

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CONTRACTS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 14, 2011**

**ATTENDANCE :** Richard Paoletto, Chair; Howard Austin, Sr., Michelle Lyons, Martin McCarthy. Council President Thomas McCarthy (6:32 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** E. Lavernoich, OPED Deputy Director; Dawn Norton, Acting Finance Director; Atty. Mark Anastasi, City Attorney; Ms. Mara Charning, the Team Negotiators for the Crossing Guards; Senator Edward Gomes, Council Member Robert Walsh; Dan Levinson, Green Village Initiative, Inc. (GVI); Karen Sussman, Green Village Initiative, Inc. (GVI).

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Paoletto called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MAY 10, 2011.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED THE MINUTES OF MAY 10, 2011.  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MCCARTHY SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 10, 2011 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**88-10 Tentative Agreement with School Crossing Guards Union regard a collective bargaining agreement.**

Mr. Philip White came forward and distributed a copy of the Summary of Changes for the School Crossing Guards contract. He stated that for the first two years, there were no pay increases. Council Member Paoletto asked how many crossing guards there were. Mr. White said that there 94 and Ms. Mara Charning, the Team Negotiators for the Crossing Guards, said that there was 95. She then explained that 2 people would be leaving at the end of the year, and that there was one position where one guard worked only in the mornings and a second guard worked only in the afternoon. Atty. Anastasi said that he would like to remind everyone that until the Council Votes on the contract, any contract was subject to change. One of the Council Members asked if there would be any layoffs. Atty. Anastasi said that there was no lay off language in the contract.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN MOVED AGENDA ITEM 88-10 TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS UNION REGARD A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.**

Council Member Lyons asked what the changes were in the contract. She was told that there were no changes in the contract other than the term and the increases.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 88-10 TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS UNION REGARD A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Paoletto requested this be put on the consent calendar.

**92-10 Proposed Lease Agreement with Green Village Initiative, Inc. (GVI) for the contiguous city owned property located at 1469 Reservoir Avenue and 20 Yaremich Drive**

Mr. Lavernoich came forward and introduced himself. He explained that the document would allow Mayor Finch to enter into a short time lease with Green Village Initiative, Inc. (GVI). The property at 1469 Reservoir Avenue and 20 Yaremich Drive was acquired by the City because it was a blighted shopping. The original idea was to build affordable housing there. The RFP was done four or five years ago. POKO Partners was selected and engaged the neighborhood in a meeting. The neighbors wanted POKO to develop it into a larger property with retail and residences. Due to the complexity of the requested, Mr. Olsen of POKO, who has other projects going on in town and at this time will not be working on this project in the immediate future. Because of this, the lease will allow the Green Village Initiative to use this for a production garden. This lease would be for a minimum of five years, while the developer works on assembling the financing for the proposed housing and retail development.

Council Member Paoletto said that Senator Edward Gomes had stopped in. He added Council Member Blunt and Council Member Bonney were the sponsors for this initiative.

Council Member Walsh asked about the developer and why the developer wasn't working on this. Mr. Lavernoich explained that the developer has no contractual rights at this time. There is no signed contract. He was just the developer that was chosen by the City from the group that responded to the RFP. The neighbors would like to have a larger and more complicated development. Council Member Walsh asked what kind of tax revenue the City was forgoing. Mr. Lavernoich explained that the housing project would involve PILOT or CHFA payments. He added that the neighborhood was strongly in favor of this developer.

Atty. Anastasi asked if the City could go out to RFP for another developer. Mr. Lavernoich said that the City could do that, but the neighbors were strongly in favor of this developer.

Senator Gomes asked about the fact that the shopping center had been abandoned for the last twenty or so years. He asked when the North End of Bridgeport would get some attention. He

said that he did not see any development going on in the North End of Bridgeport. Mr. Lavernoich explained that the CHFA funding is limited. Senator Gomes said that he was very concerned about this. Mr. Lavernoich said that there is strong competition for tax credits. Senator Gomes said that he was concerned about the fact that there would be another five or ten years delay on a parcel that has been vacant for decades.

*Council President Thomas McCarthy joined the meeting at 6:32 p.m.*

Council Member Paoletto commented that Senator Gomes had done a great deal for the City and respected his work.

Mr. Levinson and Ms. Sussman from Green Village Initiative, Inc. (GVI) came forward. He explained that the non-profit had started three years ago. He said that the sustainable issue was green, and that local food was very attractive to people. Industrial food involves chemicals and transportation. The group has already created food gardens at nine of the schools in Bridgeport, plus one at the Library. The program has completed all they said that they were going to do on time and under budget. School gardens are for the students to learn about how things grow and how to eat well.

Productions gardens are done with one or two acres and employ local teens. He said that the group hoped to do three, one near Bassick, another two other locations. Mr. Levinson then displayed a tri-fold exhibit poster board showing images the Westport Town Garden.

Mr. Levinson said that this is not a community garden, but will produce food for purchase by the local neighbors.

Atty. Anastasi asked who would be responsible for the soil testing. Ms. Sussman said that the soil analysis had already been done at UConn.

Council President McCarthy asked for clarification of the lease, which Mr. Levinson and Mr. Lavernoich then reviewed with him. Mr. Levinson said that this was not a choice between a farm or a development. Council President McCarthy asked if there was going to be a building on the property. Mr. Levinson said that there would be a single wide trailer that would be a farm stand. There would also be a full time gardener on the premises who would hire local teens to work in the garden. Council President McCarthy said that he was concerned that any profits go back into the Bridgeport project. Mr. Levinson said that he would be subsidizing this project and any profits would go back into the project.

