

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

The Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning meets this day at 6:00 o'clock P.M., in the Conference Room, Third Floor, City Hall.

PRESENT: Chairwoman Balbina A. Young, Councilman Joseph Deluca and Councilman David Segal-3.

ABSENT: Vice-Chairman Miguel C. Luna and Councilwoman Carol Romano-2.

ALSO PRESENT: Councilman Terrence M. Hassett, Councilman John J. Igliazzi, Councilman Peter S. Mancini, Councilwoman Josephine DiRuzzo, Michael Lepore, Planning & Development, Mr. Christopher Bizzaco, Deputy Chief of Staff, Anna M. Stetson, Second Deputy City Clerk and Jennifer L. Emidy, Assistant Clerk.

(Subsequently Councilwoman Carol A. Romano joins the meeting)

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT SECTION OF WEST PARK STREET FROM THAT POINT AT BATH STREET TO THAT POINT OF THE DEAD END TO BE RE-NAMED "SELWYN WAY".**

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Councilman Hassett and Councilman Igliazzi have requested that their items be taken out of order. This has had a public hearing and we have it here again for review.

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: Thank you Madam Chair, this stretch of West Park Street is from Bath Street to a dead end. Mr. Selwyn has owned the building since 1965 and he now controls all the property on that street. He has been very active in the community. He is originally from Smith Hill and has been an outstanding citizen there, he is a major property owner there and a very good landlord. I thought it would be fitting to pay some respect to a man who has given so much. He has been politically active, he has been active in the community. He is an older gentlemen now, of course he will not admit that. It makes sense because a

lot of improvement has been made along that street as a result of his purchases of some broken down buildings that we rehabilitated and now have a specialty shop. He has been growing that street and drawing people to locate there. They are not vacant buildings anymore, they are being useful buildings. It is also a closed off section of the city. That is why I thought it would be fitting to rename the street.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Questions from Committee Members?

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: Any comments from the post office?

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: It is a dead end section, right Councilman?

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: Yes it is.

MS. STETSON: I don't have anything that this went out to the post office. It looks like no Responses went to Public Works or to the post office, or the Police Department.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: None received or no request?

MS. STETSON: It doesn't look like anything was even sent out.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: We need to send it out. Why would something get on the agenda without prior....

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: It has been around a while too. Councilman do you mind if we just send it out with due diligence to the Police and get a response. Usually it is the post office.

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: Is there a way the Committee can pass it pending the responses if there are negative responses and continue on.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Sure we can do it that way.

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: With any objections by any departments.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: It is usually the post office the police department doesn't usually respond, it is usually the post office.

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: Right.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: You said it is a dead end anyway.

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: It is the number can stay the same 149.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Okay. We will do a response to the post office.

Any objections to passing this?

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: With the provisionary, I guess it goes back to the Council it has to get to the post office.

COUNCILMAN HASSETT: The objections would be noted.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: The post office is mainly whether or not if they have a problem.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano, it is voted to approve the foregoing Resolution, Contingent upon approval of the Post Office.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE TO BEGIN CONDEMNATION PROCEEDINGS ON ASSESSOR'S PLAT 107, LOT 285 (20 RALPH STREET) TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE.**

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: I would request that the Committee continue indefinitely.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to continue the foregoing Resolution indefinitely.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**AN ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO CHAPTER 1983-4 OF THE ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE APPROVED FEBRUARY 18, 1983 AND ENTITLED: "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE SILVER LAKE REVITALIZATION PROJECT" FOR THE ACQUISITION OF LOT 285 ON PLAT 107, 20 RALPH STREET.**

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: The appropriate attachments put together. I believe it has to go to a public hearing.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: We will set that up.

