

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 20, 2004**

ATTENDANCE: Johnny Dye (135th), Co-Chair; Richard Paoletto, Jr. (138th), Co-Chair; Andres Ayala, Jr.; Maria Valle (137th); Henry Webb, (139th); Robert Walsh (132nd) E. Pivrotto (132nd); T. McCarthy

OTHER: Henry Webb (139th); Robert Walsh (132nd); Thomas Mulligan (130th); Ed Gomes; A. DePara; Lisa Trachtenberg, City Attorney; William Minor, Land Use Construction Review; Paul E. Catino, Office of Policy and Management; Nancy Hadley, Office Planning & Economic Development; Jerri Sedelnik, ITS; Joe Gambino, Construction Management and Services; Joe Riccio; I. Hernandez, Bridgeport Fire Department; Ron Morales, Bridgeport Fire Department; Lorenzo Pittman

04-04 – RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO PLANNING AND ZONING REGULATIONS

Mr. Walsh said that there is a problem that many of the Council members have run into with regard to a practice whereby developers and/or attorneys representing them continue to put items on the agenda, withdraw items, or ask for continuations or referrals. He said that he believes the sole purpose is to discourage neighborhood opposition to planned projects and to inconvenience the neighbors as much as possible hoping to eventually chase them away. He said that this resolution would get the message to Planning and Zoning that the Council is tired of their practice and also that the Council wants Planning and Zoning to change their rules to discourage developers and attorneys from playing this game.

Mr. Ayala said that he agrees with Councilman Walsh. He said that his only concern is whether the City Council can make rules and regulations for the Planning Board that they adopt. Mr. Paoletto asked Attorney Trachtenberg if there is any legal issue with the Planning Board adopting such an ordinance or resolution. Attorney Trachtenberg said that there are statutes that have a 60-day window for the Board to act on a resolution or it is automatically approved. She said that she has some concern with a 90-day waiting period. Mr. McCarthy questioned whether or not the Council should allow time to hear legitimate issues that need to be withdrawn. Mr. Paoletto suggested taking out the 90-day waiting period and put the wording “some sort of waiting period”. Mr. Ayala said that there is an issue regarding the tabling of items and whether they are meant to discourage the public from attending the meetings. He suggested that this item be tabled to allow the three Council members who have worked on the resolution to meet with Attorney Tachtenberg to come up with some type of medium. Mr. Ayala expressed

concern with the 60 and 90 day waiting periods. He said that he did not want to do something to give them more time to weigh the matter out. Mr. Mulligan thought that it was a good idea to have the City Attorney go over the matter to make sure that there are no legal issues.

**** MR. AYALA MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THE ITEM AND SUGGESTED THAT THE CO-SPONSORS OF THE RESOLUTION MEET WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY IN ORDER FOR THE COUNCIL TO HAVE A RESOLUTION THAT IS ACCURATE BEFORE FORWARDING IT TO THE ZONING BOARD.**

**** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MS. PIVIROTTO MADE A MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO DISCUSS AN ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM.**

**** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MS. PIVIROTTO MADE A MOTION TO ADD RESOLUTION #21-04 REGARDING THE HIGHEST AND BEST USE OF THE PROPERTY AT SEAVIEW AVENUNE.**

**** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION FAILED WITH 5 OPPOSED (MS. VALLE, MR. PAEOLETTO, AND MR. AYALA, MR. WEBB, MR. MCCARTHY).**

Mr. Ayala said that he and other Council members spoke about putting this item on the agenda today. He said that he did not think that this is the proper way to go about bringing this resolution. He said that it is an important resolution that he would support but he cannot support it this evening because it should be done properly.

300-03 – ONE-STOP BUILDING PERMITS OFFICE RELOCATION

Ms. Hadley said that what is before the Committee is a resolution that was approved by the City Hall Committee to move the Housing Community Development offices from City Hall over to the Annex. She said that the City Hall Committee must have confirmation from the City Council in order to make the move. Ms. Hadley said that a team was formed to come up with recommendations on how to best move the staff to improve ability to interface with developers. She said that the team is present to discuss the move. She said that the goal of the move is to improve the development permit process.

Mr. Minor, Director of Land Use and Construction Review said that there was a TQM Commission which included Joe Gambino, Architect; Jerri Sedelnik, ITS; and Paul Catino, Public Facilities Department – Budget Analyst. He said the goal of the team was

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to find ways to make the permit process more efficient and more user friendly for residents as well as developers. Mr. Minor introduced Mr. Catino who gave a brief summary of the One Stop process. Mr. Catino referred to a book produced by the TQM team. He said their goal tonight is to explain the compelling reasons why the Council members should make a decision to move the staff to the Annex. He said that the problem statement they were given is that obtaining building permits is lengthy and cumbersome. The City of Bridgeport requires a 30-day wait and several visits to several different offices for a building permit. He said that what they came up with is a basic mission to develop recommendations to improve inefficiencies and redundancies from the current building permit process and to develop recommendations to make the process more understandable for the typical customer. Mr. Catino said that the overarching goal is to make the City of Bridgeport as development friendly as it can be. Mr. Catino said that they started with long examinations of State statutes, City resolutions and ordinances, met with other building departments and developers in town, interviewed personnel in City Hall that are involved in the building permit process, examined current tracking software and then drafted observations and recommendations which involved the moving of offices. Mr. Catino gave a brief synopsis of the report.

Mr. Walsh asked what exactly the Committee would be voting on tonight.

Ms. Hadley said that the only issue before Committee tonight is to approve the move of the Housing Development offices from City Hall to the Annex. She said that there would be other issues going forward with regard to several recommendations in the report, but that is not what is before the Committee tonight.

Mr. Catino said that during developer interviews, one key point that came up is that in the City of Bridgeport consecutive reviews versus a concurrent review between the Building Department and the Fire Marshall's office are done. He said that basically the statutes provide a 30-day clock for both of them together once a complete building application is in place. He said that here in Bridgeport, the practice has been to make that a consecutive rather than a concurrent review. The Fire Marshall's office is required to do it first then it comes to the Building Department. He said that this is a source of repeated frustration. He said that the TQM is recommending that it be changed to a concurrent rather than consecutive process. He said an important part of getting this working would be to have the Fire Marshall's office at City Hall, in close proximity to the Building Department so that they can share that information. He said that bringing these departments together could save as much as 30 days or more in the permit process.

Mr. Catino noted that the City of New Haven has made this One Stop Building Permit Process a major goal. He said that in New Haven the Building Official is also the Zoning Official. He said the City of Bridgeport staffing levels are slightly less than Stamford and New Haven. Mr. Catino said that they are recommending the GOTMS software tracking system. He said that the City of Bridgeport also needed to look at flex-time for its employees. He said that the City of Norwalk has this and that it is working very well. Mr. Catino said that by putting people together in a similar location increases the chance

of having crossover knowledge of the different departments. Mr. Catino reported that an additional Plan Reviewer was hired in June.

Ms. Sedelnik gave a brief overview of the permit tracking software. She said that the basic purpose for the tracking system is financial tracking for fees and permits.

Mr. Catino gave a synopsis of the TQM team's observations/recommendations. He said that the current building process calls for the review of proposed plans by the Fire Marshall before they are reviewed by the Building Official. He said that this process adds as much as 30 days to the process. He said that they recommend that the Fire Marshall and Building Official review the plans concurrently. He said that they also recommend that the Fire Marshall's office be relocated to the same floor of the same building as the Building Department and that there be a suite arrangement to facilitate cross-training of department personnel thereby providing a truer one stop process for customers. Mr. Catino said that the team recognized the need for one organizational director of the various departments involved in the building permit process. He said that the City charter already contemplates such a position. He said that the team recommends the need for more inspectors for siding and roofing. He said that violations are not investigated as vigorously as they should be because of the lack of inspectors. The TQM also recommended that the different departments be open during the same hours. Mr. Catino said that this report involved more than just moving a couple of office, it was a comprehensive examination of how the City works now and how it can work better.

Mr. Gambino gave a brief overview of the current site plan. Mr. Minor gave an overview of the current building permit process.

Ms. Pivrotto noted that there was no mention of the use of the Internet in the report. She said that it seemed to her that the One Stop could be a virtual one stop where everyone could email their application and scan in a picture of their deck/addition.

Ms. Sedelnik said that this was discussed when the software and this would probably come later on. Ms. Hadley said that they are heading in that direction. There was discussion with regard to a proposed website.

Attorney Trachtenberg excused herself from the meeting due to a childcare issue.

There was discussion with regard to parking issues and how many people would actually have to be moved.

Ms. Hadley said that block grant money would be used for the move. She said that there is currently a \$3.9 million grant. She said that is essential for the City of Bridgeport to have a new image of professionalism and efficiency.

Mr. Hernandez, Fire Department gave an overview of his view and why the Committee should not approve the move. He said that the task as City workers is to provide

customer service. He said the presentation that was given to the Committee was done in a piecemeal fashion. He said that he would give a broad scope of what is being done. Mr. Hernandez said that it is much more than one office being moved. He said that it is a huge financial obligation. He said that the block grant money could be used for other things than relocating offices. Mr. Hernandez referred to the TQM team's 95-page report dealing with the current plans review process for the City of Bridgeport. He said the process to obtain a permit is lengthy and cumbersome. He said that he has a problem with the One Stop process because the mission was not to fix the problem. He said that the move is going to relocate 14 offices into the Annex and out of City Hall. Mr. Hernandez said that he looked up business model decision-making processes. He discussed the criteria for basic decision-making process. He said that his problem with the TQM process is that there was flawed decision criteria used and insufficient data was analyzed and as a result there is a flawed hypothesis development. Mr. Hernandez referred to the current process for plan approval noting Pages 87 and 91 of the TQM report. He said that a system needed to be established to eliminate redundancy. He said that the Fire Marshall, a Deputy, two Senior Inspectors and 10 Fire Inspectors are all State certified at the same level of proficiency. He said that they have to do thorough documentation, subjective or objective analysis, and interact with public and private sectors. Mr. Hernandez said that they must have basic knowledge of forensics, building construction, life safety code requirements and chemistry but they only have one Plan Reviewer in a staff of 14. He said that is the stoppage of the whole system. Mr. Hernandez said that handbooks for all internal departments would be very helpful and then handouts for public use including multi-lingual handouts. He said that computers and PDA's would better serve as infrastructure improvements than moving departments. He said that the City wants to implement systems that address internal procedures. Mr. Hernandez commended the TQM team for the work done on the report. He said that in the long run they want the same thing, quality to the taxpayer and to make the City of Bridgeport more appealing to developers.

Mr. Morales said that when the TQM team was formed he was never asked. He said that 28 vehicles would have to be housed if the departments are moved. He said that he is concerned with what would be done with juvenile files, collection of evidence, hazardous material, etc. if the departments are relocated. Mr. Morales said that many issues regarding the Fire Marshall's division have not been addressed. He said that there is a cost factor, a personnel issue and a health and safety issue.

Ms. Hadley reiterated that the issue before the Committee is to approve the City Hall relocation of department offices to the Annex.

- ** MR. MCCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MOVE OF DEPARTMENT OFFICES TO THE ANNEX.**
- ** MR. PAOLETTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH 2 OPPOSED (MS. PIVIROTTI AND MS. VALLE).**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda L. Custis
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
JANUARY 19, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Paoletto, Co-Chair; Johnny Dye, Co-Chair; Elaine Pivrotto; Angel DePara; Henry Webb (arrived at 6:20 p.m.); Robert Walsh (arrived at 6:35 p.m.);

EXCUSED ABSENCE: James Holloway; Marie Valle; Tom McCarthy

STAFF: Lisa Trachtenburg, City Attorney; Nancy Hadley, Director, OPED

OTHERS: Council President Andres Ayala; Council members Ed Gomes, Tom Freer, Tom Mulligan; Joseph Riccio, Port Authority; State Representative Don Clemons

Co-Chair Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and said that in response to a number of those who had questioned, he and Co-Chair Dye agreed that all meetings of the ECDC would be held at 6:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, barring unforeseen circumstances.

300-03: ONE-STOP BUILDING PERMITS OFFICE RELOCATIONS

Ms. Hadley, speaking on behalf of OPED, requested that this item be tabled.

- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT AYALA MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 300-03 TO THE COMMITTEE'S NEXT MEETING.**
- ** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

304-04: RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO PLANNING & ZONING REGULATIONS

Ms. Pivirotto said she and Mr. Gomes met with Attorney Trachtenburg to discuss a refinement of the regulations and asked that the item be tabled.

- ** MS. PIVIROTTO MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 304-04 TO THE COMMITTEE'S NEXT MEETING.**
- ** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Webb arrived at the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

21-04: HIGHEST/BEST USE OF PROPERTY AT SEAVIEW & BEARDSLEY

Mr. Webb said that a resolution was prepared regarding property at Beardsley Street and Seaview Avenue which directly related to the construction of the new school. He said many residents would lose their homes through eminent domain as a result of the school project, and he felt strongly the City should do the right thing and help those displaced by building affordable housing for them. He said he discussed this need for affordable housing with Mr. Riccio and Ms. Hadley.

State Representative Clemons thanked the committee for giving him an opportunity to express his sentiments and those of his constituents. He said he and other State delegates in Hartford voted in favor of the \$60+ million for the new school, but it was also his desire that the City acquire the property from the Port Authority and build affordable housing on it. He said he met with Mr. Riccio and Ms. Hadley to discuss this, and to reiterate that the residents of the District were and want to continue to be good neighbors. He said approximately 3,500 residents were displaced from the East end and the lower East Side due to the Steel Point project and widening of the corridor. He said it is critical that housing be infused back into the community. Some residents have engaged in lawsuits with the City; others want to remain in their community. He said the site in question belonged to the community. It did not need remediation. Many properties have already been identified as brown field sites and as a result, money is difficult to come by. It was his hope that with intervention from the City Attorney's office something could be worked out between the City, the Port Authority and the community that would be feasible and equitable for everyone.

Mr. Gomes said the City's use of eminent domain has devastated many properties and displaced many residents. He pointed to the example of what happened with Carpenter Steel Corp. He felt a warehouse would not be the best use for the site, and that it should be used for housing in the 139th District. He suggested there could be industry on one side of the street and residences on the other, and one should not encroach on the other. He felt strongly the property should go back to the community.

Ms. Pivrotto said that 13 council members signed the original resolution; Mr. Walsh prepared an addendum to it which she read into the record. It stated that the Council was supportive of using the property to build housing and would request the City Attorney to take steps to reacquire the site for this purpose.

Mr. Riccio said the Port Authority would discuss this at their meeting tomorrow and a request for proposal would be prepared and sent out. Residential use of the site would be included, and this differed from other RFPs in the past which were unsuccessful in helping to determine what the best use of the sight would be. He said the Authority was well aware of the Council's and the committee's feelings and would take all comments into consideration. He said there are very few large parcels of land in the City that could be developed.

