

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: DOUGLAS E. HEMPSTEAD, CHAIRMAN

DATE: MARCH 30, 2015

RE: MEETING NOTICE

A Special Meeting of the Planning Committee of the Common Council will be held on **Monday, April 6, 2015 at 7:00 pm** in Council Chambers in Norwalk City Hall. Please Note the Time And Location.

PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

**April 6, 2015
7:00 PM**

A G E N D A

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 16, 2015
March 19, 2015
- II. BUSINESS
 - A. **FY2015-2016 CAPITAL BUDGET**
 - 1. Consider allocations and approve advancement to the Common Council
 - B. **NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE ACT TAX CREDIT PROGRAM**
 - 1. Approve scheduling a Public Hearing on 2015 NAA-TCP applications to be held on May 7, 2015
 - C. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**
 - 1. Recommend agencies (and amounts) to receive \$187,412 of CDBG Public Services funding.

ADJOURNMENT

**CITY OF NORWALK
JOINT AD-HOC COMMITTEE
PLANNING COMMITTEE-REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 16, 2015**

ATTENDANCE:

Planning Committee: Douglas Hempstead, Chair; Bruce Kimmel, John Kydes,
Shannon O'Toole-Giandurco, Travis Simms, Sharon Stewart.
Redevelopment Agency: Felix Serrano, Chairman; Tom Devine, Lisa Cooper, LaTanya
Langley, Timothy Sheehan, Lori Torrano, Marc Grenier, Esq.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hempstead called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and introduced the members as listed above and stated that this was a Special Meeting and only items on the agenda could be addressed.

Mr. Hempstead welcomed the members of the Redevelopment Agency and public in attendance and gave an overview of the agenda, as follows:

**Public comment on the Joint Committee's recommendation on the
Approved land uses and development volumes for parcels 1, 2, and 4
In the Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Plan Area.**

Mr. Hempstead gave an overview of the series of meetings held by the Ad-Hoc Committee of the Planning Committee and Norwalk Redevelopment Agency that began back in November of 2014. He thanked the members for attending the Saturday morning meetings and noted the productive results by holding meetings on Saturdays rather than amidst the work week of other meetings. He acknowledged the dedication of members that juggled weekend family commitments and weather-related struggles to make those meetings.

He noted that this public information meeting comes as the city considers whether to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement. He noted that they will try to address specific questions at the end.

Mr. Hempstead then introduced Felix Serrano, Chairman of the Redevelopment Agency, and members as follows: Tom Devine, Lisa Cooper, LaTanya Langley, Lori Torrano, Marc Grenier and Tim Sheehan.

Mr. Tim Sheehan noted that provided as a handout is a matrix for the Recommended Scale and Density of Development (attached page 9). He then read the executive summary as follows:

In December of 2015, Norwalk Land Development, LLC a subsidiary of General Growth Partners and the owner of parcels 1, 2 and 4 of the Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Plan brought forward a request to amend the governing Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) for the site. Norwalk Land Development's proposed amendment sought to revise the LDA to allow for the construction of a regional mall rather than a primarily office project as retail malls are their core business and new office construction is not economically feasible in the current market.

In considering their response to Norwalk Land Development's request the public parties to the governing LDA (Redevelopment Agency and the City), met and determined that it would consider the requested amendment in more manageable steps. First the public parties wanted to review the land uses and development volumes that could / should be allowable on the site given its urban location and the physical context that surrounds it. The last time such was considered by the public parties was in 2007 and since that time it was agreed that much in the way of urban land use and mixed use development had changed. To address this first step the public parties formed an ad hoc committee with representation from the Planning Committee of the Common Council (Douglas E. Hempstead, Travis L. Simms), Redevelopment Agency (Lisa Cooper, Felix R. Serrano) and the Planning Commission (Torgny Astrom). The committee began its work on January 13, 2015.

During its review the committee considered studies regarding the office, retail and multi-family development sectors. They considered the economic impact analysis between the proposed retail project and the approved Conceptual Master Site Plan (CMSP). They listened to the opinions and read the work product put forth by retail expert Robert J. Gibbs, ASLA. The materials reviewed by the committee are contained in this briefing package as are the minutes of the meetings and the actions taken by the committee. The meetings continued weekly through February 28th. At the final committee meeting the committee reported out the attached land uses and volumes recommending that they be adopted as an approved exhibit to the anticipated Amendment 4 of the governing LDA.

Incorporating the committee recommended land uses and volumes into the amendment as an approved exhibit provides the developer with the development volume necessary to accommodate a regional mall and two other additional land uses into their CMSP. That plan and the amendments to the LDA necessary to facilitate such a development will require additional approvals from both the Redevelopment Agency and the Common Council. Until such approvals are in place the currently approved LDA and Amendment 3 will remain the governing documents. The committee recommendation if approved sets the potential for a regional mall. The recommendation increases the currently approved maximum retail volume of 125,000 SF which precludes such mall development to 750,000 Gross Leasable Area. Such a development, however, cannot advance until further modifications to the LDA have been accepted by the parties. In this regard there remain a number of issues that require further negotiation. Finally, the project will be subject to zoning approval, design review and State Traffic Commission review.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Patsy Brescia gave an overview of the fifty year history of what was a burning dump site and listed the many “no’s” that had to be overcome to bring developments into the City. She explained that now Growth Properties has come to put a high end mall here and we need to respond bring this positive change to Norwalk. She said she often visits a GGP mall in Natick, Mass., when visiting her daughter in that state. She urged the Committee to listen to the public and to please give us an opportunity to have that same experience ... right here in Norwalk, a City that claims it's 'On the Move.' Let's make that slogan a reality, let's all work together to make this mall happen. Let's all work together to maximize this opportunity and to make it the very best that we can.
2. Rose Marie Kelly, spoke in support of the Mall and noted that we do need this mall as now we have to go to New York or Stamford. She stated she agrees completely with Ms. Brescia’s comments.
3. Sara Hunter, resident of East Norwalk, said she is not against looking for information and is not one of the “nay-sayers” but feels it is premature to vote on an LDA until more information is identified. She said there are no traffic studies and I-95 is already jammed, and pending changes to East Avenue make the need for traffic studies more evident. She noted that when 95 is jammed people take back roads and that is what will happen.
4. Eric Reigns, Landscape Architect, SONO Lock Building Maritime Yards stated the drawings are very interesting for the site and he supports the LDA changes. He added that let’s move forward and make this happen.
5. Rob Jakubik, GGP, addressed the letters of support and emails submitted from the community business owners and stakeholders. He thanked all members of the committee that have worked hard on this opportunity and encouraged support of the modified LDA.
6. Michael Pelletier, co-owner of Fountainhead Wines and Fat Cat Pie Co., stated his support to the mall. He stated that it would be a real boom to Norwalk to have a world-class mall.
7. Clay Fowler, Spinnaker & Partners, stated the deal that has been supplanted by GGP as a great opportunity for Norwalk. He stated that traffic will be taken care of, and past projects of offices have shown the office market did not support that. He noted that retail was north of the highway and now proposed south is more easily accessible from both. He added that this project has been deliberately and carefully outlined with appropriate timing gives an opportunity that Norwalk should aggressively seek.
8. Isabella Hargrove expressed concern that most voices with the nay-sayers and is happy that most tonight are glad for the support. She stated that retailers don’t make deals lightly and only a finite number of stores are built each year—they know success factors, this is an opportunity for incredible growth. Retail is an important part of a reality and luxury space in Norwalk. Retail bellows here, it allows for other developers and needs to happen quickly. Let’s make this a 21st century project right now with new trends, much more than just shopping—connectivity to surrounding areas with restaurants, IMAX and movies. This will be outward looking rather than a mall fortress of other towns. Let’s move quickly.
9. Mike Mushak thanked all the committees and the RDA and stated this is unprecedented with the working together quickly. He is very concerned about traffic and congestion and noted areas of pedestrian, walking, biking and agrees with all that has been said tonight. He noted that it is too early for certain studies until the space is definitively planned; all studies are premature until an approved plan. He explained that this developer will invest

in major infrastructure improvements. Traffic is a major concern but this project work to date is a great start and all looks good and let's keep on moving forward.

