



HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT, INC.
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Business*

March 9, 2009

To: Senator Eric Coleman, Co-Chairman
Representative Brendan Sharkey, Co-Chairman
Members of the Planning & Development Committee

From: Bill Ethier, CAE, Chief Executive Officer

Re: Raised Bill 1041, AAC The Demolition of Buildings

The HBA of Connecticut is a professional trade association with almost one thousand, three hundred (1,300) member firms statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut citizens. Our members are residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to this diverse industry. We also created and administer the Connecticut Developers Council, a professional forum for the land development industry in the state.

The HBA of Connecticut strongly opposes RB 1041. The bill adopts a substantial new, complicated and expensive process to demolish any building. Under current law, a demolition permit must be obtained from a building official.

The bill requires an applicant who wants to demolish a building to first request a written determination from a local planning commission that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the demolition. A feasible and prudent analysis will add expense, delay and difficulty to the permitting process. The applicant's request also has to include an analysis of the "embodied energy of the site and the proposal" (?) and the "economics of retaining, rehabilitating, reusing, deconstructing and recycling, or any combination thereof" and compare these multiple analyses to the "required energy consumption and economics of a new building ..." over the expected life of such building. These new requirements are simply too confusing, expensive and unwarranted. To add insult to injury, the bill also exempts these requests to planning commissions from the procedural requirements and protections of sec. 8-7d of the general statutes.

The bill further requires the building official to notice a demolition permit application in the newspaper but to what end is not described since the building official does not conduct a public hearing. Further, a demolition permit applicant has to furnish the planning commission's determination on feasible and prudent alternatives, but does not instruct the building official on what to do with it. Finally, the bill amends 22a-19a, the environmental intervention statute, by introducing a new, undefined qualifier on the public trust in historic structures.

RB 1041's new and additional requirements on demolishing buildings are extremely expensive, will cause greater development delays, are likely contrary to what the marketplace wants to do with its own property and is dangerous to our fragile economy. We urge the committee to not support this bill.

Representing the Home Building, Remodeling and Land Development Industries In Connecticut
"Enhancing Our Member's Value to Their Customers and Our Industry's Value to Society"