MR. LEPORE: Madam Chair we recommend, the Planning Department recommends that a public hearing be scheduled.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Okay. Madam Chair just very quickly, this is a house unfortunately about five years ago was a beautiful home, it is a two family. Approximately four and a half years since it has been abandoned, boarded up, every window broken. It has gone through a series of purchase sales and continued on. Now it has become a huge problem with piles of garbage, illegal dumpsters, and a fire hazard. Everything is broken, the doors are gone and now it is one of those mysterious corporations that have a litany of research to find out who or what owns it. Basically the present owners are a mysterious company where no response, you get nothing from any type of response from the company to get to clean it up, fix it up, and put it back on the market or rent it out and it is just deteriorated to such a level that the neighborhood is crying out that we get it condemned. Two things will happen, either this mysterious company will get it up to snuff and if it doesn't the city will own it and we will raze it and make an open green space out of it. I have pictures also.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: You can save all that stuff for the public hearing.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Thank you Madam Chair.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to schedule a public hearing for the foregoing Ordinance.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**AN ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO CHAPTER 1982-16 OF THE ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE APPROVED MARCH 26, 1982 AND ENTITLED, "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE SMITH HILL RENEWAL PROJECT" FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE PROJECT BOUNDARY AND THE ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL PROPERTY.**

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: This is Councilman Hassett's too.

MS. STETSON: Councilman Hassett asks that this matter be continued indefinitely. I should probably go and get him.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: If that is what he asked then that is fine.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano, it is voted to continue the foregoing Ordinance indefinitely.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**AN ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO CHAPTER 2000-6 OF THE ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE APPROVED MARCH 23, 2000, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE WANSKUCK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT" FOR THE ACQUISITION OF LOT 373 ON ASSESSOR'S PLAT 78, 9 HOUGHTON STREET.**

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: We have a letter here that was sent.

Councilwoman do you have a copy of the letter that was faxed. Anna can you make some copies?

MR. LEPORE: Tom is meeting with Mr. Sisto on Thursday. He wants to have this voted out, and then they were going to sit down and talk to Bennie personally.

COUNCILWOMAN ROMANO: I want this out.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: It is up to you, it is your call.

COUNCILWOMAN ROMANO: I want this out, this is long overdue Madam Chair. Sorry. Mr. Lepore would you like to present this because I need the Chairwoman and the Committee to know what is going on with this. This has been long, we had a public hearing on this.

MR. LEPORE: This particular parcel sits in the middle of the former American Tourister site. What Mr. Sisto did was he took this parcel and made a lot out of the entire site to hold up the project that the Councilwoman is trying to work on. To proceed with the project the department with the Councilwoman's permission the city filed and order for condemnation. It has been delayed through

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efforts by Mr. Sisto to put this off and finally we are at the point where we can proceed to condemn the parcel and go ahead. We have several developers in mind for this particular parcel. This is holding everything up that she wants to accomplish here. By doing this, this will speed up the process. If we can negotiate with him to a fair settlement fine, if not we are going to go ahead with the condemnation. This is more or less to speed up the process. He is really slowed everything up for everyone in the area.

CHAIRWOMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: We will enter this letter into the record: "Dear Councilwoman Young, Thank you for extending me an invitation to the meeting regarding the above referenced project which is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, September 30, 2003 at 6:00 o'clock p.m., in the Conference Room, Third Floor, Providence City Hall. I will be out of town and it will be difficult for me to attend this meeting. Given that the sole purpose of this meeting is to discuss the acquisition by the City, of land I own, it would be prudent that all related parties be in attendance. Therefore, I respectfully request that this matter be continued to a latter day as I most certainly wish to be present when the matter is being discussed it would be greatly appreciated if you could confirm the continuation of this matter via fax to (401)274-6276, otherwise I will make arrangements to attend. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Very Truly Yours, Bennie Sisto". It is cc'd to Anna Stetson, Carol Grant, and the Mayor's Office. It looks like he could of made arrangements to attend according to this letter. We will put this in the record anyway.

COUNCILWOMAN ROMANO: This is an on going thing that will continue and continue if we have Mr. Sisto to have his way. I know at the public hearing he went on and on but it is just absolutely non sense. I hope this Committee would pass it out tonight so I can get started on this. As far as a meeting with Mr. Sisto on Thursday, I have no idea about this and I do not want to

be invited to this at this particular time Mr. Lepore. You can relay that to Mr. Palmieri.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: Mr. Palmieri is in North Carolina.

COUNCILWOMAN ROMANO: Excuse me however, this is how I started with Mr. Palmieri so Mr. Palmieri knows my feeling.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: I have a question regarding the term condemnation and what right does the city have, you mentioned development. It is my understanding of condemnation is you can only do it if the land is going to serve a public purpose.

