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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.

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 6, 2022
VIA ZOOM**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Gregory Burnett; David Heuvelman; Thomas Keegan; Thomas Livingston; Lisa Shanahan; Barbara Smyth; Darlene Young

STAFF: Sabrina Church, Director Business Development and Tourism; Jessica Vonashek, Chief of Economic and Community Development; Mike Yeosock, Principal Engineer

OTHERS: Brian Bidoli, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll as indicated above.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public who wished to comment this evening.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of the Minutes of December 2, 2021, Meeting.

The following correction was made to page 4:

Ms. Young asked Mr. Kleppin for the number of total numbers of contractor’s yards in the area.

Should read:

Ms. Young asked Mr. Kleppin for the total number of contractor’s yards in the area.

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. TRANSPORTATION, MOBILITY AND PARKING

1. 102-360 Norwalk Traffic Signal System Upgrade – Phase 4 – Easement from Housing Authority of the City of Norwalk.

**** MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL EASEMENT DOCUMENTS NECESSARY AS PART OF STATE PROJECT 102-360 NORWALK TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM UPGRADE – PHASE 4 AND COMPENSATE THE NORWALK HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NORWALK \$5,140 AS FAIR MARKET VALUE FOR 252 SQUARE FEET OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO INSTALL TRAFFIC SIGNAL APPURTENANCES OVER A STRIP OF LAND OWNED BY**

**THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NORWALK,
IDENTIFIED AND DESCRIBED ON A MAP ENTITLED “RIGHT OF
WAY SURVEY, CITY OF NORWALK, MAP SHOWING EASEMENT
ACQUIRED FROM THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF
NORWALK,” SUBJECT TO A POSITIVE REPORT FROM THE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.**

Mr. Yeosock reviewed the item. He explained that the property is owned by the Norwalk Housing Authority and the cost is 100% reimbursable by the Federal government. Traffic signals have been upgraded throughout the City.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. 102-360 Norwalk Traffic Signal System Upgrade – Phase 4 – Easement from Grace Baptist Church.

**** MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL EASEMENT DOCUMENTS NECESSARY AS PART OF STATE PROJECT 102-360 NORWALK TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM UPGRADE – PHASE 4 AND COMPENSATE GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH \$1,930 AS FAIR MARKET VALUE FOR 48 SQUARE FEET OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO INSTALL TRAFFIC SIGNAL APPURTENANCES OVER A STRIP OF LAND OWNED BY GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, IDENTIFIED AND DESCRIBED ON A MAP ENTITLED “RIGHT OF WAY SURVEY, CITY OF NORWALK, MAP SHOWING EASEMENT ACQUIRED FROM GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH BY THE CITY OF NORWALK,” SUBJECT TO A POSITIVE REPORT FROM THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.**

Mr. Yeosock explained that this is the same as the previous item, but it is located across the street.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. 102-360 Norwalk Traffic Signal System Upgrade – Phase 4 – Easements from Riverview East Condominium.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL EASEMENT DOCUMENTS NECESSARY AS PART OF STATE PROJECT 102-360 NORWALK TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM UPGRADE – PHASE 4 AND COMPENSATE RIVERVIEW EAST CONDOMINIUM \$3,210**

AS FAIR MARKET VALUE FOR 190 SQUARE FEET OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO INSTALL TRAFFIC SIGNAL APPURTENANCES OVER A STRIP OF LAND OWNED BY RIVERVIEW EAST CONDOMINIUM, IDENTIFIED AND DESCRIBED ON A MAP ENTITLED “RIGHT OF WAY SURVEY, CITY OF NORWALK, MAP SHOWING EASEMENT ACQUIRED FROM RIVERVIEW EAST CONDOMINIUM BY THE CITY OF NORWALK,” SUBJECT TO A POSITIVE REPORT FROM THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.

Mr. Yeosock reviewed the item. He explained that the final design plans are up for review and they plan to complete the installation of the traffic signals by the end of the year.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

1. Update on the Norwalk River Valley Trail and Harbor Loop planning effort.

Mr. Bidoli gave an update and said they are also looking at the east side of the River to create a full loop. He described the outreach initiatives. He said the people at 148 East Avenue were receptive, but had concerns about parking. He said he is working on contacting 130 East Avenue

Mr. Bidoli reported that they hope to have full design plans by May. Mr. Kydes asked how the project will be impacted if they do not hear from 130 East Avenue. Mr. Bidoli said they can look at other options.

C. ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND THE CT STATE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO RECEIVE \$3M IN URBAN ACT PROGRAM FUNDING RELATED TO THE MLK CORRIDOR INITIATIVE.**

Ms. Vonashek highlighted the MLK Corridor Initiative that was adopted by the City of Norwalk in 2019. The art initiative was launch during the summer of 2021. She reviewed the housing improvements and noted this is an extension of a pre-existing

program that provides funds for owner/rent occupied residential units to improve the façade of the homes.

Ms. Vonashek presented the priorities of the initiative, which includes housing, traffic mobility and connectivity, green space, parking improvements and neighborhood safety and beautification. Each of the initiatives is partnered with a funding source. A consultant will be hired to help consolidate information and make recommendations on affordable housing.

Ms. Young expressed her appreciation to everyone involved in the MLK Corridor Initiative. Mr. Kydes echoed Ms. Young's thanks. Mr. Burnett said an enormous amount of work went into these initiatives; this is an opportunity to transform the entire area. Mr. Livingston noted how funding sources were found for the initiatives.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. Information and Update: ARPA Funding for Business Support

Ms. Vonashek gave a presentation updating the Committee on ARPA funding for business support. She explained that residents were asked for their feedback. She presented common themes and noted that over 150 projects were identified.

Of the \$39.3 million of ARPA funding received by the City of Norwalk, approximately \$6 million has been committed to Economic and Development efforts. The ARPA funds need to be appropriated by December 31, 2024.

Ms. Vonashek reviewed various projects. Mr. Livingston noted that businesses received grants in 2020 and asked how many of those businesses were still operating that received grants in 2020. Ms. Church will check.

Given that it is hard for existing businesses, Ms. Young asked if there were plans to continue support for businesses that started in these uncertain times. She asked about what type of safety nets could be put in place to help those people. Ms. Vonashek said that is something they discussed; there are a lot of businesses that need a lot of support and they want to help as many businesses as they can, but they need to make the funding stretch.

In response to Ms. Young's question, Ms. Vonashek said that if a business received assistance, they were not able to re-apply for assistance. This business development center is different because they are a loan program rather than a grant program.

Ms. Vonashek said that everything will be accessible on line. She summarized the request for \$2.3 million of ARPA funding to support businesses over the next three years.

III. **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Kydes reviewed the agenda for upcoming meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

** **MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services