

**COMMON COUNCIL  
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT**

**MAY 28, 2013  
REGULAR MEETING**

ALL COMMON COUNCIL ACTIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING TO APPROVE EXPENDITURES AND CONTRACTS OR TO ACCEPT BIDS AND OTHER PROPOSALS REQUIRING THE EXPENDITURE OF CITY FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Mayor Moccia called the meeting to order at 8:02 p.m. and led the Assembly in reciting the Pledge of the Allegiance. He asked for a moment of silence in memory of the victims , and in support of, the survivors of the recent devastating tornado in Moore, OK.

**I. ROLL CALL**

At Roll Call the following Common Council members were present:

Council at Large:	Mr. Douglas Hempstead	Mr. Fred Bondi	Ms. Sarah Mann
	Ms. Anna Duleep	Mr. Warren Peña	
District A:	Mr. Matthew Miklave	Mr. David Watts	
District B:	Mr. Michael Geake		
District C:	Mr. Nicholas Kydes	Ms. Michelle Maggio	
District D:	Mr. Jerry Petrini	Mr. Bruce Kimmel	
District E:	Mr. David McCarthy	Mr. John Igneri	

Mayor Richard Moccia; Robert Maslan, Corporation Counsel; Ms. Erin Herring, City Clerk

At Roll Call there were fourteen (14) Common Council members present and one (1) absent (Mr. Hilliard).

**II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Regular Meeting:

May 14, 2013

**\*\* MR. WATTS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2013 AS PRESENTED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MS. DULEEP)**

### **III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mayor Moccia stated the rules for public participation.

*Public comments represent summarizations of comments made, unless otherwise noted.*

Mr. Raymond Dunlap, Council President, Washington Village – said that he was here with residents of Washington Village and said that they were here hoping and praying that the Common Council will pass the Washington Village/South Norwalk Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan. He said that the residents will be eligible to move back to Washington Village. He said that he had a list of residents who were in favor of the plan.

Dr. David Levinson, Norwalk Community College, Mayor Moccia congratulated Dr. Levinson on Norwalk Community College's largest graduating class. Dr. Levinson said that he was here in support of the Washington Village/South Norwalk Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan. He said that he was the Chair of the Transformation Committee and they are very excited as Norwalk Community College is expanding educational opportunities for the residents. He said that they worked closely with the Norwalk Housing Authority and Norwalk Public Schools, because they want to bring everyone up to par in terms of education. They want to provide on-site tutorial opportunities to students and create a robust learning community. Dr. Levinson said that the College working with the residents can transform South Norwalk.

Mr. Adam Bovilsky, Human Relations and Fair Rent Director, City of Norwalk, spoke in support of the Washington Village/South Norwalk Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan. He talked about the affordable units that will be included in the project and said that they are critical to Norwalk reaching its 10% requirement. He described affordable housing as workforce housing and said that the income requirement is between \$61,000 and \$69,000. Mr. Bovilsky noted that 40% of City Hall employees live in Norwalk because they feel it is not affordable. He said that that is an indication of need for affordable housing in Norwalk.

Ms. Ganga Duleep, Norwalk resident so that no one disputes that the people of Washington Village need new housing and educational opportunities, or that workers need affordable housing. She said that what is of concern to a great number of Norwalk residents is that this project looks to public funds. She said that if they insist on building this in a flood plain, they do not stand a chance of getting funding. She said that there is talk that housing can be placed any place in Norwalk. Ms. Duleep said that if the City insists on moving forward, she does not think they will get the money for the project.

Mr. Chris Jachino, Family and Children's Agency, said that he works with families and individuals who live in Washington Village. He said that he has been involved in

facilitating focus groups with the residents and support has been very strong. He said that he feels it will be beneficial to if Norwalk Community College has a site there to offer educational opportunities to the residents. Mr. Jachino said that on behalf of the Family and Children's Agency they support the Washington Village/South Norwalk Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan. Mayor Moccia thanked Mr. Jachino for the services provided by the Agency.

Ms. Diane Cece, Olmstead Place asked if the Common Council is going to vote on the Washington Village/South Norwalk Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan that they consider imposing conditions of that approval that no affordable housing units are allowed off site. She also asked that they require the developer to look at alternative sites not in the flood plain.

There were no other speakers and public participation was closed.

#### **IV. MAYOR**

##### **RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

##### **RESIGNATIONS:**

There were no resignations announced this evening.

