

CITY of BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
of the CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2011

6:00 PM

ATTENDANCE: Council members: dePara; Co-chair, A. Ayala, *Brantley, Martinez
Council President: T. McCarthy(*sat in to make a quorum*)

*=*arrived late*

NON-COMMITTEE: Council members: Baker, Brannelly

CITY STAFF: D. Eversley, Director OPED; B. Coleman, OPED, M. Perez,
OPED

OTHER(s): R. Gupta, Grants Writer; V. Sorrentino, Deputy Dir., Health & Human
Services; A. McGoldrick, Grants Writer, Central Grants; S. Kuczo, Lead
Program Manager, Central Grants; V.Ortiz, Social Services

Co-chair dePara called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

Approval of Committee Minutes of November 15, 2010.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Co-chair dePara stated that the agenda would be taken out of order to take up the grants items first.

01-10 Grant Submission: re: State Department of Social Services for 2010-2011 Social Services Block Grant.

Ms. Grupta stated that this item involved combined grants for the Health Department and Social Services as one grant.

Ms. Sorrentino stated the total grant amount was \$180,183.00; the state combined two contracts and they were all renewal programs. There are also two sub-contracts with Child & Family Guidance and the Disability Resource Center for disable persons who need assistance to remain in their homes.

Council member Martinez asked if they received the grant last year. Ms. Sorrentino said they had a small contract that was used for personal assistance. She explained that if there is a disabled person that needs help with doing things around the house, they are eligible to receive the assistance.

Council member Martinez stated that she knew someone who needed a wider door for electric wheelchair access. She asked if this person would qualify for the assistance. Ms. Sorrentino replied no, that type of assistance would fall under another service.

Council member Ayala asked about the handicap parking in relation to putting handicap signs on the street. Ms. Sorrentino said she would meet with the department who implements this tomorrow and discuss the matter. She noted that it shouldn't take six months to be done and she said she would follow up on the matter and inform the committee.

Council member McCarthy asked if the \$180k was the combined amount for both programs. Ms. Sorrentino said yes; the programs would receive an equal amount of \$90k and there is no city match.

Council member McCarthy asked if this was flat funding from last year. Ms. Sorrentino said if it wasn't flat funding, it's pretty close to what it was last year. Council member McCarthy stated the reason he asked was because there will be cuts to CDBG funding this year that will have an effect on the programs.

Ms. Ortiz stated they also use the funding to provide counseling, crisis prevention, basic needs and food vouchers. They service 2,200 individuals and last year they exceeded the number of people they were contracted to service.

Council member Martinez stated that she works closely with social services and she was pleased with the help they offer the people she represents.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

02-10 Grant Submission: re: Department of Housing & Urban Development for 2011-2014 Bridgeport Lead Free Families Grant (BLFF).

Ms. Grupta and Ms. Kuczo presented this item to the committee. Ms. Grupta said they applied for this grant and received more than \$3 million. The program begins in February and it's a three year program. They will offer lead remediation in (210) houses.

Ms. Kuczo added that the program brings \$9 million total into the City of Bridgeport for lead abatement and funds to start healthy home initiatives, so it's a new trend to highlight energy efficiency. There is a \$75k match over the course of three years. Overall, it's for great work and partnership.

Council member Brantley asked if people who have applied previously, are eligible to reapply, since the money initially ran out. Ms. Kuczo said yes.

Ms. Kuczo also noted that they created fifty low income jobs due to the initiative.

Council member McCarthy expressed what a good job was done and he commended Ms. Kuczo for all the work she did. Ms. Grupta commented that Thompson Publication was looking to do an article on the program for a newsletter.

Council member Martinez asked who a person would contact to apply for the money. Ms. Kuczo said they do presentations and home visits and they go to NRZ meetings to reach out to people. And they may also do radio announcements in the future.

Council member Martinez asked who was eligible for the program. Ms. Kuczo said lead poison exposed children under six years old are eligible, and whomever lives in the unit.

Ms. Grupta mentioned that the match was already in the budget per Council member Brannelly's question.

Co-chair dePara asked if the allocation counted as a defacto in-kind contribution. Ms. Kuczo said yes.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

03-10 Grant Submission: re: Department of Housing & Urban Development for 2010-2013 Bridgeport Healthy Homes Program Grant.

Ms. Grupta requested to withdraw this item because the program wasn't funded.