10. Todd Bryant, Norwalk Preservation Trust, said it worries him that the projects increases vitality but may suck the life out of valuable areas. The surrounding area has raised historic areas and he hasn't seen worthwhile efforts to make sure the SONO, Wall Street, East Avenue corridors are integrated into this plan. He noted that it should be a circle, not a line approach.
11. Robert Colligan, owner of a commercial property on North Main Street, is a strong supporter of the plan and hopes to facilitate further movement. He invested in a blighted historic property in anticipation of finding an opportunity for South Norwalk, and the City should not pass this by.
12. Kristen Jenson, owner of a production company, supports the high value mall and this amazing opportunity to have this development in Norwalk.
13. Joanne Horvath, Commerce Lane, is in favor of the GGP upscale mall plan and gave an overview of what has been going on in that area since the 80's. This is the best financially based plan for use of the area with access to 95 and Rte 7. The LDA 55 public realm is suited for retail and high end-retail space that adds a key segment to the high end market. She hopes Bloomingdales joins in with Nordstrom as this would be like no other high end mall in the state and would put Norwalk on the map. She also supports resident units with affordable housing, not far from train and routes of buses and highways—a perfect TOD project. She is not in favor of a hotel as there is no reason with a soon to be constructed extended stay hotel near Washington Street and other area hotels that can accommodate the market. This mall will enhance the tax base and bring a vibrant city image to Norwalk for visitors to go to the restaurants and shops.
14. Collin Ruther works with Bruce Beinfield, and stated the LDA looks good, public realm is good and wording should be a useful 5% so that public space does not get chopped up. He spoke about a park or plaza may not serve the public, so be sure to give this thorough thought and evaluation. He agrees with statements made and wanted to provide the following letter:
15. My name is Bruce Beinfield FAIA, the president of Beinfield Architecture PC, a firm that has been located in South Norwalk since 1992. As an Architect I have been deeply involved with the revitalization efforts in South Norwalk for over 25 years, and have completed numerous projects in that neighborhood.

I am writing to voice my support for the GGP proposal to add a major first class retail component to the neighborhood. As there is presently little if any nationally based chain retail in South Norwalk or Downtown Norwalk, the proposed retail will not compete with existing retail businesses in Norwalk's urban core. This project will bring shoppers and jobs to our city. As an Architect I have had the privilege to work on a number of the restaurants in the neighborhood, including Barcelona Wine Bar, Match, the former Ocean Drive, The Brewhouse, The Spread, Harlan Publick, and Washington Prime. This history has given me a clear window into the important role that these small independent businesses play in branding SoNo as a progressive community, and a regional dining destination. The ecology of the neighborhood is fragile, and would benefit significantly from greater visitation.

The GGP development will be a major attraction from the surrounding region, and therefore it has the potential to increase visitation to Washington Street. If that is achieved,

this project will be of great benefit to the SoNo community. Limiting restaurant uses within the GGP project, and enhancing connectivity with Wall Street and Washington Street will leverage the positive aspects of the GGP plan. I support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development. It is imperative that the Ad Hoc committee move expeditiously to approve the LDA agreement, so that the City of Norwalk can benefit from this opportunity.

16. Jackie Lightfield, 5 Wall Street, Norwalk 2.0, which was established to promote vibrancy of Downtown, and also Chair of the Norwalk Center Taskforce. She spoke of this as the first of a long sequence of events that will allow the project to go forward with the LDA changes. She wants to make sure all projects are connected and fit together with the urban core and surrounding areas, with civic uses. She added that this is next to Oyster Shell Park and the Railroad and to keep in mind that Martin Luther King has been made from 2 to seven lanes so use caution with the street planning.
17. Diane Lauricella thanked the committee for spending such time at the early stages. She noted that today is FOI day and she passed out literature. She stated that she appreciates the minutes on the website and applauds the committee for the transparent approach. She agrees with connectivity with all projects as it cannot separate as a stand alone project. Take a look at past zoning that recommends postponing the vote until homework is done on traffic concerns and studies needed. CT Avenue will be impacted and there are computer models with independent engineering firms that can plug in different scenarios on how this should be handled. This should be done for the public realm use and include back up supporting documentation for review. She noted the exits and what happens in Trumbull on the Merritt where there is a back up for the mall. Mr. Gibbs did not have another mall expert or other highway adjacent malls for comparison. Mr. Bonenfant recommends changing the enterprise zone and tax credits and she agrees that we owe it to the City to readjust the deal that is far to rich for the developer. She noted that the ROI is by class A, why not B, and she asked to look at F.D. Rich concerns on Washington Street and North Main. We owe it to them with national expertise to provide examples of highway malls. She agrees with Todd Bryant to bump the units from 60-100 and is not sure if a hotel is good. She added that the YMCA or a food market is a good use for public realm. It should be more than 5% and reduce retail allowed and not worry about vaccines for senior staff has presented alternatives on Washington Village and Norden but has been allergic to alternatives.
18. Christine Bradley stated she lives near the old corset factory and walks to the public library and would love to walk by Nordstrom's every day. She jokingly referred to the financial troubles Nordstrom will be to her personal pocketbook but would love an upscale mall.
19. Sherelle Harris spoke in support of the mall on behalf of the Norwalk Public Libraries.

Doug Adams, GGP President, thanked the committee and ad-hoc group that dealt with snow storms and Saturday meetings to make this open and transparent process all happen. Everybody agrees that the independent review is appropriate. We're in favor of these recommendations and we'd like to get going on the plan. They are very excited about partnering with Nordstrom, they do their research and they are close to announcing another third partner in the near future.

20. Debra Goldstein, Osborn Avenue, thanks all who have worked so hard and have provided more dialogue than any another public project. She noted that as a so called leader of the nay-sayers, she feels it is due diligence to look closely at the cons and not rush toward the end goal. Mall vs. no mall is not the issue but the question is what best use for a property or the community is. A Chinese menu of retailers in a big place needs to be evaluated versus the traffic and halo effect on local businesses, not to mention tax revenue. Jobs do not pay enough to live here and to say it is not best is not going to provide most grand list resources if not taxed at a high income rate. Let's look at what else is involved.
21. Ken Wordway, president Spinnaker, spoke as one of the largest property owners and agrees with what was said by partner Clay Fowler. This project is great and it is extremely beneficial to Norwalk.
22. Marie Bryant noted a great opportunity for developer and for Fairfield County and there should be highway malls that have tested a mall concept elsewhere. She noted that to draw means if built, consumers will come but make sure it is not a sink hole. Take advantage of other offerings and not cannibalize with Wall Street and SONO businesses. She wants to encourage support of family restaurants and downtown and implementation that will work best for all of Norwalk is great.
23. Ed Musante, Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce President, said something monumental is happening and what was hoped for for quite some time. He congratulated all involved for putting together agencies in one room at the same time, not consecutive and sequentially meeting. This is a monumental change in the way to do business and is the first time in Norwalk. He said there was a unanimously vigorous support of the GGP project and development with volumes of information and specific uses. Let's move forward on this good plan for the City. He labeled traffic an indicator of jobs and business activity while adding that such traffic must be mitigated properly. He noted that of course this developer is not going to bring gridlock and too much pondering kills projects. This is a strong showing and thank you for amending the LDA and for the opportunity to speak. He urged approval of the mall use for the site.
24. Diane Cece, Olmstead Place, addressed comments made about the lack of sufficient public notice and outreach. There was a dialogue and exchange of comments with Mr. Sheehan who responded that notice was published on the city website. Ms. Cece stated that postponing the LDA vote on Thursday to advance to the Common Council should be done. She questioned the document on the overhead versus what was distributed as handout and asked why they were different. Mr. Sheehan explained that the handout was the most up to date and reflected a minor change. Ms. Cece stated that traffic is very important in Norwalk and while it may be an indication of a vibrant community, it's also the indication of gridlock on Connecticut Avenue. She asked to have questions answered on the financials and tax enterprise zone under former LDA and the grand list. She spoke of the density and comparisons of tax base when consideration of expiation of the retail portion. She agrees with the need for traffic analysis and a detailed mall drawing and LDA is essential to the document scope. She added that a quality engineering study as traffic is gridlocked and not sure where you live, but don't trivialize concerns as these are not short-sited nay-sayers. She stated that Mr. Fowler's comment of missing cycles is due to a host of reasons and plenty of blame can be placed but the next cycle also may close down.
25. Paxton Kinol, Waypointe. Stated that he is strongly in favor of the GGP mall, this is really creative and great design and to let the market take care of the advantages this has to offer.

There is plenty of land in Norwalk and we have not lived up to the redevelopment that Norwalk deserves. He asked the following letter be included in the comment record:

We are writing this letter in support of the proposed construction of a mall by General Growth Properties at known as 95/7. We are familiar with GGP Development's proposal along West Avenue that would permit the development of a center which is proposed to include retail, a boutique hotel, public space as well as a satellite for Norwalk Community College. We believe that this project, as proposed, would be beneficial for Norwalk overall and Downtown Norwalk, including South Norwalk, in particular.

