

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Douglas Hempstead, Kelly Straniti, John Tobin, Andy Conroy, Carvin Hilliard, Clyde Mount (7:20 p.m.)

STAFF: Tim Sheehan, Redevelopment Director; Susan Switzer, Redevelopment Agency

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hempstead called the meeting to order 7:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Hempstead called the roll. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Approval of Minutes - August 30, 2011 Special Meeting

**** MS. STRANITI MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 30, 2011.**

Mr. Mount joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

The following correction was noted:

Page 5, paragraph 3, line 1: please change “issues such as pruning trees.” To ““issues such as pruning trees and creating a budget associated with maintaining them.”

A question arose about the numerous questions that were asked during the Globe Theater presentation. Mr. Sheehan said that he had sent out an email with a list of the requests for information to the Committee members. Following a discussion about this, it was determined that the Committee members had not received that document.

Mr. Hempstead said that he had some concerns about the missing bricks in the various crosswalks on Washington Street. A brief discussion about this followed.

**** MR. CONROY MOVED TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 30, 2011.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BUSINESS

TRANSIT ORIENTATED DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN FOR THE SOUTH NORWALK RAILROAD STATION NEIGHBORHOOD.

Review Investment & Fiscal Impact Analysis of the Proposed TOD Development Scenarios.

Approve the Transit Oriented Development Master Plan for the South Norwalk Railroad Station Neighborhood to be advanced to the Common Council for final approval.

Ms. Switzer then reviewed the various fiscal analysis charts in the South Norwalk Railroad Neighborhood Planning project. She indicated that pg. 4 in the Fiscal Impact report has the chart with the fiscal impact and page 6 is where the charts with the municipal revenue by project begins.

Mr. Hempstead said that he had some concerns about the marinas and cited the problems in Stamford where marinas were pushed out by housing. Discussion followed about the exactly location of the marinas on the maps in the report.

Mr. Sheehan then directed everyone's attention to the Transit Oriented Development Master Plan for South Norwalk Railroad Station Neighborhood on the Waterfront Redevelopment. He explained that Water Street really has no street frontage right now. Mr. Mount commented that the area was all in a flood plain.

Mr. Hempstead asked about the public hearings on this. Ms. Switzer reviewed the timeline of when the public meetings had been held. Mr. Sheehan said that the build out period on some of the project pieces was 30 years and said that the Redevelopment Agency has been looking at the Webster Street development for 25 years.

Mr. Conroy asked what piece would be the last piece developed. Mr. Sheehan said that he believed that the waterfront pieces would be the last ones developed. Mr. Hempstead asked about Webster Street. Mr. Sheehan said that the Webster Street lot was a complicated property. Mr. Sheehan then stated that he would like to go on record that he had been and remained opposed to the construction of 50 Washington Street.

The discussion then moved to the issue of parking. Mr. Sheehan said that there was private development underway in other areas of Norwalk and that the residents would not be utilizing public parking because the City did not want them to do so.

Mr. Hempstead asked how this project would be presented to the Council. Mr. Hempstead said that it would be important to present this to the Council as a Plan and that he would like to see a nice cover letter stressing that this plan is an advisory document. He added that this would be presented at the last meeting of the current Council.

Mr. Hilliard said that there was a large amount of material to absorb in the reports and that there

were people who would take anything the Council voted on as a final decision. Mr. Sheehan then reminded everyone that the Committee has seen the Plan numerous times, but the one outstanding piece that was not there was the fiscal impact, which has now been presented.

Mr. Hempstead said that he would like to see this plan moved to the Council. Mr. Sheehan said that he would make sure that the Council Members would be sent this tomorrow.

Mr. Hilliard said that as a representative of South Norwalk, he was not comfortable voting on this right now. Mr. Mount said that he had concerns about the fact that there would need to be some consideration about winter storage for boats along the waterfront.

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO APPROVE TO ADVANCE THE TRANSIT-ORIENTED MASTER PLAN FOR THE SOUTH NORWALK RAILROAD STATION NEIGHBORHOOD AS OUTLINED IN THE BRIEFING SUMMARY OF MAY 5, 2011 FOR ADOPTION BY THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE IN FAVOR (HEMPSTEAD, STRANITI, TOBIN, MOUNT AND CONROY AND ONE OPPOSED (HILLIARD)).**

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS.

Approve the proposed option agreement on the Day Street properties as developed by Corporation Counsel and advance to Common Council for final approval.

Mr. Sheehan said that a \$250,000 grant had been awarded to NHA for planning. He then reviewed the details of the requirements that include site control. A draft was presented to the Committee in April and there was a request to have Corporation Counsel review the document. The purchase price in Item 7 has not yet been determined yet. This must be done by the Council.

Mr. Hempstead asked if the parcels were being utilized. Mr. Sheehan said that one of them was being used for parking. Mr. Hempstead said that he would like to have the fair market values entered into the document. The City would be turning over an asset and having the value assigned would be helpful. Mr. Sheehan said that this was basic leveraging for the Federal funding. Mr. Hempstead said that there had been a discussion about the parcels sitting fallow for a long period of time. Mr. Sheehan said that there had been a discussion with NHA about the timeframe and that two years seemed to be an acceptable time frame.

Mr. Hilliard asked if there was a deadline on Choice Neighborhoods. Mr. Sheehan said that NHA had been awarded the funding in the spring. NHA is working on a developer RFQ and in order to do this, NHA must have control of parcels. The discussion then moved back to the time line and the determination of when the options would be exercised. Mr. Sheehan said that he did not see any references to the maintenance of the property.

Mr. Sheehan said that he understood that a two year time frame should be included in the

agreement along with a firm start date for the option. The maintenance issue should also be included along with the fair market value in the document. It was decided that a five year timeline would be appropriate because this project involves the Federal Government.

Mr. Sheehan said that the implementation grant is highly competitive. Norwalk did well with the Planning grant. Mr. Hempstead asked what would happen if the implementation funding was not awarded. Mr. Sheehan said that he believed that the next call for the Federal applications would be in the spring.

Mr. Sheehan said that there had been a question raised about whether the Webster Street area would be included. He said that the Webster Street area was not included in this agreement. The document will be amended as requested and presented to the Council.

Mr. Sheehan thanked the Council Members who would not be returning.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services