Council member McCarthy explained that the easiest way to withdraw an item, was to table it and let the item die.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO TABLE
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

05-10 Grant Submission: re: State Department of Social Services for 2010-2012 Retired Senior Volunteer Program Grant.

Ms. Grupta said this was a small grant in the amount of \$6,000.00, to place seniors in non-profits. The seniors consist of five-hundred(500) volunteers who volunteer their services.

Council member Martinez asked who ran the program. Ms. Grupta said the program was run by the the Department of Aging.

Ms. Grupta said the seniors work as companions and carry out other minor tasks.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

16-10 Grant Submission: re: State of Connecticut Department of Public Health and The Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH) for 2010-2011 Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Contract.

Ms. Sorrentino stated that the money was from DPH and passed through CADH. The money funds an investigator in the Lead Department and it's related to the match for the previous item 02-10. They provide education and community outreach. The grant is in the amount of \$90,296.00 and there is no city match. The funds provide the full salary for the lead investigator and a mini computer operator in the department. She noted that the Lead Department is located in the City Hall Annex. She explained that investigations are done by going out to the the home to investigate the problem.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

18-10 Grant Submission: re: U.S. EPA 2010 Greenscaper Grant Program.

Ms. McGoldrick and Steven Hladon of the Parks & Recreation Department presented this item. Ms. McGoldrick recalled that the item was brought before the committee one month ago for the greenscaper project and to hire an intern to work on varied projects. The item was denied by the committee at the last meeting, because of the \$10k match required. - *she distributed information related to the item.* She went on to explain that they went back to the Environmental Protection Agency(EPA) and explained the problem with the match and asked if there was any other way to keep the money. And they agreed to waive the match, so it's only \$10k and they are still interested in implementing the program.

It was noted that Ted Graybarz was the director of the program, per Council member Brantley's question.

Mr. Hladon said he would supervise the intern and assign the projects. Council member Brantley asked how they will acquire the intern. Mr. Hladon said they had a session last summer where they taught rain management for creating rain gardens. Council member Brantley asked how they will advertise for the person they're looking to intern. Mr. Hladon said they will be looking at local schools such as: Uconn, Yale and City College of NY. He said they will reach out to many colleges and universities that offer these types of programs.

Council member Brantley asked if they ever got the rain barrels in place. Mr. Hladon gave the phone number (203) 394-6981; of the contact person to call to inquire about the rain barrels.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

161-09 Disposition of City Owned property to Habitat for Humanity and ordering a public hearing relative to the same.

Mr. Perez said there were two parcels on Washington Terrace and Waldorf Avenue. He stated the parcels were offered to the abutters, but they weren't interested, so they were offered to Habitat for Humanity and they decided to take them. For Washington Terrace, they received a grant that will pay for the entire development. The Waldorf Avenue parcel is a vacant lot that is located in the back of Wendy's in Black Rock. The address is 37-41 Waldorf Avenue.

Council member Ayala asked who was funding the development. Mr. Perez said it's being funded by a private grant that Habitat for Humanity received.

Council member Ayala asked how soon the project would be moving forward. Mr. Perez said as soon as they have the grant money in place.

Council member Brannelly asked what they were building. Mr. Perez said it will be a single-family home.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING PRIOR TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

164-09 Proposed Development, Lease and Use Agreement with M.O.V.E. Yacht Club for the re-development of 148-220 Waterview Avenue.

Mr. Eversley and Bill Coleman presented this item to the committee. Mr. Eversley reviewed the proposal summary (*exhibit-1 distributed and entered into the record*). He stated that they were down to the final steps of preparing Steel Point for development, including the funds they will received from the government for the last two Yacht Clubs to be relocated.

Council member Brantley questioned if the Talmadge family was still living on the property. Mr. Eversley responded that part of the family went to Norwalk and the other part still lives at the point, but they will move to the northwest corner under I-95. He recalled that the family was previously offered a 100-year lease. *Co-chair dePara requested that Mr. Eversley submit the information regarding the Talmadge family to the committee.*

