

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 7, 2017**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Doug Hempstead; John Igneri; Tom Livingston; George Tsiranides;
Faye Bowman

STAFF: Timothy Sheehan, Executive Director; Tami Strauss; Director Community Development
Planning; Sabrina Church, Community Development Planner

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public came forward.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:04 p. m. A quorum was present.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of minutes

1. Approve Minutes of October 5, 2017 Regular Meeting.

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 5, 2017 AS SUBMITTED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Approve of schedule of meetings for 2018

2. Approve schedule of meetings for calendar year 2018

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

II. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PY44

A. Advance the PY 44 NOFA amended language to the Common Council for review and approval.

Ms. Church stated that the PY 44 NOFA will include new language regarding the reservation of \$100,000 for a Walk Bridge Business Mitigation Program aimed at business retention and low to moderate income job retention. The \$100,000 will be allocated to the plan via the yearly CDBG allocation. The plan is referenced on page 11 of the NOFA in the section titled Funding Restrictions and Targeting of Resources.

She stated that if the language is not approved by the Common Council, the standard NOFA will be released by the Redevelopment Agency on December 13, 2017.

Mr. Sheehan stated that the \$100,000 will become available on July 1, 2018 and we will have until June of next year to deploy the funds. Businesses will have to prove they have been impacted by the Walk Bridge project.

- ** MR. KYDES MOVED TO ADVANCE THE PY44 NOFA AMENDED LANGUAGE TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Approve scheduling a presentation of the CDBG applications on February 1, 2018 at 6:30 p. m.

- ** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO APPROVE SCHEDULING THE FEBRUARY 1, 2018 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING FOR 6:30 P. M.
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. REDEVELOPMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

A. Wall Street – West Avenue Redevelopment Plan presentation by RPA.

- ** MR. KYDES MOVED TO TABLE THE WALL STREET – WEST AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN PRESENTATION BY RPA.
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. UPDATE ON FREESE PARK.

Ms. Strauss stated that the Redevelopment Agency has begun the process of creating a cohesive open space system to accommodate the growing residential population and visitors to downtown Norwalk. In May 2017, the Common Council approved the Master Plan of Freese Park which was funded by \$25,000 of CDBG Planning funds. She stated the Redevelopment Agency has expended an additional \$10,000 for surveys of Freese Park and neighboring Mechanic Street Esplanade and Klondike Park.

Ms. Strauss stated the firm that developed the Master Plan and surveys, has quoted an additional \$178,000 for design and construction contract administration and estimates park improvements to total \$2.2 million.

Ms. Strauss stated that she would like to gauge the interest of the Planning Committee in supporting this open space improvement project in the upcoming capital budget cycle. Mr. Sheehan stated that if the \$2.2 million in spending was approved, it would make up 10% of the Capital Budget. Discussion followed on the total cost of the project. Mr. Kydes requested that staff meet with the consultants and find out what could be included in the project if \$333,000 were spent per year over a three year period.

C. Washington Village review Phase I Development and discuss Phase II.

Ms. Eva Erlich and Mr. Tom Ivers came forward on behalf of Trinity Financial. Ms. Erlich stated that Phase I of the project is currently under construction with 80 approved housing units on two sites bordering Day and Hanford Streets. She stated that construction on the two building complex is approximately 35% complete. The roofing is complete on Building A at 13 Day Street. Underground plumbing and electrical utilities are nearly complete as is the exterior siding and windows. She stated that the base coat of asphalt has been installed for the parking area.

Mr. Ivers stated that the first floor decking and framing is complete on Building B. Installation of the second floor joists been completed. Construction has started on the wall panels.

Mr. Ivers stated that 17% of the total direct construction costs included in the construction contract has been awarded to MBE firms, 34% to State Certified Small Businesses, and 5% to Section 3 firms. Of the total number of hours worked to date, 32.94% have been minority employees, 6.03% have been women, 11.37% have been Section 3, and 75.22% have been Connecticut residents. He stated that there have been four new hires made for Phase One construction and 100% are Section 3 certified.

Ms. Erlich stated that the development team encountered early delays due to unforeseen conditions during construction. This has pushed back the project delivery date. Original projections for having Temporary Certificates of Occupancy for both Building A has been pushed back to April. Building B has been pushed back to May.

Ms. Erlich stated that Trinity is in the process of securing the capital stack for Phase Two of the Washington Village Redevelopment effort. Phase Two has been approved for 85 units. 42 of those will be Public Housing Replacement Units. 23 will be Workforce LIHTC Units and 20 will be Market Rate Units. The total development cost is estimated at \$47,664,727.

D. Webster Street Lot review study findings.

Mr. Sheehan stated that the City owns approximately five acres of land in the area defined as the Webster Street Lot. The lot is currently used to support six hundred surface parking spaces. These shared parking spaces support the business and entertainment uses that surround the parking lot and are currently managed by the Norwalk Parking Authority. Any development of City owned land within the Webster Street Lot would require the City to replace all of the existing six hundred parking spaces.

Mr. Sheehan stated that the City and Redevelopment Agency could work with the private sector regarding the public infrastructure burden of a public parking facility. Without a structured public parking facility, the economic potential of the block has been maximized by the existing uses surrounding it. That is the reason why the private sector has been unable to introduce new development despite favorable land use regulations with regards to density and height. He stated that there is no way to effectively provide for the necessary parking that any meaningful new development would require.

Mr. Sheehan stated that if the City put out a development plan, we would have difficulty implementing the plan. A better approach would be to allow the private sector to submit development plans and then we work with them on implementation.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forward.

V. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was brought forward.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR.IGNERI MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Blaney
Telesco Secretarial Services