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2 JOINT HEARING BETWEEN

3 WEST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

4 AND

5 WEST HARTFORD TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

6 - - - - -

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9

10 VOLUME 6

11 JUNE 23, 2004

12 West Hartford Town Hall

13 50 South Main Street

14 West Hartford, Connecticut

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23 Reporter: Sandra V. Semevolos, RMR, CRR, LSR #00074

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S:

2

3 Present for Town Council:

- 4 Jonathan A. Harris, Mayor
- 5 Scott Slifka
- 6 Joseph Verrengia
- 7 Barbara Carpenter
- 8 Kevin M. Connors
- 9 Charles T. Coursey
- 10 Maureen K. McClay
- 11 Art Spada
- 12 Timothy Brennan
- 13 Carolyn Thornberry

10 Present for Town Plan and Zoning Commission:

- 11 Tanya Meck, Chairperson
- 12 David Brown
- 13 Leon Davidoff
- 14 John Begley
- 15 Booker T. DeVaughn
- 16 Theodore M. Doolittle
- 17 Jeffrey Daniels

16 Also Present:

- 17 Joseph O'Brien, Esq.
- 18 Corporation Counsel

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1 (Hearing commenced at 6:20 p.m.)
2 MS. MECK: Good evening. I'd like to
3 call this public hearing to order. Can you please
4 stand for the pledge of allegiance.

04-06-23~3
(Pause.)

5
6 MS. MECK: Thank you. Mrs. Cronin, if
7 you can please do the roll call.
8 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Verrengia, sitting for
9 Mr. Bouvier.
10 MR. VERRENGIA: Here.
11 MS. CRONIN: Mrs. Carpenter.
12 MS. CARPENTER: Here.
13 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Connors. Absent.
14 Mr. Coursey. Are they not here? Mr. Harris.
15 MAYOR HARRIS: Here.
16 MS. CRONIN: Mrs. McClay.
17 MS. McCLAY: Here.
18 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Slifka.
19 MR. SLIFKA: Here.
20 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Spada will be here
21 about 8:00, I was told. Dr. Thornberry.
22 MS. THORNBERRY: Here.
23 MS. CRONIN: And Mr. Brennan, the
24 Council alternate.
25 MR. BRENNAN: Here.

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1 MS. CRONIN: Thank you. Ms. Meck.
2 MS. MECK: Present.
3 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Brown sitting for
4 Mr. Roach.
5 MR. BROWN: Here.
6 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Davidoff.

7 MR. DAVIDOFF: Here.
8 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Begley.
9 MR. BEGLEY: Here.
10 MS. CRONIN: Mr. DeVaughn.
11 MR. DEVAUGHN: Here.
12 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Daniels.
13 MR. DANIELS: Here.
14 MS. CRONIN: Mr. Doolittle.
15 MR. DOOLITTLE: Here.
16 MS. CRONIN: Thank you.
17 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mrs. Cronin.
18 Good evening, my name is Tanya Meck and
19 I'm the chair of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.
20 I co-chair these meetings with our mayor Mr. Harris,
21 and tonight it is my turn to chair this meeting, and so
22 I will do so. We are going to be continuing questions
23 that were asked beginning on Monday night for members
24 of the Plan and Zoning Commission and of the Town
25 Council.

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1 We went through, in a fairly systematic
2 fashion, zoning-related items and want to move on to
3 nonzoning-related items. We do have one outstanding
4 zoning item that we will be discussing, at least
5 briefly tonight, and that is an item as it relates to
6 parking. After that you can expect questions from the
7 body seated before you on the nonzoning items which
8 include things like the Master Agreement -- these are

9 some of the financial pieces to the application -- the
10 Master Agreement which includes the sale and purchase
11 of land, the actual bond ordinance itself, the Special
12 Services District ordinance and agreement and then any
13 tax impact or other fiscal questions that councilors
14 and commissioners may have, and we will go over that
15 this evening as well.

16 We'd like to try to accomplish all that
17 by 8:30 this evening when we will move into the public
18 comment portion of our public hearing, and because we
19 expect to get there this evening, I would like to go
20 over some of those procedures. We had outlined them in
21 past meetings for you, but now that we are finally at
22 that point, I would like to go over them so that
23 everybody who would like to speak knows the procedure
24 for doing so and knows what to expect and to refresh
25 our memories as well.

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1 What we are going to do is we have a
2 sign-up sheet that is to my right in the corner, and if
3 you would like to speak tonight, you can sign up,
4 please put your name on that sheet. We will be calling
5 people in order from that sheet, and I'll try to call
6 two or three at a time so you know who is coming next
7 so we can kind of keep the flow moving, and we can get
8 to as many questions as possible. We will ask that
9 members of the public keep their comments to four
10 minutes, and we will give you a little reminder at

11 three. This is so that everybody who wishes to speak
12 has the opportunity to do so and we can hear from as
13 many people as possible this evening and in subsequent
14 evenings. If you are representing a group of people or
15 an association, you will be given seven minutes, and we
16 will give you a reminder too. If you are unable to
17 wrap up your comments, we won't cut you off
18 mid-sentence, we will just ask you to wrap up your
19 comments. If you have more to say after that or feel
20 like you haven't had enough time to get your point
21 across, you can certainly sign up again, and we will
22 get back to you after everybody else here has had a
23 chance to speak, so we will just ask you to go back on
24 that sign-up sheet.

25 The warning you will get will be about

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1 30 seconds so when you hear it, it will be a little
2 ding or buzzer, and you will know that it's time to
3 wrap up your comments.

4 Also for those of you who are watching
5 on TV or for those of you in the audience who don't
6 want to come up here and give your public comment,
7 please remember that we are accepting written testimony
8 as well. You can do this by turning it in to the Town
9 Clerk, Norma Cronin, who is sitting over in the corner.
10 You can mail it to her at Town Hall; you can e-mail it
11 to her, and her e-mail address is N. Cronin,
12 C-R-O-N-I-N at WestHartford.org. Please know that we

13 will read, review and consider just as heavily any
14 written testimony as that that is presented orally to
15 us this evening and in the evenings to come.

16 I would like to remind everybody who is
17 here to speak that we want to hear from everybody and
18 we know there will be a lot of different viewpoints and
19 that we ask that everybody in the audience simply be
20 respectful and courteous of the commissioners and
21 councilors and the members of the public who are here
22 to speak this evening.

23 As a reminder, too, obviously these
24 proceedings are broadcast on Channel 5, and we'd like
25 to thank Channel 5 for doing that and making it

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1 available to all the citizens in West Hartford.

2 With that, and before we move to the
3 question portion of tonight's public hearing, I would
4 like to call on our Town Manager, Mr. Feldman, for some
5 comments that are follow-up to Monday night's hearing.
6 Mr. Feldman.

7 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chairwoman, if I
8 could, just a moment of your time before we begin
9 tonight, really two topics initially and we will hit a
10 third a little bit later on, but I want to comment
11 briefly on traffic and then also comment quickly on, by
12 right, what could be built on that site in a little bit
13 more detail.

14 First the traffic. I wanted to tell you

15 that I thought, and collectively we all thought your
16 discussion of Monday night on traffic was particularly
17 helpful to all of us, and so we tried to frame and
18 respond back to the questions and the concerns that you
19 have on traffic, particularly some of the comments made
20 by, well, all of you and specifically the presentation
21 that Joe Verrengia did and Kevin Connors' comments and
22 at the end Jeff Daniels' thoughts, and when we put all
23 of your comments together, it begins to help us respond
24 in a better way, and really what I'd like to do is just
25 ask for your confirmation or affirmation of a plan that

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1 we have to respond to questions and your thoughts
2 pertaining to traffic.

3 What we would like to do is to prepare a
4 more detailed traffic analysis book, somewhat similar
5 to what Jim Francis did and prepared as he presented
6 the financial management part of this investment, to do
7 something similar with the traffic piece, covering
8 important topics like capacity, safety, some of the
9 issues that Joe Verrengia touched on the other night,
10 particularly pedestrian safety in the Center as it
11 exists right now, and trying to help frame the issue,
12 and more particularly, trying to tell you how we will
13 implement the change.

14 It occurred to me, and perhaps to
15 others, that there may be a gap and that gap could be
16 the implementation. Well, how does it actually happen?

17 It's one thing to talk about it, but how do you
18 actually make these things happen? So I want to go
19 back to that and just make sure that's okay with you as
20 far as preparing this additional information. We would
21 do it orally as well as by the book. We would do it
22 orally with your permission at the end of public
23 testimony. As the investors are getting ready to sum
24 up, maybe we too can sum up on a few of these issues
25 that are still outstanding. So if that's satisfactory

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1 with the collective body, we would like to do that and
2 we would have it done through, of course, David Kraus.

3 Traffic, like finances, are ours to
4 manage. This is our Town, it's our traffic network.
5 We have to make sure it's managed well. With all
6 respect to the investors and their consultants, this is
7 still ours to make sure that it works, and I just want
8 to make sure that we are responding to those issues and
9 concerns that you have pertaining to traffic.

10 MS. MECK: Mr. Feldman, I think that
11 would be very helpful. If there is anything like the
12 presentation that Mr. Francis did for us on the finance
13 piece, I know that that might answer a lot of questions
14 that commissioners and councilors had. I would ask, is
15 there a way that we can get that report from you prior
16 to the end of the public hearing portion?

17 MR. FELDMAN: I hope we can do that and
18 then you will have a chance to read it, and then when

19 David goes through his analysis, you will have it again
20 right before you.

21 MS. MECK: I would also ask that the
22 report and any other comments be posted to the website
23 and copies made available for public that would like to
24 review them.

25 MR. FELDMAN: I'd be happy to.

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1 MS. MECK: Thank you.

2 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, if I could
3 continue just for a moment longer, I know you want to
4 get to your questions, but one of the things that was
5 posed perhaps in several different ways was the whole
6 question about what can be built on the site, and let
7 me just define "the site." The site is the
8 privately-held property that would include Grody,
9 Crowley Chevrolet, and of course the American Legion
10 and the condominium apartment buildings. It's about a
11 three-and-a-half acre site, and people have asked both
12 their questions through you, as well as certainly
13 questions in the public about, well, what can be built
14 by right, meaning what can be built by approval just as
15 the Town Planner has prescribed by your Town
16 ordinances? And I thought if it's permissible through
17 the chair to ask our Town Planner Mila Limson just to
18 describe what could be built by right on that
19 3-and-a-half acre site.

20 MS. MECK: Yes, Mr. Feldman.

21 Mrs. Limson.

22 MS. LIMSON: Madam Chair, we had a brief
23 discussion, if you remember, a couple of public
24 hearings ago. There were questions regarding what
25 could be done at that site, and the area that

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1 Mr. Feldman is referring to is the area that is zoned
2 the CBDH zone. If we were to do an analysis of that
3 site and looking at it, this site is approximately a
4 little over 3-and-a-half acres. In trying to determine
5 the permitted uses there, the regulations allow a realm
6 of commercial uses there, and they go from an office to
7 a retail use.

8 In trying to determine the level of
9 development there as opposed to just the uses, which is
10 what we spoke about last time, we would be looking at a
11 retail development there of approximately 35,000 square
12 feet and the associated parking that would have to be
13 provided on that site would have to be a little over
14 200 spaces.

15 To try to give the Council as well as
16 the commission a sense of what we are talking about
17 visually and something that you might be familiar with,
18 if we were to go to Bishop's Corner and look at the
19 northwest corner and look at what we have there now is
20 the Staples Plaza, including some of the strip
21 development that goes with that, that building is
22 approximately 35,000 square feet, the site itself very

23 comparable in size to the site that we are talking
24 about. So by right, that would be sort of the type of
25 development that would be permitted there through the

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1 site plan process, through the Town Planner's office.

2 MS. MECK: Thank you. I believe
3 Mr. Connors has a question for Mr. Feldman.

4 MR. CONNORS: Thank you. Mr. Feldman
5 just, to clarify, we left off with traffic on Monday
6 night, and I think the question that we are just
7 reinforcing, I think the question we were left with is:
8 Traffic now, how much capacity do we have left to add
9 more, traffic after this development may be built and
10 how much capacity we will have at that point? And I
11 think that's I think what we need to be able to
12 quantify, are we reaching the breaking point by adding
13 this development, or do we still have enough room for
14 things to happen beyond that? And if we can quantify
15 that numerically, if possible, I'm not sure if
16 that's --

17 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, Mr. Connors,
18 we will be able to answer that question as well as some
19 additional questions pertaining to safety, both
20 pedestrian and vehicular, picking up I think on the
21 theme that Joe Verrengia started to strike on Monday
22 night as well.

23 MR. CONNORS: Can I just ask just a
24 follow-up?

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1 MR. CONNORS: Ms. Limson, you said a
2 Staples Plaza could be built as of right. Could
3 something like an office building or like a Healthtrax
4 be built as of right on that site as well?

5 MS. LIMSON: Through you, Madam Chair,
6 yes, Mr. Connors, a Healthtrax is a personal service
7 use. The requirement for that is very similar to what
8 we are talking about as far as a retail use on a
9 parking basis. An office building certainly would be
10 permitted use there as well.

11 MR. CONNORS: Okay. Thank you.

12 MS. MECK: Thank you. Now what I would
13 like to do is turn to our last zoning-related item on
14 the agenda for councilors and commissioners to ask
15 questions on, and that is parking, and I know that
16 there has been some confusion perhaps or some requests
17 for clarification on a couple of items, some that got
18 answered during traffic, but I know there is some
19 parking-specific questions, and I'd actually like to
20 start with just some general parking questions that are
21 going to be, by and large, referred to the Town staff
22 as it exists around metered parking, garages, et
23 cetera, but also some to Mr. Heapes, as far as your
24 expertise in parking structures and schemes and payment
25 plans as well.

1 In general, some of the confusion, I
2 think, stems from some unclear notions as to what will
3 be charged when and how. There was some talk about
4 partial free municipal parking, maybe for events, maybe
5 for Town meetings. There will be some type of
6 validation system in the Town Hall lot. There is going
7 to be some free parking in the parking garages that
8 relates to library patrons, but not to others, not
9 related to this development, but obviously applicable
10 because they are across the street, there is going to
11 be free parking at the Whole Foods lot, and so there
12 was some confusion. There is different rates that
13 apply. There is rates that are different than in the
14 existing Center. I don't know if that causes confusion
15 or not amongst parkers and people who are coming to the
16 Center, but that's another question I know that some of
17 us had.

18 So I guess before I move on, there was a
19 few, one or two other parking questions I had, but just
20 in general, I think if this was a Special Use Permit, I
21 can speak from Town Plan and Zoning perspective, that
22 came before us and there were parking questions, it
23 would not be acceptable to us to say, you know, we are
24 going to work that out later, we will get back to you.
25 It's easier to do because this is such a massive

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1 application. I don't know that we need an answer to
2 all those questions right now, but a detailed plan of
3 exactly how parking would work and what would be
4 charged for whom and when I think would be helpful.
5 Mr. Feldman.

6 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, let me begin
7 the conversation and Ron Van Winkle can help certainly
8 explain in much greater detail, but let me just begin
9 by telling you that there are certain principles that
10 we believe are very, very important. Those principles
11 would include such things as when residents come to the
12 library, residents come to this building, residents
13 come to conduct business with the Board of Education
14 when they move into this building, the principle simply
15 is that we don't believe that people should have to pay
16 for that parking.

17 The question is: How long do you give
18 free parking for? Sixty minutes, ninety minutes two
19 hours? And those kinds of details I think are yet to
20 be sorted out. Obviously people that come to a public
21 hearing, your public hearing, a Council public hearing,
22 that may be three, four, five hours in the evening, the
23 last thing you want to do is say, well, 90 minutes free
24 and two-and-a-half hours you pay. So those are the
25 details that we need to think through.

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2 the library. The library we've checked and we've done
3 a little bit more extensive work on how long patrons
4 may stay. The general feeling is someplace around 60
5 minutes, an hour twenty, in other words, two hours,
6 between one and two hours, and those are the details
7 that we need to sort out as well.

8 Ron, do you want to elaborate?

9 MR. VAN WINKLE: Sure. Again, as the
10 Town Manager said, patrons coming to Town Hall are
11 those going to the library to park for free. The
12 assumption that we are working with is that there is,
13 for the library, you will go into the garage like
14 everyone else, you will get a magnetic card, a magnetic
15 strip card that will be your parking. You take that
16 into the library; you spend your time in the library.
17 And we are planning, as Mr. Feldman said, a two-hour
18 stay at the library for our planning purposes. Once
19 you are done with the library, you go to the desk, and
20 they will run it through a reader there, and that will
21 put the time you are in the library. At that moment,
22 you have approximately 15 or 20 minutes to get to your
23 car and leave the garage.

24 If there is a program there, Webster
25 Hall or something that runs longer, all of those

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1 machines can be adjusted to validate more, if that's
2 appropriate. But for the great majority of the
3 visitors, that two-hour validation would work. In Town

4 Hall, in a perfect world, we would leave it open and
5 free. We are concerned that as we charge for parking
6 next door, people will park in the Town Hall lot and
7 use it for its free parking and not for its Town Hall
8 use despite the fact we sign it and everything else.

9 Our thought is first for the employees,
10 there will be a magnetic reader on the card. They will
11 have something in their car; they will drive up to the
12 entrance of Town Hall, and there will be a gate and
13 that gate will go up for the employee. They will drive
14 in; they will park in a designated area a good distance
15 from the front door, and that's where they will park
16 all day, and when they leave the same thing will occur,
17 that reader will say it's an employee, and they will be
18 able to pass through that gate.

19 For the public that's coming in, they
20 will pull up to that gate, get a ticket, just like at
21 the library, be able to drive into the lot, park their
22 car, do their business in Town Hall and each of the
23 offices will have, again, a magnetic card reader and
24 printer that will put on the time that they were in
25 that office and allow them to get out of the Town Hall

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1 lot for free. So both of those systems are workable.

2 There is a number of ways you can do
3 this. You've seen these kiosks where you can walk out
4 and pay or run your card through for night parking. We
5 thought that there will be times when the garages will

6 be full. Maybe there is a special event going on in
7 the Blue Back Square area, and our garages are going to
8 be full. Maybe a special sale weekend or something
9 like that. We would like to use the surface lot in off
10 hours for the public to park in, and under those
11 circumstances, they drive into the garage like they
12 would anywhere else, and there will be something to
13 direct them to park in the exterior lot because the
14 garage would be full at that moment. They would pull
15 out of the garage on the backside, park in the Town
16 Hall lot, which will be cordoned off in a certain way,
17 and when they finish their dinner, event, shopping,
18 whatever, in the Center, they will go back into the
19 garage and out through the gate with the person taking
20 those cards, and they will pay for that parking.

21 All of those work in some fashion like
22 that. There is a myriad of ways which towns have
23 developed to kind of handle those things, and we
24 haven't done the final research about how to do that,
25 but we are certain that they work, and that we will be

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1 able to manage both of those systems in a fashion that
2 we've talked about.

3 We've looked at the potential of having
4 purely some free spaces in the Town Hall lot. That
5 will be 50 spaces where people can pull in and park and
6 do Town Hall business and leave, and not even go
7 through a gate or anything, and have a gate for, if

8 that is full, then maybe you do go through a gate and
9 then maybe you do get validated.

10 We've looked at various options. What
11 we are trying to do is make it simple to get to Town
12 Hall. If you've been to Greenwich, you know you pay to
13 go to Town Hall when you pay your taxes, which we
14 certainly don't feel is an acceptable system here. So
15 there are lots of ways to do it but we are certain that
16 the layout of the Town Hall lot, the operation of the
17 garages work in all of those schemes and have spent
18 some time with parking consultants to insure that we
19 are able to charge for those lots.

20 There was a question about how much
21 people pay. On-street meters, like we do in the
22 Center, they will be enforced from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00
23 p.m. in our model, and this is certainly up to the Town
24 Council. You set some of these provisions for us, so
25 if we want to change rates, we come back to the Town

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1 Council and say we want to change rates and get your
2 permission, but our financial model says that the
3 meters are enforced from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. They
4 are 75 cents per hour, and 25 cents for 20 minutes.

5 The off-street parking garage that we
6 are talking about is open from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m.
7 Monday through Saturday and 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on
8 Sunday. That garage is \$1.50 an hour, 75 cents for
9 each additional 30 minutes or part thereof, and the

10 monthly permits are \$100 for employees who will be
11 parking in that garage long term. Those rates are
12 identical to the Center except that on this side of
13 Main Street we are not talking about making the first
14 half hour free. If we did that in the Center, it
15 generates significant dollars in our lots, but we've
16 opted not to do that in the Center, and it's been a
17 longstanding principle with the community for many
18 years.

19 Our Town Hall lot ends up with 535
20 spaces, which is 75 more than we have today in that
21 lot, and those 75 are intended for the Board of Ed
22 employees that will come over with the renovation of
23 Town Hall, and they will be able to park in this lot,
24 and there will be space in this lot for the additional
25 employees of the Board of Ed as well as the existing

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1 sized lot that will meet the needs of most of our
2 events. Every once in awhile we have a big event here
3 in the auditorium that we run into some space issues,
4 but it's really only a few cars that we run into. And
5 in that case, perhaps the garages might afford us some
6 opportunity.

7 So there is a lot of flexibility going
8 back and forth here with all this parking and a lot of
9 ways we can handle it, and we are fairly certain that
10 this is a system that works. It's been dealt with in
11 many other communities.

12 MS. MECK: Thank you. Is the Town
13 comfortable with the revenue productions as they relate
14 to all these different options that you've presented to
15 us so far? Mr. Francis.

16 MR. FRANCIS: Jim Francis, director of
17 finance. When we reviewed those revenues, we looked at
18 a number of different models and projections by two
19 different consultants. Our projections were 20 percent
20 less than the developer's consultant and roughly 25
21 percent less than our own consultant, so we felt that
22 those projections were very obtainable for us. I could
23 go into more detail on that again if you'd like, but --

24 MS. MECK: No, thank you. It was very
25 clear the first time around. Thank you. Just to wrap

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1 up, and then if there is any other outstanding
2 questions on parking, I'd be happy to entertain them,
3 just for clarification for our purposes and for the
4 public that's here tonight, as far as parking is
5 concerned, this issue will then again go through the
6 Town Council when we are talking about garage rates and
7 hours of garages and meters, et cetera, is that
8 correct?

9 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chairwoman, that is
10 exactly correct. That's the way all these things have
11 to be cleared, discussed and ultimately decided upon by
12 the Town Council. But let me just touch on one other
13 issue before you get into your line of questions which

14 has to do with the image of public safety dealing with
15 making sure these two garages are adequately staffed,
16 not only will they be well-designed and opened and
17 well-lit and have all the amenities that Mr. Heapes
18 described, but the other piece of it is to have humans
19 nearby. When there is a question or a concern or a car
20 that perhaps won't start or whatever the issue might
21 be, I want to make sure when those garages are open,
22 and Ron described fairly extensive hours, that those
23 will be well-staffed, that there will be people nearby
24 to help and at the least bit of any concern that any
25 patron may have, I want somebody nearby that can help,

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1 whether it's, again, helping with a balky car or
2 helping to get maybe somebody into a car that might
3 have a locked door. Whatever the issue is, there will
4 be somebody nearby, so I just wanted to confirm it's a
5 very important principle with us that we have these
6 that are truly full service garages, in the sense of
7 being able to get in, get out easily, but also feeling
8 safe once in.

9 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Feldman.
10 Additional questions, Mr. Harris.

11 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Madam Chair,
12 through you, Mr. Feldman, you just had stated that the
13 ultimate parking fees would be determined by the
14 Council as we do with our current parking fees and
15 other leisure services fees; however, the revenue

16 estimates to pay back that piece of the bond, the
17 municipal parking piece of it, those are already set as
18 far as that analysis goes; is that correct?

19 MR. FELDMAN: Mr. Mayor, they are set
20 and hopefully you would going into the opening of this
21 investment, this investment on the east side, use those
22 rates as the rates that we open with. As we get some
23 experience, and as the project begins to open fully,
24 you may want to adjust those either way.

25 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Feldman.

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1 Again, through you, Madam Chair, I guess the issue I
2 have is, there could be some constraint at that point
3 because of the revenue models on what we do, that's
4 one, and I would like someone to be able to tell me a
5 little bit about the effect of some of the
6 differentials. There is differentials, for instance, I
7 saw in Mr. Desman's analysis, and I think you raised
8 the issue too, in the meters, the meters are 9:00 to
9 5:00 in the existing Center, and what if we pass this
10 will be the new Center, would be 9:00 to 7:00. Does
11 that create confusion among parkers? How does that
12 affect parking behavior?

