

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING

**CITY OF NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL & THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT
AGENCY**

OCTOBER 17, 2022

NORWALK, CONNECTICUT

**COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS & VIA
TELECONFERENCE**

**ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE
EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER
PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO
THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**

**The special joint meeting of the Common Council and Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
Commissioners will be a hybrid format and held both in-person and via Zoom on Monday,
October 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers in City Hall.**

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Mayor Rilling called the special joint meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Mr. Igneri called the special joint meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

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Mayor Rilling led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and called for a Moment of Silence to honor Sgt. Dustin Demonte and Ofc. Alex Hamzy of Bristol who were ambushed and murdered this past week.

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Dixon called the Roll:

Council at Large:	Mr. Gregory Burnett Ms. Barbara Smyth	Ms. Nora Niedzielski Eichner
District A:	Ms. Nicol Ayers	Mr. David Heuvelman
District B:	Ms. Diana Revolus	Ms. Darlene Young
District C:	Mr. John Kydes	Ms. Jenn McMurrer
District D:	Ms. Heidi Alterman	Mr. Bryan Meek
District E:	Mr. Thomas Livingston	

At Roll Call there were twelve (12) Common Council members present and three (3) absent (Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Johnson and Ms. Shanahan). A Quorum was present.

Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

Mr. Igneri called the Roll

Mr. John Igneri, Chair
Ms. Kelly Bloom
Ms. Lisa Cooper
Ms. Mary Peniston
Mr. David Westmoreland

Also present were City Clerk, Irene Dixon, Assistant City Clerk, Jordan Schantz and Corporation Counsel, Mario Coppola.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation comments are not verbatim and represent a summarization of statements unless otherwise noted.

Mayor Rilling asked speakers to limit their comments to three minutes and to stick to the items on the agenda.

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Mr. Jason Milligan said that rule following goes both ways and addressed the Common Council rule 22 that encourages public participation. He said it was a shame he was being censored. He explained that he is the largest property owner in the Wall Street area with close to 200 tenants. He commissioned about 100 works of art and has a personal stake in Wall Street.

Mr. Milligan said that Mr. Coppola has been in charge of all legal decisions for the past eight years and his advice put the City in this position. He said it is time to get a fresh set of eyes on PoKo.

Ms. Donna Smirniotopoulos spoke about the lawsuit with Firetree in 2018. Mayor Rilling explained that was not a topic on this evening's agenda. She explained that she was talking about the lawsuits in the City. She said the City spent over a half million dollars fighting that lawsuit, when they could have bought the house instead. Ms. Smirniotopoulos talked about the conflict of interest in choosing Ventura. She said she submitted the information to the Ethics Commission. She said that the Law Department under Mr. Coppola was buried in lawsuits.

Mayor Rilling said he insisted that people stick to the three-minute rule.

Attorney David Rubin began speaking, but there were issues with the audio.

Mr. Meek left the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

The audio was restored at 7:16 p.m.

Attorney Rubin discussed the benefits of mediation and said he did not think he ever had a case where the cost was so disproportionate. He said he has been asking for mediation for years and is pleased that the court entered an order. He said this case is supposed to be tried in March or April, but he did not think that would take place.

Attorney Rubin said the City just lost an appeal to the Olson widow. He urged everyone to take mediation seriously because it is in everyone's best interest.

Ms. Payton Tuner said she has been hearing about how much Mr. Milligan loves Wall Street, but said she does not see that. She said she sees bad uses for the commercial properties. She said she regrets moving to that area because of the empty commercial spaces.

Mr. Marc Allen said that before Mr. Milligan bought the parking lot it was an embarrassment. He cleaned it up and has done a lot in the Wall Street area. There are a lot of new businesses in the Wall Street area that had been empty properties.

Mr. Allen said that Mr. Milligan is the only one buying properties on Wall Street. All he wants is what is best for Wall Street. He said that the mediation on Thursday will be the best way to find a solution.

Mr. Brian Kaspar said it is clear this developer is not interested in a compromise. He said the time to find a middle ground is over. The Wall Street area is in a state of stagnation. This developer got his own way and will not stop until he wins.

Ms. Roslyn Pillar said these arguments hurt and asked to think about the people in Norwalk.

Ms. Kristin Catta said that Mr. Milligan makes a point and you make a point. The street is not fun and she said she does not feel safe on the streets in the Wall Street area.

Ms. Doreen LaGrand said she looks at the Tyvek Temple every day. She said she hoped Wall Street would be beautiful, but nothing has been done for the past 10 years. Once the building went up, there was no place to park. She said no one wants to make a decision and it is disheartening. She said the businesses that are there now will not survive, because of the parking. People are afraid to go downtown.

Ms. LaGrand said it would be better if people got off their high horses.

Ms. Eva Jacobs said it is not safe and her boss offers to walk her to her car at night. Everyone is looking for this to end, because it is not right for the people in the area.

Ethan from the Factory Underground said he brings a lot of notables to the area and they are developing a tech school. It would help if they could address the unfinished building. He said it is amazing what they have been able to do as a business, but the parking lot was in bad shape. He said that Mr. Milligan developed an area that looks nice. He asked why things did not get finished and said the area does not look successful. He asked if there is a resolution to this. He said he would like to see the area finished.

There were no other members of the public who wished to comment, and the public participation portion of the meeting was closed at 7:48 p.m.

IV. COUNCIL PRESIDENT

A. GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS:

II. ACCEPTANCE OF THE CALL

**** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:48 P.M.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. IGNERI MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:48 P.M.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The members of the Common Council and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency went into Executive Session to discuss the following item. The public was excused.

1. DISCUSSION AND UPDATE ON LITIGATION TITLED, CITY OF NORWALK AND CITY OF NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY VS. ILSR OWNERS, LLC, ET AL, DOCKET NO. X08-FST-CV-18-6038249-S WHICH IS CURRENTLY PENDING IN THE STAMFORD-NORWALK JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT STAMFORD. – *EXECUTIVE SESSION*

The members of the Common Council and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency came out of Executive Session at 9:31 p.m.

Mayor Rilling announced that during the Executive Session no motions were made, and no votes were taken.

Mr. Igneri announced that during the Executive Session no motions were made, and no votes were taken.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF
THE COMMON COUNCIL
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. IGNERI MOVED TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF
THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the special joint meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
Irene Dixon, City Clerk

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Special Joint Meeting of the Common Council and the Redevelopment Agency Commissioners

October 17, 2022

6:30 p.m.

Special Meeting Agenda

The special joint meeting of the Common Council and Norwalk Redevelopment Agency Commissioners will be a hybrid format and held both in-person and via Zoom on Monday, October 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers in City Hall.

- I. **ROLL CALL** 12 – Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Shanahan, Ms. Johnson absent, Ms. Young arrived 6:39pm
- II. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE CALL**
- III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** 11
- IV. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

A. GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS:

1. Discussion and update on litigation titled, City of Norwalk and City of Norwalk Redevelopment Agency vs. ILSR Owners, LLC, et al, Docket No. X08-FST-CV-18-6038249-S which is currently pending in the Stamford-Norwalk Judicial District at Stamford. – **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

NO MOTIONS OR VOTES TAKEN

IV. ADJOURNMENT 9:32 pm

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