

**CITY OF NORWALK  
PLANNING COMMITTEE  
APRIL 4, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Nicholas Kydes, Chair (7:10 p.m.); David McCarthy;  
Michael Geake; Warren Pena; Matthew Miklave (7:32 p.m.)

STAFF: Timothy Sheehan, Executive Director; Mary Grace  
Weber, Special Projects Manager; Susan Sweitzer,  
Senior Project Manager

OTHERS: Bruce Kimmel, Common Council member

**PUBLIC HEARING - DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR CDBG PROGRAM  
YEAR 39**

Mr. McCarthy opened the public hearing at 6:40 p.m.

Mr. Alan Mathis, Open Door, Liberation Programs, CEO thanked the Committee for their support in funding a Case Manager. He said that the \$30,000 being given will be paid back to the community many times.

Ms. Margaret Suib, Fair Housing Advisory Commission, said that their Chair, Reverend Inghram sends his regrets. She said that she was here to speak about their application for funding the Fair Housing law seminars. She said that they are in a bind, because the City promised HUD that they would conduct these seminars. HUD has been putting greater emphasis that they meet the needs of non-English speaking people in the community. Ms. Suib said that their budget was tight at \$19,000; they can't do the seminars for \$14,000.

Ms. Josie Castillo, Director South Norwalk Community Center thanked the Committee for their wonderful grant. She said that they received funding from Redevelopment in 1972 when the building was built. Since then they have lost a lot of funding. This will revive the Center and explain to the community that they are still active.

There were no other speakers and the public hearing closed at 6:50 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.

**\*\* MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF MARCH 7,  
2013 AS PRESENTED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **BUSINESS**

### **CDBG-DR**

#### **Discuss anticipated funding for Hurricane Sandy recovery via HUD's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program**

Ms. Webber explained the item. She said that there are a lot of federal resources being distributed through CDBG. They will be allocated in three different pieces. The first piece has been allocated to the State and 80% of the funds have to be used in Fairfield and New Haven counties.

Mr. Sheehan said that the federal government chose to work directly with the State rather than the municipalities. He said that he is confident that Norwalk will meet the criteria within the 2-year window.

In response to Mr. Kimmel's question, Mr. Sheehan described how the program works. Mr. Sheehan noted that the City has to move quickly

### **WEST AVENUE CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

#### **Review proposal for planting medians on West Avenue**

Mr. Sheehan explained that wild flowers were planted in the medians last year, but they did not thrive. The islands were not irrigated and they were not maintained. Bid specifications need to be formulated to have the medians planted and maintained. Mr. Sheehan described the medians as the gateway to the heart of South Norwalk. He said that there are also plans for lighting under the I-95 and Route 7 bridges to make them more pedestrian friendly.

Mr. Sheehan said that there is also an issue about how to address bicycle traffic. CDM Smith is going to look at how a City integrates a coordinated bicycle system through an urban corridor.

## **FY2014 CAPITAL BUDGET**

#### **Discuss, review and if so warranted modify the FY 2014 Capital Budget of the City of Norwalk and take action to advance the budget to the Common Council**

Mr. Kimmel asked how the Committee handles the capital budget. Mr. Sheehan explained that they review recommendations that have been made. He noted that the Committee cannot provide a program back to the department if they have not requested it.

Mr. Kydes joined the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and Mr. McCarthy turned the chairmanship over to him.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 7, 2013**

**\*\* MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **FY2014 CAPITAL BUDGET - CONTINUED**

Discuss, review and if so warranted modify the FY 2014 Capital Budget of the City of Norwalk and take action to advance the budget to the Common Council

Mr. Kydes asked if there were any questions or comments for Mr. Alvord. Mr. McCarthy said that he went over the capital requests with Mr. Alvord today. He said that he gets a lot of complaints about sidewalks that are not ADA compliant. He also asked about the request for funding for a generator at City Hall.

Mr. Alvord said that he has been asking for a back up generator for City Hall for several years. After Hurricane Sandy, that was the number one request from Emergency Management. He said that the City Hall roof needs to be repaired. The building was built in 1936 and when it was converted into City Hall in 1988, there was some roof done, but there are leaks. Mr. Kydes suggested providing all of the funding to fix the roof. Mr. Alvord said that is the most cost effective way **to do it. Mr. Kimmel noted that they can't fund more than was requested.**

Mr. Sheehan said that he will try to see if disaster funding is available for the generator; if it is, an additional \$800,000 will then be available.

Mr. Miklave joined the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Mr. Alvord explained the request to raise the roof of the wash bay at the DPW garage. He said that building was on the property when they moved there. The roof is too low to accommodate the trucks.

There is paint failure on the metal surfaces on the exterior of the Police headquarters building. Environmental remediation is needed at various buildings before people can go in to do utility work.

Mr. Alvord said that the Glover Avenue bridge guard rails need to be replaced; it is a liability issue and he has been requesting this for years. He said that the general bridge repair account is a flexibility account. There is not enough in the account to fix the Glover Avenue bridge guardrails.