Our understanding of GGP's proposal includes the following:

- There will be no food court at the mall
 - GGP, in addition to promoting the shopping center, will promote the area and its attractions and will work with local businesses on co-promotion efforts
 - The design of the mall will be open on West Avenue, with entrances to ground level stores and other establishments, from the sidewalk on West Avenue.
 - GGP is committed to working with the city and the Norwalk Transit District to implement a "circulator" bus or other vehicle that will enable easy and free or inexpensive transportation between the development and area attractions, including historic SONO and Washington Street.
 - A boutique hotel (and/or other multi-use space such as apartments or offices) will be part of the development
 - The development's main feature will be a Class A mall featuring "high end" retail establishments
- With these points included in the proposal, this development will attract more people from the surrounding areas to Downtown Norwalk, from SONO to Wall Street. We believe it will serve to boost business for the restaurants and other business in these areas.

We support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development and we feel that it is critical that the Ad Hoc committee move quickly to approve the LDA agreement.

The following was provided as a handout for the public.

Dear members of Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and Planning Committee of the Norwalk Common Council,

Thank you for taking the time to hear public testimony on the Joint Committee's recommendation on the approved land uses and development volumes for Parcels 1, 2 and 4 in the Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Plan Area.

Attached please find letters of support from area business owners, residents, and other interested parties. These letters express opinions and thoughts on GGP's development proposal for the site. Attached you will find e-mails and letters from the following individuals:

Andrea Light; Bruce Beinfeld, Beinfeld Architecture PC; Ernie DesRochers
Fritz Knipschildt; Knipschildt Chocolatier/Chocopologie; Jahmane West, Art of Jahmane
John Owens, Sono Buzz; Joseph K. Passero, Klaff's Inc.; Matt Storch, Match Restaurant
Michael Foley; Michelle G. Watson; Mike Sutton, Benefit Planning Services, LLC
Clue O'Neill, O'Neill's Pub & Restaurant; Pasquale Pascarella, Bar Sugo; Richard Shear, The Shear Partnership; Ryan Jennings, Indigo6; Steven Semaya/David Raymer, Strada 18,
William R. Finger, WRF SoNo Corp.

Mr. Hempstead closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Mr. Hempstead stated that the Committee did not want to move forward to the design stage without involving the governing bodies of the City and including public input. He noted that the LDA is not final and all is subject to negotiation, and nothing is binding until the end. He added that all of the documents have to be vetted through attorneys, and noted that there is a box for ranges of the LDA square footage. He noted that all of this information is on the website and minutes and documents will continue to be updated and posted accordingly.

Mr. Hempstead explained that the Planning Committee and Redevelopment Commission are scheduled to vote Thursday evening on the recommended land uses and square footage ranges.

Mr. Serrano stated that he wanted to echo the comments by Mr. Hempstead and he thanked all for the open and transparent process. He stated that there have been notices out there on the process and issues touched on by the ad hoc committee have been addressed. He added that updates on studies were done and not in a vacuum, and they have not eliminated uses, but updated public realm.

Mr. Serrano explained they did reach out to the public, notices were posted, and letters from local businesses are included for the public.

Mr. Hempstead stated that there was nothing else at this stage and he will see all on Thursday.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Attachment:

LDA Matrix - Recommended Scale and Density of Development

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Knox;
Telesco Secretarial Services

Recommended Scale and Density of Development (2015)

Site Area Calculations	FAR	Land Area			
Parcel 1&2	2.0	448,394 SF			
Parcel 4	2.0	123,883 SF			
TOTAL	2.0	572,227		1,144,454	
		572,227	Minimum Allowable Development 700,000 SF Plus Parking	Maximum Allowable Development 1,144,454 SF Plus Parking	Maximum Height 200 FT Minimum Height 60 FT

Currently Approved CMSP

Overall Project	Units	Area	Parking	Comments
Retail		125,000		
Office		601,000		
Residential	250	317,000		
Hotel	145	101,000		
Parking Spaces			2,474	
TOTAL	395	1,144,000	2,474	

Currently Approved Land Uses and Volumes (2007)

Office	475,000 – 625,000 SF
Retail	75,000 – 125,000 SF
Residential	250 – 350 Units
Hotel	80,000 - 110,000 SF
Affordable Housing	15% of Residential Units
Public Cultural	2-4%

Recommended Approved Land Uses and Volumes (2015)

Office	85,000 – 625,000 SF of Class A Office
Retail	75,000 – 750,000 GLA (Definition Attached) 10% Maximum Allocation to Restaurant Uses, Anchors of High Quality
Residential	60 – 350 Units 15% Affordable
Hotel	85,000 - 175,000 SF Minimum 150 Rooms, With Upscale Facilities
<u>Required</u>	5% of Total Development Square Footage, City / Redevelopment Agency Approval Of The Specific Improvements
Public Realm (Definition Attached)	
Institutional (Optional not one of mixes of uses on the site)	5,000 – 25,000 SF
Parking (Not A Use)	As Required by Zoning
<u>Required</u>	A Minimum of Two Land Uses In Addition to Public Realm Are Required In Any Development
Mixed Use	



March 19th, 2015

Planning Committee, Norwalk Common Council
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
Norwalk City Hall
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856

Dear members of Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and Planning Committee of the Norwalk Common Council,

Attached please find letters of support from area business owners, residents, and other interested parties. These letters express opinions and thoughts on GGP's development proposal for the site.

Attached you will find e-mails and letters from the following individuals:

Andrea Light
Barbara Smyth
Dr. Brian Davis, The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk
Bruce Beinfield, Beinfield Architecture PC
Ernie DesRochers
tz Knipschildt, Knipschildt Chocolatier/Chocopologie
Jahmane West, Art of Jahmane
John Owens, Sono Buzz
Joseph K. Passero, Klaff's Inc.
Matt Storch, Match Restaurant
Michael Foley
Michael Oz, Capital Construction & Development
Michelle G. Watson
Mike Sutton, Benefit Planning Services, LLC
Ollie O'Neill, O'Neill's Pub & Restaurant
Pasquale Pascarella, Bar Sugo
Rhonda Kiest, Stepping Stones Museum for Children
Richard Shear, The Shear Partnership
Ryan Jennings, Indigo6
Steven Semaya/David Raymer, Strada 18
William R. Finger, WRF SoNo Corp.

03/13/2015

I am not able to attend the public forum on Monday March 16 but I want to let you know I support the proposed development on West Avenue in Norwalk. I live in South Norwalk and work nearby on Ann Street. I see this as a welcome addition to the South Norwalk landscape.

Thank you.

ANDREA LIGHT
Norwalk, CT 06854

03/16/2015

We are not able to be at tonight's meeting, but want you to know our family completely and wholeheartedly supports building the high end mall in SoNo. Truly, everyone I talk to wants it - don't be daunted by the few naysayers.

Thanks!

Barbara Smyth and family



Office of the President

To: Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk, Proposed GGP 95/7 Project
From: Brian Davis
Date: March 15, 2015
RE: Proposed GGP Project @ 95/7

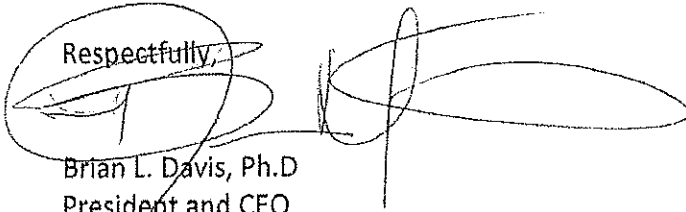
My name is Brian Davis, I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of The Maritime Aquarium. I am aware of the GGP Development proposal in Norwalk that would incorporate retail, a boutique hotel, along with public/common space and educational space. The project would transform this property from an empty lot into a prime destination and will, in effect, have a positive impact on Norwalk's economy. Economic development is critical for the neighborhood, area, and region and I/we respectfully urge the AD HOC committee to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development plan for the following reasons:

1. There is no current market for the existing land use regulations (office) on the 95/7 site and experts project there to be little chance of a major office project being marketable in the foreseeable future.
2. The project will provide significant new property taxes to the City of Norwalk. These tax revenues can be used to improve our education system, our infrastructure and police, fire and health protection and to lower the current tax burden.
3. The project is projected to bring millions of guests to the Norwalk and South Norwalk area, which in turn can stimulate visitors to the Aquarium, local attractions and local businesses. The project also will bolster property values in Norwalk.
4. The project will bring needed jobs to Norwalk in the form of temporary (construction) jobs and many more thousands in the form of permanent jobs, many of which will not require advanced degrees. There will be a wide range of employment opportunities to meet the needs of a variety of local residents, regardless of their education or experience.
5. I feel the time is right for the project as we have a world-class developer who already has invested millions of dollars in acquiring the site and already has commitments from an upscale anchor store (Nordstrom's). I would hate for us to delay as we may lose this unique

opportunity to another region. I support a rapid engagement in order to secure this investment in the Norwalk community.

