THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

125 East Avenue
P.O. Box 5125
Norwalk, CT 06856

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: NICK KYDES, CHAIRMAN

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: **MEETING NOTICE**

The next scheduled meeting of the Planning Committee of the Common Council will be held on **Thursday, December 6th, 2012 at 7:30 pm**, in the Council Chambers, 3rd floor, in Norwalk City Hall. Please Note the Time and Location.

PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
December 6, 2012
7:30 PM

A G E N D A

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 4, 2012

II. BUSINESS

A. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM

1) Advance to the Common Council for Approval the Proposed Substantial Amendment to Norwalk's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development Related to the City Neighborhoods Program

2) Discuss the Limited English Proficiency Voluntary Compliance Agreement

3) Review HUD's Evaluation of CDBG Program Performance for PY 37

4) Present CDBG Schedule for PY 39

5) Request for Approval of Mayoral Signature on Consolidated Plan Certificate of Consistency for the Norwalk Housing Authority's Annual Public Housing Authority Plan

A. The Agency, operating as the City's CDBG Administrator, deems the Norwalk Housing Authority's PHA Plan for Fiscal Year 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

6) Advance to the Common Council for Approval the Proposed revisions to the Citizen Participation Plan

7) Globe Theater – Progress update on development of Section 108 Loan Ap0plication

B. WASHINGTON VILLAGE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

1) Presentation by the Trinity Development Group of the Washington Village Redevelopment Site Plan

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLANNING

1) Review of Recommendations of the Norwalk Parking Master Plan & Implementation Methodologies

2) Review public comment from the West Avenue Public Improvements workshop

3) Discuss budget for master planning work

D. DEVELOPMENT PROJECT UPDATES

Wall Street Place
Waypointe
95/7
Norwalk Company
Oyster Shell Park

III. NEW BUSINESS

IV. OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 4, 2012

ATTENDANCE: Nicholas Kydes, Chair; Carvin Hilliard, Matthew Miklave, Michael Geake, Douglas Hempstead, David McCarthy, Warren Peña (7:34 p.m.)

STAFF: Timothy Sheehan, Redevelopment Agency Director; Munro Johnson, Redevelopment Agency; MaryGrace Weber, Redevelopment Agency

OTHERS: Council Member Bruce Kimmel, Mr. Larry Johnson, Mr. Frank Farricker, Wall Street Theater

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting at 7:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2012

**** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2012.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE IN FAVOR (KYDES, HILLIARD, GEAKE, HEMPSTEAD AND MCCARTHY) AND ONE ABSTENTION (MIKLAVE).**

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Kydes called the Public Hearing of the Planning Committee to order at 7:32 p.m.

Ms. Weber said that there were two purposes for the hearing; one of which was to review and invite public comment on CDBG program performance and the other of which was to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on a proposed amendment to the City's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, which would add redevelopment planning, brownfield remediation, public infrastructure improvements, and technical assistance to businesses as high-priority strategies to further the stated goal of supporting efforts to create income stability. Mr. Sheehan explained that the Consolidated Plan is a five-year plan approved by the Common Council and which guides the use of CDBG funds.

Mr. Peña joined the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Mr. Miklave asked whether the goals were within the HUD guidelines. Ms Weber said that they were. Mr. Miklave asked if the other similar sized cities had a process like Norwalk. Mr. Sheehan said that most other cities have a community development department that decides on

CDBG allocations and that Norwalk's program and allocation process are unique in that it is the Common Council which decides CDBG allocations which are then administered by the Redevelopment Agency on the City's behalf.

Mr. Miklave said that he completely understands the goal of income stabilization, but was uncomfortable with the aspect of providing the technical assistance to for profit businesses. He said he thought these funds were for low and moderate income groups. Mr. Sheehan noted that the City Neighborhoods program through which the Agency provides technical assistance to businesses is basically defined by geography. The technical assistance is focused on the creation of low and moderate income jobs. This implies that the businesses that are assisted are in the low and moderate income areas. Mr. Kydes pointed out that the Federal and State government have job training programs that give potential employers incentives. Mr. Sheehan then spoke about the enterprise zones and how those businesses receive incentives from the State and City.

Mr. McCarthy said that he supported the planning, transit orientated development, and brownfield remediation. He then asked for some examples of type of business loans. Mr. Sheehan said that one such loan had assisted SoNo Bakery, and in exchange for the loan, there were two jobs created. Another business, Sassafras, benefited with assistance from CDBG funding to get past a difficult economic time and one new job was created. Mr. McCarthy asked for details, which Mr. Sheehan and Ms. Weber reviewed with him. The Redevelopment Agency approves the loans and rates are set by a national agency. Discussion followed about the details of the loans.

Mr. Miklave said that he was still uncomfortable with the fact that the goal was for technical assistance rather than loans. He then reminded everyone that Norwalk had only received a million dollars in funding last year. There are times when Norwalk focuses on priorities, but as the amount goes down, there could be conflicting interests between the various priorities.

Mr. Hempstead then asked for a clearer definition of what technical assistance was. He then asked how long the loan programs had been underway. Mr. Sheehan said that a business loan program had been established with a CDBG-R grant that was provided by HUD in response to the economic recession and that this grant was recently closed out. In the past, there had been a facade program established for Washington Street. There was also a small program called "Grow Norwalk" that is administered by the National Development Council. Mr. Hempstead asked if a list could be generated of the loan recipients and the repayment schedules.

Mr. Larry Johnson asked if CDBG money is being shadowed. He wanted to know more about Goal 3 in the information packet along with what kind of accountability there was on the funding. Ms. Weber reviewed the City and Agency's process for administering CDBG funding. The Common Council decides how CDBG funding will be allocated and the Redevelopment Agency disburses the funds to the appropriate sub-recipient organizations, however these disbursements are made on a reimbursement basis and only disburses funds once sufficient documentation that the sub-recipient organization has provided the beneficiaries with the

services stipulated in its contract with the Agency and has in fact expended the funds for which it is requesting reimbursement. Agency staff also conducts on-site monitoring visits once per year to ensure that the project is being carried out as was agreed upon.

Mr. Larry Johnson then related a story about a person who was enrolled in college but had been receiving HUD funding for a project that he was not doing. He also wondered why there was only one member of the public present at the hearing. When there is pressure on the oppressed, then people don't come forward. Mr. Sheehan said that from what he understood, the college student incident did not involve Norwalk's CDBG funding. This was clearly an issue of monitoring. Mr. Sheehan said that there were checks and balances in place. Mr. Kydes said that he was hearing that there were audits being done.

Mr. Hempstead said the Council only oversees the City's CDBG program and is not involved with other programs receiving HUD funding. He noted that the largest recipient of HUD funding is the Norwalk Housing Authority.

Mr. Miklave said that the staff does a great job in monitoring the money, but that the Federal money is a large amount, which is why it requires vigorous oversight.

As there was no further discussion, Mr. Kydes closed the public hearing at 8:06 p.m.

Mr. Kydes then recused himself from the meeting and turned the meeting over to Mr. Hempstead to chair.

BUSINESS

#1. Globe Theater – Further consideration of the Resolution as approved on July 2, 2012 and additional requirements for future consideration of a Section 108 loan.

#2. Address legal threat.

#3. Discuss type of support to offer.

#4. Approve a resolution.

Mr. Hempstead said that he was happy that there was a quorum present. There was a memo in the information packet along with the attached memo from the 14th. Mr. Hempstead said that he wanted to treat this issue as a conversation.

Mr. McCarthy then asked about Mr. Farricker's letter that says the legal issue has been resolved. Mr. Farricker handed Mr. Hempstead a copy of a letter regarding the legal issue. Mr. Sheehan said that the staff was comfortable with the resolution of the legal issues.

Mr. McCarthy asked Mr. Farricker what he was looking for. Mr. Farricker said that he had a letter that resolves the legal issues, and since most of the issues outlined in the memo pertained to that issue, they were no longer applicable. The July 6th resolution requires a name change. He was asking to advance the resolution from July 6th with the name change.

**** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO RECONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:**

A RESOLUTION

FROM: COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
REGARDING: THE SECTION 108 LOAN REQUEST AS MADE BY GLOBE THEATER, INC.

WHEREAS, THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT HAS, SINCE APPROVING THE WALL STREET REDEVELOPMENT PLAN IN 2004, SOUGHT THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBE THEATER TO HOUSE A PUBLIC CULTURAL USE THAT WOULD INCREASE THE ECONOMIC VALUE AND ENHANCE THE LIVABILITY OF THE WALL STREET AREA; AND

WHEREAS, THE COMMON COUNCIL HAS LONG RECOGNIZED THE POTENTIAL NEED FOR PUBLIC FINANCING TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE AND RECOGNIZED THAT THE CITY COULD BE CALLED UPON TO PARTICIPATE IN A REDEVELOPMENT FINANCING STRUCTURE ALONG WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INVESTORS; AND

WHEREAS, THE GLOBE THEATER, INC. IS SEEKING TO ADVANCE A REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT THAT WOULD TRANSFORM THE GLOBE THEATER INTO AN ACTIVATED PERFORMANCE VENUE AND HAS REQUESTED THE CITY'S CONSIDERATION OF A PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN THE FORM OF A SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE; AND

WHEREAS, THE INTENDED USE OF THE SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE FUNDING AND THE ENTIRE PROJECT'S PROPOSED FINANCIAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL MEETINGS; AND

WHEREAS, THE INTENDED SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE HAS BEEN DETERMINED BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO WARRANT CONTINUED BUT CAUTIOUS ADVANCEMENT INTO THE FORMAL APPLICATION PROCESS WITH HUD WITH CERTAIN STRUCTURING REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS; AND

WHEREAS, SUCH REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING: (A) THE PROVISION BY THE DEVELOPER OF CASH EQUIVALENT COLLATERAL TO GUARANTEE ANY PREDEVELOPMENT DRAW ON THE CITY'S GUARANTEE CURRENTLY ESTIMATED AT $275,000; (B) UPON DRAWING ON THE REMAINING CITY GUARANTEE THE CITY BE FULLY SECURED FOR SUCH FUNDS BY AN A RATED BANK OR BETTER; (C) THESE GUARANTEES ARE TO BE EQUAL TO THE CITY'S FULL FINANCIAL EXPOSURE DURING THE TERM OF THE SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE; (D) THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BE CHARGED WITH APPROVING THE REQUESTED GUARANTEE

DISBURSEMENTS; (E) THE FINAL APPLICATION CONTAIN AN IN-DEPTH MARKET STUDY THAT CONSIDERS THE ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF THE INTENDED PROJECT WHOSE RESULTS ARE ACCEPTABLE TO THE CITY; AND

WHEREAS, IF THIS STRUCTURE IS ACHIEVABLE, IT SIGNIFICANTLY MITIGATES THE CITY'S POTENTIAL CALL RISK BY HUD UPON THE CITY'S ANNUAL ENTITLEMENT ALLOCATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDS WHICH ARE BEING USED TO SECURE THE DEBT STRUCTURE SHOULD THE GLOBE THEATER, INC. DEFAULT ON THE SECURED LOAN AND WARRANTS MEANINGFUL CONSIDERATION FROM THE FULL COMMON COUNCIL; AND

WHEREAS, SUCH CONSIDERATION TAKE THE FORM OF DIRECTING THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AS THE CITY'S CDBG ADMINISTRATOR TO PREPARE FOR THE COMMON COUNCIL'S FURTHER REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION A SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE APPLICATION CONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS AS GENERALLY OUTLINED HEREIN.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: THAT THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWALK ON THIS DATE HEREBY APPROVES THIS RESOLUTION AND INDICATES ITS SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBE THEATER AS PRESENTED BY THE GLOBE THEATER, INC. AND DIRECTS THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO UNDERTAKE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REQUESTED SECTION 108 LOAN APPLICATION CONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SO OUTLINED HEREIN FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS LEGISLATIVE BODY.

**** THE MOTION TO RECONSIDER THE RESOLUTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. MIKLAVE MOVED TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE APPLICANT TO THE WALL STREET THEATER COMPANY, INC.**

Mr. Miklave said that before he moved to approve a CDBG 108 loan he needed evidence of site control, staff sign off, hold City harmless clause, market study and numerous other issues. Mr. Sheehan said that those issues were already in the resolution.

**** THE MOTION TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE APPLICANT TO THE WALL STREET THEATER COMPANY, INC. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** The motion to approve the following resolution:**

A RESOLUTION

FROM:	COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
REGARDING:	THE SECTION 108 LOAN REQUEST AS MADE BY WALL STREET THEATER COMPANY, INC.