13 MR. FELDMAN: Mr. Mayor, if I could, let
14 me take a shot before anybody from Blue Back Square
15 talks about parking, because again, parking is the
16 public responsibility to manage and operate well. We
17 do it now; I think we do it well, and we have every

18 intention of doing this parking just as well, if not
19 better.

20 I started off by talking a little bit
21 about principles, and Ron picked up the theme as well.
22 Let me come back to the theme. One of the themes, one
23 of the principles has to do with using parking as an
24 incentive. It's a very powerful incentive, and that
25 incentive may in part be to have, by design, different

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1 parking rates, not widely different, but just enough
2 perhaps to act as an economic incentive to have people
3 park within West Hartford Center on the west side of
4 Main Street. That might mean rates that are a little
5 bit different at the meters, perhaps, although we are
6 looking at it as the same, but the hours of operation
7 might be different. Ron mentioned the half hour free,
8 we have every hope of keeping that the way it is on the
9 west side of Main Street.

10 So while, you know, there is probably
11 some debate whether there should be some uniformity,
12 the principle that we are working on right now is to
13 use parking as an incentive to make sure that people
14 will park on the west side of Main, maybe even before
15 they think about parking on the east side of Main
16 Street. So again, that's all part of that getting used
17 to how this new project, how this new development will
18 work and operate.

19 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Feldman.

20 Again through you, Madam Chair, so the fees, I guess
21 was an easy thing. Someone might be willing to park
22 west of South Main because it's cheaper, and then would
23 walk to the new part of the Center?

24 MR. FELDMAN: That's, Mr. Mayor, Madam
25 Chairwoman, that's at least the concept that we are

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1 working on right now. Again, practice and theory
2 sometimes hold, sometimes they diverge, and that's what
3 we will find out over the first couple of years of its
4 opening.

5 MAYOR HARRIS: And then for purposes of
6 illustration and understanding, through you, Madam
7 Chair, same thing with the hours, someone might say,
8 well, it's 4:00, I'm going to go to the Center, why
9 don't I just park west of South Main so I can just put
10 in, you know, an hour's worth, and then be able to stay
11 the whole night as opposed to going down into the new
12 portion of the Center and having to feed a meter, even
13 though they are not supposed to, but having to feed a
14 meter.

15 MR. FELDMAN: Mr. Mayor, Madam Chair,
16 that's correct. Let me just remind everyone, too, that
17 we are not talking about separate parking funds. We
18 have a parking fund. So it's not a question where one
19 fund is enriched and some other fund somehow is
20 injured. This is one unified parking fund. All the
21 parking revenue, whether it's west of Main or east of

22 Main come into this one unified single fund.

23 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Feldman.

24 MS. MECK: Mr. Connors.

25 MR. CONNORS: Just a couple of

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1 questions, just a confirmation. Mr. Heapes said the
2 other night, and it's been in the material, that all
3 the employee parking is going to be in the lease, put
4 in the lease to be in the parking garages and not on
5 any side streets and not at the meters or on the
6 street.

7 MR. HEAPES: Yes, specifically it's the
8 opposite, where they are not allowed to park on the
9 street.

10 MR. CONNORS: They are not allowed to
11 park on the street, and they are not allowed to park in
12 the neighborhoods, they are required to park in the
13 parking garages?

14 MR. HEAPES: Correct.

15 MR. CONNORS: Okay.

16 MR. HEAPES: They may choose to park in
17 the Town Center office garage, which is why I mentioned
18 that. Permits are available there. It doesn't mean
19 they have to park in the Blue Back Square garages.
20 They maybe get a permit and not park on the street.

21 MR. CONNORS: Right. And that was going
22 to be my next question. Right now we have that garage
23 that I think anyone would argue is underutilized west

24 of South Main Street. We are working to get some
25 pass-through on the Memorial Drive extension. Are we

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1 working again with the owner of that garage to try to
2 encourage him to allow use possibly from the parking
3 lot behind Grant's, Toy Chest? You know, are we
4 working with him to try to encourage, so we can have
5 employees of the Center, whether it's the Blue Back
6 Square section of the Center or the existing Center to
7 park in there? Is that going on right now at the same
8 time? I think we need to look at this as a whole.

9 MR. VAN WINKLE: Through you, Madam
10 Chair, Ron Van Winkle. We've been talking to them for
11 several years. The concept you are working on is an
12 excellent one. They continue to express interest in
13 it. We have not been able to persuade them to change
14 their original opinion yet, but should this development
15 go forward, it changes a lot of things in the Center of
16 the way parking works, and it may well be that that
17 attraction of having an entrance from the old Sage
18 Allen lot will be a very good thing for that garage,
19 and I would expect that we will be able to demonstrate
20 the economics of the value there.

21 We haven't given up on that one yet.
22 It's private property, they need to agree with us, but
23 we still continue to be interested in creating an
24 entrance from the old Sage Allen lot into that garage
25 so that people who pull into that lot, don't find a

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1 space, can park in the garage or employees can park in
2 that garage. They have some empty spaces, and it would
3 be great to utilize them all.

4 MR. CONNORS: Through you, just to
5 follow up, right now in the Center we do have a lot of
6 employees parking on the neighborhood streets both
7 specifically on Farmington Avenue, which was never to
8 the extent that it is now. I think for the same
9 reasons that in the Blue Back Square section they don't
10 want employees using the neighborhood streets to park,
11 we should address it the same fashion for the existing
12 Center now, whether or not, I guess, this development
13 goes through. Just as a point, I think we need to
14 continue to push up against those. Thank you.

15 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Connors.
16 Mr. Slifka.

17 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you, Ms. Meck. I
18 think this is directed to the Town, and I think you
19 addressed some of this already, Mr. Feldman, Mr. Van
20 Winkle but there is one thing I can't -- one concept I
21 can't quite get my hands around regarding the different
22 mixtures of parking that are going to exist near the
23 garages. We are going to have two parking decks that
24 are going to be located very close to a part-time
25 municipal free lot, and then across the street at some

1 point along the line here a completely free lot, what I
2 anticipate would be a completely free lot in the Whole
3 Foods parking lot, and I know we can regulate these
4 things to a certain extent and say you are only going
5 to get it as long as you are in Town Hall and, you
6 know, and I'm sure the Whole Foods people, if and when
7 they come, will put up some kind of sign saying
8 "parking here only for Whole Foods," but we know how
9 people are, and we know how things get enforced.

10 I know that you've explained the parking
11 rate structure and all that is sort of a work in
12 progress and will always be changing, but I'm wondering
13 if somebody can articulate for me how exactly we factor
14 that in, because it seems like it adds a bit of an
15 unusual variable to an otherwise fairly predictable
16 system where we are attempting to regulate. How many
17 people do you expect to show up and how many spots do
18 we need, but how do we deal with the fact that we've
19 got these different layers of parking, some of which
20 will be completely free, available and very proximate
21 to the garages?

22 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, I just want
23 to make sure, Mr. Slifka, that we answer your question.
24 Is your question along the lines of, what are the
25 assumptions that we use to determine use and ultimately

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1 revenue, or is your question dealing more with how do
2 we manage the parking so individuals don't try to seek
3 out only the free parking and avoid paying for it? Or
4 is it both?

5 MR. SLIFKA: Through you, Ms. Meck, I
6 think you've addressed the management part of it,
7 but --

8 MR. FELDMAN: You are looking for the
9 assumptions more?

10 MR. SLIFKA: I'm looking for the
11 assumptions. We have a number -- we've had umpteen
12 reports from experts that predict this. I guess I'm
13 curious as to how you factor that in. You know, this
14 is otherwise sort of a mathematical equation, but we've
15 got an unknown that we drop in there, and I'd like to
16 know how that's affected.

17 MR. FRANCIS: Madam Chair, through you,
18 the assumptions on utilization actually were developed
19 by the consultant for Desman, and while we utilize
20 those, we, as a starting point, we then reduce them
21 from 3 to 5 percent in terms of the actual utilization
22 factor, and that was, one, obviously to be conservative
23 in our revenue estimates, but to also take into
24 consideration some of those alternative uses that
25 you've mentioned.

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1 The development of the actual, the

2 beginning number I would refer to Desman Associates on
3 how they came up with that. We did review that with
4 them, and it's based on use by hour, and we went over
5 that with them, but they would be more adequate to
6 describe that basic utilization.

7 MR. SLIFKA: Can I follow-up?

8 MS. MECK: Yes.

9 MR. SLIFKA: Maybe it's been directed to
10 Mr. Desman, I'm just curious as to how -- what
11 discount, if any, has been put into that analysis to
12 account for, you know, you know there is going to be
13 people that go over to Whole Foods, and then they are
14 going to run across the street to the Blue Back area
15 and buy something quickly and run back, and while that
16 may be an only five to ten minute trip, that's probably
17 some 25 cents off for this revenue, and that's going to
18 accumulate over time.

19 Have you built in a discount for that,
20 and if so, how did you arrive at it?

21 MR. GOLDMAN: Norm Goldman. First of
22 all, there is no Mr. Desman.

23 MR. SLIFKA: Mr. Goldman, I apologize.

24 MR. GOLDMAN: That's all right. You can
25 call me anything you like.

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1 MR. SLIFKA: Can I call you Mr. Johnson?

2 MR. GOLDMAN: That stands for design
3 management. That's a contraction of those two words.

4 Anyway, similarly to your question, we have not taken
5 credit for what we call oversell in the industry, and
6 that is, if you have an office building, which we do, a
7 medical office building and a regular office building,
8 and in a medical office building doctors won't be there
9 on Fridays possibly, they won't be there on Wednesday
10 afternoon, some practices might not practice all day
11 anyway, we have not taken credit for those spaces
12 becoming available that we can then sell to transients
13 when those contract parkers aren't there.

14 In addition to that, when we talk about
15 oversell in Hartford, for example, on an office
16 building, we will manage a parking garage and have a 20
17 percent oversell of the parkers in that garage, meaning
18 you can either sell the monthlies 20 percent higher
19 than the number that you have, or you don't sell it,
20 and then you use those empty spaces. People will come
21 in, in the morning, for example, gather their material
22 and go out on the road, and that leaves that space then
23 open for the public to park in.

24 So there is a fine balance. We did not
25 necessarily consider in the winter, for example,

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1 someone going to Whole Foods, shopping there and then
2 leaving their groceries in the car to run across the
3 street to come to Blue Back Square. I think it very
4 well might be the other way around, where they will
5 park their car in a garage where it's not in clement,

6 where they are protected all the time, it's well-lit,
7 and then maybe take their car out and go to Whole
8 Foods.

9 But the placing of the Whole Foods lot,
10 which is a private facility, is entirely up to Whole
11 Foods. They jealously would like to guard their spaces
12 and make sure that they are not usurped by people who
13 don't go into Whole Foods, so I think there is a
14 management system and a management strategy here that
15 has to be employed, and that's another reason we are
16 controlling the entrances and exits to the municipal
17 lot, so that people just don't drive in and park and,
18 you know, avoid having to pay or take over the public
19 spaces that should be free.

20 MR. SLIFKA: One more.

21 MS. MECK: Mr. Slifka.

22 MR. SLIFKA: I think a follow-up
23 Mr. Desman, got it right this time, or Mr. Heapes.

24 MR. GOLDMAN: Okay.

25 MR. SLIFKA: I know that -- I think you

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1 just illustrated a situation where you would have a
2 surplus of spaces and any concern about that.
3 Conversely, there is a lot of people who have expressed
4 their concern that there won't be enough people to fill
5 up what is available, and I think maybe one thing that
6 might set some minds at ease is if you explain what is
7 the ratio of spaces that you are making available to

8 those that are already preleased? My understanding is
9 that you are putting out -- you are going to have X
10 number of spaces in the project, but on day one, when
11 you open, all of those spaces are not available to
12 somebody in the public to just drive up and use because
13 X number of them have already been leased to Hartford
14 Hospital, to tenants of the buildings, to other
15 commercial tenants, other retail tenants. So can you
16 explain what number is actually open to the public on a
17 given day?

18 MR. GOLDMAN: Okay. When we used the
19 factors that we described before that are produced by
20 the ULI, which are national standards, it's a
21 combination of, for the office building, for example,
22 of office workers and employees and visitors, so the
23 visitors would be considered the public portion of that
24 space, and the employees of the office building, as
25 Richard said, were going to be parking in other

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1 facilities, not necessarily in the garages within Blue
2 Back Square.

3 So in terms of -- it's hard to say in
4 terms of percentage what the public spaces are because
5 it's a mix, and it's difficult to put a number on it,
6 but, for example, in the medical offices, at seven per
7 thousand, three are for the employees of the medical
8 office per thousand, and 4 are for patients and
9 visitors. That's public, you know, so you'd need to

10 look at each one of the factors, which I'd be happy to
11 do, and break them down for you between public and
12 committed.

13 MR. SLIFKA: If I might follow-up, maybe
14 this is for Mr. Heapes, what I'm getting at more is:
15 How many do you think you are going to have contracted
16 for by the time it opens as compared -- I'm not looking
17 for a ratio on how many people you think are going to
18 show up to be -- to use a doctor's office in particular
19 or to go to a particular store. I'm saying how many
20 are going to be preleased and you know are bought and
21 sold or at least you project?

22 MR. HEAPES: I guess you are asking when
23 we build the project, how much of it will still be in
24 spec and how much will have leases assigned for it, et
25 cetera?

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1 MR. SLIFKA: I know you can't say that
2 with certainty but --

3 MR. HEAPES: Well, yeah, we can, because
4 and this is a really fundamental point, we don't get
5 the money to do the construction without X amount of
6 preleasing done, so there is no bank that's going to
7 say to you, we really believe in this, we love the
8 market, why don't you build these empty buildings and
9 we have faith that you guys will lease them up. That's
10 not going to happen. Each one of the uses has a
11 different threshold. We would expect to be 40 to 50

12 percent preleased before we even got the financing to
13 start construction, never mind the leasing that we
14 would do during construction.

15 So there will be no such thing as empty
16 buildings. These will be preleased with credit
17 tenants, be they condominium, people who put cash down,
18 or credit tenants, before we even start the
19 construction, and that's a third to a half before we
20 even start, and that's two years ahead of when we open.
21 Does that answer your question? It may not.

22 MR. SLIFKA: I think it's most of the
23 way there. What I'm getting at is, I know what you
24 said about preleasing, you build it. I'm saying now of
25 those 40 to 50 percent that have to meet the preleasing

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1 criteria, how many parking spots are those people going
2 to use?

3 MR. GOLDMAN: One thing before I get to
4 the real answer. Parking facilities in mixed-use
5 developments generally take two or three years to what
6 we call mature, and that means that when, as Richard
7 said, they are not going to start construction until
8 they are 40 percent preleased. By the time they are
9 finished with construction, they might be 60 or 65 or
10 70 percent leased.

11 MR. HEAPES: No.

12 MR. GOLDMAN: Higher than that? Okay.
13 Well, they are going to mature the project a lot

14 faster. However, what happens with the garages is
15 there is a certain amount of that development that
16 isn't done, isn't leased at the time that we open the
17 garages, and that gradually, over time, would fill up.
18 During that time the operator has an opportunity to
19 mold how he is doing the parking management. So it
20 doesn't happen, you know, bang, all at once, and this
21 is it. That's my whole point there.

22 The other point of this is, in the
23 approximate 1375 spaces that we have in the Blue Back
24 Square Development, about 660 will be contract, and
25 they don't all occur at the same time. Like the movie

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1 theater guy might have, he and his employees might have
2 parking spaces, but they don't come in until 12:00, so
3 there is a float within those numbers as to the actual
4 demand, but you look at that number as a total.

5 MR. SLIFKA: My one last, I think you
6 finally gave me the answer I was looking for, which is,
7 there is no situation, if all the preleasing is met,
8 where you build it and no one shows; the concern is you
9 build it and 700 people as opposed to 1300 people may
10 not show.

11 MR. HEAPES: Correct.

12 MR. GOLDMAN: Correct.

13 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you very much.

14 MR. HEAPES: If I can add one little
15 teeny note, Madam Chair.

16 MS. MECK: Yes, Mr. Heapes.

17 MR. HEAPES: It's important to realize
18 that we did not associate any revenue with the Town's
19 parking even though, let's say, on Saturday night,
20 weekend nights, when you might expect there to be some
21 parking in those lots, none of that revenue was counted
22 on, it's projected. The Town parking is viewed as
23 revenue neutral, even though we expect at certain times
24 of the week to have paid customers using that parking.
25 Thank you.

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1 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Heapes.

2 Further questions on parking? Mr. Brennan.

3 MR. BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair,
4 regarding actually projected parking revenue,
5 Mr. Heapes, will any of your leases with your tenants
6 have termination rights such that a tenant who may tie
7 itself perhaps to an anchor or two have the right to
8 termination should the other tenant leave?

9 MR. HEAPES: I don't know the answer to
10 that. I'd have to get back to you, which I'd be happy
11 to do.

12 MR. BRENNAN: Thank you.

13 MS. MECK: Any other further questions?
14 Mr. Verrengia.

15 MR. VERRENGIA: Yes, I have one
16 question. I just want to start off by thanking
17 Mr. Feldman for his response to our questions from the

18 other evening. I think it really speaks to your
19 professionalism and the professionalism of your staff,
20 and I just want to say thank you.

21 As we know, the last few years we've
22 seen modest tax increases. We are having a difficult
23 time meeting our commitments to public safety,
24 education, et cetera. With this project, there is
25 estimated funds coming in of approximately 2 million

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1 dollars. My concern would be if we ever had to use
2 taxpayer's dollars, whether it's in year one or year 20
3 to fund what I would call, to some extent, a regional
4 project, not just a local project. So my question is:
5 Before the bond is paid off, is there the potential use
6 of tax dollars to support the project, and if so, are
7 those projections included in your financial plan?

8 MS. MECK: Actually, Mr. Verrengia,
9 before we get to that, are you talking about just the
10 projections for the parking or the overall project?
11 Because what I would like to do is close the parking
12 section of this discussion and move to the financial
13 impact and that may be better suited there.

14 MR. VERRENGIA: Well, since the project
15 is tied into the garages, the bonds, it's specific to
16 the garages, but if you'd like to move it to the
17 finance part, that's fine with me.

18 MS. MECK: I would if that's acceptable
19 to you. Thank you.

20 Mr. Begley.
21 MR. VERRENGIA: I have more.
22 MS. MECK: Mr. Verrengia, excuse me.
23 MR. VERRENGIA: The other question is,
24 it's my understanding that with projects like this,
25 that there is the potential for state or federal grants

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1 to pay for some of these types of projects or a portion
2 thereof. My question is for the Town: Did we look at
3 the potential or the possibility of getting any state
4 or federal grants with respect to this project?

5 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, I'm not sure
6 whether you'd like to cover that under the finance area
7 or not. My answer won't be specific to the parking
8 garages, but more to the overall financing of the
9 improvement.

10 MS. MECK: Again, I'd like to talk about
11 overall financing together, and we will get to that,
12 Mr. Verrengia, in a very short time. We just have a
13 handful of parking questions remaining.

14 Mr. Begley.

15 MR. BEGLEY: Thank you. I have two
16 questions in regards to the parking garages. The first
17 question in regards to the condominiums. It was
18 mentioned that each unit receives one parking space per
19 unit; is that correct?

20 MR. GOLDMAN: We have 119 spaces for the
21 70 condominium units, sir.

22 MR. BEGLEY: So they are basically
23 one-and-a-half spaces, so they share a visitor spot?

24 MR. HEAPES: Basically you get one per
25 bedroom, if you want to look at it that way. Because

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1 there will be a mix of one, two and three bedroom
2 units. We would expect the visitors to the
3 condominiums to park in the public facilities either on
4 the street or in the garage. There is not separate
5 visitor parking within the confines of that 119 units.

6 MR. BEGLEY: So if someone had a
7 relative coming in for a week to stay with them, you
8 would expect that unit owner or that relative guest to
9 pay parking rates to stay in a high end unit? In other
10 words you have nothing in place to give these people a
11 credit?

12 MR. HEAPES: That's correct.

13 MR. BEGLEY: Okay. And to Mr. Desman.
14 You had mentioned the doctor spaces would be reserved.
15 If so, how would a transient know that they'd be
16 entitled to park there on a Friday or when that doctor
17 isn't there?

18 MR. GOLDMAN: If that's what you
19 received from my speech, I must have misspoken, because
20 I did not say that the doctor spaces would be reserved.
21 I thought I said that they would have monthly cards
22 that the doctors and their employees could buy monthly
23 permits. The theory in the garage is not to take a

24 space out of service by putting a reserve sign on it.
25 If you go to Saint Francis Hospital, and we are

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1 redesigning the Saint Francis Hospital garage now, as
2 you go up through the garage and you pull into a space,
3 you will see a little sign that says "reserved for
4 Dr. So and So," you pull out of this space, and you go
5 up a little further and you see another sign. That
6 slows down the functionality of the garage, adds to
7 potential accidents, et cetera.

8 So even though they have the ability to
9 get into the garage without taking a ticket, they will
10 have this AVI system, they will find a space just like
11 any other public person and park in that space, first
12 space they come to. So we are not taking them out of
13 service.

14 MR. BEGLEY: That's exactly the point
15 that I was trying to make, because when you do go into
16 a medical building, you see every spot reserved, and
17 you are driving around forever looking for an empty
18 spot.

19 MR. GOLDMAN: Right.

20 MR. BEGLEY: So that was my concern.

21 MR. GOLDMAN: If we give them the
22 spaces, we will put them on the roof, how is that?

23 MR. BEGLEY: Okay, thank you.

24 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Begley.

25 Mr. Brown.

1 MR. BROWN: Thank you, through you Madam
2 Chair, I'd like to ask Mr. Heapes, there has been a lot
3 of concern about the height of buildings. Was there
4 any consideration of having two levels underground for
5 parking and lowering the building in that fashion?

6 MR. HEAPES: I could give you some
7 orders of magnitude, this kind of education. Regular
8 surface parking space, you know, a lot space, costs
9 around 4,000 dollars, all in with nice lights, nice
10 trees, et cetera. When you put that parking space in a
11 parking structure above ground, open air, pretty
12 straightforward parking structure, you are looking at
13 slightly less than 20,000 a space, maybe 15 to 20,000,
14 depending on -- 20,000 on the high end, 15 on the
15 normal end. You take that space and put it below
16 ground, you are plus 30,000 a space, number 1.

17 Number 2, with all due respect, there is
18 no visiting customer that wants to park 20 feet under
19 the ground, so we've balanced that based on cost of the
20 parking, keeping the visiting consumer at grade and
21 above, tending to use the below-grade spaces for office
22 and residential and those uses, they are going to come
23 there every day and they know what they are doing,
24 hence the mix. So you would significantly increase the
25 cost of the parking to put it below two floors.

1 In addition to that, in several places
2 on the site where we looked at doing two stories, in
3 fact, we had three stories below grade in a few places,
4 we ran into significant rock that would have required a
5 lot of blasting, particularly by the Board of Ed closer
6 to Main Street as you come down the hill, it really
7 made it, that 30,000 space probably jumped up to
8 40,000. So it was really the balancing of the consumer
9 desire, the economics, et cetera, but of course we
10 looked at it.

11 MR. BROWN: Okay. Thanks. Also, you
12 had made a point that the access was going to be
13 limited to, I believe, one point to most of the garages
14 or you tried to limit it so that the interference on
15 the street would be minimized; is that correct?

16 MR. HEAPES: Yeah, I might phrase it
17 slightly different to say that we really have two
18 garage systems, and those garage systems include an
19 entrance to the garage, which connects all the below
20 grade with the public or private, so we tried to limit
21 its access point to two places on the street and two
22 places towards the back of the garages. So four in
23 total. It's a really important component of the
24 flexibility of the garages when they are all
25 interconnected and intertwined and as we understand how

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1 they work better, we can manage those things, but you
2 are correct.

3 MR. BROWN: Let's say at rush hour, in
4 the morning or in the evening, when people are trying
5 to get in or get out, do you anticipate congestion?

6 MR. HEAPES: Remember, I'll sing the
7 mantra one more time, mixed use, mixed use, mixed use,
8 mixed use, mixed use. We don't have a peak rush hour
9 time, and as you may recall, our peak time was 1:00 in
10 the afternoon for the parking. It was not a p.m.
11 people or a.m. peak when the traffic is peaking.

12 Now, there was a little detail about the
13 parking garages that's very important. They have been
14 designed using the current physical system that you
15 have today, man manned operators at the entrances and
16 exits, which are probably the slowest system, and as
17 new emerging technologies come through, where you don't
18 have to have that, we may not have to have that system
19 of leaving.