I urge the Ad Hoc Committee to move swiftly to approve the proposed amendment.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'B' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Brian L. Davis, Ph.D
President and CEO
The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk

March 16, 2015

To Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk, Proposed GGP 95/7 Project

My name is Bruce Beinfield FAIA, and I am the president of Beinfield Architecture PC, a firm that has been located in South Norwalk since 1992. As an Architect I have been deeply involved with the revitalization efforts in South Norwalk for over 25 years, and have completed numerous projects in that neighborhood.

I am writing to voice my support for the GGP proposal to add a major first class retail component to the neighborhood. As there is presently little if any nationally based chain retail in South Norwalk or Downtown Norwalk, the proposed retail will not compete with existing retail businesses in Norwalk's urban core. This project will bring shoppers and jobs to our city.

As an Architect I have had the privilege to work on a number of the restaurants in the neighborhood, including Barcelona Wine Bar, Match, the former Ocean Drive, The Brewhouse, The Spread, Harlan Publick, and Washington Prime. This history has given me a clear window into the important role that these small independent businesses play in branding SoNo as a progressive community, and a regional dining destination. The ecology of the neighborhood is fragile, and would benefit significantly from greater visitation.

The GGP development will be a major attraction from the surrounding region, and therefore it has the potential to increase visitation to Washington Street. If that is achieved, this project will be of great benefit to the SoNo community. Limiting restaurant uses within the GGP project, and enhancing connectivity with Wall Street and Washington Street will leverage the positive aspects of the GGP plan.

I support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development. It is imperative that the Ad Hoc committee move expeditiously to approve the LDA agreement, so that the City of Norwalk can benefit from this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Bruce Beinfield, FAIA
President

Beinfield Architecture PC
1 Marshall St. | Suite 202 | So. Norwalk | CT | 06854
T 203.838.5789 | F 203.857.0046

<http://www.beinfield.com>
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Published by Nancy On Norwalk on March 11, 2015

Ernie DesRochers is a former chairman of the Norwalk Zoning Commission and managing Director at NorthMarq Capital.

Proposed mall will be fully vetted before getting the green light

By Ernie DesRochers

To the Editor:

Much progress has been made recently on the 95/7 regional mall development proposed by GGP for the Reed Putnam parcel along West Avenue in Norwalk.

The Ad-Hoc Committee, composed of members of the Common Council, the Redevelopment Agency, and Planning Commission who were tasked with evaluating the existing Land Disposition Agreement (LDA), has recommended changes to the LDA to the permitted uses and square footage that will allow for the proposed Concept Master Site Plan to move forward. Also, Nordstrom, a leading national fashion specialty retailer, recently committed to be one of two retail anchors for the center. What a great addition to the Norwalk business community and to the City as a whole!

While these are two important developments, they are only initial steps towards the full review, evaluation and approval of the GGP Mall. Ahead for the developer remains final approval of the amendment to the Land Disposition Agreement, modifications to the Urban Renewal Plan, a full review and evaluation by the Redevelopment Agency, including a required design review by a third-party reviewer, changes to the Building Zone Regulations of the City of Norwalk, and full Site Plan and Coastal Area Management approvals.

In addition to these, the GGP mall development will also require approvals from various other agencies including the Norwalk Department of Code Enforcement, Fire Department, Department of Public Works, Water Pollution Control Authority, and Health Department, State of Connecticut, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Office of the State Traffic Commission, just to name a few.

My experience as former Zoning Commission chairman is there will be several significant reports and studies required for these approvals. They are done as part of the overall process as an application makes its way through final approval. Reports are commissioned and reviewed once detailed plans are finalized by the developer and submitted as part of the application process. That has yet to occur. Reports will include a full traffic study, engineering and storm water management reports, and a coastal area management evaluation, just to name a few.

Rest assured, this development parcel, as with all large parcels that are proposed for development in Norwalk, will undergo a thorough vetting process to ensure that any and all issues are properly addressed.

As a taxpayer and supporter of the GGP proposal, I want to thank all of the Ad-Hoc Committee members for their efforts to date. I am also pleased that this proposal has large bi-partisan support and look forward to seeing the mall approved and built. A development like this certainly will help make Norwalk CT the destination for Fairfield County!

Ernie DesRochers

03/16/2015

Re: Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk, Proposed GGP 95/7 Project

I am in support as well.

Fritz Knipschildt – CEO / Founder

t: 203.838.3131 f: 203.838.3137 e: fritz@knipschildt.com

133 Washington St, Norwalk, CT 06854 USA

www.knipschildt.com www.chocopologie.com



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03/13/2015

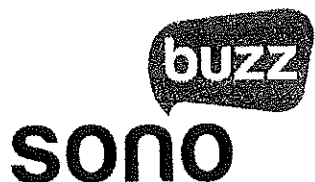
Re: Proposed 95/7 Project

My name is Jahmane West, I am a lifelong resident, artist and business owner whose roots remain strong on SoNo. My first storefront opened on Washington Street in 1995, at a time when the area was buzzing with a well-balanced mixture of retail and restaurant traffic. As we know, over the years, SoNo has experienced many ups and downs, yet is constantly on the verge of a cultural tipping point, but continues to fall short for one reason or another. Many people (still) say it's the parking issues, many say it's the lack of "things to do" besides grab a beer and a bite to eat, but I still think it's the need for a critical mass retail/social gathering destination, such as a mall, that would attract a broader spectrum of commerce and people interaction unlike our current Maritime Aquarium or Movie Theater, and thus overflow into the surrounding area.

As an independent small business merchant I welcome and support the proposed GGP development and feel it is exactly what SoNo needs to keep it as a premiere destination on Connecticut's "Gold Coast.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jahmane West



RE: Proposed 95/7 Project

Special Ad Hoc Committee:

I'm John Owens, founder of SoNo Buzz, a Facebook page where SoNo residents interact with each other as it relates to restaurant news and openings, real estate development projects, art festivals, and more. We have over **5,500 active followers** made up of women and men of varying ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds.

Our various posts on GGP's proposed development have received lots of positive comments from our community. Our most recent post about the Nordstrom announcement received 350 Likes, 51 Comments, and 101 Forwards. Here's a sample of the posts:

"This is major. Pretty amazed." – *Norwalk Resident*

"Yay...made my day!" – *Norwalk Resident*

"This is EXCELLENT news for me; my husband may not agree!" – *Norwalk Resident*

"Hello resale value." – *Norwalk Resident & Homeowner*

The GGP proposal will transform this long abandoned eyesore into a gem that we're all excited about.

The folks @ SoNo Buzz support the current GGP development plan and **we hope you expeditiously approve this LDA amendment** so that GGP can break ground!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JO" followed by a horizontal line.

John Owens

SoNo Buzz

33 North Water Street # 604

South Norwalk, CT 06854

Phone # 203.524.9631

KLAFF'S

March 12, 2015

Douglas Hempstead, Chairman, Planning Committee of the Common Council
Felix Serrano, Chairman, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
Torgny Astrom, Chairman, Norwalk Planning Commission

Gentlemen,

As a lifelong resident of Norwalk and Chief Executive Officer of Klaff's, a family owned and operated business in Norwalk for the past 94 years, I am pleased to offer my unqualified support for the proposed upscale retail project being proposed by GGP at the 95/7 site in South Norwalk.

All of Norwalk, and in particular the businesses in South Norwalk, have been waiting many years for the development of the 95/7 site. It is clear to those that understand real estate that it will be several years, if not longer than a decade, for the office market to possibly improve to the point that new construction on this site may be economically feasible. We need to change the allowed uses without further delay in order to reap the benefits associated with the type of quality development that GGP is proposing.

It is my understanding that the developer is projecting a million new visitors to the retail project on average each month. Even if only 2% of those visitors stay and visit locations in SONO, that alone will bring 240,000 potential customers to the nearby businesses. That kind of economic "shot in the arm" is sorely needed and cannot be ignored by our elected and appointed officials. The City needs the millions of dollars in new tax revenues to be gained each year and Norwalkers will greatly benefit from the 5,900 construction jobs and 2,800 permanent jobs created by this project.

I urge you to move as expeditiously as possible to approve this important project. Thank you for your time and consideration.

