

**CITY OF NORWALK  
THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 4, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Tom Livingston; Doug Hempstead; John Igneri;  
Barbara Smyth; Eloisa Melendez; George Tsiranides

STAFF: Police Chief Thomas Kulhawik; LT. John Praveen Mike Yeosock, Assistant Director TMP; Tim Sheehan, Executive Director, Redevelopment Agency; Sabrina Church, Community Development Planner; Anthony Carr, DPW Chief of Operations and Public Property; Chris Torre, DPW Superintendent of Operations; Chris King, Asst. Fire Chief; David Westmoreland, Historical Commission; Patsy Brescia, Historical Commission; Joyce Liu, IT. Dept; Jeff Oduro, IT Dept.; Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health; Chitsamay Lam; Comptroller; Tom Hamilton, CEO, Board of Education; Alan Lo, Building Management, Building & Facilities Manager; Anna Keegan, Director, Fair Rent; Steven Kleppin, Director, Planning & Zoning; Angela Fogel, Director, Management & Budgets

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Kydes opened the public hearing at 7:03PM.

There was no one from the public who wished to participate this evening.

Mr. Kydes closed the public hearing at 7:04PM.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:04PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Kydes called the roll and everyone listed on the attendance was present.

## PUBLIC HEARING-PY45 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

The draft plan can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.norwalkct.org/DocumentCenter/View/14293?Draft-PY45-AAP---V1-for-Comment>

### I. ADMINISTRATION

#### **A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

##### **1. March 7, 2019**

**\*\* MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### II. FY 2020 CAPITAL BUDGET

#### **A. APPROVE ADVANCEMENT OF THE FY 2020 CAPITAL BUDGET TO THE COMMON COUNCIL.**

- Police- Chief Kulhawik said that they are requesting dry suits and a replacement vehicle for Animal Control. Mr. Livingston asked about the request for next year for the firing range. Chief Kulhawik said that is for a major upgrade and that the current range is no longer supported by the manufacturer. Mr. Kydes asked about the request for the communications console. LT. Praveen said that the current communication console will no longer be supported by the current vendor and will need to be upgraded. Chief Kulhawik said that it is part of the entire radio upgrade.
- Fire- Asst. Chief King said that they are requesting an aerial vehicle replacement to go along with the strategic plan, a radio upgrade because what is currently being used is no longer supported by the current vendor, and the radios they have specified will be compatible with any new system that the Police Department purchases. Mr. Kydes asked about the request for the security cameras. Asst. Chief King said that will be for Station #2 because there are no cameras in the parking lots. Mr. Kydes asked what is the vehicle that was requested and not recommended by the Mayor going to be used for. Asst. Chief King said the Fire Prevention staff has been increased by two over the past few years and are in need of replacement vehicles due to the age and high mileage of the current vehicles, but that the request has been pushed back until next year.
- Parking Authority- Mr. Hempstead requested a list of sidewalks that will be replaced outside of the road paving program. Mr. Yeosock said that \$50,000 has been budgeted for new sidewalks in TMP. Mr. Hempstead asked if there is a list of the sidewalks that

will be replaced. Mr. Yeosock said “no”. Mr. Hempstead requested that a list be established. Mr. Carr said as part of the reorganization that the replacement of sidewalks outside of the road paving is now under TMP and they will now be looking at sidewalks for pedestrian connectivity, areas that currently do not have sidewalks but should, and better flow and safer pedestrian access. Mr. Hempstead asked that the footpaths that were created near schools be addressed first.

- WPCA- Mr. Kydes asked if the cost of the collection system rehabilitation and upgrade is offset by fees completely. Mr. Torre said “yes”.
- Library- Mr. Livingston asked if the request for \$450,000 is for the planning of the new addition to the Library. Mr. Lo said he believes the request is for the design services. Ms. Brescia said the Board of Trustees for the foundation are in the process of completing a survey, and once that is done the next step will be to begin the schematic design concepts for the long term development of the Library. Mr. Kydes asked if there were any numbers generated from the plan. Ms. Brescia said “no” because it will be voted on next week and has not been finalized. Mr. Kydes asked if there was an RFP done for an architectural firm for the project. Ms. Brescia said “no” not yet and not until the funds are available. Mr. Kydes asked how the request for \$450,000 was determined. Mr. Lo said it is for the design services for the space. Mr. Kydes said the committee generally would like to have an idea of what the project will cost before funds for a plan is approved. Mr. Lo said once the funds are allocated there will be an RFP and interview process and it will go to the Common Council for approval at that point.
- Historical Commission- Mr. Westmoreland said there are two critical building items and the first request is for \$80,000 for the townhouse. He said the city had allocated \$120,000 last year to re-point the entire outside of the townhouse and it was determined there would not be enough funds, and this request if approved would provide enough funding to complete the project. Mr. Kydes asked if the ADA issues have been addressed. Mr. Westmoreland said the top part of Mill Hill has been completed and they are now working on the bottom portion on Smith Street as part of a state grant.