Council President Ayala said the council members that signed the resolution must also sign the addendum. Regarding the RFP referred to by Mr. Riccio, he asked if there was a committee of community members that would review it. Mr. Riccio said the committee would be comprised of Port Authority commissioners, representatives of the City's Planning Commission and residents from the East End but a selection had not yet been made. He said that RFPs have been sought in the past and failed, and the Port Authority did not want this to happen again.

State Representative Clemons said he had reservations about another RFP. He asked that the Authority consider that 80% of the District was already commercial. He wondered what would be included other than residential, to which Mr. Riccio said it would also include light industrial, commercial, and a combination of the two. He reiterated that previous RFPs did not include residential and bid responses did not adequately address what was needed or asked for in the RFP. A 15-acre tract of land would be sufficient for some industrial on the western side of Seaview Avenue as well as some housing. He said warehouse space would be required by the container station. Ms. Pivrotto said she was perplexed that the Authority would consider light industrial in the area, especially since housing would be a more lucrative revenue generator for the City. She felt strongly there

should be nothing but residential development and reiterated that the resolution was firm about this.

Mr. Walsh arrived at the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Mr. Walsh said the amendment was written to request the City Attorney to do whatever was necessary to move forward by acquiring this property. Passing the resolution as amended did not mean the Council was agreeing to begin a process. He said the amendment was drafted such that the message was clear but understanding that legal language would be added. He calculated that interest on \$2.7 million for a seven-year period totaled more than \$1.1 million which is what the City should be owed for this property. State Representative Clemons felt that since the agreement with the Port Authority was breached, the City automatically had the right to take back the property

Council President Ayala said an RFP would be a mute point if the City Council took action to authorize the Mayor, on behalf of the City, to take the property back and use it for residential development. Or, he wondered what would happen to the Council's resolution if it was adopted after the Authority began the process of an RFP, which appeared would happen tomorrow.

Verbally reviewing the addendum to the resolution, Attorney Trachtenburg said areas of concern dealt primarily with verbiage ... "we have" should be changed to "may have" and "steps that should be taken" should be changed to "steps that could be taken."

Mr. Mulligan asked Mr. Riccio what the Port Authority wanted to have happen with the property. Mr. Riccio said that in 2003 the community asked for commercial services to be built and accordingly, an RFP was prepared in that vain. Results came back indicating that the site would not be good for this. He said the Authority wanted to pursue a project with the community in mind, but wanted to wait for the barge service project to be bid first. Since then, the community changed its mind and is now asking for housing. Mr. Mulligan asked Ms. Hadley if there was any property at Steel Point that could be designated residential. Ms. Hadley said there would be a developer meeting next month and hopefully most of the outstanding issues would be resolved. She was hopeful that residents displaced as a result of the new school project would be able to find suitable housing. She said environmental studies would be needed, and the State would spend \$900,000 on the project. Nothing could happen until then. Attorney Trachtenburg said her office would review all the information in greater detail and render an opinion and make a recommendation to the Authority. Hypothetically, she said she was agreeable to the resolution and the amendment submitted by Mr. Walsh.

Ms. Hadley said she encouraged the Authority to send out an RFP, with the understanding that once bids were received the Authority could reject any or all of them. She said she was not sure how to address the City wanting to take the property back and was concerned about taxes that would be generated. Revenue from industry would be higher than residential tax revenue, but it was important to address what was best for everyone. She would recommend to the Mayor to wait for tax implications before making a final decision. State Representative Clemons said that knowing Ms. Hadley sat on the board of the Authority further added to his reservations about an RFP because it was a conflict of interest. He said he did not understand why Mr. Riccio agreed with the need for housing but would pursue an RFP that also included commercial and light industrial development. He apologized for his insistence that the property be used for housing, but said it was a result of his frustration at having this issue remain pending for so long. He said the community felt it presented its needs in an organized manner and the Authority did not respond in a timely fashion. Residents were fearful of losing their properties and then having no where to go, and the City not able to help them financially. To his way of thinking, strictly residential development would be a win win situation. He hoped the Committee could appreciate his skepticism.

Mr. Webb asked Attorney Trachtenburg whether Ms. Hadley's association with the Port Authority was a conflict of interest, to which she responded it was not necessarily at this stage. She said the City and the Authority usually operate with a common goal and direction. Ms. Hadley said she felt an RFP was necessary so that bids could be obtained and evaluated, and that a sole-source developer/provider was not beneficial to the City. Bid responses would have a deadline of a few months. She expressed frustration that residents were being relocated and there wasn't enough advance time before the school construction project. Staff was working diligently to find a place for displaced persons to live, but there wasn't much funding to do this.

Co-Chair Dye asked how many residential units would be proposed in the RFP. Ms. Hadley said a specific number could not be mentioned because the property was not zoned for residential but that the Authority would like to see 40-44. Mr. Riccio felt specifying a specific number of residential units would limit creativity of respondents. Co-Chair Dye felt this should be negotiated and resolved with those being displaced. He asked that the Authority do its best to find housing for as many displaced residents as possible. He said it would have been wise to have this resolved three years in advance of the need; Ms. Hadley agreed a program should have been in place at least two years in advance of the City's eminent domain action.

Mr. Walsh said that commercial or light industrial development should be placed nearer to Stratford Avenue because that area was already commercial. He stressed that the City should not lose the site. Residential development was in the best interest of the City's taxpayers. It was also in the best interest of residents because there was a park in the site's backyard; the property was tailor made for residential development. The property already belonged to the City and they should take it back. He said a distribution center would offer only minimum wage for employees, not high-paying jobs.

State Representative Clemons urged the committee members to proceed with the resolution and amendment and to reject the Authority's approach to send out an RFP.

Mr. Gomes felt the issue was a moral one, saying eminent domain destroyed the entire area, and now it looked like a wasteland. He agreed the land should be given back to the community. He said there are not enough good paying jobs in the City to allow anyone to pay high rent. People who have lived in the City for many years are being forced out, and new construction seems to be occupied by people coming in because they are the only ones who could afford the prices.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT AYALA MOVED THE COMMITTEE TO APPROVE ITEM 21-04, PASSED IN COMMITTEE WITH AMENDMENTS PROVIDED BY MS. PIVIROTTI, WITH LEGAL LANGUAGE PROVIDED BY THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.**

**** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President Ayala said the item would be placed on the Council's consent calendar. He directed the City Clerk's office to look carefully at the changes to the amendment that were discussed by the committee members.

22-04: HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Attorney Trachtenburg said she thoroughly reviewed and addressed the draft(s) but there were agreements and grants that needed to be considered. She referred to this as a housekeeping issue. Ms. Hadley said a sentence was omitted from the resolution. Co-Chair Paoletto said all money and grant funding had been received.

- ** MR. DEPARA MOVED THE COMMITTEE TO APPROVE ITEM 22-04 HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA) RESOLUTION.**
- ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT AYALA SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council President Ayala said that this item would not be placed on the City Council's consent calendar.

- ** MR. DEPARA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. PIVIROTTI SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Graham for
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 15, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Paoletto, Co-Chair; Johnny Dye, Co-Chair;
Angel DePara, Elaine Pivrotto, Maria Valle, Ed Gomes,
Thomas Mulligan

STAFF: Robert Halstead, OPED; Lisa Trachtenberg, City Attorney;
Kathy Hunter, Director of Housing; Dianna Miller, Central
Grants Office

OTHERS: City Attorney Mark Anastasi, Andres Ayala, City Council
President; Kelly McDermott, Angie Staltero

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

300-04 One-Stop Building Permits Office Relocation

** MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL.
** MR. DYE SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

26-04 Restoration of Nathaniel Wheeler Memorial Fountain

Ms. Miller said a bigger plan had been created. She said they would like to do cobblestones etc. and are looking to restore the foundation. The approximate cost would be \$110,000.

** MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL.
** MS. PIVIROTTO SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

27-04 US EPA Brownfield Job Training Grant

Ms. Miller stated that \$10,000 was requested from the EPA. There is a match of \$5,711. It was 20% of the total. This has all been approved already. Mr. Ayala stated that there had been conversations with the city and quotas are not being met. He suggested a table. Ms. Valle questioned what a matching quota meant. Mr. Ayala said they were supposed to burn a certain amount of tonnage for example. This is a part of what the city was

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doing. Mr. Dye asked if this was time sensitive. Ms. Miller said it was kind of time sensitive. Mr. DePara said there should not be a problem.

28-04 State of Connecticut Food Stamp Employment and Training Grant

Ms. Miller stated that this was a grant that was funded by the state for \$800,000. This would allow food stamp recipients to acquire job training etc.

- ** **MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL.**
- ** **MS. VALLE SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

32-04 National Vacant Properties Campaign Grant

Ms. Miller said she would give technical assistance and will send expert consultants. There is no dollar amount to be applied. The match is for 30% and between \$9,000 and \$20,000. Vacant properties will be addressed.

Mr. Paoletto asked whether this was for last year or the coming year. Ms. Miller said she had assumed this would be for the New Year. This is a 2005 grant. Ms. Staltero stated that there was a continuation of programs that have been funded for years. Mr. Walsh asked what the issue of vacant lots was. Ms. Miller said they would be trying to bring them back on the tax roll. She said the problem was that the turnover was taking too long. The city is happy with having all the vacant lots. Ms. Staltero said experts would compare the city of Bridgeport with other cities and come up with strategies. All concerns were raised. 20 potential lots may be identified and money might be brought in. Mr. Dye asked if this was an ongoing program. Ms. Miller said this was a one-time thing. She said the panel would meet with upper management. Ms. Piviroto asked whether they had inventory. Ms. Miller replied yes and stated that the problem seemed to be timing. This is the process of turnover.

Mr. Ayala stated that he had attended a meeting a few weeks ago where several vacant lots were discussed. Ms. Staltero said there was extensive groundwork to be done in the city of Bridgeport. She said the work should be done by the end of March. The eastside will be one step ahead of the neighborhoods because a study is being done. The eastside has the highest number of vacant lots due to demolition. There is no complete inventory of the city. Mr. Gomes asked whether the grant would take care of this. Ms. Miller said they had a handle on this. She said inventories are one thing. This grant would address city procedure and the hope is to get money back into the city.

Ms. Staltero said there would be a recommendation for one or two parcels. The focus will be on identifying the one or two parcels. This will compliment what is being done with the city. According to Ms. Valle, Groundwork Trust has done the eastside study. This is done independently. There is an opportunity to move sites that have just been sitting around. Mr. Ayala said the concern was that CDBG monies are being committed. There

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are vacant lots in the city, but there is staff that is supposed to set a policy and protocol on how to deal with a particular land. Ms. Staltero stated that there were many approved programs that had not actually begun yet. She said there would also be reprogramming as well. Mr. Gomes questioned whether it would be a waste of money if they hired someone to do unnecessary work. Ms. Piviroto stated that she did not understand why some of the properties had not been listed on the website in order to have people bid on them. Ms. Miller said it takes 8 years to have a property turned over under the current system. She said this was part of the city's TQM process. The tax leans have been obstacles in creating housing development. She said they had tried to bring in experts to handle the issues. Ms. Miller said they were trying to acquire properties through a tax lean situation. Mr. Walsh asked what the \$20,000 was for. Ms. Miller said it would go towards part of the awarded total package. She stated that they would like to see commitments to all grants and asked that this item not be put on the consent calendar.

Mr. Mulligan asked whether the inventory was only on city owned property. Ms. Staltero said inventory exists in other cities. Mr. Mulligan asked whether this included lots with partially burnt down houses. Ms. Staltero said yes. Mr. Mulligan said this was a problem that existed 16 years ago. Lack of manpower was always a problem.

- ** **MS. VALLE MOVED APPROVAL.**
- ** **MR. DYE SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED WITH TWO VOTES IN OPPOSITION
(MS. PIVIROTTO AND MR. DEPARA).**

Mr. Paoletto stated that 28-04 was in regards to a bilingual grant for radio ads and billboards. Mr. Ayala said he had remembered past commitments with CRRA with regard to tonnage. He asked for clarification. Attorney Anastasi said there were a variety of commitments. He said the city committed to 170,000 tons of trash per year. He said there were two factors that came into play. There was a flow control, which was named, unconstitutional from the superior court, and there was also no vigorous program in the state. Bridgeport is one of the least affected entities. If recyclables are delivered, there is no fee required. The city benefits financially if the city delivers recyclables, though there is no financial downside to not recycling.

27-04 US EPA Environmental Education Grant Program

Ms. Miller said they were looking to save money in terms of burning the trash. Attorney Anastasi stated that they were contractually committed to using means to recycle.

- ** **MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL.**
- ** **MS. VALLE SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

33-04 US EPA Brownfield Job Training Grant

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Ms. Miller stated that there was \$200,000 in job training money and no match for the grant. She said they would partner with ABCD to do training and job placement. She stated that they had received a \$3m HUDLED grant. She said their own people would be trained and there is a hope that 3 people would be placed with the money. Ms. Pivrotto asked whether there was a stipulation that only Bridgeport residents could participate in the program. Ms. Miller said yes.

- ** MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL.
- ** MR. DYE SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

34-04 US EPA Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) Innovation Pilot

Ms. Miller said this was an EPA pilot grant for \$57,9333. She said Appleby had been proposing 60 handheld pocket computers. 60 key personnel would be linked. She said this would be important for emergency preparedness. Mr. Walsh asked why this item would not go before public safety. Mr. Paoletto said it was because this was a grant item. Mr. Walsh said there were definitions of what each committee is supposed to handle.

- ** MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL.
- ** MS. PIVIROTTO SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

35-04 Housing Site Development Agency Acquisition and Disposition of 1058-1064 Pembroke Street

Mr. Halstead provided a handout and said this was currently a vacant lot. He stated that United Cerebral Palsy was the developer. He stated that Pembroke Street was not known for any development, though the funding is there. He stated that the organization won allocation. There will be 25 units of housing. A developer has been found and financing is available to do this project. Its owner has abandoned the property. The city has to buy the property in order to free it up. The city paid capital assets on the dollar. Mr. Halstead said they were promoting development in an area that has not seen any. He said they could not get approval from zoning until funding is acquired. The property will be sold to United Cerebral Palsy for a \$1. Mr. Ayala said this project goes back many years. He stated that he is in support of this project. He said the Pembroke Street area is an eye sore to the city. He said the lot has abandoned cars. He said this project would serve as an anchor for the community and bring vitality back into the area. Mr. Ayala said he endorses this development. Mr. Paoletto stated that he was in support of this project in the past as well as now. He said he definitely believes in this project and it is going for a good cause.

Mr. Walsh asked if there were problems with flooding. Mr. Halstead said the entire side was dry and graveled. Mr. Walsh asked if there was handicap accessibility. Mr. Halstead

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said yes. Mr. Mulligan asked whether the property would go back on the tax roll once the project is over. Mr. Halstead said yes and stated that there would be a reduced tax rate.