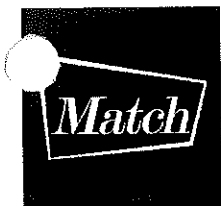
Sincerely yours,

Joseph K. Passero

Klaff's Inc.
P.O. Box 509, 28 Washington Street
South Norwalk, CT 06856
203.866.1603 Fax: 203.866.0232

Klaff's Plus Heating & Plumbing Supplies
89 Day Street
South Norwalk, CT 06854
203.866.3375 Fax: 203.853.2377

Klaff's Lighting of Westport
14 Post Road East
Westport, CT 06880
203.227.9024 Fax: 203.222.7939



98 Washington Street
South Norwalk
Connecticut
06854

(203) 852-1088
matchsono.com

To Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk, Proposed GGP 95/7 Project

Date: March 16, 2015

My name is Matt Storch and I am the Owner of Match Restaurant at 98 Washington Street in South Norwalk. I am familiar with GGP Development's proposal along West Avenue that would permit the development of a center which is proposed to include retail, a boutique hotel, restaurants, public/common space as well as educational space. I am of the opinion that this project as proposed would transform this long vacant property into a prime destination location and will have a positive impact on the Norwalk economy. The development will attract people from the surrounding region to SONO and Wall Street. I also believe it will serve to strengthen the existing retail and commercial business and activities in those areas. My main concern is the connectivity and way finding prior, throughout & after the construction process. I am in favor of a modern circulator to transfer guests from the Mall project, to downtown SONO and other pertinent locations; I am hoping this remains a top priority throughout the planning process.

I support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development. It is imperative that the Ad Hoc committee move expeditiously to approve the LDA agreement.

Warmest regards,

Matt Storch

03/13/2015

I am in Full Support of GGP plans to build a top Notch Mall in Our Town, you will bring jobs that are needed and tax money that is also need!!

Michael Foley

03/11/2015

I strongly support the mall being proposed by GGP.

I will try to be there on Monday.

Michael Oz

Capital Construction & Development

03/13/2015

As a longtime resident of Norwalk (10 Third Street) and someone who also works in town, I wanted to offer my support of the proposed shopping center in Norwalk. I'm very excited to see the space on West Avenue go to good use and I think bringing new development to that area of town is a plus on so many levels.

I hope you share this email with the council in charge of permitting this project. At least this Norwalker is pretty excited!

Sincerely,

Michelle Watson

03/16/2015

I understand that there will be an Ad Hoc Committee meeting tonight where the public may come and voice their support for your project. As a resident, business owner, and Chairman of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, I am writing because I will not be able to attend this meeting but I support your proposed project and feel that it will be a great addition that will benefit the city of Norwalk.

Norwalk does not need any more office space that will sit vacant given the economic forecasts for this area. Your project will not only bring more job opportunities to our city, both temporary and permanent, but will also increase our tax revenues. I realize that the window for such a project has a limited opening and I am encouraging the Committee to seize the moment and approve it so that you may move forward.

Sincerely,

Mike Sutton

C.I.C.

Benefit Planning Services, LLC

03/16/2015

To Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk, Proposed GGP 95/7 Project

My name is Ollie O'Neill and I am the owner of O'Neill's Pub & Restaurant and the property on which it resides at 91-93 North main Street in South Norwalk. I am familiar with GGP Development's proposal along West Avenue that would permit the development of a center which is proposed to include retail, a boutique hotel, public/common space as well as educational space. I am of the opinion that this project as proposed would transform this long vacant property into a prime destination location and will have a positive impact on the Norwalk economy. The development will attract people from the surrounding region to SONO and Wall Street. I also believe it will serve to strengthen the existing retail and commercial business and activities in those areas.

I support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development. It is imperative that the Ad Hoc committee move expeditiously to approve the LDA agreement.

Sincerely,

Ollie O'Neill

03/11/2015

I'm behind this GGP project 100%. However I won't be here on monday. I'll be in atlanta. Let me know when the next one is.

Pasquale Pascarella
Bar Sugo



Stepping Stones

Mathews Park, 303 West Avenue
Norwalk, Connecticut 06850
Telephone 203 899 0606
Fax 203 899 0530
steppingstonesmuseum.org

March 16, 2015

Douglas E. Hempstead
Chairman, Planning Committee of the Common Council
City of Norwalk
P.O. Box 5125
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856

Felix R. Serrano
Chairman, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
City of Norwalk
P.O. Box 5125
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125

Re: The Reed Putnam District (or District 95/7)

Dear Chairman Hempstead and Chairman Serrano:

As the President and Chief Executive Officer of Stepping Stones Museum for Children, I am writing to convey the museum's strong support for General Growth Properties' proposed project at the 95/7 site.

In our 15 years of existence, Stepping Stones has grown into an important community resource in Norwalk. The museum has become particularly adept at developing and cultivating partnerships which drive collective impact in this community. One such collaboration has been the consortium of individuals, neighborhood groups, area business owners and community leaders that have come together for a series of morning Coffee Talks at Stepping Stones to discuss and provide input on the redevelopment and revitalization of the entire West Avenue Corridor. The proposed project at the 95/7 site was the subject of a few of these Coffee Talks as representatives from General Growth Properties presented their proposal and received feedback.

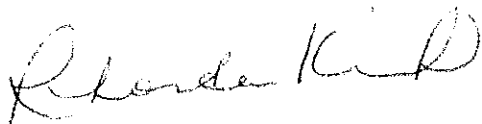
The City of Norwalk and the State of Connecticut have invested heavily to improve the infrastructure in and around our Mathews Park location. We believe the 95/7 Project is critical to completing the City's plan for the redevelopment of the 1.8-mile West Avenue Corridor, of which the revitalized, historic Mathews Park serves a premier 'central park,' of sorts, for Norwalk's children and families. Stepping Stones, itself, is one of the important improvements to this corridor and during our time here, we have seen many more positive developments. We believe that further improvements to area, which will allow for the completion of the connection between historic SoNo and the Wall Street area, are of critical importance. We know that a vibrant, walkable, attractive West Avenue Corridor is great for Norwalk and great for attracting

new residents and visitors to our wonderful city. Current residents will also benefit from the increased entertainment, retail and transportation options available along the route. General Growth Properties' proposed development for the 95/7 site will help give the City of Norwalk a true "downtown."

The mixed-use development will prove to be a valuable asset to our community, bring new jobs and tax dollars to the city. General Growth Properties has already shown a commitment to giving back to the people of our wonderful city, a commitment that will continue with their pledge of job training for local residents, upgraded bike paths around the 95/7 site and Oyster Shell Park and upgraded way finding signage and co-marketing opportunities for existing businesses. If these pledges come to fruition, they can enhance the Mathews Park investments made by the City of Norwalk, Stepping Stones and the rest of our park tenants.

On behalf of Stepping Stones Museum for Children, I fully support the proposed development at the 95/7 site. A top-notch city like Norwalk must continue to evolve to meet the growing needs and interests of its community. The Planning Committee of the Common Council and the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency can help the city meet those growing needs by supporting General Growth Properties' efforts to build its regional center at the 95/7 parcel in Norwalk.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rhonda Kiest". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rhonda" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Kiest".

Rhonda Kiest
President and Chief Executive Officer

03/11/2015

Thanks for getting in touch, and yes I am familiar with the GGP Project plan and a HUGE supporter.

As someone who has operated a design consulting business, and is a commercial property owner in SONO for over a decade - I have been watching the press coverage with delight. It will be a pleasure to watch the neighborhood receive new life and vitality in a sensitive and productive way! It looks like GGP has every intent to create a shopping experience that will positively impact the quality of life for everyone while offering needed jobs for many.

My only hope, as a designer and son of two architects, is that the final plan does two things;

1. Relates to the street environment in a vibrant way
 2. Is sensitive to the architectural heritage of our waterfront New England community.
- Something Spinnaker and their architect Bruce Beinfield, have succeeded with in the last two decades.

I will try and attend the info session on Monday night, and good luck with the approval process!

Regards, Richard

Richard Shear
Principal
The Shear Partnership

03/11/2015

That's great news. So excited to have a new anchor in the community! It should be a catalyst for even more improvement throughout the district.

Thanks for sharing. I will try to attend.

Regards,

Ryan

Ryan Jennings
Managing Partner
Indigo6



122 Washington Street, South Norwalk, CT 06854

March 16, 2015

To: Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk
Re: Proposed GGP 95/7 Project

We are writing this letter in support of the proposed construction of a mall by General Growth Properties at the property formerly known as 95/7. We are familiar with GGP Development's proposal along West Avenue that would permit the development of a center which is proposed to include retail, a boutique hotel, public space as well as a satellite for Norwalk Community College. We believe that this project, as proposed, would be beneficial for Norwalk overall and Downtown Norwalk, including South Norwalk, in particular.

