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 22, 2018

RE: **MEETING NOTICE**

The next scheduled meeting of the Planning Committee of the Common Council will be held on **Thursday, March 1, 2018 at 7:00 pm** in Room 101 in Norwalk City Hall. Please Note the Time and Location.

PLANNING COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 1, 2018
7:00 PM

A G E N D A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
1. Approve Minutes of February 1, 2018 Regular Meeting.

II. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM

A. Recommend CDBG PY44 funding allocations.
B. Advance the draft AAP to public comment period (March 29, 2018 to April 28, 2018) with a contingency provision for the final allocation by HUD.
C. Approve scheduling a public hearing on the draft AAP during the Planning Committee meeting on April 5, 2018.
D. 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 identified by the PY44 Public Disclosure Forms.

III. INNOVATION DISTRICT

A. Review plan document

V. OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF NORWALK
PLANNING COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 1, 2018

ATTENDANCE: John Kydes, Chair; Doug Hempstead; John Igneri; Tom Livingston; George Tsiranides; Faye Bowman (6:46 p. m.)

STAFF: Timothy Sheehan, Executive Director; Tami Strauss, Director Community Development Planning; Sabrina Church, Community Development Planner; Timothy Carney, Housing Development Project Manager; Susan Sweitzer, Senior Project Manager for Development

PUBIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public came forward.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kydes called the meeting to order at 6:31 p. m. A quorum was present.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Kydes called the Roll.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of Minutes
1. Approve minutes of December 7, 2017 Regular Meeting

** **MR. LIVINGSTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 7, 2017 MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK (CDBG) PROGRAM

A. Presentation of CDBG Applications for Program Year 44

** **MR. KYDES MOVED TO TAKE THE PRESENTATION OF CDBG APPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 44 NEXT ON THE AGENDA.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Carver Center

Ms. Amy Perry came forward. She stated that we would like to replace the floor of our gym. Patchwork repairs have been made, but the entire floor needs to be replaced.

STAR

Mr. Peter Saverine came forward. He stated that STAR serves people with disabilities and that 60% of the people served come from Norwalk. He stated that a redesign of the front entrance of the building is needed. He stated that an all-weather covering for the handicapped ramp is needed. Many people in the population served by STAR are aging and have difficulty entering and exiting the building.

Norwalk Senior Center

Ms. Beatrix Winters came forward. She stated that approximately 25 million seniors are scammed each year, and that hundreds of scams exist. We provide 400 seniors with training on how to avoid being scammed. She stated that many veterans are targeted with scams due to them being likely to support veteran related causes.

Ms. Laura Epstein came forward. She stated that many people come to us that aren't seniors. Many homebound and disabled people come to us because they are concerned about scams. In addition to training people to avoid scams, we offer paper shredding. She stated that many people have large amounts of documents they are scared of throwing away.

Ms. Bowman arrived to the meeting at 6:46 p. m.

Open Door Shelter

Ms. Janette Archer came forward. She stated that, with our first application, we are seeking to renovate our building on Chestnut Street. She stated that the Open Door Shelter seeks to address the causes and complexities of the homeless and working poor by providing shelter, food, clothing, case management services, treatment services, transitional planning for short and long term goals, subsidized housing, education, employment, and a path towards independence and success.

Ms. Archer stated that, with our second application, we are seeking capital improvements to the affordable housing that we provide on 143 South Main Street.

East Norwalk Library

Ms. Sylvia Archibald came forward. She stated that currently we provide the community with educational, informational, and recreational programs. We want to expand our programs beyond the children's programming we currently provide.

Ms. Katherine Gray came forward. She stated that the library has a small budget and $6 thousand will go a long way toward serving the public.

Triangle Community Center

Ms. Irene Tsikitas came forward. She stated that 1/3rd of all homeless adults are LGBTQ. We provide services to many people in the LGBTQ community that feel isolated.

HELP

Mr. Tristan Fields came forward. He stated that HELP provides services to lower and moderate income students with their goal of going to college. He stated that students of many different races are served by the organization. He stated that there are currently 20 students receiving services from HELP.