Mr. Kydes asked about the request for the roof repairs. Mr. Westmoreland said they had noticed earlier in the year that a portion of the roof on the porch was starting to sag and it was determined that when the roof over the porch was replaced in the 1970’s they did not allow for expansion joints, and the seams have come apart so the structure under the porch has rotted and the roof will need to be removed to rebuild the porch.

Mr. Kydes asked about the \$2.5 million dollar request for general code repairs. Mr. Westmoreland said the good news is that they have received a \$5 million dollar grant from the state, but the bad news is they need \$10 million dollars. He said the next project is to replace all of the systems within the mansion and it will all need to be done at the

same time, and they were able to get the price down to \$7.5 million dollars to have all of the work done which will allow them to move ahead to finish the restoration. Mr. Kydes asked how long the mansion will be closed to perform the work. Mr. Westmoreland said for approximately one year to 18 months. Ms. Brescia said that the mansion has to close during the winter because there is not sufficient heat in the building for visitors and staff and they just opened yesterday for the season and will be open until the first Wednesday in January, and they are hoping when the projects have been completed they will be able to be open all year long, and there will be a whole new opportunity for the community to use the incredibly marvelous building. Mr. Westmoreland said the caveat is that the project cannot be done if the funds are not approved and they would need to forfeit the \$5 million dollar grant.

- Health Department- Ms. D'Amore said there is no request for this year but there is a request in FY 2020-21 for exam room upgrades.
- IT Dept- Ms. Liu provided a summary of their request and said desktop and window upgrades for city departments and this year they will also be covering the Health Department. Mr. Kydes asked how often the windows database server gets updated. Ms. Liu said every six years and they now need to purchase licenses for 85 servers because they will no longer be supported in 2020. She said the request also includes funding for special event software to streamline the process.
- Human Relations- Ms. Keegan said they are requesting funds for ADA improvements pursuant to the ADA compliance and transition plan. She said this year they are hoping to repair a non-accessible bathroom/shower at Veteran's Park and three school projects. Mr. Kydes asked if any of the funds will be reimbursed through grants. Ms. Keegan said "no", not to her knowledge.
- Planning & Zoning- No comments.
- DPW- Mr. Carr provided a summary of the request and said that \$5 million dollars of the request is to maintain the pavement management program. He said the overall request is \$ 9.8 million dollars and a bulk of the request is for pavement, curbs and sidewalks and some of the fleet vehicles are slated to be replaced. Mr. Kydes asked what the \$250,000 request for general drainage will cover. Mr. Carr said for spot repairs prior to road paving. Mr. Livingston asked for the status of the East Avenue project. Mr. Carr said that the 90% design documents have to be completed by July, and they are currently working with the Third Taxing District to see if they will be amenable to allowing DPW to hire a consultant to work with their staff to negotiate the possibility of underground utilities.

Mr. Kydes said there has been an opportunity to purchase electric vehicles at a low price as a promotion and asked if any of the funding that is being requested is for any of the engineering cars. Mr. Torre said “yes” for two. Mr. Kydes asked if the electric vehicle will work for the purpose the cars are being used for. Mr. Torre said the issue is charging stations. Mr. Kydes asked what the cost would be to install the charging station. Mr. Lo said it is relatively high and that prior to Mr. Luce leaving he had done analysis on the cost effectiveness of electric cars and suggested that the committee request the analysis from the Purchasing Department. Mr. Torre said he will request the report from Ms. Connors. He said that they looked at fuel efficient cars as a possibility. He said there are some departments that don’t use their cars as much as other departments and are looking into starting a program where all of the pool cars would be signed out through an online program so that the vehicles are always rotated, and when Stamford incorporated the system their fleet went from 89 to 29 pool cars and saved \$1 million dollars. He said they are currently in the process of obtaining bids for the system to implement it at City Hall. Mr. Kydes requested a meeting be scheduled for further discussion.

Mr. Lo provided a summary for the Building Management request and said that recently Building Management has taken over the management of the facility at the Health Department and have identified some heating issues that need to be repaired and is recommending \$30,000. He said that they have tried cleaning the carpet in the community room at the main library but that it will need to be replaced and he is recommending \$15,000. He said to come up with the additional funding he is recommending reducing the concert hall request for City Hall by \$60,000 and to also reduce the replacement of the fire alarm panel at the branch library request by \$5,000.

- Traffic Mobility and Parking

Mr. Yeosock said that the request includes a traffic signal replacement which is to replace two older signals and the safe routes to school project which include replacing sidewalks for connectivity to schools. He said the other request is for the artistic crosswalk program and it is a public private partnership. Mr. Kydes asked if there are any grants for the safe routes to school project. Mr. Yeosock said that they have received grants in the past and they will continue to look for more.

