

East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Strategic Plan



January 2010
Prepared for the East Side Neighborhood
Revitalization Zone Planning Committee

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East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Strategic Plan

The Honorable Bill Finch, Mayor, City of Bridgeport

City Council 2010

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The East Side NRZ Planning Committee adopted the NRZ Strategic Plan on January 13, 2010.

The City Council endorsed the Plan on May 3, 2010.



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DEDICATION

This Plan is dedicated to the memory of Anthony Ball, East Side NRZ Facilitator, who initiated this NRZ process and gave vision and hope to the neighborhood. Those who were involved in this process were saddened by his premature death. As we completed the work he started, we all found that his spirit guided us through this project.

EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLAN

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I. Purpose and Background of NRZ Strategy

City of Bridgeport officials and East Side neighborhood stakeholders joined together in 2005 to begin the development of this NRZ Strategic Plan as a mechanism for revitalizing the East Side, a neighborhood that possesses significant opportunities but also faces significant challenges. Neighborhood and City leaders agreed that the Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Process, established by the CT General Assembly in 1995, offered the appropriate vehicle through which a partnership could be forged to stabilize and improve the neighborhood. Through this process, various stakeholders (residents, businesses, non-profit organizations, community groups and City officials) were able to gain a voice in determining priorities and developing a plan of action for revitalizing the neighborhood.

The NRZ planning process officially begins with the adoption of a municipal resolution establishing the NRZ and creating the boundaries for that NRZ. The City of Bridgeport adopted a resolution endorsing the concept of Neighborhood Revitalization Zones on May 16, 1996. The City Council then adopted a resolution establishing the East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone and its boundaries on February 5, 2007. (Resolution #278-05. See appendix).

While the State legislation created a mechanism for City and neighborhood leaders to work together creatively, there was no specific provision for funding of projects or programs identified within the NRZ Strategic Plan. The East Side neighborhood has received a variety of federal, state and local funds for revitalization projects in the past and is expected to continue receiving such funding in the future, as available. The NRZ Strategic Plan should not be viewed as one that abandons past revitalization efforts to start anew. Instead, it should be viewed as a “road map” to build on these efforts and to help guide limited resources towards the successful revitalization of the East Side neighborhood.

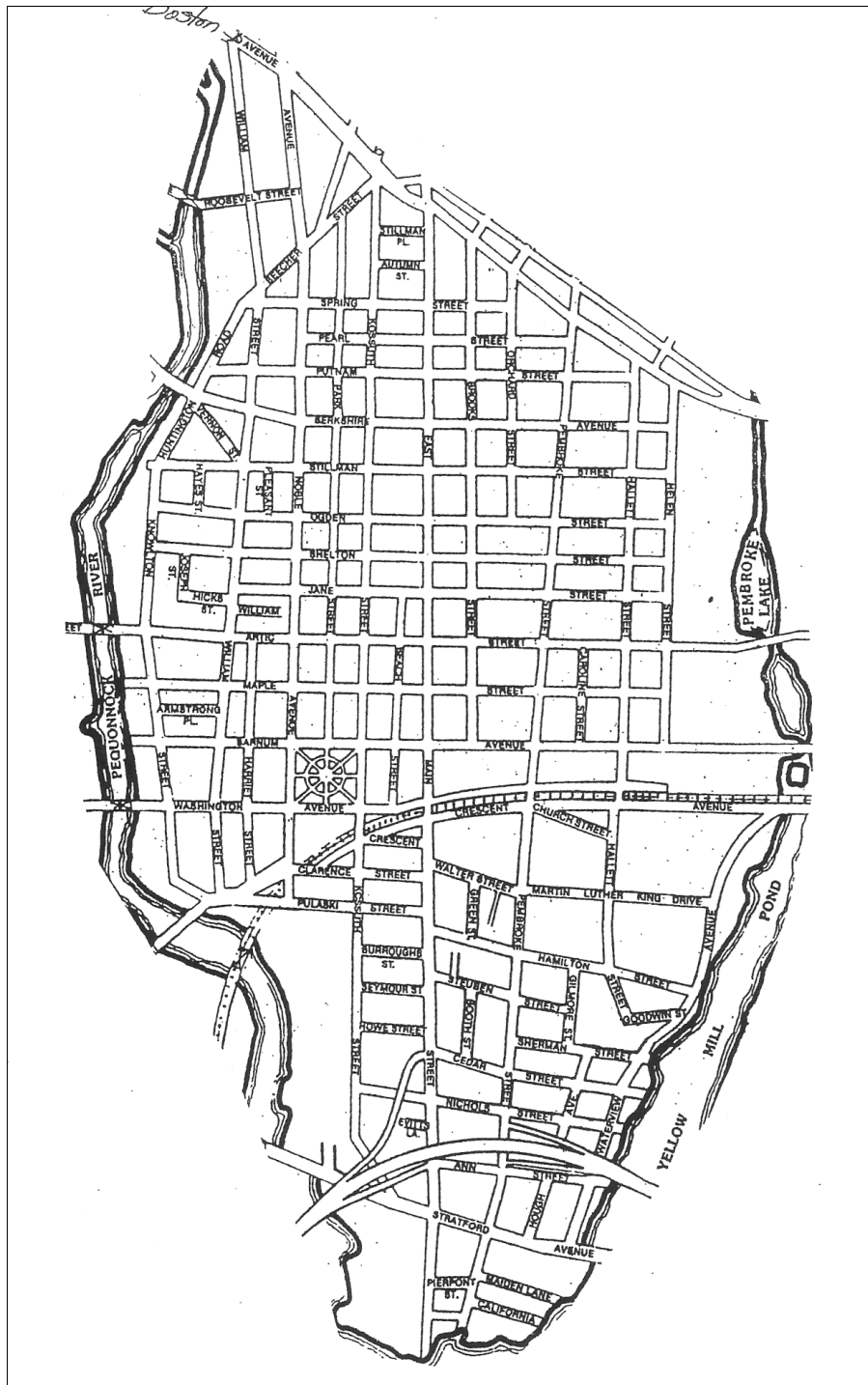
In addition to creating a strategic approach to revitalizing the neighborhood, there are specific tools the legislation established to assist in the revitalization process. Upon adoption of the NRZ strategic plan:

- the NRZ may request a waiver of state and local environmental, health and safety codes and other regulations that have been identified in the strategic plan as barriers to neighborhood development;
- the NRZ may recommend that the Mayor enter into tax agreements and allocate municipal funds to achieve the purposes of the plan;
- the NRZ may petition the judicial branch (local superior court) for appointment of a receiver of the rents for any deteriorated property;
- municipal corporations may be authorized, in accordance with established procedures, to take abandoned or blighted property in an NRZ, through eminent domain.

a. NRZ Neighborhood Boundaries

The detailed boundaries for the East Side NRZ are contained in the City’s February 2007 resolution, a copy of which is contained in the appendix to this

Plan. The boundary map is provided below. In summary, the boundaries include:
Blocks 800 to 864; 1600-1665, 1668, 1700-1777, 1802, 1804, and 1808.
Census Tracts : 0735, 0736, 0738, 0739, and 0740



EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ZONE BOUNDARIES

b. East Side NRZ Strategic Planning Process

The first community meeting involving East Side stakeholders was convened on Tuesday, September 27, 2005 at Luis Munoz Marin School. Approximately 70 people attended the session, which was facilitated by NRZ Consultant Tony Ball. To formalize the partnership of local stakeholders, the East Side NRZ process has been overseen by the NRZ Planning Committee, which had broad representation of each stakeholder group.

The East Side NRZ met on a monthly basis throughout the planning process. The meeting format was designed to allow all stakeholders the opportunity to participate and to identify issues they felt needed to be addressed in the revitalization strategy. Decision-making was achieved predominantly through consensus-shaping, and meetings were kept relatively informal to encourage participation even by those who were able to attend only a few of the meetings. The East Side NRZ Bylaws are included as an Appendix to this Plan. These Bylaws were adopted by the East Side NRZ Planning Committee on February 8, 2006.

SUBCOMMITTEES

The NRZ formed the following subcommittees to carry out its mission:

Housing Subcommittee (affordability, new construction; anti-blight, predatory lending), Chairman: Keith Cryan

Infrastructure Subcommittee (sidewalks, streets, traffic patterns, gateways, streetscapes, parking, bridges (Congress Street Bridge) and utilities - Records of meetings unavailable.

Economic Development Subcommittee (small businesses, job creation and retention, Steel Point), Chairman: Thomas Corso

Services Subcommittee (Public safety, education, public transportation, child care, health), Chairman: Ludwig Spinelli

Zoning Subcommittee - Records of meetings unavailable.

These subcommittees met regularly from 2005 to 2006. While there were no final reports issued by the subcommittees, minutes from the subcommittee meetings provided guidance and direction to the NRZ strategy throughout the planning process. Much of the work of subcommittee members was crucial to the design of the Community Charrette and the Neighborhood Workshop, as well as the Final Plan. Subcommittee recommendations have been referenced in various parts of this Plan, where appropriate.

CHARRETTE

One of the most significant early initiatives of the East Side NRZ was to hold a Community Design Charrette, a community meeting focused on addressing design issues in the neighborhood revitalization process. Eight design professionals (architects, landscape architects and engineers) provided technical assistance to small group sessions that were focused on design themes for three distinct sections of the neighborhood (waterfront/Knowlton Street, Upper East Side industrial area, and the Lower East Side) . The charrette was conducted as a weekend-long event from May 5 to May 7, 2006 at two local East Side schools (Garfield School and the Luis Munoz Marin School).

The neighborhood charrette was an intensive, open and inclusive process in which all community stakeholders came together to help visualize change for the neighborhood. Nearly 200 residents, businesspeople, City officials and institutional representatives provided input on the designs and plans they considered appropriate for the East Side. The event was supported by the City of Bridgeport and numerous businesses interested in the revitalization of the East Side. Several important areas of concentration began to emerge from that charrette:

1. Cleaning up and beautifying the East Side
2. Providing increased public access to and better use of the waterfront
3. Making Streetscape and Gateway Improvements
4. Improving industrial areas and creating residential buffers
5. Promoting the establishment of a new East Bridgeport Train Station

CONSULTANT SUPPORT

Over the subsequent years, the NRZ Planning Committee and its subcommittees continued to meet to address the various issues that had been identified through the charrette process. Unfortunately, the momentum of the NRZ process suffered when NRZ consultant Tony Ball passed away prematurely in 2007.

In 2008, the City secured funding to hire a team of consultants to assist the Planning Committee in completing the East Side NRZ Strategic Plan (Killeen Partners LLC; PRE/View Landscape Architects; and David Barbour Architects). The consultant team familiarized themselves with the work that had been completed, conducted additional assessments, and began formulating the strategy that could bring the various pieces of the neighborhood plan together.

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOP

To reenergize the NRZ process, a Neighborhood Workshop was conducted at the Achievement First Bridgeport Academy on March 14, 2009. The session enabled neighborhood stakeholders to review the elements of the NRZ strategy and to help rank the relative importance of the various plans under consideration. With approximately sixty-five (65) people in attendance, there was clear indication of support for the continued development of an NRZ Strategic Plan for the East Side. Participants vocalized their priorities for the NRZ Strategy. The Consultant team met with the NRZ Planning Committee in May 2009 to validate the reported results of the workshop and to receive further guidance on the priorities for the Plan.



Residents, businesspeople, non-profit organization representatives and other neighborhood leaders reviewed the various projects under consideration and ranked them in order of importance. Reports were given from each of the discussion groups.

II. COMMUNITY PROFILE: Neighborhood Assessment and Profile

This section assesses the various neighborhood conditions that most directly affect a successful Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Strategic Plan. Included are population and housing profiles, neighborhood assets, and overall condition assessments, as well as an identification of opportunities available to the neighborhood. This section does not attempt to be an exhaustive statistical study of the East Side. Instead, it identifies major neighborhood characteristics and trends that must be recognized in the revitalization plan.

1. Demographic and Economic Trends

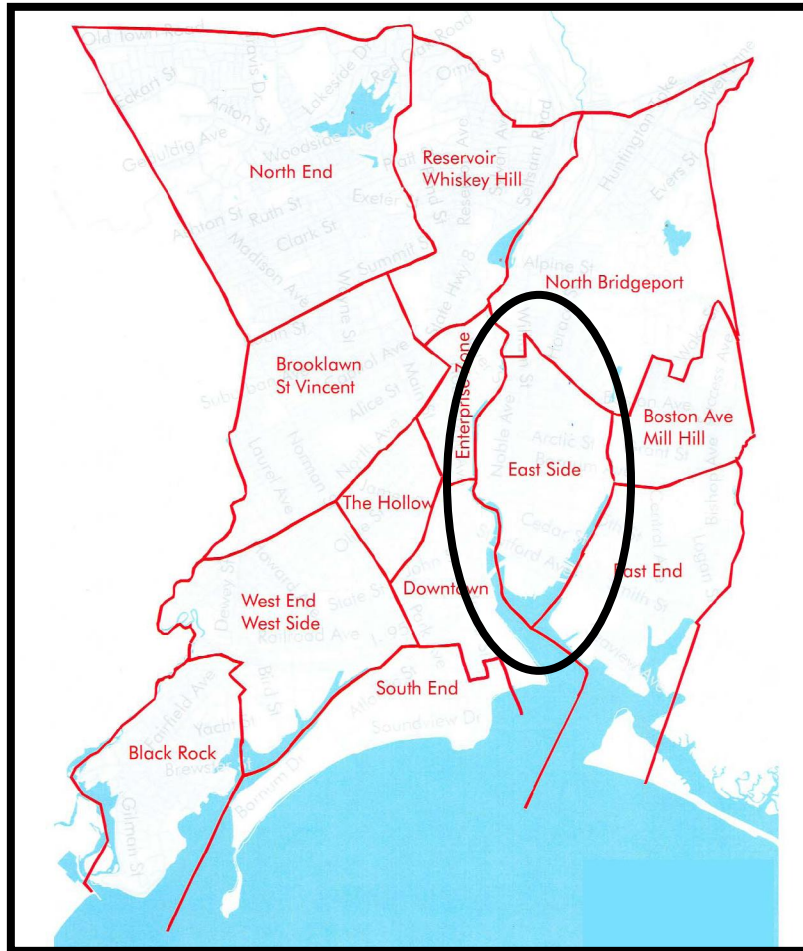
a. Neighborhood Boundaries, Census Tracts

The East Side is one of eleven residential neighborhoods in Bridgeport, strategically located adjacent to Downtown and the Enterprise Zone. The East End neighborhood, located to the East, completed an NRZ Planning Process in recent years as well. As noted earlier, the East Side Neighborhood was composed of five Census Tracts in the 2000 U.S Census: 735, 736, 738, 739, and 740.

Since the next official U.S. Census will not be taken until 2010, after the scheduled completion of this planning process, this study will use readily available public estimates of current population and housing characteristics at the zip code level for comparative purposes. The boundaries of Zip Code 06608 closely resemble the boundaries of the East Side neighborhood (The 2000 population count for the five census tracts was 13,095, while the 2000 population count for zip code 06608 was 13,400). Data reported here are from the 2000 U.S. Census unless otherwise noted. Sources for recent population estimates and projections include The Bridgeport Master Plan of Conservation and Development 2008, "Bridgeport 2020: A Vision for the Future" prepared by BJB Planning, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc. (CERC) 2009 and City-Data.com.

The East Side covers a land area of approximately 1.684 square miles. Population Density in the neighborhood is high (urban), though it is slightly lower than for the City as a whole: 7,971 people per square mile in the East Side compared to 8,721 people per square mile for the City of Bridgeport. Existing development patterns show an infrastructure that is designed to support a higher density pattern. The lower density is due to high levels of vacancy that are discussed later.

Politically, the East Side neighborhood is contained within City Council District 137.



Map illustrating Neighborhoods of Bridgeport, Connecticut
(East Side is highlighted)

Source: City Master Plan, BJB Planning.

b. Population Characteristics and Trends

There were 13,095 people living in the East Side in 2000, a decline of 4,379 persons from the neighborhood’s population in 1990 - a total reduction of 25% in a ten year period! The major cause of decline was associated with the demolition of Father Panik Village and the clearing of the Steel Point Redevelopment Area, both of which were located in the lower East Side (Tract 740).

Recent estimates of population for the East Side (Zip Code 06608) show that the population has stabilized in the last seven years and is starting to grow once again. The next chart shows that the estimated East Side population for 2007 is 13,423, a meaningful increase of 2.5% since the 2000 Census. The City population was estimated to decrease 1.9 % by City-Data.com. The City’s recent Plan of Conservation and Development also showed a similar population decline. Meanwhile, CERC estimates Bridgeport’s population at 144,515, an increase of

3.6%. CERC also projects City growth for the next five years at an annual rate of .4%.

Estimated population
2007
East Side, Bridgeport, CT

	East Side	% Change	Bridgeport	% Change
Total Population 2000	13,095	-25%	139,342	-1.5%
Total Population 2007	13,423	+2.5%	136,695	-1.9%

This increase in total East Side population is no doubt a result of significant efforts to construct new infill housing within the neighborhood and to rehabilitate housing stock that had been previously vacant. A stable population base will be an important factor in the neighborhood’s overall revitalization.

At a statewide level, Connecticut’s population of just over 3.4 million in 2000 was estimated to increase almost 3% for the same period.

The East Side has played an historic role for new immigrants, and that role continues to this day. The East Side population is predominantly characterized as Hispanic or Latino (67% of the population), followed by non-Hispanic Black (24%), White non-Hispanic (6%) and Asian (3%). Within the Latino population, an increasing number of residents are recent arrivals from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Central and South America, as opposed to Puerto Rico. Approximately 15% of the East Side residents were foreign-born as of 2000.

The population of the East Side is considerably younger, on average, than residents of the City of Bridgeport and the State of Connecticut as a whole. In 2000, the median age for the East Side population was 25, compared to 31.4 for the City as a whole and 37.4 for the State.

Race, Ethnicity
2000
East Side, Bridgeport, CT

	East Side	%	Bridgeport	%
White	4,399	33.59	63,018	45.2
Black	3,308	25.26	42,478	30.4
Amer. Indian/Eskimo	21	0.16	59	0.3
Asian	189	0.67	4492	3.2
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0	59	0.1
Other	4,081	30.68	20,519	14.7
Multi-Racial *	1,097	8.4	8,477	6.1
Hispanic **	8,711	66.52	44,568	31.9

** Multi-Racial is defined as persons having identified two or more races as a person's racial background in response to the U.S. Census.*

***Hispanic is defined as being an ancestry or origin rather than a race. Persons who identified themselves as Hispanic also needed to identify a racial background in the U.S. Census.*

c. Household Characteristics

As of 2000, there were 4,018 households in the East Side, with an average of 3.26 persons per household, higher than the citywide household average of 2.7 persons. This also represented a slight increase in the East Side average household size of 3.23 persons in 1990.

The largest household type in the East Side is single female-headed household with children (32%), followed by couples with children (20%) and couples without children (14%). For Bridgeport as a whole, single person households were dominant (29%) followed by couples without children (over 18%) and couples with children (under 18%). The largest East Side household type in 1990 was also single female-headed households with children (29%), followed by single persons (21%).

East Side Household Types Census Tracts 735, 736, 738, 739 & 740 Years 1990 - 2000						
	2000	%	Bridgeport	%	1990	%
# Households	4018		50,305		5408	
Ave. Persons per Household	3.26		2.7		3.23	
Household Type:						
Single Persons	783	12	14,568	28.9	1165	21.4
Couple with Children	735	19.8	8,984	17.9	1136	20.1
Couple without Children	497	13.5	9,172	18.2	655	11.9
Single Male with Children	189	0.8	1,482	2.9	345	11
Single Female with Children	1061	31.8	7,346	14.6	1516	29.2
Grandparents with Children	309		1,757		N/A	

d. Household Income

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, median family income (MFI) in each East Side Census Tract was substantially lower than in both Bridgeport (\$39,571) and Fairfield County (\$77,690):

Census Tract	735	736	738	739	740
MFI (\$)	26,338	19,464	19,674	24,583	25,625

More than a third (34.1%) of East Side households was below the poverty level, according to the 2000 Census, compared to a 7.9% poverty rate in the state and a 6.9% rate in Fairfield County.

Recent estimates suggest that income levels in the East Side continue to trail significantly behind income levels for the City and for the State as a whole. Estimated median household income in 2007 was \$44,216 for the City of Bridgeport compared to \$65,967 for the State of Connecticut. Median household income in the East Side for the same period was just \$27,586 or 62% of City income levels and 42% of State income levels.

e. Social Issues

The Services Subcommittee met on several occasions and identified the following issues for consideration in the NRZ Strategic Plan:

1. Public Safety Issues and Community Policing (Fire and Police) - These discussions focused on the need for block watches and close coordination with the Fire and Police Departments. The Committee specifically raised the concern that the current inoperable condition of the Congress Street Bridge (stuck in an open position) has affected service levels for the East Side. Public safety vehicles must take alternate routes that increase response time considerably. There is also a concern that East Side businesses have been harmed since this direct connection with downtown was severed.
2. After School Activities and Youth Recreational Needs–The Committee believed that the lack of quality youth activities in the neighborhood has increased the likelihood that youngsters would become involved in mischievous or even criminal activity. The Committee supports the creation of after school activities and youth recreation programs to provide an alternative to hanging around on a street corner.
3. Senior Needs and Resources - While the population of the East Side tends to be younger in general, it was noted that elderly residents here were more likely to defer maintenance on their properties due to income limitations. They were also more likely to leave a rental apartment vacant for periods of time in order to avoid costly repairs and the administrative responsibilities of being a landlord.
4. Single Parent Households - The high level of single parent households (predominantly single female with children, 31%) could represent a need for expanded social services, especially when coupled with other poverty indicators.
5. Job readiness - There is a real need to establish programs and to reinforce school curricula to help East Side students prepare themselves sufficiently for careers that will sustain them in future years.

The following statistics demonstrate the degree to which Spanish is spoken as the primary language in the household - 59% speak Spanish, while English is spoken only in 30% of the households.

Table A – Population & Race (continued)						
	2000	%	Bridgeport	%	1990	%
Language Spoken in Household:						
English	1197	29.9	28,034	55.7	522	44.1
Spanish	2484	58.9	13,749	27.3	631	53.3
Asian/Pacific Island	46	0.6	1,065	2.1	0	0
Indo-European	274	9.8	6,783	13.5	N/a	

2. Physical Development and Existing Conditions

A. Housing Stock and Current Conditions **(Blighted Buildings/Lots)**

Overview

As of 2000, there were a total of 4,577 dwelling units in the East Side neighborhood. The large majority of housing in the neighborhood is multi-family (67%) and located within buildings containing three to six units. Housing density in the East Side, at 2,717 dwelling units per square mile, is high and typical of an urbanized neighborhood in spite of the large sections of vacant land in the neighborhood.