20 But the parking garages are designed to
21 accommodate every kind of system today feasible based
22 on the manned garages, which create the longest queues
23 in the garage because they take the most time, they
24 take the most room in the garage because you have to
25 have a little shelter for the man person, so we've

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1 designed them very conservatively to take all systems,
2 but the queuing, which is really what you are talking

3 about, and the money exchange has been the physically
4 most demanding on the garages. So if anything, they
5 will only get better as different technologies come
6 into play.

7 MR. BROWN: So when a movie let's out,
8 you will accommodate it as well as possible?

9 MR. HEAPES: Correct.

10 MR. GOLDMAN: There are several things
11 you can do on the theater side, and that is that the
12 theater could very well validate. They could give the
13 customer a charge for the theater ticket which includes
14 a flat rate for parking, and again, this is an
15 operational entity that the Council would have to
16 consider when brought before it by the Town.

17 If you go -- excuse me. If you go to
18 the Morgan Street garage, that's 2300 cars. We
19 designed it and we put in the noncashiering system, the
20 contract parkers have AVIs, and people go into the
21 lobby of the garage, and they either pay at a machine
22 or they pay at two cashier windows, and then they go
23 and they get their cars. We recirculate that garage
24 twice two-and-a-half times a day, so we are passing
25 5,000 spaces through that garage.

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1 MR. BROWN: Thanks. I have one other
2 question for Town staff probably.

3 MS. MECK: Yes, Mr. Brown.

4 MR. BROWN: Mr. Van Winkle, through you,
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5 Madam Chair, I was wondering, if we've received much
6 information from other towns that have gotten into the
7 parking business, and have you found that it's very
8 desirable, a municipal business and, you know, are we
9 looking at something that we are going to be really
10 happy with as a money generator, or is it going to be
11 kind of a nuisance that pays for itself but not much
12 more?

13 MR. VAN WINKLE: Through you, Madam
14 Chair, Ron Van Winkle, we are in the parking business.
15 We manage the Town lots. We do it, I think, very
16 successfully. It turns a profit for us, a sizable
17 profit, which we put back into the Center in the form
18 of crosswalks, streets, improvements, flowers, all the
19 things that you see there come out of what we -- the
20 profits we make in the Center, so those dollars go back
21 in.

22 Other communities have had some enormous
23 failures managing garages. This isn't about, you know,
24 a parking authority that is separate from you. Someone
25 who has power to make decisions over garages are the

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1 way many municipalities end up doing it, and they
2 appear to be really problematic. The same man that is
3 responsible for everything in the Town is going to be
4 responsible to make sure the garage runs. You don't
5 have to, as a Council, ask some authority that is
6 separate from you and has the power to do what they

7 want to change the way they operate the garage, keep
8 them cleaner, do some better policing. It will be in
9 the hands of the Town government to do it, and we are
10 going to do it right. I mean, it's the way we do
11 things in this community. We are going to do it right.

12 So we've been very successful, we are in
13 the parking business, and I wouldn't look to other
14 towns for examples of good management. I think we will
15 bring our own management to this process.

16 MR. BROWN: Even though garages are new
17 for us?

18 MR. VAN WINKLE: Yes, even though garage
19 is a new theme, sort of idea. I mean, it's about
20 principles and goals, you know, safety, well-lit,
21 well-run. The question when you get out of the theater
22 is, is there a way to make this work better? There are
23 lots of things that we will do that are just logical
24 management sorts of things, and whether you are in a
25 structure or on a surface, I don't think it matters a

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1 whole lot.

2 MR. BROWN: Thank you.

3 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Brown.
4 Mrs. Carpenter.

5 MS. CARPENTER: Thank you. I think
6 certainly the challenge is going to be changing with
7 people who are used to surface parking and moving the
8 concept to parking garage. We certainly have to

9 maximize the use of the parking garage and in looking
10 over my notes, Mr. Heapes, you said that, or I think
11 I'm correct in saying this, that the parking garages
12 were the first buildings that were put down in the
13 design of the development; is that correct?

14 MR. HEAPES: It's not entirely correct,
15 although our initial discussions with the Town revolved
16 around the North Parking Garage. In looking at the way
17 you park today in the Center, you tend to park in the
18 middle of the block, surface or whatever, and then you
19 walk from that parking to any street you want, LaSalle
20 or Farmington through your little passages and
21 connectors, et cetera.

22 We realized that if the parking was
23 going to be a public asset, that the proper place to
24 put it on the north parcel was probably somewhere on
25 the property owned by us, somewhere on Crowley

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1 Chevrolet. You certainly wouldn't put it on South Main
2 Street, on public land, and as you can see, even at the
3 small garage there, and that's what began this
4 discussion of what goes on what property for the
5 long-term health expansion of the Center. We located
6 it to the north side of Crowley, knowing that if
7 further development happened north of us over time,
8 that parking could be expanded, Isham Road could be
9 moved, and it could be an asset to that whole part of
10 Town.

11 That is how -- that was our experience
12 in Bethesda Maryland where Montgomery county in the
13 1960s, very far reaching, created a public parking
14 system by asking landowners to dedicate land in the
15 middle of blocks and building public parking
16 facilities. So I meant to say that that was really the
17 issue that first started this discussion, which is
18 where is the right place to put the parking relative to
19 whether you park in the middle of the block and you
20 walk through the street.

21 MS. CARPENTER: So the North Parking
22 Garage, which I unsuccessfully tried to have moved the
23 other building, is there for the potential of the
24 expansion, the North Parking Garage?

25 MR. HEAPES: The only location where the

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1 Town could expand it, if there was a need to. We are
2 not projecting a need to. That's not part of the
3 design.

4 MS. CARPENTER: Right.

5 MR. HEAPES: But that's what was the
6 original conversation about, its location.

7 MS. CARPENTER: And the location of the
8 South Parking Garage is tied into the Hartford Hospital
9 office and retail space; is that correct?

10 MR. HEAPES: Correct.

11 MS. CARPENTER: My second question is:
12 At what point does West Hartford begin to collect

13 revenue from the parking garages, at what point in the
14 project?

15 MR. HEAPES: I'll let Jim answer that
16 unless you'd rather.

17 MR. FRANCIS: Through you, Madam Chair,
18 we have projected the income stream from the garages
19 upon us buying them, but not at full capacity. In the
20 garages we have roughly an 18-month phase-in of the
21 parking volume, so that I believe the North Garage we
22 start at about 30 percent of its full use capacity and
23 the South Garage is at about 45 percent when it
24 initially begins.

25 The timing on that is that the South

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1 Garage I believe is scheduled about 17 months after the
2 closing and the North Garage would be about 26 months
3 after the closing.

4 MS. CARPENTER: Thank you.

5 MS. MECK: Thank you. I know we have a
6 few more questions, I just want to remind everybody
7 that our goal is to get to public comment at 8:30, and
8 we still have nonzoning related items to go over, so we
9 do want to wrap up our parking questions, but I do want
10 to make sure that everybody who has outstanding
11 questions has them answered. Mr. Davidoff.

12 MR. DAVIDOFF: Thank you, Madam
13 Chairwoman. I just have a quick question, just for
14 clarification, the employees of the tenants of Blue

15 Back Square will park in the Town's parking garages; is
16 that correct?

17 MR. HEAPES: Most likely.

18 MR. DAVIDOFF: And is it correct that
19 the public parking garage is slated to close at 7:00
20 p.m. on a Sunday?

21 While are you looking that up, the
22 reason I ask that is --

23 MR. FELDMAN: Were you -- Madam Chair,
24 Mr. Davidoff, were you asking public or private? I
25 missed that

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1 MR. DAVIDOFF: The public private
2 garage.

3 MR. FELDMAN: We can answer that in just
4 one moment.

5 MR. DAVIDOFF: The reason I ask that is
6 if the employees are parking in the parking garage and
7 the movie runs to 11:00 and someone is parked in that
8 garage, I think one of the greatest fears either an
9 employee or a member of the public could have is fear
10 of being not able to get their car out of the garage.

11 MR. FELDMAN: That's an easy one, Madam
12 Chair, that's an easy one. We won't lock anybody in.
13 In other words, the gate will go up before the gate
14 stays locked down. So if it should close, and we will
15 check the hours in a moment, but if for any reason if
16 somebody comes in after the garage is officially

17 closed, in other words, the booth attendant is no
18 longer there, he or she is no longer there, the gate
19 will be up.

20 MR. FRANCIS: The garage on Sunday is
21 scheduled to be enforced, the parking revenue to be
22 collected from 11:00 a.m. to 6 p.m.

23 MR. DAVIDOFF: So basically, if my
24 understanding is correct, if someone pulls into the
25 garage, will they be allowed to pull into the garage

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1 after 6:00, and it will be complimentary at that point
2 to attend the movies?

3 MR. VAN WINKLE: Through you, Madam
4 Chair, yes. What Jim said is it's enforced. We are
5 going to collect revenue during those hours. If you
6 come in at 3:00 on Sunday afternoon and stay till 9:00,
7 you are going to get out free. So we are going to lift
8 the gates and allow people to get out. We are not
9 going to lock anybody in the garage. You know, it is
10 the worst fear of everyone, and what we are saying is
11 we are going to enforce it during those hours, and
12 we've looked at it in expectation of we are going to
13 lose some revenue with people who come in at 5:15 and
14 would normally be a payer, but stayed for a movie and
15 leave at 9:00. We will lose those revenues, but we
16 recognize that.

17 MR. DAVIDOFF: Thank you.

18 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Davidoff.

19 Mr. Harris.

20 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Madam Chair,
21 through you, I think this first question is for our
22 economist, Mr. Van Winkle. I want to just poke a
23 little bit at some of the assumptions. What is the
24 vacancy rate currently in the Center for office use?

25 MR. VAN WINKLE: Through you, Madam

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1 Chair, Ron Van Winkle, in West Hartford Center,
2 vacancies run less than 5 percent.

3 MAYOR HARRIS: What about for retail and
4 restaurant, that's all you are combining?

5 MR. VAN WINKLE: Retail and restaurant,
6 the only reason we generally have vacancies are because
7 the landlord is seeking a better tenant than those who
8 have applied or there is a turnover period. Virtually
9 every space that becomes available is rented almost
10 immediately. Although you will see spaces that are
11 vacant, sometimes there are other conditions, the past
12 tenant may still be paying rent and yet close the
13 store, but generally we seldom ever have a space that
14 just sits there in the last few years.

15 MAYOR HARRIS: In your experience since
16 you have been with the Town for a while and have seen
17 the highs and lows of the Center, what would be the
18 worst-case scenario on vacancy rates that you've
19 experienced?

20 MR. VAN WINKLE: You really have to go
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21 back to a period before we began to try to change the
22 nature of the experience in West Hartford Center. Back
23 in the recession in the late eighties, we began to see
24 some significant vacancy rates. The Council chose to
25 change some of our zoning code to allow more

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1 restaurants to operate and to change some of the ways
2 we utilize spaces. We began to invest in West Hartford
3 Center.

4 Since we tried to change the experience
5 of shopping, dining, walking in the Center, the Center
6 is not -- has not been very susceptible to ups and
7 downs. We just went through a long recession,
8 Connecticut is just beginning to see jobs come back,
9 and yet vacancy rates in the Center have not been -- we
10 have not seen them at all in this last recession of any
11 significance.

12 So for vacancies, the Center seems to be
13 pretty well recession-proof at this moment in time.
14 It's very successful, people want to be there, and they
15 are drawn there and stores are drawn there. So if you
16 go back in time, though, that experience was quite
17 different and the Center did experience some difficult
18 times in recessions.

19 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Van
20 Winkle, and the reason I'm asking, so people
21 understand, is because one of the pieces of
22 Mr. Desman's report in coming up with the parking

23 demands assumed a 10 percent vacancy factor for office
24 and medical use, a 5 percent for the retail and
25 restaurant. I just wanted to test that assumption

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1 based on our experience in the Center. Thank you.

2 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Harris. At
3 this point, I would like to move on to the
4 nonzoning-related items on our agenda for questions
5 this evening. We are talking about the Master
6 Agreement and the items contained therein, such as the
7 sale and purchase of land, we are talking about the
8 Special Services District ordinance and agreement, the
9 bond ordinance, and any financial questions that we may
10 have on these items.

11 Before we do that, I'd like to turn it
12 over to Mr. Feldman for an additional comment on these
13 items as well. Mr. Feldman.

14 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, thanks.
15 Really maybe this is perhaps a good way to begin your
16 discussion of finances and a variety of associated
17 topics. The other night David Brown asked a question
18 as we were beginning to wrap up and his question was
19 essentially, does this developer pay for the public
20 investments in a similar way that other developers,
21 investors have paid? And I want to complete my answer,
22 because it was an incomplete answer, and essentially
23 the quick answer is yes. This developer does pay for
24 those public improvements, and again, I will define

25 public improvements, streets and storm sewers and

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1 lights and landscaping and benches and a variety of
2 other enhancements that actually make that whole kind
3 of scene, that street scene. So the public improvement
4 is paid by the developer.

5 The way in which the arrangement has
6 been agreed to is a little bit different than perhaps
7 other private investments that we've seen over recent
8 years, but nevertheless it is through a special tax.
9 That special services tax that pays off a bond is the
10 way in which that investor pays for those public
11 improvements. It is his, essentially it is his capital
12 investing in our community to build our infrastructure
13 streets that will service the residents and service the
14 private investment as well.

15 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Feldman. And
16 with that, we will begin this portion of our questions.
17 I'd like to first call on Mr. Verrengia. Thank you for
18 holding your questions until this point.

19 MR. VERRENGIA: Thank you, Madam Chair.
20 My first question was concerning the bond and the
21 question was: Before the bond is paid off, is there
22 the potential use of tax dollars to support the
23 project, and if so, are those projections included in
24 your financial planning?

25 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, good

1 The risk, and there is risk, and Jim
2 touched on the risk, Jim Francis touched on the risk
3 the other night, is on the parking revenue, and that's
4 your conversation that you just had for the last hour.
5 That revenue is the third source. The parking revenue
6 is the third source. Two property tax sources and the
7 third again being the parking revenue. That revenue
8 has been looked at by our own, through our own finance
9 director and his colleagues as well as the independent
10 sources that we've hired to help us, as well as the
11 investors have done their own analysis regarding
12 parking revenue.

13 So we believe that the parking revenue
14 coupled with essentially the additional tax that those
15 investors, the developers are paying will pay for the
16 debt, the 48 million dollar debt that Jim covered the
17 other night. We can go back through pieces of that if
18 you would like. The underlying property tax, the 100
19 percent property tax essentially is used for public
20 purposes.

21 There is another component, and Jim may
22 want to elaborate if he would like. We will also
23 create essentially a reserve account that will be set
24 aside. Jim mentioned a 4 million dollar reserve
25 account that we will incrementally build. We won't put

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1 it aside in year one, but over several years we hope to
2 reserve 4 million dollars that will cover any highs or
3 lows in the parking revenue. So that was something
4 that we anticipated doing, and we won't do again, to
5 deal with those uncertainties, those unknowns. Jim.

6 MR. FRANCIS: I might just add to that
7 that there were a number of revenue streams that we did
8 not include in the model. We did not include the
9 revenue that would come from the pad lease based on the
10 sales, the gross sales that would occur there, so we
11 did not have any estimate for revenue from that
12 provision.

13 As we briefly touched on earlier, we did
14 not include any revenue from parking in the surface
15 parking of the Town property, so that to the extent
16 that that is utilized at nights, weekends, and creates
17 additional revenue, we did not put anything into the
18 revenue stream for that.

19 Again, the other thing to keep in mind
20 on it is that both of those -- both the parking revenue
21 and the library lease in its entirety continue beyond
22 the term of the bond, so that that's going to be
23 revenue that continues to come to the Town such that --
24 so that we believe over the term of the bond you won't
25 have to put Town money into it, and that's the way the

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1 plan was laid out, but we do have some other additional
2 pieces that we have not made any projection on.

3 MR. VERRENGIA: Thank you. Just to
4 follow that question up, if for whatever reason our
5 projections weren't correct and we did fall short,
6 would that come from the general fund? Or would it
7 come from some other type of funding or source?

8 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair,
9 Mr. Verrengia, if you are thinking about the parking
10 revenue falling short, it will come from the underlying
11 taxes. Again, if you think of it in three layers, the
12 underlying tax 2.8, the next tax 1.7 and the parking
13 revenue is roughly net of 2 million, if the 2 million,
14 if we don't net the 2 million, say it comes in at 1.5,
15 and oops, we are a half a million dollars short, we
16 would either go to the reserve that we just talked
17 about building up over several years, that 4 million
18 dollar reserve, or if it's early on in the project when
19 for some reason that we don't hit that 2 million
20 dollars say in year five or four or six, we would look
21 to the underlying 2.8, but we wouldn't look to the
22 existing, if you kind of -- we won't drill through
23 those three layers. In other words, we won't go into
24 our current property tax revenue, if that's your
25 question.

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1 MR. VERRENGIA: Thank you. Just one
2 last question, Madam Chair, through you, I was reading
3 in the Master Agreement, and there is a, what I would
4 call, a minor restriction with respect to delaying the

5 project in order to get some sort of bond or grant, and
6 I can't find it for the life of me in this book, but my
7 question, and what made me think, the question was:
8 Did we ever look at the potential of getting grants to
9 offset the cost and particularly these parking garages?

10 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, we did talk,
11 and Ron can elaborate, if he would like, and if you
12 would like, we did talk with certain state agencies
13 very early in the project. To my knowledge, there were
14 no grants that you can get from federal sources to help
15 build parking garages. There used to be something
16 called urban development action grants many, many years
17 ago. Those have since been phased out by Department of
18 Housing and Urban Development. We are a recipient city
19 of something called Community Development Block Grants,
20 which is a little bit different, but those block grants
21 are used, at least by West Hartford for the last 20
22 years that I'm aware of, 19, 20 years that I'm aware
23 of, primarily looking to help seniors and those in
24 particular need as well as repairing homes. That's how
25 we spend a bulk of that money. I don't believe you

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1 could use though funds to help build a parking garage.
2 I think I will leave it there. If there is some way,
3 even if we could use those funds, they would be so de
4 minus they wouldn't really have any direct influence.

5 MR. VERRENGIA: Okay. Thank you.

6 MS. MECK: Thank you. Mr. Slifka.

7 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you, Ms. Meck. I
8 think everyone will be glad to hear that
9 Mr. Verrengia's questions erased a good number of the
10 ones I had down, so thank you, Mr. Verrengia.

11 First to follow up on one I think Mr.
12 Verrengia just asked about on the covenants regarding
13 other funding, I think it's Article 3, Section 3.4 of
14 the Master Agreement. There is, in the traffic plan,
15 we talk about making some improvements to 84, I think
16 there is a proposal for widening that Park Road exit by
17 one lane. Am I right in assuming that this covenant
18 does not preclude us from receiving some sort of state
19 aid for those types of improvements should it become
20 available or federal aid for that matter since it's on
21 an interstate highway?

22 MR. VAN WINKLE: Through you, Madam
23 Chair, Ron Van Winkle. First of all, that cost is not
24 ours, that's the developers. The way the State Traffic
25 Commission works is that you submit your development to

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1 them, and they will identify changes that you need to
2 make to the state highway, federal highway system. One
3 of those in this proposal is that they widen that I 84.
4 The Town is not responsible for that expenditure. None
5 of our dollars, none of our funding is going toward
6 that. The developer would do that. It would not be
7 the practice of the state to invest in our community to
8 invest state money into traffic improvements that would

9 give advantage to a development. They do that in
10 distressed communities like our cities around the
11 state, but West Hartford would not be eligible for
12 this.

13 But again, under this system, the State
14 Traffic Commission assigns improvements to the
15 developer so that before he gets his final certificate
16 from the State Traffic Commission and say you did what
17 you were supposed to do, it's okay, he has to make
18 those improvements. So we wouldn't be in the play at
19 all.

20 MR. ALAIR: Madam Chair, if I can
21 follow-up because a couple of different people have
22 asked questions about this provision and Councilor
23 Slifka found it before I did, I give you credit for
24 that, the provision Article 3, Section 3.4, it's the
25 same provision, I believe, Mr. Verrengia was referring

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1 to.

2 The genesis of that provision is that
3 there are certain state programs and perhaps some
4 federal programs that pass through the state, which I
5 know it will come as something of a shock to you, but
6 occasionally they take a while to process applications.
7 Some of them are substantial periods of time. This
8 project has been designed, and you've heard a very
9 aggressive construction schedule, roughly two years, 26
10 months, I think, from start to finish, and the

11 developer expressed a great deal of concern about the
12 possibility that we could say, oh, our piece of this is
13 dependent on us getting state funding which drags for
14 two years. An altogether real possibility, I think a
15 couple of nights ago we were talking about, perhaps not
16 in this hearing, it was elsewhere, we were talking
17 about something that's on the works but not to be
18 funded by the state till 2007, that's something that
19 the Town is working on.

20 So there is a very real possibility of
21 delays when you deal with state grants, and the
22 condition or the clause in the Master Agreement that
23 you referred to only prohibits us from seeking funding
24 which would materially delay the project or otherwise
25 impair the developer's ability to pursue the project

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1 according to the contract.

2 If we can find sources of funding, we
3 are very good at finding sources of funding if they are
4 out there, that won't delay the project, that won't
5 impair the developer's ability to proceed, there is
6 nothing in the Master Agreement that prevents us from
7 doing that.

8 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you. In Article 5,
9 Section 5.2, it states "Notwithstanding the foregoing,
10 the Town shall, to the extent required by environmental
11 law, be responsible for any costs associated with
12 addressing the environmental conditions on other than

13 the other property," and it goes on.

14 Do we have a cost estimate for that?

15 And if so, has it already been reflected in some part
16 of your presentation to this point?

17 MR. ALAIR: We don't have a cost
18 estimate for that because we simply don't believe there
19 is such a thing. What you are talking about here, just
20 to give you some context to the question, we are
21 referring to parcel A, which is the Board of Ed
22 building, and the Town -- the Town sale of the Board of
23 Ed building to the developer is subject to a condition
24 which says that if there is any contamination on that
25 site, and again we have some anecdotal evidence,

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1 Mr. Henry spoke about it the other night, of possibly
2 some leakage from an old tank, but the testing that was
3 done indicated that it was localized.

4 If that leakage has extended off of the
5 Board of Ed property onto what is called the other
6 property in the Master Agreement, which is all of the
7 other property that the developer is acquiring, they
8 are indemnifying us from any obligation to remediate
9 that. If it is extending onto our own property,
10 remember that the topography here is generally down
11 from the Board of Ed down towards the brook, there
12 would be no obligation on our part. It would have to
13 extend beyond that, and there is absolutely no
14 indication in any report of anything like that. The

15 language is in there because as lawyers we always cover
16 everything with belt and suspenders, but if indeed
17 there was some migration beyond that property to be
18 remediated, it's our exposure because we would have
19 caused it by our actions on that site. If it's caused
20 by their development of the site, it's on them.

21 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you. Moving down a
22 bit, in Section 5.4, that section details various
23 payments the Town has to make on the Town closing date,
24 which I think have been discussed to this point. My
25 question is, and this may get the award for the most

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1 boring question in the entire proceeding, but there is
2 sections A, B, C and D and every one of these says --
3 I'm sorry, B, C and D all say that the costs described
4 therein shall not exceed, and then it states the
5 amount. In Section A, it just says not to exceed. Is
6 there a reason for that?

7 MR. ALAIR: Not one that I can think of.
8 Essentially they say the same thing. "Shall not
9 exceed" and "not to exceed" I would read as the same
10 way. I think something that perhaps I should explain
11 as just a general point of reference is the document
12 that you have in front of you was developed over a very
13 long time, and as changes were made to the document,
14 things get added here, things get plugged in there, a
15 minor revision gets made. Certainly a great deal of
16 effort was spent to try to make all of the language

17 line up so that every paragraph and subparagraph lines
18 up. It doesn't always happen. You may end up with
19 slight variations in language which are substantively
20 meaningless, but cause people to wonder is there some
21 significance there. In this case I don't think there
22 is any significance at all.

23 MR. SLIFKA: Understood. I think most
24 of my remaining questions, if not all, would probably
25 be directed to Mr. Francis, and I may make reference

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1 from time to time to the public financing plan binder
2 that you gave us the other night. I know the pages
3 aren't numbered, but I tried to number them for
4 clarity's sake. On the second page, the heading is
5 "Present Value of Assets," that left-hand column, where
6 we are detailing what the Town's assets are, the value
7 of the land, and I think it's the land in which
8 Building C and D will be built, if I'm not mistaken, is
9 10.8 million dollars. Is that right?