- ** **MR. DYE MOVED APPROVAL.**
- ** **MS. PIVIROTTO SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

04-04 Recommended changes to Planning and Zoning Regulations

Mr. Walsh passed around a resolution to Planning & Zoning. He stated that he has reviewed and included the change, and read it into the record. He said he wanted the changes incorporated. He stated that he has included enough language to meet all basic suggestions. Mr. Paoletto said he agreed that this was a good idea. He said he was aware that Planning and Zoning might tweak this resolution. He said this needed to be looked into.

Ms. Pivirotto stated that many of the council members had met the pet storeowner in Mr. DePara's district. She said the attorney received a continuance on this matter. Mr. Gomes said there have been numerous occasions where people have sat around all night only to hear that their item would not be addressed that night. He said he wanted people to see proper actions.

With regard to the language in reference to violation of state law, Mr. Mulligan said they should find out whether it is legal or not. Attorney Trachtenberg said she thought this resolution worked very well. She suggested to strike the word "and" in the resolution. Mr. Mulligan asked whether it would be a violation of state law if Planning & Zoning accepted a recommendation. Attorney Trachtenberg said she thought it would. Mr. Walsh said he understood that Planning & Zoning must act in 60 days, or else a law would be implemented. He said he did not know if Planning & Zoning could establish rules. Attorney Trachtenberg stated that timelines were state dictated. She said some timing could be only be extended with the applicant's permission. She added that they could go to Capital Hill to get a legislation change. Mr. Mulligan asked if it was only by state statutes. Attorney Trachtenberg said that was correct.

- ** **MR. DEPARA MOVED APPROVAL OF 04-04 AS AMENDED.**
- ** **MR. DYE SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Michelle Joseph
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE
MARCH 15, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Paoletto, Co-Chair; Johnny Dye, Co-Chair;
Angel DePara (6:40 p.m.), Maria Valle, Elaine Pivrotto,
Thomas McCarthy

STAFF: Dianna Miller, Central Grants Office; George Estrada,
Director/Public Facilities; Nancy Hadley, Director/OPED;
Samuel Shaw, OPED; Lisa Trachtenburg, Associate City
Attorney

OTHERS: Mary Rush, Debbie Sims, Charles Smith Foundation/
East End NRZ representative; Laurel Anderson, C.P.E.C./
City Scan, Andres Ayala, Robert Walsh, AmyMarie
Vizzo-Paniccia, Thomas Mulligan

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

42-04 IAAO/ESRI Technology Foundation Grant Serious

Ms. Miller stated that the technology would enable the tax assessor to communicate with the ECDC. She said there was no match and that there is a software package. Ms. Miller said they were not asking for any money.

**** MS. VALLE MOVED APPROVAL.
** MR. PAOLETTO SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

59-04 Recreational Trail Program on Veterans Memorial Park

Ms. Miller stated that there would be a one-mile trail with the Discovery Museum. She said the existing trails would be defined and a solar system would be created. Hiking will also be encouraged.

Mr. Ayala asked whether the \$50,000 match was on a sliding or standard rate. Ms. Miller said the \$50,000 was the requested amount. Mr. Ayala asked how this would work with the 90-acre plan. Mr. Estrada said this was a part of the overall master plan for Veteran's Park.

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Ms. Vizzo-Paniccia stated that she was in full support of this plan. She said it would be a good asset to the residents of the city of Bridgeport. Mr. Estrada said they were working to provide ADA accessibility. The museum will help to develop creative educational pieces. Mr. Walsh asked whether Representative Hennessey would prohibit this. According to Mr. Estrada, the legislation proposed by Representative Hennessey would not allow prohibition of anything. State funding would also be limited.

- ** MR. PAOLETTO MOVED APPROVAL.
- ** MS. VALLE SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

61-04 Meacham Foundation Memorial Grant (American Humane Society)

Ms. Miller stated that there was no match for this grant, which is for \$4,000. She said they were looking to pay for some of the equipment in the shelter, as the current amount will not cover all the equipment for the rooms.

- ** MR. PAOLETTO MOVED APPROVAL.
- ** MS. VALLE SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

47-04 East End Neighborhood Revitalization Zone

Ms. Sims stated that she serves as the Executive Director of the Charles Smith Foundation. She said the meetings take place every Tuesday. Attendance is between 50-60 people. Ms. Sims said they have a youth component that they are in the process of implementing. The committee has been able to come together and present an agenda that his right for the neighborhood. Ms. Anderson said this has been a smooth process thus far.

Ms. Hadley stated that they were looking to establish the boundaries. She said there are neighborhoods that have already been revitalized. The plan is almost done. There are between 100-150 people at the last public hearing. The issues regarding children and the elderly are being drafted into an ordinance. It is currently going through planning and zoning. There is currently \$10m in public investment needed. Ms. Hadley stated that they would be applying for bonding. She said she had hoped to get approval for boundaries in the Hollow. There is a consultant on board to help. A plan will be created, as children and teens will also be addressed. She asserted that they would go through what public improvements that are needed. There will be a stakeholder committee to implement the plan. Ms. Hadley stated that she also hoped to move to the other neighborhoods.

Mr. Ayala stated that this project was attempted several years ago in a different area and the scope was too large. He said the Hollow seems to be smaller than the east end and questioned what the drawbacks were. Ms. Hadley said this was all about human nature. If the stakeholders can work together, there should not be any problems. The size does not

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particularly matter. She reported that they would not be doing two subdivisions. A lot of organizing work has been done on this project. City Scan is doing 2,200 pictures and the blight will be identified. 130 properties will be blighted in the Hollow area.

Mr. Coble stated that he represented personnel from the east end. He said a lot of work went into this project and there are a lot of people working out in the Hollow. Mr. Coble passed handouts around to the committee. The strategic plan will move forward as things progress. He asserted that one of the handouts he provided gives a diagram of how the operation should take place. Mr. Coble also provided a blueprint plan of Pleasure Beach, which was originally left out of the blueprint and eventually added in. He reported that the community saw it as a necessity.

Mr. Paoletto said he has worked with Ms. Hadley, as well as in several groups. He states that the east end had received the bottom of the barrel in the past. He stressed that the time has now come for this project to take place.

**** MR. PAOLETTO MOVED APPROVAL.
** MS. PIVIROTTO SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MR. PAOLETTO SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Joseph
Telesco Secretarial Services

**City of Bridgeport
Economic & Community Development & Environment Committee
March 15, 2005**

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE
APRIL 19, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Dye, DePara, Valle,
Pivrotto, McCarthy

ABSENT: Council members: Holloway and Paoletto

OTHERS: Council members: Andres Ayala, Gomes, Mulligan,
Webb, Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Council member Dye called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

It was stated that Councilmember Andres Ayala would sit in as Co-chair in place of Councilmember Paoletto.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 15, 2005

**** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

69-04 Community Conversation Grant Program (League of Women Voters)

Ms. Kelly McDermott of the Central Grants office was present as the representative on this item. She said the grant was for \$2,000.00 to hold a community based forum to discuss critical education issues for kindergarten through 12th grade students. She said the Mayor and the Board of Education have collaborated to focus on school security. There was no match required for

the grant. She explained this was a unique opportunity to come up with an action plan.

**** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

70-04 Community-Policing Partnership Award Program (MetLife Foundation)

Ms. McDermott spoke about this item also. She said this involved a community service division for neighborhood revitalization. She referred to the Phoenix program that installs house locks and implements bike safety. There was no match required.

**** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Item placed on the consent calendar.**

71-04 Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program (US Department of Justice)

Ms. McDermott said they could receive monies towards this program. The maximum received in the past had been \$13k and there was a 50% match required. She said there was approximately \$60k in the budget for the program, but she didn't anticipate that they would receive any more than \$40k.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked about the line item in the police budget that was geared toward bullet proof vests. Ms. McDermott said that out of that line item, 60% was geared toward that expense.

Councilmember Walsh read a portion of the City Council rules referencing paragraph 13 that outlined: **the sole jurisdiction over police matters and all grant applications should be in the jurisdiction of the City Council.** He thought any grant should automatically go through this committee with attention to specific types of grants. He further relayed that this matter should be looked into.

**** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Item placed on the consent calendar.**

74-04 Historic Documents Preservation Grant (Connecticut State Library)

It was stated that a grant was awarded through the CT State Library to help with the archival process. There was no match required and the monies were designated. The process involves posting the City Council minutes on the website for easier access.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DePARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Item placed on the consent calendar.**

82-04 Taking of appropriate action to foreclose on 800 Seaview Avenue from Port Authority

Councilmember Walsh addressed this item. He said this matter related to a document where the City of Bridgeport borrowed money from the Port Authority to acquire property from the old tech site. He further read details of the contract. He went on to say that the property located on Seaview Avenue has sat vacant for years. He didn't feel that the Port Authority acted diligently in terms of the community and he felt that it made sense to put housing on that property. He noted that the City Council expressed in the past that housing be developed on that property. And according to the RFP, housing was supposed to be a priority, but it didn't happen. He further spoke to the tax burden already seen from this endeavor and he thought if the Port Authority was not able to meet their financial burdens, then the city should take the property back and not leave it in the hands of the Port Authority.

Representative Clemons agreed with Councilmember Walsh. He thanked Councilmember's Gomes and Webb for their help in the community. He went on to say that his goal has been in trying to fight the people for that property. He noted that ULI came in to do an assessment and they concluded that housing was a key component to revitalize the city. He emphasized that affordable housing was key. He said that as far as the parcel, there is a 7-year window according to the agreement whose time span is now up, so the property is

eligible to be reverted back to the city. He said he supported housing to start the revitalization process in Bridgeport.

Councilmember Gomes said the important point was that the property be developed on a residential basis. He recalled that when the property was taken years ago. He reminded everyone of the past history on the east end, where the housing shortage was exacerbated and resulted in loss of tax revenue. He thought they should give the property back to the residents for development. He further stressed that he attended the meeting with the Port Authority where everything was laid out. He got the impression the members present were listening and they were told there would be a preference for residential, but the RFP is geared toward commercial development. He stressed that the City Council should act in the proper manner to act on and take the property back.

Ms. Jovan Elcarda spoke as a resident of the east end. She relayed how Eagle Street came out to Seaview Avenue. She expressed that she lived on that side of town for a long time, but she strongly stated that she was tired of other people telling them what they need on the east end!

Senator Newton stated that the community has been very supportive of the Port Authority in the past. And they always tried to work with them. He recalled there were meetings with Mike Freimuth about negotiations to bring the shipyard in, as well as talks for the property to be used for commercial use. But the property should not be for the city to put containers, commercial or otherwise. He said that although the residents of the east end have been good neighbors, the Port Authority hasn't been in return. The residents were told to put a plan together and this was done and in the plan housing is outlined. He relayed that more housing has been displaced in Bridgeport than it has in any other area, and they are only trying to get a small acre of land for developing residential.

Senator further spoke about the new tax policy in the city of collecting delinquent taxes and the process of putting the boot on cars that owe back taxes. He stressed that it seemed this process takes precedence over the more important issue of housing. He didn't think it was the city's job to go unheard! He recalled that the Mayor has expressed that "*the last shall be first*", but this hasn't happened and it's unfair! He further expressed dissatisfaction, in that anytime there is a commercial venture; the east end is the first area they consider. He stressed that the residents needed help from the City Council. He urged them to put some fire under the Port Authority to implement much needed housing for the community. He asked for help with the resolution.

Mr. Ralph addressed the history of the piece of land in question. He said the development proposed coincides with the development of the east end. He stated that back in 1979; Car-Tech approached the city to expand their parking lot with the reasoning that they would be able to stay in the city if the request was

approved. But there was nothing in the provision for the acquisition of land if it failed, but they did fail and the land has been dormant ever since. Then there was the matter of replacing Father Panik Village housing with 1000-units, but this never happened. There were other proposals for housing as well that never panned out, such as the BEDCO project to move houses, with the prospect of building more housing in place of, but this was never done. Overall, there is frustration among the residents having to watch their neighborhood further erode. He asked for the City Council to help them revive the neighborhood. He emphasized that a majority of taxes are paid by homeowners, therefore, the more homes that are built; this will inevitably increase the tax base.

Councilmember Andres Ayala stated that the committee has stepped up for the acreage being discussed. He said the City Council has met with the Port Authority regarding the RFP that was supposed to include housing. And through due diligence of Councilmember Webb, that is why there is a new resolution. But the City Council is on it and he said he would support it when it comes to the City Council floor.

Councilmember Mulligan asked when the bids were due for the RFP. Ms. Hadley said fourteen developers picked up bid packages and they have until May 12 to submit their proposal. She noted there were three members of the community that will work in conjunction with two members of the Port Authority board to develop a ranking sheet followed by a recommendation to the board. Ms. Hadley further explained the procedure for ranking.

Councilmember Gomes asked if Ms. Hadley was present at the meeting with the Port Authority. Ms. Hadley said she thought she was. She stated the RFP read that preference would be given to housing. Councilmember Gomes disagreed and said he thought it was geared more toward commercial

Representative Clemons said that in the original agreement orchestrated under the Ganim Administration in 1998; he felt that agreement was moot. He didn't feel they should entertain the RFP due to a breach of contract to the existing contract. He made reference to responding to two RFP's within the past two years, noting they were derailed both times. He further relayed numerous meetings were attended where promises were made and the proposals were well received, but nothing happened. He said with all due respect, he felt Ms. Hadley has been promoting other uses than residential. He reiterated that the original RFP should be moot. He read a portion of the RFP where community development was highlighted.

Mr. Ralph said if the RFP emphasized community and a process was set up to emphasize residential, then he thought this constituted an impropriety. He said if that was the case, the end result would be that the matter ends up in litigation, thus still no more housing.

Councilmember Pivrotto noted an e-mail from City Attorney Anastasi that highlighted that the Port Authority granted the city the option to acquire the property. The document also pointed out that the 7-year period was up.

Mr. Charles stated that through the community, he had the RFP looked at by two developers and bankers, but he found it was clearly geared toward commercial use. He said to utilize the RFP; there should be a lease agreement with the landowner. He referred to another line item that stated the Port Authority had the final decision, so with that said, he thought the RFP process didn't make sense.

Ms. Hadley said she would pursue the statement of commercial development. She stated the intention was not to preclude housing.

Councilmember Gomes expressed that the City Council governs the city. He felt that taking "guff" from someone who created the situation was wrong. Again, he strongly felt the City Council should act under eminent domain and take back the property. Overall, he felt they were being back-doored and that the citizens were being taken advantage of. He further questioned when this type of treatment stopped, someone has to say enough!

**** COUNCILMEMBER ANDRES AYALA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DePARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

89-04 Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) 2005
 Allocation Plan

Ms. Ada Fognow and Joanne Shreve were present to address this item.