Age of Housing Stock

The housing stock on the East Side is considerably older than average. Over 90% of the neighborhood's housing units were built before 1980 and, much of it dates back to the late 1800s. Only 11.4% of existing units were built in the last 20 years. Due to the age of the housing stock, there is a particular concern about the health hazards of lead poisoning since lead was commonly used in paint until 1978. These hazards are particularly acute for children who live in these homes and can become exposed to lead in paint that is chipping or peeling.

Building Quality/Condition

To determine overall condition and occupancy level of the East Side, the City hired an independent consultant to complete a comprehensive property inventory (CityScan). Conducted from March to April 2006, the inventory was a systematic review of all properties within the neighborhood, to determine current conditions and identify vacant and blighted properties. The following building conditions were reported:

Total Number of East Side Properties Scanned = 2,666

All Properties/Residential Use = 1,799 (67.5%)

All Properties/Mixed Use = 81 (3%)

All Properties/Commercial = 185 (7%)

All Properties/Other = 67 (2.5%)

Total Number of Vacant Lots = 534 (20%)

Total Number of Blighted Buildings = 93 (3.5%)

Blighted Buildings/ Residential Use = 77 (83%)

Total Number of At-Risk Buildings = 84 (3.2%)

At-Risk Buildings/ Residential Use = 69 (83%)

Total Number of Well-Maintained Buildings = 1,955 (73.3%)

While there are a number of dwellings that do not fully comply with local housing codes on the East Side, almost all dwellings possess basic modern facilities. Only 3% were identified as lacking plumbing or kitchen facilities in 2000.

The map on the next page illustrates the locations of vacant properties that were identified during the CityScan process (lots in yellow are City-owned). Concentrations occur in the industrial areas on the Upper East Side and extensively throughout the area cleared for the Steel Point redevelopment project. The map shows vacant properties scattered through virtually every part of the East Side. While almost 75% of the buildings inventoried were well-maintained, there are a significant number of properties that are either vacant, blighted or at risk. The concern is that if nothing is done to stem the decline, the blighted conditions will likely spread to other parts of the East Side neighborhood, making it increasingly more difficult to achieve a successful neighborhood revitalization.

Blighted Buildings/Lots

Blight Indicators (2005-2006)

Number of blighted property citations:	239
Number of City foreclosures:	2

As noted earlier, 83% of the properties that were identified as blighted or “at-risk” by CityScan were residential. While it was decided not to publish a map of the blighted properties located in the neighborhood, the large number of residential properties that are blighted is a potential threat to confidence levels for individuals and business owners who plan to invest in the neighborhood.

Housing Value

Between 2004 and 2006, the average sales prices on the East Side :

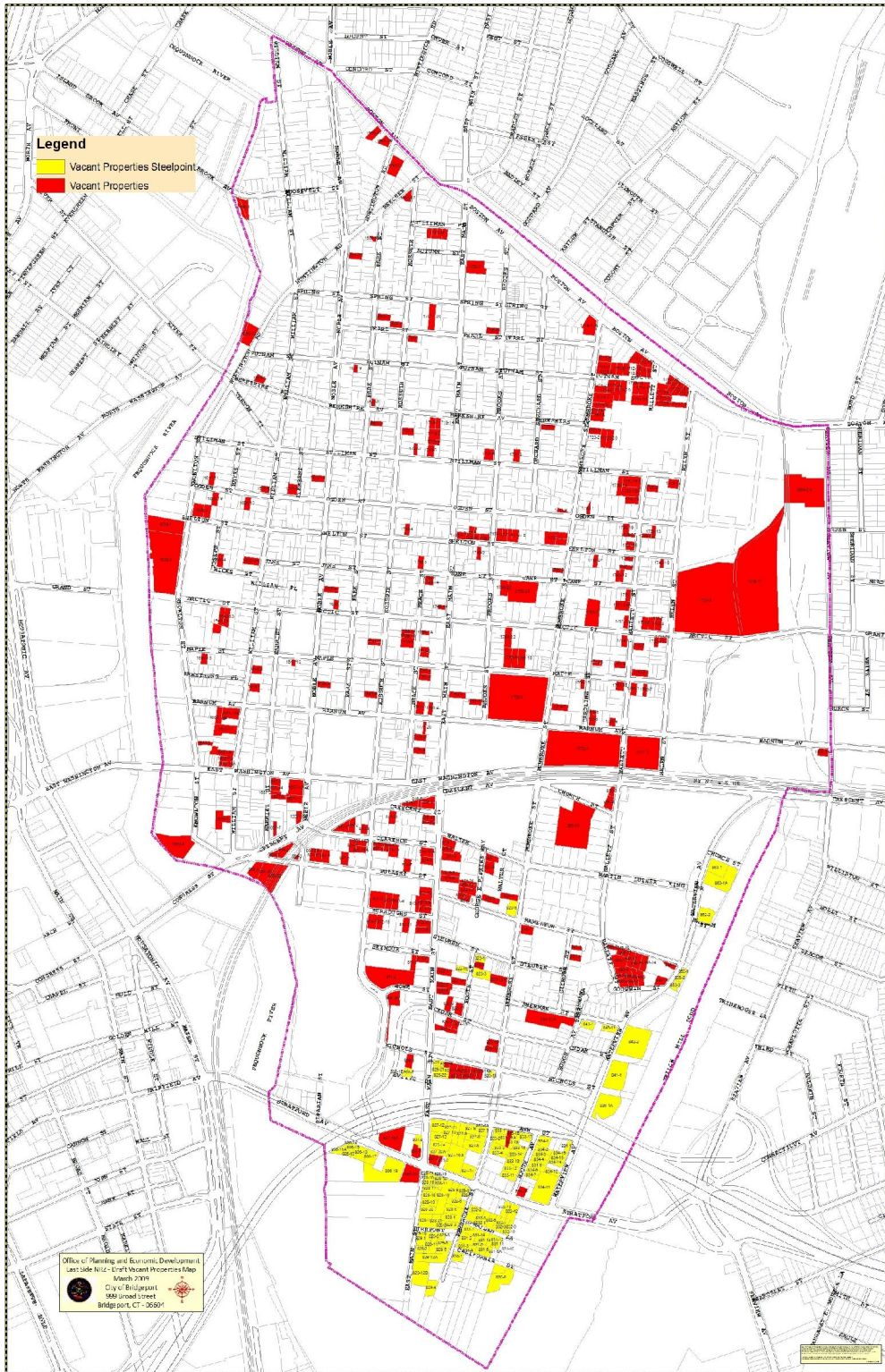
Single Family	\$150,578
Multi-family	\$240,510

Housing prices have fluctuated dramatically. By 2007, the median price of a home on the East Side was \$197,749. The recent economic downturn clearly had an impact, but its affect is turning around. By the beginning of 2009, housing prices dropped below \$100,000 as a result of high foreclosure rates. Fortunately, by the fall of 2009, median sales prices were rising above \$150,000 once again.

Ownership/ Investment

Levels of home ownership currently are very low on the East Side:

Owner-Occupied Units	20.5 %
Renter-Occupied Units	66.8 %



Vacant Properties on East Side.
Source: CityScan 2006, City of Bridgeport Planning Department

For the State as a whole, the average level for renter-occupied units is 33% --half that of the East Side. Low home ownership levels typically results in a less stable neighborhood. Aside from the value of their security deposit, renters are generally free to move from one address to another or from one neighborhood to another with little risk and little obligation (aside from social connections such as school and church). On the other hand, a property owner is invested in their home, and their equity is at stake (this includes down payment, principal payments, and investments in maintenance and property improvements). Homes that are owner-occupied are generally better maintained than renter-occupied units. In the extreme, absentee property owners (landlords) can defer maintenance of their properties for long periods of time, drawing income from rents while their properties continue to deteriorate. This condition is a significant threat to the revitalization of the East Side neighborhood.

Compatibility with surrounding Land Uses

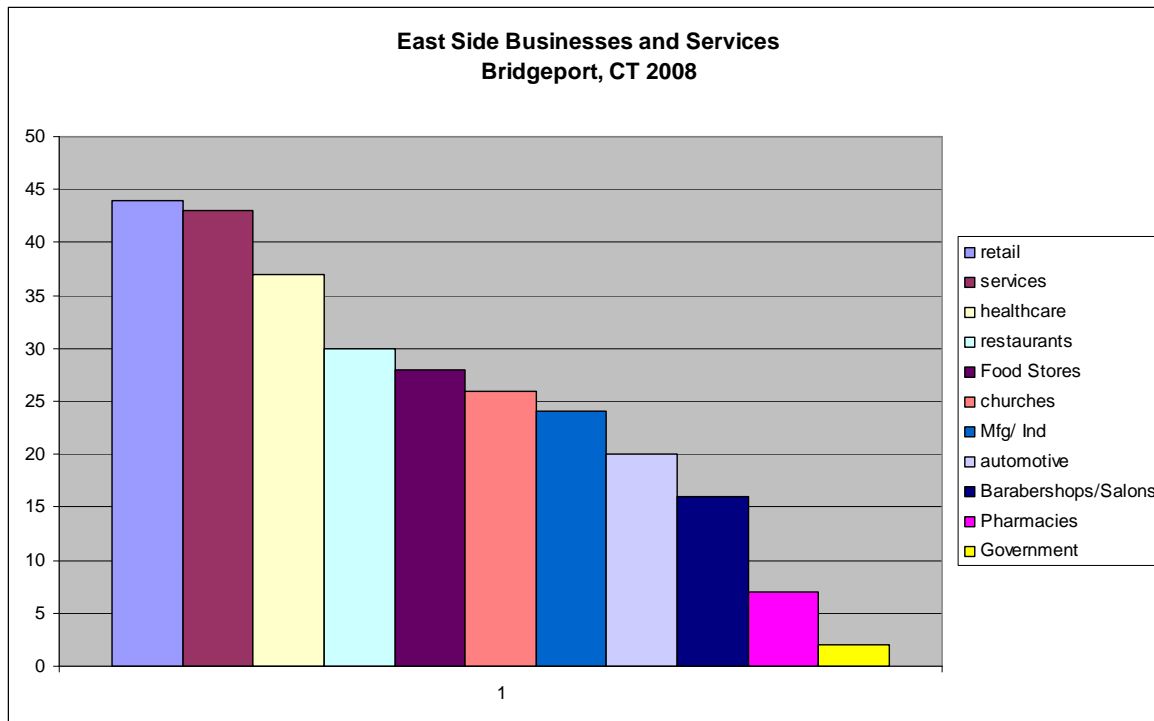
In some parts of the East Side, commercial and industrial uses have expanded and their operations have impacted the quality of adjacent residential areas. This has happened especially in sections of the neighborhood where deteriorated residential buildings have been razed, allowing for business expansion. This situation is also compounded by the fact that current zoning regulations enable a variety of commercial uses (Home offices are permitted and offices, retail sales and services are medical centers are allowed as Conditional or Special Permit Uses) within the R-C Residential Zone, the predominant zoning classification throughout the East Side.

During the charrette process, stakeholders identified industrial buildings and transportation features such as Interstate-95 as imposing to the neighborhood character of the East Side as well.

B. Business Profile and Conditions

The chart on the next page provides a summary of the approximately 300 businesses that were operating in the East Side as of 2008. Predominant business uses are retail uses (44), service uses (43), healthcare (37), restaurants (30) and food stores (28). Manufacturing or industrial uses have dropped dramatically over the year, which is evidenced by the extensive vacancies that can now be seen in the East Side. Only 24 industries were counted in 2008.

Retail uses are concentrated along East Main Street and Boston Avenue to the north. Convenience stores are scattered throughout the neighborhood.



Top industries in 06608 by the number of employees in 2005:

- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services: Janitorial Services (250-499 employees: 2 establishments, 5-9 employees: 1 establishment, 1-4 employees: 2 establishments)
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services: Security Guards and Patrol Services (500-999: 1)
- Health Care and Social Assistance: All Other Outpatient Care Centers (100-249: 1)
- Educational Services: Elementary and Secondary Schools (50-99: 1, 20-49: 1, 1-4: 1)
- Wholesale Trade: Home Furnishing Merchant Wholesalers (50-99: 1)
- Health Care and Social Assistance: Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers (20-49: 1, 10-19: 2)
- Construction: Finish Carpentry Contractors (20-49: 1, 10-19: 1)

Vacancy/Underutilization

The great majority of the 185 vacant commercial properties identified through the CityScan inventory process were industrial buildings of varying sizes. Stakeholders are concerned about large vacant industrial buildings located on the East Side, especially the Remgrit buildings located along Helen Street on the eastern edge of the Upper East Side. This complex occupies 16.7 acres and includes over 340,000 square feet of industrial floor space, constructed since 1915. Once productive employment centers, these industrial buildings are currently vacant. Until recently, Habitat

for Humanity used some of this industrial space for limited warehousing purposes, but it was recently relocated to a facility on Barnum Avenue. Some of these historic industrial buildings possess significant architectural character, most notably the Shot Tower Building.

Remgrit industrial building located below.
Shot Tower Building at right.



Local Economic Conditions

Unemployment levels in 2005 were at a very high 16.2% in the East Side compared to 10% for the City as a whole and approximately 6% for the County. The nation's recent economic downturn has most certainly had a devastating impact on neighborhoods such as the East Side.

According to the City's recent update to the Plan of Conservation and Development (2008), "The concentration of Bridgeport's residents in lower skilled occupations has resulted in declining real incomes over the past fifteen years." A comparison of average annual wages in 2005 for Bridgeport residents showed them to be significantly lower than for the Bridgeport-Norwalk-Stamford region (\$44,119 compared to \$68,746).

Incomes below poverty level: 16% for Bridgeport; 5 % for the Region.

The lack of significant economic generators or uses on the East Side threatens its ability to be self-sufficient. The revitalization strategy should seek to increase local business on the East Side and also enable residents to access employment opportunities within the City and region. An important element of that movement should focus on increased job training, particularly for specialized skills, and recruitment within the area. The Greater Bridgeport OIC would be a supportive partner in this area.

Economic Development Subcommittee

The Economic Development Subcommittee met on several occasions during the NRZ Planning Process. The Subcommittee reviewed 17 development projects under consideration for the East Side and helped rank priorities for this Plan. The group also kept abreast of the Steel Point redevelopment project (later called the Steelpointe Harbor Project) and informed the NRZ Planning Committee of areas for coordination. Areas of concern identified by the Subcommittee:

- Disposition of large vacant land parcels and industrial sites;
- Programs for job development/creation;
- East Main Street Façade Improvement Program;
- ACME United remediation of Knowlton Street property;
- The Asbestos Abatement program (Pomfret an example of “Best Practices”).

The Subcommittee recommended that the NRZ track job training and referrals of new jobs. One significant opportunity exists with the Steel Point redevelopment project. There was also a strong interest in supporting small businesses as a critical component of the revitalization strategy.

C. Infrastructure

a. Transportation - Fixed Rail

The East Side is bisected by the Connecticut Metro North/Amtrak railroad line which distinctly defines the Upper East Side and the Lower East Side. New Haven Metro North Line carries approximately 87 trains through Bridgeport daily, and Amtrak operates ten trains through the area daily. An additional 12 trains run along the Waterbury branch of Metro North daily.

b. Transportation - Roadways

Connecticut Turnpike (Governor John Davis Lodge Turnpike, I-95 crosses through the East Side neighborhood (length: .81 miles) in both directions (north-south). There are two entrance/exit ramps serving the neighborhood.

Boston Avenue (US Highway 1) forms the northern boundary of the East Side. Boston Avenue runs in an east-west direction (Length: 1.12 miles)

Stratford Avenue (State Highway 130) runs in an east-west direction (.77 miles)

East Main Street is the most significant local road serving the neighborhood. Measuring 1.57 miles in length, the north-south road serves as the main commercial corridor serving the East Side neighborhood, a role it has historically filled since the inception of the neighborhood.

In general, the neighborhood is accessible by a network of major and local roads and by an extensive system of bus routes managed by the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority.

One significant issue is the Congress Street Bridge, which connected the East Side neighborhood to the downtown area until the bridge became stuck in an open position over five years ago.



c. Transportation - Ferry Service

Year round ferry service operates from nearby downtown Bridgeport to Port Jefferson, Long Island. The service provided over 1.5 million passenger and vehicle trips in 2005.

d. Public Utilities

Due to an extensive network of public water lines (Aquarion Company of Bridgeport) and public sewer lines (maintained by the City of Bridgeport) that service all sections of the East Side neighborhood, the neighborhood is able to support large areas of high density development of various types (residential, commercial, manufacturing, mixed-use).

As with many older urban cities and neighborhoods throughout the country, the conditions of the existing infrastructure serving the East Side vary considerably. One of the biggest issues for Bridgeport is the fact that a majority of their storm and sanitary sewer systems are combined. While the City's two wastewater treatment plants are sufficient to handle sanitary sewer discharge demands, they cannot handle the combined flow of sanitary and stormwater discharges, resulting in occasional release of partially treated and disinfected wastes into local waterways and Long Island Sound. The City is currently engaged in a Phase II CSO elimination project to address the issue on a citywide basis.

e. Sidewalks and Bicycle Trails

There is an extensive system of sidewalks throughout the East Side, but many of the sidewalks in the neighborhood are in need of repair, as reported in the CityScan inventory. Currently, there are no specific bicycle trails within the neighborhood. Additionally, the roads are not marked in any way to designate bike routes, and there are no intersection improvements that would enhance bicycle crossings.

f. Home Utilities

The great majority of homes (72%) are heated with gas, 18% are heated with oil and approximately 6% are heated by electricity. Only 3% used bottled gas.

D. Architecture

In 1851, East Bridgeport was developed as a planned residential and manufacturing suburb radiating out from a five-acre central square (Washington Park). Largely influenced by the efforts of then-Mayor P.T. Barnum and his industrial acquaintances, much of the East Side's early layout is still evident in the neighborhood's existing street and development patterns.



Victorian homes located along a typical residential street in the East Side date back to the late 1800s.



High-style Victorian houses and churches flank all sides of Washington Park.

The map on the next page illustrates the location of inventoried historic structures throughout the East Side neighborhood. Historic structures are highlighted in gold. The great majority of historic properties are located in the Washington Park area and along East Main Street.

E. Neighborhood Resources/Assets

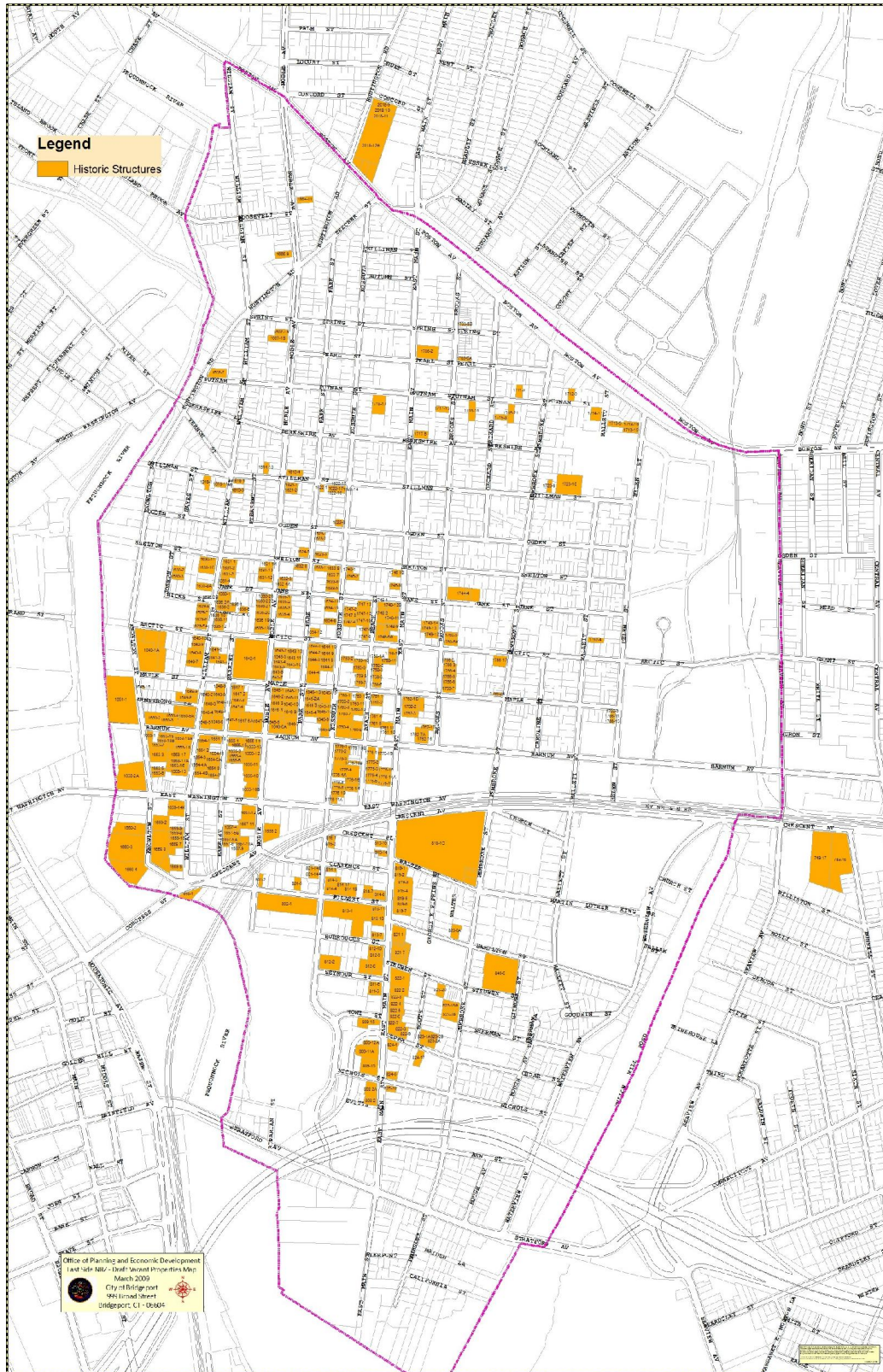
a. Human Resources

i. Health Services

Optimus Health Care, Inc. (formerly the Bridgeport Community Health Center) is located on Barnum Avenue. The nonprofit health center is the largest provider of primary health care services in Southwestern CT and has 12 service delivery sites located in the Cities of Bridgeport and Stamford, and the Town of Stratford. The Health Center operates a satellite office on East Main Street. The East Side neighborhood is located in close proximity to Bridgeport Hospital as well.

ii. Human Services

There are approximately eighteen organizations that provide a variety of social and support services to East Side residents, including Hall Neighborhood House and the McGivney Community Center and the Spanish American Development Association. There are a number of halfway houses and programs providing drug treatment in the East Side as well. Numerous social service agencies operating in Bridgeport provide a wide variety of social, educational and training services, however many of these agencies have limited resources with which to assist East Side residents. This situation has become particularly acute with the economic recession of 2008 to 2009, during which nonprofit organizations have found contributions dropping off significantly.



Historic structures Located within East Side Neighborhood; Source: City of Bridgeport Planning Department

The Hall Neighborhood House's main building is located at 52 George E. Pipkin's Way Hall. The organization offers a host of community resources and programs that service the demands and needs of the community, including:

- Early Childhood Education
- Youth Services, Counseling and College Prep
- After School Recreation
- Performing Arts, Music & Dance
- Senior Citizen Support Services
- Affordable Housing, Home Ownership Counseling
- Job Training and Entrepreneurial Development

As a settlement house, Hall Neighborhood House's mission is to provide quality human services to a diverse population of children and families and to develop a blueprint for financial stability, programmatic excellence and the creation of new initiatives to strengthen the organization and better serve the community.

The McGivney Community Center is a non-profit organization founded in 1992 by a group of concerned businessmen and community leaders. It was founded to provide youth with an educational "safe haven" from the dangers of the streets. The Center provides young people with After-School and Evening Programs, as well as a Summer Camp.

iii. Religious Institutions



Churches, synagogues and other religious organizations are an anchor of the East Side community. There are numerous denominations serving the neighborhood's diverse population.



Religious institutions are an important element of the social fabric of the East Side neighborhood. Over thirty separate churches and temples were identified in a 2008 survey of the neighborhood, including various Hispanic denominations, Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Pentecostal, and Russian Orthodox churches. These churches help promote communication throughout the community in the various languages of the community. They also provide a wide range of services to support the social health of the neighborhood (e.g. food banks, serving dinners, counseling, etc.). They often play an important role in promoting civic programs and neighborhood improvement projects as well.

iv. Education

Almost 54% of the adult East Side population has not completed high school. Only 28% have high school diplomas and, while 15% have taken some college classes, only 3.3% of the population possesses a college degree.

Statistics also demonstrate that many of the students from the East Side are ranking low in their studies. In 2006, only 5.42% of fourth graders and 7.90% of sixth graders have met Connecticut Mastery Test Goals.

Average SAT Scores for 2006 were also low for the East Side: Verbal (374) and Math (370).

Public Schools serving the East Side Community:

- Barnum & Waltersville Elementary School was recently completed on the lower East Side. The school replaces the two separate elementary schools as follows:
 - WALTERSVILLE SCHOOL (Students: 500; Location: 150 Hallett ST., Grades: PK - 08)
 - BARNUM SCHOOL (Students: 750; Location: 495 Waterview Avenue; Grades: PK - 08)
- Luis Muñoz Marin School (Students: 900; Location: 479 Helen Street, Grades: PK-08)
- Achievement First Bridgeport Academy; the public charter school began operations at the former Holy Rosary School on East Washington Avenue. In the last year, the school purchased the former Barnum School on Noble Avenue and Garfield School on Stillman Street. The Barnum School has become the Middle School, Grades 5-7, 232 students. The School is expected to convert the the Garfield School to its elementary school. They are expected to open kindergarten classes for 84 students by the Fall 2010. Prospective students must live in the East Side, the East End or the West End.
- Harding High School, located on Central Avenue in the East End serves the East Side neighborhood as well

F. Neighborhood Organizations and Activities

A number of community organizations, neighborhood groups and nonprofit organizations have been operating for years on the East Side. These groups are vital to the success of the neighborhood revitalization strategy since they focus leadership and available resources towards the improvement and growth of the neighborhood. Among these groups are:

- The East Side Community Council
- Washington Park Association
- East Main Street Revitalization Association (EMSRA)
- Lower East Side Development Corporation (LESDCO)
- Hall Neighborhood House
- Habitat for Humanity
- Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust
- McGivney Community Center

Each organization has demonstrated leadership in securing grants and identifying programs to address neighborhood issues, ranging from redevelopment projects to neighborhood cleanups and beautification programs.

G. Existing Land Use Profile and Patterns

1. Overview

Vacant land is the predominant land use in the East Side, accounting for over 26% of total land area in the neighborhood, followed closely by two-to-four family (multi-family) residential uses, which comprise almost 22% of the neighborhood. Industrial uses occupy just over 15% of the neighborhood's land area, and commercial uses account for about 10% of the land area.

Summary: While more detailed descriptions of each use are provided on the following pages, the following is a summary of current land uses in the East Side, as shown on the map of existing land uses shown on the next page:

- Single Family Residential Use (7.0%)
- Two-to-Four Family Residential Use (21.9%)
- Five + Family Residential Use (5.6%)
- Commercial Use (10.5%)
- Mixed Use (2.6%)
- Light Industrial Use (7.8%)
- Heavy Industrial Use (7.7%)
- Utility (.03%)
- Parks/Open Space/Cemeteries (2.6%)
- Institutional (7.8%)
- Vacant Land (26.4%)

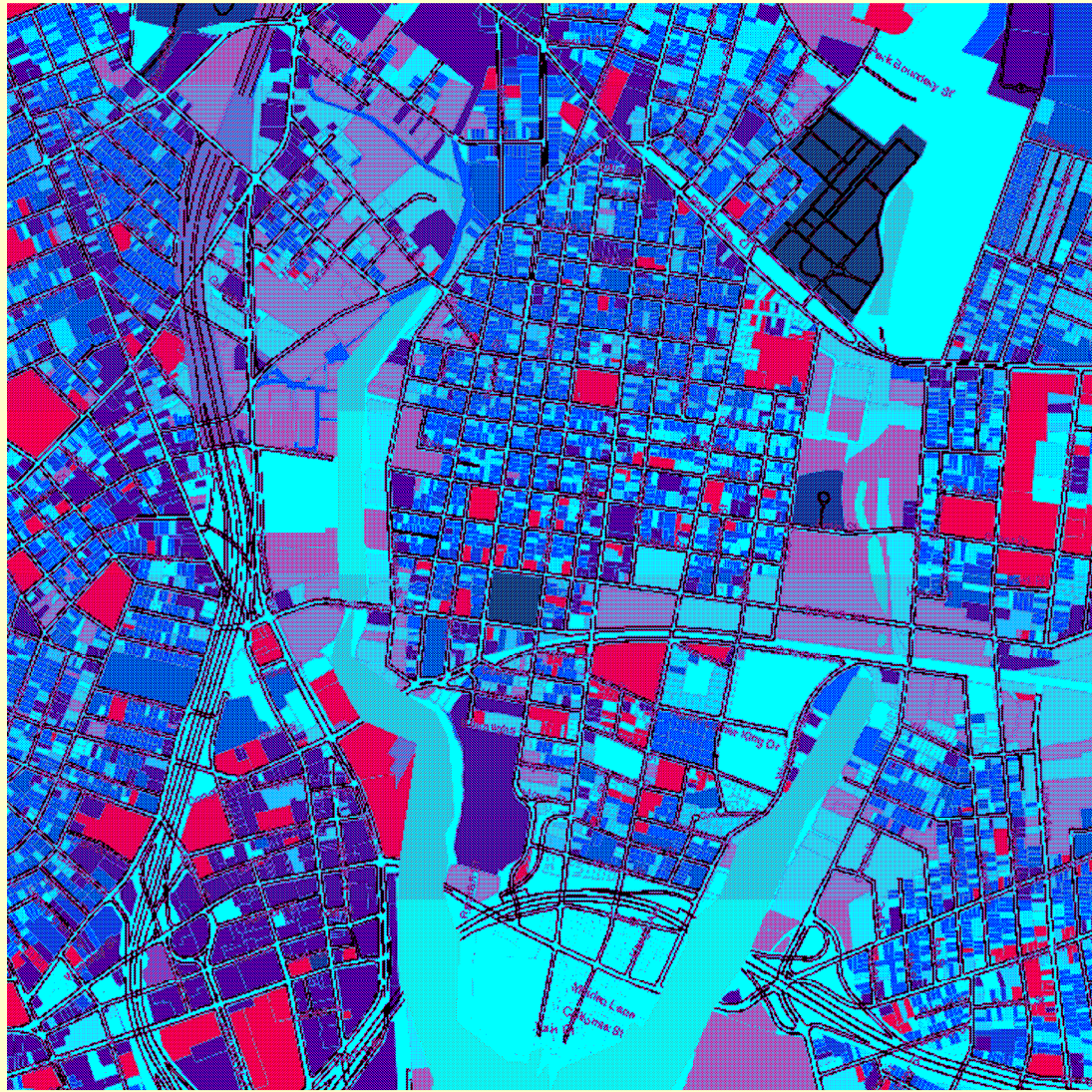
** Approximately 17.4% of the neighborhood is classified as Brownfields

2. Commercial

Commercial uses account for just over 10% of the developed land areas in the East Side. Commercial uses are concentrated along the East Main Street commercial corridor, along Boston Avenue, and along Knowlton Street. Commercial uses are mostly retail, grocery and convenience stores and service uses such as beauty parlors and nail salons.

The largest single piece of commercial property is the Shoreline Star property located on Kossuth Street, which is 16.13 acres in size. While it is the largest commercial property, it has been largely underutilized since the days it was used as a dog track. Today it used for Off Track Betting.

Existing Land Use, City of Bridgeport - Plan of Conservation and Development 2008



LEGEND - EXISTING LAND USE - East Side Neighborhood

Yellow	1 Family
Orange	2-4 Family
Red	5+ Family
Pink	Commercial
Purple	Mixed Use
Light Purple	Light Industrial
Dark Purple	Heavy Industrial
Grey	Utility
Green	Park/Open Space/Cemeteries
Blue	Institutional
White	Vacant
Light Blue	Water



-Colorful Bodegas line the Streets of the East Side... adding to the ethnic character and appeal of the neighborhood-

3. Industrial

Industrial uses are concentrated on the eastern edge of the Upper East Side, and currently along Knowlton Street. As noted from the CityScan results, a large number of industrial/business uses (185) are currently vacant. One of the largest employers in the neighborhood is the Prime Resources Corporation on Boston Avenue, employing 440.

4. Residential

Single family Residential uses are concentrated in the upper East Side area. On the lower East Side, single family residential uses are primarily located within residential redevelopment areas built over the last ten years to replace the previous Father Panik Housing Development.

5. Open Space/Parks

There is a relatively small amount of dedicated open space or parks currently located in the East Side (2.6% of the neighborhood and approximately 1.1% of the City's open space). The primary park serving the neighborhood is Washington Park, approximately five acres in size. There is also the waterfront park located along Yellow Mill Pond on Waterview Avenue (James Brown Park, Marin-Garfield Park, William Barnum Park and Friendship Park (across from Garfield School).

The City of Bridgeport officially recognizes and owns six Community Gardens within the Boundaries of the East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone. These properties were procured through financial assistance in the form of grants from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the City of

Bridgeport's Community Land Trust (BCLT) matching funds. The funds were further administered through the City's then Urban Green and Community Initiative.

In the event that the City needs to utilize said designated parcels for other uses in the public interest, the properties (s) will be substituted with like property (s) over the duration of the contractual period of 10 years.

The following properties are fall under the aforementioned classification:

122 Arctic Street
509 Arctic Street
749 Hallett Street
28 Stillman Street
617 Ogden Street

6. Current Development Controls and Regulations

A. LAND USE REGULATIONS: CURRENT ZONING MAP - PLANNING AND ZONING

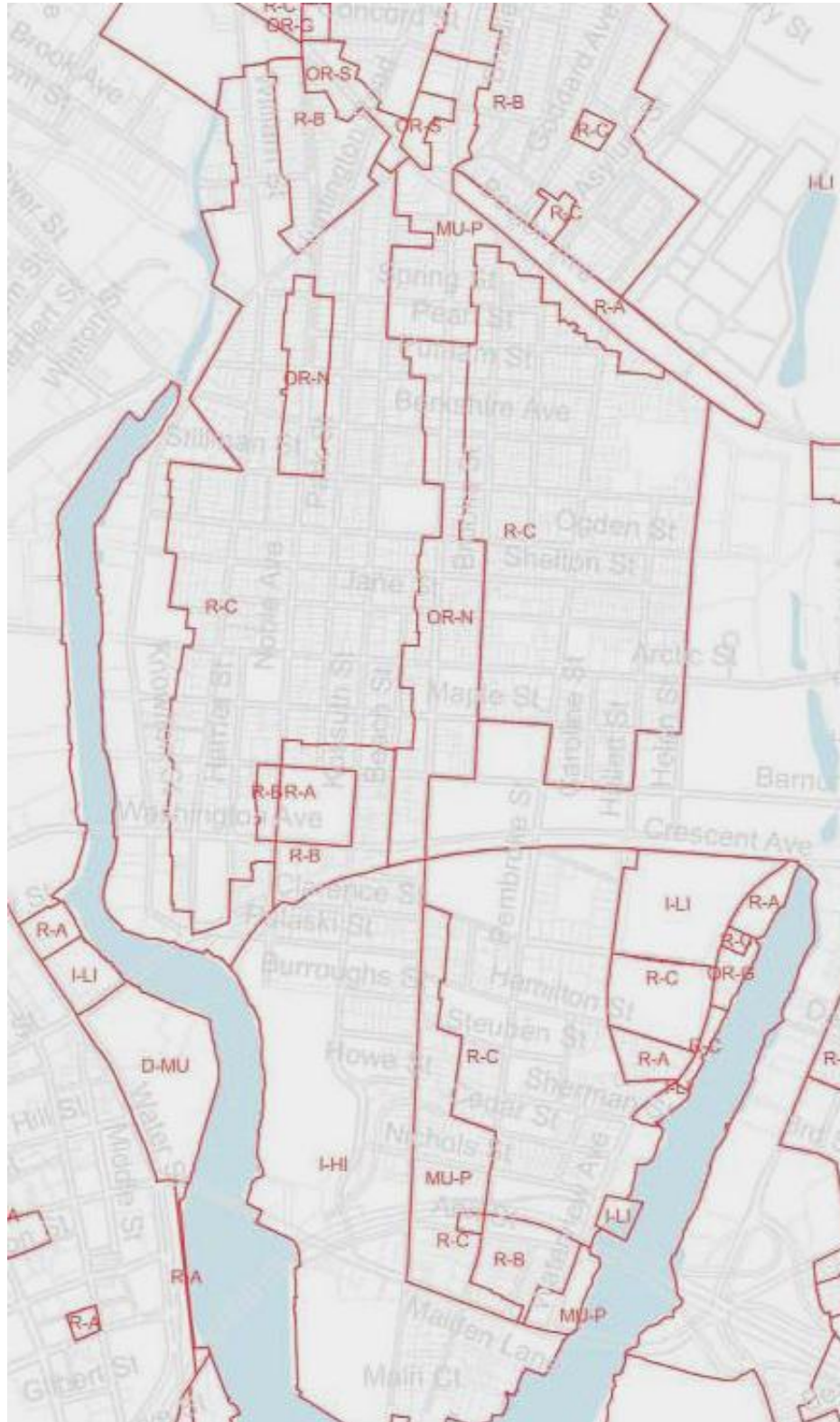
Current Zoning Districts - As noted earlier, the majority of the East Side is located within the R-C Residential High Density Zoning District. Other Zoning Districts within the East Side neighborhood (illustration next page):

1. OR-N (Office/Retail Neighborhood) - This is the zoning classification currently established for the majority of East Main Street in the Upper East Side and along upper Noble Avenue)
2. MU-P (Mixed Use Perimeter) - This zoning classification currently applies to East Main Street within the lower East Side and Boston Avenue around its intersection with East Main Street. The purpose of this zone is to promote mixed use development in between major industrial and commercial areas and residential neighborhoods.
3. I-HI (Heavy Industrial) - Land along the western shore of the East Side as well as the eastern edge of the Upper East Side are zoned Heavy Industrial. All of the waterfront property along the Pequonnock River is zoned Heavy Industrial, preventing the suitable use of this area for waterfront purposes.

B. CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS

The current Zoning Regulations were adopted in August 1996 and have been amended through July 2007.

Current Zoning Regulations restrict waterfront uses along the neighborhood's waterfront. Regulations for the R-C High Density Residential District allow residential development at a rate of 2700 sq. ft. per dwelling or up to 16 dwelling units per acre.



Current Zoning Map for East Side Neighborhood

C. COASTAL MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS/FLOOD PLAIN BOUNDARIES

The City's current Coastal Site Plan Review procedures are outlined in Article 14.3 and implement Sections 22a-105 through 22a-109 of the CT General Statutes. There are no specific additional local requirements for implementing the State's coastal policies. Flood hazard areas (100-Year Flood Boundary) are located along the western and eastern shores of the East Side neighborhood, and there is one additional low-lying area prone to flooding that is located between East Main Street, Boston Avenue, Stillman Street and Huntington Road.

D. CITY PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT 2008

The City Council and the City Planning and Zoning Commission recently adopted an updated Plan of Conservation and Development, which was prepared by Buckhurst Fish and Jacquemart PC, New York, NY. The Plan was prepared as a major rewrite to the existing Plan and was developed with significant input from the Community. The Citywide plan provided a great deal of direction for the development of the East Side NRZ Strategic Plan. In general, the closer the neighborhood can align itself to the development directions of the City as a whole, the more successful the revitalization strategy will be.

The Land Use Plan would encourage the creation of greenways and public access along the waterfront throughout the East Side neighborhood. The Land Use Plan also recommends increased flexibility within the current industrial areas along the waterfront to encourage mixed-used developments (residential, retail/commercial services and office uses).

Proposed Amendments to Zoning Map and Zoning Regulations

The proposed amendments to the Zoning Map and Zoning Regulations currently under consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission would help implement significant recommendations of the City's new Plan of Conservation and Development, including the following changes:

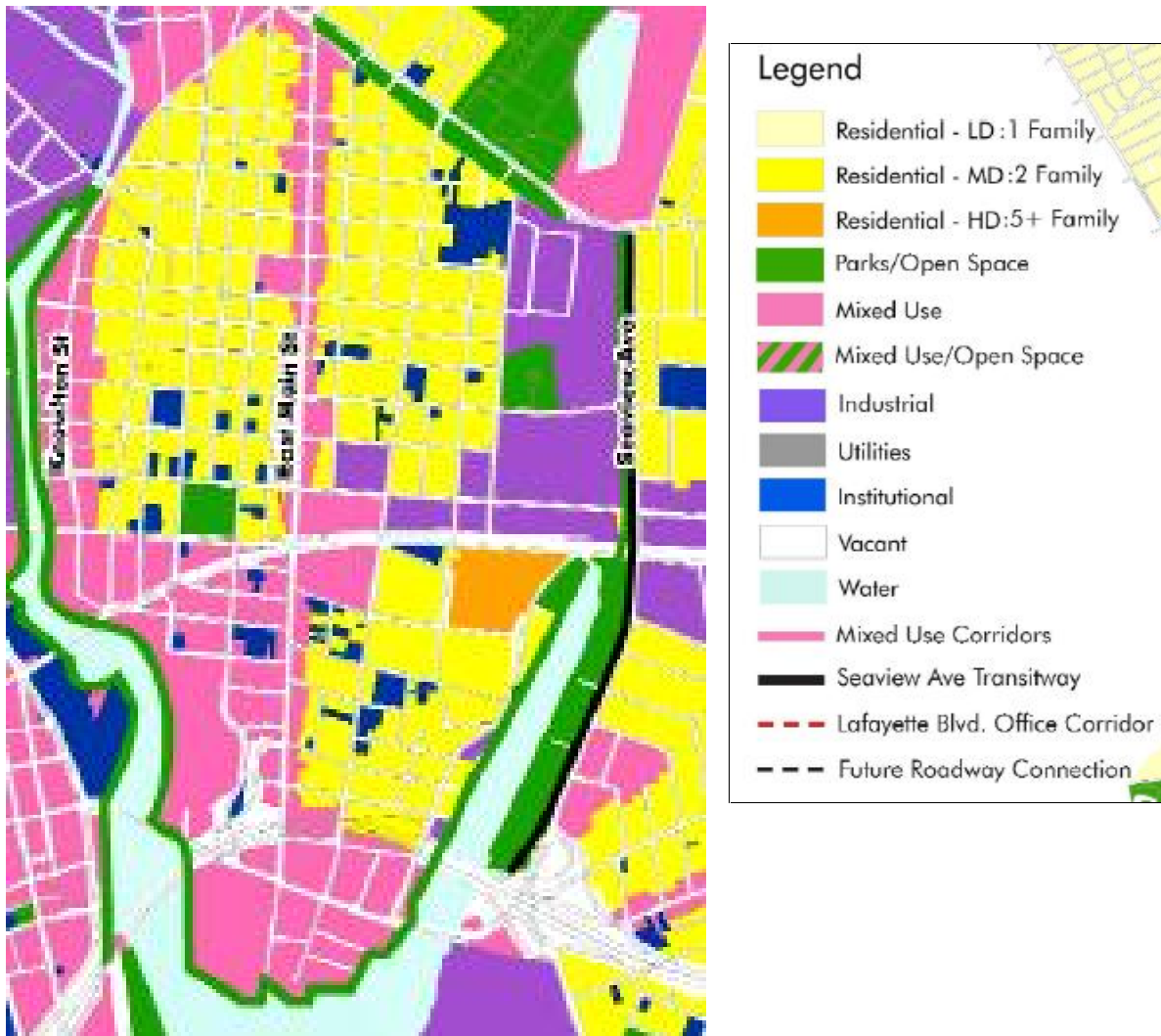
- Light Industrial Areas along the Pequonnock River would be replaced with Mixed Use/Light Industrial Zoning Districts and OR-G Districts (Office and Retail)
- Mixed Use - Perimeter Zones would be deleted from the zoning regulations.
- There are no significant changes within the residential zones.
- There are no significant changes within the industrial zones.

Impacts on Neighborhood Development

In the context of this NRZ Strategic Plan, the amendments to the City's Plan of Conservation and Development, Zoning Map, and Zoning Regulations should have a positive impact on the directions envisioned by the neighbor's stakeholders, especially with regard to waterfront development and access. The

City’s long-range plans also foresee the medical industry and related services as being an area of growth for the City over the next 10 to 20 years. That direction is seen as playing a positive role in the East Side’s revitalization as well.

Land Use Plan



2. HISTORIC DISTRICT REGULATIONS

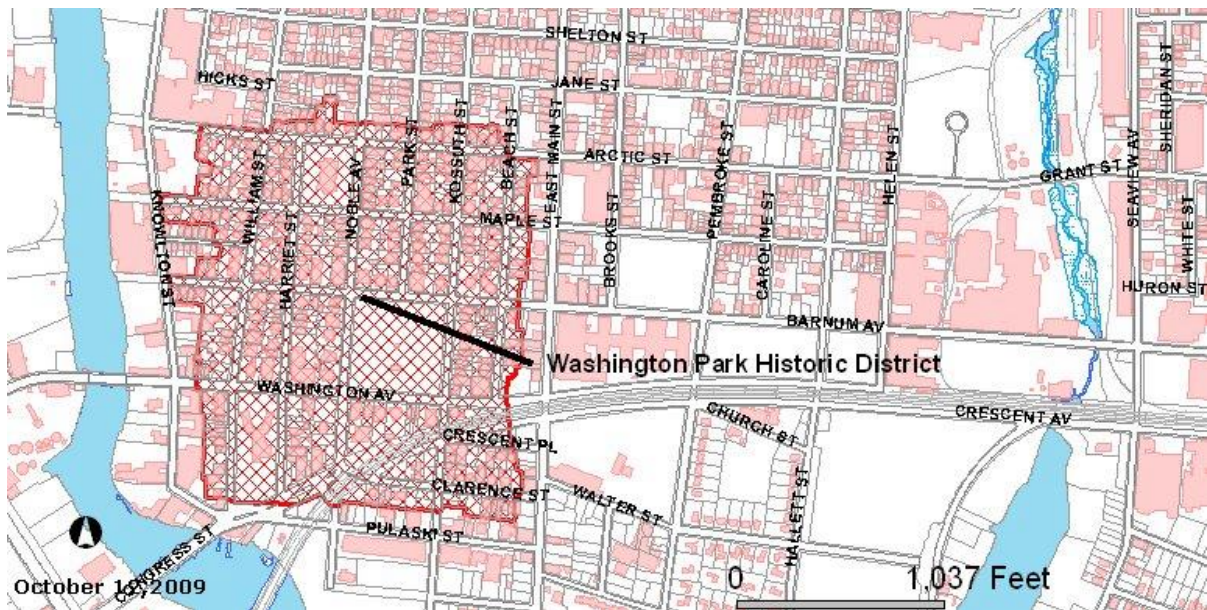
a. Local Historic District

Pembroke City Historic District; bounded by Crescent Avenue; East Main Street and Pulaski Street. The local historic district is adjacent to both the East Bridgeport Historic District and the East Main Street Historic District.

This is one of five (5) local historic districts. It is also located on the National Register of Historic Places

b. National Register of Historic Places

1. East Bridgeport Historic District - this area was designated in 1979 and includes approximately 250 buildings. The total area is 938 acres in size. Railroad Tracks, Beach, Arctic Street, and Knowlton Street.



2. East Main Street Historic District, Listed in 1985; 160 acres in size, includes 33 buildings.

Local and national historic districts can each play an important role in the revitalization strategy, but design is directly regulated in a local historic district (Pembroke City Historic District). Any proposed modification to a building within the local historic district must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission before a building permit can be obtained. The Commission must determine that proposed improvements, visible from the street or public right-of-way will not negatively affect the historic character of the building and property.

Listing on a National Register of Historic Places makes the property eligible for certain tax credits and grants, although many of the grant programs are available primarily to buildings that are open for public access and use. When historic funds are used for building improvements, the design must be approved by the State or Federal agencies, depending on the funding source.

III. REINVESTMENT/DEVELOPMENT CLIMATE IN THE EAST SIDE

Investment and reinvestment in the neighborhood are direct indicators of potential for revitalization of the neighborhood. There has been a significant level of reinvestment in the East Side over the years. The degree of success the East Side will have in achieving its full revitalization will depend largely on the degree to which property owners continue to make investments in their properties and in their neighborhood. The East Side NRZ effort has been underway since 2005, and its efforts have been bolstered by the individual investments of residents and business owners within the community. The nonprofit sector has played a lead role in these revitalization efforts and should be seen as a continuing force to rebuild the East Side as a viable neighborhood. Some substantial revitalization projects have already been completed within the neighborhood, and the revitalization strategy should be designed to build on the strength of these efforts. The following are some good examples of the kind of work that has been realized to date:



East Main Street Mews; 588-612 East Main Street. (Pictured at left, before; and after renovation at left, below). (Mixed-Use)

Conversion of 6 historic buildings (Victorian row structure) into 20 apartments and four retail stores. 16 of the 20 apartments were income restricted/affordable apartments for families whose incomes were below 60% of the Area Median Income. Four were market rate units. Project was completed in late 2007 with occupancy in early 2008.



1001-1007 East Main Street (Mixed-Use)

Anti-blight Action: Rehabilitation into four 3-bedroom units with restaurant on lower level (El Flamboyen Restaurant) September 2007

1131 Noble Avenue - Rehabilitation, four (4) dwelling units, private. \$400,000.

1055-1069 Pembroke Street - 25 units, affordable. \$5 Million investment, \$700,000 HOME funding. Webster Bank. ChFA, FHLB, LISC.

101 Barnum Avenue - Four- unit historic renovation. Four condo units were created, each Affordable at below 80% AMI. \$1.1 Million. Funding sources: DECD, CHFA, CT CDFI Alliance. 15 year deed restriction. Start: 2007. End: 2008. Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, Mutual Housing of Southwestern CT.



101 Barnum Avenue, above, as it appeared before renovation and, at left, after renovation. This renovation created quality affordable housing, improved the neighborhood, and serves as a very good example of the importance of historic preservation.

235-237 William Street - Historic Renovation that converted original 21-unit structure into a 12 unit historic development. Financing: CT Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, Federal Home Loan Bank, Bridgeport HOME funding, private donations, corporate sponsorships; \$1.2 Million. Partnership between Mutual Housing Association and Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County.

665-679 Arctic Street Areyto Apartments. 20 one bedroom apartments, income restricted, for formerly homeless individuals with mental illness and/or substance addictions. \$6,082,723. Funding: 3 year PILOT. Begin: 2007. End: 2008

52 George E. Pipkin Way - Hall Commons Senior Housing. 41 units HUD Section 202 Senior Housing; Section 8 Rents. Funding: HUD, \$6 Million. Hall Neighborhood House.

Achievement First - Charter School, 409 East Washington Avenue
Completed Fall 2008 to house 84 fifth graders, with plans to expand to 720 students, level K-8. \$1.5 million over next 9 years, City of Bridgeport.

Bridge Academy Charter School, 401 Kossuth Street; Connecticut Coast YMCA Day Camp. \$3.3 Million state and private funding. Opened September 2005

Barnum and Waltersville Elementary Schools
252 Hallett Street, corner of Martin Luther King Drive.

New elementary school was completed for August 2008 occupancy. The 172,000 square foot building was designed to accommodate 1,250 students. Total investment: \$58.3 Million

New Marin-Garfield Fire Station; 950 Boston Avenue. \$5.5 Million, Federal and City bond funds. Begun May 2004, occupied April 2007

New Marin-Garfield Park - Between Boston Avenue and Marin Garfield School; new play fields and playgrounds including new turf and watering system, completed Fall 2006. \$1.8 Million, Federal and State.



574 Stillman Street - Caroline House, Literacy Program for women and children,.

2326 East Main Street The Montano Center, state-of-the-art Interactive Learning Center for individuals with physical and cognitive limitations. \$100,000 (\$50,000 CDBG).

BLIGHT ENFORCEMENT

The City's Office of Neighborhood Revitalization (ONR) has been instrumental in promoting the renovation and reuse of a number of East Side properties in recent years, including the following:

192 Beach Street - private demolition, pre-fab construction; warning issued: 7/05/06; In compliance as of 11/6/2006

66 Barnum Avenue - anti-blight & Condemnation Board - Construction by new owner. WarningL 6/12/05; In compliance as of 6/20/07

1568 East Main Street - warnings issued June 2005, compliance in February 2007

304 Kossuth Street - Anti-Blight and Condemnation Actions

616 Kossuth Street - Mutual Housing Association Conger House LLC Supportive Housing; Warning issued: June 2006, In compliance as of May 2007; 8 rental apartments and two large community spaces to serve 16 homeless individuals with a permanent disability. \$1.4 Million (\$387,000 HOME funding). Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut.

343 Maple Street - Anti-Blight Action. Warning issued: May 2005; In compliance May 2006.

Examples of this type suggest the need for continued use of blight enforcement to counteract neighborhood decline. During the Committee process, concerns were raised about the need to refine the definition of blighted properties and to make sure that long-term blights (e.g. 291 Harriet Street), are resolved.

Planned and Proposed Developments

Steel Point Redevelopment



Original Plan for redevelopment of the 52-acre Steel Point site.

The most significant development plan on the books that would directly influence the East Side revitalization strategy is the Steel Point Redevelopment Area. The project involves the development of a new mixed-use community with a waterfront pedestrian promenade, dedicated open space and a marina on a 52-acre peninsula on the lower section of the East Side, along Bridgeport Harbor. The developer, Bridgeport Landing Development LLC reached an agreement with the City on the development of Steelpointe Harbor in November 2007. The original concept included a 732,400 square foot retail center; 90,000 square feet of waterfront retail space, over 2,000 units of residential development (including 300 units that would be income restricted in perpetuity).

The agreement with the developer was recently revised due to market conditions and other factors. The Economic and Community Development and Environment Committee and the City Council have recently approved a new agreement with the developer, and the City Planning Department has provided the following update on the status of the project and key elements to be included in the plan:

1. Presently submitting regulatory applications PDD, GDP & CAM
2. LDA recently completed
3. Public Board Walk
4. Parking
5. Restaurants
6. Big box anchors/ increase in retail square footage
7. Residential units 1200 +/- market rate
8. Additional offsite affordable rehab and infill.

The site has been cleared for demolition over the last 3 years. The future development of a project of this size could have dramatic impacts on the East Side revitalization strategy.

Waterview Avenue Marina Project

As an indicator of the potential for additional waterfront development in the East Side, the MOVE Yacht Club is being relocated from California Street in the Steel Point Redevelopment Area to Waterview Avenue. The Yacht Club building and marina were recently approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Common Council approved the abandonment of a portion of Nichols and Cedar Streets to support the development. The proposed marina retail complex will include the following components:

1. The square footage of the site is 46,180 sq ft or 1.06 AC+/-
2. There will be approximately 12 slips
3. Include three - four retail operations related to marine activity
4. Will Not include a large scale repair operation.
5. Restaurant will not be a component
6. Winter dry storage of boats will not be Included (denied because it diminished available retail parking requirements so as to not meet minimum zoning reqs.).
8. Slips will be connected with a ramp
9. Embankment will be contained with rip-rap.
11. Boat launch will be provided for "private" club member use. (Possible "for fee" use for general public.)

IV. Summary of Development Issues and Opportunities Facing the East Side Neighborhood

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The following issues are seen as requiring the greatest attention in the NRZ Strategic Plan:

1) Population Loss

Total East Side population dropped almost 25% from 1990 to 2000, primarily the result of concentrated efforts to redevelop large sections of the lower East Side (Father Panik Village and the Steel Point area). Among other factors, this dramatic reduction in population has caused significant change that has had a marked impact on the overall condition of the East Side neighborhood.

2) High Levels of Vacancy and Vacant Land

Vacant land is the highest existing land use on the East Side (26%). This is a serious issue for the neighborhood and for the City. Large vacant lots are a blighting influence and become targets for illegal dumping. These lots do nothing for building the tax base of the community.

3) Neighborhood Ranking - Quality of Life

The East Side was ranked last among the City's neighborhoods in terms of quality-of-life in the City of Bridgeport's recently-updated Plan of Conservation and Development (effective March 17, 2008). "The neighborhood has some of the highest crime rates and lowest income levels in Bridgeport."

4) Unemployment Rates are high

The East Side's unemployment rate (16.2%) has been higher than that of the City (10%) and the State (6%).

5) Income levels are low

As of 2007, median household income in the East Side was \$27,586 compared to \$44,216 for the City of Bridgeport as a whole and \$65,967 for the State of Connecticut. 34.1% of the neighborhood's households were below poverty level, while only 7.9% of the State's households were below poverty level.

6) High level of single parent households

31.8% of the households in the neighborhood were female headed, single parent, households, more than twice the rate for the City as a whole.

7) Education levels and skill levels are low

Only 28% of the adult East Side population has graduated from high school.

8) Home Ownership Levels are Low

Only 20.5% of the dwellings in the neighborhood are owner-occupied. For the state as a whole, home ownership rates are above 75%.

9) Property taxes are high

Property tax rates in Bridgeport have been raised as a concern to attracting new business development in the community.

10) Crime levels are high

According to Bridgeport Police Department, the East Side neighborhood ranks as one of the highest for incidences of crime.

11) Brownfields

A high percentage of industrial buildings are classified as brownfields (17.4% of neighborhood), pointing out the importance of incorporating cleanup strategies into revitalization plans.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A. Waterfront



The East Side possesses a significant waterfront along the Pequonnock River to the west and Yellow Mill Pond to the east. Much of the waterfront along the Pequonnock River on the Upper East Side (Knowlton Avenue) has been developed for industrial and other commercial uses, none of which are water dependent uses, as defined by the CT Coastal Management Act; there are a small number of docks located along the Congress Street Bridge Plaza Area.

While the waterfront could provide access for passive recreation, fishing and various forms of boating, none of those uses currently exist since most of the waterfront is blocked from public access. On a citywide basis, it has been recognized that much of the riverfront has been zoned and developed for industrial purposes. This led to a primary recommendation of the City's recent Master Plan to move industrial zones away from the waterfront to make the waterfront available for more appropriate uses. The largest singular piece of waterfront property is the Shoreline Star property on the lower East Side.

B. Waterfront Access

While there is an extensive waterfront in the East Side, there are very few opportunities for public access to the waterfront for the residents of the neighborhood currently, and the neighborhood needs more spots for fishing. Along Knowlton Street, even some of the public rights-of way to the waterfront are blocked by industrial uses that have incorporated these rights-of-way into

their operations. The waterfront park on Waterview Avenue has the potential for providing public access for the neighborhood, however, access for driving through and parking within the Park is restricted, and the park is not currently inviting for public use.

C. Transportation Infrastructure

Proximity to fixed-route rail lines offers the greatest long range opportunity for the revitalization of the East Side neighborhood. Parts of the East Side are already within walking distance of the existing train station in downtown Bridgeport, creating the potential for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the neighborhood -- high density mixed use village developments that enable residents the potential for connecting with employment centers in the broader region. Proximity to the major highway infrastructure and ferry service to Long Island is another key asset for future revitalization of the East Side.

D. Proximity to Downtown

The East Side neighborhood is convenient to the downtown, providing opportunities for employment and access to some of the region's most important cultural assets.

E. Historic Properties

The substantial supply of historic buildings in the East Side provides an asset to the revitalization strategy. Redevelopment can achieve a high standard of architectural design and character and incorporate architectural elements that enhance an overall revitalization initiative.

V. NRZ Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives

An effective plan must include a statement or description of the desired result the plan intends to achieve - a “vision statement” that describes the successful result of the plan. This is especially important for an NRZ strategic plan, which emphasizes follow-up and implementation. This section is devoted to the long range vision statement for the East Side NRZ Plan, along with a series of goals and action steps help the neighborhood move towards that vision.

VISION STATEMENT

This NRZ Strategic Plan envisions the East Side as a vibrant, culturally diverse neighborhood, one that is considered a community of choice for residents and business owners alike, and one which possesses an active waterfront, a healthy supply of diverse jobs, quality housing choices, and a full range of neighborhood amenities.

Making the East Side a Self-Sufficient or “Sustainable” Community

In recent years, there has been increasing emphasis among planning professionals and City and neighborhood leaders around the need to move distressed neighborhoods beyond just a physical revitalization - and towards the attainment of being livable or “sustainable communities”. Sustainable communities are ones that not only look good, they function effectively. They are healthy, long-term neighborhoods of choice that can be independent and durable. Being a sustainable community requires the physical improvement of the neighborhood at a minimum. Every abandoned, blighted or under maintained property in the neighborhood is a sign of “disinvestment” to the outside community. A vacant building is a tangible symbol that there is no demand for that building. In the East Side, stakeholders are especially concerned with the deteriorated condition of streets and sidewalks and the general lack of street trees. Beyond these physical improvements of the neighborhood, the East Side NRZ has to address the need to create a stable economic base within the neighborhood, providing good jobs and job training and a positive business climate, and the addition of neighborhood amenities that will make the neighborhood livable -- and desirable.

The concept of sustainability is especially relevant to the East Side neighborhood. The East Side NRZ Strategy should be viewed as four progressive steps or levels. These steps should be viewed as building blocks that can lead to the effective revitalization of the neighborhood. The East Side NRZ Steering Committee should continually review its efforts within each of these steps and develop an annual work plan to assure that any effort builds on the strategy and to make sure that all levels of the strategy are being addressed to the extent feasible.

GOALS

1. To reduce the number of blighted properties in the neighborhood until they are eliminated.
2. To encourage prompt rehabilitation of at-risk properties, while taking steps to preserve properties that have historic character.
3. To reduce litter, improve maintenance and encourage efforts to beautify the overall appearance of the East Side neighborhood
4. To rehabilitate and adaptively reuse buildings that lack code compliance in order to provide quality mixed-income housing
5. To increase affordable housing options for East Side residents
6. To increase levels of home ownership
7. To improve the levels of security in the East Side neighborhood.
8. To increase public access to the neighborhood's waterfront
9. To increase educational levels and skill levels in the neighborhood for children as well as adults.
10. To Increase employment opportunities for the East Side.
11. To strengthen the influence that community organizations have in the redevelopment of the East Side neighborhood.
12. To create a business environment that is conducive to attracting continued investments in commercial, industrial, and mixed use developments throughout the neighborhood.
13. To increase the availability of youth activities and elderly services for East Side residents.
14. To increase communication by using the media that is available to the community (making sure that communication is sent out in English, Spanish and other languages that will be understood by a majority of the neighborhood's residents).
15. Since the East Side has such a high percentage of children with elevated blood lead levels, the neighborhood should consider making lead education and poison prevention a priority/goal.

Objectives

1. The general appearance of the East Side needs to be softened and beautified with trees, landscaping and buffer plantings that balance expansive views of buildings, roads, highways, paved parking lots and other impervious surfaces. Streetscape improvements throughout the neighborhood are seen as very important to this effort.
2. The East Side NRZ Planning Committee sees its most significant revitalization opportunity as the development of the neighborhood's waterfront for public access and for mixed-use communities (pedestrian walkways, restaurants, shops, boating, etc.).
3. To help increase employment and income levels on the East Side, the NRZ Planning Committee is interested in encouraging job training/career development for East Side residents with a focus on the health-related field, which is envisioned as a growth industry for Bridgeport.
4. Support the efforts of the Bridgeport Public Library to begin work to identify and negotiate a replacement for the Old Mill Green library branch with a larger, more modern, permanent library.
5. In addition to the major areas of focus above, the following recommendations are viewed as supporting the long-range vision for revitalization of the neighborhood:
 - a. Promoting the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings, especially along the eastern edge of the neighborhood (e.g. Remington)
 - b. Continued commitment to the East Main Street Revitalization effort and enhancement of the neighborhood's gateway areas.
 - c. Creation of a Congress Street "Village" area, once the Congress Street Bridge has been replaced.
 - d. Development of a new East Bridgeport Train Station off of Barnum Avenue central to the East Side and East End neighborhoods
 - e. Bringing into the neighborhood (or linking to) training for East Side residents and creating a community center for such services and other community needs.
 - f. Recognize and support events on the East Side such as the East Main Street Festival and other community events, with an emphasis on using Washington Park.

VI. NRZ PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Guiding Principles

1. **EFFORTS SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED TO BUILD A STRONG INVESTMENT CLIMATE.** The revitalization of the East Side neighborhood will not be an easy task. The issues facing the neighborhood are significant, and those who have been working here to stabilize and revitalize the neighborhood over the years are well aware that change often occurs slowly. As noted, there are already examples of reinvestment occurring in the neighborhood. Many projects have been completed in past years, and there are a number of projects currently underway. While these projects have been individually successful, they have often been scattered through various parts of the neighborhood and don't always build on the success of each other. The NRZ Strategic Plan should focus investments to maximize impact. Public sector investments should be used to: a. support private sector projects and activities and b. leverage investments.
2. **LEADERSHIP MUST BE FOCUSED ON IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN.** The Strategic Plan should build on past successes and rely on the continued involvement of the people and the organizations that are already committed to the East Side's revitalization with enough representation of the Community's residents (e.g. 66.% were Hispanic, as of the last Census). Ideally, this Strategic Plan should be viewed as a Management Plan by the NRZ Committee. The Plan should be used to maintain a "bird's eye" perspective of the neighborhood - and provide a blueprint for fostering projects and programs that will most significantly influence the further revitalization of the neighborhood as a whole. To be successful, the NRZ Committee must enlist the help of additional people and groups in the neighborhood to join in the revitalization effort and to increase the impact of leadership efforts here. Success will only be possible if stakeholders continually manage the revitalization strategy.
3. **NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCACY IS IMPORTANT.** NRZ leaders recognized the need to strengthen and enhance communication within the neighborhood. The NRZ Committee could play a strong role in being a "voice" for the East Side. Many participants felt that there was currently a perceived lack of power within the East Side and the need for stronger involvement of community organizations. The NRZ should work to connect the leadership of existing community organizations and solicit greater involvement by other residents and businesspeople by means of radio, newspaper, schools, churches, etc.
4. **SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES SHOULD BE ACHIEVABLE.** While there was some interest in supporting larger projects that could have long-term economic impact for the East Side (such as the creation of a new East Bridgeport train station and new Transit-Oriented Development related to it), most participants favored short-term projects they considered to be more feasible given current

conditions and trends, and available resources. This input influenced the suggested phasing of projects included within this Strategic Plan. East Side NRZ leaders wanted to emphasize the basic elements of neighborhood revitalization in this strategy such as rehabilitation of housing stock, construction of infill housing, and implementation of streetscape improvements. Meanwhile, certain issues that were seen as beyond immediate control by the neighborhood are nonetheless viewed as critical to a sound revitalization strategy. The restoration of the Congress Street Bridge was identified as the most significant example. Many see the bridge stuck in an open position as being a visible sign that the neighborhood is not connected to other parts of the City, in particular the downtown - and a symbol of a neighborhood weakness.

5. USE OF TARGET AREAS

“Building from a position of strength...”

The NRZ Planning Committee sees the revitalization of the East Side as a building- block-strategy. This Plan recommends the use of an implementation strategy within specific target areas to achieve this revitalization. By targeting projects within key target areas, the NRZ will have the opportunity to encourage change and revitalization that will have broader impact. Following the completion of the East Side NRZ workshop in early 2009, the East Side NRZ consultants presented the neighborhood’ priority projects at a meeting of key City staff members who provide policy direction for development of the City and its neighborhoods. At that meeting, City staff reinforced the importance of targeting activities and resources to maximize impact. Recent revisions to regulations for Community Development Block Grant funding, for example, stress the importance of looking at the renovation of entire blocks to assure that strong neighborhoods are being created. It will be important to consider housing, streetscape, mixed use where applicable and commercial services.

6. **ECONOMIC FACTORS.** While the nation is currently suffering from an economic recession that has had an impact on the current real estate market, those conditions have already started to improve as this Plan is being completed. The NRZ strategy is designed to build on the existing physical strengths of the neighborhood and to create a climate that supports growing investment within the neighborhood, at a rate commensurate with general improvements to the economy as a whole.

Activities included in Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan involves various types of Activities that strengthen the neighborhood at multiple levels. For each activity, this Plan identifies: a. potential partners and b. resource opportunities available to help carry out these activities.

Level One - Build the sense of community (Communication in English, Spanish and other languages as needed, and Community Organization)

Level Two -Stabilize the Neighborhood - Core Revitalization Programs

Level Three -Improve the Appearance and Viability of the Neighborhood

Level Four -Enhance the Business Climate of the East Side/ Economic Revitalization

Level One - Build the sense of community (Communication and Community Organization).

The social problems within the East Side need to be addressed in a direct way. Neighborhoods function best when the people who live in them have a sense of belonging, confidence that neighborhood problems are being addressed, and a sense of security. The first level of activities in the East Side Revitalization Strategy, therefore, is to strengthen the neighborhood's sense of community by supporting the continuation of existing community organizations, creation and maintenance of block watches, and scheduling regular neighborhood cleanups and beautification efforts. Activities at this level are fundamental to the neighborhood's long-term success and, therefore, need to be ongoing throughout the revitalization strategy. These efforts will have direct impact on the livability and sustainability of the East Side.

1. Form NRZ Steering Committee to Facilitate revitalization process

Once the NRZ Plan is adopted, the community should form an NRZ Steering Committee, responsible for implementation of the NRZ Strategic Plan.

Neighborhood Outreach/Dialogue. The NRZ Steering Committee should reach out to the community and foster an ongoing dialogue, especially within the resident community. The Committee should include representation of specific community organizations and stakeholder groups, including:

- a. The East Side Community Council
- b. Lower East Side Development Corporation
- c. East Main Street Revitalization Association
- d. Washington Park Association
- e. Trash Busters
- f. Residents
- g. Churches, Faith-based organizations
- h. Business community
- i. Non-profit organizations (Habitat for Humanity, Mutual Housing, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, McGivney Community Center, etc.)
- j. Spanish/English media (e.g. Radio Cumbre, LaVoz, Radio Amore)

It is critically important that each project be approached through collaboration. At the beginning of each year, the NRZ should develop an ANNUAL WORK PLAN through joint meetings with its partners, most of whom are hopefully represented around the table. There should be an emphasis on residents. Together, the NRZ and its partners should assess previous progress, identify localized needs, determine available resources and develop a plan of implementation for the coming year, by identifying the role of each group and the resources they can bring to bear or jointly secure. In this way, all

organizations can work towards achieving common goals.

Neighborhood Topics. While the NRZ Steering Committee should focus on advocating for projects and resources to complete physical improvements in the neighborhood, other areas of concern should include:

1. **Social Services** to support the needs of neighborhood residents. The 20+ Human Service Agencies operating on the East Side (such as Hall Neighborhood House, Helping Hand Center, Alpha Home, McGivney Center, etc.) should be directly involved in these efforts.
2. **Security** (expansion and maintenance of viable block watch groups, in close coordination with City Police Department and other public safety officials). This could include expansion of block watches, community service, etc.
3. **Cleanup and Beautification:** East Side neighborhood groups should continue to work closely with established groups like the Trash Busters to organize cleanup drives on a regular basis. Special efforts should be focused on anti-graffiti efforts, perhaps in conjunction with the neighborhood's block watch efforts and community service (Police). The East Side NRZ should make a special effort to work closely with Mayor Bill Finch's recent "Be Green" Beautification initiative and connect with youth conservation teams and groups such as Groundwork Bridgeport.
4. **Youth Activities** - During the revitalization planning process, it was noted that there is a need for increased youth activities within the East Side. Without meaningful recreational or employment opportunities, it will be difficult to keep the neighborhood's youth engaged in constructive activities. The alternative will be increased loitering, graffiti and crime within the neighborhood. It was recommended that opportunities for recreation and employment be pursued as part of the revitalization strategy. It will be important to promote the use of youth programs offered through the Orcutt Boys Club, the McGivney Community Center and the Hall Neighborhood House. Boys & Girls Clubs offer programs and services to promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence. Summer camps and youth summer employment programs should be continued and expanded if possible. The McGivney Community Center is a non-profit organization founded in 1992 by a group of concerned businessmen and community leaders. It was founded to provide youth with an educational "safe haven" from the dangers of the streets. The Center also provides young people with After-School and Evening Programs, as well as a Summer Camp. Examples of the Center's past programs includes homework assistance, supplemental education, computer literacy, music programs, arts and crafts and recreation programs. As funds are available, scholarships are available to help defray tuition costs.

Hall Neighborhood House offers a variety of programs as well, including youth services, counseling and college prep; after school recreation; and performing arts, music and dance.

There are also several after school programs currently offered in the East Side, mostly located at the Luis Muñoz Marin School. Examples include the Lighthouse Program (ASPIRA); Bridgeport Parks and Recreation programs for basketball, dance and volleyball), etc. Other locations should be identified as well, including the private sector.

5. **Senior Services** - Some of the elderly residents of the East Side lack sufficient resources to maintain their homes and their properties. Additional services for meals, medical services and recreation should be explored. A number of local organizations, such as the Hall Neighborhood House, offer senior citizen support services.
6. **Social gathering and interaction** -- The East Side NRZ should support social efforts in the neighborhood and encourage close coordination with schools, churches, similar Faith-Based organizations, business groups and other community groups.

The importance of community organization needs to be fully understood and cannot be overstressed: the East Side neighborhood will not be successful without continued efforts to clean up, to make the neighborhood a safe place to live, and to maintain an open dialogue among stakeholders. A strong, unified community voice is also the best way to effectively communicate neighborhood concerns and needs to City leaders and officials who are operating with fewer resources.

Level Two - Stabilize the Neighborhood - Core Revitalization Programs

Several areas of concern must be addressed at this level: high levels of vacancy (land and buildings); high number of blighted properties; and the high number of properties lacking code compliance. Underlying these areas of concern are the generally low household income levels within the neighborhood and the low levels of owner occupancy. Efforts must be focused on creating new housing, renovating housing that is below standard and creating strong neighborhoods. The NRZ must work with other partners and tap as many resources as possible to assure sufficient stabilization.

SUGGESTED PARTNERS:

- a. Non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Mutual Housing of Southwestern Connecticut, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, East Main Street Revitalization Association, Lower East Side Development Corporation (LESDCO) and Groundwork Bridgeport.

b. City agencies such as the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization (Blight enforcement, NRZ), Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency, Building Department, Health Department, Bridgeport Housing Authority, etc.

c. Since much of the East Side is in a historic district, the NRZ might consider partnering with someone to provide training on how property owners could access historic tax credits.

SAMPLE RESOURCE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Community Development Block Grant funds; annual entitlement approximately \$3 Million
- Bridgeport Lead Elimination Action Plan (LEAP) Program (Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust) - \$ 3 Million to eliminate lead poison hazards
- Neighborhood Stabilization Funds -- \$6 Million (City of Bridgeport ARRA Stimulus Funds) - to be used to leverage \$26.2 Million of Housing Development Funds (HDF) to buy, restore and sell foreclosed properties in the City
- Steelpoint Redevelopment Project - Since Steelpoint Harbor has the responsibility of creating up to 300 income restricted housing units, the East Side NRZ should work to negotiate the placement of as many of these units as possible into the NRZ strategy, particularly for infill housing, housing rehabilitation and mixed-use projects.
- Department of Economic and Community Development Funds
- Congressional Earmark Funds
- Lower East Side Development Corporation (LESDCO) -- \$1.8 Million in Section 108 funding for projects including streetscape improvements, job development, affordable housing, etc.
- Historic Tax Credits
- Federal Home Loan Bank - AHP (although very competitive lately)
- CHFA Housing Tax Credit Contribution Program (HTCC) - \$10M made available annually. Applications typically due July 1; and
- Flexible financing could be secured through community loan funds (Community Capital Fund and Housing Development Fund).
- City bonds
- Bridgeport Housing Authority, Section 8 Certificates
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Private Foundations

1. Housing Rehabilitation, Code compliance

Properties in disrepair or lacking code compliance must be repaired and upgraded so that the neighborhood is stabilized and its housing stock can provide for future generations. It is recommended that housing rehabilitation programs seek to achieve the following goals to the extent possible:

1. Funds should be targeted in a block-by-block strategy, beginning with initial target area between Washington Park and Knowlton Street.

2. Funds should be available to fund a variety of housing improvements, ranging from system replacement and repair to property enhancements such as painting and window replacement. Properties, at a minimum, must be brought into compliance with existing health and safety codes.
3. There should be a stringent code enforcement program especially within targeted areas.
4. There should be a specific focus on absentee-owned and derelict properties, tailoring programs to the zoning of specific properties (e.g. brownfields, industrial properties).

Continued support should be provided to programs like the Healthy Homes initiative of the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (BNT). In partnership with the City, BNT promotes access to healthy homes, providing dollars and services to prevent lead poisoning, promote wellness, and improve the quality of life for the City's neediest population. Over the next two years, BNT intends to create another 160 lead safe units using almost \$2,000,000 of HUD funding through the City of Bridgeport Lead Free Families Program and BNT's Lead Elimination Action Program (LEAP), a 3 year grant to address the critical need of lead prevention, education, and abatement of 100 units. The past data shows that the need for these types of programs is even greater in the East side. From 2004 thru 2007, there were 420 incidents of lead reported in the East side. 30% of the incidents reported have children with elevated blood lead levels above 20 micrograms per deciliter. The following census tracts lists the percentage of housing stock built before 1950 and the number of lead incidents reported.

2. Adaptive Reuse of larger buildings where appropriate, including adaptive reuse of Holy Rosary, Waltersville, and St. Charles Schools

Buildings sometimes outlive their economic use. This is particularly the case for some of the older industrial buildings and public buildings that remain on the East Side. Building standards for modern industry are generally different than those of the late 1800s or early 1900s when much of the East Side was first developed. It is more important today to have space that is energy-efficient, flexible and functional. With the advent of newer schools, such as the Barnum Waltersville School, the City has no need to operate schools like the Waltersville School. When large buildings become vacant for long periods of time, they become blights on the neighborhood, safety risks, and targets for attractive nuisance. These properties need to be guided into a productive use, which will often be an adaptive reuse (e.g. conversion of a school into multi-family housing units or a factory into a mixed-use complex for new housing, office and retail uses). Other examples include Holy Rosary School (previously occupied by Achievement First) and St. Charles School.

3. Blight enforcement

Strict enforcement of the City's Blight and Housing Codes is essential to the continued revitalization of the East Side. The Office of Neighborhood Revitalization has proven that certain deteriorated properties can be turned around and made productive elements of the neighborhood through consistent enforcement of local blight laws. Enforcement assures that absentee property owners are held accountable for the condition of their properties. It will also help the City and the NRZ to identify individuals who have an interest in maintaining their properties but lack the financial capability or technical ability to keep up with ongoing repairs or upgrades, such as the elderly.

Additional recommendation: Revisit the Definition of Blight. The Housing Subcommittee believed that a uniform definition should be established for classifying sites as blighted (Although CityScan inventoried all East Side properties, a number of properties viewed locally as blighted did not show up in the CityScan inventory. Examples included: 197-207 Harriet Street; 64-72 Maple Street and 291 Harriet Street)

4. Halfway Houses, Social Programs

The East Side NRZ is supportive of the purposes for which Halfway Houses have been created in Bridgeport, so that programs can be offered to assist individuals who are seeking to overcome alcohol and/or drug abuse problems. Meanwhile, there is a local concern that the number of such homes in the East Side is disproportionate to those contained in other Bridgeport neighborhoods, which could affect the overall revitalization strategy. Based on a recent review by the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization of the list of all the licenses group homes and rooming houses in Bridgeport: The East Side has nineteen (19) such licenses. In comparison, the West Side has twenty-two (22); the Hollow has eleven (11); the South End has six (6); the East End has five (5) and Black Rock has two (2).

. The NRZ Committee wishes to encourage the overall upgrade and improvement of existing halfway houses before new ones are created in the East Side... and to encourage balanced placement of halfway houses throughout the City.

5. Home Ownership Promotion - Homeownership Counseling, Financial Assistance.

Low owner occupancy rates in the East Side are directly proportional to the high levels of renter occupancy/absentee ownership in the neighborhood. This is in part due also to the neighborhood housing stock which is made up largely of four to six unit multi-family structures that are conducive to a rental housing market. In general, the NRZ leadership needs to recognize that increases in homeownership will directly result in a community of longer-term residents that are invested and committed to the future of the East Side.

Efforts need to be concentrated on the promotion of home ownership in the East Side. The Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (BNT) has established a number of successful programs for promoting affordable home ownership opportunities. One of the key elements of these programs is their Comprehensive Homeownership Counseling Program: BNT is a HUD approved and CHFA certified housing counseling agency. BNT's one on one counseling services provides support to first time homebuyers to obtain the goal of homeownership. Each client starts with an orientation to determine mortgage readiness and finishes equipped with the information to purchase in today's market. BNT's program has three components; individualized one on one counseling, monthly 8 Hour Pre Purchase Homeownership Class, and monthly post closing workshops including Foreclosure Prevention, Financial Literacy, and Landlord Tenant Training. To complement its program the City has selected BNT to be the administrator of its Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program which will make available up to \$25,000 for down payment and closing cost assistance, per applicant.

The Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust should be invited to assume a leadership role with the NRZ since the goal of increasing home ownership must be at the forefront of the East Side NRZ process.

In addition to home ownership programs, the NRZ process should recognize all opportunities for creating various levels of home ownership within the East Side. For example, as multi-family dwellings (duplexes and three-to-six family dwellings) become available, consideration should be given to shared ownership models, e.g. condos, cooperatives, etc.). The Mutual Housing Association has an excellent track record in developing housing with various ownership models.

6. Infill Housing

Where there are vacant lots within the neighborhood, the NRZ Strategy suggests the construction of infill housing where there is sufficient room to create onsite parking and where no other neighborhood needs exist (e.g. open space, neighborhood parking lots, community gardens, etc.). Construction of new housing units will be the key to redeveloping large tracts of vacant land. This should be a primary strategy on the lower East Side and an appropriate location to encourage the development of income-restricted units by Steelpointe Harbor.

The Housing Subcommittee made further recommendations for the NRZ strategy:

- Shared Neighborhood Parking Lots. Parking is a major problem on the side streets of the East Side. CityScan identified 40 unregistered and

abandoned cars on East Side streets. Some registered vehicles are also being parked on City streets and left for days at a time. The Committee recommends that certain vacant lots should be considered for parking or other housing-related uses rather than being built upon, which would increase overall neighborhood density. Some vacant lots should be used as parking lots to support neighboring housing. In concept, these parking lots could be owned, secured and managed by neighborhood associations to provide parking for adjacent residential uses (consider use of easements and common driveways to access residential property to the rear). Proceeds from rentals could be used to support neighborhood programs.

- Encourage Home Ownership. To the extent feasible, emphasize conversion of rental units to owner-occupied dwellings. Meanwhile, the Housing Subcommittee also recognized the need to utilize available funding sources and resources that provide for the ongoing maintenance of housing units and the retention of those units as affordable. In particular, it was recommended that Section 8 certificates and related subsidies be incorporated into the housing strategy.

To be successful, efforts to stabilize the neighborhood must be designed to include mixed-income housing options and will require some levels of public and private subsidy. Mixed-income housing options should not be limited to low income or subsidized housing models, however. To achieve neighborhood sustainability, the East Side must attract a certain level of market rate housing that occurs within a healthy, livable neighborhood.

Programs such as the Habitat for Humanity and the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust can help increase the availability of quality Affordable Housing Development : BNT has completed over 75 units of affordable housing units leveraging over \$10,000,000 of public and private resources. Currently, the BNT has 28 units in the pipeline, of which 24 units are in construction. This represents more than five million dollars of investment in the community. Of the units completed, 4 were in the East Side. Of the 24 units currently in construction, 6 are located in the East Side.

Level Three - Improve the Appearance and Viability of the Neighborhood: Neighborhood Improvement Projects

After developing a strong sense of community and making improvements to the conditions of the neighborhood's housing and building stock, existing residents and businesspeople will be more likely to stay for longer periods of time and continue to invest in their properties as a place to live, raise their families, and make a living. The next phase of the revitalization strategy needs to focus on specific improvements to upgrade the overall appearance and viability of the neighborhood so that other residents and businesses will also be drawn to the East Side. The following list of neighborhood improvement projects are discussed in further detail in the next Section, Action Plan.

SUGGESTED PARTNERS:

- a. Non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Mutual Housing of Southwestern Connecticut, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, East Main Street Revitalization Association and Groundworks.
- b. City agencies such as the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization (Blight enforcement, NRZ), Bridgeport Redevelopment Agency; Building Department, Bridgeport Housing Authority, Board of Education and the City Parks Department, etc.

SAMPLE RESOURCE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Community Development Block Grant funds; annual entitlement approximately \$3 Million
- Department of Economic and Community Development Funds
- State and Local Tax Incentives and Credits (Neighborhood Assistance Act)
- CT DEP Long Island Sound License Plate Program
- Congressional Earmark Funds
- City bonds
- Public/Private Partnerships

Improve Public Access to the Waterfront.

Waterfront access is very limited at this time. As part of the Revitalization Strategy, there will be an emphasis on creating quality points of access to the waterfront to enable neighborhood residents to access and enjoy the waterfront and to enhance the neighborhood's appeal. The emphasis will be on identifying and developing three specific points of public access:

- Barnum Avenue Right of Way at Knowlton Street and Pequonnock River
- Arctic Street Right of Way at Knowlton Street and Pequonnock River
- Redevelopment of James Brown Park (formerly Waterview Park, at Waterview Avenue, Crescent Street and Yellow Mill Pond)

Improve Streetscapes throughout the East Side

While some streetscapes, like East Main Street, have been upgraded over the last five to ten years, there are still a significant number of streets and sidewalks that are in various levels of disrepair throughout the neighborhood (CityScan results). There is also a strong need for streetscape improvements, including street trees, street lights, benches, and improved pedestrian/bicycle crossings.

Improve Parks and Open Space facilities in Neighborhood

- Support the development of the Barnum/Waltersville fields
- Marin-Garfield Park
- Support the enhancement of the waterfront and especially the Barnum Avenue and Arctic Street rights-of-way and the James Brown Park.
- Consider support for additional recreational facilities for the neighborhood, such as tennis courts.

Congress Street Bridge Replacement

The NRZ believes strongly that the Congress Street Bridge needs to be replaced. The Committee has included the replacement of this bridge as one of its priority projects for improving the viability of the neighborhood. Cost estimates for the replacement of the bridge are upwards of \$50 to \$60 Million, and the City has been actively working on the funding to replace the bridge and it is believed that more than \$40 Million has been raised so far for this purpose. In the meantime, recent funding allocations through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, also called “Economic Stimulus” funding) have been specifically earmarked by the City towards the immediate demolition of the existing bridge structure in an effort to remove the stigma associated with the visual impact of the existing bridge stuck in an open position.

Pedestrian Bridge Crossing. During the East Side NRZ Planning Committee meetings, there was some discussion of the feasibility of funding the initial construction of a pedestrian bridge at this location with existing funds. A pedestrian bridge could cost as little as \$10 to 15 Million and would provide a connection across the Pequonnock River. A pedestrian bridge could also be designed so that it would abut a full bridge with vehicular crossing in the future. While the concept interested some of the Planning Committee members, the majority opinion of the Committee was that the construction of a full bridge should continue to be a high priority goal of the neighborhood revitalization strategy. Others talked about the potential for a pedestrian bridge at an alternative location such as Arctic Street.

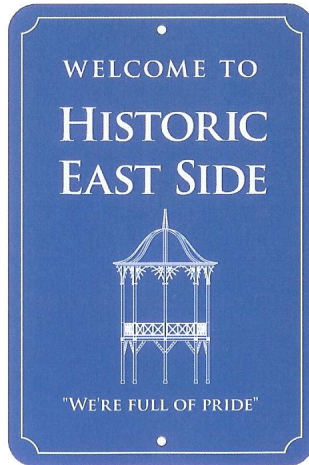
Level Four - Economic Development Projects

Waterfront Redevelopment

The waterfront is the East Side’s most significant physical asset. The current conditions of the East Side’s waterfront are not conducive to promoting new economic

development that relates to the water. There are factories, in some cases brownfields, and many barriers to access and use of the water. There needs to be a concentrated effort towards redeveloping the waterfront to support water dependent uses and increased public access along the neighborhood's waterfront. There is a need for changes to the City's zoning, expanded use of the Coastal Site Plan Review Procedure, and efforts to encourage waterfront redevelopment, especially along Knowlton Street and the Pequonnock River.

Gateway/Commercial Corridor Enhancements and Streetscape Improvements



The East Side's commercial corridors and primary entrances./gateways are the community's calling card. It is important to establish a clean, welcoming appearance to he neighborhood. Beautification efforts are already beginning here. The Office of Neighborhood Revitalization is in the process of implementing a program to install 75 banners along East Main Street and two welcome signs, one at the Old Mill Green Park, Boston Avenue and the other one at Housatonic Avenue before the East Washington Bridge. There should also be some smaller welcome signs and some additional trash cans, although the specific number has yet to be determined.



