

# State seizure squeezes Pleasantville UEZ budget

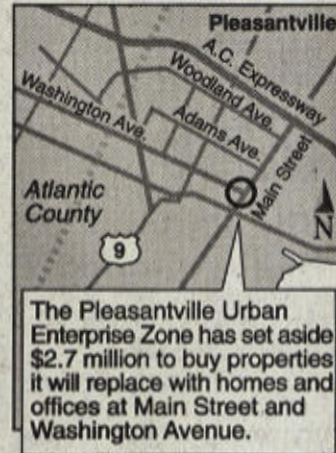
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**PLEASANTVILLE** — The elbow room in the city's Urban Enterprise Zone budget has vanished, but the zone's coordinator is cautiously optimistic that its biggest project can proceed on schedule.

Last week, the state government seized from the zone's \$5.3 million budget \$2.1 million it said was erroneously directed there. That left Roger Tees with \$3.2 million for three projects, one of which is to spend about \$2.7 million to buy four properties in the District redevelopment area.

The city wants to raze buildings at Washington Avenue and Main Street, replacing them with business space and more than 300 homes. City Council approved the \$975,000 purchase of the first property Monday night. But financial negotiations with other owners continue. The UEZ budget is within a few hundred dollars of being fully earmarked.

Urban-enterprise officials at the state level must approve this latest phase of the District project in August, Tees said. Then property settlement could happen in October and groundbreaking in late 2010.



Press graphic

The project's total cost has been estimated at \$150 million to \$175 million.

Also Monday night, the council repealed its restrictions on where convicted sex offenders can live, citing a state Supreme Court order. In response to a question from resident Simone, solicitor Alfred Scerni said such regulations are no longer considered the province of municipalities.

"That's not good news," Simone said. Councilwoman Judy Ward said she agreed: "It stinks, but we don't have a choice."

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