Our understanding of GGP's proposal includes the following:

- There will be no food court at the mall
- GGP, in addition to promoting the shopping center, will promote the area and it's attractions and will work with local businesses on co-promotion efforts
- The design of the mall will be open on West Avenue, with entrances to ground level stores and other establishments, from the sidewalk on West Avenue.
- GGP is committed to working with the city and the Norwalk Transit District to implement a "circulator" bus or other vehicle that will enable easy and free or inexpensive transportation between the development and area attractions, including historic SONO and Washington Street.
- A boutique hotel (and/or other multi-use space such as apartments or offices) will be part of the development
- The development's main feature will be a Class A mall featuring "high end" retail establishments

With these points included in the proposal, this development will attract more people from the surrounding areas to Downtown Norwalk, from SONO to Wall Street. We believe it will serve to boost business for the restaurants and other business in these areas.

We support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development and we feel that it is critical that the Ad Hoc committee move quickly to approve the LDA agreement.

Sincerely,
Steven Semaya, Co-owner, Strada 18
David Raymer, Co-owner, Strada 18

03/15/2015

To Special Ad Hoc Committee: City of Norwalk, Proposed GGP 95/7 Project

My name is William Finger and I am the president of WRF SoNo Corp., owner of 64 North Main Street in South Norwalk (the SONO Regent movie theater property). I am familiar with GGP Development's proposal along West Avenue that would permit the development of a center which is proposed to include retail, a boutique hotel, public/common space as well as educational space. I am of the opinion that this project as proposed would transform this long vacant property into a prime destination location and will have a positive impact on the Norwalk economy. The development will attract people from the surrounding region to SONO and Wall Street. I also believe it will serve to strengthen the existing retail and commercial business and activities in those areas.

I support the current Ad Hoc committee recommendations to amend the existing Land Disposition Agreement to allow the proposed GGP development. It is imperative that the Ad Hoc committee move expeditiously to approve the LDA agreement.

Sincerely,

William R. Finger
William R. Finger Company

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
AND NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
RE JOINT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION
MARCH 16, 2015

NAME	ORGANIZATION	EMAIL
1. <u>Patty Deserri</u> ✓	<u>private</u>	<u>pbroscia@wpsir.com</u>
2. <u>Rosemarie Kelly</u> ✓	<u>resident</u>	<u>rosenmariekelly@rocketmail.com</u>
3. <u>Sarah Hunter</u> ✓	<u>resident</u>	<u>sarah@hunter^{creative}.net</u>
4. <u>Edw. Banks</u> ✓	<u>RESIDENT/BUSINESS OWNER</u>	<u>EDUC@BANKS.BY</u>
5. <u>Rob Jakubik</u> ✓	<u>GGP</u>	<u>robert.jakubik@ggp.com</u>
6. <u>Michael Palletier</u> ✓	<u>Fountainhead (Fat cat Pic</u>	<u>wikee.fountainhead.wikee@sup.com</u>
7. <u>Gray Fowler</u> ✓	<u>Spumacher Real Estate Partners</u>	<u>clayce@spumacher.com</u>
8. <u>Isabelle Hargrave</u> ✓	<u>Resident</u>	<u>IsabelleHargrave@gmail.com</u>
9. <u>Mike Mushak</u> ✓	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Mgmka@optonline.net</u>
10. <u>Tom Bryant</u> ✓	<u>NORWALK PRESERVATION TRUST</u>	<u>TBRYANT23@OPTONLINE.NET</u>
11. <u>Ronell Howard</u>	<u>Resident</u>	<u>ronell.eaunc@gmail.com</u>
12. <u>Robert Colgan</u> ✓	<u>Timberidge Associates, LLC</u>	<u>rob@timberidgect.com</u>
13. <u>Kristen Jensen</u> ✓	<u>KJ Productions, LLC</u>	<u>Kristen@kristenjensen.com</u>
14. <u>To-Anne Horvath</u> ✓	<u>Norwalk Resident</u>	<u>_____</u>
15. _____	_____	_____

16. Deborah Grotheer ✓
17. JACQUE LIGHTFIELD ✓
18. Doug Adams ✓
19. Deborah Goldstein ✓
20. Kim Marquie ✓
21. Ed Musante ✓
22. Maria Bryant ✓

23. _____
24. _____
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**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 19, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Douglas Hempstead, Chair; Bruce Kimmel, Shannon O'Toole-Giandurco, Sharon Stewart, Richard Bonenfant, John Kydes (7:09 p.m.)

OTHERS: Felix Serrano, Redevelopment Agency Board Chair; Lori Torrano, Redevelopment Agency Board Vice Chair; Tom Devine, Redevelopment Agency Board; Lisa Cooper, Redevelopment Agency Board, Atty. Marc Greiner, Redevelopment Agency; Debora Goldstein, Brenda Penn-Williams, Douglas Adams, GGP Developers, Robert Jakubik, GGP Developers

STAFF: Timothy Sheehan, Redevelopment Agency Director; Susan Sweitzer, Senior Project Manager

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Hempstead called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

Ms. Debora Goldstein of Osborne Avenue came forward to speak about the Transit Orientated District resolutions. She congratulated the Council for putting these resolutions forward as soon as possible. She thought that the impact of what has been proposed at the State level will be significant and detrimental to the City and her District. While there is the possibility of this proposal being considered and negotiated, she felt that having the Council propose this resolution was a positive thing. She thanked the Council members for moving forward on this issue.

Mr. Doug Adams, of GGP Developers came forward and thanked the group for coming out again to discuss this matter.

Mr. Sheehan said that there were some letters of support that were provided to the recording secretary.

Mr. Robert Jakubik, of GGP Developers, said that there were a number of letters of support that arrived since Tuesday and he would like to add them to the record. (See attached)

Mr. Kydes joined the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING REQUEST.

B 1. Approve Scheduling a Public Hearing at the Committee meeting on Monday, March 30, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. to receive comments on the draft Citizen Participation Plan, draft 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and Draft PY41 Annual Action Plan.

C 1. Approve Scheduling a Public Hearing at the Committee meeting on Monday, March 30, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. to review the Capital Budget.

Mr. Hempstead said that HUD requires that a Public Hearing Notice be posted. Mr. Sheehan reviewed the details and said that the public hearing date and time must be approved by the Committee and incorporated into the notice published in the newspaper. He noted that there were two of these items, Items B1 and C1, on the agenda.

**** MR. KIMMEL MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

B 1. APPROVE SCHEDULING A PUBLIC HEARING AT THE COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2015 AT 6:30 P.M. TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN, DRAFT 2015-2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND DRAFT PY41 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN.

C 1. APPROVE SCHEDULING A PUBLIC HEARING AT THE COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M. TO REVIEW THE CAPITAL BUDGET.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES,

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2015 MEETING**

Ms. O'Toole Giandurco left the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 9, 2015 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REED PUTNAM URBAN RENEWAL PLAN.

1. Approve referring land uses and development volumes for parcels 1, 2, and 4 of the Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Plan to the Common Council.

Ms. Brenda Penn Williams of Karen Drive came forward to express her many concerns regarding the Reed Putnam Renewal Plan.

Ms. O'Toole Giandurco joined the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Ms. Penn Williams said that the location where the mall is being built has been vacant for around 20 years. Ms. Penn Williams had friends who lived in that area and were forced out when the land was taken. She also mentioned the Waypointe Development, where she grew up. When these places are being built, they displace the residents, who have to move elsewhere. The developers were promising jobs, but said that the high end mall would not be hiring people without high school diplomas. She asked who they were looking to bring the money into, and said it would not be from Norwalk residents. Ms. Penn Williams said that she had a problem with this. As an African American, she said that black people were being displaced. She said that she was fortunate in that she was able to purchase a house but wanted to know what they would be doing for those who are being displaced.

There was no one else present who wished to address the Council Members or Commissioners at this time.

Mr. Sheehan said that the Council Members should have an overview of what was reviewed by the ad hoc committee and what was considered from the March 16th Public Comment period.

**** MS. O'TOOLE-GIANDURCO MOVED APPROVAL OF REFERRING LAND USES AND DEVELOPMENT VOLUMES FOR PARCELS 1, 2, AND 4 OF THE REED PUTNAM URBAN RENEWAL PLAN TO THE COMMON COUNCIL.**

Mr. Hempstead noted that Atty. Greiner was present at the Ad Hoc Committee meetings and the City did not have legal representation at those meetings. He said that if there was any questions this was the time to ask.

Mr. Kimmel said that he had a number of questions and concerns. He commended the Ad Hoc committee. He said originally that he had been lukewarm at best towards the creation of the Committee. The Ad Hoc committee spent a lot of time and worked hard to dig into the issues. At the beginning he had a number of questions about whether all the studies actually existed and the statistical backgrounds. Those studies and statistical analysis do exist and are very extensive.