Ms. Shreve spoke about the HOPWA program that is a component of the federal government to provide funds for housing for people with AIDS and that are disabled. She said the funds were allocated from the state social services division to act as grantee. She referred to the handout that indicated how the program worked. She said the program provides an opportunity for those that need assistance. She pointed out that the chart showed how the funds would be disbursed. She explained that they would act as the grantee, but they hired a contractor to select project sponsors and to monitor project sponsors who will provide information on their progress. There are six (6) recipients located in Danbury, Fairfield, Stamford and Bridgeport that make up the Regional Network of Program.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked who the CT AIDS Residence Coalition was. Ms. Shreve said that organization was based in New Haven.

Councilmember Mulligan asked where the Mid –Fairfield AIDS Project was located. Ms. Shreve said in Norwalk.

**** COUNCILMEMBER DePARA MADE A MOTION TO APPRO**

Councilmember Mulligan asked where they were proposing to build the housing. Ms. Shreve said she was sure locations had been identified, but they were indicated in the proposal. She said she could provide that information later if required.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if they were proposing any group homes in the cities of Fairfield, Easton, Monroe or Trumbull. Ms. Shreve said she wasn't sure.

Councilmember Andres Ayala stated that even though they were a non-profit organization, they would still be taxable. Ms. Shreve said there were two focuses. One was that most housing is transitional and there is an intake profile process. She further noted the housing may be in scattered sites. **VE**

**** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO SECONDED**

Councilmember Andres Ayala said that he supported the program and he thought it was a good idea. But he said in looking at the numbers, he questioned Ms. Hadley about neighboring towns and who Bridgeport's friends were. He stressed that Bridgeport is stepping up once again to help. And although Bridgeport would be getting piece of the financial pie, they need to see their day come and be given a hand in return when it's needed. Ms. Hadley stated that Danbury, Norwalk and Stamford all had AIDS populations. Councilmember Andres Ayala further mentioned that the same way that Fairfield and other towns use Bridgeport's resources; he hoped that at some point, they can receive the same help.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

90-04 HOME Investment Partnership Program 2005 Allocation Plan

Ms. Shreve thought everyone was familiar with the concept of HOME Program. She said it was clear that housing was the primary objective. An allocated plan was developed and it was outlined in the public notification. She said the allocated plan works to be able to prioritize where resources are directed. She pointed out there was a request made by the Mayor to produce (500) new or rehabilitated home ownership units and they were looking to fulfill that number. The HOME Program will provide an additional \$ 75k in down payment assistance and \$600k is being set aside for multi-family development. She further reviewed general details of the program

Councilmember Dye asked if there would be home ownership component. Ms. Shreve said yes. She noted the fund would help supplement production in the neighborhood.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked the way home dollars were being disbursed, and given the census track; he asked if this fell under the guidelines of the program. Ms. Shreve said it was not related to the CDBG Program.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if all the monies were coming from the Federal Government. Ms. Shreve said the funds outlined in the notification distributed were funds allocated to Bridgeport.

Councilmember DePara asked if they needed to apply beforehand for money from the state. Ms. Shreve said the state will seek deals, but if they can apply beforehand, then they will.

Councilmember Valle asked when they expected the program to happen. Ms. Shreve said launching would start within the next 60-days.

Councilmember Dye asked if there was any requirement for large contractors to partner with the small contractors. Ms. Shreve said that anything over \$300k must go out to MBE's, but there was no strict policy to partner with small contractors.

Councilmember Dye expressed that since the small contractor couldn't get bonded, he felt the project would be out of their scope. Ms. Shreve said they could look at the situation to possibly see how they facilitate including the small contractor.

**** COUNCILMEMBER DePARA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

91-04(a) (a) Proposed New Ordinance: Ch.8.78 Hollow Neighborhood Revitalization Zone

91-04(b) (b) Hollow Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Plan Resolution

Councilmember asked for a motion to table the two items above.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO TABLE
** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Other Business

Councilmember Andres Ayala spoke about a document that was distributed at the City Council meeting on April 18 concerning: **An Act Establishing the Steel Point Infrastructure Improvement District**. He explained they needed a two-thirds vote to add the item to the agenda and they needed notification of 48-hours to publish the item in the newspaper.

- ** COUNCILMEMBER ANDRES AYALA MADE A MOTION TO ADDE THE ITEM TO TONIGHT'S AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION**
- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Jack Statrom was present to give some background information of the resolution pending legislation to create special assessment districts. He stated a decision was made that Bridgeport should have an opportunity to take part in the Act. They have been asked to come back by the first week in May, to indicate if they want to go with the economic development tool. The Act designates a specific area known as Steel Point. He further reviewed details of the Act as it was outlined in the memo distributed. He explained that overall, the Act allows development financing to the guaranteed debt service. He said that nothing happens under legislation until the Assessment District and city come to an agreement on what incremental taxes would be dedicated to the debt service and what the requirements are. He referred to page 9 of the memo that explained the components of the Act. He said they were looking for evidence that the City of Bridgeport would be supportive of the Steel Point Act.

Councilmember Pivrotto asked if the Act was like the DSSD Act. She asked him to clarify. Mr. Statrom said the intention was to use the special assessment to guarantee flow of the debt payment service.

There was some further open discussion.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if they defaulted on the bonds who would be liable. Mr. Statrom said the developer would be. He said the bottom line was to get an indication from the committee to create the authority.

Councilmember Andres Ayala said that everyone was expected to receive phone calls regarding this matter. He urged them to take the calls and meet with the appropriate parties to voice their concerns further.

- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM TO BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR**
- ** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNED

**** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Councilmember Dye moved to adjourn at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
&
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MAY 11, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: J. Dye, Co Chair; Councilmembers Pivirotto, Ayala, DePara, McCarthy.

OTHERS: Councilmembers Silva, Gomes, Curwen, Mulligan & Walsh; William Lopez, Project Security; Daniel Pfeffer, Midtown Equities; Michael Stone, Midtown Equities; James Heller, KA Architecture; Roland Baez, Perkins Eastman; Maryke Smil, Perkins Eastman; Nancy Hadley, OPED, Ron Pacacha, City Attorney's Office; Aijaz Syep & Mike Nidoh, OPED; Tom Dubno, Gateway Tech; John Quinn, Midtown Equities; Bert Sacco, TPA; Vincent Napoli, V. Cruse & John Botton, DDDG; Jef Bishop & Kevin Nunn, B.E.R.C.; William Minor, LUCR; Joseph Savino, HMO; Charles Carroll, Bpt. Chief of Staff; Kathleen Hunter, Bridgeport Housing; Bob Kantor, Fannie Mae; David Giordano, Pannuzzio & Giordano; Paul Pimentel, Congressman Shays' Office; Joe Riccio, Bpt. Port Authority; Warren Sabloff, Midtown Equities; Paul Timpanelli, BRBC; Nnenna Lunch, Urban Green Builders; John Stafstrom, Pullman & Comley; Mike Lupkas, Bpt. CFO.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by City Council President Ayala, who explained that that meeting and presentation were for informal purposes only.

**RCI REPORT AND UPDATE CONCERNING STEELPOINT DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION #287-03 ADOPTED DECEMBER 6,
2004**

A power point presentation was made on the Steelpoint Development project, preceded by a review of the Midtown Miami project.

Mr. Stone said they would review project goals, framework development, the Steelpoint Development concept and next steps. Mr. Baez narrated the presentation.

Mr. Heller reviewed the retail portion of the plan. He said he could see “House of Blues” coming in, a Magiano’s, etc. There will be a travel agent, a dry cleaner, grocery store. This project will be a catalyst for more and for change. This is an opportunity for tomorrow that is coming today.

Mr. Baez said they want to activate the waterfront.

Mr. Stone reviewed phasing. Every phase will overlap the preceding one. They have an aggressive schedule requiring a lot of work on their part and on the city’s part. They plan to start in July 2006. Mr. Pfeffer said they need zoning and utility infrastructure in place before they start.

Mr. Burch discussed financing. Revenues from the project are expected to pay the debt service. Excess revenues go to the City of Bridgeport. If revenues are slow, the developer absorbs the risk to pay debt service.

Mr. Pfeffer said there will be an incremental \$743,000,000 available to the City over the 30 year bond issue. He said that 16,000 construction jobs would be created and almost 10,000 permanent jobs.

Mr. Lopez reviewed his childhood and police department background. He said that the best way to protect a neighborhood is to get the neighbors involved. He spoke of the excitement about job creation. In a few months, he will look for security people.

Councilmembers Gomes asked how many of the jobs are related to union jobs. Mr. Pfeffer said they always encourage and require certain apprenticeship programs. They have run project workshops. They also reach back into the schools. Mr. Gomes said this will be expected. They expect permanent jobs but don’t want transient jobs. Mr. Lopez said he would need the City’s help to introduce them to people they know. He is very much into local hiring. When there are jobs, it is followed by crime reduction. They will work with the City. Mr. Gomes said he will continue to talk about permanent jobs that people can build their lives on.

Ms. Hadley said Bridgeport Landing LLC and the City executed a PLA. Councilmember Curwen asked if there was a time frame on this, which was signed in 2002. Ms. Hadley said this should be discussed at another meeting. The 2002 PLA list precedents that the City and the developer have to accomplish.

Mr. Pfeffer showed a slide of their vision for Bridgeport.

Ms. Hadley said that the issue with UI has to be worked out.

City Council President Ayala said he appreciated having people from the bank at the meeting but asked what the Council can do to move this project along. Mr. Pfeffer said they need to make sure that the UI piece is acquired. They have to create the zoning as

soon as possible; to help them fast track. They need to cooperate on the tax implement financing plan. This has to be a public-private partnership. Mr. Carter said they need the legislation in the next few weeks and to work together on the property issues. Ms. Hadley said until there is an intermunicipal agreement in place, nothing happens. Their must be open communication with ECDC.

Councilmember Curwen said he is familiar with TIF. He wants to see the agreement for the bulkhead replacement. He was concerned about starting.

Councilmember Walsh said he is a skeptic. He wants a point person for questions to be directed to.

Councilmember Mulligan inquired about taxes. Mr. Burch said a portion of the taxes would go into debt service, but only a portion of the revenues. Ms. Hadley said they have to figure out additional costs for services. The total tax increase is the cost of the basic services, debt service and the general benefit to the City. Mr. Mulligan asked how much, out of \$100 in assessment, would be used to pay off the 30 year bond and how much would be for debt service. Mr. Burch said 35% would be for debt service over the 30 year time period. The district levels assessments to be paid by the developer if revenues are slow. Any excess goes to the City.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if the City retains ownership over the esplanade or if there was an easement. Mr. Burch said public improvements have to be owned by a public entity. There will be guaranteed, unrestricted public access to the water. Mr. Lopez said they make sure security is trained by them so that this will be a public area.

Councilmember Curwen said he would like an analysis on possible spin-off impacts.

Councilmember Mulligan asked if there was contemplation of any tax breaks or reductions other than in the TIF. Mr. Burch said if there is a tax break, there is no revenue generated to pay the bonds.

Ms. Hadley asked if the Councilmembers could talk to the Miami Councilmembers and Mr. Burch responded affirmatively. He also said he would like to take them to Miami. It was noted that Mayor Fabrizi has spoken to the Mayor of Miami.

Mr. Stone is the point man for questions. They are opening an office in Bridgeport in the Riverside Marine building.

Council President Ayala said they are optimistic but cautious. They hope the plans come to fruition; they will do their due diligence. This will be the economic engine to the future of Bridgeport. He thanked everyone for the presentation and adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ECD & Environment
Committee
May 11, 2005
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Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services

CITY of BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE of the CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 21, 2005

ATTENDANCE: Councilmember's: Paoletto, Pivrotto, McCarthy, DePara

ABSENT: Councilmember's: Dye, Holloway, Valle

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember: Andres Ayala, Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

Councilmember Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes – May 4, 2005

** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTI SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes – May 11, 2005

** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

130-04 Amend Barnum/William Redevelopment Plan, and Proceed with Acquisition of 235B and 257C William Street

Councilmember Paoletto stated this item was requested by Nancy Hadley to be tabled.

** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO TABLE
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

*Consent Calendar

138-04 Bridgeport Zoning Watershed Project

The representative present on this matter stated this was a project to the EPA to address flooding issues. She explained as the city decreases development, there were more potential problems with flooding. So the grant will allow a consultant to look at the flooding issues. She said all the information will go through normal city channels and any recommendation through OPED. She said they will also save the city money by decreasing costs down to shrink water waste. It will also make them eligible through FEMA and the grant will pay for a consultant to address the issues.

She also spoke about other technology that will prevent water from going into the storm drains. The overall grant is to plan for the future.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Consent Calendar

156-04 America the Beautiful Grant Program (State of CT Department of Environmental Protection)

It was stated this grant was for \$8,000. It was explained they had to remove several trees at Beardsley Park. So the grant will be matched and \$5,000 will be cash from the Recreation & Parks budget and \$5,000 will go toward trees. It was said that the innovative part was that they will partner with Groundwork Bridgeport and they will have volunteers trained to prune trees that will be an asset to the city.

Councilmember McCarthy asked if the grant only applied for Beardsley Park. The response was yes.

**** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE**
with the comment that even though the grant will only benefit Beardsley Park, a lot of people do go there.
**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Consent Calendar

160-04 Senior AIDES Program (Senior Service America)

Councilmember Paoletto announced that no one was present to address this matter.

**** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTI MADE A MOTION TO TABLE
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The representative showed up within minutes of the motion being made, so:

**** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTI MADE A MOTION TO RESCIND THE TABLED ITEM**

** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Linda Cervero spoke about the Senior Aides Program that is sponsored by the Federal Government and Department of Labor in the City of Bridgeport. She explained that each year they receive monies to help them find employment where community service is assigned. They get paid minimum wage and the program allows them to learn new skills. She said that right now, they had (17) city aides assigned to offices, noting that this saves the city approximately \$170k per year. But the community services are meant to be temporary. She said they met all their goals for the past four years by placing people in various jobs. Overall, it's a great program and they just celebrated their 40th anniversary.

Councilmember McCarthy expressed that he dealt with some of the senior aides and the program was well run. And it does a wonderful service for the seniors and a great asset to the city.

Councilmember Paoletto added that he has gotten to know quite a few senior aides. He agreed the program was a tremendous help for them and the city.

** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

*Consent Calendar

162-04 Redevelopment of 327 Myrtle Avenue – The Jefferson School

Mr. Lavernoch explained this matter involved the proposed redevelopment for Jefferson School. The resolution was to authorize the Mayor to enter into the transaction. They will sell the property back at a pre-set amount and they got \$1.00 per square foot per unit for five years. He noted this should end at the same time the pilot ends.