Council President McCarthy asked if there was a time constraint. Mr. Levinson said that the soil does have some lead in it, and because of this it would be a cover crop like sunflowers to pull out the lead this year and next year it would be regular crops. If approval is delayed too long, the

GVI will not be able to plant the cover crop this year and would miss the spring planting season next year.

Council President McCarthy said that he would be happier if the Council Members from the district were present. Council Member Paoletto reiterated that both Council Member Blunt and Bonney had co-sponsored the proposal. Council Member Lyons said that she would feel more comfortable if Council Member Blunt and Bonney were present. Council President McCarthy said that the fact that if Council Member Blunt or Bonney were co-sponsors cleared up any hesitation on his part. Mr. Lavernoich said that there were still a number of approvals that were needed, such as P&Z, City Hall Committee, and one other group.

Council Member Walsh asked what the cost would be involved. Mr. Levinson said that it would be under \$25,000. The City will be moving the electrical and water to where it needs to be. Usually the fence is the most expensive item, but there is one on the site already.

Council Member Walsh asked if this parcel was the only parcel discussed. Mr. Lavernoich said that the group had approached the City about the site. It turned out Mr. Levinson knew Mr. Olson of POKO and Mr. Olsen is also in favor of this project.

Senator Gomes asked if the group had a farm on a brown field. Mr. Levinson said that his group had not done this yet, but would be interested.

Council Member Lyons said that she would feel comfortable with a five year limit and having the group come back for additional approval. Mr. Lavernoich said that the co-sponsors had created the language in the resolution. Mr. Levinson said that he was not sure that a five year agreement with a hard out would be productive.

Mr. Lavernoich said that the Mayor would have the option in five years, if the housing development was ready to go, the City would find another parcel. Council President McCarthy said that the issue really would be whether the Council makes the call in the five years.

Council Member McCarthy said that he completed understood the idea of the commitment for more than five years. He said that he felt that the City should find a better site for the garden so it could be long term. Mr. Lavernoich said that community gardens are not considered permanent. He said that parcels that were non-park, non-community properties would be long term gardens. Discussion followed. Council President McCarthy suggested the item being tabled.

Senator Gomes said that he appreciated the garden. He said that the District has been working on this project but he didn't want anything to block the proposed development.

**\*\* COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 92-10 PROPOSED LEASE AGREEMENT WITH GREEN VILLAGE INITIATIVE, INC. (GVI)**

**FOR THE CONTIGUOUS CITY OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1469  
RESERVOIR AVENUE AND 20 YAREMICH DRIVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**RECESS**

Council Member Paoletto announced a recess at 7:18 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:26 p.m.

**79-10 Proposed Amendment to the current Agreement between the Town of Stratford and the City of Bridgeport and their respective Water Pollution Control Authorities**

Atty. Anastasi said that this item has been tabled at the last go around because of questions. He said that he had checked into the various details that had been requested. He said that he relayed the information to Chairman Paoletto earlier. Atty. Anastasi said that the occupants of the building would be willing to contribute towards the cost. There is an alternative, but the developer is looking to bring the sewage line through Trumbull to Bridgeport to avoid ripping up newly paved roads.

Mr. Don Cinto of OWI came forward and was representing Robert Camillo, the developer. He stated that the property was owned by the doctors who occupy the building. Atty. Anastasi said that he had misunderstood this and thought that the doctors were leasing the building.

Council Member Paoletto said that he wanted to know why the doctors were not present. Atty. Anastasi said that it was not uncommon for property owners to have representatives go to the meeting. Council Member Paoletto said that he would like to know why the owners were not present. Mr. Cinto said that as a member of another zoning board, he said that the owners often are not present.

Council President McCarthy said that he appreciated that \$2,500 that was being offered, but did not think it was a major part of the project. Atty. Anastasi said that when the project was developed, the fact that the sewage would have to be linked into the Trumbull/Bridgeport sewer was not anticipated. Council Member Paoletto pointed out that this was a multi-million dollar project and someone made a major mistake. He said that Mr. Camillo had overstated the degree of completeness in terms of the building.

Council Member Lyons said that the building was constructed but there was a possibility of an additional medical property. She said that she had concerns about this allowing this second building to tap into the sewer line. Atty. Anastasi said that Bridgeport did not allow any additional tie ins from Stratford north of a particular street. The confusion arose because of unclear language in documents in Stratford. Because of this, Atty. Anastasi believes that this type of arrangement would only apply to this one parcel.

Atty. Anastasi said that both he and Ms. Norton sit on the WPCA board. The Council had passed an ordinance that does not allow the addition of any outside items like this without the full City Council approval.

Council Member Lyons said that there were other questions, but felt that Mr. Camillo should have been present.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 79-10 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CURRENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF STRATFORD AND THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT AND THEIR RESPECTIVE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITIES BECAUSE MR. CAMILLO WAS NOT ABLE TO BE PRESENT.**

Council Member Paoletto said that he would highly recommend that the owners attend the next Committee

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Paoletto said that speaking for himself, he said that he appreciated Mr. Cinto attending. He suggested that Mr. Cinto convey to Mr. Camillo that his previous attitude had not been appreciated and that he leave his attitude at the door.

Mr. Cinto asked when the next meeting would be. Council Member Paoletto said that it would be July 12th.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services