WHEREAS, THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT HAS, SINCE APPROVING THE WALL STREET REDEVELOPMENT PLAN IN 2004, SOUGHT THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBE THEATER TO HOUSE A PUBLIC CULTURAL USE THAT WOULD INCREASE THE ECONOMIC VALUE AND ENHANCE THE LIVABILITY OF THE WALL STREET AREA; AND

WHEREAS, THE COMMON COUNCIL HAS LONG RECOGNIZED THE POTENTIAL NEED FOR PUBLIC FINANCING TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECTIVE AND RECOGNIZED THAT THE CITY COULD BE CALLED UPON TO PARTICIPATE IN A REDEVELOPMENT FINANCING STRUCTURE ALONG WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INVESTORS; AND

WHEREAS, THE WALL STREET THEATER COMPANY, INC. IS SEEKING TO ADVANCE A REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT THAT WOULD TRANSFORM THE GLOBE THEATER INTO AN ACTIVATED PERFORMANCE VENUE AND HAS REQUESTED THE CITY'S CONSIDERATION OF A PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN THE FORM OF A SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE; AND

WHEREAS, THE INTENDED USE OF THE SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE FUNDING AND THE ENTIRE PROJECT'S PROPOSED FINANCIAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL MEETINGS; AND

WHEREAS, THE INTENDED SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE HAS BEEN DETERMINED BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO WARRANT CONTINUED BUT CAUTIOUS ADVANCEMENT INTO THE FORMAL APPLICATION PROCESS WITH HUD WITH CERTAIN STRUCTURING REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS; AND

WHEREAS, SUCH REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING: (A) THE PROVISION BY THE DEVELOPER OF CASH EQUIVALENT COLLATERAL TO GUARANTEE ANY PREDEVELOPMENT DRAW ON THE CITY'S GUARANTEE CURRENTLY ESTIMATED AT $275,000; (B) UPON DRAWING ON THE REMAINING CITY GUARANTEE THE CITY BE FULLY SECURED FOR SUCH FUNDS BY AN A RATED BANK OR BETTER; (C) THESE GUARANTEES ARE TO BE EQUAL TO THE CITY'S FULL FINANCIAL EXPOSURE DURING THE TERM OF THE SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE; (D) THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BE CHARGED WITH APPROVING THE REQUESTED GUARANTEE DISBURSEMENTS; (E) THE FINAL APPLICATION CONTAIN AN IN-DEPTH MARKET STUDY THAT CONSIDERS THE ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF THE INTENDED PROJECT WHOSE RESULTS ARE ACCEPTABLE TO THE CITY; AND

WHEREAS, IF THIS STRUCTURE IS ACHIEVABLE, IT SIGNIFICANTLY MITIGATES THE CITY'S POTENTIAL CALL RISK BY HUD UPON THE CITY'S ANNUAL ENTITLEMENT ALLOCATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDS WHICH ARE BEING USED TO SECURE THE DEBT STRUCTURE SHOULD THE WALL STREET THEATER COMPANY, INC. DEFAULT ON THE SECURED LOAN AND WARRANTS MEANINGFUL CONSIDERATION FROM THE FULL COMMON COUNCIL; AND

WHEREAS, SUCH CONSIDERATION TAKE THE FORM OF DIRECTING THE REDEVELOPMENT

AGENCY AS THE CITY'S CDBG ADMINISTRATOR TO PREPARE FOR THE COMMON COUNCIL'S FURTHER REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION A SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE APPLICATION CONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS AS GENERALLY OUTLINED HEREIN.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: THAT THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWALK ON THIS DATE HEREBY APPROVES THIS RESOLUTION AND INDICATES ITS SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBE THEATER AS PRESENTED BY THE WALL STREET THEATER COMPANY, INC. AND DIRECTS THE NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO UNDERTAKE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REQUESTED SECTION 108 LOAN APPLICATION CONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SO OUTLINED HEREIN FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS LEGISLATIVE BODY.

AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to consider at this time.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN>
** The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

NORWALK re: DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: MARYGRACE WEBER, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MAYORAL SIGNATURE ON CONSOLIDATED PLAN CERTIFICATE OF CONSISTENCY FOR THE NORWALK HOUSING AUTHORITY'S ANNUAL PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Norwalk Housing Authority (NHA) is in the process of crafting its annual Public Housing Authority (PHA) Plan, which will soon be approved by the NHA board and submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The PHA Plan summarizes NHA's strategy for providing affordable housing during the upcoming fiscal year. The PHA Plan is comprised of several pieces, which include a summary of NHA's progress toward meeting the goals established in its 2010-2014 Five Year Plan, NHA's budget and financial resources, as well as a listing of grants both pending and received. Further, the PHA Plan details NHA's administrative policies and its action plan for the Family Self Sufficiency Program, which provides educational and social service programming aimed at reducing the dependency of low-income families on welfare assistance and other public subsidies. An executive summary of the Plan is attached to this memo.

Although the PHA Plan is currently in draft form, NHA and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency ask that the Planning Committee advance this request to the Common Council so that NHA may meet HUD's January 15th deadline to submit the PHA Plan and accompanying Certificate of Consistency. NHA will hold a public hearing on December 18th, 2012 after which the NHA board will review citizen comments and adjust the PHA Plan accordingly. The PHA Plan will be finalized and approved prior to the Redevelopment Agency's request for Mayoral signature on a Certificate of Consistency for this PHA Plan.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency deems NHA's draft PHA Plan to be consistent with the City of Norwalk's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (ConPlan). The PHA Plan establishes a strategy for preserving and improving the physical quality of the approximately 1,100 public housing units NHA administers, while also improving the economic self-sufficiency of public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher holders. By doing so, the PHA Plan addresses multiple elements of the City's ConPlan. Specifically, such projects respond to *Goal One*, or the *Housing Pathway* found on page 18 of the ConPlan, which identifies the need to improve access to affordable housing opportunities through investments in the physical quality of existing housing units.

The PHA Plan also outlines programs administered by the NHA to improve the academic performance of school-age residents of Housing Authority-owned units, to position residents to improve their economic well-being through skill training and to transition residents into homeownership. These programs are consistent with *Priority Two*, or the *Income Stability Pathway*, found on page 18, which is supportive of efforts to create income stability through the provision of

literacy, job-readiness and placement services that prepare low/moderate income residents for entry into the workforce.

The PHA Plan and ConPlan do differ in one aspect. *Goal One*, listed on page A1 of the PHA Plan, identifies a goal of expanding the supply of assisted housing. This goal differs from the ConPlan, which focuses on the preservation of Norwalk's existing inventory of affordable housing as well as investments to maintain or improve the physical quality of this housing. Despite this difference, the Agency considers the PHA Plan to be substantially consistent with the City's ConPlan.

ACTION REQUESTED

The Agency, operating as the City's CDBG Administrator, deems the Norwalk Housing Authority's Public Housing Authority Plan for Fiscal Year 2013 to be consistent with the City's current Consolidated Plan and requests that the Planning Committee ***advance the Agency's request for Common Council approval for the Mayor to execute a Certificate of Consistency for the Norwalk Housing Authority's Public Housing Assistance Plan for fiscal year 2013.***

Executive Summary of Norwalk Housing Authority's Annual Public Housing Authority Plan for Fiscal Year 2013

The PHA Plan of the Norwalk Housing Authority (NHA), accessible on the Housing Authority website and on file in the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency's office, reports on NHA's progress toward achieving the goals established in its five-year plan and details NHA's policies and strategy for providing affordable housing during the upcoming fiscal year.

The contents of this PHA Plan are summarized in the following outline:

Anticipated Actions to be Taken in FY2013

- Using the award of Planning funds from HUD, the NHA intends to make an application for Choice Neighborhoods funding for Washington Village in 2013. It also intends to explore voluntary conversion, demolition and disposition and mixed financing and/or Choice Neighborhoods and other funding opportunities for Roodner Court and Meadow Gardens.
- The NHA will submit an application for demolition of Washington Village in 2013.
- The NHA will continue and expand its self-sufficiency efforts through the FSS program and through its homeownership programs for public housing residents and for HCV participants through its current approved HCV homeownership program. It will make another request of the City of Norwalk to use CDBG funds to replenish the funds for the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency Down Payment Assistance program, which is critical for low income homeownership.
- The NHA will continue to examine the use of project based Section 8 both for redevelopment of existing public housing developments including Washington Village, Roodner Court and Meadow Garden and for other initiatives.
- The NHA will continue to improve the living environment for any properties it owns or manages by promoting smoke free buildings following approval by the Board of a no-smoking policy in and around NHA properties.

Accomplishments April 1st 2012 through March 31st 2013 (including anticipated accomplishments through March 31st 2013)

Note: *Additional detail on accomplishments can be found in Attachment A of the PHA Plan.*

Goal 1. Expand the supply of assisted housing

Strategies:

- Apply for additional rental vouchers when opportunities arise
- Create new public housing if an opportunity arises
- Leverage private along with other public funds to create additional housing opportunities
- Pursue improvements and expansion of Norwalk's Work Force zoning by-law in Norwalk's 5 Year Consolidated Plan
- Pursue passage of linkage fees by-law in Norwalk's 5 Year Consolidated Plan

Outcomes Actual and Projected Through 3/31/2013:

1. Will make input to the Work Force regulations, proposing that such affordable housing should be located in low poverty census tracts when it is not an onsite component of a mixed income development

and the minimum size for a project to be subject to the regulation revert back from 20 to its original 12 units.

2. Secured a HUD Planning grant for Choice Neighborhoods.

3. Apply for a Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant if able to secure City sites on or before 4/1/2013. Complete Transformation Plan and submitted to HUD and Common Council by 3/31/2013.

4. Applied to HUD in July 2010 for Housing Choice Voucher for people with disabilities, but not awarded.

Goal 2. Improve the Quality of Assisted Housing

Strategies:

a. Analyze what is required to become a HUD high performer under the new public housing assessment system and create an action plan for this
b. Continue the high performance of the Housing Choice Voucher program
c. Continue to create or enhance programs serving NHA clients
    i. Applications for grants and loans
    ii. Improve the information systems, reporting and actions in response to reports
d. Where warranted, redevelop obsolete public housing
e. Continue efforts to become a MTW agency
f. Pursue energy efficiency improvements

Outcomes Actual and Projected Through 3/31/2013:

1. The Housing Authority of the City of Norwalk completed implementing its green grants from HUD and continues to identify additional green initiatives. The NHA worked with public utilities that have funded weatherization work at various locations including Washington Village, Colonial Village, Ludlow Village, Seaview, Leroy Downs and King Kennedy. It will continue these efforts and along with contractors such as Zero Draft and Competitive Resources Inc., will improve the condition of our buildings as it can.

2. In conjunction with the Grants that Norwalk Housing Authority received to install Solar Panels for hot water creation at Leroy Downs, Senior Court and 20 West, the NHA has prepared an IPM (Integrated Pest Management) plan. This will be a multi-faceted approach which will help the NHA to combat and prevent pest infestation of all types, thereby improving the quality of living for these residents. Also, prepared a Green Maintenance Plan for these 3 sites.

3. The Housing Authority has received numerous complaints over the years about second hand smoke. As a result it has completed a smoke free housing policy for all buildings.

4. Maintained High Performance rating under HUD's Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) performance assessment

5. The NHA implemented Phase II of its Energy Services contract with Siemens Building Technologies that includes replacement of heating systems at 356 Main Ave., King Kennedy Homes and Chapel St. Replacement of steam traps at Washington Village. Meadow Gardens Learning Center boiler replacement, conversion from oil to gas heat at 36 Fairfield Ave. and weatherization at all Federal sites.

Goal 3. Increase Assisted Housing Choices

Strategies:

a. Continue policies and procedures which enable voucher holders to move into better housing and better neighborhoods
b. Continue homeownership programs for HCV participants
c. Pursue ways to use project based vouchers to increase housing quality and choices

Outcomes Actual and Projected Through 3/31/2013:

1. There have been 6 new home ownership purchases since April 1, 2010.

2. To Increase Assisted Housing Choices & Deconcentration the NHA has continued the two tier Payment Standards program. From April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012, NHA's HUD Fiscal Year, the strategy resulted in the following:

a. 105 families moved during the fiscal year ending 3/31/2012.
b. 28 families, 27% moved to upper tier (income) census tracts:
   - FSS participants 21%
   - Disabled 14%
   - Non elderly 96 %
   - White 50%
   - Black 50%
   - Ethnicity break down – Hispanic 25%. Non-Hispanic 75%

c. 77 families or 73% moved to lower tier (income) census tracts:
   1. FSS participants 10 %
   2. Disabled 35%
   3. Non elderly 86%
   4. White 36%
   5. Black 64%
   6. Ethnicity break down – Hispanic 23%. Non-Hispanic 77%

Since 2007, the overall outcomes of this policy have been as follows:

Before the 2 tier payment standard was implemented, an average of 13% of participants who moved in between 2004 and 2006, moved to higher median income census tracts, while 87% moved to lower income census tracts. Since implementation of the 2 tier payment standard in 2007, an average of 29% of participants who moved, moved to higher income census tracts while 71% moved to lower income census tracts, more than doubling the choice of participants for lower poverty neighborhoods. Since 2007, 220% more partcipants who moved chose a high payment standard census tract and 18% fewer live in lower income census tracts.

In the first 3 quarters of 2012 there were no additional deconcentration actions required.

Goal 4. Improve Quality of NHA Properties and the Neighborhoods they are in

Strategies:

a. Continue deconcentration policies for public housing and for HCV
b. Continue to improve external appearance of properties and grounds
c. Continue to improve quality of building amenities and unit conditions
d. Continue aggressive screening for admission, lease enforcement
e. Work with the City of Norwalk to reduce crime in the neighborhoods and ameliorate negative neighborhood conditions
f. Coordinate re-development of NHA properties with the City re-development plans and Plan of Conservation and Development where consistent with NHA goals.
g. Continue strict lease enforcement

Outcomes Actual and Projected Through 3/31/2013:

1. See deconcentration information in Goal 3, Outcomes, Section 2.
2. The Capital Fund Program (CFP) (See Attachments I1, I2 and J) list a variety of projects aimed at improving the appearance of properties and grounds and the quality of amenities and units.