Councilmember DePara asked about the pilot and what was the difference between that and what they would be normally getting. Mr. Coleman said in the past the property paid \$21k but it is being billed at \$18k per year. He distributed a comparable tax payments schedule listing various condominiums in the city. He noted the rate was either above or below.

Councilmember Paoletto clarified the property was being billed at \$18k where it was previously billed at \$21k. Mr. Lavernoch said that was correct. He stated the property had many years of tax arrears before Mr. Spencer bought the property. He thought the lower rate would give them a fair chance to succeed with the property.

Councilmember Pivrotto said she didn't have a problem with the past taxes owed, but she had a concern about the \$1.00 per sq. ft. for people that buy the units. She stated constituents would most likely question her about it. So she wondered why they shouldn't be more than \$1.00 per sq. ft. Also, with the values of condominiums, she asked what they would sell for. Mr. Spencer, the developer explained they wouldn't be able to sell them at a higher rate in that neighborhood. He said they established the grunt work for the project and noted they would not get the type of clients in the units if they didn't allow the \$1.00 per sq. ft. He felt there was an image in Bridgeport that the taxes were horrendous, so with that mind set, he thought they would

get stung one way or another. He further noted he has owned many properties and was familiar with the taxes well. And the whole agreement was instrumental in offering the \$1.00 per sq. ft.

Mrs. Spencer added the parking lot has a vacant building that is more enclosed by two families, but she felt it would still be a push to get people in and she thought incentives were needed to do that. She noted it would be a smaller project of only 27-units. Also, the project details required a lot of extra work to replicate certain features.

Mr. Lavernoich said he viewed the matter as a tough residential project. He said they looked at the net gain of real estate and considered that in the calculation.

Mr. Spencer expressed that they sold fifty units and none of the tenants had children, so he didn't think it would be a hardship for them. Also, most of the people were from outside of Bridgeport and are doing well financially.

Councilmember McCarthy said he supported the project.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked the market rate price of the units. Mr. Coleman said they would range between \$100k and \$120K. He noted the lofts were small.

Councilmember Andres Ayala stated they were asking the city to subsidize the project by providing fewer taxes, but he questioned the commitment to allow Bridgeport people to benefit. He stressed there was a tremendous housing problem due to taxes and rents, noting renters bear the brunt of increased taxes as well. Overall, he thought there seemed to be a trend of people in Bridgeport being pushed out. Mr. Spencer said he has partnered with City Bank who works with Habitat for Humanity that works to get indigenous people into units. And there is a program in place to bring people into the project.

Mr. Coleman said Councilmember Ayala had a legitimate issue. He said if they looked at the specifics of the project, they would find there is a replacement housing effort at designated locations in Bridgeport. And there is a concentrated effort to focus on housing. Although this won't happen with this particular project, on a larger scale it will happen. Councilmember Ayala said that he appreciated that fact, but all he had to look at right now was this project. Again, the project will not be affordable for most of the Bridgeport residents and he felt they should look at including Bridgeporters in future projects. He further emphasized that Bridgeporters need to be included in the equation.

Councilmember Walsh stated he had a problem with the \$1.00 per sq. ft. He said he figured out that taxpayers would lose \$60k in the first year according to his calculation. He expressed that he was fearful of people wanting the "Garfield Spencer" deal for future projects. So it's a matter of the \$1.00 per sq. ft. vs. \$2.00 and he thought the sooner they get off the \$1.00 the better. Mr. Lavernoich responded that they were getting off the \$1.00. He noted his office has been approached requesting the so called "Spencer deal", but he didn't anticipate they would see deals like this unless there were extraordinary circumstances.

Mr. Spencer displayed the floor plan of the project and he explained the layout and sizes of the units, noting they may have to adjoin the smaller units. He said that in reference to the tax situation, the \$1.00 per sq. ft. was not farfetched.

There was some open discussion regarding the risks vs. reward.

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Councilmember Ayala asked if the City Council wanted to impose a clause to have five (5) affordable units incorporated into the project for Bridgeport residents, was this legal? Attorney Trachtenberg said she thought it would be a restraint of alienation. And according to the anti-trust laws, it's an area that could inhibit competition that could be possible grounds for a lawsuit.

** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

*Consent Calendar

163-04 Lease with Lamar Advertising for property owned by the City of Bridgeport on Bruce Boulevard

Mr. Lavernoich of OPED stated they had a resolution to authorized the Mayor to enter into a new lease with Lamar Advertising for the property on Bruce Blvd. They recently renegotiated the lease terms and in conversations with Lamar, their lease was up to \$650.00 per month. But the compromised and came up with getting \$750.00 per month, that is consistent with the margins they were able to get. Per the resolution, they will grant them a 1-year notice if they terminate the lease, but Lamar only has to give the city 30-days. However, there are not costs associated.

Councilmember Pivrotto said she was told that no one would want the property because it was inaccessible and it's a paper street. Mr. Lavernoich said he thought the only use would be for a competitor to Lamar, but the property doesn't have a lot of alternative uses and it didn't have a lot of potential.

Councilmember Pivrotto asked about the property going out for an RFP. Mr. Lavernoich clarified he meant that could happen to bid on signs.

Mr. Jack Consalves said the subject sign had been there since the 1960's. He noted that the OPED office worked hard on the negotiation. He went on to say the property where the sign board sits, is on the town line and it's an existing sign and legal with a state permit. But they plan to invest to make the sign cleaner and neater. He further expressed that Lamar Advertising was committed to the city.

Councilmember Andres Ayala said he knew Lamar had a long history in Bridgeport and on numerous occasions, different organizations have had use for the board, so it's a good use for the city and they have been good corporate partners.

Councilmember Walsh said he had a problem with the city giving Lamar a 1-year notice, but Lamar only has to give the city 30-days notice. Mr. Consalves said they didn't plan on exercising the 30-days and would only do so if there was a restriction placed. He reiterated they have been in the city a very long time and didn't plan on going anywhere. But the clause is in place only in the unlikely event there is a governmental rule or regulation.

Councilmember Walsh asked about the possibility of changing the size of the billboard. Mr. Consalves said that wasn't in the contract. Mr. Lavernoich added they would be sensitive to the terms of the contract.

Councilmember Walsh questioned whether it was a time issue as to why they weren't getting the actual lease rather than the resolution. Mr. Consalves said it was because they haven't come up with a happy medium to devise a lease. He reiterated they have been in the city a long time and planned on staying.

Councilmember Walsh asked what the terms of the lease were. Mr. Lavernoich said it was for 10 years.

Councilmember asked if they were able to renegotiate the terms. Mr. Consalves said the board was 100% donated by Lamar Advertising, so the question of being in business to make money was not always the case.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Consent Calendar

168-04 Department of Public Health HIV Prevention Grant

The representative present on this matter said this was an existing grant they reapplied for the HIV/AIDS division where they built up the program to make it stronger.

Councilmember Paoletto expressed that once again, Bridgeport was stepping up to take care of Easton, Monroe etc. The representative replied there was an outreach component outlined in the grant.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Consent Calendar

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN
- ** COUNCILMEMBER DEPARA SECONDED
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE
JULY 20, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Paoletto, Jr., Co-Chairman; Johnny Dye, Co-Chairman; Angel diPara, Jr.; Thomas McCarthy; Maria Valle; Elaine Pivirotto; Thomas Mulligan; Robert Walsh; Ed Gomes.

STAFF: Michael Feeney, Director of Operations; Ted Grabarz, Public Facilities

OTHERS: Ed Piquette; Rosemarie Hoyt, Department of Aging; Andres Ayala, B.W. Skinner, City Engineer, Mr. Coleman, OPD.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Mr. Paoletto.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**** MR. McCARTHY MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2005 AS WRITTEN.**

**** MR. DYE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Paoletto said that he would be taking several agenda items out of order.

#191-04 CITY/STATE AGREEMENT OXBROOK FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

Mr. B.W. Skinner, City Engineer, said this item was to ask the Mayor to sign a proposed City/State agreement that will provide the City with approximately \$580,000.00 in funding for a flood control project that had been part of a Special Act since 1990. Mr. Skinner said there was no funding match required by the City. He said the funds were being made available to the City and will provide money for various tasks of improvement, permitting, design and construction as far as the money will go, plus the main focus of obtaining some property to build a water retaining area on. Mr. Skinner said he was asking the Council to authorize the Mayor to sign this agreement.

Ms. Pivirotto said that she supported this agreement one hundred percent and that it was important to the City. She said this was only the first step but without this step it wouldn't allow them to go forward with getting property and creating the retaining area.

She said this was a massive issue for the City and an important one.

Mr. Paoletto asked if there were any further comments and said that he agreed that this was a very important issue and he also agreed with Mr. Skinner and Ms. Pivirotto.

- ** MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE CITY/STATE AGREEMENT FOR FUNDING TO MOVE AHEAD WITH THE OXBROOK FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT.**
- ** MS. PIVIROTTO SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#174-04 SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT AGENCY ON AGING SENIOR TRANSPORT PROGRAM

Mr. Paoletto recognized Ms. Rosemarie Hoyt to report on the program. She gave a brief overview to the Committee.

Mr. Paoletto said that his constituents had used these services extensively and he found this program to be a great asset to the seniors in the community. He said he has sent many referrals to the program and can't say enough good things about it.

Mr. McCarthy agreed with Mr. Paoletto and said that the program itself was a fantastic idea and was being run fantastically. Mr. Dye asked if the organization was attempting to obtain "green" buses, meaning environmentally clean-running and/or fuel-efficient vehicles. Mr. Paoletto said that this was a good idea and asked Ms. Hoyt to report back to the Committee about it. Mr. McCarthy said there was some testing going on regarding "green" vehicles. Mr. Mulligan asked if this was a grant requiring a City match in funding. Ms. Hoyt indicated that the grant was a 25% in-kind match. She also said that this was the fourth year the program had received funding.

- ** MOTION TO ACCEPT THE GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE PURCHASE OF NEW VEHICLES TO TRANSPORT SENIORS BY MR. DYE.**
- ** MR. McCARTHY SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**#175-04 SOUTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT AREA ON AGING SENIOR
CHORE PROGRAM**

- ** MOTION TO APPROVE BY MR. McCARTHY.
- ** MR. DYE SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#130-04 AMEND BARNUM/WILLIAM REDEVELOPMENT PLAN, AND
PROCEED WITH ACQUISITION OF 235B AND 257C WILLIAM STREET**

Mr. Paoletto said that he had written tonight's agenda while on vacation and he had asked the City Clerk's office to add any pending items to it. This item was added according to his request to the City Clerk but that he had been asked by Mr. Ravanovich (sp) to table the item as Lynn Haig was still away. Mr. Ravanovich gave Mr. Paoletto a progress report on the situation and said that Mutual Housing was still working with the property owners and they feel that they might not even need to bring it back in front of the committee if they find a remedy.

Mr. McCarthy said that he just wanted to add that he hoped that it does come to a conclusion particularly in light of the recent Supreme Court decision on eminent domain which has a lot of people upset.

- ** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO HAVE THE ITEM TABLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
- ** MR. DePARA SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#173-04 LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENT GRANT FROM THE STATE OF
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Ted Grabarz from Public Utilities addressed the Committee. He said this was a grant from the DOT for \$235,000.00 to do landscaping improvements as determined and set down. He passed copies of the designated areas to the Committee members, saying that these particular areas were very hard-hit and he thinks that this would be a good opportunity for them to work with the State to pick out plantings as well as help design the area. He said this would go a long way to make the area down to the Arena look good to people coming to the events there.

Ms. Piverotto said that previous landscaping had not been maintained and that if they use

taxpayers' money to landscape again, then it needs to be maintained properly. She said she has seen trees knocked down but not replaced. Mr. Mulligan said that when it happens at 1 or 2 a.m. it sometimes isn't possible to know who knocks down the trees. He said he has seen Parks people out working in the area so he knows they do maintain somewhat.

Mr. Mulligan said he can't see how the City can afford to add trees and plantings, just grass and said that fancy plantings attract weeds. He said this was State-owned property, and questioned why the State doesn't maintain it. He asked if the funding was coming from a grant. Mr. Grabarz said it was grant money and that no City money is involved. Mr. Grabarz said that although it is State property the City will be responsible to maintain it.

Mr. McCarthy said he agreed with Ms. Pivrotto and also with Mr. Mulligan, but from his point it is essential to upgrade the area as people use this road to get to Harbor Yard and may be the only time they see the City. If the area is upgraded and looks better it gives a good impression about the City. Mr. Ayala said the upgrades should be replicated throughout the town and not just in one specific area. Ms. Pivrotto agreed with this, saying more people use North Avenue, Main Avenue and other areas.

**** MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE STATE DOT GRANT FOR LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS.**

**** MR. DePARA SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#202-04 CREATING A DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FIRST TIME HOMEBUYERS USING RESIDENTIAL PILOT FUNDS

Mr. Paoletto said that before Mr. Coleman of OPD speaks, he wanted to say that this item was something that he hadn't been there for, it was a resolution introduced by several Councilpeople and he had talked to Mr. Ravanovich and Mr. Coleman. Mr. Paoletto gave the floor to Mr. Coleman.

Mr. Coleman briefly explained the resolution and said that originally there had been two main objectives. One was a desire to use PILOT funds and the other was to try to get better access for Bridgeport residents into these programs. These were the two objectives which got buried in this resolution, and it came up to the City Council who said they would try to discuss it more thoroughly. Mr. Coleman said he had had a chance to get into some of the issues but the hope was that the Committee might consider tabling the item for now and simultaneously letting him know what Committee members were interested in it and might get involved.

City of Bridgeport

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Mr. Ayala asked if there were any particular members of the Committee who wanted to form a subcommittee to work with Mr. Coleman on the issue, which could be an out-on-the-floor committee and work in session then they could come back and make a report to the rest of the Committee and put something legitimate on the table to be discussed. Mr. McCarthy asked if there had been any work on the City-side to put together some people to develop the program. Mr. Coleman said that from what he recalled, there was some interest expressed and there was some talk about getting everyone together.

Mr. McCarthy said he would like to be on the subcommittee. Mr. Paoletto asked for anyone else who might be interested and mentioned Ms. Pivirotto. Ms. Pivirotto said she would be delighted to be on the Committee in a few months but her workload wouldn't permit it at this moment. Mr. Paoletto said that the subcommittee would consist of himself, Mr. Dye, Mr. Ayala, Ms. Valle, Mr. McCarthy and Mr. DePara.

**** MS. VALLE MOVED TO TABLE #202-04 UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE SUBCOMMITTEE COULD REPORT TO THE FULL COMMITTEE WITH THEIR FINDINGS.**

**** MR. DePARA SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#300-03 ONE-STOP BUILDING PERMITS OFFICE RELOCATIONS

Mr. Paoletto said that this item's number on the agenda was incorrect, it should be #300-03 instead of #300-04. He asked that the Committee note the correction.

