

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6680

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONVEYANCE OF A PARCEL OF STATE LAND

Title: IN THE TOWN OF WINDSOR TO THE TOWN OF WINDSOR.

Vote Date: 5/19/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 5/14/2021

File No.: 761

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Sponsors of the Bill:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

Reasons for Bill:

To convey a parcel of state land to the town of Windsor for economic and transit-oriented development purposes.

Response from Administration/Agency:

Joseph Giulietti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation:

Town of Windsor plans to sell this parcel for economic development and as such, the State should be paid fair market for all parcels that will be utilized for economic development. In addition, the current language contains a reverter clause that states that if the Town sells or leases the property or uses it for another purpose it will revert to the state. This appears to contradict the purpose of the legislation. If the town develops the site and sells or leases it, it then reverts to the State.

Melissa McCaw, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management:

OPM is opposed to this bill as written. A conveyance for economic development should be for fair market value. We note, also, that it is unclear how this property can be used for economic development when it has a reverter clause that states that it cannot be sold or leased.

Representative Jane Garibay, Connecticut General Assembly:

The parcel of land that is considered in this legislation is currently just a street-side parking lot for a small strip mall. In a downtown that is in so many ways designed for walking and transit use (two local CTTransit bus lines and the train line), it only makes sense that we repurpose this land to suit the residents of Windsor Center and create a more mixed-use development close to the street. This will make our downtown more practical and more aesthetically-pleasing.

Nature and Sources of Support:

Town of Windsor: Peter Souza, Town Manager and Jim Burke, Economic Development Director:

The Town of Windsor is interested in facilitating redevelopment of a shopping plaza at 144 Broad Street into a mixed-use transit-oriented development in accordance with the Windsor Center Transit Oriented Development Plan. However, they are seeking the bill be amended, because by requiring that the town retain ownership of the parcel as per subsection (b)(2), the land cannot be transferred to the developer. As a result, the developer will not be able to incorporate the conveyed parcel in the development site plan to increase residential density, reduced setback and circulation. In addition, the developer's potential to finance the project would be limited because of the inability to mortgage the whole site.

Gregory Vaca, Co-Chair–Economic Enhancement, First Town Downtown:

The land in question was left over from several public works projects over the past century that narrowed the state routes that run through the heart of the Town's center. This project checks all of the boxes for developing the sustainable, walkable environments our village centers need and deserve: creating lively and dynamic urban environments, fomenting Transit Oriented Development, increasing our village residential populations, augmenting our tax base and writing the wrongs of urban renewal.

Nature and Sources of Opposition:

None expressed.

Reported by: Dallas Emerle

Date: 5-19-21