3. The NHA is working with the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency to revitalize the transit area where the NHA offices, Leroy Downs, Washington Village, King Kennedy, 20 West Avenue and Seaview are located.

4. It is also focusing on a Choice Neighborhood opportunity for Washington Village for which it was awarded a Planning grant by HUD in 2011. Anticipate applying for a Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant by 4/1/13 if available. Transformation Plan will be completed and submitted to Common Council and HUD.

Washington Village (CT 2-1) - is a 136 unit 1-3 bedroom Public Housing complex in the South Norwalk neighborhood of Norwalk, Connecticut in the block bound by Water Street, Raymond Street, Day Street, and Concord Street. It is the oldest public housing development in Connecticut, occupied since 1941. It consists of 11 two story residential buildings, a community building and one storage building. In general, the development is aging, building systems are obsolete; there is very little green space within the developments 4.75 acre site which has a density of 29 units per acre.

Goal 5. Promote Self-Sufficiency of NHA Customers

Strategies:

a. Continue and create promotions and opportunities for customers of the NHA to improve their skills and job opportunities
    i. Continue focus on children attending school
    ii. Continue educational mentoring programs
    iii. Continue other learning programs and expand where needed
    iv. Continue scholarship programs for post-high school education
b. Continue outreach to working families for admission to NHA programs and housing
c. Expand the Family Self Sufficiency programs for HCV and Public Housing

Outcomes Actual and Projected Through 3/31/2013:

Family Self Sufficiency Program Goals and Accomplishments for April 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012

Activities and Outcomes	Grant Goal through 3/30/13	Actual through 8/31/12
Self-sufficiency Participants	135	135
Youth College Enrollments	5	12
Youth Summer Programs	10	58
GED & ESL	7	7
Homeownership Education	20	30[*2]
Homeownerships	2	3
Credit & Financial Counseling	15	23
Childcare Connections	10	87
Community Service & Volunteering	30	39
Health / Certificate programs	40	68[*3]
Employment Counseling	50	66
Job Readiness Programs	10	29
Employment Obtained	7	13

[*1]Includes Grants for Section 8 Family Self-Sufficiency, Federal Public Housing Family Self-Sufficiency, ROSS Home/Health/Grow, ROSS Service Coordinator
[*2]Homeownership workshop scheduled for October 2012
[*3]Includes 40 Fall 2012 health and certificate program enrollments

The self-sufficiency team conducted ten workshop and information sessions open to all NHA residents including home ownership, budgeting, nutrition, health and cancer prevention, Health Career education opportunities through the Workplace, extended studies opportunities through Norwalk Community College, and Career Resources' STRIVE job-readiness program. The first STRIVE program resulted in fifteen graduates with nine people currently employed. The second STRIVE program in Fall 2012 resulted in five graduates in October. Already in only four weeks since graduation, three of the five are employed.

Seven people have graduated from HUD's Family Self-Sufficiency program since April 2012 with an average escrow disbursement for graduates of $12,230.

Forty people are currently enrolled for Fall 2012 programs at Norwalk Community College across a variety of fields including health care, security, and computers.

Scholarship Program April 1, 2012 to August 31, 2012

Harvard Business School of Connecticut Community Partners Report
In April, HBS Community Partners agreed to review the Scholarship Program. During the review process they determined that 236 scholarships were awarded to 132 recipients totaling $498,000 in 14 years (1998-2012). Also, they reported that the graduation rate of both African American and Hispanic program recipients at 4-year and 2 year colleges was higher than the State rate. A full report was presented in September, 2012, but the data was compiled through August and its findings will be implemented for the 2013 Scholarship Program. The HBS Report Group was extremely impressed with the Scholarship Program and some members have offered to continue assisting the Program.

2012 Scholarship Program and Awards

Overview
37 College Scholarships were awarded to public housing applicants totaling $132,000 in this national award winning program. This included 18 repeat applicants who are continuing in college and 19 new applicants. Of these applicants 27 are registered to attend 4 year colleges, 10 are set to attend 2-year community colleges.

Recipients assisted by the Scholarship Program in applying for other scholarships received $62,000 in other leveraged scholarships, making the total Norwalk Housing recipients received over $194,000.

Activities
In April, Scholarship Program volunteers went to Norwalk's high schools to work with public housing resident youth who were seniors on their Norwalk Housing Scholarship Program applications. 11 high school seniors received scholarships as a result of this outreach.

Additional assistance was given to all applicants-- new and repeat-- on other scholarship applications from April through June. Recipients of our scholarship received $62,000 in scholarships from these other resources.

In July The Scholarship Program held the 2012 Awards Ceremony at Stepping Stones Museum for Children attended by the recipients and their families and many of Norwalk's elected officials and prominent citizens. A Special Guest Speaker was Dan Henson, Officer, GE Company and President & CEO of GE Capital, Americas. He discussed making your career in a company. Also speaking was Suria Ceja, a 2012 Scholarship Program Graduate from UCONN. She spoke about how important both the financial support and personal guidance given by the Program had been for her during her four years at college and she encouraged the students to keep in close contact with the Program outreach because it had helped her at critical times. Suria Ceja has since obtained work at MasterCard and hopes to continue in a career there and be assigned overseas.

In August a Mandatory Freshmen Orientation Workshop was held to prepare students for college, many of whom have no relatives who have gone to college to go to for advice. This workshop creates a communication between the Program and the students that continues through the academic year providing guidance as needed and adding to the program's extremely successful graduation rate. Time management, tutor recruitment, establishing positive relationships with professors, finding the right guidance counselors, and what to expect overall, are topics discussed with students and family members at this workshop.

In August a special check presentation was held at the Norwalk Housing Learning Center for middle school and high school youth so that these younger students could meet and be inspired by the students that are going to college. At the check presentations, college students introduced themselves, talked about their majors and motivations to go to college. After the presentation of checks there was a question and answer period and then a free time period for the college students to mix with the younger students.

In August a batch email list is compiled of all recipients. These recipients begin to receive emails on college scholarships, other programs of interest, reminders of documentation due to be submitted to the scholarship program.

Accomplishments April 1st 2012 through March 31st 2013 (including anticipated accomplishments through March 31st 2013) Learning Centers

The Norwalk Housing Authority Learning Centers (NHALC) are committed to providing NHA students with academic support, enrichment programs, school and career guidance, character building opportunities and educational field trips. NHALC's provide safe, comfortable environments, as well as qualified, dedicated staff that help empower children to reach their highest potential. The long term goal of the overall NHALC Program is to support, guide and assist NHA students to launch successfully into adulthood. 47.40 % of all Norwalk's school age children qualify for reduced or free lunch of that percent 43% reside in the zip code address of 06854 which includes public housing that is overseen by the NHA.

The academic support that the NHALC provides include homework help, tutoring, literacy support provided by state certified reading specialists, computer access for school projects, a math and science program and the newly developed Bridge to College Program for middle and high school students. All of our staff have earned Bachelor degrees and many hold advanced degrees as well. A volunteer program is currently being developed with hopes of launching in January 2013.

NHA maintains a strong, communicative relationship with the Norwalk Public Schools. We strive to develop relationships with teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors within all Norwalk Public Schools. Our staff obtains parental permission to talk, write, and/or email school staff members to get information about a child's academic progress, struggles, behavior issues, and the ways the Learning Center Staff can best assist a student. NHA also employs an outreach worker who connects with school, family and student to identify student needs and try to prevent dropping out or failing.

Student participation in the Learning Centers

- As of May 2012 the Learning Centers had over 301 students registered. Each student's parent or guardian was required to register their child in person in order to begin to foster more effective parent/center communication.
- The Learning Center Summer program (June 2012-August 2012) had 205 students registered across the five Learning Centers. Students participated in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, such as weekly beach trips, dance and art classes, science programs and continuing to engage in the Literacy program to improve reading skills.
- Fall registration for 2012 NHA Learning Centers has over 210 registered students. We are currently expanded the programs we offer to middle and high school students with an expectation that specific program tracks will engage new students to the centers. We anticipate

an increase in registration among the middle and high school students this coming winter 2013. Current registration by age and gender and PHA community:

Learning Centers Accomplishments:

- A June 2012 assessment of student reading skills/performance showed a 78% overall increase in scores versus a baseline assessment. This reflected a 2% increase from last year.
- A June 2012 assessment of student math skills/performance showed a 72% increase in scores versus a January 2012 baseline. In comparing the December data with the June data, there is empirical evidence to suggest that V-Math continues to enhance the students' math skills.
- NHA was awarded the 2012 National Merit in Program Innovation-Resident and Client services for the Public Housing Youth Math Literacy Program from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials in Washington, D.C.
- Partnering with Stepping Stones Museum for Children, Norwalk Community College and Literacy How. Six of NHA's Early Childhood program 3 & 4 year olds were accepted into the Early Literacy and Language Initiative (ELLI) Early Childhood program at Stepping Stones Museum for Children this fall 2012.
- NHA Learning Centers also provide opportunity for adult residents to have access to computers for job readiness skills (resume writing etc.) and space to hold resident community meetings.
- NHA received funding in 2011 through CDBG for renovations of one of the Learning Center sites, Roodner Court which was completed in the summer of 2012.

Goal 6. Promote Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

Strategies:

a. Have staff attend Fair Housing training at least every other year.
b. At joint meeting with the City of Norwalk's Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent, the Fair Housing Officer, staff of the Norwalk Housing Authority and some Landlords discussed Fair Housing. The Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent and the Fair Housing Officer of the City of Norwalk provided information about Fair Housing and Landlord/Tenant rights for Landlords.
c. Send annual mailing to HCV landlords on Fair Housing and Landlord/Tenant rights prepared by City of Norwalk's Fair Housing Officer and Director of the Human Relations and Fair Rent.
d. Send an annual mailing to all public housing voucher participants prepared by City of Norwalk's Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent and the Fair Housing Officer which may include training invitations.
e. Add FAQ on Fair Housing and Landlord/Tenant rights to NHA's website if prepared by Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent and Fair Housing Officer.
f. Invite the Fair Housing Officer and Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent Fair to participate in group HCV briefings.
g. Review the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing for NHA policies and programs.
h. Request the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency review and prioritize its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing.

Outcomes Actual and Projected Through 3/31/2013:

Based upon the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency's (NRA) 2010 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, the Norwalk Housing Authority (NHA) evaluated how it could positively impact and further fair housing in Norwalk.

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency's preliminary analysis of Norwalk's marketplace led to identification of five impediments as follows:

1. Discrimination in the housing market
2. Housing affordability
3. Zoning, Planning and land use issues
4. Local opposition (NIMBY)
5. Lending practices

The Housing Authority reviewed its own operations and developed actions to implement the recommendations in that Plan.

IN ADDITION THE NHA WAS ABLE TO SECURE THE FOLLOWING GRANTS WHICH PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR THE GOALS LISTED ABOVE

Grants received by Norwalk Housing Authority 2012

1. **HUD 2012** Ross Service Coordinator, $240,000 three year grant to fund a full-time coordinator to serve residents living in Washington Village. The coordinator would promote service delivery including education, job training, and other referrals to 50 residents
2. **United Way** Math Literacy program, $45,000
3. **CDBG38**, installation of automatic doors at central office, $18,000; installation of a/c at Ludlow and Senior Court, $38,000
4. **HUD 2012** Public Housing Family Self Sufficiency Program -- $69,000 to continue to fund the salaries and fringe benefits of a coordinator to promote and foster assistance with public and private resources to enable participating families to increase earned income, financial literacy, reduce or eliminate the need for welfare assistance, and to make progress toward economic independence and self- sufficiency.
5. **HUD 2012** Family Self Sufficiency Housing Choice Voucher Program -- $69,000 to continue to fund the salary and fringe benefits of a coordinator to ensure continuity of services to those families currently enrolled in HCV FSS program. The coordinator would promote strategies to enhance education, training and job opportunities that are available to HCV FSS program participants.

Pending Grant Applications

1. Near and Fair Aid, early childhood program, $10,000
2. Emergency Safety and Security to remove and install drop ceilings at Roodner, $135,445

Significant Amendments to Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan *(See PHA Plan Attachments B1, B2, B3 and B4 for more detail*

- A new preference for the chronically disabled limited to 5 applicants will be established
- A revised Community Service Plan for residents in Federal Public Housing will be adopted, clarifying eligible service and refining administrative procedures
- A Reasonable Accommodation Plan is to be adopted

NHA Budget (*See Attachments C1 and C2 for more detail).*

- Total budgeted expenditures for FY2013: $26,503,000

Civil Rights

See Attachment L1 which provides a demographic breakdown of applicants to family public housing and senior public housing, as well as Housing Choice Voucher and Special Program participants and other information about the NHA's support of fair housing and of the City's Plan to eliminate impediments to Fair Housing.

