

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
DECEMBER 1, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Matthew Miklave, Chairman; Michael Geake, Douglas Hempstead, Carvin Hilliard, David McCarthy, Jerry Petrini.

STAFF: Norwalk Redevelopment Agency: Tim Sheehan, Munro Johnson, Susan Sweitzer, Mary Grace Weber.

OTHERS: Common Council: Bruce Kimmel, David Watts (7:45 p.m.)
Paxton Kinol, Stanley Seligson, Michael Serrao,Waypointe.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hempstead called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Miklave asked for members of the public in attendance who wished to speak to state their name and address, and he invited comments to be made during discussion of agenda items. He added that this meeting was an orientation session, and comments or questions on particular projects could be reserved to be made at a later time in the meeting.

Ms. Diane Ceci, 37 Olmstead Place, Norwalk stated that she was here to speak on the Choice Neighborhoods Program Day Street Option Agreement that was on the agenda as an action item. She stated that in view of new Committee members, this item should be for discussion only and not for approval to forward onto the Common Council. She added that information posted on the website is incorrect in terms of the agenda as well as the members of the Committee, and she wanted to know when the official list of members would be approved. Mr. Miklave replied that he had planned to table the item in view of new information, and that the final list of Committee members names had been revised and would be approved at the next Council meeting. Ms. Ceci asked how this meeting could take place and Mr. Miklave replied that there was a quorum of members in attendance, as listed in the roll call.

Mr. McCarthy left the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Sheehan stated that there were several corrections and he requested for the edited minutes to be submitted for approval with the next agenda packet. Mr. Miklave stated that he would table approval of the minutes until the next meeting.

Mr. McCarthy returned to the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Mr. Miklave stated that the primary objective of the meeting was to have an orientation

session for the Committee members to have an overview of the projects managed by the Redevelopment Agency. He introduced Mr. Tim Sheehan, who presented a binder of information to be presented by the project managers of the Agency. Mr. Sheehan gave an overview of the statutory authorization and structure, highlighting that the Redevelopment Agency is comprised of five commissioners (Mayoral appointments) and the Agency is funded principally from state and federal grants, its own entrepreneurial efforts and in part through City operating budget funds.

He then reviewed the Operating and Capital Budget summary by project. Mr. Kimmel asked how the City Operating Budget Programs/Personnel are broken down between the two. Mr. Sheehan replied that the Operating Budget committed to these Positions and Programs is approximately 90 percent salaries / benefits and 10% for programming.

Mr. McCarthy left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Mr. Sheehan then gave an overview of the major projects and explained that the Agency has responsibility for the development and coordination of programs for the economic growth of Norwalk's six statutory urban renewal/redevelopment areas, as follows:

- Wall Street Redevelopment Plan
- Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Project
- West Avenue Redevelopment Plan
- South Norwalk Urban Renewal Project
(Webster Street/Martin Luther King Boulevard area)
- Washington Street — South Main Improvement Area II
- South Main Corridor Urban Renewal Plan

Mr. Sheehan stated that a more in depth review of the above areas would be done by the project managers throughout this orientation session. He added that the Agency also operates at the request of the City and that separate from its statutory responsibilities, the Agency also administers various programs that enhance the social and economic health of the community in accordance with the five year Master Plan of Conservation and Development, the City's Consolidated Plan and the City's Annual Action Plan for CDBG.

Mr. McCarthy returned to the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Mr. Sheehan introduced Mr. Munro Johnson, Ms. Susan Sweitzer, and Ms. MaryGrace Weber who presented their respective projects and fielded questions from the Committee members, as follows:

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)
- Housing Site Development
- 8-30 G Affordable Housing Documentation and Inventory
- Urban Connectivity Master Planning
- Public Parking Master Planning
- Transit Oriented Development Planning
- Fair Housing Program Neighborhood Preservation Program
- City Marketing and Business Development

Mr. McCarthy left the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Mr. Miklave asked about the impact of these programs as it relates to the Harbor Loop Trail, pedestrian plans, bicycle trails and the development of Oyster Shell Park, and Mr. Sheehan replied that all of the initiatives identified are relevant to the Connectivity Master Plan a draft of which was included in the binder and was then reviewed later in detail by Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Miklave stated that he would move the order of the agenda to have the Waypointe status next on the agenda as a courtesy to the team of presenters that were in attendance.

WAYPOINTE STATUS UPDATE

A Power Point presentation was made by the Waypointe team, and following the in-depth discussion, Ms. Sweitzer introduced Mr. Paxton Kinol, who gave an overview of the history on the project.

Mr. McCarthy returned to the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Following the presentation the team fielded questions, and Mr. Kimmel asked about the mix of residential and commercial property. Mr. Kinol replied that the plan has been adjusted from original assumptions in response to the market demand. He explained that north block of Waypointe, when complete, will contain 95 apartments, and approximately 12,000 square feet of retail and 1,600 square feet of restaurant space, with planned occupancy by the end of 2013.

Ms. Sweitzer asked about the timing, and Mr. Kinol replied that demolition in the Mid-Block is poised to begin along West Avenue and Orchard Street in preparation for construction of the Mid-Block Waypointe once the building permits are ready, which would likely be around the end of January. It will be concrete in the ground, first toward the front starting at the corner of Merwin and West Avenue, then we'll work back from West Avenue, and the planned six-story parking garage will arise next April at the center of the mid-block. He referred to the renderings and new motion software part of the presentation that gave a virtual tour of driving down West Avenue.