Mr. Eversley went on to review the summary. He stated that they need to access the entire point and relocated the Yacht Club. He updated that the deal goes back a decade and the proposed site is on Waterview Avenue north of I-95 and consists of 2.88 acres of undeveloped land. It was previously used for various industries, it's a popular property, but recently has been used for dumping. However, it will provide a new home for the Yacht Club and put eliminate a blighted property and put it back into the positive development and on the tax role. The site will remain city owned property and there will be a long term lease. The city will contribute a portion of money to the site work and construction cost. It will be fully built out over the course of one year or so. He clarified that this was an old deal that's just getting finished and that's why they were before the committee for the final approval.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ENTER EXHIBIT-1 (SUMMARY) INTO THE RECORD**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Eversley referred to the site plan indicating the new development to the north. He did this to point out that this project will finish off Waterview Avenue in terms of

development. The small marina district will be an adjunct to Steel Point itself and from a planning standpoint, it will serve as a connected development to the water resources in Bridgeport. He reviewed page 3 of the summary that denoted what will be seen when the development is complete. He noted they will construct a decorative masonry wall and it will be well lit at night. He referred to page 5 that denoted the designated location of the building and two stripped parking lots on either side of the building and a boat ramp launch.

Council member Martinez stated that the residents were up in arms about the construction work that has begun. She also asked if they planned on installing any trees. Mr. Eversley clarified that it will be a nice stone wall will be constructed.

Mr. Eversley introduced the members of the Yacht Club that were present. He stated that there was ample space to put in landscaping and he was sure trees would be part of the project. Council member McCarthy added that there will be funding to plant trees. He commented that if money for the trees was provided, he was sure the members of the Yacht Club wouldn't have a problem planting them.

Mr. Eversley stated that they will see more earth moving equipment as the development progresses for the purpose of preparing the site, but the site won't be operated as a construction yard. Council member Martinez suggested that they put up signs to make the residents aware of the impending development. Mr. Eversley acknowledged that would be a good idea.

Council member Ayala stated that he was glad the project was going forward. However, he had a concern about the cost to the city and the tenants, as far as the clean up of the property. Mr. Eversley said the funding comes from the Steel Point account that was created during the 1980's. Also, the city allows the use of the city obligation bonds for property improvements, however, there is petroleum and PCB soil on site that will be capped by a contractor. Those costs are covered by the city and the relocation amount will be given to the club and they will facilitate the funds to get into a closed building before the summer, which will allow them to get off the old site and they will have active boat slips at that time. He said that although the budget is tight, he felt they could get in the first phase at a reasonable cost. There is no cost to the tenants for the environmental clean up.

Council member Brantley asked if the amount of \$375k that was outlined in the summary information was accurate. Mr. Eversley said yes. He noted that the first draft came about five years ago and the original amount was \$300k or \$325k. The \$375k was a negotiated amount his department came up with.

Council member Brantley asked if the \$375k was sufficient to meet the tenants needs considering the current market. Mr. Eversley referred to the plan layout, pointing out the big area where the banquet hall space will be situated. He expressed that the events the Yacht Club holds there would be profitable in the long run.

Council member Brantley asked how long the lease was for. Mr. Eversley said it was for 40-years. He explained that there has been a variety of relocation deals discussed over the years, but the difference in the deal negotiated may be between an owner of a property vs. a renter of a property.

Willie Murphy approached the committee. He stated that he was one of the oldest members of the Yacht Club. He said that they should keep the residents of the community in mind and how the Yacht Club will connect to Steel Point. He said he expected it to be a first class structure that will be used by everyone in the community. He further expressed that they were looking to open it up to everyone in Bridgeport, as well as out-of-towners. As far as the wall that will be erected, he promised that it wouldn't look like a prison. He also expected to increase their membership. He further noted that women will be free to join, per Council member Brantley's question.

He went on to thank OPED, commenting that they really worked with them, although admittedly, there had been somewhat of a fight in past administrations. He expressed that it might not be enough money, but he stressed that the members will have to bring some sweat equity and they may have to do things differently to make it work. He expressed that he was glad people have enjoyed the club in the past and he hoped they would in the future.

Council member Ayala asked if the \$375k is the amount that was originally quoted. Mr. Eversley said the original amount was \$225k. And then it was stated that the city would also pay for the engineering, site work and clearance. Then they advocated for additional money and they ended up with an additional amount of \$50k and that's how

they went from \$325k to \$375k. Mr. Murphy clarified that the true original amount was \$110k, but as Mr. Eversley stated they advocated for more money and OPED worked with them.

Council member Martinez asked if the Yacht Club was part of Steel Point. Mr. Eversley said not exactly in those terms. However, it will be a supportive part of Steel Point.