Violence Against Women Act Policy

See Attachment M which details NHA's policy to comply with the Violence Against Women Act, which prohibits PHAs from denying an applicant admission to the Public Housing Program on the basis that the applicant/tenant is or has been a victim or domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking

NORWALK re: DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: MARYGRACE WEBER, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT RELATED TO HUD FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMPLIANCE REVIEW OF NORWALK

Following a compliance review conducted by the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Office (FHEO) of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), HUD issued a preliminary finding of non-compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in the area of access for persons of limited English proficiency. Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving any form of federal financial assistance, CDBG or other. Failure to provide persons having limited English proficiency with meaningful access to services is considered to be discrimination on the basis of national origin.

The basis for HUD's preliminary finding was that Norwalk had not conducted a required analysis of the needs of its Limited English Proficient population as they relate to the provision of City services and had not, according to FHEO determination, implemented procedures to ensure non-discrimination against non-English speaking persons.

In order to avoid a formal finding of non-compliance that could jeopardize its future CDBG funding, the City of Norwalk entered into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (attached) with HUD, effective September 28th, 2012, which establishes six specific provisions which the City of Norwalk must meet no later than March 31st, 2013 (this deadline reflects an extension of the deadlines initially included in the Voluntary Compliance Agreement, as has been approved by HUD). Those provisions require that the City conduct an analysis of the needs of its Limited English Proficient (LEP) population as they relate to City services, that it develop a Language Access Plan which establishes procedures for serving the needs of LEP persons; that it modify correspondence and forms to include a statement written in Norwalk's five most commonly spoken languages that these documents can be translated upon request; that it provide training on language services and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to City staff who routinely interact with the public in the providing of services; that it post notices in common areas, offices, and anywhere applications are taken and the public is served which explain available language services; and that the City provide proof of its efforts to comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements of Title VI and the requirements of the Voluntary Compliance Agreement.

The required actions for meeting the provisions of the VCA will be guided by the Redevelopment Agency and Human Relations Office; the staff training component will be coordinated together with the Personnel Department. The following paragraphs summarize the action steps and deadlines associated with meeting each of the provisions of the Agreement:

***Specific Provision A**: Modify template forms to include a phrase in the City's five most common languages (excluding English) to indicate that each of these documents can be translated upon request [Associated Deadline: March 31st, 2013]*

In consideration of the time and cost associated with updating all such forms within the time frame established by HUD, the aforementioned phrase will be printed on independent inserts which City departments would be responsible for attaching to all forms being made available to the public. Over time, and as template forms are updated, City departments would incorporate the required language directly into those documents.

A translation service can be contracted with to provide written translation on an as-needed basis, if and when translation requests are made by members of the public. The needs analysis required under Specific Provision B will inform an estimate of the annual cost of providing translated documents to residents.

***Specific Provision B:** Conduct an analysis of the needs of its Limited English Proficient (LEP) population as they relate to receiving equal access to City services [Associated Deadline: December 31st, 2013]*

U.S. Census and Norwalk Public School (NPS) data have been used to estimate the number of LEP persons residing in Norwalk[1]. Human Relations and CDBG staff are now conducting a survey of each City department to determine the frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with City departments providing services or information, the language resources that are currently available for meeting LEP needs (e.g., bilingual staff or volunteers) and the frequency with which outside language services (interpretation/document translation) are likely to be required.

***Specific Provision C:** Develop and adopt a Language Access Plan which establishes procedures for serving the needs of LEP persons [Associated Deadline: March 31st, 2013]*

The needs analysis detailed in the preceding paragraph will inform the development of LEP policy, as set forth in a Language Access Plan. This policy will take into account both LEP needs as they relate to receiving equal access to City services and the cost of language services that would address those identified needs. LEP policy, to be drafted by Human Relations and CDBG staff, will seek to minimize language service costs by utilizing all available resources (e.g., bilingual City staff, community volunteers).

***Specific Provision D:** Post notices in common areas, offices, and anywhere applications are taken and the public is served which explain available language services; modify outreach documents, notifications, advertisements and forms to include information on available language services [Associated Deadline: March 31st, 2013]*

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[1] While Census indicates that 14.6% of Norwalk's population is not proficient in English, NPS data suggests that this population is in fact higher, as 37% of NPS students speak a language other than English at home. Spanish is the most commonly spoken non-English language, followed by French, French Creole, Greek, and Italian.

Upon Common Council adoption of a Language Access Plan, CDBG staff will prepare notices explaining available language services and will ensure that these notices are properly posted.

The language services training described in the following paragraph will provide instruction to all department heads and participating staff that outreach documents, notifications, advertisements and forms must include an explanation of available language services written in the city's five most commonly spoken non-English languages. This notification will be reflective of policy set forth in the Language Access Plan as adopted by the Common Council. Given the costs associated with modifying all such documents within the time frame established by HUD, the City would pursue an interim approach similar to that proposed for meeting Specific Provision A, which would involve attaching independent inserts summarizing available language services to all pre-printed materials being made available to the public. Over time, and as such materials are updated or reprinted, City departments would incorporate the required language directly into those documents.

Specific Provision E: *Provide training on language services and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to all City staff who routinely interact with the public in the providing of services [Associated Deadline yet to be determined by HUD]*

HUD has indicated that its FHEO office can provide training in language services and Title VI which would be provided on-site to department heads and via web seminar to those City staff members identified by their department heads as having routine interaction with the public.

Specific Provision F: *Provide proof of efforts to comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements of Title VI and the requirements of the Voluntary Compliance Agreement [Associated Deadline: March 31st, 2013]*

The Agency's CDBG staff will document Norwalk's compliance efforts and will provide such documentation to HUD within the given reporting timeframe.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

OFFICE OF FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Voluntary Compliance Agreement

Under

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

CONCERNING

CITY OF NORWALK

REVIEW NUMBERS: 01-12-R005-6

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Voluntary Compliance Agreement
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

City of Norwalk

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (hereinafter "The Department") conducted a compliance review under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) of the Recipient, the City of Norwalk. After conducting the review and before issuing findings, the Department discussed the results of the review with the Special Projects Manager, Norwalk Redevelopment. During this discussion recipient agreed to avoid formal findings by entering into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) with the Department.

The preliminary findings revealed certain Title VI deficiencies. The Department found that City of Norwalk is a "Recipient" of "Federal financial assistance" as defined by the Department's regulations defining those terms at 24 C.F.R. §8.3 and 24 C.F.R. §1.3. Specifically, City of Norwalk receives funding under the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

The preliminary findings of non-compliance also revealed:

Recipient is not in compliance with Title VI in the area of access for persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Recipient has not conducted an assessment of its eligible population who may be LEP and implemented procedures to ensure non-discrimination against non-English speaking persons.

Recipient and the Department agree that it is in their respective interests to voluntarily settle and resolve this matter without the potential for lengthy findings, evidentiary hearings, or other judicial processes. Therefore, City of Norwalk agrees to the terms of this VCA.

II
DEFINITIONS

- **Department** — The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- **Housing and Community Development Assistance:** Financial assistance provided or otherwise made available through a HUD housing or community development program through any grant, loan, loan guarantee, cooperative agreement, or contract, and includes community development funds in the form of community development block grants, and loans guaranteed under section 108 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended. Housing and community development assistance does not include financial assistance provided through a contract of insurance or guaranty.

- **Recipient:** Entity which receives CDBG covered assistance, directly from HUD or from another recipient and includes, but is not limited to, any State, unit of local government, PHA, DIA, Indian tribe, or other public body, public or private nonprofit organization, private agency or institution, mortgagor, developer, limited dividend sponsor, builder,

property manager, community housing development organization, resident management corporation, resident council, or cooperative association.

III
GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. This Agreement applies to all federally funded projects, related facilities, and programs or activities that City of Norwalk owns, controls, operates or sponsors, as well as City of Norwalk's administration of sub-recipient of CDBG program funding.

B. The effective date of this Agreement is the date of the last signature in Section VIII. This Agreement shall be binding on all of the officers, trustees, directors, agents, employees, and successors or assigns of City of Norwalk and the Department. This Agreement shall remain in effect until City of Norwalk has satisfactorily completed the provisions set forth in this Agreement. The Department will monitor City of Norwalk's implementation of this Agreement and may amend the Agreement if the Department determines that it is in the best interests of the parties.

C. This Agreement does not increase or diminish the ability of any person or class of persons to exercise their rights under Title VI. This Agreement does not create any private right of action for any person or class of persons not a party to this Agreement.

D. This Agreement does not affect the ability of the Department or City of Norwalk to take action under appropriate statutory or regulatory authorities unrelated to the specific issues covered by this VCA.

E. Upon execution, this Agreement is a public document. A copy of this Agreement shall be made available to any person for their review in accordance with the law. City of Norwalk shall provide a copy of this Agreement to any person upon request. City of Norwalk shall also provide a copy of this Agreement to each Project Manager and agency-wide resident organization.

F. City of Norwalk shall provide a copy of reporting data it generates to neither comply with this Agreement to any person upon request in accordance with City of Norwalk's Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act procedures, except that no individual or organization shall be charged any amount for the data nor will any part of the reports be considered privileged material. In no event will public disclosure include personally identifiable information regarding applicants or residents.

G. This Agreement is the controlling document concerning City of Norwalk compliance from the effective date of this Agreement without regard to any prior Department guidance, waivers, administrative decisions, letters, opinions, or similar guidance regarding City of Norwalk's obligations, responsibilities, or technical requirements under Title VI.

This Agreement does not affect any requirement for City of Norwalk to comply with all requirements of Title VI not addressed in this Agreement.

IV
SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

A. Modify Correspondence and Forms. Within 90 days after the effective date of this Agreement, City of Norwalk will update template forms, both internal and external forms, to include a phrase in the 5 most common languages as determined by language needs assessment of the LEP (other than English) that this document can be translated upon request.

B. Conduct the Four Factor Analysis. Within 60 days after the effective date of this Agreement, City of Norwalk will conduct an individualized assessment based on (1) the number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service population (2) the frequency with LEP persons that come into contact with City of Norwalk (3) the nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by City of Norwalk and (4) the resources available and cost to City of Norwalk.

C. Develop a Language Access Plan (LAP). Within 90 days after the effective date of this Agreement, City of Norwalk shall consider the Four Factor Analysis and determine whether it needs to improve its access to persons of Limited English Proficiency. In making this assessment, the recipient agrees to adopt and publish a formal Language Action Plan. This provision can be accomplished by implementing the Department's guidance published in the Federal Register Volume 72, Number 13, pages 2731-2754, January 22, 2007.

D. Recipient will submit its analysis to HUD within 90 days after the effective date of the Agreement, and adopt any changes or suggestions that HUD makes.

D. Providing Notice to LEP Persons. Within 90 days after the effective date of this Agreement, City of Norwalk will post signs in common areas, offices, and anywhere applications are taken and the public is served. The postings should be translated into the most common languages encountered and should also explain how to get language help. Additionally, outreach documents, notifications, advertisements and forms should state language services are available and/or be written in more common languages by City of Norwalk.

E. Staff Training. Within 120 days after the effective date of this Agreement, City of Norwalk will provide to the Department a written statement with notification that City of Norwalk has provided training in Language Services for those staff who routinely interact with the public in the providing of services. Additionally, City of Norwalk will provide training for such staff about Title VI. City of Norwalk will include each staff person's name, title and the topics covered.

F. Statutory and Regulatory Requirements. Within 120 days after the signing of this Agreement, City of Norwalk will provide proof of its efforts to comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements of Title VI and the requirements of this VCA.

V
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Within one hundred and twenty (120) days after effective date of this agreement, City of Norwalk shall submit documentation to the Department certifying the completion, work it has performed or detailing the progress toward completion of each of the specific provisions of this agreement. Said notice will be provided to:

   United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
   Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
   Susan Forward, Region I Director, FHEO
   T. P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building
   10 Causeway Street
   Boston, MA 02222

2. As to the actions yet taken or completed, City of Norwalk shall provide a status report and continue submitting status reports to the Department on a quarterly basis (90 days) after the signing of this Agreement until it certifies that all tasks have been completed.

3. For the purpose of this Agreement, if the reporting day falls on a weekend or a government recognized holiday, the report will be due the first business day after the weekend or holiday.

4. The purpose of this agreement is to bring the City of Norwalk into compliance with applicable statutes. In the event that any of the goals enumerated in this agreement are not met in a timely manner, the City of Norwalk will promptly notify the Department of the failure, the cause and projected completion date within 30 days of the quarterly reporting due date. The Department may at that time extend the timeframes in order to achieve the goals of the VCA or may, in its discretion, find the City of Norwalk in non-compliance if insufficient progress has been made or City of Norwalk projected completion dates are insufficient to achieve the goals of the VCA or for any other reason related to compliance. Failure to notify the Department promptly, without good cause, will result in a finding of non-compliance.

VI
MONITORING PROVISIONS

A. The Department will monitor City of Norwalk's implementation of this Agreement. At its discretion, the Department may convene meetings with City of Norwalk's representatives, propose modifications, or conduct other business with respect to this Agreement.

C. The Department will determine whether recipient has complied with the terms of this VCA.

D. The Department will provide monitoring reports with formal written notifications based upon the specific provisions listed in Section IV.

E. The Department may amend the Agreement if in fact it is in the best interest of the parties to the Agreement.

F. In the event that City of Norwalk fails to comply in a timely fashion with any requirement of this Agreement without obtaining advance written Agreement from the Department, the Department may enforce the terms of this Agreement by any contractual, statutory or regulatory remedy.