MR. LEPORE: This particular parcel Councilman sits in the middle of the former American Touristor site, which Mr. Sisto formally owned. Mr. Sisto has approximately, and correct me if I am wrong, \$700,000.00 dollars in back taxes on the whole site. What he did was he did not pay the taxes on the former site, but created a small 10,000 sq. ft. lot directly in the center of the parcel and maintained taxes on that to prevent the city, the Redevelopment Agency, the Councilwoman to proceed and develop that site. In the interest of the city and the projects that we have for that area we needed to condemn that. Without that 10,000 sq. ft. parcel dead center of that lot we could not proceed with the development that we had in mind.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: My thought and concern is you can only condemn property for the purpose of public use. Is that correct or incorrect?

MR. LEPORE: Correct.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: How can you condemn this parcel.

MR. LEPORE: It repeated the project that we had for the entire parcel. Approximately twenty acres surrounding it.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Councilman Deluca you are asking what is the purpose.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: I am asking the legality of being able to condemn this parcel and being able to sell it for private development.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Is that what you are doing, or are you creating something like a school?

MR. LEPORE: Absolutely we have several parcels.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: I just want one clarification. On this particular parcel you can condemn it if what is going to be put there or used for is for a public purpose that is fine. If I am hearing you say development that sounds like private development, and condemnation and private development although the state is doing it, I don't think they are going to get away with it.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: I think the developer should developer the area and not private development.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: This parcel will be developed for a public purpose.

MR. LEPORE: Yes.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: That is all I need to know because otherwise it would be unlawful to condemn it.

MR. LEPORE: We are not condemning it for a particular individual. It is done for a redevelopment project, development of the whole area.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: I am not hearing the trigger words. If it is redevelopment for a public purpose we are on safe ground.

MR. LEPORE: It is absolutely.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: Is there any plan on what that public purpose is?

MR. LEPORE: We discussed it as a school site. We discussed this with Mr. Sepe, Councilwoman.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: As a new school. That being the facts being represented I move passage.



On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilman Segal it is voted to approve the foregoing Ordinance.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE CITY COUNCIL TO CAUSE THE TRANSFER OF PROPERTIES LOCATED ON ASSESSOR'S PLAT 10, LOTS 199, 203 AND 213, 19 WHEATON STREET, 143 BENEFIT STREET AND 2 WHEATON STREET, RESPECTIVELY, FROM THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE TO THE PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY.**

MS. STETSON: Councilwoman Williams asked me to have this matter continued indefinitely, she said it needs state legislation.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to continue the foregoing Resolution indefinitely.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE TRANSFER OF ASSESSOR'S PLAT 54, LOTS 52, 107 AND 108 (A/K/A 5-10-14 GALLUP STREET), IN THE AMOUNT OF ONE DOLLAR (\$1.00), TO THE PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND REQUESTING THE CITY COUNCIL ABATE ALL OUTSTANDING TAXES AND ANY TAXES WHICH WILL ACCRUE WHILE IN PRA OWNERSHIP.**

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: It is a very common thing when the PRA finds a developer for these properties. They were given from the city.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to approve the foregoing Resolution.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO CAUSE THE TRANSFER OF ASSESSOR'S PLAT 64, LOT 693 (280 ACADEMY AVENUE), TO THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE.**

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: This is something that has been lingering on for five years. We finally cleared it all up. It is a little park on Chalkstone and

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Academy Avenue. It is already there. We passed it at the last council meeting or the one before it and now we want to transfer it to the Parks Department.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to approve the foregoing Resolution.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE TRAFFIC ENGINEER TO CAUSE THE INSTALLATION OF A MEMORIAL PLAQUE ON POLE # 13 IN FRONT OF 163 WEBSTER AVENUE, IN HONOR OF EDGAR O. ORTEGA, WHO WAS BEATEN TO DEATH OUTSIDE OF THE KEG ROOM IN DOWNTOWN PROVIDENCE.**