Mr. Kimmel said that he had a question about the legal status of the resolution that the Committee had received from the Planning Committee. Mr. Sheehan then said that because there was the potential of amendment to the Reed Putnam Renewal Plan, that would ultimately accommodate this project, the volumes and land uses were incorporated

into the Urban Renewal Plan. It was then referred back to the Planning Commission for their written comment, which is part of the State statute with regard to any Urban Renewal Plan or modification of it. Mr. Kimmel had several detailed questions about the wording of the resolution. Mr. Sheehan said that they were comparing it to the City's Master Plan and basing their approval on that comparison.

Mr. Kimmel said that there was a 10% maximum allocation for restaurant space and 5% allocation for the public realm. He wished to know if 10% would translate into 3, 5 or 6 restaurants. The Council Members were told earlier that the mall would enhance the businesses in the SoNo area, but Mr. Kimmel pointed out that the mall was in close proximity to many other restaurants.

Mr. Serrano said this issue had been a concern and it was addressed with staff. The Redevelopment Agency staff had reached out and were able to get an indication regarding this, but he would let Mr. Adams give a more in depth answer.

Mr. Sheehan said that this was more Committee work than GGP work. He then reviewed the mall space allocation process in terms of individual restaurants.

Mr. Kimmel repeated his question regarding how many restaurants would be involved. Mr. Sheehan said that depending on the square footage, it would be between 10 and 14 restaurants. Mr. Kimmel said that these restaurants would conform to the mall, which would be an upscale mall. He then asked how many restaurants were on Washington Street. Mr. Sheehan said that the vast majority of the leasable square footage in SoNo were restaurants.

This is the beginning of a long process, Mr. Kimmel said. One of the primary concerns is the adjacent convenience of SoNo and there had been discussions about a shuttle and a circulator. If there are 15 high end restaurants, where would the shuttle be going? Mr. Sheehan said that if someone went to the Cheesecake Factory with two children and were told that there would be an hour and a half wait, that person would probably choose to eat somewhere else.

Mr. Kimmel said that while he liked the idea of the shuttle, since he grew up in Philadelphia and often put caps on the trolley tracks. He said that it would be a great idea, but hoped that the Redevelopment Agency was not paying lip service to the idea of circulation because Norwalk has many historic sites, like Mill Hill.

Mr. Kimmel said that the artistic rendering indicated two plazas. Mr. Sheehan said that there had been no acceptance of the proposed drawings at this time. The proposal identifies the percentage of land use for public space. The action that the Committees are being asked to take is to only approve the Land Use.

Mr. Kimmel then asked about the traffic study. He said that there was an amended traffic study. He wanted to know how the independent experts were selected. Mr. Sheehan said that the developer has to put forward an application regarding the on and off ramps for I-95. The State will have their own independent consultants review the application, and then send back their questions and concerns. There will be an independent review done again to insure that the developer has satisfied the State's concerns. As part of the entitlement process, the Norwalk Zoning Commission will also be reviewing this.

Mr. Hempstead said that the Zoning Commission would most likely have GGP pay for the traffic studies. The Zoning Commission would be last in line for approval pending STC approval. Mr. Sheehan said that in the last progress submitted, there were major changes.

Mr. Kimmel asked how the design review process worked. Mr. Sheehan gave a brief overview of how this was done. Mr. Kimmel said that if the mall could be presented as having a "New England flavor" to it with the history and the Sound so close by, it could be a good opportunity. He said that he would not want to see another mall that looked like other malls.

Mr. Bonenfant said that his basic question had already been answered. He said that the Redevelopment Agency had voted so quickly, there had been little discussion. Mr. Serrano said that there had not been a vote yet. Mr. Bonenfant said for the record that he would like to make it very clear that this was not a final vote on financial arrangements and other things. Mr. Sheehan said that the action does not change anything in regards to the existing document, but would change an amendment. Mr. Serrano said for the record, they are a smaller group and they are getting the information during the meeting. Mr. Hempstead said that the purpose of the meeting was for both groups to have the same information.

Mr. Hempstead said that the design aspects criteria had been distributed to the Committee members. Mr. Sheehan said that the design aspects that have been presented thus far require consideration as to whether they meet the compliance criteria.

Mr. Hempstead that he liked the joint meetings because it keeps the project moving forward. Ms. Torrano said there had been a large amount of discussion about this project among Agency Board.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Hempstead thanked Atty. Greiner for his help on the issue.

Mr. Hempstead said that he had just received a text from Mr. Simms who was not feeling well.

NEW BUSINESS.

Transit Orientated Bill - Official Act - Governor's Bill #6851 -

Mr. Hempstead said that everyone had the resolution that Mr. McCarthy had drafted. He said that he had brought up the Governor's Bill because he felt that the State was trying to dissolve towns. This would give the State the right to take the land within a half mile of a transportation line on each side. This would include the Rowayton Railroad Station, the South Norwalk Railroad Station, the East Norwalk Station along with the Route 7 station.

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Kimmel said that he had not had a chance to review the back up. However, he said that he would begin the resolution with the third "Whereas" as the resolution should begin with the issue.

Ms. Stewart said that she had not known that the government could step in and do this because it would displace a lot of people. In the past, when people had been displaced, they ended up having to move to the South and often lost businesses and livelihoods.

Mr. Bonenfant said that he supported the concept, and it if needed to be amended before it reached the Council, that was fine. Ms. O'Toole Giandurco said that she supported it also.

**** MR. KIMMEL MOVED TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION.**

**** THE MOTION TO AMEND THE WORDING OF THE RESOLUTION AS DISCUSSED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED TO ADD THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT AT THE MEETING AS CO-SPONSORS.**

Mr. Kydes asked about the eminent domain issue. Mr. Sheehan explained that the State has the power of eminent domain and that they were conferring this power to an appointed body.

**** THE MOTION TO AMEND THE CO-SPONSORS TO INCLUDE THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE PRESENT AT THE MEETING PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sheehan said that the staff did not have the document in Word but would have it retyped. He then reviewed the changes.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AS AMENDED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Sheehan reviewed the fact that there was a regular meeting scheduled for April 6th and asked if the committee members wanted a public hearing on the Capital Budget on March 30th. Mr. Kimmel suggested scheduling both dates and then canceling one. Discussion followed.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MS. O'TOOLE GIANDURCO MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Service.

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: HUNTER ARTON, COMMUNITY OUTREACH ADMINISTRATOR
RE: NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE ACT TAX CREDIT PROGRAM FOR 2015
DATE: MARCH 12, 2015

Applications are now available for Connecticut's Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program (NAA-TCP), which provides a tax credit to business firms which make cash investments in qualifying community programs conducted by tax exempt or municipal agencies. An informational publication is attached to this memo. The community programs must be approved by both the municipality in which the programs are conducted and by Connecticut's Department of Revenue Services.

Anticipated Program Timeline

- April 16, 2015 – Deadline for organizations to submit 2014 proposals to Agency
- May 7, 2015 – Public Hearing regarding 2014 NAA-TCP requests (proposed)
- May 7, 2015 – Planning Committee review and advance 2015 proposals to Common Council (proposed)
- May 12, 2015 – Common Council review and approve programs for inclusion in Norwalk's list of Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program activities (proposed)
- June 5, 2015 – Advance list of approved projects for participation in 2015 NAA-TCP program (proposed)

REQUESTED ACTION:

1. Approve scheduling a Public Hearing on 2015 NAA-TCP applications to be held during the regularly scheduled meeting of Planning Committee on May 7, 2015.



25 Sigourney Street
Hartford CT 06106-5032

INFORMATIONAL PUBLICATION

The Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program

Purpose: This Informational Publication explains the Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Tax Credit Program

Effective Date: upon issuance.

Statutory Authority: Conn. Gen. Stat. §12-630aa et. seq.

Definitions: For purposes of the NAA tax credit program:

Business firm means any business entity authorized to do business in the state and subject to the tax due under the provisions of Chapter 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212 or 213a. For purposes of a business entity subject to the provisions of Chapter 213a, the tax credit earned by such entity may be used by the members or partners of such entity that are subject to the Corporation Business tax under Chapter 208.

Donation of money to an open space acquisition fund means money contributed to an open space acquisition fund of any political subdivision of the state or any nonprofit land conservation organization.

The money must be used for the purchase of land, interest in land, or permanent conservation restriction on land to be permanently preserved as protected open space.