G. Failure by the Department to enforce this entire Agreement or any provision in the Agreement with regard to any deadline or any other provision herein shall not be construed as a waiver of its right to do so with regard to other deadlines and provisions of this Agreement. Furthermore, failure by the Department to enforce this entire Agreement or any provision thereof shall not be construed as a waiver of any obligation of City of Norwalk under this Agreement.

VII
ENFORCEMENT

A. Failure to carry out the terms of the Agreement may result in the suspension or termination of or refusal to grant or to continue federal financial assistance, or other manner that would interfere with a Recipient's rights to due process.

B. The parties intend to resolve any disputes with respect to non-compliance with this Agreement in a timely manner and efficient manner. The Department may take any of the following actions in the event of non-compliance, unless specifically noted otherwise in this Agreement.

1) Any act(s) or omission(s) that violates the terms of this Agreement may serve as grounds for the Department withholding some or all of City of Norwalk's Community Development Block grant funding or other CPD funding from the Department. 24 C.F.R. § 968.335.

2) Any act(s) or omission(s) that violates the terms of this Agreement may serve as grounds for the Department to conduct a compliance review under Section 504, Section 3, Title VI or other appropriate statutory or regulatory authority.

C. The acts set forth in this section of the Agreement, Section VII, are not mutually exclusive and the Department has the right to pursue any or all of these remedies or any other remedies available under law.

VIII
SIGNATURES

These signatures attest to the approval and acceptance of this Voluntary Compliance Agreement:

For the Recipient:

Richard Moccia
Mayor, City of Norwalk

Date 9/26/12

For the Department:

Susan M. Forward
Region 1 Director
Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

Date 9/28/12

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Office of Community Planning and Development
Hartford Field Office
One Corporate Center 10th Floor
Hartford, Connecticut 06103-3220
Telephone (860) 240-9770
Fax (860) 240-4857

New England

NOV 16 2012

NOV 20 2012

Mr. Timothy Sheehan
Executive Director
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
125 East Avenue
P.O. Box 5125
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125

Dear Mr. Sheehan:

The City of Norwalk received $889,537 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in Federal Fiscal Year 2011, the year covered by this report. This is HUD's report on our assessment of the use of those funds.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, and the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990, require that grant recipients submit annual performance reports for the programs covered under these Acts. The Acts also require the Secretary of HUD to determine annually that the grant recipient is in compliance with these statutes and has the continuing capacity to carry out the programs for which it received funds.

Our review includes an analysis of each grantee's planning process; its management of funds; progress in carrying out the strategies and goals expressed in the Consolidated Plan; compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements; accuracy of required performance reports; and evaluation of its accomplishments in meeting key departmental objectives. Our Annual Assessment is directed not only toward meeting the mandates of the statutes, but to provide the basis for working together collaboratively to achieve the revitalization goals of your community. We congratulate you on your community's many accomplishments during this past year regarding the achievement of Departmental Objectives.

Noteworthy Accomplishments

The Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now (NEON) received $10,700 in funds to provide GED preparation classes and career counseling. In addition, NEON provides community development and emergency assistance to low- and moderate-income households. NEON provided 48 low-income individuals with job training through GED preparation and career counseling.

The City provided $9,261 for downpayment and closing cost assistance to 6 low- and moderate-income homebuyers. The City leveraged funds $300,000 with funding from the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and the State of Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development. The assistance is provided in the form of a forgivable loan.

The Domestic Violence Crisis Center was provided $15,100 for counseling to victims of domestic violence and advocacy services. These services were provided to 579 individuals at the Center and the shelter facilities.

The City met our timeliness standard that not more than the equivalent of 1.5 years of program funds was on its Line of Credit on May 1, 2012, sixty days before the end of its Program Year. The City had 1.44 as its sixty day ratio. We commend the City on maintaining its timeliness standards.

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

The City carried out activities that Affirmatively Furthered Fair Housing, including rehabilitation, public facility renovation for persons with disabilities, housing counseling, providing security deposits, and providing downpayment and closing costs. The City identifies four impediments to fair housing choice, including discrimination in the housing market; housing affordability; zoning, planning, and land issues; and lending practices. We commend the City on conducting activities that addressed three of these impediments. We encourage to the City to invest in activities that create accessible housing for disabled persons, beyond the public facility renovation completed in FY2011.

If you have questions or would like to receive Technical Assistance, please call Michelle Johnson, Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Specialist, at 860-240-9780.

Financial

We reviewed the financial reconciliation you provided to us, and we find that the CAPER expenditures appear to be consistent with draws. The City's Single Audit for the period ending June 30, 2011, did not contain any audit findings.

Conclusion

We are rating our Connecticut grantees' overall performance in carrying out their programs as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. This determination is based upon information available to this office, and does not reflect a comprehensive evaluation of specific activities. We have determined the City of Norwalk's performance to be satisfactory. We further deem that Norwalk has the continuing capacity to administer its programs.

If you have questions or would like to discuss any of these issues, please do not hesitate to call me or Kelsey Brown, Community Planning and Development Representative, at (860) 240-9723.

Sincerely,

Caroline F. Carlson

for Gary Reisine
Director
Community Planning and Development

cc: MaryGrace Weber

NORWALK re: DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: MARYGRACE WEBER, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: SUMMARY OF PROCESS AND SCHEDULE ASSOCIATED WITH ALLOCATION OF CDBG FUNDING FOR PROGRAM YEAR 39 (JULY 1, 2013 – JUNE 30, 2014)

The Redevelopment Agency will soon initiate the public process associated with disseminating the City's CDBG resources for Program Year 39 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014). Agency staff is providing this briefing to apprise the Planning Committee members of the steps and schedule associated with this process.

Notice of Funding Availability

Each year, the Redevelopment Agency circulates a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) inviting local stakeholders to apply for funding from Norwalk's annual entitlement of CDBG resources. The services offered by sub-grantees to low and moderate income residents are essential to the implementation of the strategies identified within the City's five-year Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (ConPlan), which serves as the framework for the allocation of CDBG resources.

Date of NOFA release: December 28th, 2012

Phase I Applications

Applicants are asked to submit their proposals in two phases. The Phase I application is relatively simple, while the Phase II, or full application, is very detailed and time-intensive to complete. The intention of Phase I of the application process is to obtain basic information as to the eligibility of the proposed activity, its consistency with ConPlan goals and objectives, the substance of the activity being proposed, the dollar amount being requested, and the number and type of beneficiaries that this proposed activity will serve.

To assist Planning Committee members in their review of applications, a scoring committee reflective of Norwalk's diversity will assess all eligible applications according to objective scoring criteria as will be outlined in the NOFA. Phase I applications, scoring sheets and a summary of proposals and scores will be provided to Planning Committee members ahead of a public hearing at which all CDBG applicants are invited to present their proposals. Following this presentation, Planning Committee members will be asked to recommend those applications that are most worthy and likely to be funded to advance to Phase II of the application process.

Submission due date: January 18th

Public Hearing that will include brief presentations by CDBG applicants: TBD by Planning Committee

Planning Committee recommendation regarding which proposals should advance to Phase II of the application process: February 7th

Phase II Applications

Phase II of the application will require much greater detail on the project and a detailed budget, as well as relevant background information related to the finances and non-profit status of the applicant organization. Phase II applications will be summarized by staff and assessed by the aforementioned scoring committee. Following their review of Phase II applications, Planning Committee members will be asked to make recommendation as to which proposals should receive PY39 funding allocations. At this time, Planning Committee members will be asked to advance the AAP, subject to any changes requested by the Committee in response to public comment, to the full Council for its review and approval.

Submission due date: February 25th

Planning Committee recommendation regarding PY39 funding allocations: To be requested during March 7th meeting of Planning Committee

Development, Review, Approval and Submission of PY39 Annual Action Plan

Funding allocations, as recommended by the Planning Committee, will be outlined in a draft PY39 Annual Action Plan for Housing and Community Development (AAP) which will be provided to the Planning Committee and made available to the public for a 30-day comment period. At the end of the 30-day comment period, these materials will be submitted to the Planning Committee for its review. The tight timeframe, however, will not allow for discussion of these materials during a regular meeting of the Planning Committee, however a special meeting could be scheduled to review the public comment received and discuss any changes that should be made to the AAP before the document is submitted to the full Council for its review and approval. Once approved by the Common Council and signed by the Mayor, the final AAP will be submitted to HUD.

Release of draft AAP for Public Comment: March 15th

Close of 30-day Public Comment period: April 15th

Planning Committee review of draft AAP with public comment: April 15th – April 20th

Common Council review and approval of AAP: April 23rd

Submission of final AAP to HUD: On or before May 15th

NO ACTION IS BEING REQUESTED AT THIS TIME

NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: MARYGRACE WEBER, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MAYORAL SIGNATURE ON CONSOLIDATED PLAN CERTIFICATE OF CONSISTENCY FOR THE NORWALK HOUSING AUTHORITY'S ANNUAL PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Norwalk Housing Authority (NHA) is in the process of crafting its annual Public Housing Authority (PHA) Plan, which will soon be approved by the NHA board and submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The PHA Plan summarizes NHA's strategy for providing affordable housing during the upcoming fiscal year. The PHA Plan is comprised of several pieces, which include a summary of NHA's progress toward meeting the goals established in its 2010-2014 Five Year Plan, NHA's budget and financial resources, as well as a listing of grants both pending and received. Further, the PHA Plan details NHA's administrative policies and its action plan for the Family Self Sufficiency Program, which provides educational and social service programming aimed at reducing the dependency of low-income families on welfare assistance and other public subsidies. An executive summary of the Plan is attached to this memo.

Although the PHA Plan is currently in draft form, NHA and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency ask that the Planning Committee advance this request to the Common Council so that NHA may meet HUD's January 15th deadline to submit the PHA Plan and accompanying Certificate of Consistency. NHA will hold a public hearing on December 18th, 2012 after which the NHA board will review citizen comments and adjust the PHA Plan accordingly. The PHA Plan will be finalized and approved prior to the Redevelopment Agency's request for Mayoral signature on a Certificate of Consistency for this PHA Plan.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency deems NHA's draft PHA Plan to be consistent with the City of Norwalk's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (ConPlan). The PHA Plan establishes a strategy for preserving and improving the physical quality of the approximately 1,100 public housing units NHA administers, while also improving the economic self-sufficiency of public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher holders. By doing so, the PHA Plan addresses multiple elements of the City's ConPlan. Specifically, such projects respond to *Goal One*, or the *Housing Pathway* found on page 18 of the ConPlan, which identifies the need to improve access to affordable housing opportunities through investments in the physical quality of existing housing units.

The PHA Plan also outlines programs administered by the NHA to improve the academic performance of school-age residents of Housing Authority-owned units, to position residents to improve their economic well-being through skill training and to transition residents into homeownership. These programs are consistent with *Priority Two*, or the *Income Stability Pathway*, found on page 18, which is supportive of efforts to create income stability through the provision of

literacy, job-readiness and placement services that prepare low/moderate income residents for entry into the workforce.

The PHA Plan and ConPlan do differ in one aspect. *Goal One*, listed on page A1 of the PHA Plan, identifies a goal of expanding the supply of assisted housing. This goal differs from the ConPlan, which focuses on the preservation of Norwalk's existing inventory of affordable housing as well as investments to maintain or improve the physical quality of this housing. Despite this difference, the Agency considers the PHA Plan to be substantially consistent with the City's ConPlan.

ACTION REQUESTED

The Agency, operating as the City's CDBG Administrator, deems the Norwalk Housing Authority's Public Housing Authority Plan for Fiscal Year 2013 to be consistent with the City's current Consolidated Plan and requests that the Planning Committee ***advance the Agency's request for Common Council approval for the Mayor to execute a Certificate of Consistency for the Norwalk Housing Authority's Public Housing Assistance Plan for fiscal year 2013.***

NORWALK re: DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: MARYGRACE WEBER, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

As administrator of the City of Norwalk's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, and in accordance with the Common Council resolution indicating its support for the proposed redevelopment of the Globe Theater and directing the Redevelopment Agency to undertake the development of the requested Section 108 Loan Application, the Agency is proposing minor additions to the Citizen Participation Plan which outlines citizen engagement procedures related to the CDBG program. The proposed additions would establish a citizen participation procedure related to the development of an application for and the prospective administration of a Section 108 guaranteed loan from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The proposed changes, as summarized in the attached document, were made available for a 15-day public comment period beginning on Wednesday, October 24th and ending on Thursday, November 8th. No public comment was submitted on the proposed revisions.

REQUESTED ACTION

Advance to the Norwalk Common Council a request to approve proposed revisions to the Citizen Participation Plan

*Proposed changes appear underlined and in red

Citizen Participation Plan

Introduction
The City of Norwalk (City) considers the involvement and input of the City's low/moderate income residents, including those residents of public housing, to be essential to the creation and implementation of its *2010-2014 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (Plan)* and of its guaranteed loan funds. In order to ensure the involvement from those who will derive the greatest benefit from the *Plan* and guaranteed loan funds, the Agency has created a formal *Citizen Participation Plan.* Drafted in accordance with 24 CFR 91.105, this *Citizen Participation Plan* outlines the strategy and formal processes for securing comment regarding the goals, objectives and content of the *Plan* and its guaranteed loan funds. This strategy will detail:

- The process for submitting public comment;
- The steps used to publicly notice the draft document;
- The duration of public comment periods;
- The locations for accessing copies of the draft *Plan;*
- The dates and times of public hearings and
- The criteria for amending the *Plan*.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City and Agency have moved proactively to encourage participation of all its citizens including minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities. Information and records related to the *Plan* and use of assistance received under the United States Department of Housing and Community Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) are available at the Agency offices. The City and Agency will make the Citizen Participation Plan accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request (e.g., providing oral, Braille, electronic, or large print copies for the visually impaired; and delivering copies to the homebound). The City and Agency will make online versions of each document compatible with web readers for the visually impaired.

