

**CITY OF NORWALK  
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JULY 15, 2013**

**ATTENDANCE:** Douglas Hempstead, Acting Chair; Matthew Miklave, Carvin Hilliard, Michael Geake, Bruce Kimmel, Warren Peña

**STAFF:** Timothy Sheehan, Redevelopment Agency; Susan Swietzer, Redevelopment Agency; Charles Brown, NEON Facility Manager; Chiquita Stephenson, NEON Chief Operating Officer.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Substantial Amendment to the City of Norwalk's PY39 Annual Action Plan.**

Mr. Hempstead called the public hearing to order at 7:34 p.m. He asked if there was any member of the public present who wished to address the Committee regarding the amendment to the City's PY39 Annual Action Plan. No one came forward. Mr. Hempstead repeated the question twice. No one came forward. Mr. Hempstead then closed the public hearing on the City of Norwalk's PY39 Annual Action Plan at 7:35 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER.**

Mr. Hempstead called the Planning Committee meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**ROLL CALL.**

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

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - JUNE 17, 2013.**

**\*\* MR. GEAKE MOVED THE MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2013.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2013 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

No one from the public wished to address the Committee at this time.

**\*\* MR. GEAKE MOVED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEM FIRST:**

**CDBG**

**NEON REQUEST FOR EXTENSION ON PY38 CDBG AWARD FOR RENOVATION TO BATHROOMS AT BEN FRANKLIN**

**A. CONSIDER NEON REQUEST FOR EXTENSION TO PY38 CDBG AWARD FOR THE RENOVATION OF NCDP BATHROOM AT BEN FRANKLIN AND ISSUE A RECOMMENDATION TO STAFF AS TO HOW IT SHOULD PROCEED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**CDBG**

**NEON Request for Extension on PY38 CDBG Award for Renovation to Bathrooms at Ben Franklin**

**a. Consider NEON request for extension to PY38 CDBG award for the renovation of NCDP bathroom at Ben Franklin and issue a recommendation to staff as to how it should proceed.**

Mr. Sheehan said that there was a 30 day extension approved by the Committee for NEON to provide evidence of the matching funds. He then gave a summary of the discussion at the previous meeting and the staff's actions.

Mr. Miklave asked for a copy of the letter from Mr. Carney to NEON regarding the 30 day extension requesting NEON to provide evidence of the matching funds. Mr. Sheehan said that Mr. Carney had called NEON about this. Ms Chiquita Stephenson, NEON's Chief Operating Officer, came forward and distributed copies of a letter from Price Line regarding a matching donation. She added that NEON could provide copies of the checks if needed.

Mr. Miklave suggested that sending this item directly to the Council would be the least complicated course. Any amendments could be made there. He then asked if the issue regarding the deadline would be problematic. Mr. Sheehan explained that the timeline was for the Redevelopment Agency to prove to HUD that the funding was being spent appropriately.

Mr. Hempstead asked if there were any additional delays anticipated. The NEON representative said that the project was ready to go out to bid.

Mr. Miklave suggested that the original resolution be sent to the Council while Mr. Sheehan drafts up a document with the adjusted language to be brought forward to the Council.

**\*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMITTEE FORWARD TO THE COUNCIL THE INFORMATION ON THE MATCHING FUNDS AS NOTED IN THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2013.**

Discussion followed about when the project would be able to go out to bid. The length of the extension will be set and approved by the Council.

Mr. Peña said that he would like to have copies of the checks since he was not comfortable with the document. He said that he wanted to be sure that everything has been complied with.

**\*\* THE MOTION FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO FORWARD TO THE COUNCIL THE INFORMATION ON THE MATCHING FUNDS AS NOTED IN THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2013 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### BUSINESS.

#### **Wall Street Redevelopment Plan Area.**

**a. Review and approve the draft terms and conditions as set forth in the draft Option Agreement between THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT, AND HEAD OF THE HARBOR SOUTH, LLC and advance such document to the Office of Corporation Counsel for written comment.**

Mr. Sheehan explained that the Committee had reviewed the term sheet previously. Mr. Miklave said that the Committee has the authority to send this to the Council, but he felt that it did not have the authority to send this to the Corporation Counsel.

The City will be getting fair market value for the land. Mr. Sheehan explained the various things that the City would be responsible for and those which the developer would be responsible for. There is a schedule of the public improvements that would be required and the developer agreed to. Mr. Sheehan said that there had been discussion about whether there should be an LDA, but at the end of the day, it was not thought that the amount of property would warrant an LDA. Options would be the more appropriate method for this project.

Mr. Hempstead asked about the timeline. Mr. Sheehan said that it was 90 days after the approval of the agreement on page 3. "In the event that the abandonment by the City of Smith Street to the Redeveloper and any applicable appeal period has not been completed by January 2015, then the June, 2015 date hereinabove set forth in this paragraph shall automatically be extended to the earlier date upon which the Smith Street abandonment has been completed and all appeal periods have expired or June, 2015." Discussion followed.

Mr. Peña asked if the developer was ready to move on this project. Mr. Sheehan said that the developer had already started the environmental approval process. There are two small pieces that Zoning has to approve, but it is expected that these applications will be approved. The road abandonment will be a lengthy process.

Mr. Miklave pointed out that this project has been underway for the last eight years and he did not want to raise people's hopes. Mr. Peña said that the developer seems to be very reputable.

He said that when there is a good relationship with the developers, the Council should do everything possible to move the project forward.

Discussion followed about whether or not the Committee had the authority to send this to the Council or to send it to the Corporation Counsel.

**\*\* MR. MIKLAVE MOVED TO TABLE THE ITEM FOR COMMENTS BY THE CORPORATION COUNSEL.**

Mr. Sheehan said that Corporation Counsel would want to know if the Committee approved the terms. Mr. Hempstead replied that the Committee had approved the draft form.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO TABLE THE ITEM PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

#### **1. Discussion of the proposed Academy Street Extension**

Mr. Sheehan said that what the Agency was ultimately looking for with Academy Street was the understanding that there was a need for an extension, or whether the City wanted to move forward on the design/build plan. This project will most likely require City/State and Federal support. How committed the City is to this project will determine whether the City should start conversations with the State and Federal funding. The development work is advancing and it may preclude the City's ability to have the Academy Street Extension in the future. Discussion followed about the development phases.

Mr. Kimmel said that he was unclear about the need for this project. Mr. Sheehan said that without the Academy Street Extension, the traffic counts on Harbor would increase dramatically. Discussion followed.

Mr. Miklave said that he thought the concept of opening up Academy for more traffic was great, but that it was unrealistic. He then said that the City had difficulty maintaining the paving of roads and there were numerous neighborhoods that flooded routinely. Mr. Sheehan agreed and said that unfortunately, the City would not be able to revisit this in five years because of the ongoing development. He said that it would be important to know if the Redevelopment Agency should move forward into design phase. Mr. Miklave said that he felt this would be a good question for the Mayor and the full Council to discuss. He suggested possibly drafting a resolution and sending it out to the various entities for feedback. Discussion followed about how to distribute the cost of a shared public improvement.

### **ADJOURNMENT.**

**\*\* MR. HILLIARD MOVED TO ADJOURN.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

City of Norwalk  
Planning Committee of the Common Council  
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The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services