Mr. Alvord reviewed the fleet requests. He said that in recent years they have had to evacuate the Public Works center twice and is asking for two emergency operation trailers.

**Mr. Miklave asked about the Police department's request for a snow plow. Mr. Alvord said that the City's snow plows do not fit through the Police Department's gate. They want a small snow plow there 24/7 during a snow event. In addition, there is no place to store the snow.**

Mr. Miklave said that the Police Department wants to purchase a truck so the officers can plow. He said that it would make more sense for DPW to get the truck. Mr. Alvord said that he does not have enough people to have one driver dedicated to the Police department during a snow event.

Mr. Alvord said that he has been asking for infrastructure mapping for 8 years. This would generate accurate mapping.

Mr. Alvord talked about the paving program and said that they are synching utility repairs with paving projects. He explained that when they pave a road there is not only compaction; there are grades that need to be met so the road drains properly.

**\*\* MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADVANCE THE FY 2014 CAPITAL BUDGET OF THE CITY OF NORWALK TO THE FULL COMMON COUNCIL AS PRESENTED**

Mr. Miklave said that he had other questions, but no one was present to answer them. Mr. Sheehan said that there was a public hearing on the capital budget, when the department heads came in to answer questions. He said that this **session was to review the Mayor's recommendations and make** recommendations which will go into a memorandum to the full Common Council. Mr. Kimmel said that once on the Council floor, any item can be changed. Mr. Miklave asked Mr. Sheehan to request that the Finance Department provide an Excel spreadsheet of the Capital budget.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. MIKLAVE)**

## **TOD MASTER PLAN**

Discuss and authorize the staff to advance the public approval process of

consolidating and modifying certain urban renewal plans into a new TOD  
Redevelopment Plan

Ms. Sweitzer explained that this is an outgrowth of the master plan process that the Common Council approved in 2011. There are 3 urban renewal areas and the recommendation is to consolidate them into one TOD (Transit Oriented Development). She said that Common Council authorization is needed to move forward.

Mr. Sheehan said that the most recent plan is 23 years old. He said that they need to begin the framework of what it is and the message they need to put out to the development community. Mr. Miklave asked if there has been input from the Zoning Commission about this. Mr. Sheehan said that he spoke to the Chair regarding the TOD plan and feels that the staff is receptive. Mr. Miklave said that it is up to the Zoning Commission to implement the zoning change.

Mr. Kimmel asked what would be the problem if there were not uniform zones. Mr. Sheehan said that a problem would be the density. Currently in an I-1 Zone, housing is a special permit use.

Mr. Kimmel asked what was required to change a zone. Mr. Sheehan explained that each zone has implications across the City. Other communities have done Overlay Districts, but there has been hesitancy in Norwalk, although they have been successful in other communities. Mr. Sheehan said that they need to move through on this because other communities are in the development process.

**\*\* MR. PENA MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE STAFF TO ADVANCE THE  
PUBLIC APPROVAL PROCESS OF CONSOLIDATING AND  
MODIFYING CERTAIN URBAN RENEWAL PLANS INTO A NEW TOD  
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**CDBG**

**\*\* MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING AS  
PRESENTED:**

- 1. CONSIDER PUBLIC COMMENT ON DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN  
FOR CDBG PROGRAM YEAR 39**
- 2. ADVANCE A REQUEST TO THE COMMON COUNCIL TO REVIEW  
AND ADOPT THE ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR CDBG PROGRAM**

YEAR 39 WHICH OUTLINES THOSE CDBG PROPOSALS WHICH THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HAS RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING IN THE CDBG PROGRAM YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2014 WITH PROPORTIONAL CUTS TO BE MADE TO EACH ALLOCATION COMMENSURATE WITH ANY CUTS IN THE CITY'S ESTIMATED ENTITLEMENT GRANT FROM HUD. (THE DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN WILL BE SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE REVISIONS SHOULD THE PLANNING COMMITTEE WISH TO AMEND THIS DRAFT PRIOR TO THE COMMON COUNCIL MEETING ON APRIL 23<sup>RD</sup> IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED BEFORE THE CLOSE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2013

3. ADVANCE A REQUEST TO THE COMMON COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUBMISSION OF THE APPROVED PY39 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN TO HUD AND WITH ADMINISTRATION OF THE CDBG PROGRAM FOR THE JULY 1, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2014 PERIOD

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE ACT TAX CREDIT PROGRAM**

Review timeline for review of project proposals for participation in the Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program

\*\* MR. PENA MOVED TO APPROVE THE TIMELINE FOR REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE TAX CREDIT PROGRAM - MAY 2, 2013 AT 7:30 P.M.

\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business discussed this evening.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Sheehan announced that there will be a special meeting at the Washington Village Community Center on April 15, 2013 to review the plan with the consultants.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi  
Telesco Secretarial Services