Mr. Merritt Ruff came forward. He stated that he works with students all year round with SAT prep. He stated that it he feels it is rewarding to be able to help students achieve their goals.

ChoZen Few Entertainment

Ms. Mellodye Green-Ragin came forward. She stated that ChoZen Few provides at-risk youth with music production lessons and studio time through the LIFT program.

Liberation Program

Mr. Cary Ostron came forward. He stated that the Liberation Program has been serving the community for fifty years. He stated that services are provided to 1200 people every day. He stated that we help the chronically homeless and serve as a launching pad to lead them to future success. He stated that we have an on-site case manager and are seeking funding to cover 25% of that person's salary.

Person to Person

Ms. Marianne Delaney came forward. She stated that Person to Person has two sites. One is in Darien and one is in Norwalk. She stated that we are requesting $35 thousand for a case worker salary. She stated that we serve at least 230 households.

Family and Children's Agency

Ms. Elizabeth Murdoch came forward. She stated that the agency provides a substance abuse program for women who have experienced trauma. She stated that in the past year we have had funding cuts. The funding cuts caused us to reduce services and staff members. She stated that we have had to move into a smaller office. She stated that we are seeking $20 thousand to go towards staff salaries.

Child Guidance Center

Ms. Gail Melanson came forward. She stated that the DBT program serves adolescents that are suicide threats. She stated that we provide comprehensive services including therapy and 24 hour phone coaching. She stated that we are asking for $25 thousand to go towards those programs.

Saturday Academy

Dr. Cynthia Barnett came forward. She stated that the academy provides science and computer science programs for girls that are entering high school. Classes are offered in coding and app development. She stated that we also have taken the girls on trips to Sikorsky and Google to see women in working environments. We show them that success is possible. She stated that we encourage mothers to be involved and provide encouragement to the girls.

Breakthrough Options for Families

Ms. Akisha Cassermere came forward. She stated that Breakthrough advocates for families in poverty. She stated that mentoring services are provided. She stated that she is seeking $19,200 for one year of office space.

Professional Dental Assistant School

Ms. Carol Felder came forward. She stated that the school provides students with education and clinical skills. The clinical skills include x-ray and sterilization training. She stated that students are given assistance with interviewing skills and resume writing.

Domestic Violence Crisis Center

Ms. Kimberly Donovan came forward. She stated that 76% of the clients served by the crisis center are from Fairfield County. She stated that the clients often times feel financially dependent on their abuser and feel cut off from society. She stated that 50% of the clients are Spanish speaking and we provide services in both Spanish and English.

Keystone House

Ms. Kim Carter came forward. She stated that the Keystone House has been serving the community since 1972. She stated that we help people with disabilities. Our goal is to help them with mental illness and help them towards living a happy and safe life. She stated that we are seeking to renovate the shower in our building.

Community Health Center

Ms. Amy Taylor came forward. She stated that the center provides medical and dental services. She stated that mobile dental services are provided at most schools in Norwalk. Services are also provided to seniors over 60 years of age. She stated that we are seeking $20 thousand to go toward direct patient care and lab fees.

HomeFront

Mr. Sean O'Brien came forward. He stated that HomeFront is a community-based, volunteer-driven home repair program that provides FREE repairs to low-income homeowners, thus enabling them to remain in their homes with an improved quality of life.

South Norwalk Community Center

Mr. Warren Pena came forward. He stated that he is seeking $100 thousand for the remodeling of the front of the center. He stated that the remodel would provide a warmer and welcoming environment.

ABCD

Mr. James Saint Paul came forward. He stated that ABCD has been in Norwalk for four years. He stated that ABCD provides rental and energy assistance to low income persons. He stated that for the past seven months case management has been provided. He stated that we have been providing services to the greater Bridgeport area for the past 25 years. He stated that the funds we are seeking would be used entirely for Norwalk residents.

Hair Tech Beauty & Barber Academy

Ms. Darlene Young came forward. She stated that we are seeking $40 thousand for programs offering services to four low income persons.

Mr. Vincent Grant came forward. He stated that he has been in business in Norwalk for 26 years. He stated that the academy provides opportunities for low income persons to improve their lives.

SAVE

No representative from SAVE came forward.

Redevelopment Agency – City Neighborhoods

Mr. Tim Carney came forward. He stated that the agency is seeking to improve public infrastructure. We seek to make sidewalk and street improvements.

Ms. Bowman exited the meeting at 8:32 p. m.

II. REDEVELOPMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

A. Wall Street-West Avenue Redevelopment Plan presentation by RPA.

Ms. Melissa Kaplan-Macey gave an overview of the geographic location of the Wall Street-West Avenue Plan Area. She stated that the population of the area is concentrated in pockets of the neighborhood. While that population has decreased between 2000 and 2010, we can assume that it has increased based on the completion of recent housing developments. She stated that the neighborhood is more racially diverse than Norwalk as a whole. She stated that the median household income is lower than Norwalk as a whole, but it has increased since 2000.

Ms. Kaplan-Macey stated that RPA's vision includes improving the community character, economic development, land use and mobility. She stated that in the fall of 2017, a draft of recommendations was drawn up and in the Winter/Spring of 2018 we will be seeking comments and revise the plan as necessary. Ms. Kaplan-Macey stated that RDA has received feedback from working groups, residents, developers and banks, government representatives and institutions, retail and commercial businesses, waterfront businesses and social service organizations.

Ms. Kaplan-Macey stated that many stakeholders consider the urban character, historic buildings, central location and trails to be among the assets in the neighborhood. She stated that stakeholders expressed the lack of pedestrian activity, lack of connectivity, a feeling of the neighborhood being unsafe, and a lack of identity as being the main shortcomings of the neighborhood. Ms. Kaplan-Macey stated that free parking, affordable rents, and proximity to highways and transit as being the most valued assets named by stakeholders.

Ms. Kaplan-Macey stated that a green and healthy place to live in work is the core of RDA's vision for the Wall Street-West Avenue neighborhood. We seek to attract new types of businesses, jobs and entrepreneurs. We recognize that the way we live and work is changing. She stated that we need to capitalize on the physical, economic, and networking opportunities that are available. She stated that we seek authenticity through the historic character, growing arts organizations, local businesses and restaurants, and the established industrial uses on the waterfront.

Ms. Kaplan-Macey stated that we seek to improve accessible transit, improve sidewalks for walking, and better the streets for vehicles and for bikes. She stated that we seek an affordable neighborhood for residents to rent and buy homes, for commercial businesses to thrive, and for industrial businesses to operate and utilize the river.

B. Review Innovation District Incentive Structures.

Mr. Sheehan stated that last year the City began to lay the ground work for the Wall Street and West Avenue Corridor to become an Urban Innovation District. A UID is a defined geographic area within a city where technology and creative class businesses and institutions are clustered. Business relocation, retention and new development that significantly contributes to the City's public policy objectives are the building blocks that the incentives would encourage. Mr. Sheehan stated that the Agency has gathered input from the Innovation District Subcommittee of the Common Council and is proposing an incentive program.

Mr. Sheehan stated that the proposed incentive program will only apply to a targeted area within the City to draw new jobs and businesses to that specific area. Having these institutions within the incentive boundary will benefit the district as a whole. It will also incentivize anchor institutions and new businesses that are hoping to enter the district.

Mr. Sheehan stated that the Agency is proposing five tax incentives for the Innovation District to attract new development, businesses and jobs to the area. The incentives can be used in combination or standalone, depending on the business or project. He stated that the Agency will develop various applications for the Innovation District that will vet applicants and streamline the process prior to coming to the Innovation District Committee and the Common Council for approval.

Mr. Sheehan recommended that, upon general consensus from the Planning Committee to advance the program outline, it be advanced into a formalized Program/Business Plan. He recommended that upon the Program/Business Plan's completion, that it be formally commented on by the City's Finance Director, the Board of Estimate and Taxation, the Planning Commission and the City's municipal tax counsel.

** **MR. KYDES MOVED TO ADVANCE THE INNOVATION DISTRICT INCENTIVE PROGRAM INTO A PROGRAM/BUSINESS PLAN FOR FURTHER REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE.**

** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. Review Urban Core Infrastructure and Affordable Housing Capital Budget requests.

Mr. Sheehan stated that $1.7 million has been requested for Urban Core Infrastructure. Of the $1.7 million $900,000 has been requested for the restoration of the HUD Choice Neighborhood Initiative grant funding for Ryan Park Improvements, $500,000 has been requested for additional funding for the completion of improvements to the Washington Street Plaza, and $300,000 has been requested for Phase I improvements to the open spaces in the Wall Street area to enhance the emerging residential and commercial center.

Mr. Sheehan stated that $500,000 has been requested for Affordable Housing.

III. Approve advancing to the Common Council the scope of work for Waypointe infrastructure and streetscape improvements Phase II DECD Grant.

Mr. Sheehan stated that in 2017 the City received a $3 million grant from the State DCED for the construction of public infrastructure improvements in the second phase of the Waypointe development project on West Avenue. He stated that the City committed a $1 million match to the State funds. Mr. Sheehan stated that the project scope of work includes material and labor to complete street lighting, streetscape and utility improvements in the public right of way.

** **MR. KYDES MOVED TO ADVANCE TO THE COMMON COUNCIL THE PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE PROGRAM OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS TO SUPPORT THE PHASE II WAYPOINTE DEVELOPMENT AS PRESENTED IN THE PINNACLE UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE & STREETSCAPE UPGRADE DATED JANUARY 5, 2018.**

** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

V. NEW BUSINESS

No items were brought forward.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

No items were brought forward.

ADJOURNMENT

** **MR. IGNERI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Blaney
Telesco Secretarial Services

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OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

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

TO: MEMBERS, PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE NORWALK COMMON COUNCIL

FROM: SABRINA CHURCH, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNER

DATE: FEBRURARY 22, 2018

RE: PY44 CDBG FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

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 allocation needs have been met.

Funding Category	Anticipated Funds	Funds Requested	# of Applications
Public Service activities	$112,614	$535,974	18
Public Facility & Housing activities	$405,723*	$684,797	7
Planning & Administration activities	$183,180	$183,180	1
Total	*$701,517**	*$1,403,951*	*26*

***100,000 was removed for the pre-approved Walk Bridge Business Mitigation Program.**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The 30-day public comment period for the draft PY44 Action Plan is proposed to run from March 29, 2018 through April 28, 2018. A public hearing is proposed during the Planning Committee meeting on April 5, 2018. The comment period and public hearing will be noticed in *The Hour*, on the City's website and on the Agency's Facebook page.

KEY DATES

- April 5, 2018 – Public Hearing – Held at prior to the Planning Committee meeting to receive public comment on the draft PY44 Annual Action Plan
- May 3, 2018 – Planning Committee meeting – The Committee is asked to forward the draft PY44 Annual Action Plan to the Common Council for approval
- May 8, 2018 – Common Council meeting – The Council is asked to approve the draft PY44 Annual Action Plan for submission to HUD

REQUESTED ACTION:

- Recommend CDBG PY44 funding allocations
- Advance the draft AAP to public comment period (March 29, 2018 to April 28, 2018), with a contingency provision for the final allocation by HUD
- Approve scheduling a public hearing on the draft AAP during the Planning Committee meeting on April 5, 2018

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: SABRINA CHURCH, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNER

DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2018

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 12, 2018, Common Council members were emailed a Self-Disclosure form to be collected at the March 13, 2018 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 13, 2018 meeting will serve this purpose.

If granted, an exception clears the affected organization for potential funding; however, <u>the affected person must still refrain from participating in the decision making process in regards to that organization</u>, 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 PY44 Public Disclosure forms.