

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: JOHN KYDES, CHAIRMAN
DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2020
RE: MEETING NOTICE

The next scheduled meeting of the Planning Committee of the Common Council will be held on **Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 7:00pm** in the **Room 231** in Norwalk City Hall. Please note the time and location.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
March 5, 2020
7:00PM
AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC HEARING – Enterprise Zone Expansion

To amend the current Enterprise Zone ordinance to include Census Tract 437

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

I. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Approval of Minutes of the February 6, 2020 Regular Meeting.

II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling to execute any and all agreements related to Census 2020 initiatives.
- b. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - 1. Recommend CDBG PY46 funding allocations.
 - 2. Advance the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) to public comment period (March 23, 2020 to April 21, 2020), with a contingency provision for the final allocation by HUD.
 - 3. Approve scheduling a public hearing on the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) during the Planning Committee meeting on April 2, 2020.

4. Advance to the Common Council permission to authorize the Mayor to submit waiver requests related to the CDBG program to HUD on behalf of the affected persons as identified by the PY46 Public Disclosure forms.
- c. Mapping initiative presentation by the Norwalk Land Trust.
- d. Update on the East Norwalk Train Station proposed improvements and additional transit oriented initiatives.

III. OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT



City of Norwalk – Community & Economic Development

125 East Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06851

TO: PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL
FROM: JESSICA CASEY, CHIEF OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SABRINA CHURCH, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2020
SUBJECT: EXPANSION OF THE ENTERPRISE ZONE

Introduction

Over the past three meetings in December 2019, January 2020, and February 2020 the Committee has reviewed both the Enterprise Zone program and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District as potential economic development tools for the Wall Street-West Avenue geography. With direction from the Committee, staff is pursuing both options. The Enterprise Zone requires changes to an existing ordinance for it to be used in the district and has a much shorter timeline than a TIF District that requires a consultant to do an in depth analysis before its establishment. A public hearing was scheduled at the February Committee meeting to begin the formal adoption process. For more information and past presentations and memos please see the following link to the past agendas: <https://norwalkct.org/Archive.aspx?AMID=177>.

PUBLIC HEARING TO AMEND THE CURRENT ENTERPRISE ZONE ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE CENSUS TRACT 437.

**CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 6, 2020**

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Tom Keegan, Lisa Shanahan,
Barbara Smyth, George Tsiranidis, Darlene Young
(6:24 p.m.)

OTHERS: Lori Ellyn Guttman, Norwalk Redevelopment Director of
Community Development Planning

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

Mr. Kydes asked if there was anyone present who wished to address the Committee on a matter other than the CDGB applications. No one came forward.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL.

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

ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of the Minutes of January 2, 2020 Regular Meeting

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2, 2020 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2, 2020 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (KEEGAN, SHANAHAN AND SMYTH) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (KYDES AND TSIRANIDIS).**

NEW BUSINESS.

Schedule a Public Hearing at the March Planning Committee Meeting for amending the current Enterprise Zone ordinance to include Census Tract 437.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING AT THE MARCH PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING FOR AMENDING THE CURRENT ENTERPRISE ZONE ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE CENSUS TRACT 437.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Community Development Block Grant

a. Review and Presentation of CDBG Applications.

• The Child Guidance Center.

Ms. Gail Melanson, the Executive Director, came forward and spoke about the fact that the Center runs a comprehensive program for teens 13 years old and up. She said how there has been an uptick in youth with suicidal ideation. The treatment including weekly individual therapy, multi family groups and various other treatment modalities. The Child Guidance Center accepts all clients regardless of the insurance plan.

• ChoZen Few Entertainment.

Ms. Mellodye Ragin came forward to speak about their LIFT program, focusing on the current issues our youth encounter, such as peer pressure, substance abuse, self-esteem, and producing public service announcements in relation to issues at hand. They have now incorporated a podcast studio and would like to provide training for more children. The staff is working on a video production on grief because loss is a part of life and this will provide techniques for people to deal with grief.

Mr. Keegan asked about the availability of the grief video. Ms. Ragin said that it would be played at the local movie theater. She reminded everyone that she had lost her husband two years earlier and both she and her daughter had to deal with their loss. Now they want to help others in the same situation.

• Community Health Center.

Ms. Amy Taylor spoke about the program and said that this program would be focused on seniors. She said that dental health is important to seniors because if they can't chew, they can't feed themselves. They have had support from SWCAA, but last year, CDBG chose not to give them any funding.

Ms. Smyth asked if this group was the one that has the school dental program. Ms. Taylor said that it was, but that the funding for this would only be used for senior dental health.

• East Norwalk Improvement Association.

Ms. Sylvia Archibald came forward and explained that the group operates from the East Norwalk Library. They are not part of the Norwalk Public Library system. For the last two years, they have received CDBG funding and were able to provide two to three STEM programs each month. The number of attendees has doubled and more people are volunteering at the library. Last year, they did a two week robotic camp for the children. There is a demand for this type of programming.

Ms. Young joined the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

- **ElderHouse.**

Ms. Denise L Cesareo, the ElderHouse Executive Director, came forward to speak about how the clients at ElderHouse have chronic conditions. The clients come to Elder House and this provides the families who provide care a respite. The average age is 87 and many of the clients have chronic conditions that require care. The program provides transportation to and from the residence. This year, the focus will be on veterans. Now the Federal Government has changed the rules and will allow veterans to seek care from community health providers.

- **Greater Norwalk Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

A representative came forward and spoke about how workforce development training services would be provided to the Hispanic population in terms of language skills and job opportunities.

Ms. Young asked about the matching funding and Ms. Shanahan asked about the membership fees, which the representative answered for them.

- **Higher Education Literacy Professionals (H.E.L.P)**

Mr. Tristan Fields came forward to speak about the program which provides access to SAT prep and college prep. He said that they have the high school juniors in the spring and then the seniors come to the program in the fall. Traditional SAT prep usually runs to about \$600 per course. They usually have 20 students in the fall, 20 in the spring and now have added an additional 20 in the summer. The group is looking for more opportunities to expand their funding which will be used to pay the instructors. Mr. Fields said that many of the students who choose out of state colleges end up returning to Connecticut because of the cost for out of state students. Because of this, he is focusing more on Connecticut colleges.

- **Malta House**

Ms. Carey Dougherty, the Executive Director of Malta House, came forward to speak about the homeless program for women with babies. The clients can stay for up to 18 months. There was a recent inspection and the inspector said that Malta House was one of most efficient homeless shelters they had seen. Ms. Dougherty also spoke about their second application submitted for the renovation of their new Norwalk location.

- **Liberation Program**

Mr. John Hamilton, came forward to speak about the program for women and children that struggle with substance abuse, which started in 1984. He said that DCF will not fund the children that are in the program with their mothers. They focus on teaching the women financial planning.

- **Open Door Shelter**

Ms. Michele Conderino, the Open Doors Executive Director, came forward to speak about the 95 bed homeless shelter and listed a number of the services that the program provides for Norwalk residents. The request is for funding for job training, job placement and sponsoring job fairs. There is a partnership with Malta House. The second request is to replace 33 windows in 3 of the affordable housing properties.

- **Person to Person**

Ms. Nancy Coughlin, the Executive Director of Person to Person, came forward and said that they operate 3 food pantries, a mobile pantry in Stamford, along with brick and mortar pantries in Norwalk and in Darien. The request is for salary for the three Norwalk case workers. The requests for services have increased. The program also provides programs such as rental support up to \$500, utilities. They make sure that people will utilize the services.

- **Saturday Academy**

Ms. Cynthia Barnett, the CEO of the Saturday Academy came forward stating there are going to be over 15,000 ITS jobs and the program will focus on teaching girls to create apps, and become tech entrepreneurs. They will work in teams of five in high school and work on solving a community problem. This will culminate in a Shark Tank type of presentation.

- **Serving All Vessels Equally (S.A.V.E)**

Ms. Pamela George, the S.A.V.E Executive Director, came forward to speak about the mentoring program for the student and their entire family. SAVE has existed since 2006 and they would like have a full time staff member. The program has received State funding, but has been told that the funding for staff will be decreased. They had 12 youth and it increased to 20. They would like to increase the staff hours from 10 to at least 15 or 17 hours.

Ms. Young asked if the summer program would be affected if they did not receive funding. Ms. George said that they would have to stop the summer program.

- **STAR, Inc.**

Mr. Peter Saverine, the STAR Director of Philanthropy, came forward and spoke about how they had been in Norwalk since 1962. Their first request involves job placements for disabled individuals. The goal is to try to find employment for everyone who wants to work. There are two job developers in the program. The State of Connecticut does not fund the job development position. He explained that the former in-house piece work program was discontinued nationally and the focus moved to shifting people to work in the community.

- **Carver Center.**

Ms. Novelette Peterkin, The Executive Director, came forward and said that they now have the after school program. They serve about 2,500 students. They are requesting funds for an elevator to allow physically disabled teens to be able to participate in activities in their new second floor teen center.

- **Domestic Violence Crisis Center (DVCC)**

Ms. Boardie Kurz, Director of Development for DVCC came forward, mentioning the organization has two shelters, one in Norwalk and one in Stamford. The Norwalk safe house is in need of repairs, such as a replacement of the bathroom flooring or repairing the sidewalks.