10 MR. FRANCIS: Through you, Madam Chair,
11 that's correct. That's based on appraised value of
12 that property.

13 MR. SLIFKA: Could you give a little
14 detail to the appraisal? You know, when was it
15 performed? Did it factor in, you know, perhaps the
16 increase in property value that may have already
17 occurred as a result of this transaction just getting
18 off the ground?

19 MR. FRANCIS: I'm going to refer that
20 answer to Mr. Alair.

21 MR. ALAIR: Through you, Madam Chair,
22 the Town had an appraisal performed originally as of
23 September 1, 2003. At that time, the project was far
24 enough along that we had a fairly good handle on what
25 property was being exchanged, and we were able to give

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1 an appraiser a reasonable idea of what the assignment
2 was. We hired an appraiser we have used over the years
3 on a number of projects from tax appeals to purchases
4 and sales of other real estate, a gentleman named
5 Arnold Grant, who is an MAI, Master of Appraisal
6 Institute. Mr. Grant provided us with a value estimate
7 of 10.5 million dollars as of September 1, 2003.

8 Subsequent to that, as the project
9 fleshed out and the applications were actually filed,
10 Mr. Grant provided us with an update, which I thought I
11 had with me, but apparently has slipped out of my book.
12 Within actually the last few weeks, I can't remember
13 the exact date. Between his first appraisal and his
14 follow-up appraisal, the areas of the parcels which are
15 the subject of the transaction have changed slightly.
16 Some have gotten bigger, some have gotten littler.
17 There have been some market fluctuations that he took
18 into account, but the bottom line is he adjusted his
19 appraisal by 300,000 dollars upwards to come to the
20 10.8 million dollar figure. Some of you may have along

21 the way heard the figure of 10.5 bandied about and
22 that's the discrepancy between 10.5 and 10.8 is the
23 September 1, '03 value and the more recent update.

24 MR. SLIFKA: So the 10.8 is the most
25 current figure?

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1 MR. ALAIR: Yes, and it's within the
2 last month.

3 MR. SLIFKA: Moving down the two lines,
4 new garages and land and environmental cleanup, as I
5 understand it, please correct me if I'm wrong, we are
6 essentially purchasing or financing the 21.9 million
7 dollar cost of that; is that right?

8 MR. FRANCIS: Through you, Madam Chair,
9 that's correct.

10 MR. SLIFKA: Now the next line is for
11 environmental cleanup, and as I understand it, with
12 most -- when there is a transaction or sale involving
13 an environmentally contaminated property, generally
14 there is an appraisal at an as is value and then a
15 deduction of some sort is made for the environmental
16 clean-up cost. I think that's simplifying the process
17 a bit, but I believe it's a fair assessment. Is that
18 21.9 -- I'm sorry, let me rephrase it. The appraisal
19 is not at as is value, it is at highest and best use, I
20 think, and it assumes a cleanup and then the deduct is
21 made for the cleanup.

22 So my question is, is the 21.9 the

23 highest and best use value and then we are subtracting
24 it by the environmental cleanup cost below or has that
25 already been factored into the 21.9 figure?

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1 MR. FRANCIS: The 21.9 is really the
2 cost of us purchasing the garages and the land
3 underneath the North Garage. The million 490 that's
4 below that is the value that was attached to the cost
5 of cleaning up the north -- the land under the North
6 Garage.

7 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you. Moving down to
8 the library pad lease, I assume because we use the word
9 "lease" there that it reflects that we are retaining
10 ownership of that pad throughout, for eternity; right?

11 MR. FRANCIS: That's correct.

12 MR. SLIFKA: I think you mentioned that
13 the Town is going to receive 6 percent of gross
14 revenues out of whatever lessee ends up there.

15 MR. FRANCIS: Of the gross revenues
16 starting at a million, I believe it's a million 3.

17 MR. SLIFKA: How did we arrive at that
18 figure and what gives us the right to do that, since
19 that seems like something new to us here in Town?

20 MR. VAN WINKLE: Madam Chair, Ron Van
21 Winkle, it's not an uncommon thing. This is a land
22 lease, we are leasing the land to them. You can do a
23 straight land lease for a fixed base, but if you are
24 leasing the land, and the person that is occupying the

25 facility there is highly successful, it is nice to get

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1 a return out of their success, and so what we did here,
2 which is what we did at Rockledge Restaurant, we have a
3 base rent, and then we get a percentage of the
4 Rockledge Restaurant sales over a certain number, and
5 that's what's going on here.

6 MR. SLIFKA: I stand corrected, I guess
7 it's not new.

8 MR. VAN WINKLE: This number is on the
9 high end of what you would expect to receive for a land
10 lease.

11 MR. SLIFKA: The lease of the Board of
12 Ed building is 100 years in the agreement. How do we
13 arrive at the figure 100? Why is it not 50? I know a
14 lot of people have expressed concern about retaining
15 some form of control over that, and I would like to
16 know how we get to that figure.

17 MR. ALAIR: No magic. We picked a
18 number. It's 100 years. The fundamental principle
19 here is the developer is acquiring property at what is
20 in essence, frankly an above-market cost, at least
21 arguably. Certainly it is a fair market cost, and to
22 give us the right to reacquire that property at some
23 point in the future for a dollar, the land for a
24 dollar, the developer has a reasonable expectation of
25 owning it for a long enough period of time to recoup

1 their investment. Certainly you are looking at a
2 long-term period of time before such a right of reentry
3 or a right to repurchase, rather, would come into play.
4 100 years is not an uncommon period of time, but is
5 there a magic to the number? No.

6 MR. SLIFKA: Is there an explanation as
7 to what -- I'm assuming there is some logic behind 100
8 and that there would be an effect on the financing
9 model if you went to, say, 50 or some other number we'd
10 pick.

11 MR. VAN WINKLE: If I could clarify, I
12 think there is some magic in that old Town hat, that
13 magic in that number. First of all, what we did was
14 sell the property, so they are obtaining title to the
15 property. We are not land leasing it to them. If we
16 land lease it, like we do the pad, then at the end of
17 the lease, the 50-year lease, we get the building and
18 the land back.

19 If we -- in this case, we are selling
20 the property and at the end of this lease, this 100
21 year sale, we get to buy, we get the property back, the
22 land back for a dollar, and we have to buy the
23 building, the value of the building at that moment in
24 time.

25 The decision to sell the property was

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1 made because it was the best financial decision for the
2 Town. A lease would have not been a good financial
3 decision for us. We get the property back at 100, and
4 it was the best decision to sell financially. The 100
5 year number is a common number used in the industry
6 simply because the investors here are putting a lot of
7 money into that building and must sort of get their
8 returns over a long period of time. For us to take
9 that building back in 50 years would have changed the
10 way they get financing, would have changed the
11 structure of the deal somewhat dramatically, so there
12 is some magic into it. I don't know if the investor, I
13 see David Hidalgo over there, their financial chief
14 might want to comment on that, too.

15 MR. HIDALGO: Members of the Council and
16 members of the TPZ, yes, Ron is correct. We are
17 purchasing the land, and in fact by Jim's own
18 calculations, we are paying 20 million dollars for the
19 land. It's been appraised at 10 million 8. So to
20 emphasize Ron's point, you are getting both an
21 above-market price for the purchase of the land.
22 That's the -- that's calculated as the present value of
23 the entire SSD payment that we are making, which is 20
24 million dollars or 34 million dollars over the 20-year
25 period, and in addition, the Town has the opportunity

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1 to repurchase the land for a dollar.
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2 To shorten the time frame, to shorten it
3 to 50 years would have made it difficult and more
4 costly to finance and perhaps made the deal in fact
5 impossible to put together because you would have had
6 to rise, increase your cost or your returns to capital
7 in order to amortize the cost of the improvements over
8 the shorter period of time.

9 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you. On the Town
10 Hall renovation issue, we've projected a cost of some 7
11 million dollars, and there has been some discussion
12 about whether all that would be used. I think it's our
13 assumption, the two bodies here, that the Town is first
14 going to explore every possibility to move the Board of
15 Ed over to here without making an addition and to
16 minimize those costs, and there is a potential for a
17 surplus then for that 7 million dollars.

18 My question is: If we project the
19 possibility of a surplus, you know, I guess what you
20 mean not using it at all or only using some portion of
21 it, do we plan to bond that money anyway or will that
22 come off our 48 million dollar figure, and we will
23 borrow less?

24 MR. FRANCIS: Through you, Madam Chair,
25 no, we are still going to continue to bond the 48.8

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1 million. That would not have an impact on that bond
2 sale.

3 MR. SLIFKA: Can you just explain why we
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4 would bond it anyway?

5 MR. FRANCIS: If the total -- well,
6 whether you have an addition or renovations, I'm sorry,
7 I should clarify, if the total of the renovations to
8 Town Hall was less than 7 million, then we would still
9 bond that. It may not be at that 7 million dollar
10 mark. So if it was 5 million dollars, let's say, then
11 the bond would be reduced by 2 million dollars.

12 MR. SLIFKA: To 46 or so?

13 MR. FRANCIS: Yes.

14 MR. SLIFKA: Okay.

15 MR. SLIFKA: The TDD precondition in the
16 Master Agreement, it calls for a bond cap of 48 million
17 dollars. What happens in the case of cost overruns? I
18 know that this is meant to say that the Town is
19 protected, but obviously the project has to get done,
20 and somebody has to incur that cost, and I know you've
21 touched on that a bit, but could you put a period on
22 the end of that sentence for me?

23 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, I'm going to
24 give you the very simple answer, Pat may want to be far
25 more elaborate. The simple answer is our costs are

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1 capped at that 48 million dollar number. If there are
2 additional overruns it's the investors, Blue Back
3 Square investors who will absorb those overruns. And
4 if I can just go on to tell you that was such a
5 critical essential point with us that there -- I don't

6 think there is much more that I need to do than to tell
7 you that that's clearly understood by both parties.

8 MR. SLIFKA: Another precondition states
9 that there are no pending lawsuits. Is there further
10 definition of that? Is it simply that there are no
11 cases in litigation regarding the project, or is there
12 room there where, you know, if a case has reached a
13 certain point, it looks like it may be disposed of? I
14 don't know, I'm trying to think of a hypothetical, but
15 is that an absolute I guess is my question. If there
16 is a suit by someone against this project, does that
17 stop the project from going forward?

18 MR. ALAIR: I would refer you to, if you
19 want to read the actual language, Section 2.1 L, small
20 I. Page 26 of the Master Agreement, and I'll read it.
21 This is the precondition. "There is no action, suit or
22 proceeding affecting the developer that would
23 materially adversely affect its financial condition or
24 its ability to perform its obligations hereunder."

25 The shorthand "no pending lawsuits"

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1 covers actually a couple of different topics. When we
2 talked about the zoning approvals being final, any
3 zoning appeals had been completed, that's one category
4 of lawsuits, that's actually dealt with elsewhere. But
5 the any lawsuits language that you saw in Jim's
6 presentation refers to this, and it's only lawsuits
7 which would affect the financial condition or ability

8 to perform of the developer. We wanted to make certain
9 that if the developer had any kind of litigation
10 pending regarding its ability to perform, that we were
11 not obligated to close on the property.

12 Certainly any parties to any contract
13 may choose to waive a requirement of that contract. If
14 there was some sort of litigation affecting the
15 developer which was within the scope of this provision,
16 the parties could agree that that was not material or
17 that there was a resolution of that imminent, and that
18 we would move forward by agreement and waive that
19 provision but would not be obligated to, the Town would
20 not be obligated to go forward with the closing.

21 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you. On the bonding
22 in general, I know there has been some discussion that
23 this bonding is, at least as perceived by the rating
24 agencies, is almost off budget in the sense that the
25 way that the financing is designed, it's not meant to

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1 come out of the general obligation of the Town, it's
2 not meant to be paid for by tax revenue, property tax
3 revenue, apart from an emergency situation, but if this
4 were to be adopted, does this 48 million become part of
5 our capital improvement budget that we pass every year
6 at the Council?

7 MR. FRANCIS: Yes, it would be. We
8 would certainly have it in the capital budget. We
9 would designate it as a separate project however and

10 denote that it was revenue also.

11 I might add further clarification that
12 for this project and its revenues and expenses, we will
13 be setting it up or would be setting it up, if it goes
14 forward, as an enterprise fund in the -- for the Town,
15 so that in referring back to an earlier question about
16 whether property taxes would be used, and that sort of
17 question or fact is a potential. On an enterprise
18 fund, we could actually run it with a deficit and it's
19 a cash flow issue. So that if that were ever the case,
20 it really amounts to a loan from the general fund that
21 gets paid back at a later date. And we would have it
22 set up in that manner, but we would indicate that in
23 the capital budget, and it wouldn't impact the way our
24 capital improvement plan is now stated and set forward.
25 So it wouldn't impact any existing projects or projects

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1 that are in the plan now.

2 MR. SLIFKA: In following up on that,
3 and what I have down is the 19th page of your booklet,
4 there is a chart, a graph, "ratio of annual debt
5 service to general fund operating expenditures with
6 Blue Back Square," and you are trying to, I think,
7 project out what percentage of our expenses will be
8 dedicated to debt service throughout, at least through
9 2013, and I know that for some period of time starting
10 in 2008, these numbers are slightly higher than the
11 numbers that we've had the budget at for sometime.

12 Do these numbers anticipate no change in
13 the other levels of borrowing by the Town? Do they
14 assume that we are flat and the CIP is progressing at
15 its currently expressed rate, or is there room in here
16 to factor in an additional project or two that may need
17 to come along at some point, such as the third middle
18 school that popped up recently?

19 MR. FRANCIS: The chart that you have in
20 front of you assumed that we would continue with the
21 way the capital improvement plan is currently laid out.
22 I would say back to you on that, that even with this,
23 we would have flexibility in that plan to have the
24 unusual or unexpected project added to our capital
25 improvement plan, just as we do now.

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1 We would be presenting that plan to you
2 just as we would to the rating agencies, both with
3 these indicators, with and without this bonding in it,
4 and certainly without it, we would have a lot of
5 flexibility in the plan.

6 MR. SLIFKA: So your opinion is we are
7 not handcuffed by this?

8 MR. FRANCIS: I don't believe you'd be
9 handcuffed at all, no.

10 MR. SLIFKA: The first two years of
11 bonding on the project can be paid for by bonding
12 anticipation notes, and that's because we won't have
13 any revenue coming in yet, according to the financing

14 model, correct?

15 MR. FRANCIS: That's correct.

16 MR. SLIFKA: Are those then paid for out
17 of the general fund? I know the first year we are
18 paying interest only --

19 MR. FRANCIS: They would be paid from
20 the general obligation bond once we did it. We would
21 roll those costs over, both the principal and interest,
22 until we bonded the general obligation bond.

23 MR. SLIFKA: I have a question about the
24 assumptions on both the -- the interest rates for both
25 the bands and the general obligation funds that come

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1 thereafter. I know you said, I think it's 4.5 percent
2 assumed and it floats to 5 basis points for the general
3 obligation bonds, and I think the band is somewhere in
4 the 2s.

5 MR. FRANCIS: That's correct.

6 MR. SLIFKA: How much flexibility is
7 there with that? You've got a bonding cap at 48
8 million; we've got interest rates with, you know, some
9 flexibility built in, but, you know, let's say interest
10 rates are rising right now, let's say they go up to 6
11 or 7 over the life of this project, if we are
12 borrowing, again how much room is there? Would we
13 still be able to get the job done under that situation?

14 MR. FRANCIS: We've tried to build in
15 some flexibility to that in addition to the half a

16 percentage point that's built into the plan now. If we
17 sold right now, we would probably get about a 4.0,
18 maybe a 4.1 rate. But what we've said is, again, that
19 that's going to depend on the timing of when we sell
20 it, because we are looking at now a couple of years
21 out. We would look at perhaps having some hedging
22 products that we would do to reduce the cost of that.
23 We would look at adding some refunding opportunities so
24 that you might incur a higher cost earlier, but be able
25 to refund later to a lower cost.

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1 Again, we would have -- we would build
2 up that 4 million dollar reserve and in addition, we
3 believe that our revenue estimates are conservative, so
4 to the extent that they are and we accrue more revenue,
5 we would be able to handle a larger debt.

6 MR. SLIFKA: Moving to the property tax
7 assumptions, your charts say that we estimate annual
8 revenue property taxes about 2.85 million. First
9 question, is that property tax revenue just from the
10 Blue Back Square project itself, or is that inclusive
11 of projected property tax increases from the residual
12 increases that may occur in the surrounding
13 neighborhood as a result of this project being built?

14 MR. FRANCIS: That's only this project.
15 We do not take into consideration any of the residual.

16 MR. SLIFKA: But there could be a
17 residual?

18 MR. FRANCIS: Absolutely.

19 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, if I could,
20 Mr. Slifka, just to tell you that the mill rate
21 assumption too was lowered to 32 -- 31, and as you
22 know, the mill rate currently is 42, but our
23 assumptions were predicated upon a much lower mill rate
24 of 31. So the revenue generated out of 31 gives us
25 that 2.85 million dollar number.

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1 MR. SLIFKA: I hope we can get there. I
2 think you said in response to the earlier questioning
3 that, and in your previous testimony, that the
4 worst-case scenario for this financing model is that
5 the revenue no longer cuts -- the revenue no longer
6 covers the debt service, and thus to pay for the
7 finance, you have to cut into the property tax revenue
8 that's coming in; is that correct?

9 MR. FRANCIS: That would be the worst
10 case, yes.

11 MR. SLIFKA: Using that assumption, how
12 does the projected property tax revenue, just from the
13 project, the 2.8 million project figure, compare with
14 estimated inflation increases? We've factored in the
15 net. We know that costs are going to rise in Town and
16 this 2.85 is there, but how much will have been eaten
17 up simply by the facts of life over time?

18 MR. FRANCIS: The 2.8 number that's used
19 is a present value number based on 20 years of tax

20 payments, and then put into the annual stream today, so
21 we estimated that already based on 4-and-a-half percent
22 discount factor.

23 MR. SLIFKA: A quick question on the
24 parking. It's not in the parking, as we discussed it
25 before, but more on the financing, who controls the

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1 rate schedule? Is that us? That's the discussion we
2 had earlier, but it's kind of in flux, and we can
3 change it, depending on needs.

4 MR. FRANCIS: Yes. That's one of the
5 public policy issues that we said was the criteria for
6 why we would want to own the garages. The Council
7 would control the rate structure and the hours of
8 operation.

9 MR. SLIFKA: I have a question about tax
10 arbitrage. Given that the garages are proposed to be
11 financed by municipal bonds, have we taken measures to
12 ensure that there is a bond Council opinion letter that
13 includes a full discussion of any potential IRS tax
14 arbitrage issues so there is no question as to whether
15 these remain tax exempt?

16 MR. FRANCIS: Yes, in answer to your
17 question, we would have bond Council's opinion before
18 we issue these bonds, but in addition there is a
19 provision in the Master Agreement that says the
20 developer will not take any action that would affect
21 our tax exempt status of our bonds. I don't know the

22 exact reference number to that, but that is in the
23 Master Agreement.

24 As you know, the arbitrage rules are
25 fairly complex, but we do look at that seriously

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1 whenever we issue bonds. We have both restriction
2 requirements and rebate requirements, and that would
3 impact both the original proceeds, the investment
4 proceeds, any replacement proceeds, and any transfer of
5 proceeds that came out of this project. There are
6 rules for each of those that we would go through and
7 examine, so that we would make sure that we wouldn't be
8 in any violation of those rules. We are used to doing
9 that because we do that with every bond that we issue,
10 and we do that on an annual basis, so that's not new to
11 us. We --

12 MS. MECK: Mr. Francis, excuse me, I
13 need to interrupt you for one second. We need to take
14 our TV time-out to change tapes here. I was waiting
15 for a moment to do it, but the answer was a little more
16 involved. We will take about a one-minute break just
17 to change tapes, and we will get right back to this
18 line of questioning.

19 (Pause.)

20 MS. MECK: Okay, we are -- we have a
21 tape and we are back. Mr. Francis, if you can continue
22 that answer, and I apologize for the interruption.

23 MR. FRANCIS: Madam Chair, I'm sure

24 everyone probably enjoyed the interruption from that
25 answer, but I would go on to say that one of the major

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1 fundamentals of that is -- one of the major issues with
2 arbitration or arbitrage is the spend-down formulas,
3 and in this case, we are not going to be issuing the GO
4 bond until the end of the construction period and most
5 of the construction will be done and be paid for
6 immediately, so we are not going to issue the bond and
7 keep the funds and then invest it for a period of time
8 before we spend it. So our biggest guarantee of not
9 running into any problems with arbitrage is the fact
10 that it does have a quick spend-down period.

11 MR. SLIFKA: Thank you Mr. Francis and
12 thanks to for my colleagues for letting me go a bit
13 beyond the limit.

14 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Slifka.
15 Before I say this next comment, I want to thank you for
16 a very comprehensive detailed and much necessary line
17 of questioning, but I will say that I'm going to award
18 you first, second and third place for most boring
19 question.

20 MR. SLIFKA: It's an honor, thank you.

21 MS. MECK: And that's why I prefaced it
22 by much necessary, very detailed, and we are thankful
23 that you did that. We are going to take a few more
24 questions on this piece. We are going to get to the
25 public comment at 8:30, after a short break, but we

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1 will get as many questions in before that time as we
2 can. Mr. Connors.

3 MR. CONNORS: Thank you. Just listening
4 to Mr. Slifka, a question came up, we are going to be
5 exceeding our debt per capita by issuing this bond, and
6 I guess he mentioned a question, does it give us, in
7 doing that, it exceeds the Council's priorities, in
8 terms of how much debt per capita we have. Does that
9 still give us, and this may be answered, but does that
10 still give us room if we have to add more bond money to
11 the plan as we go forward for projects that come up
12 unforeseen today? Or is that just a legislative action
13 we take, it's our prerogative?

14 MR. FRANCIS: Through you, Madam Chair,
15 the debt per capita is a self-imposed policy, so it's
16 not a legislative or regulatory policy, and as I
17 mentioned, while we do go up to about 2500, a little
18 over that when we first issue it, within five years, we
19 are down under our policy schedule.

20 The other thing that I think is worth
21 repeating is that again the average right now of other
22 triple A communities of debt per capita is 3,118, which
23 is above where we even project us being at the highest
24 point by a substantial amount, almost 25 percent, so we
25 believe that we will still have flexibility and even at

1 those levels we will be at the low end, from a
2 comparison standpoint.

3 MR. CONNORS: To follow-up, and the
4 revenue that comes in from the parking garage and the
5 tax helps offset and mitigate that as well?

6 MR. FRANCIS: To the extent it's paid
7 for by revenue, the entire amount would be taken off of
8 those criteria.

9 MR. CONNORS: Thank you.

10 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Connors.
11 Mr. Brennan.

12 MR. BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, I
13 hope not to be awarded fourth place for my questions.
14 Following up for Mr. Feldman on a comment about the
15 special services taxes being guaranteed. I'm curious
16 if you mean that in the sense of a financial guarantee
17 or sort of in a lower case G. Could you elaborate on
18 that?

19 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, it's
20 guaranteed in the sense that it's a property tax, and
21 as such, we are in the superior position, if there are
22 other creditors for any reason, we get paid first.

23 MR. BRENNAN: Thank you, understood.
24 Regarding the general obligation bonds, if I were to
25 purchase these bonds, would I be purchasing triple A

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1 bonds?

2 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, I just better
3 want to tell you better, absolutely, they will be
4 triple A, absolutely right.

5 MR. BRENNAN: Great. And as a purchaser
6 of these GO bonds, would I be looking to the taxes, the
7 special services taxes and the parking revenue or to
8 the Town's assets and ability to repay?

9 MR. FRANCIS: You would be looking at
10 the Town's general assets, not the revenue. They are
11 not revenue bonds. So you are looking at the whole --
12 the obligation of the Town's general assets to repay
13 those.

14 MR. BRENNAN: Is there any reason or was
15 there any consideration given to the possibility of
16 issuing secured bonds?

17 MR. FRANCIS: We looked at several
18 possibilities of other types of bonding for this,
19 including revenue bonds and other types. The primary
20 difficulty with that is that we are going to pay
21 probably 100 to 150 basis points above what we would
22 pay for the GO bond. In addition, there are other
23 regulations, higher reserve levels that are required
24 and not voluntary as we are doing here with those types
25 of issuances.

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1 And when you come down to it, because we

2 are not going through an independent authority, so it's
3 not a parking authority, for instance, or some other
4 type of authority, in the end it still comes down that
5 the Town is going to be responsible for that bond no
6 matter how we issue it.