Mr. Michael Feeney, Director of Operations said the City of Bridgeport was appearing before the Committee to seek authorization for possible relocation of several offices. He said they had funds which had been set aside to cover the costs of the relocation.

Mr. Grabarz said this had originated in the last year or so and was an attempt to bring together some of the permitting processes into one area at Lyon Terrace. To facilitate that was moving Housing and Development from Lyon Terrace down to the Annex. Mr. Grabarz said that what they were going to do, assuming they have the Committee's approval, was to utilize carpenters, painters and electricians from Public Utilities to work on the spaces. He offered copies of plans to the Committee and said it would be a grand total of \$170,890.00 to fit out the spaces for the relocation into the existing spaces.

Mr. Feeney said that an approximate total of seventeen people would be moved, twelve from Development and five from Housing. Mr. Gomes said that Block Grant money was diminishing and the citizens' needs were not being met. Mr. Ayala said this would be

good for the City to have all these offices under one roof. Ms. Pivrotto said there should be a better system to facilitate a building visit, it was an intelligent idea to avoid making it piecemeal.

- ** **MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE AUTHORIZATION TO RELOCATION OF THE ONE-STOP BUILDING PERMITS OFFICES.**
- ** **MS. VALLE SECONDED.**

Mr. McCarthy said he wanted to amend his earlier motion to a motion to table.

- ** **MR. McCARTHY MOVED TO AMEND HIS EARLIER MOTION TO APPROVE ITEM #300-03 AND NOW MOVED TO TABLE ITEM #300-03 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION.**
- ** **MR. AYALA SECONDED.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda J. Hayes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
AUGUST 16, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Paoletto, Co-Chair; Johnny Dye, Co-Chair; Tom McCarthy; Elaine Pivirotto; Andres Ayala; Maria Valle; Angel dePara

OTHERS: George Estrada; Mike Feeney; Curtis Leng; Ed Lavernoich and Kathy Hunter, OPED; Iris Molina, Social Services; Diane Miller and Rebecca Harriman, Central Grants; Director of MACH; Jason Epstein and Ken Regan, Developers; Councilmembers Tom Mulligan and Robert Walsh

Co-Chair Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 20, 2005 AS SUBMITTED.**
- ** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

202-04 DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Council President Ayala said the group held their first meeting and felt it was successful with a good exchange of ideas, but the program was still at preliminary stages of development. Mr. dePara said the meeting was excellent but the presentation was not yet completed.

- ** MR. DEPARA MOVED TO TABLE 202-04, CREATING A DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FIRST TIME HOMEBUYERS USING RESIDENTIAL PILOT FUNDS, TO ALLOW TIME FOR COMPLETION OF THE PRESENTATION.**
- ** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

207-04 SOUTHWEST REGIONAL HEALTHY START CONTRACT

Ms. Molina said the City had been involved in the program for five years. Originally there were five regions in the State, but now there were three. Bridgeport was joined by the cities of Stamford and Norwalk. Language from the contract would be used to secure a federal grant in the future. Council President Ayala asked if grant money from other communities was ever available to Bridgeport residents. Ms. Molina said that many participants in the program moved between the three cities and data collected from all of them was used to secure the grant which brought a large sum of money to the City. Speaking on behalf of the City, Co-Chair Paoletto said the record should reflect that Bridgeport frequently stepped up to the plate to help others. Mr. dePara said he wanted everyone to know that Bridgeport did this because it cared about its neighboring residents, even though the cross and burden were often heavy to carry. He thanked Ms. Molina and her staff for their diligent efforts in successfully securing the grant money.

- ** MR. DEPARA MOVED TO APPROVE 207-04, CONTRACT AMENDMENT – SOUTHWEST REGIONAL HEALTHY START CONTRACT #015HUO-04.**
- ** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

212-04 COMPASSION CAPITAL DEMONSTRATION FUND GRANT

Ms. Harriman said that \$1 million in grant money was available from the Federal government to cities for purposes of providing technical assistance to capacity to serve residents for housing and the homeless. Bridgeport would have access to \$500,000 as well as \$200,000 in matching CDBG funds. Mr. Leng said some of the agencies under the 15% cap would receive assistance and free up CDBG money. Additionally, technical reports that the City received and forwarded on to HUD would be more efficient.

- ** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE 212-04, COMPASSION CAPITAL DEMONSTRATION FUND GRANT (DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES).**
- ** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

213-04 ADOLESCENT FAMILY LIFE DEMONSTRATION GRANT

Ms. Harriman said that \$375,000 per year for the term of the contract (five years) would benefit the parent-aid program which was currently funded by DCF. The program partnered with another program for teen fathers and would allow creation of a pregnancy

prevention program. Ms. Valle asked if this would be available to middle school students or just to those in high school. Ms. Harriman said it would be available to both, and there was no contribution required from the City. Funding would be provided by a Federal grant.

**** MS. VALLE MOVED TO APPROVE 213-04, ADOLESCENT FAMILY LIFE DEMONSTRATION GRANT (DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES).**

**** MR. DEPARA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

216-04 GRANT APPLICATION TO HUD

Ms. Miller said that Chris Shays' office appropriated and allocated \$277,000 for MACH's grant application to HUD. The money would be used to locate the MACH facility and to grow its programs. She said there is a full capital campaign to bring the Center to Bridgeport, but they face serious space concerns. The intent is to find a location in the downtown area that would benefit everyone, especially children. Mr. dePara encouraged everyone to support the item, saying that what MACH offered was amazing, and the service they provided to the youth was invaluable. MACH's director said that funds were being raised privately, but they also work with the United Way.

**** MR. DEPARA MOVED TO APPROVE 216-04, GRANT APPLICATION TO HUD FOR THE RELOCATION OF MUSIC AND ARTS CENTER FOR HUMANITY (MACH) THROUGH THE CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2005.**

**** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

220-04 PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES

Mr. Lavernoich said that Ms. Hunter and developers for the project were present to answer questions. A resolution was being proposed to negotiate a 10-year pilot program on behalf of the City for phase-in of taxes on the project. He said the project had been worked on for at least two and one-half years to provide affordable housing with some retail space. Mr. Lavernoich said the site for the project cornered Pulasky and East Main Street, across from a furniture store that was and had been vacant for many years.

Mr. Epstein said he considered himself to be one of the largest developers in the City, having already renovated about 30 structures into multi-family dwellings; taxes were

current. He said that State money had not been used for any of the completed projects. Units were available to first-time buyers only. This project would offer a two-bedroom unit for rent at \$850.00.

Ms. Valle said one of the problems was the issue of parking, another was that the project was in front of a bar. The area was already high density.

Mr. Regan said that store fronts would remain in the structure, and rentals would be to local businesses with rental apartments above. He said the (complete gut) renovation would comply with historic standards in order for the project to qualify for substantial tax credits. In addition, private financing would be secured from the Bank of America. If the resolution were to be approved, the bank would provide financing and the project could begin immediately.

Mr. dePara asked why the developer chose this particular site. Mr. Regan said the developer sought out projects that would regenerate properties. Historically, significant buildings were chosen that were felt to be appropriate for affordable housing. This project represented a long-term investment, and so affordable housing would remain for the duration of the project; rents would increase 3% each year. He said the developer was successful at creating quality affordable housing that would be an investment in the community. Mr. Lavernoich asked why the pilot schedule was for 10 years but tax credits would be available for 15. Mr. Regan said profit margin on the property was slim and thus the financial institution wanted to see a long-term commitment. Mr. Walsh said that he had many questions but would review the financial information provided, especially as it related to the term "limited profit by structure." He said the initial cost was \$440,400 but an additional \$400,000 bridge loan would be applied for after State bonding. The bank was requiring a 1.2 debt coverage ratio. Mr. Lavernoich said taxes would be assessed on 70% of property value; bills would be sent from the City's tax collector. In the 11th year, tax assessment would be on a normal basis. He said the City did not have any other situations similar to this one that could be used as a basis for comparison.

Mr. Mulligan asked what the value of the building would be if it were already completed, to which Mr. Regan responded it would be worth \$1.5 to \$1.6 million and generate about \$40,000. Mr. Lavernoich said this would be filed on the land records as a mortgage. Mr. Epstein said the developer was taking a risk because it was locked into keeping the building even if the units remained vacant. Mr. Regan said that by agreement, four would be required to remain for historical purposes. He discussed rents on the residential units and commercial units. For auditing purposes, funds used to develop retail units would remain separate from those used to develop residential units. He said there were sufficient funds to build the commercial units without using any portion of the funds designated for

residential construction. This would allow a Federal tax credit for 20% of the ownership entity of development costs. Mr. Epstein said current taxes are \$1,800 and the City owned the other half of the building.

Mr. dePara asked what made a project in Bridgeport different from others the developer had worked on and if the developer had approached any particular retailers. Mr. Regan said the pilot program was set up differently because different financing tools were used; Mr. Epstein said no retailers were approached, and most probably anyone that expressed interest would be accepted, all things being equal. Retailers that provided a service to the community, i.e., a deli would be appropriate. Mr. dePara said he was raised in the area and wanted to be sure that responsible economic development that contributed to the neighborhood and to the City was addressed. He asked the developer to consider the highest and best possible use of the retail space. Mr. Regan said the project fell under Bridgeport's Rental Program and came in as an RFP. He said developer fees were \$435,000 and would decrease if costs increased. The project would have a \$400,000 contingency for contractor costs. Mr. Lavernoich said a reserve was established such that if this amount was used, the City could adjust the pilot upward. Mr. Regan said the developer purchased four parcels some time ago from the City for a total cost of \$17,000 and he was not sure they were worth that much on today's market.

Mr. Walsh said he viewed other properties for sale on the developer's website and was not impressed. He felt that E/N Properties and Regan Development were not the kind of developers the City wanted to deal with. Mr. Epstein said many of the properties had been sold already and the website was updated periodically. He said he was insulted that anyone would verbally attack the renovated structures to say they didn't look good.

Council President Ayala said many of the properties on the website did not include retail, and he thought it was important that this project did. He felt the developer made tremendous improvements in the structures from their original condition. He said he toured the work site and felt comfortable with the project going forward.

- ** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE 220-04, PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF 588-612 EAST MAIN STREET.**
- ** MS. VALLE SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

300-03 ONE-STOP BUILDING PERMITS

Mr. Estrada said the proposal was to use \$130,000 of CDBG funds to relocate the housing office from City Hall to the annex to alleviate serious overcrowding on the second floor.

The move would create swing space for work offices such as engineering, which currently did not have a conference room. He said by moving the department, which consisted of a supervisor and an ADA employee, the City would not need to invest money for additional HVAC units and it would bring departments together for greater functionality. Mr. Leng said the move was estimated to cost approximately \$108,000, and it was a one-time cost with no financial burden to the City. Ms. Pivrotto said the City spent a great deal of money on a study about where to put police emergency personnel, health department personnel, etc. and she wondered why no focus was put on a bigger picture. She said this move would mean another move at a later date. She said she felt uncomfortable spending money from the block grant for this purpose. She felt that it did not matter to anyone if personnel from a particular department were scattered as long as customer service objectives were met. Mr. dePara said he agreed with Ms. Pivrotto and asked if there was an intent to improve other departments in City Hall or to improve the aesthetics of the building itself. Mr. Estrada said that security improvements and custodial changes had been made over the past few months. He spoke about the overall plan for the building, and said nothing could happen until space was created. Paving in front of the building had begun; restriping of the north parking lot would continue. Mr. Estrada said discussions with the office of homeland security were ongoing. He said the custodial staff was cut in the last budget and was currently short-staffed due to extended vacations and personnel out on medical leave. He said an attempt was being made to keep overtime costs to a minimum. Mr. dePara asked if there was a plan to address the issue of parking due to changeover of personnel to the annex, to which Mr. Estrada responded that the City had been assessing parking problems for a long time. The Board of Education had its maintenance department in the annex, and some of the trades. The problem was not easy to solve. Mr. McCarthy said he would support Ms. Pivrotto on the issue of a master plan and suggested a meeting be set with the Council to discuss all of the City's buildings; Mr. Estrada said he would handle this. He said that documentation was available on all the buildings relative to which ones were too expensive to maintain, etc. Mr. Walsh said that he and Mr. Gomes felt this would eventually be a cost to be borne by the taxpayers. He said the City has been remiss in not developing a master plan to address the situation at hand. He agreed that residents wanted service and were less concerned about good-looking buildings or offices in them. It was his opinion that personnel from departments didn't need to be together to be productive. He urged the ECDC to take greater control of how administrative costs were managed. Mr. Mulligan asked if there was space in the former bank mart for BOE personnel to move into.

Co-Chair Paoletto said that discussion of the item was going off into tangents, and said it was important to address only the issue of the move to the annex. Council President Ayala said he agreed in principal with comments made by his colleagues, with the exception that taxpayer dollars would not be impacted. He said the concept of one-stop had tremendous

merit, but the program could not be developed until space became available. Ms. Pivirotto said the City owned many properties that could be sold, leased or utilized so that taxpayer money would not be needed.

**** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE 300-03, ONE-STOP BUILDING PERMITS OFFICE RELOCATIONS.**

**** MS. VALLE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (PIVIROTTA).**

Co-Chair Paoletto adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Graham for
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 20, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Paoletto, Co-chair; Thomas McCarthy, Maria I. Valle
Angel de Para, Jr. (6:08 PM), Elaine Pivirotto

OTHERS: Robert Walsh, 132nd District Council Member (6:10 pm); Dianna
Miller, Central Grants; Bill Cummings, CT Post, Rebecca Spencer,
(6:25 pm) Garfield Spencer (6:25 pm) ,.

Mr. Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: AUGUST 16, 2005

- ** **MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF AUGUST
16, 2005 AS SUBMITTED.**
- ** **MS. VALLE SECONDED.**
- ** **THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. de Para arrived at 6:08 pm.

**232-04 - AMERICA'S PROMISE ALLIANCE, 100 BEST COMMUNITIES FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE.**

Ms. Miller introduced herself to the Committee and explained that she was from the
Central Grants Office. This city award is sponsored by Capital One. There was a very
brief discussion about the award. Additional information will be made available to the
Committee.

- ** **MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE 232-04 - AMERICA'S
PROMISE ALLIANCE, 100 BEST COMMUNITIES FOR YOUNG
PEOPLE AND TO BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR.**
- ** **MR. DE PARA, JR. SECONDED.**
- ** **THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**242-04 - MINIGRANT APPLICATION TO EZRA JACK KEATS FOUNDATION
TO FUND CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP ON CITY HISTORY.**

Ms. Miller also presented the information on this grant for \$350 which would be used for
a consultant to hired to create story-enriched songs tied in with the history of Bridgeport.
Mr. Paoletto asked that Ms. Miller report back to the Committee as the grant moves
forward. He explained that often the Committee approves grants like this, but the
Committee never learns whether or not the grant was actually obtained. He also observed

that since it was a small financial amount, that if the grant was denied, then perhaps the money could be found elsewhere.

