

TESTIMONY OF DAVID PRENDERGAST
COMMERCE COMMITTEE

MARCH 11, 2008

Good Morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commerce Committee. My name is David Prendergast and I am the CEO for the Naugatuck Economic Development Corporation and I am before you today to speak in support of HB5882 – an Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for Various Projects. This bill provides the opportunity for the State to offer financial assistance from existing programs to the Naugatuck Economic Development Corporation for the purposes of economic development, restoration and improvements to property within the downtown area in the Borough of Naugatuck.

This financial assistance would help the Borough in completing public improvement including streets, sidewalks, utility updates and parking garages that will support the Renaissance Place downtown revitalization project. Renaissance Place is planned as a green, energy independent mixed use, transit oriented development encompassing 60 acres along the Naugatuck River in our historic downtown.

The project will include retail space, condominiums and rental units, entertainment space, technology space and parking garages to support these activities. The project plans to generate electricity from reusable sources sufficient to offset its electrical load demand with any excess available to the power grid. Renaissance Place will also be a transit oriented development located adjacent to the Naugatuck Metro-North Train Station.

The live/work/play project, which has been in the planning for several years, is a public/private partnership between the Borough of Naugatuck, the Naugatuck Economic Development Corporation and Renaissance Place LLC of Fairfield, CT. The parties have entered in a Development Agreement for the project in May of 2007, after a referendum on May 7th was approved by the public in a 2 to 1 majority. The project would have an important impact on the regional economy not only in creating a unique lifestyle draw but also by creating permanent jobs and expanding the local tax base. A detailed Fiscal Impact and Market Analysis on Phase I of Renaissance Place was completed in May 2006. It estimated that the \$218 million first phase would create approximately 1425 construction jobs, 963 permanent jobs and generate over \$4 million in annual tax revenue for the Borough of Naugatuck. The entire project is estimated to be \$707 million and would be completed in four phases over a multi-year development period.

The project is uniquely located to take advantage of the major transportation elements of the Naugatuck Valley Region, including the Metro North Railroad line and the Route 8 state highway. The Development partnership has been working with a number of state agencies as the project planning has been progressing. The Department of Economic & Community Development is currently conducting an Environmental Impact Evaluation of the project and the Borough of Naugatuck will also complete a Municipal Development Plan for the project this year.

I will be happy to answer any questions that any of the Committee Members may have. I thank you for the opportunity to make you aware of this exciting economic development in the Naugatuck Valley Region.