7 MR. BRENNAN: Thank you. Regarding the
8 flow of funds of the special services tax, and I recall
9 reference before to a contract between the Town and the
10 Special Services District, is there any type of -- I'm
11 curious about the mechanics of collection and where it
12 goes, will those taxes be commingled with the general
13 fund or will they, in the words of Al Gore, be in any
14 form of a lock box?

15 MR. FRANCIS: We will collect in the
16 same way we do a regular property tax through the tax
17 collector and the revenue office. We will issue them
18 semiannually, but we will account for them separately,
19 and that's, as I mentioned previously, that's the
20 purpose of designating this as an enterprise fund. So
21 that the entire, both the revenue and expense stream
22 can be isolated to this project.

23 MR. BRENNAN: I was wondering whether
24 that tied into the enterprise fund. Is that then, as
25 an enterprise, sort of not part of the overall pi, if

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1 you will? If you look at it as a pie chart of the
2 general fund, it would be separate?

3 MR. FRANCIS: That's correct.

4 MR. BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 MS. MECK: Thank you Mr. Brennan.

6 Mrs. Carpenter.

7 MS. CARPENTER: Yes. This is for
8 Mr. Francis, you did an excellent job on your
9 presentation, and I'm referring to the page that says,
10 how do we spend 48 million dollars? I can see that all
11 of the improvements are based upon renovations to the
12 designated Blue Back Square area space. Mr. Slifka did
13 mention that our goal is certainly to have the Town
14 Hall renovations to be under the 7 million dollars.

15 Is there any reason why, because this is
16 a whole Town endeavor, we will all be involved in it,
17 that some of the 48.8 million dollars can't be spent
18 across Town, perhaps in Elmwood, Bishop's Corner? Kind
19 of at the time we have this money, could we use it to
20 really, you know, invest in other projects that have
21 been really concerning to us?

22 MR. FRANCIS: When we issue the bond, we
23 have to designate the use of the bond, and so if these
24 are the uses which we would anticipate having in it, we
25 would have to use them for that purpose.

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1 MS. CARPENTER: Thank you. So there
2 would be no way of doing it?

3 MR. FRANCIS: That would be a no.

4 MS. CARPENTER: The other question is
5 actually for you, Mr. Feldman, it's in reference to

6 your opening statement, and I just need to hear what
7 your answer is going to be. You said that both
8 Mr. Heapes has used the word "risk," you've used the
9 word "risk" throughout the last couple of nights. You
10 said, "we must minimize the risk in doing nothing."

11 Could you explain what that risk would
12 be to our community in doing nothing at this time?

13 MR. FELDMAN: Madam Chair, my comment
14 had to do with, we looked at all the risks and have
15 done, I believe, all that should and could be done to
16 minimize those risks. There is still an element of
17 risk. I don't want to misstate that, but what we
18 couldn't quantify and really tried to determine is how
19 significant and serious the risk would be and what
20 steps we would have to take to mitigate that risk if no
21 action is taken. In other words, if this investment is
22 rejected, and the do nothing action is basically the
23 one that everybody selects, I can't tell you with any
24 certainty what that risk of doing nothing really
25 entails, and further, I can't determine how we would

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1 minimize that risk of essentially doing nothing,
2 allowing the 3-and-a-half plus acres that now comprises
3 the former Grody, Chevrolet, American Legion site, how
4 we minimize any risk of allowing that property to sit
5 fallow or underdeveloped.

6 MS. CARPENTER: Thank you.

7 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mrs. Carpenter.

8 At this point, we may have some follow-up financial
9 questions. We are going to reserve some time, maybe a
10 half an hour before our next public hearing, but we do
11 want to get to public comment. So with that, we are
12 going to break for about ten minutes. When we return,
13 we will move to the public hearing portion.

14 For those of you here who would like to
15 testify, a reminder, the sign-up sheet is in the corner
16 to my right.

17 (Recess taken at 8:26 to 8:49 p.m.)

18 MS. MECK: I would like to reconvene
19 this public hearing. As we move to the public comment
20 portion of this public hearing, for those of you who
21 were not in attendance at the beginning of this
22 hearing, just a quick reiteration of the rules. I do
23 have a sign-in sheet for those of you who wish to speak
24 but have not yet signed up. You can do so at the table
25 to my right. I will be calling two or three names at

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1 the same time, the first person can come, approach the
2 podium, please state your name and address for the
3 record, and for our court reporter if you could spell
4 your last name, that would be very helpful.

5 At that point you will have four minutes
6 to make your comment, you will get a reminder about
7 three minutes and a friendly ding at four, so if you
8 can just wrap up your comment so that everybody can
9 have an opportunity to speak. To the best of our

10 ability, we would like to get as many people in tonight
11 as possible. If you are representing a group or
12 association, your time limit will be seven minutes and
13 we will give you a warning at six minutes.

14 Before we get to our first speaker , I
15 would like to do a few internal housekeeping items here
16 on our agenda. First, I would like to thank the
17 developer and the Town staff for the thoughtful and
18 thorough presentations over the last couple of nights
19 and thank the commissioners and councilors for their
20 thoughtful questions. You may have noticed, for those
21 of you watching, that in certain items or instances, a
22 commissioner or councilor took the lead in a line of
23 questioning, and I want to thank everybody for making
24 that work and for streamlining the process as much as
25 possible.

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1 We will have an opportunity, just for
2 the general public, so that you know, to hear from the
3 developer again at the end of the public comment
4 portion, which we expect will last a couple of nights.
5 At that point we as councilors and commissioners will
6 be able to ask additional questions, and I'm sure that
7 we will do so.

8 With that we are going to do two motions
9 that we need just for purposes of housekeeping and I'll
10 turn it over to Mr. Harris for the first one.

11 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you, Madam Chair,

12 under our Council rules during public hearings, the
13 speakers are limited to taxpayers of West Hartford and
14 residents of West Hartford, but as we typically do on
15 an individual basis, here we are going to do up-front
16 for the entire proceeding, we are going to suspend the
17 rules to allow anybody, no matter where they live,
18 where they pay taxes or otherwise, to be able to speak.
19 So if I could entertain a motion to suspend the rules
20 for purposes of changing that rule.

21 A VOICE: Why? Why? We don't want
22 outsiders.

23 MS. MECK: At this point, I'm going to
24 have to ask public to curtail their questions, we can't
25 answer them off the record when they come from the

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1 audience. This is an internal housekeeping matter. If
2 we have an issue with too many speaking, we will have
3 to reevaluate our rules, we will do that, but that is
4 an item for the Council to consider at this time.

5 Mr. Harris.

6 MAYOR HARRIS: Thank you. We have a
7 motion that's made on the table, do I have a second?

8 A VOICE: Second.

9 MAYOR HARRIS: Motion has been made and
10 seconded. All those in favor.

11 VOICES: Aye.

12 MAYOR HARRIS: Opposed. Motion carries.
13 Thank you.

14 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Harris. We
15 need to do some similar housekeeping for Town Planning
16 and Zoning Commission. As those of you who have come
17 to our hearings know that we ordinarily organize our
18 comments, we ask people who are in favor of the
19 application to come first and people who are against it
20 to come second. We try to keep people in that order.
21 With this large amount of people in the audience and
22 who want to speak, that will probably not work. And it
23 would make those of you who waited here a long time
24 tonight wait even longer, and we don't want that to
25 happen. So I would like a motion to suspend those

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1 rules, so that we can take public comment either for or
2 against in any order.

3 A VOICE: So moved.

4 MS. MECK: Moved, do we have a second?

5 A VOICE: Second.

6 MS. MECK: Moved and second. Any
7 further discussion? All those in favor say aye.

8 VOICES: Aye.

9 MS. MECK: Opposed. Motion carries.

10 With that, I'm going to move to the
11 public comment portion, and I'm going to call the first
12 person to testify, that will be Sandy Fry, the next
13 person will be Matt Warshauer and David Aron. I
14 apologize ahead of time if I'm mispronouncing names,
15 but you can certainly correct me when you come up to

16 the podium. State your name, address and please spell
17 your last name for the record.

18 MS. FRY: Thank you. I have copies of
19 my testimony. Should I just give that -- I made 20
20 copies so that everyone could have a copy.

21 MS. MECK: That would be wonderful, you
22 could actually submit them to the Town Clerk.

23 MS. FRY: Mayor Harris and Council Town
24 Planning and Zoning Chair Tanya Meck and TPZ members,
25 thank you for the opportunity to provide this

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1 testimony. I am Sandy Fry, F-r-y, president of the
2 League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford, and I'm
3 testifying on behalf of the League of Women Voters of
4 Greater Hartford. I live at 74 Westland Avenue.

5 For many years the League has been
6 a supporter of long-range comprehensive planning in
7 order to protect orderly growth in our Town. In 1985,
8 after lengthy study, we adopted a position relative to
9 Town growth and development, and we have reaffirmed
10 that position each year, most recently at our annual
11 meeting in May.

12 Over the past two years, we have held
13 general membership meetings open to the public where
14 Town staff members, and more recently the developer,
15 have shared their visions for this part of Town. In
16 addition, statewide we have positions related to
17 transportation and affordable housing. My testimony

18 will reflect these adopted positions of the League of
19 Women Voters.

20 You may find it of interest know that in
21 1985 when the League first adopted a position regarding
22 Town development, there were a number of concerns
23 similar to concerns in the Town today. First, at that
24 time, there were regular referenda on the budget. In
25 addition, slow growth of the grand list was a major

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1 issue, and there was an increasing reliance on
2 residential property tax, as residential property was
3 increasing in value more rapidly than commercial
4 property.

5 Residents were also concerned about the
6 Town changing in character. Today we see many of the
7 same concerns, and it's clear that in both the 1980s,
8 and now again in 2004, the Town has a large job to
9 balance these various needs. The League has long
10 believed that the properties in the east part of the
11 Center are underutilized from both the physical and
12 economic standpoint and could generate more revenue for
13 the Town.

14 We have reviewed the information
15 presented by the developer and the Town, and we believe
16 that a development like Blue Back Square, in large
17 part, meets the goals that the League has for Town
18 growth and development. First, it preserves the
19 suburban character of the Town while recognizing the

20 optimal use of commercial areas is necessary for
21 economic well-being. Secondly, it gives special
22 attention to traffic safety, adequate parking,
23 provision for open space and buffering. It also
24 provides mixed-use buildings with retail establishments
25 on street level and office space or residential units

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1 above. And finally, it satisfies the development
2 parking needs through a variety of approaches,
3 including better use of surface parking, shared
4 structured parking and below grade parking.

5 In terms of transportation, this project
6 will be helpful in furthering the development of a
7 balanced transportation system in the region. A
8 balanced transportation system is one which is
9 coordinated and multimodal, meaning that the system
10 provides alternatives to the automobile. This project
11 is conveniently located within walking distance of the
12 E route of the Connecticut transit system. This route
13 has the most frequent service of any route in the
14 region, and it will provide convenient public
15 transportation access to the development for both
16 patrons and employees. From the point of view of
17 transit service and transit accessibility, this is the
18 right place for increased development.

19 In addition, the project has been
20 designed to promote easy walking within the Center. We
21 would ask that you also consider bikability in this

22 project by providing for bicycle parking needs in the
23 parking garages and the surface parking facilities.

24 In addition, we ask that in your review
25 of traffic improvements, you make certain that the same

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1 attention to walkability that has been applied within
2 the development is also applied to off-site traffic and
3 intersection improvements.

4 Since West Hartford is already a
5 wonderful place to walk and bicycle, we would like to
6 be certain that residents will be able to walk and bike
7 to Blue Back Square, along with being able to walk
8 within the development. We are concerned that current
9 development plans will not enhance bike safety on
10 Farmington Avenue, Main Street, Park Road, and Trout
11 Brook.

12 We do believe that there is a serious
13 shortcoming with this project, and that is its silence
14 on affordable housing. Concern about affordable
15 housing is surfacing in this community in a powerful
16 way today. It will continue to grow as an issue as
17 rental units are converted to condominiums, as
18 residential property values continue to rise, and as
19 new development tends to be strictly on the high end.

20 This project is located in the ideal
21 spot for affordable multi family units. It has easy
22 access to public transportation, shopping and
23 government facilities. As we consider the character of

24 West Hartford that we care about and that we want to
25 retain, the diversity of population, the diversity of

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1 income levels, the ability of Town and school employees
2 to live in Town are all integral elements of our Town's
3 quality of life.

4 We encourage the incorporation of some
5 affordable housing units in this project. If that is
6 not possible, the League suggests that the Town require
7 the developer to pay into a fund that would be
8 dedicated to providing affordable housing units
9 elsewhere in Town. This is an example of inclusionary
10 zoning, which has been successfully implemented in
11 other municipalities.

12 The property being considered for
13 development presents a tremendous opportunity for the
14 Town. We commend the Town for working with the
15 developer who controls the property to create a project
16 that fulfills many of the goals of the Town's plan of
17 development. We expect that the Town has completed all
18 due diligence required for the property, making sure
19 that the developer can actually carry out this project.
20 We also understand that the Town commission did
21 independent reviews of traffic, urban design and
22 financial projections, and we encourage the Council and
23 TPZ to consider the findings of those independent
24 reviews.

25 The League commends the Town Council and

1 the TPZ for all the many, many hours you've put in.
2 I've had trouble watching it all at home, and it's
3 quite an effort that you've put to the project, and I
4 thank you for the opportunity to share our views.

5 MS. MECK: Thank you very much. Next we
6 will hear from Matt Warshauer followed by David Aron
7 and Henry Steiner, and if those of you who I'm calling,
8 just to sort of queue you up, can come sit in the front
9 row, so you can walk right up to the podium, so we can
10 streamline this process as much as possible, that would
11 be very helpful. Thank you.

12 MR. WARSHAUER: Hello. Thanks for
13 allowing me to speak this evening. My name is Matt
14 Warshauer. I reside at 115 North Main Street.

15 MS. MECK: Mr. Warshauer, could you
16 spell your last name for the record, please,

17 MR. WARSHAUER: Sure.
18 W-a-r-s-h-a-u-e-r. Good to go? All right.

19 I would like to begin by complimenting
20 Mr. Heapes for his presentation. It's clear that the
21 Street-Works organization has spent considerable time
22 on the Blue Back Square proposal. Their designs are
23 impressive, and I have no doubt that should Blue Back
24 Square be built, it will be an imposing and beautiful
25 development with full-size trees and all, yet the

1 question for the Town Council and the residents of West
2 Hartford is not the beauty of Blue Back Square or even
3 its economic success, rather it is whether or not we
4 desire such a development in our Town, for there is
5 little question that it will fundamentally change the
6 atmosphere of this community.

7 I, for one, am opposed to Blue Back
8 Square as it is currently proposed. I believe it to be
9 too big and too dense. I'm sure that many others will
10 be speaking on this point. We have no need for a
11 mammoth Hartford Hospital facility or a gigantic
12 Healthtrax facility. I have nothing against Hartford
13 Hospital at all. All three of my children were born
14 there. I think it's a wonderful facility; I don't want
15 it in my back yard though.

16 The Blue Back Square development as
17 proposed will forever alter what is currently a
18 wonderful Town by making it into a city. The traffic
19 generated will be excessive. Experts can talk about
20 traffic-calming measures all they want, but it doesn't
21 take an engineering degree to realize that a
22 development of this size will mean lots of traffic.
23 There is also of course the questionable decision to
24 transfer sizable portions of Town property.

25 The larger issues in the Blue Back

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1 Square proposal are both the vision and process. Barry
2 Feldman would have us believe that Blue Back Square
3 fits into the master plan of West Hartford. He spoke
4 of the original plans to create West Hartford Center
5 many years ago and noted that today we are happy that
6 the Town's Leaders engaged in this project.

7 He then asserted that in the years to
8 come future generations of West Hartford residents
9 would be happy about Blue Back Square. I wonder,
10 however, if Mr. Feldman bothered to investigate the
11 historical record and see if people were opposed to the
12 original Center development. My guess is that they
13 were not. It was the beginning of the economic
14 centerpiece for this community. This issue of Blue
15 Back Square is far different from years ago when the
16 Center was originally built. Today we have a vibrant,
17 energetic and successful Town Center. It is not a
18 blighted area that needs regrowth. And that is the way
19 that the majority of Street-Works' developments have
20 begun, in areas that need economic regrowth. True,
21 there are no guarantees that West Hartford Center's
22 economic success will always be here, but there is also
23 no guarantee that Blue Back Square will in some way
24 secure economic performance for West Hartford forever.

25 I also learned from Mr. Feldman's

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1 presentation about the background of the Blue Back
2 Square Development, what he had done over the last two

3 years or so to move Blue Back Square forward. This is
4 information that would have been very welcome six
5 months ago when Town residents began asking questions
6 about Blue Back Square. Providing this information
7 through a Town forum may have allayed some concerns and
8 certainly avoided accusations of secrecy and collusion
9 on the parts of the Town Council. This is an aspect of
10 the process that has been a shamble since the start of
11 the Blue Back Square issue. The Town Council believes
12 otherwise, they have simply not done an adequate job of
13 engaging citizens on this issue and four days of public
14 testimony at this time don't cut it.

15 Today we have problems with Blue Back
16 Square in Elmwood, with the pond house and the Town
17 budget, among other things. Does the Town Council
18 somehow believe that these issues are entirely
19 unrelated? At last night's Council meeting Mr. Slifka
20 assured residents that the government was not broken.
21 In looking at these many problematic issues in the
22 abysmal process of the Blue Back Square proposal, can
23 the members of the Town Council not see why some
24 residents believe that the Town government is in fact
25 broken?

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1 MS. MECK: Mr. Warshauer, I have to ask
2 you to wrap up your comments.

3 MR. WARSHAUER: I will wrap them up. My
4 inclination is to believe Mr. Slifka's apparent

5 sincerity and commitment to what is best for West
6 Hartford. With that in mind, I hope that he and his
7 fellow councilors will think beyond an opportunity to
8 bring a few more tax dollars, even though they are
9 needed, and focus instead on the long-term quality of
10 life in West Hartford. In my opinion, that quality of
11 life does not include Blue Back Square as currently
12 proposed. And anybody at home who would like more
13 information about opposing the Blue Back Square
14 project, please call 521-6939 or visit one of two web
15 sites, Save The Center.net or WHRRD.com. Thank you
16 very much.

17 MS. MECK: Thank you. We will next move
18 to David Aron and Mr. Steiner.

19 Excuse me, I certainly don't mind some
20 applause, but I want to make sure that people can hear
21 me as I call them up and we can move on. After
22 Mr. Steiner will be Jane Godfrey.

23 MR. ARON: Thank you, Madam Chair,
24 Mr. Mayor, members of the Council, members of the
25 Zoning Board, Town officials, corporation counsel,

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1 general public. First, I'd like to thank all of the
2 men and women around the world who are helping to
3 preserve the freedom and rights that we have to speak
4 at this Town Council and debate the issues.

5 My name is David Aron, A-r-o-n, and I
6 live at 40 North Quaker Lane, where I've lived all my
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7 life. I grew up in West Hartford, went to the public
8 schools for a time. I used the library and parks and
9 benefit from the police and the fire services while
10 partaking in the prosperity and the opportunity we can
11 be proud to call our own. Many of you and many of the
12 people here have had similar experiences.

13 I come to you tonight as a product of
14 the Town that you are now thinking needs some change,
15 needs to be improved, and I'm here to tell you that you
16 should oppose the Blue Back Square Development as
17 proposed. Now, you might say that I'm too young to
18 really understand what is at stake here, but you are
19 wrong. We are fighting for the very soul of our Town.
20 When we look at our Center now, we see a vibrant
21 Center, as has been pointed out. As a young person, I
22 go there with my friends all the time, and I can tell
23 you firsthand that West Hartford Center is the place to
24 be right now. That's where, you know, even if you go
25 out to somewhere else to see a movie in Hartford or

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1 wherever, you go back to West Hartford Center for
2 coffee, to walk around, to have a good time. There is
3 no blight; there is no crisis; there is nothing to fix.
4 And maybe I'm just too nostalgic or too sentimental,
5 but I think that things are pretty good just the way
6 they are. You see, West Hartford is special because
7 every part of it contributes something to the Town,
8 each acting to balance the other.

9 This development is too much too soon
10 and threatens to disrupt that balance. Imagine a scale
11 perfectly leveled, then chunk down this proposal on one
12 end of the scale, and it will throw the whole thing
13 off. The development proposes retail space. Having an
14 influx of new business, many of which are supposed to
15 be national chains, affect not only businesses in West
16 Hartford Center, but at West Farms Mall. How will they
17 cope with new competition? How many will go out of
18 business? The development proposes office space. How
19 will this affect the property values of offices around
20 Town? The development proposes a theater, but we
21 already have one sitting in Elmwood begging us not to
22 be torn down. Why not revitalize the corner of New
23 Britain and South Quaker and the Elm Theater and turn
24 that into a cultural Center? Won't that provide the
25 revitalization that residents south of Farmington

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1 Avenue have been asking for for so long?
2 And I might add that the Boca Raton
3 development, the movie theater and the book store went
4 under , and I can put you in contact with my friends
5 who live in Boca Raton, and they told me that once that
6 went down, the development had to go down and the Town
7 had to put in money to put in an amphitheater to
8 revitalize the area again. So don't listen to all of
9 the sweet-talking of the developer saying how this is,
10 you know, there is going to be no additional things for

11 the Town to do after this development.

12 MS. MECK: Mr. Aron, I have to ask you
13 to finish your comments.

14 MR. ARON: Okay. What we need is
15 gradual development provided by the free market and not
16 by one firm and the Town Council. But since you have
17 been choosing to do this through the Town government, I
18 hope that you realize that this vote will define your
19 careers and our life sentence. And I can tell you
20 this, that the cranes and construction crews that will
21 be working one year from now will be a constant
22 reminder to West Hartford residents of how you sold us
23 out and why we should vote you out. Thank you.

24 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Aron. Next
25 we will hear from Henry Steiner, Jane Godfrey and Tom

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1 Corrigan representing West Hartford Interfaith Housing
2 Coalition. Mr. Steiner.

3 MR. STEINER: My name is Henry Steiner,
4 and I live at 35 Burr Street. I am and have been a
5 resident, a property owner and a taxpayer of West
6 Hartford for 45 years. My two children were born at
7 Hartford Hospital and attended West Hartford schools.
8 This year I have attended three neighborhood meetings,
9 a meeting by Save the Center at the West Hartford
10 Library and presentation by the developers at the Town
11 Hall Auditorium, all dealing with the impact of Blue
12 Back Square on me and my neighbors.

13 My home, 35 Burr Street, will now be a
14 few hundred feet from ground zero if Blue Back Square
15 is approved. This is not a prospect I expected when I
16 bought my house, nor one which I look forward to as I
17 grow older. I ask the Town Council to vote no to Blue
18 Back Square because I don't want to see an above-ground
19 garage from my front porch. I ask the Town Council to
20 vote no to Blue Back Square because I don't want to see
21 five-story residential buildings from my front porch.

22 I ask the Town Council to vote no to
23 Blue Back Square because I don't want to see a
24 development which so negatively overwhelms the
25 character, beauty and scale of my Town. I ask the Town

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1 Council to vote no to Blue Back Square because I don't
2 want to lose Town land which has always been available
3 for Celebrate West Hartford, patriotic assemblies and
4 other special events. I ask the Town Council to vote
5 no to Blue Back Square because in fairness, they
6 shouldn't vote yes without knowing if the majority of
7 those they represent feel the development should go
8 forward.

9 No Council member ran for office during
10 the last election on a Blue Back Square platform. West
11 Hartford is a wonderful, unique and beautiful Town to
12 live in. I would respectfully ask my nine elected
13 representatives to keep it that way.

14 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Steiner.
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15 Ms. Godfrey followed by Tom Corrigan and Maria Roja.

16 MS. GODFREY: I'm sorry.

17 MS. MECK: Mrs. Godfrey, I was just
18 queuing the people up who were going to testify behind
19 you.

20 MS. GODFREY: Hello. I'm Jane Godfrey,
21 G-o-d-f-r-e-y, I live at 60 Bainbridge Road in West
22 Hartford, Connecticut. I love West Hartford, the Town
23 Hall green with concerts and carnivals, the tree line
24 streets and friendly inviting shops and especially the
25 library, which I frequent once a week at least. I

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1 speak for myself, my husband, my disabled -- my son,
2 who is a disabled veteran, my parents and my senior
3 friends, as I am one also, all registered voters in the
4 Town of West Hartford who feel as I, that we need
5 handicapped parking on-site. You know, I have to
6 interrupt myself here to say I wrote a very short
7 thing, and I'll give everybody plenty of time, but I
8 couldn't think that I could ever stand up here and
9 speak ad lib, but I am so passionate about this
10 particular thing, and I see a beautiful Town that's
11 about to make some very serious mistakes. There are
12 some parts of what I heard tonight that are wonderful.
13 There are some things that I heard that I disagree
14 with.

