

Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID.

Please find the information using the link above. Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" will need to register in advance and use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to view the meeting, but are not participating, can view a live stream on the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. This stream is delayed by approximately 20 seconds. Please find the information using the link above. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted on the City of Norwalk website within seven (7) days after the meeting.

Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Maritza Alvarado at malvarado@norwalkct.org to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 4, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Thomas Keegan; Thomas Livingston;
Lisa Shanahan; Barbara Smyth; George Tsiranides

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director of Business Development and Tourism

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll as indicated above.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

I. ADMINISTRATION

a. Approval of the Minutes of the January 7, 2021 Meeting.

The following correction was made to the minutes:

Add Mr. Heuvelman under attendance.

- ** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE**

II. NEW BUSINESS

a. Community Development Block Grant

1. Review and Presentation of CDBG Applications.

Ms. Church called the applicants and kept the time. Mr. Kydes requested that the applicants keep their comments to three minutes.

Comments are not verbatim and represent a summarization of statements unless otherwise noted.

Mr. Clinton Hamilton, represented the Carver Center. He said the Carver Center recently renovated their gymnasium and they are requesting funding to replace that roof which will allow them to prolong the life of the new gym. Mr. Hamilton said that over the years, they have updated their HVAC, fire and security systems. Their next project will be a new boiler. He said they are requesting \$175,000 which covers the whole building, including the gym.

Ms. Mellodye Ragan, Sweet Mellodye, represented the LIFT (Learning Is Fun Too) Program. She said it is a non-profit that trains kids in the community on what to do in the studio. Ms. Ragan said she wants to produce a video on grieving because it will help a lot of people because everyone is hurting. There are people who do not know how to deal with grief. The title of the video is "Good Grief".

Ms. Tamara Pardo represented the Domestic Violence Crisis Center. She said their request for \$50,000 is to hire a bilingual counselor. This counselor will allow them to

provide the same services to the Spanish speakers as those that are given to the English speakers.

Ms. Pardo also requested \$25,000 to renovate their Norwalk safe house. This conversion will prevent them from having to shelter their clients in hotels.

Mr. Kydes asked Ms. Pardo if there was a plan in place to fund the bilingual counselor for the next year. Ms. Pardo said she would get back to him.

Mr. Sean O'Brien represented Homefront. He described their services and said they rely on volunteers and work year-round to get materials donated to their program. As a result of Covid, they have been doing outdoor repairs only. This request will help keep the momentum going. He requested \$17,000 for materials. He said their previous request did not keep up with the cost of materials.

Mr. Livingston asked how the \$17,000 will work. Mr. O'Brien said their primary way of helping people is with their Homefront Day. This year they may end up helping more people with this funding if they are not able to do this on a per house basis.

Mr. Kydes asked if in the past, they had requests for interior work. Mr. O'Brien said it has been for both. They get requests for electrical and plumbing work. He said they keep people on their radar for when it is safe to do interior work.

Ms. Kim Carver, represented Keystone House. She said they are asking for funding to replace the deck on their residential home.

Ms. Maggie Young, represented Liberation Programs. She described the women and children's program. They are asking for \$27,000 to pay for a child care coordinator. This position would care for the children on site when their mothers are in group sessions.

Ms. Carey Dougherty, represented Malta House. She described the program and said they are a home for homeless and pregnant mothers and their babies. They offer a myriad of services and are asking for \$50,000 for residential staffing. They are moving next month and expanding their capacity by 50%.

Ms. Gail Melanson, represented the Mid Fairfield Child Guidance Center. She said they are asking for \$20,000 for their extended day treatment program. She described the therapeutic services they provide for children and adults. She said her reimbursements do not cover her costs associated with the program.

Ms. Michelle Condermo, represented the Open Door Shelter. She said she had two applications this evening. The first is for \$35,000 to support their employment program.

The second application is for \$36,000 to replace the doors in their affordable housing units. The replacement doors are needed for security and will be energy efficient.

Ms. Nancy Coughlin, represented Person to Person. She described their services and said they are seeking \$30,000 to support their casework services. She noted they are seeing a higher demand for their services.

Ms. Pam Ralton, represented the Supportive Housing Works. She said they are applying for funds to prevent eviction. They serve a vulnerable and challenged cohort. The funding request is based on 211 calls. In Norwalk, housing is the biggest call to 211.

Mr. Dajuan Wiggin, represented YBI (Youth Business Initiative). He described his program and said they teach youth about business and how to become successful entrepreneurs and managers. Mr. Wiggin said that almost 50% of Norwalk students are economically disadvantaged. The program gives students \$150.00 per week and the goal is to give them \$10,000 when they develop a business plan. He said they have over 20 students enrolled and they all come from the projects. The students are from 15-20, but they serve people from 15 – 24. Mr. Wiggin said they have an application process and they continually engage with the youth.

Mr. Keegan joined the meeting.

Mr. Stephen Ivan, represented the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency. He said described their request for CDBG administrative costs. The City Neighborhood fund is for eligible low to moderate activities and construction projects.

Mr. Kydes thanked the applicants and said they are faced with difficult decisions. He asked for input from the Committee members.

b. Overview of the Solar for All Program.

Mr. Bryan Baker said he sent a memo to the Committee members. He said he is looking at a kick off date for sometime in mid March. He said he is working on getting the word out; however, the program is only for Eversource customers.

Mr. Kydes said he was glad this was being done.

Mr. Kydes said he spoke with Ms. Casey and they discussed economic and development initiatives. He said the list of initiatives will be shared with the Committee members.

III. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. TSIRANIDES MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services