Graphics: Above is a copy of the sign developed by the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization (ONR) to welcome visitors to the East Side at key gateway locations. Initially, two will be installed but this is a program that can hopefully be expanded. At right is a picture of one of the new 32 gallon trash cans (approx. 30) that ONR has purchased for use along East Main Street. An additional ONR project is the introduction of Highland Company banners that will help to create a sense of community and enhance the attractiveness of the overall business climate.

East Main Street Revitalization

Efforts to revitalize East Main Street have made significant progress over the last 25 years or so, with the help of the East Main Street Revitalization Association. These efforts to foster the commercial strip need to continue and be strengthened to assure reasonable commercial services to support the neighborhood. The East Main Street corridor has provided for mixed use developments in the past and should continue to be viewed for that purpose. Additionally, the commercial corridor should be seen as an important retail link with the Steelpointe Harbor development, and a primary gateway.

Efforts should be focused on:

- Promotion of mixed use developments along corridor (retail, service uses on first floor, residential above.
- Infill housing in proximity to commercial corridor to increase market support for retail and service establishments
- Continued efforts to enhancing the historic character of the buildings located along East Main Street
- Promotion of streetscape improvement program
- Strengthening communication among business leaders
- Active support of the East Main Street Revitalization Association

Job Training

Neighborhood leaders want to see increased training for East Side residents to assist them in finding gainful employment. In particular, the neighborhood wants to position itself to be able to access and be part of growing industries within the City and the Region. The City's recent Master Plan emphasizes the health industry as being one of the most significant opportunities for future growth in Bridgeport. The East Side wishes to support that direction and to support job training and job opportunities in the health industry for East Side residents.

Partnerships should be established with existing health providers: Bridgeport Hospital, St. Vincent's Medical Center, Optimus and the Bridgeport Health Care Center were four of the top employers in the City of Bridgeport as of 2006. Additional partners should include the Greater Bridgeport O.I.C. and area universities and colleges (e.g. Housatonic Community College, Sacred Heart University) that provide employment training in the medical field and related support services. The Bridgeport Trade and Technology Center is also strategically located in the neighborhood, and some of their building space (e.g. Building #3) could be used for educational programs and job training.

Efforts should also be placed on involving the Board of Education in this goal of expanded job training for East Side residents and supporting the expansion of school curricula in a manner that would help guide and encourage East Side students to pursue appropriate job training, higher levels of education and job experiences that could help qualify them for employment opportunities in various aspects of the health field.

Longer-Term Projects

In general, the East Side NRZ strategy supports the completion of projects and the creation of programs that will strengthen the neighborhood. The Planning Committee was interested in pursuing a number of more aggressive long-range plans for the neighborhood, but they felt these should be done after other priority goals have been achieved. The projects that were seen as being appropriate in the long term are as follows:

- Adaptive Reuse of Industrial Buildings (it was noted that many of the industrial buildings located in the East Side will require some form of remediation for “brownfield” properties)
- Shoreline Star/Lower East Side Redevelopment
- Congress Street Village
- East Bridgeport Train Station

VII. ACTION PLAN: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLAN

1. TARGET AREAS

The East Side NRZ Strategic Plan recognizes the need to create several distinct target areas for the long-range revitalization strategy, with each target area having their own redevelopment goals.



- 1 - Knowlton Street/Washington Park
- 2 - East Main Street Commercial Corridor
- 3 - Congress Street Village
- 4 - Industrial Redevelopment Area
- 5 - Waterfront Redevelopment Area
- 6 - Transit Station/ Transit Oriented Development
- 7 - Lower East Side

2. Overview of Target Areas (Short Term Revitalization Strategy - ST, Mid Term Revitalization Strategy - MT, and Long Term Revitalization Strategy - LT)

To promote effective revitalization, the NRZ Strategy recommends that the neighborhood concentrate physical redevelopment efforts, available resources and programs within specific target areas. The initial target areas are generally located as follows:

1) KNOWLTON STREET/WASHINGTON PARK (WESTERN SHORE OF EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD) -- ST

The redevelopment of the western shore of the neighborhood is one of the first areas the NRZ should focus on in the East Side's revitalization, for a number of reasons:

- a) The close proximity to the downtown area, the transportation hub and business center of the City, which also holds job opportunities for East Side residents.
- b) There is a significant waterfront exposure along the Pequonnock River, with several distinct opportunities for waterfront development and public access that could benefit the revitalization of the East Side neighborhood.
- c) Close proximity to the downtown train station and major transportation routes (e.g. I-95, Route 25) enables excellent connections to other parts of the City and the region.
- d) Buildings in this area have significant historic character, and the presence of Historic Districts in this area further helps to foster strong design in chosen revitalization projects.
- e) The residential areas around Washington Park are strong and have responded well to the revitalization process. There have been significant investments made by nonprofit groups like Habitat for Humanity, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, and Mutual Housing of Southwestern Connecticut.
- f) Redevelopment of the lower East Side and the waterfront area adjacent to it will enable excellent coordination and linkage with the redevelopment of the nearby Steel Point Redevelopment project.

LOCATION: The Pequonnock waterfront and the Knowlton Street Corridor from Arctic Street to Congress Street is seen as an important area for promoting waterfront redevelopment. It is recommended that this target area also include the residential neighborhood between Washington Park and the Pequonnock River, including residential areas along Arctic Street, Maple Street, Barnum Avenue, Washington Avenue, Knowlton Street, William Street, Harriet Street, and Noble Avenue. Important residential restoration projects have been completed in this area in recent years, making it easier to have impact within this area.

There have been numerous studies and reports prepared for the City over the years that recommend waterfront development of the East Side, and this

recommendation is reinforced in the City's recent Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). In general, the POCD encourages the City to move industrial uses away from its waterfront to inland locations and to reclaim its waterfront for public access and appropriate waterfront and water dependent uses. A few private sector efforts in recent years further support the concept of revitalizing the Knowlton Street/Pequonnock River area for waterfront redevelopment purposes. Examples have included:

288 Knowlton Street - The opening of Bridgeport Lobster and Shellfish in 2007. Fresh seafood market retail and wholesale

305 Knowlton Street - Owners of the historic 1896 Armstrong Factory Building have expressed an interest in developing this property for waterfront development purposes. Between 2007 and 2008, the owners were close to securing commitments and approvals for the development of a new home for the Fairfield University Men and Women Varsity Rowing Teams. While the University ultimately backed out of the deal, it suggests an appropriate water dependent adaptive reuse of this industrial.

459-562 Knowlton Street - The Acme Shear United Development Site. The 3 acre property was cleared in 2007 of the former manufacturing building, which had become blight to the neighborhood. The site is now available as a vacant parcel of land possessing 300 feet of direct water frontage, and it is being marketed that way

2) EAST MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR AND GATEWAY AREAS (ST)

The main entrances to the neighborhood are also the most visible and noticed sections of the East Side. These are the areas through which the majority of residents, workers, businesspeople and passersby experience the neighborhood and make their assessments of the neighborhood and its relative health. These areas are included within the initial target areas so that programs and projects can be seen by the broader community. Included within these target areas are the following:

- East Main Street Commercial Corridor
- Entrances from Stratford Avenue (East Main Street, Kossuth Street, Waterview Avenue)
- Barnum Avenue, Eastern and western edge
- East Washington Avenue
- Noble Avenue, near Boston Avenue
- Boston Avenue and Entrances into the neighborhood, especially East Main Street.

**3) CONGRESS STREET BRIDGE (ST)
AND CONGRESS STREET VILLAGE (MT)**

Since the western shore of the East Side is seen as the most critical component of the revitalization strategy, the restoration of the Congress Street Bridge is also viewed as vital to the neighborhood's revitalization, since it provides the most direct connection with the downtown. The Bridge is also viewed as critical for supporting public safety in the East Side by providing access to emergency response vehicles. The bridge has been identified as a short term goal.

The Congress Street Village concept is a development opportunity that is seen as being more of a mid term goal for the East Side. Given the unique characteristics of the historic buildings and the layout of streets and adjacent public space, there is the potential for the creation of a mixed use village area that could provide an attractive setting for restaurants, shops, cafes and even space for farmers markets or other community events.

4) INDUSTRIAL REDEVELOPMENT AREA (LT)

During the development of this Strategic Plan, Committee members underscored the importance of redeveloping the industrial area located along the eastern border of the Upper East Side, including the RemGrit properties. While identified here as a long term goal, the redevelopment of this area is vital to the success of the NRZ Strategic Plan. In general, it is believed that the potential for revitalization of the Industrial Redevelopment Area will be further enhanced by the redevelopment of the neighborhoods' waterfront, stabilization of its residential neighborhoods and the future development of an East Bridgeport Train Station serving the East Side and the East End.

5) WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT AREAS (MT)

The NRZ should seek to support any opportunities for the quality redevelopment of the neighborhood's waterfront for purposes of promoting public access and/or suitable waterfront and water dependent uses along the shore. While the initial focus should be on public rights-of-way already owned by the City, there should be a concerted effort to encourage the proper redevelopment of private property along the waterfront for these purposes. Waterfront redevelopment and public access along the shore will tie in well with development objectives of the Steel Point Redevelopment Area as well as the City's efforts to revitalize the downtown waterfront. Redevelopment of parts of the waterfront should be pursued as soon as possible. This target area is identified as a mid term goal mainly because market support will most likely be harder to attract until some of the other NRZ objectives are sufficiently underway.

6) TRANSIT STATION/TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (LT)

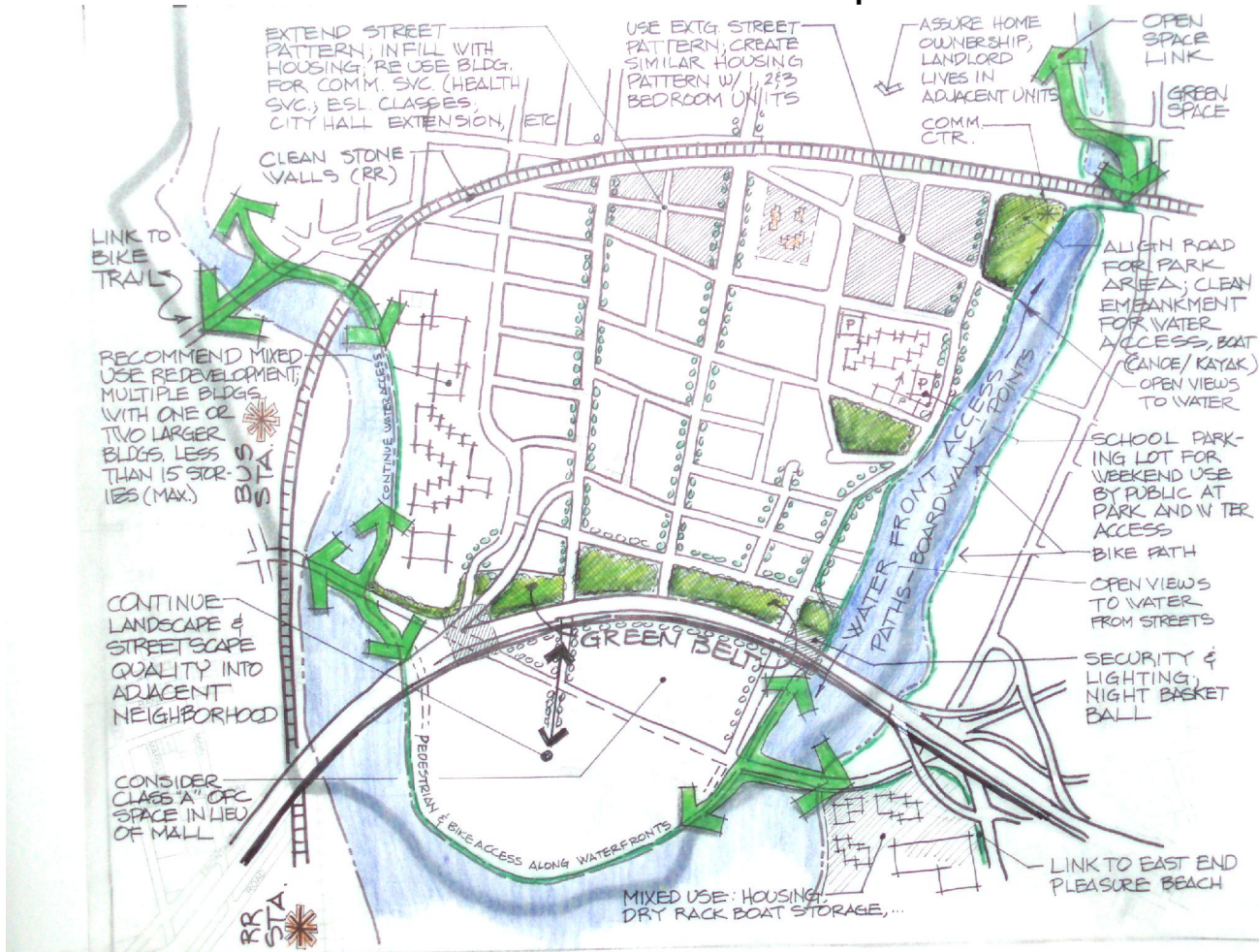
During the charrette and again at a number of the East Side NRZ Planning Committee meetings, there was considerable discussion of developing a new train station on the East Side. If located right between the East Side and the East End neighborhoods (suitable locations can be found along Barnum Avenue), a train station could significantly increase access to labor markets throughout the region. Such an improvement could also be beneficial in connecting the Industrial Redevelopment Area and the Bridgeport Trade and Technology Center to employees located throughout Connecticut and parts of New York. It could also be advantageous to Bridgeport Hospital and its employees, located within walking distance of this location. Further, the introduction of a train station at this location would make it feasible to promote the creation of Transit Oriented Development (T.O.D.). The TOD concept promotes the creation of mixed use villages composed of mixed housing types, blended with commercial retail and service uses. Generally, these developments are attractive to a segment of the population that welcomes the opportunity to live adjacent to a fixed-rail train stop and have access to employment opportunities, in this case in other parts of Fairfield County or in New York. These developments tend to be higher density and include some higher priced market rate housing. However, they can also provide opportunities for creating affordable housing depending on the density levels and land costs. Parking spaces are generally more limited, especially if residents find suitable transit access to jobs and necessary conveniences/support services.

7) LOWER EAST SIDE (MT)

The Lower East Side area possesses unique opportunities as well as substantial challenges from a revitalization standpoint. An extensive amount of land has been cleared in the Lower East Side -- in the past, from the demolition of the Father Panik Village Housing Complex and in recent years, from the assemblage of land to support the Steel Point Redevelopment Project. It will be necessary to stabilize this section of the East Side in order to support a full revitalization of the area. It would be important to continue the revitalization of the East Main Street commercial corridor and some of the gateway areas in order to create a positive reinvestment climate. The NRZ strategy also recommends close coordination of the Lower East Side's revitalization with the redevelopment of the Steel Point Area, development of new infill housing and the redevelopment of the waterfront (including the new marina recently approved along Waterview Avenue and, as a long range strategy, the possible redevelopment of waterfront property extending from the Congress Street area to Stratford Avenue, including the existing Shoreline Star property).

During the Charrette process in 2006, one of the discussion groups expanded on their visions for the lower East Side, with Landscape Architect Stuart Sachs. While it was early in the process, many of the recommendations that came from that discussion group remained pertinent throughout the NRZ planning process. The overall concept they developed is provided below and should be utilized during the implementation phase of this project.

Lower East Side Redevelopment



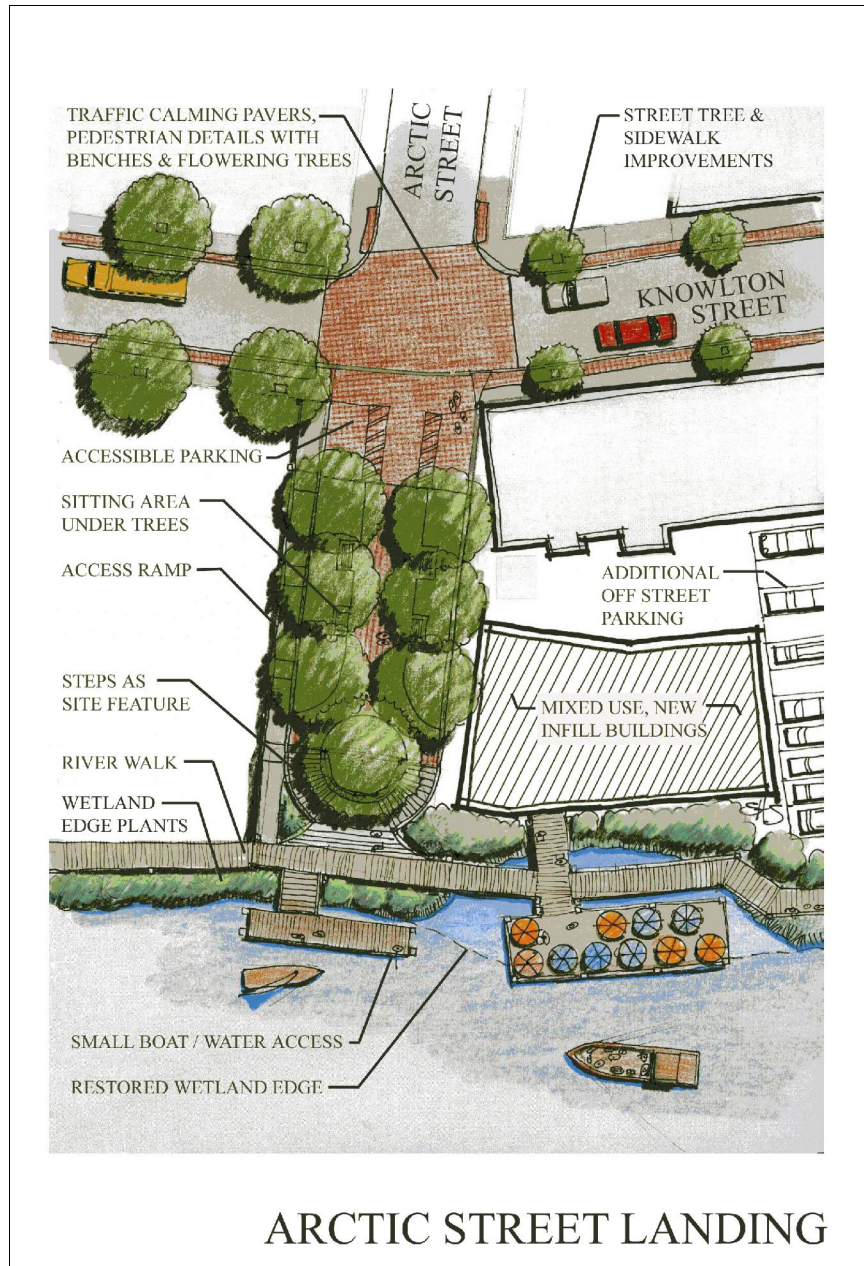
Concept Plan for Lower East Side redevelopment, showing connections with adjacent redevelopment, waterfront access, infill housing, open space enhancements, etc. Graphic courtesy of PRE/view Landscape Architects

3. Neighborhood Improvement Projects and Economic Development Projects

A series of Neighborhood Improvement Projects were identified by the East Side NRZ stakeholders as a way of improving the overall appearance - and appeal - of the East Side. For the NRZ Strategic Plan, these projects will include:

1. Improve Public Access to the Waterfront. East Side leaders recognize the importance of the neighborhood's extensive waterfront and want that waterfront to be an accessible resource for residents. As in other parts of Bridgeport, the vast majority of the waterfront is dominated by industrial and commercial buildings and uses that stifle access to the water. During the NRZ Planning Process, it was further recognized that there are already a number of existing public access points to the waterfront in the form of existing street rights-of-way to the waters edge. Some of these rights-of-way became access ways for bridges that now connect the East Side with other parts of the City. In other cases, these rights-of-way were not improved. It made no sense to construct a street that went no where other than the edge of the river. However, over time, adjacent commercial and industrial uses began to informally take over these mapped (but unmarked) rights-of-way by expanding parking lots or walkways over the rights-of-way and incorporating these areas into their operation.

While it will be beneficial to create more expansive public access and use of the waterfront in the future, these rights-of-way are a good starting point for creating waterfront access for the public in the short term. As part of this Strategy, two rights-of-way along the Knowlton Street corridor were identified for development of public access: Barnum Avenue and Arctic Street rights-of-way to the Pequonnock River. During this NRZ strategic planning process, the City's Office of Neighborhood Revitalization developed a conceptual plan for the Barnum Avenue waterfront public access and is in the process of implementing that plan. To complement that effort and to further increase public access to the water, the consultant team for this NRZ Strategic Plan looked at the Arctic Street public right-of-way and came up with the following conceptual plan for its development.



Site plan concept, above, for the Arctic Street Landing Project, prepared by PRE/View Landscape Architects.

This Plan recommends a series of modifications to enhance public access to the edge of the Pequonnock River at Arctic Street and Knowlton Street and to further support the redevelopment of this area to enhance this waterfront location and to encourage a proper mix of land uses here to support the neighborhood's revitalization. Among the key components of this proposal:

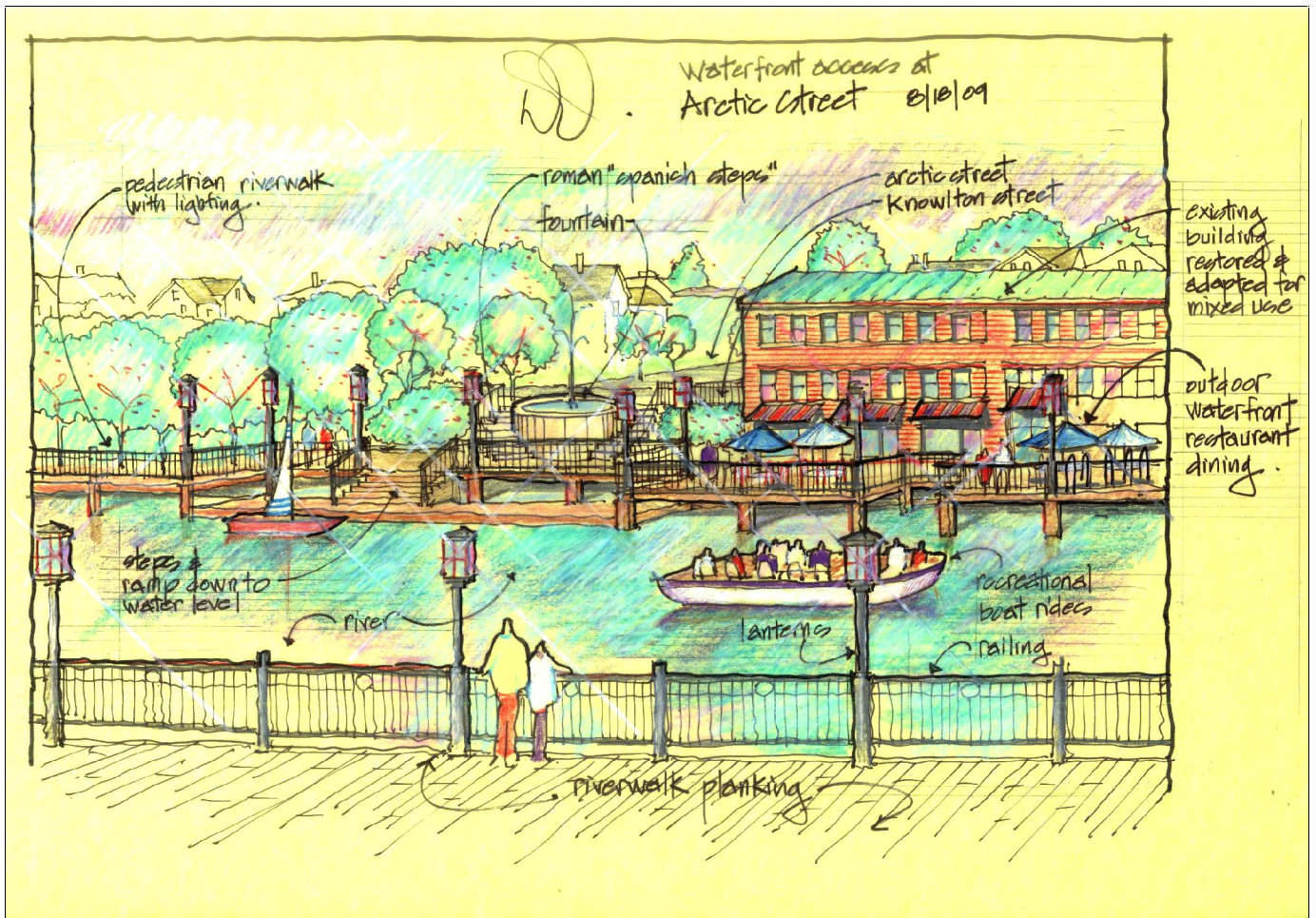
- Use of pavers to create a pedestrian environment and to establish “traffic calming” measures to slow vehicles down as they travel along Knowlton Street.
- The planting of street trees and flowering trees to make the public access inviting and user friendly. This treatment will also reinforce the beautification message stressed in the revitalization strategy.
- Creation of sitting areas with benches to enable residents to sit and enjoy views of the water.
- The creation of limited parking near Knowlton Street, including handicap accessible parking spaces.
- Due to a significant elevation drop from Knowlton Street to the waters edge (approximately 15 feet), this conceptual plan recommends the use of an access ramp and the use of steps to accommodate the change in grade.

Installation of the public access at Arctic Street will help to support future waterfront development of this segment of the River as well. The site plan above and the perspective sketch on the next page, illustrate how such an improvement can easily support the creation of a river walk/boardwalk, the introduction of docks or slips to provide for small boat access and the construction of infill buildings (preferably mixed-use) designed to enhance the public use of the waterfront (restaurants, shops, etc.). As pilot projects, the East Side NRZ should also seek to improve environmental conditions along the River and support positive treatment, e.g. installation of wetland edge plants near the waters edge to enhance the natural landscape. Current cost estimates for the Arctic Street Waterfont Access are approximately \$500,000. (See Appendices).

On the next page, a rendering shows the transformation that could occur to the existing conditions at this location. Notice the use of decorative street lighting, vibrant uses like outdoor waterfront restaurant dining, recreational boating and the pedestrian river walk, which could also be echoed on the opposite shore of this site. The use of a fountain to decorate the area where steps would take the pedestrian to the waters edge enhances the appeal and use of the site (the use of the Roman “Spanish Steps” also suggests a design theme for the area).



Photo at left shows existing conditions at the end of the Arctic Street right-of-way at the edge of the Pequonnock River. Illustration below, by David Barbour Architects, provides a perspective sketch of the Arctic Street Landing project which could provide important public access to the waterfront and assist in the neighborhood's revitalization efforts.



Another example of public access was considered on the other side of the neighborhood, along the shore of the Yellow Mill Pond. Here, there is an existing City-owned park located along the southern side of Waterview Avenue and Crescent Avenue, James Brown Park (formerly Waterview Park). Aside from Washington Park and Upchurch Park (Hallett and Goodwin Streets), this Park is one of the only public open space parks in the neighborhood. Unlike Washington Park, James Brown Park has not yet been improved for public use. While large areas around the Park have been vacant since the demolition of Father Panik Housing, there have been numerous residential developments completed in the general vicinity in recent years, and the park is located very close to the new Barnum-Waltersville School that was completed in 2008. Former residents of Father Panik Village reportedly still visit the park often and hold a large annual event there. Since there is such a limited amount of public open space within the East Side currently, this park should be improved to serve the growing resident population and to enhance the neighborhood's waterfront. As the lower East Side continues to revitalize, this park will provide over 500 linear feet of publicly owned waterfront. The sketch below, developed by PRE/View Landscape Architects, illustrates how this Park could be improved. Current cost estimates range from \$100,000 to \$175,000 (see Appendices).



Features of the Park could include an area for picnics and barbecues; areas for launching small boats, canoes and kayaks; a pier/dock for larger boats; use of access steps and ramps to provide for access to the waterfront; and ADA accessibility. On a long term basis, the City could consider realignment of Waterview Avenue to increase the overall size and functionality of the Park.

2. **Improve Streetscapes of the East Side.** Streetscape improvements are needed to soften some of the “harsh landscapes” that now exist in parts of the East Side (long sections of street that are characterized by rows of brick and frame buildings, sidewalks and streets, often in disrepair). Planting strips throughout the East Side are sometimes nonexistent and often ignored. There are not many street trees or landscaped areas to define public entrances to the community. These harsh landscapes typically offer no break in the urban appearance of the neighborhood. Streetscapes are generally dominated by imposing telephone poles with attached street lights and hanging wires, deteriorated and broken sidewalks, streets with potholes, and few or no street trees. In some cases, the wrong types of street trees were planted and their roots have grown and broken sections of sidewalk in the neighborhood. The presence of harsh landscapes sends the strong message that “no one cares about this area” or, worse, “no one lives here anymore”. The buildings tend to deteriorate and the overall appearance is one of a lackluster, uninteresting neighborhood that has been forgotten. As part of the NRZ Strategic Plan, the Consultant Team evaluated a section of Knowlton Street.

Sidewalk improvements. The Revitalization Strategy should encourage the use of pavers or alternate paved materials for sidewalk replacement projects, in order to bring color and texture to the pedestrian ways throughout the neighborhood. The costs of pavers and textured materials are generally higher than bituminous concrete. Since available public funding will be limited in coming years, the East Side NRZ should concentrate its efforts in the following way: Use of pavers and alternate colors and textures should be the preferred treatment for:

1. all visible public improvements in the gateway entrance areas
2. areas or projects of public gathering, such as commercial corridors, parks, schools and other public buildings and
3. where there is a significant private investment in rehabilitation or new construction.

Concrete should be used as a preferred material for repair or replacement of sidewalks in disrepair in more remote sections of the neighborhood. In general, concrete sidewalks should also be used primarily where there are immediate safety concerns.

Street Improvements. Efforts should be made to keep all streets in the neighborhood in safe, passable condition. Again, like with sidewalk improvements, the NRZ Revitalization Strategy should recognize the value

of street improvements to the overall appearance of the neighborhood. Since street improvements will also be done on a limited basis (due to limited funding), it is important that street improvements be performed strategically. The City should seek to work closely with the East Side NRZ to coordinate road improvement projects with the overall strategy: road overlay projects and intersection improvements should be completed in the following general order: 1. Highly visible traffic corridors (e.g. East Main Street, Barnum Avenue, Boston Avenue, Stratford Avenue, Noble Avenue, etc.), gateway entrances and areas of public gathering 2. In areas where substantial private and non-profit investment has or will occur (e.g. Washington Park/Knowlton Street Target Area). Other road improvements throughout the neighborhood should be completed as funding is available and focus primarily on safety concerns.

Street Trees and Landscaped Improvements - Street trees should be planted throughout the community to help soften the urban appearance of the East Side, as well as to enhance overall environmental quality. Care should be taken to select street trees that are ornamental or shade varieties that will not interfere with overhead wires and whose roots will not destroy the sidewalks (avoid trees with an expansive root system).



3. Improve Roadway Connections. Neighborhood leaders want to see traffic and circulation improvements to assure the neighborhood is connected to other parts of the City, a significant element of the neighborhood's economic viability; the most critical transportation connection is seen as the restoration or replacement of the Congress Street Bridge. Currently, the neighborhood is aware that the City has committed approximately \$40 Million to the replacement of the Congress Street Bridge. Some members of the City administration have suggested that the neighborhood may want to continue evaluating the potential for redirecting equivalent public resources to other parts of the revitalization strategy to maximize impact.

Economic Development Projects

In order for the East Side to grow in the future and to become a competitive neighborhood within the city, the NRZ needs to promote the completion of development projects that will become significant drivers to the economic revitalization of the neighborhood. These projects will: be of a scale that enables them to stand on their own merit, generate a renewed resurgence in reinvestment into the community, and promote the creation of new jobs and wealth within the neighborhood. These projects will be led by: 1. waterfront redevelopment projects. Building on efforts to create public access to the waterfront, the neighborhood should capitalize on its waterfront location as its most significant asset for promoting economic growth 2. Streetscape Improvements along the neighborhood's primary commercial corridors and gateway entrances 3. Promotion of efforts to help local residents to prepare and train for entry into jobs in industries viewed as having growth potential in the city and the region. The growth area initially targeted for this purpose is the health industry, which is anticipated to expand significantly in the city over the next decade or more. 4. Promote the revitalization of the neighborhood's commercial and industrial areas including: Continuation of efforts to revitalize the East Main Street commercial area, with the help of the East Main Street Revitalization Association and any other organizations that are qualified and show interest; Redevelopment of large vacant or underutilized commercial properties, especially along the waterfront (e.g. Shoreline Star property); Redevelopment of the Remington Industrial Park. Special areas with unique potential: the Congress Street "Village" area and an area along the neighborhood's eastern boundary where it is possible to develop an East Bridgeport Train Station.

1. Waterfront Redevelopment

- Redevelop the East Side waterfront to increase neighborhood public access to the water and to help the neighborhood become a waterfront destination.. To the extent possible, the East Side NRZ and the City should encourage a mix of uses and waterfront amenities that will create vitality and energy along the River, which will ultimately enhance the neighborhood's quality of life and increase its property values.
- Appropriate uses along the water should include

- Recreational boating and marinas
- Fishing (taking into account the need for proper maintenance, e.g. weekly cleaning of piers by Public Works, addition of a cleaning station, etc.)
- Waterfront recreation and pedestrian access
- Cartop boating access (kayaks, canoes, etc.)
- Selective commercial boating uses, such as day cruises
- Other suitable ***water dependent uses*** along the Pequonnock River and Yellow Mill Pond. There is a significant opportunity to also promote commercial uses that will enable public enjoyment of the waterfront (e.g. restaurants, pubs, and shops)

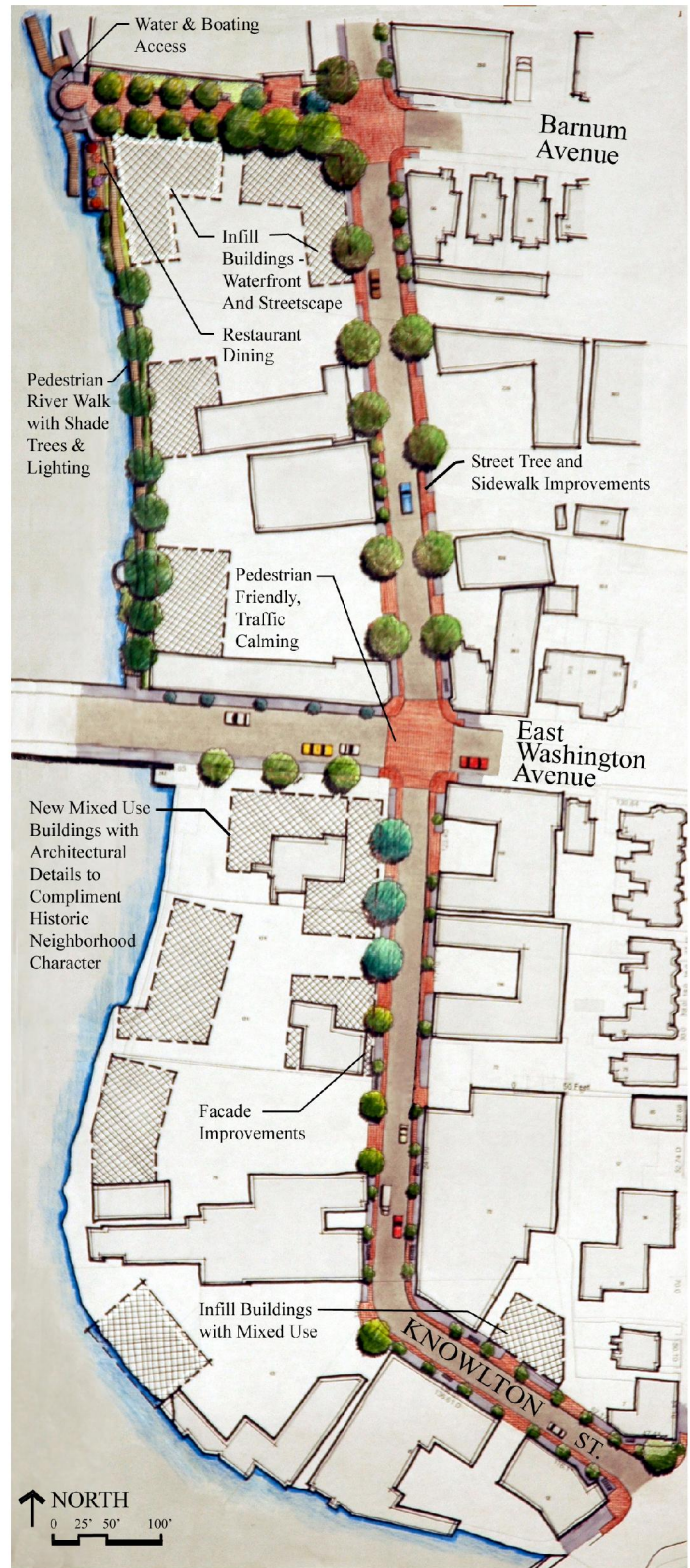
The effort should focus on developing public and private partnerships and encouraging redevelopment of waterfront for water-dependent uses, working with existing owners to the extent possible. The initial focus should be along Knowlton Street between Arctic Street and the Congress Street Bridge. The redevelopment of the Acme site would offer significant advantage to this effort, as long as the property could be cleaned to sufficient level.

Where a non-water dependent use is not possible, consider use of strengthened zoning regulations to require public access to be incorporated into the use of waterfront property when a change in use is being sought by an owner. The attached illustrations recommend the extension of a public riverwalk along the shore, as new uses are attracted to the area. The riverwalk could be constructed section-by-section by private owners as part of their redevelopment efforts. The City should be prepared to fill any gaps along the riverwalk, especially where public rights-of-way or public land exists.

- Longer term strategies should include redevelopment of waterfront property as far north as Island View Drive. The Pequonnock River is reported to have sufficient channel depth to accommodate recreational boaters of most sizes up to Island View. The main impediment to boating traffic is the height of the Washington Avenue bridge during high tide, when clearance drops to approximately six feet.

Knowlton Street/Waterfront Redevelopment

The illustration on the next page shows a close up of the Knowlton Street Target area, illustrating streetscape improvements along Knowlton Street, the redevelopment of the Pequonnock waterfront and the introduction of waterfront accessways and a waterfront walkway. Streetscape improvements along Knowlton Street are currently estimated at approximately \$1.8 Million to \$2.9 Million (see Appendices).



KNOWLTON STREETSCAPE

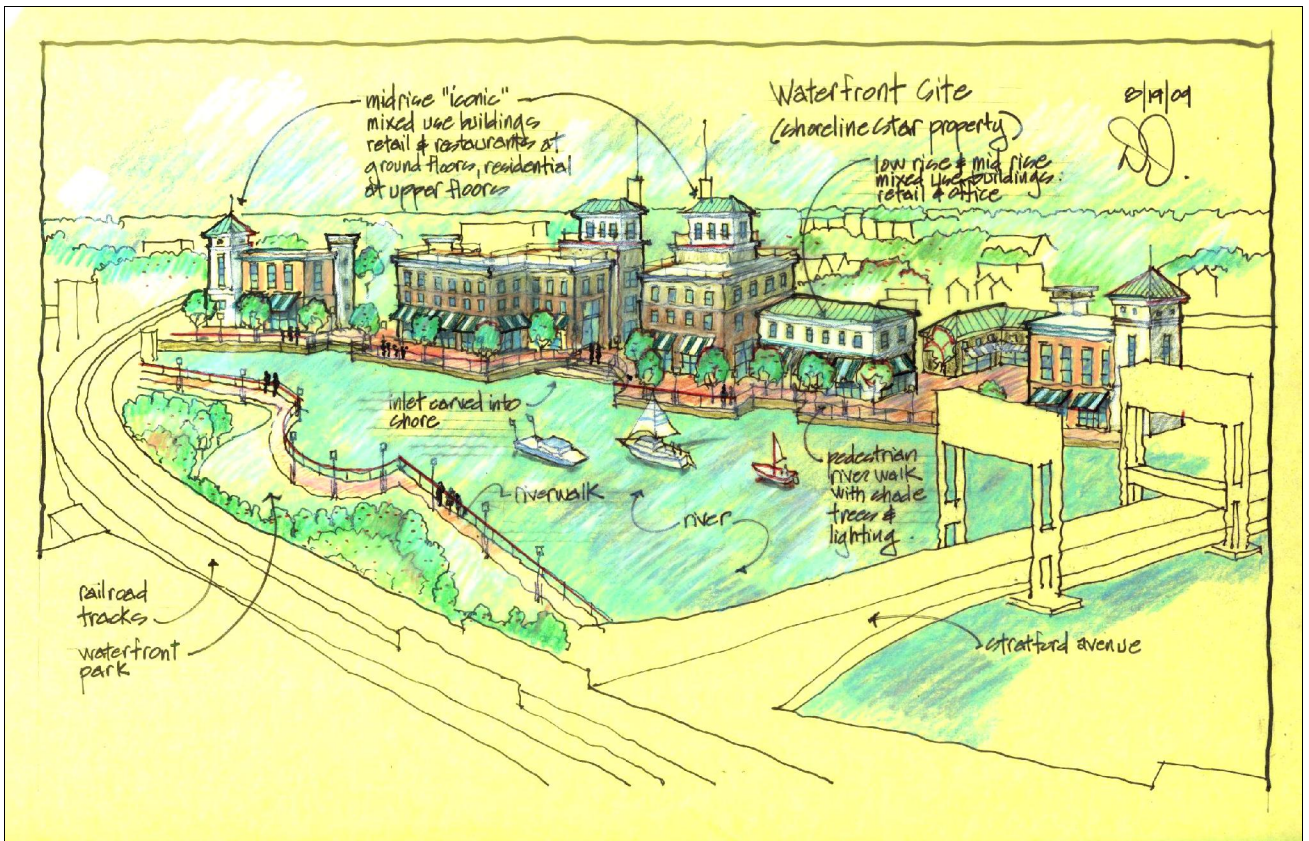
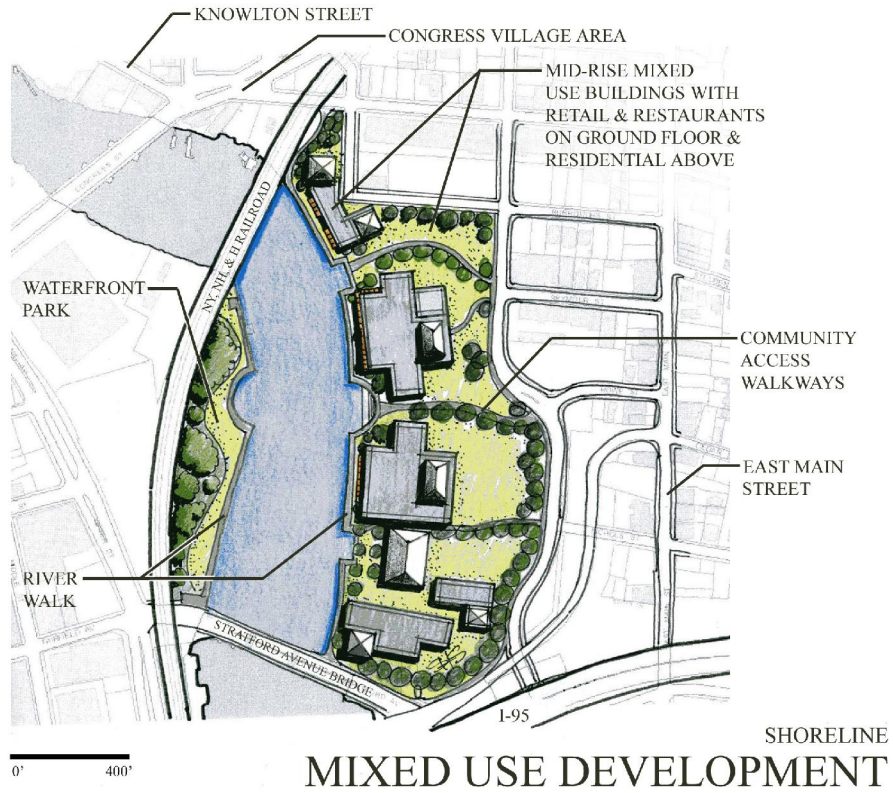
Public Access Rights-of-Way.

- When land was first subdivided and roads were laid out in the East Side, a number of road rights-of-way were shown on early maps as extending to the edge of the rivers. Along the west shore, there are a number of these locations. The first step in revitalizing the waterfront will be to create public access ways to the River. One had already been designed for the Barnum Avenue right-of-way
- **Riverwalk.** Create a continuous linear riverfront walkway for public access to the shore for pedestrians and bicyclers. The section of shorefront between Congress Street Bridge and the Shoreline Star is an additional redevelopment opportunity. In this area, there should be an emphasis on creating expanded public parking to support the redevelopment of the Congress Street Village Area and to support other public access facilities to be developed along the Pequonnock River. Current estimates for the Pequonnock Waterfront Walkway range from \$1.3 Million to \$2.0 Million (see appendices).