15 So now I'll go on, and I stress on-site
16 parking for all facilities. We must be able to park

17 within walking distance in order to use any public or
18 private building. We cannot walk from a parking
19 garage. We will not use any parking building that does
20 not have parking for handicapped at its door, and I'm
21 referring to my family, my older parents, my
22 handicapped son. Some people don't like to hear the
23 word "handicapped," persons with disabilities. Now,
24 that's about all on that.

25 But in general, I'd like to say also

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1 that the Blue Back Square, which I can hardly say, plan
2 to change the area proposed is not environmentally
3 friendly, and I'm sure that other people are going to
4 speak about this, but you all know what I mean about
5 taking land away that you can never replace.

6 Wouldn't it be best to rebuild the
7 currently vacant areas of the Williams Ford and Crowley
8 Chevrolet lots to meet the ever increasing needs of
9 seniors? We need housing and perhaps a small grocery
10 or deli. Please keep the open space in front of Town
11 Hall as it is for parking and events we can never take
12 back once it's gone.

13 Please, Council, consider the needs of
14 the residents, not the needs of the developers. We
15 deserve to have a beautiful Town without congested
16 streets and more taxes. We are not in favor of Blue
17 Back Square and I speak for all of the people that I
18 mentioned before, family and friends.

19 MS. MECK: Thank you, Ms. Godfrey.
20 Mr. Corrigan, representing the West Hartford Interfaith
21 Housing Coalition, followed by Maria Roja and Angelo
22 Faenza. Mr. Corrigan.

23 MR. CORRIGAN: Good evening. My name is
24 Tom Corrigan, C-o-r-r-i-g-a-n. I live at 65 Cassandra
25 Boulevard in West Hartford. A few years ago I was

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1 privileged to be an assistant secretary of the state
2 for Connecticut and part of Secretary Rappaport's
3 mission then and part of Secretary Bacewicz's mission
4 now has been to reinvigorate the democracy, the state
5 of democracy in the state of Connecticut. I think this
6 process which you Council members and members of the
7 Planning and Zoning Commission and Town staff have
8 undertaken is an excellent example of our democracy and
9 action, and I want to congratulate you for it.

10 I am here tonight representing the board
11 of the West Hartford Interfaith Housing Coalition, a
12 nonprofit organization here in West Hartford that has
13 developed over 40 owner-occupied affordable housing
14 units in the past several years in our Town with more
15 on the way, and several of the members of our board and
16 staff are here tonight with me. We welcome the
17 opportunities that the Blue Back Development brings to
18 enrich the vitality of the Town of West Hartford. At
19 the same time, we are keenly disappointed that the Town
20 seems to lack a proactive policy on affordable housing

21 and therefore did not work with the developer early in
22 the process to include that component in the housing
23 plans for the development. We urge the Town to do two
24 things: One, work with the developer and with
25 knowledgeable resources, like WIC, the West Hartford

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1 Housing Authority and others, to explore possibilities
2 even at this late date to incorporate some affordable
3 units in the new development.

4 There are numerous state, federal
5 programs and private funding sources that may make it
6 possible to accomplish this goal with no financial
7 hardship for the developer. Work with the League of
8 Women Voters, the West Hartford Housing Authority, West
9 Hartford and others to develop a policy encouraging
10 affordable housing associated with all future
11 developments, considering policies like inclusionary
12 zoning with density bonuses and other incentives for
13 developers and a linkage program that have proved
14 successful in other communities. We join our
15 colleagues in urging the Town Council to appoint a task
16 force immediately to develop proposed policies for
17 increased affordable housing opportunities in West
18 Hartford, and we will be sending you definitions and
19 examples of these policies by mail.

20 Too often we find that people make
21 erroneous assumptions when affordable housing is
22 discussed. We are talking about people who work in the

23 many retail establishments in the Center, the sons and
24 daughters of longtime residents and other hard-working
25 families who are unable to purchase homes in a

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1 high-priced market like West Hartford. Sustaining our
2 economic diversity enriches the fabric of our community
3 life. Young people who grew up here have the chance to
4 start building home ownership without leaving Town.
5 People who work in the retail and dining facilities can
6 live in Town, making it easier for employers to find
7 and retain workers. Families who work hard and long to
8 invest in building equity get the chance to start home
9 ownership along with everyone else. People with
10 disabilities whose affordability issues include
11 accessible units have the opportunity to join in our
12 community life and elderly persons with limited means
13 find new ways to stay in the community.

14 Let me share our own experiences at WIC.
15 Recently we have renovated and made available for
16 affordable home ownerships several new units throughout
17 the Town. Five of the six families were already living
18 in West Hartford, but these fellow citizens could not
19 afford to buy their own home in the high market rates
20 in Town. Three of these families who are doubling up
21 with relatives while they tried to find a home of their
22 own, and reminding us that affordable housing is linked
23 directly to our Town's economic life, three of our new
24 buyers work in West Hartford.

25 In response to a question from the mail
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1 Last week, the developer indicated that the Town had
2 not pressed for consideration of affordable housing up
3 to now. Our hope is that it is not too late to work
4 together on some creative approaches in the Blue Back
5 Development and we pledge ourselves to work hard with
6 you and others to insure that we do not overlook the
7 crucial need for affordable housing in future
8 developments. Thank you.

9 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Corrigan.
10 Maria Roja or is it Roja.

11 MS. ROJA: Actually it's Roja.

12 MS. MECK: Not even close.

13 MS. ROJA: Not even close. Thank you.

14 My name is Maria Roja, and I live at 34 Argyle Avenue
15 in West Hartford, and I've been a resident and taxpayer
16 here for over 30 years. Let me start by saying that I
17 am not against development of the Raymond Road area, no
18 question something needs to be done in that part of
19 Town, something that is reasonable.

20 The developer has made Blue Back Square
21 sound very good. In fact, almost too good, too good to
22 be true, and I cannot help but wonder what the
23 residents of our Town are not being told. What are the
24 pitfalls, the risks that no one has or is talking
25 about. What about a plan B if Blue Back Square fails

1 because projections turn out to be inaccurate? We are
2 familiar with that story. To my knowledge, no one has
3 done a market study to support these projections and
4 expectations, and in my opinion, they have no basis in
5 fact and are speculative in nature.

6 Further, it seems that Blue Back Square
7 would be competing with the same market share of empty
8 nesters, young professionals, upscale shops and
9 shoppers, et cetera, that Hartford's Adriean's Landing
10 is trying to attract. Earlier issues and concern
11 remain just that, the size and density of the project,
12 the volume and impact of traffic, the sale of public
13 land for private development are just a few of those
14 issues.

15 With regard to size and density ,
16 Mr. Heapes himself firmly indicated his unwillingness
17 or inability to scale back on the size and density
18 because in order for Blue Back Square to be profitable,
19 it needed to be as large and dense as it is. Blue Back
20 Square is a mammoth development that will change the
21 landscape and character of our quaint New England Town
22 forever, a change that many residents do not want.

23 Finally, having a brand new state of the
24 art library, as well as the other public benefits are
25 very attractive to a Town that has held off making

1 these improvements on its own. The Town benefits have
2 been emphasized by the developer and our own Town
3 Manager as positive outcomes of a joint partnership
4 between the Town and Blue Back Square Development, LLC.
5 However, all that glitters is not gold , and I believe
6 we must not let those benefits cloud sound judgment.
7 Therefore, I firmly believe that Blue Back Square is
8 not in the best interest of West Hartford, and strongly
9 encourage the Town Council not to approve this
10 development and the Town Zoning Commission deny any
11 Special Use Permit and other zoning changes related to
12 the Blue Back Square project. Thank you.

13 MS. MECK: Thank you. Our next speaker
14 will be Angelo Faenza followed by Laura Reale-Foley and
15 Shelley Baker. Mr. Faenza.

16 MR. FAENZA: Good evening. My name is
17 Angelo Faenza, and I reside at 893 Farmington Avenue,
18 and that's spelled F-a-e-n-z-a.

19 Good evening, Council and Town Plan and
20 Zoning Commission. I strongly urge the Town Council
21 and TPZ to support the project as proposed. I have
22 reached my decision after careful consideration of both
23 the proposal and the qualifications of the development
24 team. My reasons are many, and I have made this
25 decision from a number of perspectives. I am a

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1 Long-time resident and parent who raised four children
2 in this Town. My children and grandchildren continue
3 to live in West Hartford. I've been the chairman of
4 Celebrate West Hartford for the past 17 years, and
5 1992, I along with a number of other local business
6 owners founded the Park Road Association.

7 I've also been owner of the Prospect
8 Cafe since 1965. I have been president of the Park
9 Road Association for the past 12 years. I am also a
10 property owner and taxpayer.

11 In 1995, I entered into a public-private
12 partnership with the Town of West Hartford to operate
13 the concession at Rockledge Golf Course, by any measure
14 of the partnership has been a success for both the Town
15 and the business. It is with that perspective as a
16 resident and businessman who has had the opportunity to
17 enter into a successful private-public partnership in
18 West Hartford that provided a benefit to the entire
19 community that is particularly important in my reasons
20 for this development.

21 I believe that the Blue Back Square will
22 benefit West Hartford in many ways. Not only will it
23 project and rehabilitate an area in West Hartford
24 Center that has been underutilized for a number of
25 years, but it will provide the mechanism to accomplish

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1 a number of goals that the West Hartford community has
2 sought for many, many years.

3 The proposal provides a unique
4 opportunity for you, the Town Leaders, to control
5 development in the east side of the Center through a
6 coordinated and well-designed plan that will provide
7 you the ability to shape the development of the east
8 side in a manner that provides the greatest benefit to
9 the West Hartford residents. Improvements to the Town
10 library, a solution through outdated Board of Education
11 facility and development of an efficient and
12 well-designed Town campus and a growing grand list have
13 been goals of the Town of West Hartford leadership for
14 many years.

15 In approving this proposal, you will be
16 able to accomplish these goals that have eluded your
17 predecessors. You stand at a moment in time that will
18 not likely occur again for sometime. Accomplishing
19 longstanding goals by marrying the Town's interests
20 with mixed-use commercial development that by any
21 measure will enhance our current Center is a win-win
22 for West Hartford residents, taxpayers and business. I
23 do not believe that this will have an adverse impact on
24 existing Center. In fact, I believe this development
25 offers complementary uses that will ensure the success

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1 that the Center enjoys today will continue for many
2 more years.

3 I have lived and conducted business in
4 this community for a long time. There is one thing

5 that is certain, that is that change will occur, and I
6 can't stress this next paragraph enough. Without a
7 coordinated and well-planned development on the east
8 side, the change that may occur might be out of your
9 control and detrimental to the existing Center and the
10 character of our community. It would not likely
11 involve any of the improvements to the Town buildings
12 that I discussed. I'm almost finished.

13 You'll have the opportunity to
14 control a development and create a mix-used development
15 that builds new residents, creates existing public
16 places, provides a new use, like the health care
17 building and theaters and to help our commercial center
18 be competitive and viable and face future competition.
19 This is smart growth. I urge you to support this.

20 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Faenza.
21 Laura Real e-Foley. Laura Real e-Foley, followed by
22 Shelley Baker and Judith Saunders representing the West
23 Hartford Chamber of Commerce. Again, I'll ask those of
24 you who I'm calling to come to the front so we can move
25 along with our public comments. Okay. We will move

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1 along to Shelley Baker, please.

2 MS. BAKER: Hi, I'm Shelley Baker. I
3 live at 31 Riggs Avenue. And that's spelled B-a-k-e-r.
4 I only have a few short things to say. I've lived here
5 20-and-a-half years, although I am not a home grown
6 West Hartfordite, but I have enjoyed living here. I

7 live about five blocks from the planned redevelopment
8 district and my husband and I embrace it thoroughly,
9 are so excited about it and the quality of it, and the
10 collaboration between the Town and the developer. I
11 feel as though most of the things that you have asked
12 for, he has met you halfway.

13 I also want to say that I have been
14 involved with the Merchant Association for many years
15 and Chamber of Commerce, and the fact that they have
16 embraced this and giving their nod and the Chamber of
17 Commerce and Celebrate West Hartford and the senior job
18 bank, I think speaks well for all of us that are in
19 favor of this. But one thing I'd like to say is I have
20 raised two of my three sons to adulthood in this Town,
21 and one of the things I know that was lacking when I
22 was a young parent was -- or when they were teenagers
23 was enough for them to do. There was never quite
24 enough for them to do, and it caused many concerns on
25 my part, and as we all know that when teenagers are

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1 bored, they can get into a lot of other problems.

2 But one of the things I think that
3 hasn't been brought up that much is that this area of
4 redevelopment will employ our teenagers, our college
5 students when they come home in the summer, our college
6 students when they are on breaks, our seniors who I
7 know, because I've worked at the Chamber of Commerce,
8 I love to work three and four-hour shifts, as well as it

9 will attract young professionals that will not only
10 live here, but will work here, get involved in the
11 community, shop, eat, and be part of it. And I think
12 that having a development like this in our midst, we
13 are not only going to be the envy of Connecticut, but I
14 think we are going to be the envy of all of New England
15 I urge you to vote yes. Thank you.

16 MS. MECK: Thank you, Ms. Baker. Next
17 is Judith Saunders, representing the West Hartford
18 Chamber of Commerce followed by Ann Mahoney and Tim
19 Mahoney.

20 MS. SAUNDERS: My name is Judith
21 Saunders, and I'm the president elect of the West
22 Hartford Chamber, and I'm speaking on their behalf.

23 The West Hartford Chamber of Commerce is
24 pleased to offer its support for the Blue Back Square
25 proposal currently before the Council. The goal of the

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1 West Hartford Chamber of Commerce is to encourage the
2 development of business and enhance the quality of life
3 in our community. We have been living by that concept
4 since 1908. Consistent with our mission, the Board of
5 Directors participated in a comprehensive series of
6 meetings, discussions, and working groups with the
7 developer, Town staff, and neighborhood groups.

8 With this information, together with
9 that contained in the application submitted by BBS
10 Development, LLC, the board held a special meeting to

11 discuss the proposal. After lengthy discussions, the
12 Board of Directors voted unanimously to support Blue
13 Back Square. The chamber extends its appreciation to
14 the Town staff for their time and effort to meet with
15 us to answer members' questions and concerns,
16 clarifying many significant issues, including
17 financing, zoning, traffic and safety.

18 We are most impressed with the process
19 by which this proposal is being reviewed. It is
20 apparent that the Town administration has dedicated
21 itself to ensuring that residents and businesses will
22 be well-informed throughout the review and approval
23 process.

24 As we all know, Blue Back Square is the
25 largest development proposal in a generation, and

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1 represents a significant investment of capital funds by
2 the Town. This private-public partnership is
3 complicated, but responsible effort to expand the
4 success of West Hartford Center eastward from South
5 Main to Raymond Road. The proposed mix of office,
6 retail and residential development will bring new
7 vitality to an already vibrant and commercial
8 residential Center.

9 We are particularly pleased that the
10 Blue Back Square proposal will also allow the Town to
11 address several public goals that have been set over
12 the past 30 to 40 years. A major goal has been the

13 physical integration of the Board of Education and Town
14 Hall facilities. By combining the two, the Town will
15 realize not only short-term administrative savings, but
16 also the long-term goals, better communication and
17 cooperation between both administrations.

18 Another major goal has been the
19 expansion of the Noah Webster Library, which will
20 provide much needed additional space and allow the use
21 for new technology to better serve the Town residents.
22 The chamber strongly supports these efforts and is
23 pleased to see the developer has integrated these
24 important municipal improvements in its development
25 plans.

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1 Blue Back Square promises to become a
2 valuable and integral part of West Hartford bringing
3 new businesses and individuals to Town and enriching
4 our community. We have been pleased to see the BBS
5 Development, LLC is already involving itself in
6 community activities and look forward to working with
7 them in the future.

8 Additionally the Chamber greatly
9 appreciates the efforts made by BBS to provide the
10 infrastructure in its proposal for a bigger Celebrate
11 West Hartford in the years to come. The Chamber also
12 extends its appreciation to BBS Development for
13 extending a great deal of time to educate our members
14 on the many aspects of Blue Back Square. At no time

15 has it refused our requests for information or its
16 attendance at our meetings. Because of its efforts,
17 the chamber was able to thoroughly review and discuss
18 the proposal and make recommendations which ultimately
19 led to our unanimous support for Blue Back Square.

20 We understand and appreciate the scope
21 and magnitude of Blue Back Square and the necessary
22 caution, concerns and risks inherent in such a
23 proposal; however, we suggest that given the safeguards
24 in place, the question should not be: What are the
25 implications of going forward? Rather the question

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1 posed to our members was: What are the implications of
2 not going forward? Clearly the benefits of Blue Back
3 Square greatly outweigh the risk, and we encourage the
4 Council to approve the application.

5 The Chamber recognizes the fluid nature
6 of the approval process. The application may be
7 subject to refinement as the process for public input
8 continues. We have been encouraged by the open nature
9 of the development process and have valued the
10 opportunity to be a part of the discussion to this
11 point. We continue to offer our assistance to both the
12 Town and the developer as the application moves through
13 the process.

14 MS. MECK: Thank you, Ms. Saunders.

15 Next we will hear from Ann Mahoney
16 followed by Tim Mahoney followed by Brian Wholey.

17 MS. MAHONEY: Good evening. My name is
18 Ann Mahoney. I live at 63 Foxcroft Road, and I have
19 been a resident of West Hartford for almost 12 years.
20 I am here tonight to express my support for the
21 development of Blue Back Square. I believe this
22 development will add to the beauty and charm of West
23 Hartford while strengthening its financial viability.
24 We have here a proposal from a private developer which
25 includes the wish list or grand design of the Town

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1 campus as envisioned by Town Leaders throughout more
2 than two decades. Time was spent reviewing over 20
3 years of proposals which Town officials had previously
4 brought to developers seeking private investments.

5 This Blue Back Square plan was designed
6 by incorporating the public needs as seen by Town
7 officials into the private developer's plans, precisely
8 the partnership Town officials pursued unsuccessfully
9 many times before. Information sessions were held
10 throughout several months to involve the public and
11 comments in the process. The design for Blue Back
12 Square is both beautiful and functional. Great
13 attention and detail on the plan assures the blending
14 of the new with the existing, creating a cohesive
15 continuous link between the Town campus and Center.
16 Green spaces, mature trees and safe, well-lit
17 pedestrian pathways can only enhance and complement the
18 existing Town Center.

19 The mixed-use design provides the
20 environment for long-term vibrancy. Many in Town
21 expressed a concern over increased traffic. The
22 developers have studied existing traffic patterns and
23 include in their proposal a plan to address both
24 existing and anticipated traffic problems.

25 I support this cohesive development

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1 project. West Hartford is a wonderful Town with
2 terrific services and excellent schools. The Town's
3 budget needs will continue to increase yearly. I
4 believe development of Blue Back Square will add to our
5 Town's beauty and certainly its financial base. I want
6 to see this area of Raymond Road developed in a way
7 that complements our charming Town campus and Center.
8 I see this as a win-win plan. We get needed Town
9 improvements at the expense of a private developer,
10 while creating beautiful residential and commercial
11 space. We benefit from some of the country's most
12 highly respected consultants working on the
13 architectural plans, traffic concerns, and
14 environmental problems again at the expense of private
15 developers.

16 Our vibrant Town Center is expanded.
17 This area will be developed to complement, not compete,
18 with our established thriving Town Center.
19 Construction will occur on this site. Let's take steps
20 to be certain it is not the type of development we see

21 presently under way in neighboring communities. Please
22 continue to thoughtfully examine this proposed plan for
23 the development of Blue Back Square and thank you for
24 all the time and energy you, the Council and Plan and
25 Zoning Commission have put into the project.

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1 MS. MECK: Thank you.

2 Next we will hear from Tim Mahoney
3 followed by Brian Wholey and Kevin Kinsella. Tim
4 Mahoney.

5 MR. MAHONEY: Tim Mahoney, 63 Foxcroft
6 Road. I hate it when I have to follow Ann, she is such
7 a good speaker, hard to follow. We've attended, Ann
8 and I have attended the hearings for the first three
9 nights and then we followed them at home for the last
10 two sessions, and after listening to the very
11 thoughtful and detailed presentation, we think this is
12 an extraordinary opportunity and we fully support it.
13 I hear a lot of my neighbors tonight and friends
14 talking from their heart, with a lot of passion, with a
15 lot of fear about the unknown of what might happen from
16 the changes that would come from this project. I don't
17 hear them though talking a lot about the details that
18 were excruciatingly laid out before them. Any
19 community, any individual constantly needs to look at
20 opportunities to improve themselves, just as you need
21 to look at opportunities to improve the Town Center.
22 Doing nothing, sheltering what we have today is never

23 the answer. It's not the answer.

24 Our Town Center is involved -- has
25 evolved over a number of years, and continues to

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1 change. It's unrealistic to think that it won't
2 change. We need to look at our strengths and we've
3 seen some of the strengths laid out for us, great
4 sidewalks and trees and wonderful businesses, but we've
5 also seen some of the weaknesses exposed. By
6 addressing those at the end of the day we come out with
7 a much better, a much vibrant and we really save the
8 Center. We come up with a better Town Center. It's a
9 great asset, and we need to work hard to maintain it.

10 We think Blue Back Square is a thorough,
11 thoughtful, logical, detailed proposal. It's been
12 developed by competent and experienced people, both
13 from the public and the private sector. It provides
14 for smart growth, a good balance of mixes, residential,
15 retail, commercial, and entertainment. It also is
16 financially responsible, significant public
17 improvements based on substantial private expense.

18 There is a couple of things I'd just
19 like to point out. I fully endorse what my wife had
20 said before me, but a couple of things. We keep
21 hearing that information that was not available on this
22 project, that people are colluding, people are being
23 secretive, there is a lack of opportunity for inputs.
24 That's not the issue, that has never been the issue,

25 and I implore you not to make it the issue in your

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1 deliberations. There is a lot of detail and fact in
2 front of you, please look at it carefully, that's what
3 we should talk about.

4 Let's talk about traffic for a minute.
5 It is such a logical presentation. If you were here to
6 see it, you'd want to stand up and cheer for it.
7 Raymond Road, I come off of that exit on 84 when I come
8 home all the time, I do exactly what the consultants
9 say. I live to the east, but I go to the west, I go
10 down Raymond Road to avoid that intersection. We've
11 all been through Main Street and Farmington, and we
12 know that there is a lack of order at that
13 intersection. You never know what people are going to
14 do.

15 I have crossed over to the library at
16 least 100 times. It's got to be one of the most
17 dangerous movements next to climbing Mount Everest in
18 the world. Traffic coming from two directions, traffic
19 coming from the park, parking lot, people backing out,
20 and you think that the safety -- your safe movement is
21 that you've reached the intersection where people are
22 making illegal U-turns and then you move on to the
23 library.

24 I'll wrap up. It makes a lot of sense.
25 It optimizes the use of existing public facilities, and

1 it allows this project to go forward. We are not going
2 to do this project because of traffic improvements. We
3 are going to do it because the traffic improvements are
4 an additional benefit for the Town. Thank you very
5 much, and we fully support this project.

6 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Mahoney.
7 Brian Wholey, followed by Kevin Kinsella, followed by
8 Harry Gold.

9 MR. WHOLEY: Good evening. My name is
10 Brian Wholey, and I live at 20 Cliffmore Road here in
11 West Hartford. I've lived in West Hartford for the
12 better part of my 47 years. My parents and sister have
13 lived here continuously for 50 years this month. We
14 have seen a lot come and go in West Hartford, but I
15 don't think there is anything as important that this
16 Council has faced in our time here any more important
17 than Blue Back Square. I come here this evening to
18 speak in favor of Blue Back Square, I'm pleased to do
19 so.

20 I would respond to what the opponents to
21 Blue Back Square have said about the risks connected
22 with the public financial aspects of the project, but
23 really there is nothing to respond to. I've listened
24 to the speakers tonight, I've studied their literature,
25 I've studied their website, and I haven't seen a single

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1 specific and lucid objection to the financial
2 underpinnings of the public-private collaboration that
3 is behind Blue Back Square, not one.