Energy conservation projects means programs to promote energy conservation that are directed toward properties where at least 75% of occupants are at an income level not exceeding 150% of the poverty level for the year immediately preceding the year during which the tax credit is to be granted or at properties owned or occupied by charitable corporations, foundations, trusts, or other entities. Such projects include, but are not limited to:

- Energy conserving modification or replacement of windows and doors;
- Caulking and weather-stripping;
- Insulation;
- Automatic energy control systems;

- Hot water systems;
- Equipment required to operate variable steam, hydraulic, and ventilating systems;
- Replacement of burners, furnaces, or boilers;
- Electrical or mechanical furnace ignition systems; or
- Replacement or modification of lighting fixtures.

The Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program: The NAA Tax Credit Program provides a tax credit to business firms that make cash investments in qualifying community programs conducted by tax exempt or municipal agencies. Such tax credit may be applied against the taxes due under the provisions of chapter 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, or 212. The community programs must be approved by both the municipality in which the programs are conducted and by the Department of Revenue Services (DRS).

Community Programs That Qualify for the NAA Tax Credit Program: Listed below are examples of the types of programs that qualify for the NAA tax credit and the amount of the available credit.

A tax credit equal to 100% of the cash invested is available to business firms that invest in energy conservation projects.

A tax credit equal to 60% of the cash invested is available to business firms that invest in programs that provide:

- Neighborhood assistance;
- Job training;
- Education;
- Community services;
- Crime prevention;
- Construction or rehabilitation of dwelling units for families of low and moderate income in the state;
- Donation of money to an open space acquisition fund;
- Child day care facilities;
- Child care services;

- Employment and training programs directed at handicapped persons;
- Employment and training programs for unemployed workers who are 50 years of age or older;
- Education and employment training programs for recipients in the temporary family assistance program;
- Community-based alcoholism prevention or treatment;
or
- Any other program which serves a group of individuals where at least 75% of the individuals are at an income not exceeding 150% of the poverty level for the year immediately preceding the year during which the tax credit is to be granted.

Obtaining Approval for the NAA Tax Credit Program:

Tax-exempt entities and municipal agencies desiring to obtain benefits under the NAA must complete **Form NAA-01, Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Proposal**, Parts I, II, and III and submit the form to the municipal agency overseeing the implementation of the proposal. The overseeing municipal agency then completes Part IV of Form NAA-01 and submits the form to DRS on or before July 1 of each year. Prior to submitting Form NAA-01 to DRS, each municipality must hold a public hearing on all program applications. The governing body of the municipality must vote to approve the programs. Copies of the public hearing notice and minutes of the meeting approving the programs must be submitted by the municipality to DRS with the approved program proposals.

Limits on the Amount of Contributions That May Be Made or on the Amount of Tax Credit Available: The NAA Tax Credit Program has several statutory limits which must be observed, including the following:

- A business firm is limited to receiving \$150,000 in tax credits annually; however, the amount of tax credit allowed any business firm for investments in child day care facilities for any income year may not exceed \$50,000.
- The minimum contribution on which a tax credit can be granted is \$250.
- Any organization conducting a program or programs eligible for funding under the NAA is limited to receiving an aggregate of \$150,000 of funding for any program or programs for any fiscal year.

- The total amount of all tax credits allowed in any fiscal year is \$5 million, which, if exceeded, results in prorating the approved tax credits among the approved organizations.
- Effective with the 2011 NAA program, the total charitable contributions of the contributing business firm does not need to equal or exceed its prior year's charitable contributions in order to be eligible for the tax credit.

Business Applications Deadlines: Each business firm requesting a tax credit under the NAA Tax Credit Program must complete a separate **Form NAA-02, Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Business Application**, for each program it wishes to sponsor. Form NAA-02 must have an original signature and be mailed or hand-delivered to DRS on or after September 15 but not later than October 1 of each year.

Claiming the Tax Credit: DRS issues an NAA program approval letter to business firms that make cash investments in qualified community programs. The letter indicates the tax credit amount that may be claimed on the applicable business tax return. The tax credit amount must also be entered on **Form CT-1120K, Business Tax Credit Summary**, and/or **Form CT-207K, Insurance/Health Care Tax Credit Schedule**.

Carry Back Provisions: The amount of tax credit that is not taken on the tax return of a business firm for the income year beginning during the calendar year in which the program proposal was approved may be carried back to the two immediately preceding income years (beginning with the earlier of the years). No carry forward is allowed.

Obtaining Additional Information: Direct inquiries to:

Department of Revenue Services
State of Connecticut
Research Unit
25 Sigourney St Ste 2
Hartford CT 06106

Call: **860-297-5687**

Email: DRS.TaxResearch@po.state.ct.us

Effect on Other Documents: Informational Publication 2010(22), The Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program, is superseded and may not be relied upon after the date of issuance of this Publication.

Effect of This Document: An Informational Publication issued by DRS addresses frequently asked questions about a current position, policy, or practice, usually in a less technical question and answer format.

Related Forms and Publications: Request the most recent edition of the following forms: **Form NAA-01**, *Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Proposal*, and **Form NAA-02**, *Neighborhood Assistance Act Business Application*.

For Further Information: Call DRS during business hours, Monday through Friday:

- **1-800-382-9463** (Connecticut calls outside the Greater Hartford calling area only); or
- **860-297-5962** (from anywhere).

TTY, TDD, and Text Telephone users only may transmit inquiries anytime by calling 860-297-4911.

Forms and Publications: Visit the DRS website at www.ct.gov/DRS to download and print Connecticut tax forms and publications.

Paperless Filing/Payment Methods (fast, easy, free, and confidential):

Business and individual taxpayers can use the **Taxpayer Service Center (TSC)** at www.ct.gov/TSC to file a variety of tax returns, update account information, and make payments online.

File Electronically: You can choose first-time filer information and filing assistance or log directly into the **TSC** to file returns and pay taxes.

Pay Electronically: You can pay taxes for tax returns that cannot be filed through the **TSC**. Log in and select the *Make Payment Only* option. Designate a payment date up to the due date of the tax and mail a paper return to complete the filing process.

DRS E-Alerts Service: Get connected to the latest news from DRS. Receive notification by email of changes to legislation, policies, and procedures. **DRS E-Alerts** provide information for employer's withholding tax, News – Press Releases, and Top 100 Delinquency List. Visit the DRS website at www.ct.gov/DRS and select *Sign up for e-alerts* under *How Do I?* on the gold navigation bar..

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: TAMI STRAUSS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
RE: PY41 CDBG RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS
DATE: MARCH 26, 2015

A total of \$187,412 in funding is available for PY41 CDBG Public Service projects. On March 5, 2015, the Planning Committee recommended funding ten proposals for a total of \$211,775 (an excess of \$24,363).

The chart below lists each applicant organization and proposed project, the requested amount of funding and the level of funding recommended by the Planning Committee on March 5.

Organization	Project Title	Total Requested	Total Recommended
Career Resources	Briggs Academy Proposal	\$10,000	\$0
Child Guidance Center of Mid-Fairfield	Dialectic Behavioral Therapy for Teens	\$50,000	\$40,000
ChoZen Few Entertainment dba SoNo Entertainment & Recording Studios	L.I.F.T. Program - Distracted Driving	\$15,000	\$15,000
City of Norwalk	Summer Youth Employment Program	\$20,000	\$0
City of Norwalk	Neighborhood Improvement Coordinator	\$25,000	\$0
City of Norwalk	Aggression Replacement Training for Youth at Risk	\$24,000	\$0
Domestic Violence Crisis Center	Domestic Violence Prevention through Effective Community Policing	\$30,000	\$20,000
Elderhouse	Medical Monitoring Services	\$20,000	\$0
Family & Children's Agency	Home Care for Seniors	\$30,000	\$0
Liberation Programs	Families in Recovery Program	\$20,000	\$0
Liberation Programs	Supportive Housing Case Management Services	\$15,000	\$15,000
Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project	Jump Start Self-Sufficiency Program	\$25,000	\$20,000
Neighborly Care LLC	Neighborly Care LLC	\$10,000	\$0
Norwalk Housing Authority	Head Start ELLI Initiative	\$15,955	\$15,955
Norwalk Seaport Association	Sheffield Island Education Program	\$20,000	\$15,000
Norwalk Senior Center	Elder Abuse Prevention Initiative	\$20,000	\$20,000
Person to Person	Emergency Financial Assistance	\$35,000	\$35,000
Saturday Academy Inc	Girls Computer Science Project	\$15,820	\$15,820
Women's Business Development Council	Small Business Assistance Program	\$40,000	\$0

ACTION: Recommend organizations and programs for a total of \$187,412 in PY41 CDBG Public Services funding.

**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: DOUGLAS E. HEMPSTEAD, CHAIRMAN
DATE: MARCH 18, 2015
RE: NOTICE OF CANCELLATION

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The regularly scheduled meeting of the **Planning Committee of the Common Council** for **Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 7:00 pm** in Room 231 in Norwalk City Hall has been cancelled.