Council member Martinez questioned the \$11 million allocated to the Steel Point project. Mr. Eversley stated that the \$11 million is for very specific transportation related items, such as: sewers, light signalization and utilities. Those monies were part of a grant application and specified for specific uses. He briefly relayed information that was related to Steel Point and what was planned.

Council member Martinez asked about the 40-year lease. Mr. Eversley said the Yacht Club was offered the right of first refusal, he said this information was contained in the contract.

Council member Brannelly asked what M.O.V.E. stood for. The response was it stood for; *Men of Vision and Enthusiasm*.

Council member Brannelly asked who owned the site. Mr. Eversley said the city owns both sites that consist of 1 ½ acres.

Council member Brannelly asked if any estimates were done on the parcels to determine the market value of one site to another. Mr. Eversley said no, the intention was to accommodate the boat slips.

Council member Brannelly asked if they had a commitment from the Yacht Club for a certain investment. Mr. Murphy said he understood that they will need to put a business plan together and bring more to the table. He said if they default at any time, then the city still has the property. However, he had no doubt that an excellent place will be built. They have the plans they will follow and they intend to build it to meet a high standard.

Mr. Eversley said in this case, there was a certain amount of good faith to maintain and an agreement to assure that the project works. Although there was some bad faith in the past administration, it has been rebuilt.

Council member Brannelly asked about the PCB's and where they will be moved to. Mr. Eversley said they will be moved to an acceptable disposal location to a designated site that is approved by the state and federal government.

Council member Brannelly stated that in this economy, people are walking away from their boats and banks aren't easily lending money. She questioned what will happen if all good faith efforts fail. Mr. Murphy said there were at least three people who frequent the club that are developers and there is a person that is working on downtown construction. Also, he believed that the income that will be generated from the big rooms will generate income because of the new modern facility. He reiterated that the club will be built and nicely done. He further noted that it will be up and running before Steel Point is completed. Mr. Eversley also felt there will be a demand for new members.

Co-chair dePara stated that he understood Council member Brannelly's concerns. He expressed his concern was related to sustainability. He clarified that the questions weren't meant to doubt the Yacht Club's commitment, but more to make sure that they have what they need to sustain the club after it's built. Mr. Murphy stated that their business plan will ensure that they can fiscally operate without any issue. He emphasized that he wasn't worried about sustainability.

Angelo Pierce another member of the Yacht Club stated that they were stepping into a project with a proud character. He said they have events in place to bring in money, such as selling club jackets etc. He further stressed that they weren't coming into the community to destroy it, but to embrace it. He emphasized that as someone who pays taxes, he believed they should be able to have the right to launch a boat in the water. He expressed that they aren't trying to hurt the city and whatever has to be done to get it built will be done. He mentioned that they were looking to start up a sea scout program for the youth. So although the committee had concerns, their concern is to go up.

Council member Brannelly questioned if they were getting twice the size of land, what will be the outcome if the project fails. Mr. Murphy agreed it will take work, but he pointed out that they're not taking housing money to finish the property and he expected it will succeed. He went on to mention other development projects that occurred, such as Harbor Point. He said this to make the point that if no one spoke up to do that project, it wouldn't have ever gotten done. He again emphasized that his club could be a vital part of Steel Point.

Council member Brannelly asked if there would be public access to the launch. Mr. Murphy said yes. He clarified that no one will be denied access to the club.

Council member Brannelly commented that he recognized all the concerns by the council members, because at the end of the day they have to account to their constituents. He expressed that he has known the members at the Yacht Club a long time and they are truly a community organization and he felt that the city had an obligation to embrace this type of organization. He said they should be allowed to continue doing what they do, because they provide a place for people to go and a program for kids.

Council member Brantley stated that she has been involved with the club since she was a child. And although she has heard many political discussions about the club, she was fully aware of the fact that the club has been opened up to the community's needs for various purposes and events. It's a very historical part of the community and not only for black people, but for everyone!

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING PRIOR TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*The co-chair called for a break at 8:05 pm.
The co-chair reconvened the meeting at 8:10 pm.*

165-09 Proposed Tax Assessment Phase-In Agreement with M.O.V.E Yacht Club for the re-development of 148-220 Waterview Avenue.

Mr. Eversley suggested that this item be tabled for the purpose of reassessing the tax rate figure. He explained it's expected to increase from approximately \$6,000 to between \$10,000 and \$15,000. The increase will be phased in, taken into consideration PILOT's and tax credits. A revised tax agreement will be drafted.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO TABLE
** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services