4 I suggest that if the bond meisters at
5 Moody's and other bond rating agencies have no
6 objection to Blue Back Square, if they see no threat to
7 the Town's much coveted triple A bond rating, then
8 nobody here should see any threat either, either real
9 or conjured out of thin air.

10 With the financial aspect out of the way
11 let me talk next about aesthetics. I am staggered,
12 just staggered that Mr. Warshauer and others have
13 evaded the obvious about the site in question. The
14 site in question, to be charitable, is light
15 industrial. It has always been blight, nothing but
16 blight. I don't know about anybody else here, but I've
17 never been inspired to look at Grody Chevrolet and then
18 cast my eyes up to the congregational church. My
19 reflection when I look at that dealership is to look
20 away. West Hartford has always deserved something
21 better than what it's had in the Raymond Road, Isham
22 Road area, always, and it's never had it. Now is the
23 opportunity to have something better, and I can't
24 imagine anything better than Blue Back Square.

25 I read a letter to the Courant sometime

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2 opponent of Blue Back Square, who described the plan as
3 something Stalinist, right out of the old Soviet Union.
4 He obviously didn't see the same plan, the same layout
5 that I and others have seen. I think it's beautiful.
6 I think it will be beautiful, and the eastern gateway
7 of the Center should always have looked this way. Now
8 is our chance. I advise the Council to go ahead and
9 support Blue Back Square as it is presently conceived.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Wholey. Kevin
12 Kinsella, followed by Harry Gold and Richard
13 Monterosso.

14 MR. KINSELLA: Good evening. I'm Kevin
15 Kinsella. I live at 87 Woodrow Street, which is two
16 blocks off the Center, and I'm also vice president of
17 Hartford Hospital, and I'm here tonight to support the
18 Blue Back Square project and glad to hear there is a
19 lot of Hartford Hospital fans.

20 About seven years ago Hartford Hospital
21 did a survey of all of its patients and asked them what
22 they liked about Hartford Hospital and what they didn't
23 like, and the didn't-like side was that the patients
24 did not want to drive into Hartford to receive some of
25 their medical care, not their in-patient care, that

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1 wasn't the issue, but their out-patient care, their
2 ambulatory surgery care. They wanted to see their
3 doctor. They wanted a convenient place to go and they

4 wanted that place in their Town.

5 We embarked on a program of satellite
6 development, the first one we put up was in Windsor on
7 Day Hill Road. It was largely a medical office
8 building. The Town was very welcome, welcomed us.
9 We've been very proud to be there and citizens receive
10 primary care there and also postoperative care. We
11 then put up our second facility in Wethersfield on the
12 Silas Deane Highway. That's a larger facility than the
13 Windsor facility, followed by a facility in Glastonbury
14 on Hebron Avenue. We then went to Avon and we decided
15 to do something a little different, and I know people
16 who work in the Town Manager's office have been out to
17 see our project on Route 10 in Avon, but it's really a
18 remarkable development because what we did was rather
19 than just build a physician office building, we
20 partnered with Healthtrax, which is a health chain, a
21 national health chain located in Glastonbury, and
22 really the average age of people who use that
23 Healthtrax facility is 53, so it's not -- it's a
24 health facility that's trying to attract people who are
25 interested in wellness, people who are getting a

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1 prescription from their physician in many cases for
2 exercise. It has a pool; it has various exercise
3 rooms, and it's certainly open to the public. On the
4 second floor are Hartford Hospital offices. We have a
5 large cardiology program there and a large physical

6 therapy program which utilizes the services of
7 Healthtrax. Based on that model, we looked to find
8 what our last Town on our satellite development radar
9 was going to be, and it was West Hartford.

10 Hartford Hospital is a very large place,
11 and in terms of West Hartford, 500 people who live in
12 West Hartford work at Hartford Hospital, are employed
13 at Hartford Hospital. We have a medical staff of 900
14 and over a third of the physicians at Hartford Hospital
15 live in West Hartford. Last year almost 2000 people in
16 West Hartford went for ambulatory surgery at Hartford
17 Hospital.

18 Based on that, we tried to locate a
19 facility in West Hartford, and the problem that we
20 have, and I say we because I live in the Town, it's not
21 like going to Day Hill Road in Windsor. There isn't
22 farmland that you can kind of plow over and build
23 surface parking and buildings on with kind of no
24 problem. There is a lack of land in West Hartford. We
25 looked for quite a while because we wanted to combine

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1 the Healthtrax facility with the Hartford Hospital
2 facility.

3 We learned about this particular
4 project; we did due diligence, and we have to do that
5 because we are a not-for-profit organization, and went
6 to White Plains. We visited with Streetscape, our
7 Healthtrax colleagues did the same. We also spent an

8 enormous amount of time with the Town staff, and we are
9 appreciative of their help. And we came up with this
10 design. We think this is going to be an asset to the
11 Town. You are going to be able to walk to your
12 doctor's visit. A family member will be able to get
13 routine ambulatory surgery there. We will have a
14 women's program. We will have a cancer service
15 program, and we will have a cardiology program there.
16 We hope we are able to come to West Hartford, and we
17 hope we are welcomed the way we were welcomed in the
18 other communities. Thank you.

19 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Kinsella. Next
20 we will hear from Harry Gold, followed by Richard
21 Monterosso, followed by Mark Quiigley.

22 MR. GOLD: Good evening. My name is
23 Harry Gold. I live at 5 Bishop Road, and I recently
24 moved to Town. I chose West Hartford because of the
25 character of the Town and Town Center in particular.

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1 To me that character meant an active, vibrant place to
2 live. My experience has been, well, there is a lot of
3 great places to eat and have coffee, so the notion of
4 changing things so that we can get rid of an eyesore of
5 an empty or underutilized lot, add some new buildings
6 and a movie theater and places to shop, especially for
7 food, are all necessary additions to Town. I believe
8 that Blue Back Square is a great next step in the
9 evolution of our Town. Thanks.

10 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Gold. Richard
11 Monterosso. After that we will hear from Mark Qui gley
12 and Nancy Metcal f.

13 MR. MONTEROSSO: Good evening. My name
14 is Richard Monterosso, M-o-n-t-e-r-o-s-s-o. I live at
15 178 Westland Avenue, and I've lived in West Hartford
16 for a total of 15 years at various times to the east,
17 to the north and now to the west of the Center, all
18 wi thi n wal ki ng di stance.

19 I wish first to thank the citizens who
20 volunteer for the Council and the Planning and Zoning
21 Commi ttee and the developer and their staff that have
22 put so much work into this proposal .

23 I am here to endorse the proposal
24 as presented. Blue Back Square is a beauti ful and wise
25 development to increase the access to commercial ,

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1 heal th care and cul tural resources whi ch i nclude
2 si gni fi cant i mprovements to the li brary. As we know,
3 the Blue Back Square is consistent wi th the long-term
4 plan for the central busi ness di strict. Thi s
5 represents an appropriate mi x-used devel opment. It
6 does not encroach upon currently desi gnated resi dential
7 areas. Given the recent referendum on the Town budget,
8 people shoul d be very i mpressed wi th thi s devel opment
9 proposal to help shi ft some of the tax burden from the
10 home owners to the busi ness communi ty and work out a
11 better balance i n that regard.

12 I also am here to support the increased
13 traffic safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers
14 in the area and would encourage the reviewers to also
15 look at the aspects of affordable housing that were
16 raised by speakers earlier this evening.

17 Keep the development the way it is, keep
18 it focused on the growing needs of this community, and
19 I think we will find that, we will all find that it is
20 an important part of West Hartford's developing
21 heritage. Thank you very much.

22 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Monterosso.
23 Next we will hear from Mark Qui gley, followed by Nancy
24 Metcal f, followed by Dave Gugi no.

25 MR. QUI GLEY: Thank you, Chai rperson

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1 Meck, Mayor Harris, Town Council and the Town Plan and
2 Zoni ng Commi ssi on. My name is Mark Qui gley,
3 Q-u-i -g-l -e-y. I'm at 21 Overbrook Road, about a half
4 mile from the Town Center, and I know the last couple
5 of weeks for you folks have been quite arduous, and I
6 thank you for your time.

7 I'd like to start my remarks by telling
8 you that I'm absolutely against Blue Back Square as the
9 project is proposed. Although I've always been a
10 believer in development and economic growth, this
11 project is full of components that when taken together
12 give me no ability to see this project in a positive
13 light.

14 First I'd like to discuss the bonding
15 for this project. 48 million dollars is an extreme
16 amount of money when in the end the Town is a proud
17 owner of two parking garages. The other dollars from
18 this bonding issuance use on other improvements in my
19 eyes are maintenance, street repair, infrastructure
20 improvements and others, all of which should be
21 conducted at the developer's expense.

22 These items, not long-term investments,
23 in 20 years, roads will need repaving, street lamps
24 will need replacing and curbs and sidewalks will have
25 deteriorated. However you look at it, floating 48

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1 million dollars in debt for a single development
2 project is unacceptable, and as you will see, if that
3 aspect of this project is approved, your citizens will
4 make every effort to get this to a referendum.

5 Continuing along the financial lines,
6 I'd like to express my views on the designation of a
7 Special Services District for the area comprised of
8 Blue Back Square. Let's be clear that this will grant
9 Mr. Heapes and his investors complete control over this
10 area of the Town, creating as the deputy Town Council
11 stated, a mini municipality. I'm dumbfounded at the
12 notion that the Town staff would want to take an area
13 of this size in the heart of their Town and turn it
14 over to an outside developer. Being that repeal rights
15 of this designation are granted only to the property

16 owners within the area, this doesn't seem like a good
17 idea for the Center of our Town.

18 My final thought on finances stem from a
19 comment made by Mr. Francis of the Town when referring
20 to having discussions with Moody's, as you referred to,
21 and Standard & Poors. One statement you made,
22 Mr. Francis, was that you met with each of these
23 organizations, and their members told you that the rate
24 of return on this project was at an acceptable range,
25 albeit on the low side of acceptable. Why would we do

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1 all of these things for a low end return on investment?
2 This Town should be making money hand over fist on this
3 deal just as Mr. Heapes will.

4 Next the notion of selling off this much
5 Town land is equally as amazing to me as the amount of
6 debt the Town will incur. Citizens of West Hartford
7 love this Town for not only the schools and the
8 character, but the few areas of the Town that the Town
9 has to gather.

10 One of the most important areas is the
11 common area between Town Hall and the police
12 department. Taking this area away to put in a parking
13 garage is downright sick. This developer will tell you
14 that no one uses the area, but I beg to differ. I see
15 people walking, walking dogs, playing with their
16 children, having picnics and throwing a ball, just to
17 name a few. I don't think observing the Town use of

18 this area from November to March will give you a great
19 picture of the green's use.

20 Finally, as you've heard, I believe this
21 proposal is fraught with problems including the Town
22 incurring too much debt for a very low return, the sale
23 of Town land in the heart of our Center, the granting
24 of complete control to the developer by the designation
25 of an SSD and building a mall in part of our Town.

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1 Ladies and gentlemen of the Council, be
2 assured that neither I nor my fellow citizens will
3 forget your vote on Blue Back Square as we cast our
4 votes in future elections. I feel it's time for you to
5 make your mark.

6 MS. MECK: Mr. Quigley, I have to ask
7 you to finish.

8 MR. QUIGLEY: Make the right decision in
9 this case, and your Town will thank you for it. Thank
10 you.

11 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Quigley. We
12 are going to hear from Nancy Metcalf and Dave Gugino,
13 after which we will take a five-minute break and with
14 Lascel Webley followed by Harriet Dobin.

15 MS. METCALF: My name is Nancy Metcalf,
16 M-e-t-c-a-l-f, and I live at 80 Woodrow Street. Some
17 of you may have read an article that my husband Steve
18 and I wrote for The Hartford Courant Sunday play
19 section a few weeks back summarizing all the reasons we

20 support Blue Back Square. We were pleased and I think
21 a little surprised by the outpouring of positive
22 feedback to that piece.

23 It is almost impossible to overstate the
24 unique importance of the Center to the continued
25 well-being of West Hartford. Walking over here earlier

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1 today to put my name on the list, it takes about five
2 minutes from my house. I stopped to chat with my
3 next-door neighbor. Her young family is one of many
4 who have moved into our neighborhood in the past few
5 years, and she told me that the ability to walk to the
6 Center is the only reason they are willing to put up
7 with no closet space, no family room, and no master
8 bath, all of which they could have easily and for the
9 same price in one of the outer Farmington Valley
10 suburbs. We felt the same way when we moved to the
11 area as young parents, and we've never regretted our
12 decision.

13 I don't need to remind you that the
14 Center is at a critical juncture if we are to continue
15 to attract newcomers like my wonderful neighbors. The
16 Grody property is going to be developed some way
17 somehow. During these hearings you will probably hear
18 lots of suggestions for what should go there. We heard
19 a wonderful one tonight, senior housing. I've also
20 heard suggestions to put an arts and craft center there
21 or baseball fields. These are lovely ideas, but the

22 fact of the matter is that they are not going to
23 happen. Whatever goes on this site is going to have to
24 enable the developer, whether this one or another one,
25 to earn back an up-front investment of many millions of

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1 dollars to buy it and clean it up.

2 The alternative to Blue Back Square will
3 not be a craft center or a ball field, but a Wal-Mart
4 or a Staples or a Walgreen's or some other dreary big
5 box surrounded by asphalt parking. Such a development
6 would add nothing to the beauty or interest of the
7 Center, and it certainly wouldn't come close to
8 generating the millions in additional annual tax
9 revenues projected by Blue Back Square. The Town has
10 just come through a traumatic budget and revaluation
11 process with more pain to come. The only way to
12 relieve the pressure on homeowners is to grow our
13 commercial base. I'm convinced that Blue Back Square
14 will not only succeed, but succeed well enough to
15 prompt other upgraded land uses in and around the
16 Center.

17 I, as a tax-paying homeowner, am
18 delighted at this process. We like to think of West
19 Hartford as a charming New England Town, but let's not
20 kid ourselves. It's really a fully built-up, older
21 suburb with an aging housing stock that shares a rather
22 long border with one of the nation's poorest cities.
23 Its continued economic and social viability is by no

24 means assured. We can't compete with newer suburbs on
25 things like two-acre lots or big houses with Jacuzzis

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1 and palladium windows, but with an invigorated and
2 large Center, we can offer something absolutely unique
3 in the region. Mixed-use walkable developments are
4 tremendously desirable and tremendously difficult to do
5 right.

6 I don't think West Hartford fully
7 appreciates our great, good fortune in having a
8 proposal arrive on our doorstep from one of a handful
9 of development teams in the country who can do it. We
10 believe Blue Back Square could only make the Center
11 healthier and more attractive than it already is, and
12 that's why we support it. Thank you.

13 MS. MECK: Thank you. Dave Gugino and
14 then we are going to take a five-minute break.

15 MR. GUGINO: Hello. My name is Doug
16 Gugino, G-u-g-i-n-o.

17 MS. MECK: Thank you.

18 MR. GUGINO: I live at 20 Owings Road.
19 I guess I am here tonight, not having put as much time
20 as the staff obviously has or the developer or even the
21 Town Council is embarking upon, but I'm trying to say
22 what questions do I have in your decision-making body
23 that can affect the development at this point in time?
24 Do I believe that it is at the right scale? Do I
25 believe that all the numbers -- and let me just point

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1 out one of them. The SSD tax, I think I heard the
2 developer say that he thought that was the payment
3 stream for the 10 million dollar market value of the
4 land. I thought I heard him say that. So in essence
5 I'm wondering, is that doublecounting that 10 million
6 dollar market value? The value of the improvements we
7 are doing is less by that 10 million dollars for the 48
8 million, so is that SSD tax just money that we are
9 trading from the capital value of the land for a
10 payment stream? So do we have more risk if the parking
11 revenues aren't at the level they are stated in here?

12 So these are the questions that come to
13 my mind. When we look at the development itself, that
14 open space, which is along Trout Brook, which you can
15 see here, and then it looks very nice in that picture
16 there, that kind of leads the development to look less
17 dense. Well, what can we do to make that open space as
18 permanent as we can? So somebody else doesn't want to
19 come in and say, let me develop that, and we go through
20 another round. Do you feel that there is something you
21 can do as a Zoning Commission to do something, zone
22 that. It's Town owned land now, but obviously we are
23 developing Town owned land now if this development goes
24 forward.

25 We have a residual interest in the

1 library retail pad. Why don't we have a residual
2 interest in Building A? Why don't we have a residual
3 interest in Building D? That Master Agreement, I can't
4 imagine the work it took to -- I guess I can imagine
5 it -- to write it, but to read it and digest it.
6 That's yours, all your jobs right now. You can make
7 changes to that, and I am really encouraged by the
8 level of questioning that I did hear. I mean, what
9 happens if the revenues aren't there? Do we go into
10 the Town funds? And some of the other questions. So
11 I'm neither -- I guess I'm for development. This looks
12 like a very nice development. I can't say if I'm for
13 or against it, but I'm just wondering what questions do
14 we have. It's not too late to make changes or
15 improvements, and I guess that's all I have to say.
16 Thank you.

17 MS. MECK: Thank you very much. We will
18 take a five-minute break and reconvene. Thank you.

19 (Recess taken from 10:07 p.m. to 10:19 p.m.)

20 MS. MECK: We are going to reconvene
21 this public hearing. If everyone will take their seats
22 please. The next speaker on our list is Lascel Webley,
23 followed by Harriet Dobin and Linda DiNapoli.

24 MR. WEBLEY: Madam Chair, Mr. Mayor,
25 members of the Council and developer, Ladies and

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1 gentlemen, it's a pleasure for me to hear for the very
2 first time what I hear, and what I see is a very
3 wonderful, tremendous job you've been doing.

4 MS. MECK: Thank you. Mr. Webley, can
5 you please just give me your name and spell it and
6 address for the record.

7 MR. WEBLEY: Yes, sorry. My name is
8 Lascel Webley, from 25 Bainton Road, W-e-b-l-e-y.

9 MS. MECK: Thank you very much.
10 Proceed.

11 MR. WEBLEY: My son has been growing up
12 in West Hartford, he went to Hall High School. I've
13 been living in West Hartford for 18 years. And what I
14 have seen you put together here is a very wonderful
15 thing you have been doing. You created jobs for the
16 city of West Hartford. It gave the city of West
17 Hartford income. Because of the tax burden on the
18 citizens of West Hartford, this will help eliminate a
19 flat tax increase that we are paying today. I don't
20 know if you notice a lot of people have been moving out
21 of West Hartford because of the high taxes, and if we
22 have more taxes come into the city of West Hartford, it
23 will help the senior citizens of West Hartford who
24 cannot work anymore or to earn a big salary. And I
25 think this is a wonderful, tremendous job. You have

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1 none to shame of. Anything you do, there will always

2 be opposition. But may God continue to bless you and
3 give you health and strength, knowledge, wisdom,
4 understanding to press on with the good job that you
5 have been doing. Thank you very much.

6 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Webley.

7 Next is Harriet Dobin followed by Linda
8 DiNapoli and Tracy Fanning. Is Ms. Dobin present?

9 A VOICE: She is not here.

10 MS. MECK: We will move on to Linda
11 DiNapoli. Tracy Fanning.

12 MS. FANNING: Hi, I'm Tracy Fanning. I
13 live at 145 Walbridge Road, and my husband and my
14 three-year-old son and I moved here a little over a
15 year ago. And for me it was a chance to move back to
16 West Hartford because I grew up here, and I went to
17 school here, and my first job ever was at that little
18 coffee sandwich shop that was on LaSalle Road, so I
19 remember what West Hartford Center was years and years
20 ago, and what it's becoming, and for the last 15 years
21 I've lived in the suburbs of Boston and down in
22 Fairfield County and I wanted to live there because I
23 thought that's where all the great shopping was and the
24 great restaurants and the plays and culture, and that
25 was the place to be, and on weekends I would come home

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1 to see my parents and on holidays, and we'd eat dinner
2 in West Hartford Center, and we'd walk around, and we'd
3 go shopping, and every time I'd come home, I'd go, God,

6 just think Blue Back Square is going to make it what
7 everyone wants it to be, and again, for all new
8 families that are coming here that are raising their
9 families here and becoming part of the Town, this is
10 what we came here for, and we are really excited that
11 it's coming. Thank you.

12 MS. MECK: Thank you , Ms. Fanning.
13 Next is John Mele followed by Doris Hornblow and Thomas
14 Harrington. I know I didn't queue you up appropriately
15 so you can take your time coming up to the podium.

16 MR. MELE: Thank you very much. Good
17 evening. My name is John Mele, M-e-l-e , and I live
18 with my wife Pat Dempsey at 11 Rockwell Place. I have
19 been a resident of West Hartford and homeowner for 36
20 years. My wife Pat has deeper roots in West Hartford,
21 as she came here as a child from Ohio and was a product
22 of the West Hartford school system. We raised and
23 educated our children, Pat's four sons and my three
24 daughters in this Town, and as so often the case these
25 day, the next generation of our children are now living

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1 and raising their families here in West Hartford. It's
2 a quite unique and distinctive Town. So for my wife
3 and myself, we can say without reservation that West
4 Hartford has been the ideal place to live, to work, to
5 raise, educate a family, and benefit from the ethnic,
6 cultural and community diversity that the community
7 has.

8 What sets West Hartford apart from other
9 communities? I would think four things: The citizens,
10 wonderful mix, multigenerational, from all social
11 economic quarters. The second thing is elected
12 officials, an endless run in my time here of 38 years
13 of talent and dedication of volunteers. The third,
14 professional and dedicated Town administration. Second
15 to none, the kind of folks you see routinely in
16 corporations. And last, demonstrated vision for growth
17 openness to new ideas. Those things make West Hartford
18 different.

19 With this said, given the scope and the
20 impact of the Blue Back Square proposal, Pat and I
21 invested a lot of time to learn about the details. We
22 visited the model. We read the information that was
23 made available by the developer, the Town's briefing
24 book. We participated in several meetings, open
25 meetings of interested fellow citizens. We watched

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1 these public hearings and then myself, I've attended
2 several of them, and of course, we participated in
3 countless, what-do-you-think conversations with our
4 fellow citizens and neighbors.

5 Considering everything we have come to
6 learn, and there is much to learn, and quite an
7 education, by the way, Pat and I vote yes, and we
8 express our support for this application. We are
9 convinced that this is a creative and a thoughtful

10 growth in our Center, in our Town, and continues the
11 West Hartford growth pattern that we experienced as
12 young people and now as senior citizens. This proposal
13 retains the unique style and the comfort zone that we
14 knew as younger people and as senior citizens.

15 Briefly here is why we are for it. We
16 are favorably impressed by the proposal's positive
17 impact on West Hartford and the quality of life. We
18 are impressed with the creation of a new neighborhood
19 that fits right into the existing Center. We are
20 impressed with the mixed use and the public-private
21 concept, a unique thing that I don't think has been
22 seen in many other communities. We are impressed by
23 the increase in the grand list and the implications of
24 taxes to us as senior citizens. We are impressed with
25 the sound financial plan that the Town has crafted with

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1 the developer. We've been impressed with the
2 evolution, the two-year evolution of the program, not
3 just a last year's program, and we are impressed with
4 the developer, his expression of his ideas, not the
5 sizzle, but the thoughtful reason behind design.

6 MS. MECK: Mr. Mele, I'm going to have
7 to ask you to wrap up, please?

8 MR. MELE: And the last thing is we are
9 impressed by the investment of the developer to learn,
10 respect, appreciate our history and our heritage and be
11 open to changes. So we are for it, and it's a home

12 run.

13 MS. MECK: Thank you very much. Next is
14 Doris Hornblow, followed by Thomas Harrington and Bob
15 Hurvitz. Okay.

16 Thomas Harrington.

17 MR. HARRINGTON: Good evening. I'm
18 Thomas Harrington from 52 Meadowbrook Road in West
19 Hartford.

20 I'd like to thank all of you for giving
21 me the chance to speak to you tonight. I come here
22 with mixed feelings. I am not an anti development
23 person. I'm a person that likes to see us go forward,
24 but I have a few remarks that have to do with process.

25 It is said that procedure is the

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1 lifeblood of democracy, but it's equally true that
2 procedure can be its worst enemy. You might ask,
3 what's the difference? While truly democratic
4 procedures allow the public discussion to get at the
5 core tenets of an issue in question, nondemocratic
6 procedures do their best to safeguard the substantive
7 tenets of the discussion from rigorous and far-ranging
8 analysis of the citizenry.

9 In case someone has been bought into
10 thinking otherwise, Mr. Heapes is a profit-seeking
11 entrepreneur. There is nothing wrong with that. There
12 is nothing -- I wish him well in his endeavors. I
13 bring it up because he is seeking, as part of his

14 desire to earn profits, an important session of our
15 public patrimony in the form of a Main Street address,
16 in the form of our bonding help among many other
17 things. As I see it, that puts him, and I say this
18 with all due respect, in the role of a supplicant
19 vis-a-vis the citizenry in regard to the completion of
20 this deal. And yet strangely it appears that we have
21 been put in the role of supplicants vis-a-vis
22 Mr. Heapes and the seemingly unconditional support
23 within our permanent and nonelected branch of
24 government. Put another way, we are being asked to
25 pose small questions about a project whose major issues

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1 have been settled well beyond the gaze of the public.
2 Lest this all sound an immaterial
3 lesson in civics, let me bring it down-to-earth.
4 Earlier this evening there was a question raised about
5 sinking parking garages underground. Mr. Heapes
6 suggested that the cost of doing so would be
7 prohibitive. Prohibitive in what sense, relative to
8 what? Prohibitive in the sense of cutting into
9 Mr. Heapes' profit margin, the dimensions of which are
10 completely unknown to the public?

11 If we decide that for the health of our
12 civic space sunken garages are anything else, such as
13 affordable housing and other things that have been
14 mentioned tonight, more green space, are what is
15 needed, it seems to be that it should be incumbent on

16 the developer, who serves to make a great deal of money
17 from this deal, that it's in his interest and his need
18 to come up to us and tell us how he could meet that
19 goal.

20 It will be said that such an attitude
21 will scare off perhaps Mr. Heapes and perhaps other
22 investors, translated, and I've heard it all, grow up
23 and accept the unwritten rule that the civic must
24 always take a subservient role to the commercial.
25 However, the last time I checked, developer land in

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1 affluent communities in Connecticut was still a very
2 scarce commodity in the world of commercial real
3 estate.

4 Mr. Feldman and Mr. Van Winkle, I know a
5 lot of work has gone into this from your end, and
6 you've probably developed quite an attachment to the
7 project. It would be unnatural for this not to be the
8 case. But if that takes you, as it seems to have taken
9 you, to a place where you think you know better and
10 where you construct or perhaps more accurately delimit
11 a democratic process to insure the essential
12 inviability of Mr. Heapes' plan, and that will be the
13 case if we have a special development zone, then you
14 will now be dealing a death blow to participatory
15 democracy and civic rigor in a Town that you both love.
16 Thank you.

17 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Harrington.

18 Next speaker will be Bob Hurvitz, followed by Judy Aron
19 and Lynne Miller. Mr. Hurvitz.

20 MR. HURVITZ: Good evening, Council and
21 board, excuse me -- Council and Zoning Board members.
22 My name is Bob Hurvitz. I live at 1579 Boulevard,
23 which is about a block away from here. It's part of
24 the Boulevard, Raymond Road Historic District. I've
25 been there for 18 years.

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1 The Blue Back Square project has many
2 positive aspects that can enhance the quality of life
3 in our Town in addition to adding a long-term positive
4 cash flow to our tax base. However, residents like
5 myself, who live adjacent to the project are faced with
6 absorbing the negative impacts of Blue Back Square.
7 Our Town Center will be transformed from an older
8 suburban Center to a more urban contemporary Center.
9 With this transformation, traffic will increase and a
10 more urban feel will gradually take hold of the
11 neighborhood.

12 As a resident in the Boulevard, Raymond
13 Road Historic District, I like my neighbors have
14 witnessed an increase in traffic accidents on Boulevard
15 and Raymond Road. Accidents have occurred almost
16 monthly at the corners of Boulevard and South Main and
17 Boulevard and Raymond. Cars travel down the Boulevard
18 at excessive speeds endangering residents, particularly
19 when we go in and out of our driveways. The

20 intersection of Boulevard and Raymond Road is
21 particularly dangerous and these accidents that occur
22 there aren't just fender benders. Cars get really
23 destroyed, ambulances come, really quite bad.

24 Taking these issues into consideration,
25 I'm here to request that the Town officials and

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1 developers improve two major shortcomings that I see in
2 this project that have detrimental impact on the
3 adjacent neighborhoods. They deal with traffic and
4 open space, green space, and at times overlay one
5 another. I think that the following suggestions can
6 enhance the appearance and lessen the negative impact
7 of Blue Back Square on the adjacent neighborhoods.

8 Now, for traffic, the intersection of
9 Burr and Raymond Road, which is up here on this map of
10 West Hartford, by narrowing the intersection, by
11 building out the curbs, you can raise the level of the
12 intersection to the height of the curbs. The
13 driveway-type ramp on all sides would allow emergency
14 vehicles to cross the intersection from all directions.
15 The raised section could be stone and lath-enhanced
16 appearance. What this in fact will accomplish, by
17 doing this, it will essentially turn Burr Street and
18 Raymond into cul de sacs. Emergency vehicles could
19 pass by, but then traffic could not run through Burr
20 Street, and it could not run through Raymond Road from
21 Raymond to Boulevard. This would in fact protect these

22 neighborhoods and traffic, as was discussed earlier,
23 the plan was to put it on the Trout Brook and Memorial,
24 so there shouldn't be any negative impact on Blue Back,
25 but there should be an enhancement to the people who

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1 I live on Raymond and on Burr.

2 Also, the intersection of Raymond and
3 south side of Boulevard, which is right down over here,
4 a similar raising could be done and blocking of that
5 area just allowing emergency vehicles to go through,
6 again that can protect that neighborhood that consists
7 of part of Boulevard, Raymond, Meadowbrook and
8 Thompson.

9 MS. MECK: Mr. Hurvitz, if you could
10 wrap up, please.

11 MR. HURVITZ: Okay. The last thing that
12 I have to say is that the lawn area in front of the
13 Town Hall should be extended to Burr Street and kept in
14 line with the Town Hall building. The planned Main
15 Street parking lot entrance should be eliminated. The
16 parking lot entrance could remain where it is in that
17 Burr Street is now blocked. This would result in more
18 green space, and it would allow more suburban flow of
19 the property line when looking at it from South Main
20 towards Town Hall. Thank you.

21 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Hurvitz, and I
22 will add that we received that letter, a copy of the
23 letter that you are talking about for the record.

24 MR. HURVITZ: Yes, you received it, and
25 it's more in detail. This was more abbreviated.

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1 MS. MECK: Yes. Thank you very much.
2 Next we will hear from Judy Aron, Lynne Miller and Tom
3 Carroll.

4 MS. ARON: Good evening. My name is
5 Judy Aron, and I live at 40 North Quaker Lane in West
6 Hartford. I've lived in this Town for over 20 years,
7 and West Hartford has always been a great place to live
8 and raise a family. No doubt everyone in this room
9 feels the same way, this is home. This is why this
10 type of development disturbs me so. I am not opposed
11 to development, but I'm very opposed to development of
12 this kind. I oppose having such a dense project go up
13 in the middle of Town.

14 This picture over here, this is not us.
15 This is someplace in Long Island or down in Stamford.
16 This is Faneuil Hall in Boston, this is urban sprawl,
17 this is not West Hartford. And I'll tell you something
18 that really incenses me, you guys. Ronus Company has
19 this property up for sale already, a listing on their
20 website. They are already selling space on this
21 property that they don't even own. How ethical is
22 that? Maybe that's the way they do business. Maybe
23 that's the way leasing companies do business. But I
24 find it very unethical that they are out there leasing
25 this property. They have property listings out there

1 on the Internet, and it's property they don't even own
2 yet. What arrogance. Even as they sit up there
3 looking down on us like God, and I really have a lot to
4 say about this master plan.

5 Blue Back Square is part of some kind of
6 master plan of development. Excuse me, Mr. Van Winkle,
7 and Mr. Feldman, I've never heard of a master plan
8 before. I've lived in this Town for 20 years. Have
9 you ever come to the Town, have a meeting with anybody
10 to say, you know, have a Town hearing or something?
11 This is what we have planned for West Hartford, what do
12 you think of it? No, you haven't. You've been sitting
13 behind closed doors for the past two years or more
14 making up your own little ideas about what this Town
15 should look like, what you want it to look like. What
16 about the rest of the Town? What do they want it to
17 look like? And very, very simply, you've crafted this
18 budget referendum crisis to make it look like we have a
19 problem in this Town needing money. It's all one and
20 same, all part of your plan to make it look like West
21 Hartford needs this kind of development, that we are in
22 some kind of big crisis. Well, we are not.

23 West Hartford is the place to be. And
24 I'll tell you, I've spoken to many people who don't
25 live in West Hartford, and they've all told me, what

1 are you people planning to do there? You are going to
2 ruin it. It's a beautiful place now. It has wonderful
3 shops. It's everything that it should be. And to put
4 this kind of development here is absolutely wrong.

5 You know, the first thing in the way of
6 you guys is the voter, and I have to say, I don't want
7 you to vote on it. I want us, the Town, to vote on
8 this. This whole plan, the entire kitten caboodle, it
9 affects us all, not just all you people here, and yes,
10 you are elected officials, but we are the people who
11 are going to be living with this, and I want you to
12 make sure that this whole plan goes to a referendum so
13 the whole Town can have a voice on this.

14 MS. MECK: Mrs. Aron, I'm going to have
15 to ask you to --

16 MS. ARON: Thank you very much.

17 MS. MECK: Thank you very much. Next we
18 will hear from Lynne Miller, Tom Carroll and Norm
19 Spector.

20 MS. MILLER: That's a tough act to
21 follow. Lynn Miller, my address is presently 3
22 Centerbrook Court in Avon.

23 Thank you, Madam Chairman, mayor, Town
24 officials for letting me speak. My husband and I have
25 lived in West Hartford for the past 34 years. Recently

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1 we sold our home, and we were very sorry to have to
2 leave the area. I attended this school. My children
3 went to Hall High, the new Hall High. Today my
4 children live in Boston and thanks to the last speaker,
5 they, too, enjoy coming back home and reminiscing with
6 their friends in the Center.

7 Why did I leave? As a realtor, I was
8 able to visit every facility that we had in the greater
9 Hartford area, and my husband I, who have enjoyed a
10 wonderful life here in West Hartford, wanted something
11 comparable. We were looking for something new,
12 something convenient, that we didn't have to get in the
13 car all the time. My husband works, he is your
14 friendly pharmacist at CVS. He likes to be able to
15 walk to work. I'd like to be able to have my real
16 estate office in the Center of Town again, so therefore
17 we feel very strongly about maintaining the Center and
18 bringing the residential into the Center. I have many
19 contemporaries who have pent-up emotions because they
20 want to sell their home. They want to move down in the
21 downtown of West Hartford. This has not been available
22 until now.

23 Thank you, Richard Heapes, and your
24 affiliates for having the stamina and the fortitude to
25 bring to West Hartford what it needs and has been

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1 missing for a very long time. I implore you to vote in
2 favor of this project, so West Hartford can grow and

3 flourish well into the next century and beyond, so we
4 can keep our residents in West Hartford and I can move
5 back. Thank you.

6 MS. MECK: Thank you, Ms. Miller. Tom
7 Carroll, followed by Norm Spector and then Sandra
8 Hydeck. Is Tom Carroll present? We will move on to
9 Norm Spector.

10 MR. SPECTOR: Hello. Norm Spector, 29
11 Miami's Road, West Hartford. Council and Zoning board
12 members, I've heard here that home values are too high
13 in West Hartford. This proposal will help put brakes
14 on this increase. Homes in a well-positioned, quaint
15 Town appreciate significantly more than homes in a Town
16 that have lost its quaint character through
17 installation of large parking garages, multiplexes and
18 denser development. Unfortunately, for West Hartford
19 economics, the tax base added by this development will
20 probably be dwarfed by a lower rate of appreciation for
21 the thousands of West Hartford homes and its lost tax
22 revenues. You would have to quadruple the size of this
23 development to increase the tax base enough to overcome
24 this lost revenue. Thank you.

25 MS. MECK: Thank you, Mr. Spector.

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1 Sandra Hydeck.

2 MS. HYDECK: Good evening. My name is
3 Sandra Hydeck, I reside in Bloomfield, Connecticut. I
4 thank you for allowing me to speak this evening. I do

5 reside in Bloomfield; however, I worship in West
6 Hartford; I shop in West Hartford; I utilize
7 restaurants here, and I am totally in support of this
8 Blue Back Square project.

9 I must disagree with some previous
10 speakers who mentioned that the area on Raymond
11 Boulevard is not blight, but it most certainly is
12 blight when you compare it with the rest of West
13 Hartford, the Center, LaSalle Road, and so forth. So I
14 hope that you will take all of this into consideration
15 when you vote and please let's do something positive
16 for West Hartford. It's a win-win situation. Thank
17 you.

18 MS. MECK: Thank you very much. That
19 concludes the names that I have on my sign-up sheet for
20 this evening. Seeing no other sign-up sheets over
21 there at the table, I will just make a final
22 announcement for tonight. We will reconvene tomorrow
23 evening, which is June 24th, at 6:15. We will reserve
24 the first half an hour for some follow-up questions
25 from commissioners and councilors regarding the finance

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1 piece that we began tonight's discussion with and after
2 that we will move immediately to public comment. We
3 will again provide a sign-up sheet, and we will again,
4 as usual, be accepting written testimony and written
5 comment.

6 And I do have a reminder from our mayor
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7 that you can sign up starting at 5:30, and I believe
8 that you do that in this room.

9 Is there anybody, seeing as we are not
10 at our 11:15 time, before I close the hearing, is there
11 anybody here who did not sign up who wishes the chance
12 to speak this evening? We will give you an opportunity
13 to do so.

14 Okay. Seeing none we will see everybody
15 -- would you like a chance? We may as well get people
16 in tonight if we have the opportunity to do so.

17 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: Sorry for the
18 confusion. My name is Patti Sanko-Lowry. I'm going to
19 speak on behalf of Elmwood Renaissance.

20 I've had a hard time listening to the
21 presentations over this last week, not because the
22 developer is proposing something new for downtown West
23 Hartford, but because the Town administration's
24 presentation fits so seamlessly into this whole
25 presentation. A lot of work went on behind the scenes

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1 over a very long period to put on such a professional,
2 warm, feel-good production. The administration would
3 have you believe that the prospect of a public-private
4 partnership with this developer on this project is the
5 most wonderful idea to hit West Hartford since the
6 ordinance changed to allow outdoor dining in the Center
7 which gave us the ability to enjoy our lattes in full
8 public view. Unfortunately for them, some of us

9 remember that not so long ago the very same type of
10 partnership was pooh-poohed by these very same players
11 as something West Hartford doesn't do. Why the change
12 now?

13 When the Traditional Neighborhood Design
14 Ordinance was adopted in 1998, it was made clear on the
15 record that the only way to spark development,
16 neighborhood development in declining areas was with
17 the aforementioned public-private partnership. When
18 Elmwood asked the Town to kick in 4 million to fix
19 traffic to spark the desired development, we were told
20 no.

21 When Ken Goldberg and Sidell Gold,
22 developers who received approval to build a mixed-use
23 development on the Talcott site, they were being
24 required to add 5 million to their proposal for the
25 Town-required infrastructure enhancements, and the Town

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1 was not willing to help them obtain their financing
2 because they were afraid to jeopardize the bond rating.

3 When the Perakos family, owners of the
4 Elm Theater, begged, in writing, in 2000 for the Town
5 to come to the table to discuss combining
6 public-private land to ameliorate traffic in order to
7 save the theater, the Town didn't even have the
8 courtesy to reply.

9 And now for our Director of Finance to
10 tell us, after meeting with Moody's and Standard and

11 Poors, and I quote him, "And they told me this bond, 50
12 million, will not impact the Town's AAA rating, even if
13 we don't get any revenue to offset the debt service."
14 Elmwood only wanted 4 million, and our rate of return
15 would have been far greater than this 50 million dollar
16 investment, and Iately 2 million to match assigned
17 state traffic, funds for traffic, we were told by the
18 Town administration "We can't incur more debt, we don't
19 want to jeopardize our AAA rating."

20 I guess the relevance of my comments is
21 that I find myself wondering what changed to allow this
22 massive investment of public dollars in what is in
23 essence a private development. Private development.
24 Out of ten plus acres on this proposed parcel, only
25 4.23 acres of it is privately-owned property. The rest

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1 is Town-owned land and buildings. The Town has worked
2 very hard to convince homeowners to sell to entice
3 organizations to relocate and to convince the
4 townspeople that giving up our former Town Hall and
5 green space is a necessary step in obtaining a project
6 that will enhance West Hartford's future. This massive
7 investment in tax dollars, land and assets in a
8 location that has only been vacant for a few years
9 mostly by design overshadows every other part of West
10 Hartford. You are asking for all residents to sponsor
11 this developer, out of all the others who have tried to
12 invest in our neighborhoods, in an area that abuts a

13 thriving commercial Center and contains the very heart
14 of our government, our community. Fine. You are
15 allowed to ask. But what are the neighborhoods to get
16 out of this?

17 Mr. Heapes has been very clear that
18 their Bethesda Row development, the one that is being
19 held up as the most comparable of all his prior works,
20 helped to kill off another neighborhood in that same
21 town. Woodmont Triangle now requires a substantial
22 influx of Bethesda's tax dollars to salvage a ravaged
23 business district. Yes, yes, it's just a bunch of
24 restaurants that had been struggling before, but have
25 you looked at Elmwood lately or Bishop's Corner? They

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1 are about the same approximate distance from Blue Back
2 Square that Woodmont Triangle is from Bethesda Row.
3 All prior discussing here seems to cover the notion
4 that the existing center will benefit from its
5 proximity to the new development.

6 Well, how about the rest of West
7 Hartford? Hartford made some business decisions from
8 the sixties onward that focused public investment and
9 attention on its central business district to the
10 admitted detriment of its neighborhoods. That is, it
11 is admitted now, after the civic center mall is dark,
12 Constitution Plaza comes alive once a year during a
13 festival, when Mayor Perez is announcing pride blocks
14 and investment of tax dollars to bootstrap

15 neighborhood-serving, owner-operated ventures, and when
16 Adriaen's Landing requires 95 percent investment of
17 state dollars to entice development and has had to
18 bludgeon the developer to start the retail
19 construction, retail that is in danger of failing in
20 part because of this proposal. Heck, for awhile
21 Mr. Heapes' organization was sharing the services of
22 the very folks who were responsible for obtaining
23 Adriaen's retail tenants, talk about a small, small
24 world

25 MS. MECK: Ma'am, can you wrap up your

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1 comments, please.

2 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: I won't be able to
3 wrap them up. I've got probably another three minutes,
4 so I guess I'll speak another night.

5 MS. MECK: Normally I would tell you to
6 sign up and come back at the end, but if you've got
7 three minutes, you are our last speaker, as far as I
8 can tell, you can wrap up that way.

9 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: Thank you. Mr. Van
10 Winkle, an often-quoted economist, and our director of
11 community service, has been very complimentary about
12 this proposal. However, just last month, in the
13 Courant, in the article "Giant Step for a Tiny Town,"
14 May 16, when speaking about the new development in
15 Canton on Route 44, he stated, and I quote him, "The
16 success of the estimated 50 million dollar project,

17 which was once golfing greens, is giving rise to a
18 massive 430,000 square foot retail development with
19 three major chain stores and plans for 60 shops and
20 restaurants designed to mimick the wildly popular West
21 Hartford Center will rest squarely on pulling
22 businesses away from competitors." And I quote him,
23 "You eat someone else's lunch in these things."
24 Mr. Van Winkle said, "The development has the affluence
25 of the Farmington Valley on its side." Didn't

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1 Mr. Heapes state that the Farmington Valley, Avon
2 Mountain market is what he is seeking for Blue Back
3 Square?

4 But the shops is opening at a worrisome
5 time, as the state struggles to create jobs that will
6 put money in the pockets of more consumers. And I
7 quote Mr. Van Winkle "In Central Connecticut our
8 economy is not exactly going gangbusters right now."
9 Other towns and cities across the state are beginning
10 to realize that there exists an opportunity rather than
11 a crisis, in their formerly underappreciated and
12 undervalued downtown areas. Instead of accepting any
13 proposal that would generate tax revenue, more and more
14 local governments are adopting a measured, deliberate
15 and public approach to revitalizing the core areas of
16 their communities.

17 I'd like to close with a quote from the
18 New Urban News of October/November 2003, regarding the
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19 Urban Land Institute's two-day placemaking September
20 conference held in Reston, Virginia, which was attended
21 by more than 500 developers and consultants. They
22 stated that the strong turn-out was indicative of the
23 industry interest in building mixed-use projects,
24 mixed-use projects centered on Main Streets or designed
25 in downtown districts. They talked about projects in

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1 urban centers and cores that often arrived complete, a
2 new downtown in a highly-capitalized grand opening.

3 The article states, and I quote, "Yet
4 there is only so much demand for mega million dollar
5 Town Centers in any market, and these projects, because
6 of their size, carry significant risks. The architect
7 who designed the influential Mizner Park in the late
8 1980s acknowledged as much in Weston. I think these
9 things, Town Centers, are going to get smaller," he
10 said, "and that's great, because they have been way too
11 big and developers have tried to do way too much. Town
12 Centers will be phased more, and you will start with a
13 kernel of a place."

14 The architect cited Santana Row in San
15 Jose, which struggled at first, partly due to the
16 economy, and partly due to a huge fire just prior to
17 opening in 2002, but is now stabilizing. As an urban
18 environment Santana Row is spectacular, he said. Yet,
19 he claimed, it was too damn big. You can't do a whole
20 city district at once. The architect quoted was

21 Richard Heapes.

22 As Mr. Heapes and his company,
23 Street-Works -- as Mr. Heapes and his company
24 Street-works are proposing to insert exactly such a
25 whole city district in a village-style Town Center,

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1 perhaps the Town Council should adopt a different view
2 toward development of our irreplaceable asset, West
3 Hartford Center, and declare a moratorium on new
4 development until a more measured, deliberate and
5 public approach to revitalizing our community.

6 I would ask that the Town Council not
7 approve this application as is. I urge the Council to
8 allow the residents of West Hartford an opportunity to
9 vote and decide if the Town's desire to be
10 developer-friendly poses an acceptable risk to the
11 public good. Before changing the landscape of our
12 municipal Center to accommodate a single, albeit
13 significant proposal, let's examine West Hartford's
14 development picture as a whole, and then approve
15 measured, appropriate development. A thorough
16 examination of the big picture needs to be made before
17 approving such a substantial change in the character of
18 our Town. Thank you.

19 MS. MECK: Ms. Sanko-Lowry, can you
20 spell your name for the record. You speak as fast as I
21 do and I didn't get that in before you started, so if
22 you can just spell it in the mic.

23 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: S-a-n-k-o hyphen
24 L-o-w-r-y.

25 MS. MECK: Thank you very much.

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1 MR. DOOLITTLE: I have a question.

2 MS. MECK: Actually we are going to save
3 our questions and ask them at the end.

4 MR. DOOLITTLE: Can I make a comment to
5 you, please?

6 MS. MECK: Yes, you may.

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: I think it would be
8 great if we can get a copy of that article that
9 Ms. Lowry referred to into the record. Thank you.

10 MS. MECK: Perhaps you would like to
11 submit that as part of your testimony.

12 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: I'll bring it in at
13 the next hearing.

14 MS. MECK: That would be fine. Thank
15 you very much.

16 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: Are we only allowed to
17 speak once?

18 MS. MECK: You are, until we get to
19 everybody who signed up to speak.

20 MS. SANKO-LOWRY: And then we can speak
21 again? Thanks.

22 MS. MECK: Correct. My announcement, as
23 follows, is actually for any of you that are watching
24 on TV still at this late hour or who might be

25 contemplating speaking, we do have a certain number of

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1 nights budgeted for public hearings; however, we were
2 very efficient and got through everybody who is here
3 tonight. We will proceed with our public hearing for
4 tomorrow night, but I would encourage anybody who wants
5 to sign up, to please come and do so. We will make
6 this announcement as we go, but at some point, we will
7 cut off those public hearings if we don't have people
8 who are coming out to speak. We are not just going to
9 come in and sit and wait for people to speak. So if
10 you are planning on doing that, please make sure that
11 you come and sign up as soon as possible, and we will
12 keep you informed on that public hearing process.

13 And with that, we will recess until
14 tomorrow night.

15 (Public hearing adjourned at 11:00 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 189 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original stenotype notes taken of the Joint Hearing between West Hartford Town Council and West Hartford Town Plan and Zoning Commission, which was held at West Hartford Town Hall Auditorium, 50 South Main Street, West Hartford, Connecticut, on June 23, 2004.

Sandra V. Semevolos RMR, CRR
LSR # 00074
Certified Court Reporter

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