##### **APPOINTMENTS:**

There were no appointments made this evening.

##### **REAPPOINTMENTS:**

There were no reappointments announced this evening.

##### **MAYOR'S REMARKS**

Mayor Moccia stated that he would like to thank the City Clerk Ms. Herring and Mr. Watts for working together to get the City Seal that is placed in front of him in the Common Council Chambers. He also wanted to thank all the people of Rowayton and the people of Norwalk for Memorial Day Parades and more importantly to honor our Veterans who served. He said that he was very happy to see so many young people at the parades.

Mayor Moccia said that the Preservation Trust raised \$4 million to purchase the Hart Property. He thanked all those involved for preserving the beautiful open space. He also

wanted to congratulate all those involved in the Mentoring Program. He said they awarded \$70,000 in scholarships.

**V. COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

**A. GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Mr. Hempstead thanked all those who attended the Memorial Day parades and ceremonies and for showing our Veterans the respect they deserve. He said that it is our obligation to show our children that it is a day of remembrance. He announced that Mr. Hilliard was not present because he recently had minor surgery and is home recuperating. He noted that Mr. Hilliard is a Veteran.

**APPOINTMENTS**

There were no appointments made this evening.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

\*\* MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE FOLLOWING CONSENT CALENDAR:

VII.B.1, VII.B.2

**B. RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**1. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE “NORWALK RIVER ROWING” FOR THEIR USE OF SHADY BEACH FOR THEIR LIGHTHOUSE TO LIGHTHOUSE RACE TO BE HELD SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2013 FROM 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. SET UP TO TAKE PLACE SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2013 AT 6:30 AM. ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE 200.**

**2. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH N.E.O.N. INC. FOR THE USE OF NATHANIEL ELY GROUNDS FOR A SUMMER CAMP TO BE HELD JULY 1, 2013 THROUGH AUGUST 9, 2013 MONDAY – FRIDAY FROM 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM. ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE 100+.**

Mr. Miklave noted that he was a member of the Board of Directors for the Norwalk River Rowing, but does not feel voting on this item would be a conflict, since he is no longer a member.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**VI. REPORTS: DEPARTMENTS, BOARD AND COMMISSIONS**

**COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**B. RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**\*\* MR. PETRINI MOVED TO APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL PLANTING OF 26 TREES TO THE OYSTER SHELL PARK PROJECT. THE TREES AND CARE ARE BEING DONATED BY SOUTHGATE NURSERYMEN LLC IN MEMORY OF THE 26 INDIVIDUALS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN SANDY HOOK. A SMALL STONE PLAQUE WILL HOST THEIR NAMES**

Mr. Petrini explained that this item was discussed at their last Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs Committee meeting. He wanted this brought to the full Common Council due to what is being commemorated. He said that he was very honored over the significance of this magnificent contribution. Mr. Petrini said that Oyster Shell Park is gorgeous and has come a long way; it was an old land fill site that was transformed into a park.

Mayor Moccia said that this was a great gesture on the part of Southgate Nurserymen, LLC. He thanked Parks and Recreation for the development of Oyster Shell Park.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**A. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**\*\* MR. KYDES MOVED TO APPROVE WASHINGTON VILLAGE/SOUTH NORWALK CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS TRANSFORMATION PLAN**

Mr. Kydes described Washington Village and noted that it was built in 1941 and is the oldest public housing development in the State of Connecticut. He said that it has become obsolete and has a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood. He said that South Norwalk stands on the threshold of significant transformation.

Mr. Kydes said that the vision is of opportunity for all people of all incomes. Trinity Financial has a strong track record. He described the development phases, costs and funding. He said that there is a possibility they will get funding from the Hurricane Sandy fund.

Mr. Kydes said that the overall vision for the neighborhood is to capitalize on the assets and transform it into a diverse neighborhood. He said that the various unit types will be integrated into the total plan. He said that the site will be developed so that flooding will not be an issue; it is a well thought out plan. Mr. Kydes said that they will be seeking funding from the State and Federal Government. He encouraged everyone on the Common Council to support this project. He said that he and the Planning Committee took a walk through this area and said that it needs a tremendous amount of work.

Mr. Kydes said that the plans include improvements to Ryan Park, which will remain a park.