- Board of Education

Mr. Hamilton provided an overview of the request and said that the request is a lot but that the city went for many years without investing in the school buildings and are in the middle of a catch up phase and will be in that phase for a number of years. He said that they have broken ground on Ponus School and it is a huge milestone because Norwalk has not built a new school in 50 years, and hasn’t done a renovation as new in approximately 18 years and as part of the plan will be building the first new school in 50 years. He said the total budget request that the Mayor has recommended for education totals \$23.6 million dollars, and is anticipating \$6 million dollars in state grants so the

recommended budget that will need to be bonded by the city is \$17.4 million dollars. The appropriations are going to support additional funding for several major projects. Mr. Livingston asked Mr. Hamilton to highlight what is critical to the master program. Mr. Hamilton said that there are a lot of different things going on and the Chairman had attended the last Land Use Committee meeting and had advised them that there are some additional needs at several of the projects and are still working with the Mayor's office and the Superintendent and the Mayor have had a number of discussions about that. He said there are significant funds that will be needed above what was anticipated for the projects, and that was brought to the attention to the Board of Education through the facilities committee and to the Mayor. He said the Mayor has a large amount of flexibility and when the capital budget comes to the Mayor he wanted to bring it to his attention with the intention of asking if he wanted to add \$20 million dollars to the capital budget recommendation, but he had indicated at that time that he was not prepared to support the addition to the capital budget but that he and the Superintendent have had a number of meetings regarding this and are continuing to work on a plan that will address the needs of the Board of Education. Some funds will need to be reallocated from one project to another and would be making the request to the committee as early as next month to do that because the necessary funding needs to be in place in the right project by June 30<sup>th</sup> in order to file the school building grant applications. Mr. Livingston asked that the master plan that was created three years ago be updated to include these numbers.

Mr. Livingston said that the request is to renovate as new for Columbus School and not for a new school. Mr. Hamilton said that is what the estimate is based on and there has been discussions on whether or not the City or the Board of Education should consider doing a whole new school because the cost differential is not that much, and it does provide a clean slate and to be able to design the school in a way to make the most sense. Mr. Lo said he does not typically support building a new school because if the structure is sound he would prefer to renovate as new. He also said that the reimbursement rate is the full 32% on a renovate as new whereas it's only 22% for a new school, and the cost difference between the two is approximately \$4 million dollars more to build new.

Mr. Kydes asked about if the Board of Education will be piggy backing on the city's contract for paving services. Mr. Hamilton said "yes" and has more or less been turning the paving projects over to DPW. Mr. Kydes asked about the air conditioning program. Mr. Hamilton said it was determined that to install central air conditioning at all of the school buildings would be too expensive at this point, and are proposing to install the central air condition into the renovate as new schools and to install a portable solution in the classrooms of the remaining schools until it's time to renovate them as new projects.

- Redevelopment Agency

Mr. Sheehan said that they have an annual request in for the affordable housing and they normally request \$500,000, and the city has supported the annual request consistently for the past 15 plus years of \$250,000. He said there are infrastructure projects for design and engineering and that one is associated with taking Station Place and making it a

public street and doing design enhancements in and around the South Norwalk Railroad Station with regards to infrastructure. He said the other project is for the design and engineering relative to what ultimately is going to be the replacement of the geography in and around the current IMAX Theater as the demolition is scheduled to advance. In discussions with the Mayor's office they want to have a plan ready to implement when the state advances out of the site and want to be able to convey to them as to how we want the site left from a grading standpoint. He said there is also a small façade improvement project included in the request.

In closing Mr. Kydes stated that he is very pleased with this budget and that they are not just maintaining, but are operating across the board and it's good to see.

**\*\*MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES: ADD \$30,000 TO ITEM E-14; ADD \$15,000 TO ITEM E-7; DEDUCT \$60,000 FROM ITEM E-1 AND DEDUCT \$5,000 FROM ITEM E-6 AND TO PUT THE REMAINING \$20,000 INTO RECREATION AND PARKS INTO ITEM H-3, SCHOOL AND PARK PLAYGROUNDS.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **III. MASTER PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

#### **A. Overview of plan and review of timetable for Council approval.**

Mr. Kleppin said that two weeks ago the Planning Commission had completed their final recommendations and edits to the plan, and they were sent to the consultant last week and he also sent some edits from the Harbor Management Commission today and he anticipates it will take them a few weeks to make the changes. He said that the State Statute requires the Planning Commission refer the document to several groups, and he did receive some comments and concerns on the last draft from the CT DEEP and they have been addressed, and he believes a positive outcome will be received when it is sent back out. He said that the State Statute also requires a referral to the Common Council. Mr. Kydes asked Mr. Kleppin to have hard copies of the plan delivered to the Common Council members once the draft has been completed. Mr. Hempstead also requested that the draft plan be emailed. Mr. Kleppin said that there is a link to the draft plan on the Norwalk Tomorrow website and that he will e-mail the Common Council members the link.

Mr. Kydes said that if the draft is completed by the May Planning Committee meeting he requested that Mr. Kleppin attend the meeting to provide an overview. Mr. Sheehan suggested that the members of the Common Council also be invited to attend to hear the overview of the plan as has been done in the past.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business discussed this evening.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business discussed this evening.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. TSIRANIDES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd