and stated the

City is not interested in developing this property except for a recreational facility. He stated that 60% plus of the open space is used by the Reserve and is not buildable.

Mr. Cutsumpas was most concerned about the length of the lease for \$1 for 99 years.

Mayor Boughton stated that this would have to be structured in the lease, if this proposal gets that far and after the feasibility study.

Other questions that were discussed were: has there been information about other cities building this type of multi-purpose facility and will highway improvements be undertaken.

Mrs. Saracino was concerned if the Common Council agrees to the fifteen month study, what will be the obligation to go forward with a lease.

Mayor Boughton stated that the Council would authorize the Mayor to exercise an agreement with the petitioners that has language stating an option on this property. Once the petitioners have done due diligence, it would return to the committee to exercise their option. The City would negotiate the terms and conditions of the lease with the petitioner, which would be referred to the Council. The Council would refer this proposal to an ad hoc committee for changes, if necessary, and would return to the Council again for a vote. The committee would agree to negotiate the lease and the Council would approve or reject it.

Mr. Rotello was not comfortable tying up the 13.1 acres for fifteen months. He would also like to see an escape clause in the lease to protect the taxpayers if this project is sold before the 99 year lease term.

Mr. Cutsumpas moved to agree to an option on the property a term not to exceed fifteen months and give authority to the Mayor's office and Corporation Counsel to execute such agreement. Seconded by Mr. Visconti.

Mr. Cutsumpas moved to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Visconti.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Calandrino, Chairman

Ted Cutsumpas, Councilman

Fred Visconti, Councilman