Mr. Walsh arrived at 6:10 pm.

Ms. Pivirotto suggested that perhaps the Board of Education might film it. Mr. de Para asked Ms. Miller if a list of the grants that have been submitted and a list of grants that have been approved. Mr. Paoletto commented that it was an excellent idea and that since Central Grants had always been cooperative with the Committee that perhaps the Committee should simply put it in the form of a resolution. This was agreeable to all.

- ** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE 242-04 - MINIGRANT APPLICATION TO EZRA JACK KEATS FOUNDATION TO FUND CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP ON CITY HISTORY AND TO BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR.**
- ** MS. PIVIROTTO SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

261-04 - SUPPORT OF ADAPTIVE REUSE IN INDUSTRIAL ZONED AREAS.

Council Member Walsh greeted the members of the Committee and explained that he was one of the co-sponsors of this proposal, along with Ms. Pivirotto and Councilman Gomes. Mr. Paoletti expressed surprise that no one else from the City government had shown up to speak about the issue. Council Member Walsh agreed and displayed two articles that had been published in local papers in the last few weeks. He explained that the City seemed to be saying in the article, that the City was opposed to any type of blanket adaptive re-use for Industrial Zoned Areas. Yet the City does not seem to be coming up with any type of alternative for using these Industrial Zoned spaces.

At this point, it was discovered that no one had copies of the proposal, so the Committee decided to recess for five minutes to make copies for the members.

- ** MS. VALLE MOVED TO HAVE A FIVE MINUTE RECESS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING COPIES OF RESOLUTION 261-04 - SUPPORT OF ADAPTIVE REUSE IN INDUSTRIAL ZONED AREAS**
- ** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED**
- ** THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The Committee went into recess at 6:15 pm.

Mr. Paoletto reconvened the meeting at 6:24 pm. He thanked Ms. Pivirotto for making all the copies for the Committee and turned the floor back over to Mr. Walsh.

Mr. and Ms. Spencer arrived at 6:25 pm.

Mr. Walsh explained that the issue has been publicized and that the issue had been on the Zoning agenda and later pulled. He felt that the issue had been stalled at that point. Mr. Walsh pointed out that the articles indicated that Norwalk, New Haven and Hartford had all come up with some type of adaptive reuse zoning, and this was necessary for Bridgeport to do, also. All the resolution does is make a statement that the City should move forward in that direction. On the Web, Mr. Walsh located C.E.R.C., one of many sites which works in conjunction with the State to encourage businesses to relocate in the State. The site lists properties that were industrial manufacturing. This list accounts for 2, 387,000 sq. ft. available in the City. The range of this listing covers from 10,000 sq. ft and below to the largest.

Mr. Walsh also pointed out that the leasing price per square foot on these abandoned buildings was anywhere in the range from \$4.50 to \$5.50 per square foot. For commercial properties, the rent drives the appraised value. By keeping this large inventory of available properties out there, the City keeps the rental rate extremely low, which then in turn, keeps the appraised value low and consequently keeps the amount of taxes that can be collected on these properties low. There are people who are anxious to move forward and readapt these buildings. Converting these buildings to use will increase the tax base, along with reducing the amount of available inventory. Micro-managing the various individual pieces of properties is not productive. Mr. Walsh feels that approaches like this does more to turn off potential investors than other issues. Mr. Walsh hopes that perhaps this resolution will result in the City responding with the reasons that they oppose a blanket adaptation resolution.

Mr. de Para stated that he does agree with a great deal that Mr. Walsh stated. He expressed concerns about having a blanket adaptive reuse resolution because of the criteria that needs to be set up to control the reuse. There is a lot of potential in the resolution, but he would like to see some kind of criteria to select certain sites. Mr. de Para also expressed disappointment that no one from the City was in attendance to answer questions.

Mr. McCarthy spoke and said that he personally liked Garfield Spencer and did not want to see them leave the City. He also pointed out that the resolution was pointing the City in a direction, and not tying anyone's hands.

Mr. Paoletto said that he had been reading the U.L.I. report and that Mr. Walsh's presentation covered many of the points contained in the report. Mr. Paoletto felt this problem showed a lack of vision in the master plan and the lack of housing options. The U.L.I. report states clearly that the City must break away from the stranglehold on the past and move forward in regard to industrial sites. He concluded by saying that he was in favor of this resolution.

Mr. Spencer asked Mr. de Para for further explanation about his concerns regarding criteria for the adaptive reuse. Mr. Spencer explained that the actual zone change does

with industrial property is that it basically allows adaptive reuse for a particular type of industrial property. In essence, everything that comes before the Zoning Board will be on a case by case basis. The blanket resolution just opens a door for people to use industrial properties under an adaptive use criteria. It will be spot checked at every possible point, but the zoning will no longer be purely commercial. Since the City has excess industrial properties on the market, allowing a zoning change would help everyone. All the properties will still have to go before Zoning.

Mr. Paoletto reminded the Committee that Mr. Spencer was correct, that regardless of what the Committee approves, the issue falls back on Zoning. This is an opportunity for the Committee to express their opinions on the direction the City should take, but ultimately, any changes will be controlled by Zoning. This is a statement to the City, to Zoning and to the Council that this is where Economic Development stands.

Mr. de Para thanked Mr. Spencer for the clarification and stated that he sees a tremendous amount of potential in this idea. He was content that Planning and Zoning will be reviewing proposals on a case by case basis.

Mr. Spencer pointed out that what has happened in South Norwalk, and in Boston shows how the reuse can be accomplished. In Rhode Island, the industrial zoning by right allows for living and work space. Rhode Island feels that these new businesses are in historical buildings and by allowing this, it preserves the building by encouraging the developers to adapt. There is value in these abandoned buildings here in Bridgeport. By recapitalizing the real estate, it will be a start on reducing the taxes. It's not the answer, but it is a start.

**** MS. PIVIROTTO MOVED TO APPROVE 261-04 - SUPPORT OF
ADAPTIVE REUSE IN INDUSTRIAL ZONE AREAS.**

**** MR. MCCARTHY SECONDED
** THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MR. MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURNED
** MS. VALLE SECONDED
** THE MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee
September 20, 2005
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CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT
OCTOBER 18, 2005

ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL MEMBERS: PAOLETTO, DYE,
de PARA, VALLE, McCARTHY, PIVIROTTO, SILVA,
HOLLOWAY

OTHER(S) PRESENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS: CURWEN, VIZZO-PANICCIA,
WALSH, ANDRES AYALA, SANTACROCE

GUESTS PRESENT: CITY ATTORNEY TRACHTENBURG, MICHAEL FEENEY,
EDWARD LAVERNOICH, KATHLEEN HUNTER, DAWN
SALVO, CARLOS VASQUEZ, MATTHEW FARIS, CITY
ATTORNEY PACACHA, CHARLES COVIELLO

Councilmember Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Bill Coleman of the Housing Initiatives Office gave an update on housing policies. He stated the effort came about by considering the Jefferson School proposal. And that Council members Walsh and Andres Ayala proposed a resolution for the proposed pilot to create affordable housing to expand a little. He said they met twice to discuss the matter and he was present tonight to bring updates and get some input that will allow them to bring people in from Norwalk and Stamford for their input.

Mr. Coleman said he had four points to review: one point being that they have to give to get. He said they were doing housing development, but they need affordability. There was also the matter of how to define affordability. He said they talked about the language of having a requirement of 60% to 80% of the area median income, i.e., people that fall into that income range would be eligible for affordable housing. He said they went back to look at the census data to check the demographics of Bridgeport and they were able to capture that there was a little over half of the city that fell into that percentage range. But if they go with 60% >80% of the median income, then they needed to talk about how that will happen. In that they will require a developer to give 15% to create affordable housing. He further spoke about giving flexibility to the developer or requiring it as a policy.

Council member Holloway stated that it was important to define affordable housing. He noted that rents range between \$950.00 and \$1,150.00 per month. He spoke about driving the market rate up that would push over to the east side and east end of Bridgeport. So again, there is a question of what is affordable.

Mr. Coleman agreed they needed to define affordability. For example: a 3-bedroom house would sell between \$126k and \$130k, and for a rental, it would be \$995.00, so he thought the percentages were in the range of what seemed to be reflected in Bridgeport.

Councilmember Holloway asked how this would be affected if inflation occurred. Mr. Coleman said this would depend on whether or not they locked in the price.

Councilmember de Para stated there was an issue whether they would allow buys out or not, or when a developer comes in, should they just take the 15% affordable housing. He said this must include the percentage of affordable housing. He further commented that they weren't looking to do "gentrified ghettos".

Councilmember Holloway asked if the addressed rent control, noting that is an area where most people will have a problem. For example, in Norwalk minorities lived in certain areas, but they got forced out because housing was not affordable and it became a question of where they would go. So he thought they needed to do some type of rent control and not focus so much on affordable. He emphasized that rents were escalating at 2% per month.

Mr. Coleman said they looked at affordable rents being locked in rather than having a strict rent control policy.

Councilmember Paoletto reminded everyone that the plan was still a work in progress. He thought Mr. Coleman's comments were a good start.

Councilmember Andres Ayala agreed the plan was a work in progress. He said there were a lot of ideas brought in, but they were looking for more people to come in with their input, so when it becomes policy, everyone would be on the same page. He urged that if someone was unable to attend a meeting regarding this matter, they should follow through with any ideas they might have. He spoke about the buy out option, noting that this was something that needed to be worked out among all parties involved.

Ms. Kathleen Hunter added they wanted to expand their audience to national experts to submit research in the area. She pointed out that Norwalk and Stamford were different markets, so they needed to research cities that were comparable to Bridgeport.

Minutes Approval – September 20, 2005

**** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES**
**** COUNCILMEMBER DYE SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Councilmember Paoletto requested an item be added to the agenda:

298-04 Communication from Central Grants re Application to renovate Wheeler Center Facility (Department of Social Services Bonding) referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee

Ms. Dawn Savo, of the Central Grants office stated everyone should have a copy of the application. They were looking for approval of the resolution to Social Services for bonding of \$470k for the ABCD Program and the AmeriCares clinic. She noted the updates included renovations. She further noted that AmeriCares was raising \$192k to do the renovations inside the building.

Councilmember Holloway asked if there was any cost to the city. Ms. Savo said no.

**** COUNCILMEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO APPROVE**

Councilmember Paoletto clarified that at last night's City Council meeting the item read incorrectly on the agenda and that where it read **actions to that end, including eminent domain** should be deleted because it didn't apply.

**** COUNCILMEMBER de PARA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Consent calendar

282-04 A moratorium of six (6) months on the transfer or sale of city property.

Councilmember Silva of the 136th District stated the resolution came to him through CFFAB. He explained that basically, Bridgeport had a policy of selling and controlling real estate to entities at fair market value. But to ensure that the city capitalizes on the recent real estate boom, he proposed a resolution to be submitted to the City Clerk's Office. He further stated that selling a lot of properties for \$1.00 to certain organizations, some that are valid, such as Habitat for Humanity is fine, but the resolution was devised for developers that come in and try to buy property and buy it for a low price and then get the tax abatement. That was the purpose of the resolution. He said that although a 6-month moratorium might be too much, it could be reconsidered.

Councilmember Pivrotto asked if the moratorium was to still transfer property as long as it meets the market value. Mr. Coviello said there needs to be a 60-day due diligence period.

Councilmember Walsh said that in the past, the city used unlicensed realtors to establish market value. He said by not having a city employee appraising properties, he wasn't sure they were at a good starting point. So he asked if they could tighten up that loop hole. Mr. Coviello said the document stated that the properties are appraised by a licensed appraiser. But there are two ways to do this; one is through a broker price method or through an RFP process. Another is to get the appraisal before the bank gets involved in the matter, but he thought the best way was through an appraiser.

Councilmember Pivrotto said there was another resolution to auction property. she asked if this would interfere with the appraisal process. City Attorney Trachtenburg stated that she formed a legal opinion regarding this. Councilmember Holloway interjected to say that since

Attorney Trachtenburg represented the city, he preferred to hear from the housing department on the matter.

- ** COUNCILMEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO TABLE THE MATTER UNTIL ALL PARTIES INVOLVED COULD MEET TO DISCUSSTHE MATTER FURTHER**
- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE VOTES IN FAVOR AND FOUR VOTES IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS: de PARA, PAOLETTO, PIVIROTTO, VALLE)**

276-04 Proposed Amendment to Eaton Enterprises, LLC development rights to allow for duplex construction (Lower East End/Municipal Development Plan)

Councilmember Holloway stated that Eaton Enterprises LLC was given property to develop, but he encountered a snag. However he is looking to develop a duplex and he is ready to start. He noted that ECDE didn't have a problem with this.

- ** COUNCILMEMER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO APPROVE CONSTRUCTION TO BUILD A DUPLEX AT THE DESIGNATED LOCATION IN THE LOWER EAST END OF BRIDGEPORT**
- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent Calendar**

289-04 A Resolution Regarding Opposition to Proposal by Broadwater Energy

Councilmember Paoletto said the resolution was submitted by Councilmember Rodgerson; but he wasn't present tonight. He said the matter was at the discretion of the committee.

- ** COUNCILMEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO TABLE ITEM 289-04**
- ** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

303-04 Communication from City Clerk re Sale of Excess City Properties, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee

- ** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO ADD THE ITEM TO THE AGENDA**
- ** COUNCILMEMER de PARA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Feeny stated that in regard to the resolution, it was the Mayor's directive to open

up the process here tonight and then they would go forward to the Planning & Zoning Commission, ECDE and the City Council. He noted there would be many steps they need to take. He went on to say there would be twelve (12) properties auctioned off that are listed and ten (10) split between two property owners. He distributed booklets of the listed properties.

Attorney Liskov said they were trying to identify properties to be sold or those believed to be sliver pieces and those sold to abutters. He gave an overview of numerous properties referencing the booklet as follows:

- **Parcel on Ellsworth Street** – 1 ¼ acre. The auction for this property will be held on Saturday, October 22, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. the minimum bidding price will be set by Mr. O'Brien.
- **608 Connecticut Avenue** - single family house. Property will be auctioned on Saturday, October 22, 2005.
- **135 Miles Street** - will be auctioned. This is a commercial building.
- **979 Central Avenue** - this property is 6,000 sq. ft. that is a buildable lot
- **1185 Iranistan Avenue** - this is an empty lot #36. It has 80 ft. of frontage and is 80 ft. deep. It is right for development and sale.
- **209 Shelton Street** – this property has a decent single family house on it and is appropriate to salvage and put on the tax role.
- **1955 Seaview Avenue** - this property should be resold at auction. It has an auto garage on the premises and should be sold.
- **105 Emeril Street** – there are two lots adjoining that should be sold together
- **751 Evers Street** - there are several acres of property. The property will be assessed to determine the base line price.