Mr. Hempstead said that this is a game changer for the City of Norwalk. It is something that has been developed over the past six years. Financing is going to be the real key. He said that this is one of the most important projects he has voted on in his 20 years on the Common Council.

Ms. Duleep said that financing is why this is a failed opportunity on the City's part. She suggested planning so that people are not affected by the same issues. She said that the recent changes made to the plan are inadequate. Ms. Duleep said that this needs to be built, but wishes more planning has been put into the design to be more progressive for flood mitigation and the types of financing.

Ms. Duleep said that she knows this has to be built and that this housing structure would be great if they were not getting money from the tax payers. She said that she would be more comfortable with the plan if she had a better idea of what has a realistic shot of getting funding. Ms. Duleep said that the plan is not as well thought out as it should be. She urged as the plan continues, that they think about re-building what they have and look at the trends as far as mitigation measures.

Mr. Kimmel said that after listening to comments for a number of months one would get the impression that no one would build anything near a river or ocean and that would be absurd. He said that the design has changed and the government is saying there are ways to build in a flood plain. He said that the experts have come up with a design for flood infrastructure improvements. Mr. Kimmel said that the flooding issues go beyond Washington Street. He said that he trusts the engineers and the architects.

Mr. Kimmel said that if they put this in another place in Norwalk, in a decade or so, there will be luxury condos in th location. He said that he does not like hearing that a great number of Norwalk residents do not like this. He said that the ones saying this are not residents of South Norwalk. He said that this project could be a game changer. It is great for the City and all precautions are being taken. Mr. Kimmel said that they are not going wily nily into this and that Mr. Kydes is right; this project will change the nature of South Norwalk and is a great deal for all residents.

Mr. Watts asked who are they to tell the folks of Washington Village that they do not deserve quality housing. He suggested looking at the infrastructure and said that anything the City decides to partner with will be better. Mr. Watts said that he supported this project. He said that it may not be perfect, but it is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Watts said that the residents are excited about what can be; he said that they are crying out for a better place to live.

Mr. Peña said that he fully support approval of this plan. It is a wonderful thing and is a tremendous opportunity for the City to reestablish a certain area of town that needs it. He thanked all the stakeholders that worked to bring this project to the Common Council.

Mr. Peña said that the living quarters need to be modernized. He thanked all who worked to make this happen.

Mr. McCarthy said that he supports this plan. He said that it was unfortunate that Mr. Hilliard was unable to attend this evening. He said that it was through discussions about this project that he got to know him.

Mr. McCarthy said that there have been comments made by people without practical knowledge and trying to drive another agenda that he does not agree with.

Mayor Moccia said that he received a call from Evonne Klein, State of Connecticut Department of Housing. She is going to Washington to lobby for additional funds for Hurricane Sandy remediation. He said that Mr. Sheehan has agreed to go to Washington with her.

Mayor Moccia asked Ms. Mayer, Deputy Director, Norwalk Housing Authority what would happen to residents if they spoke in opposition to this plan. Ms. Mayer said that nothing would happen to them; that would be against HUD regulations. Mayor Moccia asked Ms. Mayer if there was another site in Norwalk for this project. Ms. Mayer said that she was not aware of any other place.

Mayor Moccia said that there are some people that look for solutions where there is no problem. He said that Ryan Park is City of Norwalk property and is owned by the City of Norwalk; not a private group. Mayor Moccia said that in the discussions, they forgot about the people. He said that the kids are our obligation. This is one of the best plans he has ever been involved with. Mayor Moccia said that it is great that so many Common Council members from both sides of the aisle support this project. He said that if they do nothing, people will continue to live in substandard housing which will flood.

Mayor Moccia said that he hoped the Norwalk Housing Authority would consider putting aside units for transitional housing like at Fair Street or Liberation House.

Mr. Peña said that at some point, they have to trust the professionals.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH THIRTEEN (13) IN FAVOR (MR. HEMPSTEAD; MS. MAGGIO; MR. WATTS; MR. BONDI; MS. MANN; MR. PEÑA; MR. MIKLAVE; MR. GEAKE; MR. KYDES; MR. KIMMEL; MR. PETRINI; MR. IGNERI AND MR. MCCARTHY) AND ONE (1) VOTE IN OPPOSITION (MS. DULEEP)**

**MOTIONS POSTPONED TO A SPECIFIC DATE**

There were none.

**SUSPENSION OF RULES**

There were none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Erin Herring, City Clerk