Requirements of the Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (Plan), Annual Action Plans (AAPs), and Guaranteed Loan Funds Prior to the City's approval of the *Plan* and subsequent *AAPs* or guaranteed loan fund applications, the City and Agency will make available to residents – particularly those living in low-and moderate-income neighborhoods, slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used – and by residents of predominantly low- and moderate- income neighborhoods, governmental agencies, social service organizations and other interested stakeholders information that includes (1) the amount of financial assistance the City expects to receive from the CDBG Program or HUD's Section 108 loan program, (2) the range of activities that may be undertaken (3) the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low/moderate income, (4) the local government's plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced, specifying the types and levels of assistance the local government will make available (or require others to make available) to persons displaced, even if the local government expects no displacement to occur; (5) and when and how the local government will make this information available.

In the case of its *Consolidated Plan* and associated *AAPs,* the City will make this information available as part of the annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process associated with the dissemination of program funds to subgrantees. In the case of guaranteed loan fund applications, the City will make this information available in the proposed application which will be made available for a 30-day public comment period and on which a public hearing will be held, in accordance with the procedure established in the *Public Hearings* section below.

Note, for the purposes of this Citizen Participation Plan the definition of residents of predominately low-and moderate-income neighborhoods' are those residents of low and moderate income census tracts as identified within the current *Plan*.

The NOFA will contain the value of the City's annual allocation of HUD funding and budget for these funds.

Minimization of Displacement
Projects and activities funded using CDBG Program monies will be planned in order to minimize the displacement of low/moderate income residents. In the event displacement occurs, the City will notify affected persons and provide assistance consistent with the provisions of the Federal Uniform Relocation Act and all other applicable governmental regulations.

Publication of the Plan
The City will publish and make public all versions of the *Plan,*subsequent *AAPs, and* guaranteed loan fund applications. The publication of these documents will afford the opportunity to provide comment regarding content.

The City and Agency will place copies of the draft and final versions of these documents at the following locations:

- The Norwalk Public Library,
- The South Norwalk Branch Library,
- The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency,
- The administrative offices of the Norwalk Housing Authority and
- Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc. (NEON)

In addition the Agency will make these documents available to other area funders, and on the City's website: *www.norwalkct.org*. The City and Agency will also make free copies of the *Plan* and subsequent AAPs available to those groups or individuals that request the document.

A summary of the proposed *Plan,* subsequent AAPs, and guaranteed loan fund applications including a listing of sites where the document is available will be published in a periodical of general circulation (presently, the *Norwalk Hour*). This summary will contain a description of the contents and purpose of the *Plan* or guaranteed loan fund applications. The City and Agency will place a final copy of the document, as adopted or amended by the Common Council and in the format to be submitted to HUD, at the previously mentioned sites.

Public Hearings
The Agency, as administrator of the local CDBG Program, will conduct at least one public hearing during the drafting and development of the *Plan,* subsequent *AAPs,* and guaranteed loan fund applications. At a minimum, published Notices of Public

Hearing will appear in the legal notices sections of the Norwalk Hour twice prior to each hearing. The Agency will publish the first such notice no earlier than fourteen (14) days prior to any public hearing.

The Agency will also schedule a thirty (30) day period in order to accept comments regarding the near complete version of the draft document. The Agency will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, in preparing the final *Plan,* subsequent *AAPs* and guaranteed loan fund applications. The Agency will produce a summary of the comments and a summary of any comments not accepted and the reasons for their exclusion and attach this summary to the final *Plan* and subsequent *AAPs*.

Access to Records
The City and Agency will provide residents, social service organizations and stakeholders with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the City's use of assistance under the programs covered by this part during the preceding five (5) years.

Technical Assistance
The City and Agency will provide for technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low/moderate income that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the *Plan,* subsequent *AAPs*, and guaranteed loan funds with the level and type of assistance determined by the City.

Complaints
The Agency will provide timely, substantive written response to every written citizen complaint, within fifteen (15) working days.

Development of Annual Plans and Release of Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs)
At least annually, the Agency will announce the availability of funding under the Community Development Block Grant program and guaranteed loan fund, when available, following the procedures outlined in this section for notices, public hearings, and information sharing. The NOFAs will include an application form for receiving a sub-grant of CDBG funds. Eligible applications will be those that are consistent with HUD eligibility guidelines and clearly comport with and advance the goals of the Consolidated Plan or guaranteed loan fund.

Applicants are asked to submit proposals addressing needs and themes, discussed in this Plan.

Substantial Amendments
According to 24 CFR 91.105(c) the Citizen Participation Plan must identify a process for obtaining public comment when a substantial amendment is proposed for the *Plan*.

Substantial amendments including the reprogramming of funds left unexpended from previous activities and are defined in 24 CFR Section 91.505 as:

- Any changes in the uses of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another,
- Any change in the allocation priorities or the method of distribution of funds, Funding an activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan, not previously described in the action plan
- Any modification not previously identified in the *Plan* that results in a 25%

increase or decrease in level of funding to program,
• A change in the purpose, location or beneficiaries of a previously approved Activity.

In order to comply with requirements for public comment, any substantial amendment to the *Plan* will require a public hearing and a public comment period of at least 30 days. The City and Agency will publish the notice of the public hearing and public comment period in the legal notices sections of the Norwalk Hour twice prior to the hearing. The City and Agency will publish the first such notice no earlier than fourteen (14) days prior to any public hearing. The public comment period will begin the day following the hearing. Following the close of the public comment period the proposed amendment must receive approval from the Commissioners of the Redevelopment Agency and the Norwalk Common Council.

The Agency will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally during at the public hearing, in preparing the substantial amendment to the *Plan*. The City and Agency will produce a summary of those comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons for their exclusion and attach said summary to the substantial amendment.

Performance Reports – Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER)
The City and Agency will provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on the annual CAPER that measures the annual expenditure of CDBG funds and the progress of activities and projects funded with CDBG monies. The City will provide a period of fifteen days during which residents, social service organizations and stakeholders may comment on the performance report that the City and Agency will submit to HUD. The City and Agency will publish a notice for the public comment period in the legal notices sections of the Norwalk Hour twice prior to the start of the comment period. The City and Agency will publish the first such notice no earlier than fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the comment period.

Public Hearings Related to Annual Administration of CDBG Program and Guaranteed Loan Fund
The City and Agency will provide for two public hearings each year to entertain comments and questions from residents, social service organizations and stakeholders.

The City and Agency will hold all hearings in Norwalk City Hall, a public building fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. Notices for each public hearing will appear in the legal notices sections of a periodical of general circulation, the Norwalk Hour twice prior to each hearing. The City and Agency will publish the first such notice no earlier than fourteen (14) days prior to any public hearing.

For those hearings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably be expected to participate, the City and Agency will provide translation services.

NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

November 13, 2012

Frank A. Farricker
Wall Street Theater Company, Inc.
177 Sound Beach Avenue
Old Greenwich, CT 06870

Re: Section 108 Guaranteed Loan Application

Dear Mr. Farricker:

As directed by the Norwalk Common Council, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency staff has drafted a Section 108 Guaranteed Loan application based upon the information which you have provided to date to the Agency and to the Planning Committee of the Common Council. This draft application reflects certain adjustments to the use of Section 108 funds as proposed in your letter dated May 31st, 2012, the reasons for which are detailed below. Please understand that this draft application cannot be advanced to the Planning Committee until the requirements of the Resolution approved by the Common Council on October 9th, 2012 have been met. Further, the Agency asks that you address two critical concerns it has regarding 1) the level of benefit which the project, once completed, would provide to low and moderate income persons and 2) the project's proposed sources of funds.

Summary of Adjustments to Proposed Use of Section 108 Funds

In your letter dated May 31st, 2012, it was proposed that the majority of the requested Section 108 loan funds be released upon completion of the project, but that an estimated $275,000 be applied to various pre-completion expenses. Specifically, it was noted that these expenses would include operating costs, which are an explicitly ineligible Section 108 activity. While tax credit applications and third party consultant costs may be eligible under CFR 570.703(i), "Special Economic Development Activities," HUD regulations require that those activities carried out under this category must meet one of the following public benefit standards:

1) Create or retain at least one full-time equivalent, permanent job per $35,000 of CDBG funds used or
2) Provide goods or services to residents of an area, such that the number of low- and moderate-income persons residing in the areas served by the assisted business amounts to at least one low- and moderate-income person per $350 of CDBG funds used.

The Section 108 application drafted by the Agency proposes that instead, the full $2,000,000 be applied to the Wall Street Theater Company's acquisition of the *fully renovated theater*, an activity eligible under CFR 570.703(a). Given that the market value of the theater upon project completion has been estimated by the Austin McGuire Company to be $5,590,000, the $2,000,000 in requested Section 108 funds can be fully drawn for acquisition purposes and can serve as take-out financing on a bank mortgage and construction loan for a third party entity acting as project developer. Should project feasibility hinge on the $275,000 in pre-development financing, the Agency will consider a predevelopment loan, if fully secured by an acceptable third party guarantee.

Inquiry as to Status of Items Required by Common Council Resolution

The Resolution approved by the Common Council on October 9th, 2012, requires 1) the provision of cash equivalent collateral equal to the City's full financial exposure during the term of the Section 108 loan and 2) an in depth market study that considers the economic feasibility of the proposed project. The City's advancement in the formal Section 108 application process with HUD is contingent upon the satisfaction of these provisions – evidence of the third party guarantee must be submitted and the requested market study must be provided to the Agency before any action on the draft Section 108 application will be requested of the Planning Committee.

Summary of Concern Regarding whether the Project as Proposed Sufficiently Meets the CDBG National Objective of Providing Benefit to Low and Moderate Income Persons

The primary objective of the CDBG program is to benefit low and moderate income persons. Reflective of this priority, HUD regulations require that the City expend 70% of all CDBG-related funds, including Section 108, on activities that benefit its low and moderate income population. Activities which benefit an area in which at least 51% of residents are low and moderate income are determined by HUD to provide sufficient benefit to justify the use of CDBG (and by extension, Section 108) dollars. The Globe Theater's location within a transit-rich area means that area residents could reach the theater with relative ease and minimal expense. Following on this reasoning, the draft Section 108 application developed by the Agency proposes the City's downtown transit corridor, in which 61.4% of the population is low and moderate income, as the service area which will benefit from the redevelopment of the Globe Theater. The fact that the redeveloped Globe Theater will be geographically located within a transit-rich area that is predominantly low and moderate income, however, does not necessarily mean that the residents of this area would derive measurable benefit from a project rendered financeable by a pledge that the City's future CDBG funds can be called upon in event of default. If this draft Section 108 application is to advance to the Common Council, to the public, and to HUD, it must clearly demonstrate the way in which the proposed project will *meaningfully serve* the low and moderate income persons who reside in the aforementioned service area. To enable it to develop a strong application that is consistent with the intentions of the CDBG program, Agency staff requests that the Wall Street Theater Company, Inc. fully detail its plan to provide the residents of Norwalk's downtown transit corridor with meaningful access to the Globe's facility and programs.

Summary of Concerns Regarding Identified Sources of Funds

The Agency and its economic development consultant have concerns related to the proposed financing structure, especially regarding the assumption that $1 million can be raised through New Market Tax Credits given the tenuous status of the NMTC program, the complicated structure should NMTC be used and the time involved in accessing this source of funds.

We ask that you address each of the following questions in your response to this letter:

1. *New Markets Tax Credits* – What are the sources of funds that you intend to leverage in order to raise the estimated $1 million through NMTC? Has an alternative source of funds been identified in case the NMTC program is not renewed by Congress?

2. *Green Tax Credit* – Please provide additional information on this program. How was it determined that $750,000 could be raised?
3. *Historic Tax Credits* – Have you assembled a design team that has a working knowledge of historic tax credits and that will be able to submit a Part 2 application that would qualify the project for historic tax credits?

The Agency stands ready to advance a draft application for a Section 108 Guaranteed Loan to the Planning Committee of the Common Council once these questions and concerns have been fully addressed.

Sincerely,

Timothy T. Sheehan
Executive Director
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
(203)854-7810 ext. 46786
tsheehan@norwalkct.org

cc: Members, Planning Committee of the Norwalk Common Council
Kevin Gremse, National Development Council

APPLICATION FOR SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEE IN THE AMOUNT OF $2,000,000

draft

SUBMITTED BY THE CITY OF NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Executive Summary

The City of Norwalk is applying for a Section 108 loan guarantee in the amount of $2,000,000 to support the redevelopment of the historic Globe Theater located at 71 Wall Street. The proposed project will restore this cultural and historic centerpiece of the City's Wall Street district, serving as a critical step forward in the revitalization of the area.