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: Thank you Madam Chairwoman. I am requesting this memorial plaque be placed in front of the home where Edgar Ortega lived. The family who is present here, his sister is here, cousin and his favorite neighbor came to visit me. As you know this is a terrible situation, a terrible thing that happened. It is certainly shocking to the whole neighborhood and the family is still in shock. The neighbors are still in shock. It is a thing that no one ever plans on and is very hard to accept. He was a young vibrant twenty-four year old man, who actually was about 300 lbs. To look at him you would think that no one could ever harm him. He could always take care of himself, but he was more like a teddy bear. He was well known through the whole neighborhood. This was his home, and so we are all going through a very bad period and it has been requested that we memorialize him in some way. I thought the best thing for us to do was to place one of the memorial plaques that we place for veterans, and for people who have requested that their loved ones be remembered. That is why I am asking on behalf of the family and the entire neighborhood that we be allowed to place a memorial plaque on the pole which is pole number 13 in front of his home, which is located at the corner of Webster Avenue and Roosevelt Street so we can do a full dedication in his honor and memory and so he will always be remembered

by his family in that small way. I don't know if you want to allow the family to speak.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Certainly.

MS. ORTEGA: I appreciate it because he was really well known in my neighborhood. He was always there for everyone and it is a big shock to me that my older brother is gone now and I didn't even get to say good bye because of someone's mistake or whatever their problem was. On behalf of my family I am sorry that they are not here, they are away right now. They really appreciate it if this could be done. Thank you a lot because it is so hard, he was the only boy and so strong.

MS. RAMOS: He was more like the protective one, nobody ever thought something like was going to happen. He was always there for everybody. It is just unbelievable.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Thank you so much for coming we really share your sorrow. We read about what had happened, I didn't know the people involved. It is important that you are here representing the family. We certainly will honor Councilwoman DiRuzzo's request and your request. Hopefully this will help in your grieving process for losing your brother, and cousin. From what I heard he was a good young man, I heard a lot of good things about him. These days there are so many tragedies out that and you just don't know why things happen. They happen on a regular basis, we are losing a lot of our young people way too soon.

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: Madam Chair person if you wouldn't mind I would like Mr. Evangelist to say something. I am sure you recognize him, he was interviewed on TV and he was the one who really approached me to do this.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: They all can speak.

MR. EVANGELIST: When he passed away I felt that we needed to do something in some manner. I don't know, when you were driving down the neighborhood you would see him on that corner under the telephone pole.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Thank you so much. We are all going to be in tears.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to approve the foregoing Resolution.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: God bless.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE TRAFFIC ENGINEER TO DESIGNATE A PORTION OF BROAD STREET AS THE "JUAN PABLO DUARTE BOULEVARD" BEGINNING NORTH ON CONGRESS AVENUE TO SOUTH ON MILLER AVENUE, BEGINNING NORTH ON MASSIE AVENUE TO SOUTH ON PORTER STREET.**

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Did you hear anything?

MS. STETSON: They never said anything.

COUNCILMAN DELUCA: No responses from the eight appropriate....

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: Did it go to the post office?

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to continue the foregoing Resolution.

CHAIRWOMAN: All in favor.

Motion carries.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT VEAZIE STREET PARK BE NAMED THE "IOLA FRENCH PARK".**

COUNCILMAN MANCINI: Thank you Madam Chair. Iola French is an elderly woman. I have been waiting so long I hope she is still around.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: How do I know the name?

COUNCILMAN MANCINI: She is every where. She is very involved in the Woonasquatucket neighborhood. If I want to know anything I call Iola up. The

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park is near her house and I am spending about \$40,000.00 dollars in bond money to renovate it. We had a meeting about a month ago and we decided. It is a small park behind the school, just the neighborhood people know about it. We were trying to think of someone to name it after and Iola is the perfect person. Once we do the renovations, probably in Spring it will be finished I would like to dedicate it here. Carol knows Iola very well, she is at my meetings, her meetings anything...

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: I know her name.

COUNCILWOMAN ROMANO: She is very active.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: That is wonderful. I am really big on doing this in parks and stuff. It is nice to do it when they are still alive.

On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to approve the foregoing Resolution.

CHAIRWOMAN YOUNG: All in favor.

Motion Carries.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Councilman Deluca, seconded by Councilwoman Romano it is voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 o'clock p.m.

  
Second Deputy City Clerk

  
Assistant Clerk