- **HomeFront**

Mr. Sean O'Brien, the Executive Director of HomeFront, came forward and spoke about keeping families in their homes by helping with repairs. He spoke about some of their clients who received some assistance from his organization. There is an aging population with no immediate family nearby in this area or single parent families with one income. The group has been able to repair dangerous flooring, repair plumbing and replace cabinetry. They have repaired over 3,000 homes over the last 36 years and assisted 600 home owners in Norwalk. The request for \$17,000 would cover about three major projects for low income families.

- **Keystone House**

Ms. Kim Carter, the Keystone Development Officer, came forward to present their request. There are three group homes in Norwalk and the request was for funding to repair the bathroom at the main house on Elmcrest Terrace. They hope to install a walk in shower, grab bars and other renovations. Ms. Young asked if it was ADA accessible. Ms. Carter said that they were not wheel chair accessible.

- **New Neighborhoods, Inc.**

Mr. Jonathan Singsen, a staff member of the private, non-profit organization came forward and said that they had developed over 700 affordable housing units. They look to provide quality affordable housing. They are asking for funding to improve flooring and heating systems for the Fair Avenue units and will be working with Eversource on the heating project.

Ms. Shanahan asked if it would be possible to break any of the projects down into smaller financial amounts. The staff member said that heating would be the priority, which is \$12,000 per unit. Discussion followed about the details and the cost of corridor lighting and new corridor flooring.

- **Norwalk Housing Authority.**

Mr. Adam Bovilsky, the Executive Director of Norwalk Housing Authority, came forward and said that the Authority serves over 2,000 families along with managing

seven senior facilities. The request is to make 3 units in the Ludlow Village Housing Units senior development ADA accessible. As the seniors age, they struggle with living situation.

• **STAR, Inc.**

Mr. Peter Saverine, the STAR Director of Philanthropy, said that they would like to have a covered handicapped ramp to the main building. The initial plans did not include having a covering over the ramp, which will involve a long distance in order to provide access to the vans. He also spoke about their other application for funds to help cover the expense of a Competitive Employment Job Developer for Norwalk Residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Mr. Kydes asked about the status of the greenhouse. Mr. Saverine said that the greenhouse project was doing very well.

• **Norwalk Redevelopment Agency**

Ms. Lori Guttman, the Norwalk Redevelopment Director of Community Development Planning, said that the Agency had been administering the CDBG program since the 1970's.

She explained that \$184,916.00 would be needed to help with the administration of the program. HUD has capped the administrative amount at 20%. The Agency is required to place public notices for almost every program. There are both hard and soft costs, such as printing and providing the CDBG binders for the Council Members. The staff must report back to HUD about all the details.

The second application is titled City Neighborhoods. They are asking for \$333,025 which covers many programs such as economic development, community clean ups, transit orientated programs, and the Choice Neighborhoods program along with a variety of other programs.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk
Planning Committee of the Common Council
Regular Meeting
February 6, 2020



City of Norwalk – Community & Economic Development

125 East Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06851

TO: PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: JESSICA CASEY, CHIEF OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SABRINA CHURCH, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2020

SUBJECT: CENSUS 2020 GRANT AGREEMENT EXECUTION

Introduction:

Over the past eight months the Norwalk Complete Count Committee (CCC) has been strategizing outreach and marketing for the Census 2020 initiative. The main goal of the committee is to ensure that everyone is counted and represented effectively by the Census. The committee focused on hard to count areas that have higher concentrations of populations that are less likely to complete the Census survey. These populations include families with children, immigrant populations, low income individuals, persons experiencing homelessness, and renters among other targeted groups. Areas identified mainly culminate Norwalk's urban core and other neighborhoods throughout Norwalk with high populations of these identified target groups.

Grant Budget and Use:

With limited resources, the CCC approached the Fairfield Community Foundation and Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. for grant funding to support outreach efforts. Both organizations have contributed \$10,000 each in support of the Norwalk CCC outreach efforts. The funds will be used for various outreach support as follows:

Type of Support	Amount	Description
Public Transportation Advertising	\$3,000	Bus advertisements
Digital Advertising	\$2,000	Social media and video advertisements
Printed Advertising	\$9,000	Banners, palm cards, "swag" items
Promotional Materials	\$6,000	Giveaway, video curation, multilingual translations

Conclusion:

In order for the CCC to use the grant funds, the Mayor must execute any and all grant agreements to release the funding. As such staff is requesting that the Common Council authorize the Mayor to execute any and all agreements associated with the Census 2020 initiative.