Like its Globe Theater, Wall Street has experienced significant disinvestment over the past half century that has threatened its status as a prominent destination and vibrant center of urban life. Beginning during the colonial period and for much of Norwalk's history, Wall Street was the city's center for banking and commerce, politics and local governance, entertainment, and hospitality. By the middle of the 20th century, shifts in the economy and patterns of land use and transportation caused Wall Street to lose ground to the area's growing suburbs. Then in 1955, floodwaters from the Norwalk River caused catastrophic damage to Wall Street by destroying a river crossing, several local roads and buildings on each side of the river. Recognizing the health of Wall Street as critical to the health of the City as a whole, in 2004, the Norwalk Common Council approved a Wall Street Redevelopment Plan affirming the city's commitment to the revitalization of this historic neighborhood. Development interest in the area is slowly being rekindled: an approximately 300-unit residential development was completed in 2010 and planned developments promising an additional 500 residential units are expected to begin construction in 2013.

Despite the recent and pending influx of new residents to the area, properties remain blighted, retail vacancies remain high and existing businesses continue to struggle. Foot traffic along Wall Street is relatively low, creating a self-perpetuating cycle in which the limited number of customers makes sustaining a business a challenge and in which the limited shopping and dining options cause neighborhood residents to take their business elsewhere. Investment in neighborhood amenities is desperately needed in order to breathe life back into the area. The adaptive reuse of Wall Street's existing cultural assets offers a promising path by which vibrancy can be restored.

The currently vacant Globe Theater, located at 71 Wall Street, presents a redevelopment opportunity that has the potential to catalyze the revitalization of the Wall Street area as a whole. Initially developed as a vaudeville theater in 1915, the Globe Theater has long served as a cultural centerpiece of Norwalk, Connecticut's historic Wall Street area. While the venue's offerings evolved over time from vaudeville to burlesque to cinema to rock music, the theater now stands empty, an unfortunate disuse of such a valuable community asset.

In support of a redevelopment effort by a local non-profit organization, the City of Norwalk is requesting $2,000,000 in Section 108 guaranteed loan funds to provide acquisition financing to the Wall Street Theater Company, Inc. This public investment is a critical piece of the financing needed to renovate the Globe which will operate as a general purpose theater suitable for a number of varied uses including live

entertainment, conferences and gatherings, school and church assemblies, and other community uses.

I. Community Development Objectives

The adaptive reuse of the Globe Theater is consistent with the second objective of Norwalk's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (ConPlan) which is to "utilize community development resources to first invest in small businesses and redevelopment activities within low/moderate income neighborhoods..." (ConPlan, 43)

This project is also consistent with the Wall Street Redevelopment Plan, adopted by the Norwalk Common Council on July 11, 2004. This Plan serves as the formal implementation document for redevelopment initiatives in the Wall Street area and explicitly identifies the Globe Theater as a historically significant cultural asset which should be preserved and revitalized.

II. Description and Eligibility of Proposed Activities

The Globe Theater, currently appraised at $1.1 million, is in need of extensive renovations estimated to cost between $3.1 and $3.9 million. These renovations are set to be completed prior to acquisition of the building by private non-profit organization Wall Street Theater Company, Inc. The requested $2,000,000 Section 108 funds would be loaned by the City of Norwalk to the Wall Street Theater Company, Inc. to support this organization's acquisition of the fully renovated theater. Section 108 funds would provide a source of affordable, long-term financing critical to project feasibility. This proposed activity is eligible under CFR 570.703(a): "Acquisition of improved or unimproved real property in fee or by long-term lease, including acquisition for economic development purposes". This activity is not expected to generate program income, nor is it expected to result in the displacement of individuals or businesses.

III. National Objective

The proposed activity will meet the first of the three CDBG national objectives: benefit to low and moderate income persons, as determined on an area benefit basis. Once redeveloped, the Globe will be a general-use theater suitable for live entertainment, conferences and gatherings, school and church assemblies, and other community uses. The delineation of the area of benefit for this activity, proposed to comply with 570.208(a)(1) is based on the mobility of residents within the Globe Theater's immediate neighborhood and Norwalk's broader downtown transit corridor who can easily access the theater by foot and bus[1]. This area, delineated in the map provided in Attachment A, is entirely encompassed by census tracts 434, 437, 438, 440 and 441, which have a combined low and moderate income population that is 61.4% of the total

[1] Access to this facility is expected to be further improved in coming years by a proposed circulator which will provide frequent transit service between the South Norwalk Train Station and Norwalk's central bus hub.

population of these areas[2]. While the proposed service area is urban and thus mixed use in nature, it is predominantly residential. As is demonstrated in Attachment B, the floor area dedicated to residential uses far outweighs the amount of floor area dedicated to retail, institutional and commercial uses. Further, the relatively high population density of the City's downtown transit corridor makes this area arguably *more* residential than neighborhoods outside it. The City's *Plan of Conservation and Development* states the average density in Norwalk to be 3,700 residents per square mile (POCD, page 54), or approximately six *residents* per acre – throughout Norwalk's downtown transit corridor, the average density is over nine *dwelling units* per acre. While the service area accounts for only 8% of Norwalk's total land area, it is home to an estimated 24,170 people, or 28.2% of the City's overall population[3], and has a dramatically higher proportion of low and moderate income residents than the City as a whole[4].

IV. Sources and Uses

[To be submitted following response to Redevelopment Agency request for information]

V. Guidelines and Objectives for Evaluating Project Costs and Financial Requirements

A. Reasonableness of Proposed Project Costs

The development costs appear reasonable. The rehabilitation of the theatre is estimated at $3.7 million which is approximately $229/SF. There is also a 7% contingency factored. Contingencies are always advisable for such historic structures. Other soft costs and professional fees are considered reasonable. The developer has capitalized a developer fee equivalent to 15% of the project costs, less acquisition. This capitalized developer fee is fairly typical for tax credit transactions, as the developer fee increases the basis upon which the credits are determined. Of note is the fact that almost half of the developer fee is deferred, meaning it will be earned out of residual cash flow.

B. Commitment of all Sources of Funds

The developer is currently working to secure terms sheets from the following sources of funds:

- *Debt* - First and foremost, the developer will need to secure an interim construction loan to fund a portion on the rehab costs during the

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[2] According to HUD Low and Moderate Income Summary Data, the low and moderate income populations of census tracts 434, 437, 438, 440 and 441 are 55%, 67%, 55%, 65%, and 75%, respectively (http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/systems/census/ct/index.cfm)

[3] Average household size within service area census tracts is 2.4 (Census data for 2010 Census Summary File 1 – H13)

[4] According to HUD Low and Moderate Income Summary Data, 40.7% of the City of Norwalk's population is low and moderate income, compared with 61.7% in the census tracts which embody the identified service area. (http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/systems/census/ct/index.cfm)

construction period, as the Section 108 financing is considered take-out financing and is available to the developer only after the certificate of occupancy.

- *Historic Tax Credits* - The developer is also working with prospective historic tax credit investors but first must show the project's eligibility for the credits, based upon the approval of a Part 2 application, one in which the applicant demonstrates that the rehabilitation plan is consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards.
- *Green Building Tax Credit* –
- *State of Connecticut DECD* – The developer reportedly has a commitment for funding through the State Department of Economic and Community Development.

C. Substitution of Public funds for Private Sources

There is no substitution of public funds for private funds. Simply put, a development such as this cannot raise sufficient conventional debt and equity to complete development costs. The Section 108 loan guarantee program, a source of flexible lower cost capital, is an effective financing mechanism but in no way replaces financing that would be available elsewhere.

D. Project Feasibility

(To be completed upon submission of market study)

E. Check for Reasonable Return on Owner's Equity

The developer is a not-for-profit entity. The financial incentive for the developer is the 15% capitalized developer fee which is $771,000. Of this capitalized developer fee, a little less than half is earned at closing and the other half deferred, meaning it will be earned from residual cash flow. This financial incentive is less than a private developer would demand. As such, it is not unreasonable.

F. Disbursement of Section 108 Funds

The proposed project is structured so as to minimize the risk to the City of Norwalk's CDBG funds which would be called upon in the event of default on the Section 108 Guaranteed Loan. The Section 108 loan would fund the acquisition of the fully renovated Globe Theater, thus serving as take out financing on debt incurred for the purchase and rehabilitation of the theater.

VI. Additional Security

Besides the pledge of the City of Norwalk's CDBG line of credit, the loan will be secured with a first mortgage on the Globe Theatre. An appraisal which values the building on an

"as-complete" basis is included in this packet. Austin McGuire Company, a long-established Norwalk appraisal company, completed the appraisal on September 1, 2012 and assigned an "as complete" value of $5,590,000. HUD underwriting guidelines suggest an 80% loan to value or lower, suggesting that the all debt (including Section 108) should not exceed 80% of value. In this case, the LTV is favorable, at 36%.

VII. Pledge of CDBG Grant Funds as Loan Guarantee

The City of Norwalk fully understands that it must pledge its CDBG line of credit as guarantee on the requested Section 108 loan (certification attached).

VIII. Schedule for Repayment of the Loan

Year	Principal Reduction	Year	Principal Reduction
1	$0	11	$103,000
2	$72,000	12	$107,000
3	$75,000	13	$111,000
4	$78,000	14	$116,000
5	$81,000	15	$121,000
6	$84,000	16	$126,000
7	$88,000	17	$131,000
8	$91,000	18	$136,000
9	$95,000	19	$140,000
10	$99,000	20	$146,000
			$2,000,000

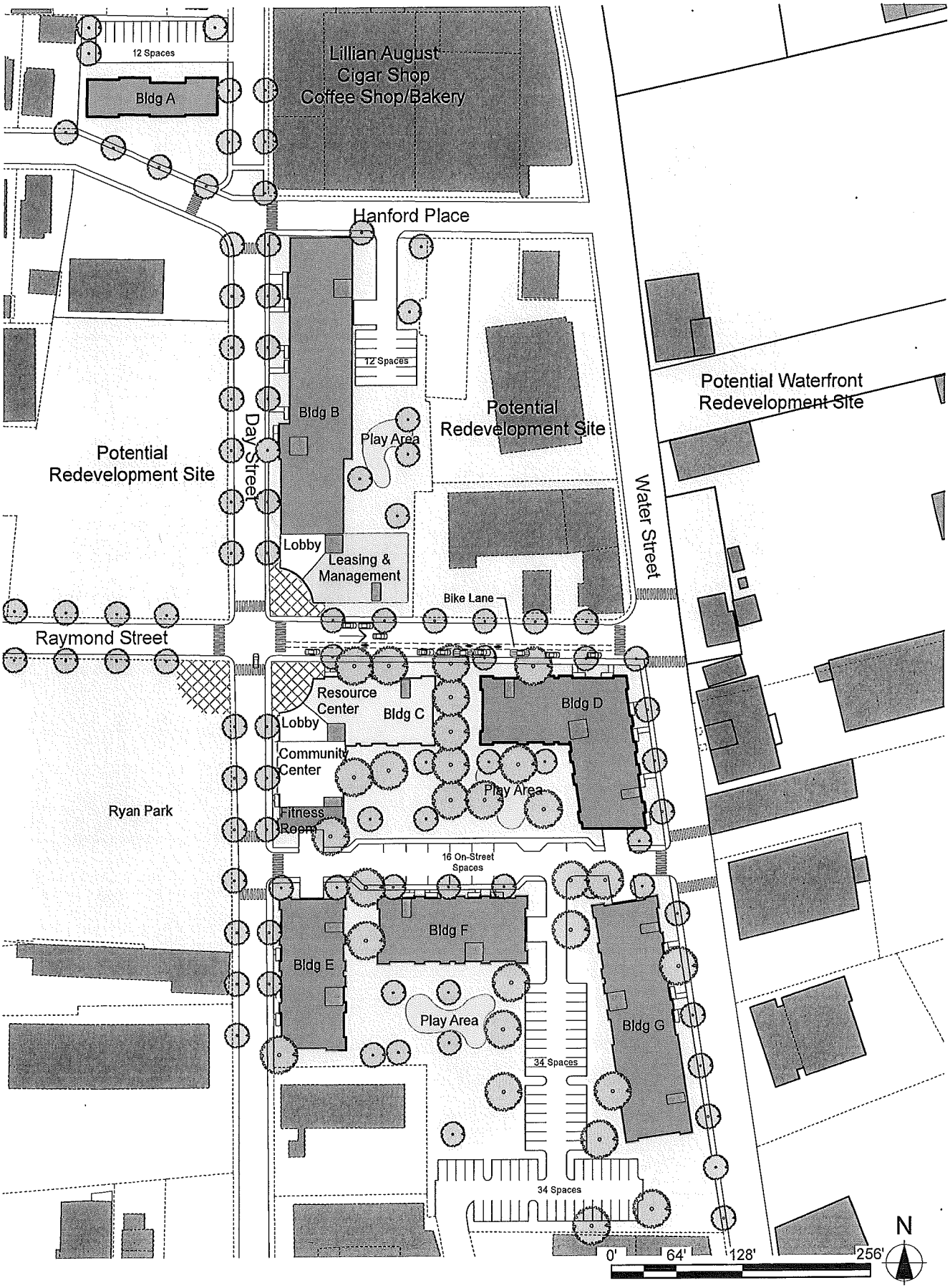
IX. Contact Information

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency serves as the administering agent for the City of Norwalk's Community Development Block Grant Program and will serve as the principal contact for this application. Please direct questions regarding this application to:

MaryGrace Weber
Special Projects Manager
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
mweber@norwalkct.org
(203)854-7810 ext. 46792

draft

Washington Village Site Plan

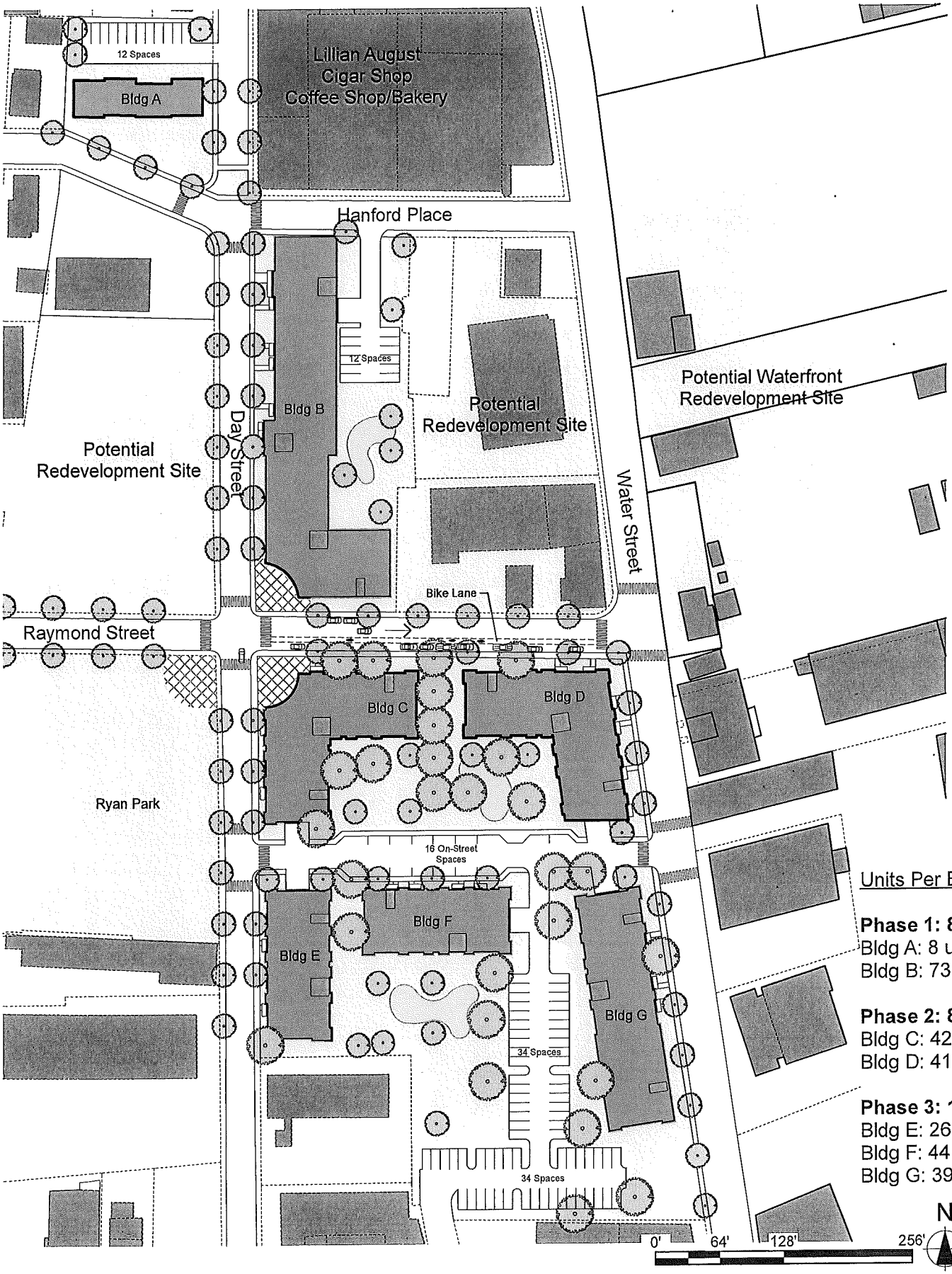


Washington Village Development Plan

Program & Outdoor Space

South Norwalk, Connecticut
November 15, 2012

ICON architecture



Units Per Building

Phase 1: 81 units
Bldg A: 8 units
Bldg B: 73 units

Phase 2: 83 units
Bldg C: 42 units
Bldg D: 41 units

Phase 3: 109 units
Bldg E: 26 units
Bldg F: 44 units
Bldg G: 39 units

Washington Village Development Plan

Development Plan

South Norwalk, Connecticut
November 15, 2012

ICON Architecture

THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

125 East Avenue
P.O. Box 5125
Norwalk, CT 06856

MEMORANDUM

TO: **PLANNING COMMITTEE MMEBERS**

FROM: **TIM SHEEHAN**

DATE: **NOVEMBER 29, 2012**

RE: **NORWALK PARKING MASTER PLAN**

The Planning Committee has been updated several times as to the progress of the City's Parking Master Plan which was conveyed to the Redevelopment Agency to undertake by the Mayor and the Parking Authority via a Capital Budget appropriation. This plan is advancing into completion over the next few days and I thought it an appropriate time to again review with the Committee the recommendations that are being incorporated into the study.

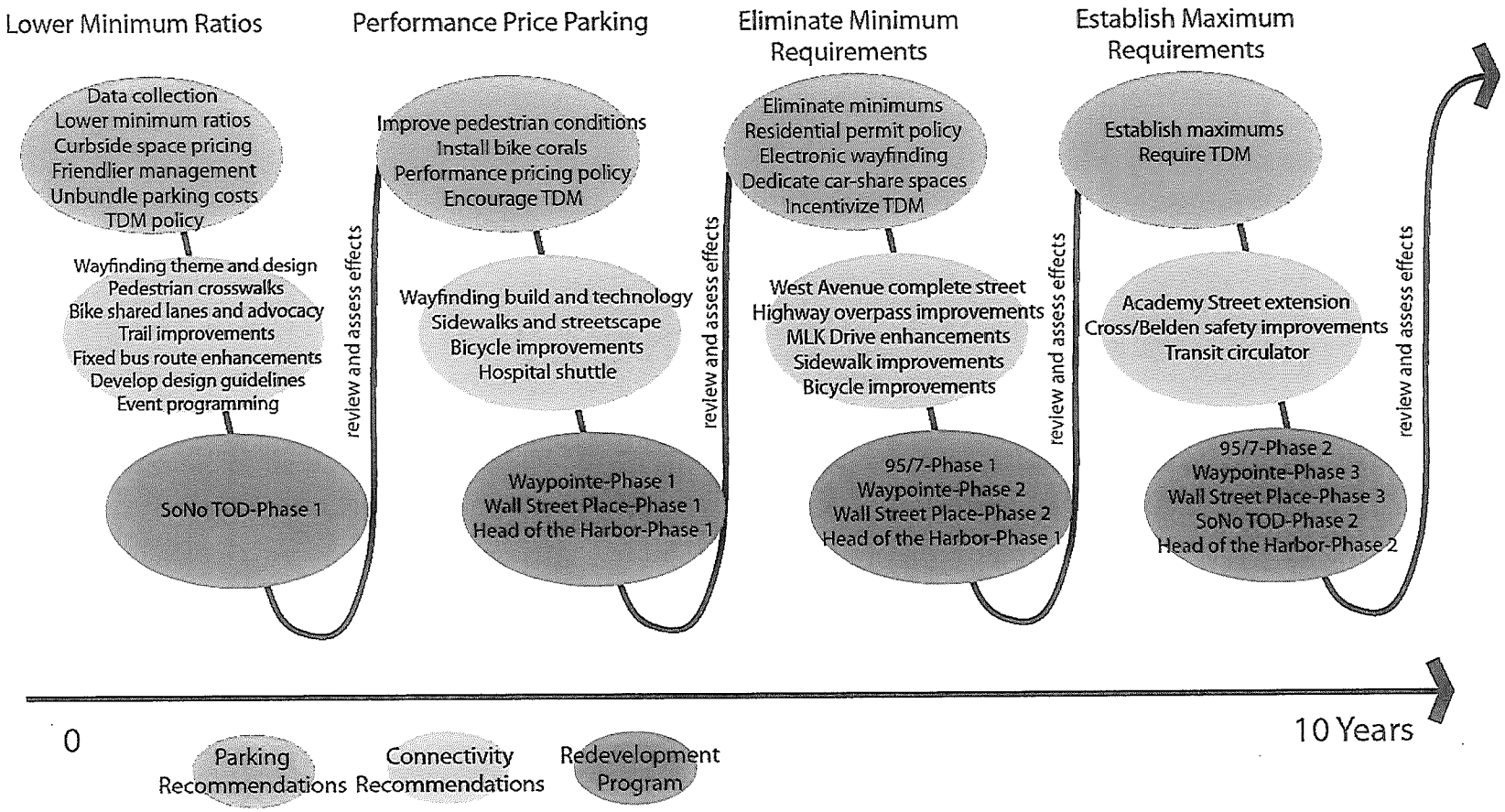
By way of background the approved Connectivity Master Plan called for the study of parking relative to Norwalk's urban core. In developing this study significant stakeholder outreach guided the development of the recommendations. The recommendations are structured to provide an incremental approach to phasing out minimum ratio-based parking requirements and establishing maximums, or caps, to the amount of new parking that is allowed. Naturally, such a change is a challenge to implement immediately. Thus the plan takes incremental steps toward achieving this end goal, in a 10-year program corresponding with the phasing of Norwalk's redevelopment agenda as well as the implementation of various Connectivity initiatives. The attached flow chart summarizes the significant findings and recommendations of this study and how they are integrated with the implementation of the Connectivity Study recommendations and the City's approved redevelopment program.

The process starts with adjusting parking requirements and pricing to more appropriately reflect downtown's urban context. Following an assessment and adjustment of those initial strategies, a more progressive approach to pricing is to be pursued in which rates for public parking are periodically adjusted to maintain optimum 85% utilization of all public spaces. From there, assuming the successful implementation of previous strategies, a move toward eliminating minimum requirements is to be made. This will provide greater flexibility to developers, and will remove some of the current barriers to infill development. The tail end of the parking master plan calls for capping the amount of new parking a developer can build in the downtown. This policy assumes that in 10 years, downtown Norwalk will have experienced the completion of a significant amount

of its development program, and land values will be greater (and more scarce) than today. Parking maximums will help ensure that available space is optimally utilized for the highest and best use yielding the maximum tax revenue, and that parking development does not compromise the transportation and livability goals articulated in the approved City urban planning which has been conducted over the past decade, much of which still awaits implementation.

Implementing the proposed changes in this plan and its precedent plans to accommodate the pending development will require responsiveness and follow through by the City's elected officials working with its land use boards and commissions. To that end, staff strongly recommends that the Planning Committee consider commencing a standing quarterly meeting with the chairs of the Zoning Commission, Planning Commission, Parking Commission and Redevelopment Commission and principal staff to discuss the progress towards implementing these various plans. Without focusing the Council's legislative and fiscal oversight regarding the implementation of the public policy objectives it has approved, I fear that the City will have wasted a significant financial investment on high quality urban planning documents that are never implemented for lack of internal accountability to implement.

Implementation Timeline



NORWALK re: DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: MARYGRACE WEBER, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 29, 2012

RE: SUMMARY OF INPUT FROM COMMUNITY WORKSHOP ON LANDSCAPE DESIGN MASTER PLAN FOR WEST AVENUE

The Redevelopment Agency has scheduled two community workshops to invite the public to review and comment on the landscape design improvements that are being proposed for the West Avenue corridor. The first of these meetings was held at Stepping Stones Museum on Wednesday, November 28th.

Approximately 20 people were in attendance who emphasized the importance of the pedestrian experience and the need for "human scale" complete streets which promote livability.

Attendees expressed concerns about the lack of designated bicycle lanes and the safety/usefulness of the proposed sharrows; whether the proposed improvements were sufficient to slow the speed of traffic; the absence of proposed improvements to the entrance and borders of Mathews Park; current practices that place utilities, street lights and signs on sidewalks in a way that impedes pedestrian movement; and the absence of public art, especially in the Art Park.

Attendees' recommendations for revisions to the plan included:

- Narrowing lanes of traffic and considering a center turn lane that would permit space for designated bicycle lanes
- Avoid installing infrastructure that would preclude the future inclusion of dedicated bicycle lanes throughout the corridor
- Include striping in intersections, in order to promote the flow of traffic and simultaneously slow it down
- Lighting should be LED compatible
- Pedestrian plazas should be near to existing residences and restaurants which include outdoor dining, or should be constructed in conjunction with new development
- Street trees should be canopy trees and should be consistent in order to better unite

There was generally strong support for the plantings and the enhanced crosswalks proposed throughout the corridor. Attendees labeled improved lighting as an immediate priority for improvements, as well as landscaping of existing medians.

The proposed landscape design plans will be presented to the public again on Monday, December 17th from 5:30pm-7:30pm at Stepping Stones museum.

No action is requested at this time.