



BECKER+BECKER

Remarks for the Planning & Development Committee
March 7, 2008

- My name is Bruce Becker. I am the president of Becker and Becker Associates, an integrated architecture and development firm based in Fairfield.
- I have been a strong proponent of green building in this state.
- My firm is currently working on a major, \$160 million development project in downtown New Haven, across the street from State Street train station and a block away from New Haven Green.
- I am testifying **in strong support** of the proposed green building tax credit.
- One of the problems my firm has encountered is that—while there are some limited incentives in Connecticut—it's not enough to make green building design in large projects work financially.
- In neighboring states, this is not the case. My firm recently completed a project in Manhattan, called The Octagon. It received \$5.6 million of state green building tax credits and is one of the greenest projects in the state.
- The Octagon has the largest solar photovoltaic array in Manhattan and has received numerous awards for excellence in green building design, including awards from the City, the State, and the federal Environmental Protection Agency.
- Without the tax credit, The Octagon couldn't have been as green as it was.

- The same is true with our project in New Haven. We need additional incentives from the state to ensure that our budget can accommodate all of the green features on the project.
- We have had teams of architects and engineers working on the design of geothermal wells, a fuel cell, solar panels, and other green features. We are a pilot project in the LEED for Neighborhood Development program, which means that we have been recognized as a possible nationwide pioneer in a new LEED program which emphasizes sustainable community design, not just sustainable building design.
- Yet as the project approaches its construction start date, and as we are making design decisions, it has become more and more difficult for us to understand the economics of the green building aspects of this project will work.
- A green building tax credit would help us to close the funding gap we now see in our project.
- In closing, I would like to add that a green building tax credit program only needs to be in place for a few years to launch a handful of highly visible green buildings. This can transform the design and construction industries and spur local innovation (create, expand, and shape markets for green product and services).
- Please feel free to get in touch with me, by phone at 203-292-4900, or by email at bruce@beckerandbecker.com, if you would like to learn more about the importance of these tax credits to developers in this state.