ACTION: Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling to execute any and all agreements regarding Census 2020 initiatives.

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL
FROM: LORI ELLYN GUTTMAN, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2020
RE: PY46 CDBG FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

On March 5, 2020 – Planning Committee Meeting – The Committee is asked to recommend PY46 CDBG applications for funding.

ANTICIPATED FUNDING AVAILABLE AND REQUESTED FUNDING

The anticipated funds are based upon HUD's funding category caps and an *estimate* of what will be allocated to the City of Norwalk by HUD. It is subject to change based on federal budget decisions. HUD has indicated that a final allocation will not be available until later this year yet recommends the Action Plan be available for public comment period. The Action Plan should include a contingency provision for adjustments to match the actual allocation amount. Once actual amounts become known, the Redevelopment Agency recommends the provision allow for adjusting the Planning Committee's funding recommendations up or down by the percentage difference in the actual allocation after the City's immediate needs and funding allocations have been met.

Funding Category	Anticipated Funds	Funds Requested	# of Applications
Public Service activities	\$138,687	\$380,220	14
Public Facility & Housing activities	\$167,952*	\$783,357	9
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency (NRA) City Neighborhoods Activities	\$333,025	\$333,025	1
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency (NRA) Planning & Administration activities	\$184,916	\$184,916	1
Total	\$824,580	\$1,681,518	25

** These numbers were adjusted to reflect the approved \$100,000 allocation of funds to the Walk Bridge Business Mitigation Program.*

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The 30-day public comment period for the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) is proposed to run from March 23, 2020 through April 21, 2020. A public hearing is proposed during the Planning Committee meeting on April 2, 2020. The comment period and public hearing will be noticed in *The Hour*, the Agency's website and on the City's website.

ADDITIONAL KEY DATES

- April 2, 2020 – Public Hearing – Held during the public participation portion of the normally scheduled Planning Committee meeting to receive public comment on the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024)
- May 7, 2020 – Planning Committee meeting – The Committee is asked to forward the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) to the Common Council for approval
- May 12, 2020 – Common Council meeting – The Council is asked to approve the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) for submission to HUD no later than May 15, 2020

REQUESTED ACTION:

- Recommend CDBG PY46 funding allocations
- Advance the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) to public comment period (March 23, 2020 to April 21, 2020), with a contingency provision for the final allocation by HUD
- Approve scheduling a public hearing on the draft PY46 Action Plan (2020-2021) and 5-year ConPlan (2020-2024) during the Planning Committee meeting on April 2, 2020

THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

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

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL
FROM: LORI ELLYN GUTTMAN, DIRECTOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2020
RE: FEDERAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) upholds firm guidelines regarding conflicts of interest and the involvement of federal funding such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), particularly as it relates to decision-making and administration of such federal programs.

Pursuant to Title 24, §570.611 of the Code of Federal Regulations, no persons who exercise any functions or responsibilities with respect to HUD-funded activities, or who are in a position to participate in the decision making process or gain inside information with regard to such activities, may obtain a financial interest or benefit from a HUD-funded activity, or have a financial interest, including compensation, in any contract, subcontract or agreement with respect to a HUD-funded activity, or with respect to the proceeds of a HUD-funded activity, either for themselves or those with whom they have business or immediate family ties, during their tenure or for one year after. HUD defines "family ties" as the spouse, parent (including stepparent), child (including stepchild), brother, sister (including stepbrother or stepsister), grandparent, grandchild, and in-laws of a covered person, regardless of whether the relation is by blood, marriage or adoption.

On February 25, 2020, Common Council members were emailed a Self-Disclosure form to be collected at the March 10, 2020 Common Council meeting. Following collection, Council members considered to be "affected" will be asked to state their name, the name of the affected organization(s), and the nature of the conflict for the public record, so that a waiver request may be filed with HUD.

Agency staff will work with Corporation Counsel and the affected person to determine if requesting an exception from HUD is warranted. Exception requests are reviewed by HUD on a case-by-case basis. HUD requires the waiver request package to include documentation indicating public disclosure of the conflict(s). The minutes from the March 10, 2020 meeting will serve this purpose.

If granted, an exception clears the affected organization for potential funding; however, the affected person must still refrain from participating in the decision making process in regards to that organization, to the extent of removing himself/herself from the room during such conversations and votes. Affected persons may participate in discussions and votes regarding non-affected organizations but may not participate in any final votes, if the affected organization is included.

ACTION REQUESTED: Advance to the Common Council permission to authorize the Mayor to submit waiver requests related to the CDBG program to HUD on behalf of the affected persons as identified by the PY46 Public Disclosure forms.