Attorney Liskov further reviewed the sliver lots consisting of (10) parcels. He explained these lots consisted of triangle pieces of property. He circulated the room to point out what a sliver lot looked like, noting they usually are not saleable or buildable and can cause grief to the Tax Assessor. So they propose to deed the lots to the most logical abutting owner if they want that option.

- **637 N. Summerfield Avenue** - this lot is a miniscule triangle.
- **96 Goldenrod Avenue** - there is a garage that sits on the lot and it is 50 ft. long and 6 ft. wide
- **236 Sunrise Terrace** - this property is 2 ft. wide and 100 ft. in depth
- **558 June Avenue** - this lot is 1,000 sq. ft.
- **263 Harmony Street** - this lot is only 130 sq. ft., a very small triangle piece
- **50 Chatam Terrace** - this lot is 5 ft. wide by 100 ft. long
- **1008 Reservoir Avenue** - this property is a triangle shaped; 360 ft. long x 8 ft. to 0 ft. at the end
- **46 Hooker Road** - this lot is a triangle piece

He further reviewed potential builder lots:

- **243 Sixth Street** – requested to be auctioned; the lot is 40’ x 100’
- **43 Lee Avenue** - will be auctioned; the lot is 30’ x 100’

Councilmember de Para asked about a property indicated on page 69 of the booklet. He asked what would happen to the structures that were on the property. Attorney Liskov said the structures didn’t encroach. He said it was recommended to sell it to the abutting neighbor, but they haven’t accepted, so it is being recommended for auction.

Councilmember Dye asked when someone comes in for a building permit after they purchase one of these lots, will there be any restrictions. Attorney Liskov said they will probably need variances. Councilmember Dye questioned how they could sell them as buildable lots if someone might encounter a problem obtaining a variance.

Councilmember Holloway said that before the auction, both property owners should be approached to buy. Attorney Liskov said they would give notification to abutters to buy.

Councilmember Holloway asked if it should be sold as a buildable lot. Attorney Liskov said no, it will be sold strictly as a lot.

Councilmember Paoletto stated that these were recommendations only, noting that if the committee chose to do something specific, then that was an option. It was a matter of either accepting the properties or rejecting them.

Councilmember Walsh brought up the point that a while ago this evening, a resolution was tabled concerning properties and now the city comes in reviewing vacant properties, but no one had the chance to look at them and the abutters were unknown. He said he was hesitant to make a decision to sell or split the lots with abutters, because he thought they were rushing the matter. He further thought the city should do more due diligence research and come back with more information that would allow the committee to act at a future date.

Attorney Liskov continued reviewing properties:

- **216 Maple Street** - this is a 1,500 ft. lot with a fence; they will approach the abutter.
- **387 Helen Street** - there is a big rock pile on the property; the lot is 55 x 50 x 55. it will be made available to the abutter to buy.
- **1171 Pembroke Street** - this is a 35’ x 80’ lot.
- **96 Madison Terrace** - this is a 2,000 sq. ft. lot; sort of a sliver piece of land.
- **4 Paul Street** - this lot is 38’ x 100’ and next door is a 40’ x 100’ lot that is desirable for an abutter to buy.
- **247 Griffin Avenue** - this is a triangular piece lot that is available for an abutter to buy.
- **460 Woodlawn Avenue** - this is a 25’ x 20’ lot that would be desirable to sell to an abutter.
- **244 Monroe Street** - this is a 30’ x 51’ lot; good for an abutter sale.

- **Tesiny Circle** - this is a narrow piece of property; the owner may want to build on it because it has enough frontage.
- **145 Alba Avenue** - this is an interior land lot piece that is pentagon shaped; it might be desirable to develop on.

Attorney Liskov stated that they tried to make the most rational decisions to decide what was saleable or valuable to an abutter. They tried to determine the most optimal use for development and the City of Bridgeport.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked if there was any recourse for owners that have been maintaining the properties for years. Attorney Liskov said they can't adversely process against municipalities.

Councilmember Vizzo-Paniccia asked if the monies spent for the time put into compiling the listings and researching the properties would be recouped. Attorney Liskov said he hoped the would draw a decent dollar from the auctions.

Councilmember Holloway said he thought that Councilmember Walsh was correct in that the 100-pages of properties to review was a lot to absorb. He thought that the matter should be sent back and then the city council could then decide what they wanted to do with them. He was in favor of tabling the matter.

**** COUNCILMEMBER HOLLOWAY MOVED TO TABLE**

There was no second to the motion to table.

**** COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTI MOVED TO APPROVE**

Councilmember Holloway asked if they were approving the item as is. Councilmember Pivirotti clarified her motion was to approve as is, noting there was a lot of work that went into compiling the properties for sale or for auction.

**** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE SECONDED**

Councilmember Walsh asked for clarification on what approved "as is" meant.

Councilmember Paoletto said he thought it meant, that the properties would be made available at public sale or they would transfer the slivers of land as they were outlined in the booklet. Councilmember Pivirotti concurred.

Councilmember Walsh asked where the items that were overruled by City Hall were indicated in the listings. He also questioned the approval of the resolution "as is". It was clarified that the resolution devised was City Hall's resolution.

Attorney Liskov said they requested that the properties be sold to an abutter or auctioned. He said they will give abutters notice. He said he was assured they would show up ready to buy, since they will be aware the properties are up for auction.

Councilmember Walsh asked if a property is sold "as is", did this mean there is no reverter clause on the property. Attorney Liskov said there was a reverter clause in place.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH SEVEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCILMEMBER HOLLOWAY)**

It was noted that properties **209 Shelton Street** and **608 Connecticut Avenue** were taken off due to issues with City Hall, but they were subsequently resolved.

274-04 Authorization for Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency and Mayor to Acquire/Steel Point/East Side Neighborhood Development Plan Area property by undertaking all necessary actions to that end, including eminent domain

Mr. Ed Lavernoich stated the resolution was to authorize the Mayor to acquire the United Illuminating site by eminent domain. He mentioned eminent domain was previously granted for other Steel Point sites.

An Executive Session was requested by Associate City Attorney Pacacha. He explained what the matter involved (*see attached*).

The Chairman called for the ECDE Committee to enter into Executive Session at 7:20 p.m.

The Executive Session ended at 8:16 p.m.

Mr. Lavernoich said the resolution for the Neighborhood Renewal Plan was to acquire properties. He asked the committee members to refer to their packet containing the resolution and locator map showing the block of the properties and the numbers. He pointed out in particular block #86.

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED WITH SEVEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO)**

302-04 Communication from Mayor re Disposition/Redevelopment of 333 State Street, referred to Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee

**** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE MOVED TO ADD THE ITEM TO THE AGENDA
** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED WITH SEVEN VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN OPPOSITION (COUNCILMEMBER PIVIROTTO)**

Mr. Lavernoich said the resolution contemplated the transaction to put more detail in it (*he distributed copies of the resolution for review*). He said he understood that it was an unconventional transaction, but the merits of it were significant enough to see what the City Council thought of it. And to bring an accomplished developer in and put it in the hands of a capable party to develop quickly

Attorney Liskov described why they influenced the transaction. He said everyone should have been familiar with the building, it is the brown glass, half plywood building located next to Housatonic Community College. The building has been in foreclosure for seven years and the matter went to the Supreme Court on many issues. But there were claims from the LLC, claiming that when the building was taken down, the city used the abatement monies improperly. He said he has reviewed five boxes of documents and he was unable to find any validity to that claim. The case is currently muddled in foreclosure and issues are pending contingent upon a trial. However, the 18% interest continues to accumulate dating back 14 or 15 years. He said they have appraisals on the value of the property and the most recent one was as of June 2005 in the amount of \$555k.; an older appraisal was in the amount of \$500k, so there has been a 10% fluctuation. The tax debt is \$2.9 million and it continues to accumulate. The building is owned by a single asset LLC. He went on to say that they can get the asset or the value of asset at \$555k or they can let the building sit and fight it out, but the best option was to resolve it now. The foreclosure will take two to three years to move out of court. He noted that if goes to court, many issues would be addressed, such as the past administration and the matter of the City Trust building.

Councilmember Holloway stated if they go to court, they would forgive the taxes to the LLC. Attorney Liskov said nothing was being forgiven. Councilmember Holloway asked if they take the building and it goes to foreclosure, does it forgive the taxes. Attorney Liskov said by going through foreclosure, the taxes would be wiped out. The agreement would be to take it back, take the title and sell it to a developer.

Councilmember Holloway asked about building 65-units and if some would be affordable at a lower rate. Mr. Lavernoich said there wouldn't be any special consideration in the way of a pilot, unless there is an affordability component. Councilmember Holloway asked out of the 65-units, would some be affordable. Mr. Lavernoich said none would be, because they weren't asking the city for anything.

Councilmember Holloway asked about the parking situation where the units will be. Mr. Lavernoich said there was plenty of parking space for residents living in the complex.

Councilmember Holloway questioned what they would do to deal with issues of terrorism and other safety factors. Mr. Lavernoich said the development had to be figured out, but there are parties involved that own the parking garages, so this will be motivation to provide parking.

Councilmember Holloway questioned how zoning could allow building 65-units without parking. Mr. Matt Faris said that in the early stages of looking at the parking situation, they contemplated the 65-units to decide whether or not they would have any dedicated to

affordable. But for the parking, that issue needs to be figure out, they need a due diligence period to accomplish that.

Councilmember Holloway questioned the fact that they were asking them to vote on the matter tonight. He said that although he liked the idea of eminent domain, he couldn't see the project happening without the parking matter resolved. Mr. Faris said they could go through the process to work out the issues.

Councilmember de Para asked how they came to select Greenfield Partners for the project. Mr. Lavernoich said Greenfield Partners approached the city as a result of a conversation with the former owner; they offered to pay the fair market value. They felt they could develop and turn the property around quickly. Attorney Liskov concurred that the city was approached by Greenfield Partners. He also felt there was a lot of potential to develop.

Mr. Faris relayed that Greenfield Partners has also invested in properties in the Town of Norwalk, such as, the SoNo area and Norden Park. He said they were dedicated to investing in Bridgeport.

Councilmember de Para asked if they were allowing a delinquent tax entity (D'Addario) to dictate the terms of whom they give the development to; he questioned why they were doing this. Mr. Lavernoich said that for the first time in years, the owner said he would step aside if they transfer the property to Greenfield Partners. But they were not allowing him to dictate the business terms. He thought the matter should be attractive to the city, noting that it was not meant to cause any controversy. Overall, he said they were trying to resolve the matter in the best manner.

Councilmember de Para said he still wasn't clear about the method they were using. He said that although they need to get the property back on the tax role, there is a question of the committee not having a choice of who should be selected. Mr. Lavernoich said they looked at the deal as that of getting the property for fair market value and putting it back to public use.

Councilmember de Para expressed that it was a great project, but he reiterated that he was not pleased with the means of how it came to the committee, he said he had a fear of encouraging tax absconders that might be looking to do the same thing in the future. Attorney Liskov explained this was one of the last pieces of property Bridgeport with this type of history. He felt this development and being able to capture the fair market value was the best thing to do.

Councilmember Pivrotto recalled they just discussed taking the property of a taxpayer through eminent domain, so she questioned someone that owes \$3 million in taxes. She questioned why they don't take this property back by eminent domain. Attorney Liskov stated that the property has to be in a redevelopment zone to take it by eminent domain.

Councilmember Valle asked if Housatonic Community College wanted to buy the property. Mr. Lavernoich said they would love to acquire it, but they were more interested in the city giving them the use of the property, rather than them buying it.

Councilmember Dye asked if it would be setting a precedent if they opened themselves up to this type of deal. Mr. Lavernoich said that most developers don't have the resources to fight them. He further noted that they already set a precedent, such as with what happened with City Trust. Councilmember Dye replied then, in essence, the message has been put out that they don't have to pay taxes, and just find a buyer and make a deal. Attorney Liskov said it's a matter of taking a building or pick up the fair market value. He noted that most developers are smart and know how to ply the game and get what they want.

Councilmember Curwen said Greenfield Partners was not asking for a tax abatement. They are offering to buy the property and pay the taxes immediately. So he thought it was a good deal to get the property back on the tax base. He further commented that the only issue would be if the property ended being flipped by D'Addario. Mr. Faris said that D'Addario was not involved.

Councilmember Curwen thought the committee should support the project. Again, the development will put the property back on the tax base.

Mr. Lavernoich said that as far as he knew, the amount offered by Greenfield Partners was the most anyone has offered to pay.

Councilmember de Para asked why Bee Knee was being so generous to Greenfield Partners. Mr. Faris said the founder of Greenfield and Bee Knee were acquaintances, but there is no business deal to his knowledge with D'Addario.

Councilmember de Para agreed it will bring new life and revitalization to the downtown area, but he still had an issue of how the matter was decided.

Councilmember Walsh said he heard rumors about the City Trust's former owner who is now a minority developer. Mr. Lavernoich said they will participate in profitability down the line.

Councilmember Walsh asked if the developer would be willing to include specific language in the agreement excluding the heirs of the D'Addario estate to any part of the business deal. Mr. Faris replied that was a business decision. However, he was emphatic that there was no agreement with D'Addario, noting there is no guarantee there won't be in the future.

Councilmember Walsh asked if there was a reverter clause in the agreement. Mr. Lavernoich said land use approvals and building permits were required, but they will not hand over the property until all paperwork is in place. The reverter clause will include that they perform over a certain period of time and if they don't, they will take the property back.

Councilmember Walsh asked if an 18-month period was acceptable for them to show performance. And if this wasn't fulfilled, it would be agreed upon that the property would be taken back. Mr. Faris said that would be acceptable.

Mr. Faris stated that they were putting \$10 million equity onto the project. This consists of the cost to refit the building and turn it into retail space.

Mr. Lavernoich mentioned that it was estimated that the property would generate approximately \$150k to 200k in taxes annually.

Councilmember Andres Ayala asked if they were here tonight to approve the foreclosure only. He also questioned whether there would be any subsequent deals in the making that would require them to come back before the committee. Mr. Lavernoich said they were looking to pursue market rate development. Councilmember Andres Ayala said then based on tonight's vote, they would have the approval to go forward to other commissions and departments and they won't have to return to the committee. Mr. Lavernoich said that was correct.

Councilmember McCarthy commented that it was a good project!

**** COUNCILMEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE
** COUNCILMEMBRER VALLE SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE VOTES IN FAVOR; TWO VOTES IN
OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS: de PARA AND PIVIROTTO) and
ONE ABSTENTION (COUNCILMEMBER DYE)**

ADJOURNED

**** COUNCILMEMBER VALLE MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCILMEMER PIVIROTTO SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOULSY**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Economic and Community Development
And Environment Committee of the City Council
October 18, 2005
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