Choice Neighborhoods

Mr. Sheehan referred to the supporting documents in the packet and stated that based upon revisions to the Option Agreement as drafted by Corporation Counsel which have been negotiated and accepted, he recommended tabling the item to give the Committee sufficient time to review the revised draft Option Agreement. Mr. Hempstead asked for it to be noted in the record that this item had been discussed and reviewed in Committee at the October meeting, and sought the incorporation of some additional provision before sending it to the Council for approval to the Council. Specifically Mr. Hempstead asked about the term of the Option Agreement.

Mr. Sheehan read what the revised Agreement contained on that particular point. Mr. Sheehan clarified for the Committee that Option Agreement negotiations have been between Corporation Counsel and the Norwalk Housing Authority Counsel.

Ms. Cece stated that the document as posted on the website did not have information that was read by Mr. Sheehan. Mr. Sheehan replied that Ms. Cece was correct as what he read from was a revised document that included certain modifications. Because of these modifications Mr. Sheehan indicated he was asking for the action to be tabled. Ms. Cece asked when she could get a copy of the revised document. Mr. Sheehan indicated that he intended to provide her one immediately along with the Committee members. Mr. Miklave requested that information be provided to the Committee electronically as well.

Mr. Petrini asked if the delay poses a risk to existing or potential funding. Mr. Miklave replied that the issue has to go through the 8-24 review process. Mr. Sheehan replied that this is a HUD program and the challenge is to create a transformation plan supported by the Council, along with the terms of the agreement that has been vetted through Corporation Counsel within a year and a half window.

Mr. Hilliard stated that he has been involved for quite some time on the project and he strongly supports it as it will transform the area. He added that he has been through about a dozen public information sessions and meetings and there will be another meeting on Friday, December 9 with the groups involved from three Sub-Committees. He added that it will be at Calvary Baptist Church beginning at 8:30 a.m. Mr. Miklave asked for the details of the meeting schedule to be sent to the Planning Committee members by e-mail, and that he would like to attend.

- ** MR. PETRINI MOTIONED TO TABLE APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED OPTION AGREEMENT ON THE DAY STREET PROPERTIES UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING PENDING REVIEW OF NEW INFORMATION FROM CORPORATION COUNSEL.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR (HEMPSTEAD, MCCARTHY, MIKLAVE, PETRINI) ONE OPPOSED (HILLIARD) AND NO ABSTENTIONS.**

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION.

Mr. Sheehan referred to the supporting documents and gave an overview of the program, and stated that it speaks to the Chairman's questions raised earlier about the connectivity issues. He explained that it represents a potential source of federal grant funds to effectively leverage the recent roadway improvements and infrastructure work within the City's West Avenue Corridor.

Mr. Miklave added that there is a tremendous need for improvements, and Mr. Sheehan replied that this program provides selected enhancements, including both pedestrian and lighting improvements recommended in the City's Connectivity Master Plan as well as landscape improvements not previously included due to budgetary constraints of the West Avenue roadway and infrastructure program.

- ** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOTIONED TO APPROVE AND FORWARD ON TO THE COMMON COUNCIL TO AUTHORIZE THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, AS PROJECT ADVOCATE, TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH APPLICATION TO THE STP - TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$750,000, ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF NORWALK AS PROJECT SPONSOR; AND FURTHER TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH SAID APPLICATION. (FUNDING FOR THE MATCHING REQUIREMENT TO BE PROVIDED BY THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED CAPITAL BUDGET FUNDS)**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Request for Approval of Mayoral signature on Consolidated Plan Certificate of Consistency for the Norwalk Housing Authority Annual Public Housing Plan.

Ms. Weber noted that the Agency had reviewed the Norwalk Housing Authority's annual Public Housing Authority Plan and deems it to be consistent with the City of Norwalk's Consolidated Plan for housing and community development. Specifically, the PHA Plan is consistent with the Housing and Income Stability Pathways set forth in the City's ConPlan. Mr. Miklave stressed that compliance with federal regulations was a critical issue and he asked that the certifications be read and closely followed.

- ** MR. GEAKE MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING:
THE AGENCY, OPERATING AS THE CITY'S CDBG ADMINISTRATOR,
DEEMS THE NORWALK HOUSING AUTHORITY'S PHA PLAN FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2012-2013 TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE CITY'S CURRENT
CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND SEEKS PLANNING COMMITTEE APPROVAL TO
ADVANCE THE AGENCY'S REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL APPROVAL
FOR THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE REQUIRED CERTIFICATE OF
CONSISTENCY THAT MUST ACCOMPANY THE PHA PLAN WHEN
SUBMITTED TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Miklave requested the following be added to the agenda for the next meeting:
An update on Housing for Working Families Initiative.

Mr. Miklave asked that the complete agenda packet be e-mailed to the Committee members in advance as a matter of practice for meetings.

Mr. McCarthy apologized for having to leave and re-enter the meeting several times due to having to attend another meeting which was going on simultaneously with this one.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Knox; Telesco Secretarial Services