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY: Waterfront Redevelopment, e.g., Shoreline Star property.

The stretch of waterfront along the Pequonnock River on the Lower East Side is less developed than other sections of waterfront on the East Side. The Shoreline Star property is a specific example of a large property in single ownership with significant waterfront access and the potential for substantial redevelopment. This 16 acre property is extremely unique as to its location and size, both of which influence its development potential. The property is within 1/2 mile (walking distance) of the City's train station. This close proximity enables the development of significant residential development within short walking distance of public transportation, making the property a strong candidate for Transit Oriented Development (T.O.D.). (Transit Oriented Development generally consists of high density mixed uses within walking distance of a fixed route train facility. This form of development is gaining increasingly greater market value in the United States and is a main feature of the City's Downtown Revitalization Plan. Of significance is the fact the property is in a prime waterfront location along the Pequonnock River near Bridgeport Harbor and possesses some of the most scenic views in this area.

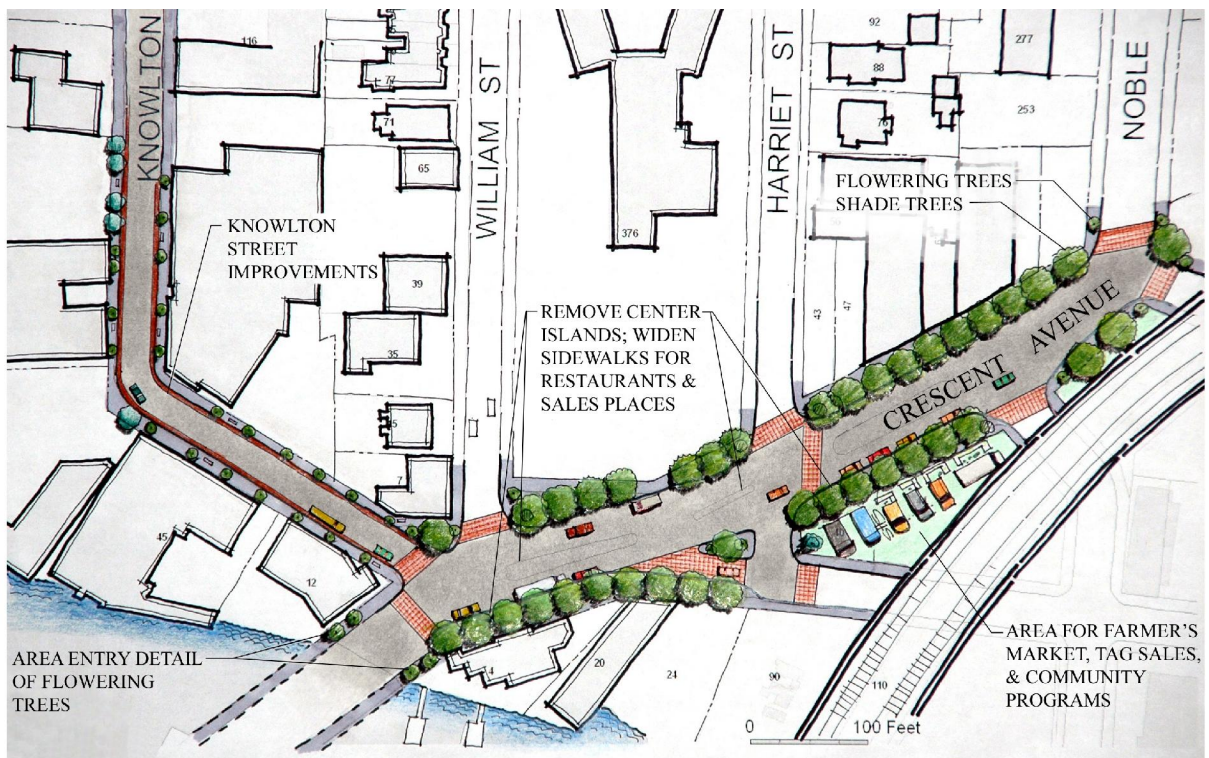
Because the property was initially developed as a dog racing track, there is only one large building and several accessory buildings currently on the property. A large percentage of the property is devoted to surface parking. Consequently, there are few existing barriers to new development and minimal requirements for building demolition to accommodate redevelopment.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY: Congress Street “Village Area”.

□ The architectural style of the existing buildings near the Congress Street entrance to the East Side has historic value and is rich in detail and design. This area could be easily redeveloped as a small, mixed-use enclave that could serve as a destination for restaurants, shops and apartments. The City might be looking at \$500,000 to \$1 million in streetscape improvements and the costs of road reconstruction. This Plan recommends:

- Elimination of the central esplanade
- Redesign of the road system to significantly expand the sidewalks and pedestrian ways and assembly areas near the buildings, in order to support a vibrant commercial area with cafes and outdoor dining as well as the opportunity to stage farmers markets, fairs, and festivals.



Scale
0' 150'

CONGRESS VILLAGE AREA



Photos of some of the interesting architectural styles and waterfront location that could support a Congress Street Village development concept..

VIII. PHASING PLAN (Short-Term & Long-Term Objectives & Strategies)

1. LEVEL ONE - Community Organization

Short-term Revitalization Projects 2010 to 2015 (1-5 years)

- a. Establish an NRZ Steering Committee, with residents of the area being in the majority. Consider bilingual and multilingual capability for staff that will support efforts of the Steering Committee. Work at building partnerships with various nonprofit organizations, City agencies, churches and community organizations that are actively working in the East Side. Encourage participation by Board of Education and by Parks Department.
- b. Publish and market recommendations of East Side NRZ Strategic Plan to City leaders (elected officials and administrators) and neighborhood leaders, to assure a clear understanding of the direction for the neighborhood and specific goals, objectives and projects the neighborhood seeks to achieve. Efforts should be made to assure the use of publications that are bilingual or multi-lingual and reflective of the resident population of the neighborhood, (e.g. Spanish, English, etc.). Consideration should be given to the hiring of staff and consultants that are also bilingual or multilingual (City Office of Neighborhood Revitalization (ONR), NRZ.)
- c. Block watch groups. Promote the creation of 5 block watch groups within the East Side and provide support to existing block watch groups. Involve the City Police Department in providing necessary training and maintaining communication. Reports should be provided to the NRZ Steering Committee on a regular basis (e.g. quarterly). (NRZ, community organizations, Police Department)
- d. Cleanup efforts. Work with local neighborhood groups to coordinate regular cleanup efforts within the neighborhood, with a special focus on the initial target areas (Knowlton Street corridor, Gateway entrances). Seek leadership, assistance from Trash Busters group. Schedule neighborhood cleanups on a regular basis (minimum two times a year: spring cleanup and the fall). (NRZ, ONR, Trash Busters, City "Be Green" Initiative, churches, and other community organizations).
- e. After hour youth athletic programs. After hour youth educational assistant programs, Big Brother and Big Sister Programs, McGivney Community Center, Orcutt Boys Club, Hall Neighborhood House, Board of Education, and other groups.

- f. Increase communication within Neighborhood. Consider newsletter, neighborhood programs, and flyers in English, Spanish and any other language that is prominently spoken within the neighborhood. (Consider neighborhood media, e.g. Radio Cumbre, LaVoz, Radio Amore). Utilize communication to reinforce goals of the Steering Committee (importance of cleanup/beautification effort, information on block watch formation, report of progress on NRZ projects, seek additional leadership, etc.) (NRZ)

Mid-Term Revitalization Projects - 2016 to 2020 (6 - 10 years)

- a. Continue short term community organization efforts
- b. Update NRZ Plan as deemed necessary
- c. Support Senior Rides Assistance programs
- d. Support Senior Medical Care and Screening
- e. Support creation of Senior Housing

Long-Term Revitalization Projects - 2020 to 2030 (11-20 years)

- f. Update NRZ Plan as deemed necessary
- g. Establish updated objectives

2. LEVEL TWO - Stabilize the Neighborhood

Short-term Revitalization Projects 2010 to 2015 (1-5 years)

Housing Rehabilitation Programs, Infill Housing Programs

- a. Negotiate housing investment strategy with Steel Point developers
- b. Seek active participation in City housing programs, especially Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- c. Reduce density in non commercial neighborhoods
- d. Increase density along corridors and transit lines
- e. Bolster protection of East Side Historic properties
- f. Develop incentives to encourage the preservation of historic and architecturally significant buildings and promote strong neighborhood design guidelines

Mid-Term Revitalization Projects - 2016 to 2020 (6 - 10 years)

- a. Update NRZ Plan as deemed necessary

Long-Term Revitalization Projects - 2020 to 2030 (11-20 years)

3. LEVEL THREE -Neighborhood Improvement Projects
Short-term Revitalization Projects 2010 to 2015 (1-5 years)

Congress Street Bridge

- a. Support City's efforts to use ARRA funding for the demolition of the existing Congress Street Bridge.
- b. Confirm availability of \$50 million to complete bridge
- c. Secure additional funds if needed (Consider City Council Capital Improvement Plan, State Delegation to secure earmark funding, future economic stimulus funding, etc.)

Waterfront Access:

- a. Make application for funding to construct public access along Barnum Avenue right-of-way (Community Development Block Grant, State of Connecticut Office of Long Island Sound License Plate Grant Program, City of Bridgeport CIP Funds. Design completed by Office of Neighborhood Revitalization)
- b. Develop design for Riverwalk along Pequonnock River
- c. Encourage inclusion of public access in private commercial and mixed-use developments (Coastal Site Plan Review, Zoning)

Mid-Term Revitalization Projects - 2016 to 2020 (6 - 10 years)

Waterfront Access:

- a. Complete design for Arctic Street Right-of-Way Public Access Improvement Project
- b. Seek funding for construction of the Arctic Street Right-of-Way Public Access Improvement Project
- c. Consider changes to Zoning Regulations and Coastal Site Plan Review procedures to promote waterfront redevelopment
- d. Encourage inclusion of public access in private commercial and mixed-use developments (Coastal Site Plan Review, Zoning)

Streetscape Improvements

- a. Knowlton Street streetscape design
- b. Secure funding to complete approx. 5 blocks of streetscape improvements in proximity to new redevelopment projects (Knowlton Street, Barnum Avenue, Washington Street, William Street, etc.).
- c. Utilize playgrounds at school sites
- d. Urban Garden Programs

4. Level Four - Economic Revitalization
Short-term Revitalization Projects 2010 to 2015 (1-5 years)

Waterfront Redevelopment

- a. Work with Economic Development Office to confirm support for redevelopment efforts
- b. Promote awareness of NRZ Strategy
- c. Work with existing waterfront property owners to change uses along Pequonnock River

East Main Street Revitalization

- a. Storefront Improvements
 - b. Streetscape Improvements
 - c. Mixed Use, Infill Housing
 - d. Facades and design standards
 - e. Sidewalk & Crosswalks Safety: Signage (school zones, historic districts etc)
 - f. Road Repairs: State and Local contacts
 - g. Bottlenecks
 - h. Parking Public Transportation
- e. Mid-Term Revitalization Projects - 2016 to 2020 (6 - 10 years)

Waterfront Access:

1. Arctic Street Right-of-Way
2. Develop design for Riverwalk along Yellow Mill River
3. Waterfront Park Redevelopment on Yellow Mill River

Economic Development

1. Shoreline Star/Lower East Side Redevelopment for Mixed-Use, waterfront destination and Transit Oriented Development
2. Design for development of new East Bridgeport Train Station on Barnum Avenue site, on edge of East Side and East End Neighborhood
3. Promote the development of Transit Oriented Development in vicinity of new train station, which

f. Long-Term Revitalization Projects - 2021 to 2030 (11-20 years)

- a. New East Bridgeport Train Station
- b. East Side Transit Oriented Development projects

IX. Performance and Review Standards

Earlier in this Plan, it was recommended that the East Side NRZ adopt an annual work plan. The adoption of that plan should be a collaborative exercise by a cross representation of the various neighborhood stakeholders.

The plan should include specific performance standards to enable a review and assessment of the degree to which the Committee is achieving the goals of this revitalization strategy. During the development of this plan, the following performance standards were envisioned as examples of statistics that could be monitored periodically to determine the success of the plan:

- Number and percent of properties that are vacant
- Number and percent of properties that are classified as blighted
- Number and percent of housing units that are owner-occupied
- Number and percent of housing units that are renter-occupied
- Percent of population below poverty levels
- Median household income
- Linear feet of waterfront accessible to the general public
- Number of new businesses operating on the East Side
- Education Levels and Skill Levels
- Crime Statistics
- Employment/Unemployment Levels

X. Regulatory Issues

The East Side NRZ Steering Committee should play an active role in communicating the goals of this Revitalization Strategy to elected officials, City agencies, and other City leaders. As part of this role, the NRZ should actively participate in public meetings that will affect the future decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals and other regulatory bodies affecting the future land use of the East Side. Efforts should be made to encourage or support changes to the City's current zoning regulations or changes to the City's Zoning Map that could enhance the implementation of this revitalization strategy. Among them:

Zoning Amendments

-Support the aggressive use of the zoning regulations and the Coastal Site Plan Review process to:

1. **Significantly expand the opportunities for public access to the waterfront.** Other communities in the Fairfield County region, including nearby Stratford, have incorporated

requirements in their zoning regulations that waterfront properties provide a walkway along the waterfront and meaningful forms of public access (access, fishing, docks, launching ramps, etc.). The Coastal Area Management process requires the use of property for a water dependent purpose (uses that cannot be located inland) and, where onsite characteristics are not conducive for that purpose, the provision of public access.

It is believed that much of the vision for waterfront redevelopment along the Pequonnock River and Yellow Mill Pond could be achieved in conjunction with approvals for development of private property. This could be one tool for promoting the development of a boardwalk along the Pequonnock for example, in conjunction with the Knowlton Street Redevelopment concept.

2. Increase the number of water dependent uses along the neighborhood's waterfront.

-Consider advocating for inclusionary zoning in Bridgeport's Zoning Regulations.

- Support Zoning Amendments that can support the creation of mixed-use developments as envisioned in the City's recent update to the Plan of Conservation and Development

Zoning District Changes

The East Side NRZ should advocate for a number of changes to the City Zoning Map. Among these changes:

1. Support changes to the Zoning Districts of the City's Zoning Map as contained in the City's recently adopted Plan of Conservation and Development.
2. Support the rezoning of waterfront property in the neighborhood to discourage the continuation of industrial and heavy commercial uses. Models to consider would include waterfront business districts and mixed-use districts that would permit waterfront development uses (marinas, docks, fishing piers, boardwalks, etc.)
3. Support the creation of Mixed-Use Zoning Districts that would promote the creation of Mixed-Uses along the lower East Side, properties like the Shoreline Star property, and

along Barnum Avenue and the area near the industrial redevelopment area (Remgrit properties).

4. Consider the creation of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Districts within walking distance (approx. ½ mile) of the existing train station in downtown Bridgeport; On a long-term basis, consider the creation of similar TOD Districts around the East Bridgeport Train Station if one is developed.

APPENDICES

- A Certification of City Council Adoption of City of Bridgeport Resolution #278-05 - East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone

- B East Side NRZ ByLaws, adopted February 8, 2006

- C Outreach Efforts

- D Cost Estimates for East Side NRZ Projects

APPENDICES

- A Certification of City Council Adoption of City of Bridgeport Resolution #278-05 - East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
- B East Side NRZ ByLaws, adopted February 8, 2006
- C Outreach Efforts
- D Cost Estimates for East Side NRZ Projects

APPENDIX A

Certification of City Council Adoption of City of Bridgeport
Resolution #278-05 - East Side Neighborhood
Revitalization Zone



CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

45 Lyon Terrace, Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604 • Telephone (203) 576-7081 • Fax (203) 332-5608

FLEETA C. HUDSON
City Clerk

ANN L. MURRAY
Assistant City Clerk

January 12, 2007

Thomas K. Coble
Office of Planning and Economic Development
City of Bridgeport, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Cobel:

The City Council of the City of Bridgeport on February 5, 2007 adopted the following resolution #278-05:

East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
September 13, 2006

WHEREAS, in 1995, the Connecticut General Assembly adopted Public Act 340, "An Act Establishing a Neighborhood Revitalization Process", establishing a new model for economic revitalization of neighborhoods on the local level; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bridgeport on May 16, 1996 adopted a resolution endorsing the concept of Neighborhood Revitalization Zones; and

WHEREAS, the first step in establishing a Neighborhood Revitalization Zone is to determine the boundaries, which are to be jointly determined by the neighborhood committee and the City; and

WHEREAS, the boundaries for the newly established Neighborhood Revitalization Zone for the East Side are to be as follows:

Beginning at the corner of Boston Avenue and William Street Block 1668 then: travel south two blocks to Huntington Road then: south along the Pequonnock River at the juncture of River Street and Huntington Road/Knowlton Street, then south along the eastern shore line of the Pequonnock River then: at the junction of Congress Street stay along the eastern shoreline of the Pequonnock River: then under Route I-95 continuing along Bridgeport Harbor shoreline to the Steele Point shoreline: then turning north into the Yellow Mill Pond where, at Stratford Avenue, the boundary is located mid-channel heading northeast to Yellow Mill Pond's terminus then: north across the rail-road tracks to Barnum Avenue then" north along the western borders of Blocks 1808, 1802 and 1804 Barnum Avenue to Boston Avenue then: north west along Boston Avenue to the junction of William Street.

Blocks included in the East Side NRZ are:

800-864
1600-1665, 1668
1700-1777
1802, 1804, 1808,


Thomas K. Coble
February 12, 2007
Re: Approval #278-05
Page 2

Census Tracts 0735, 0736, 0738, 0739, 0740

WHEREAS, the boundaries encompasses both sides of the streets and all the streets located within the defined boundaries; and Now Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the City recognizes and adopts the East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone with its boundaries.

Attest:



Ann L. Murray
Assistant City Clerk

ALM: pa

cc: S. Shaw, Planning Dept.
N. Hadley, Director/OPED

278-05

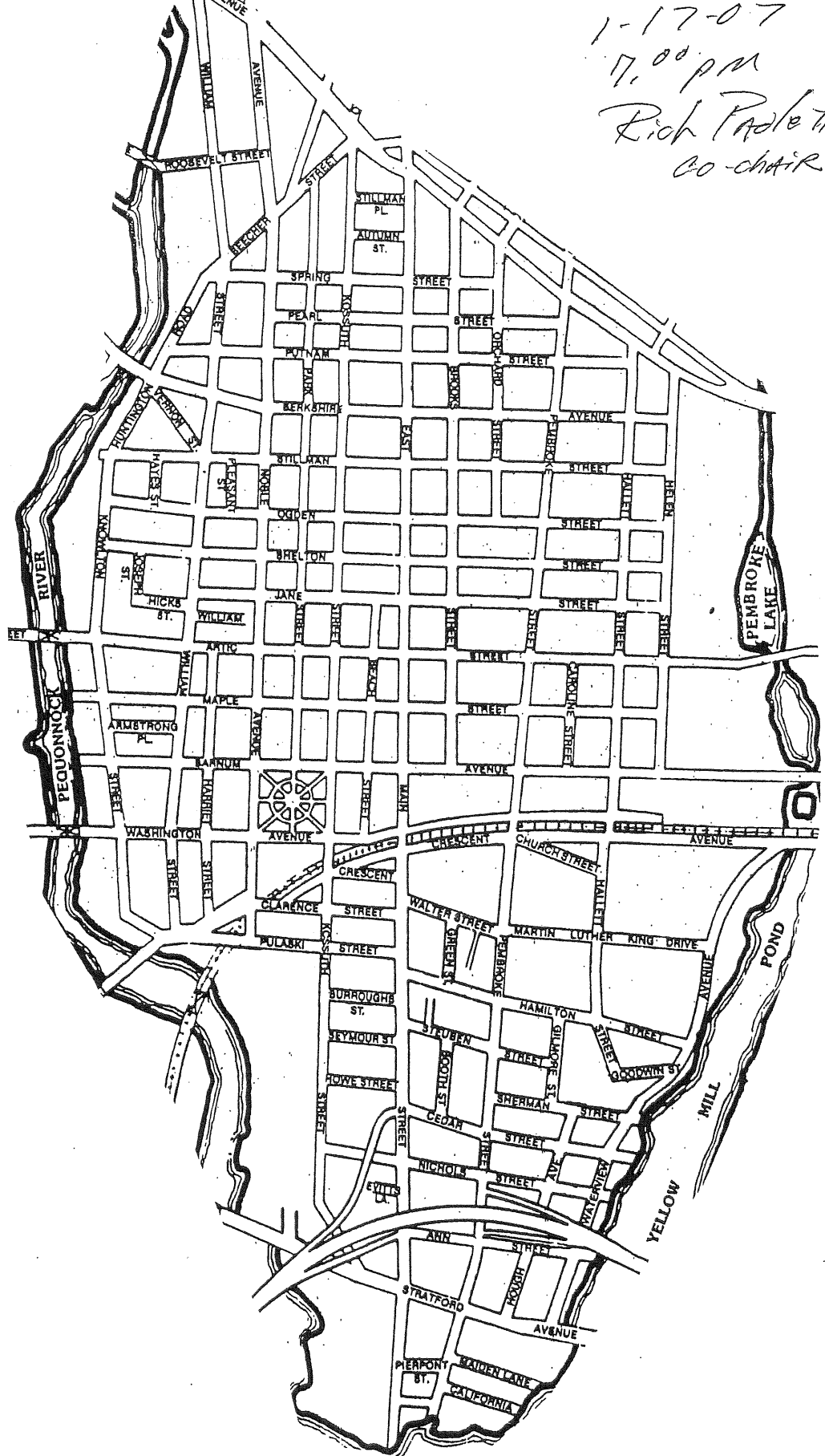
Doston AVENUE

Exhibit A

1-17-07

7:00 pm

Rich Pasletto
co-chair



RECEIVED
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

07 JAN 18 AM 10:10

ATTEST _____
CITY CLERK

APPENDIX B

East Side NRZ ByLaws, adopted February 8, 2006

Draft Bylaws (Basic Concepts)
East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Planning Committee

1. **Mission.** The sole mission of the East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone is to draft a Strategic Plan for the neighborhood pursuant to Connecticut State statute, Public Act 95-340.

2. **Open Membership.** Membership in the NRZ Planning Committee shall be open to all residents, investment property owners, business owners and operators, non-profit and faith-based representatives, and any other persons having a stake in the East Side neighborhood. The members of the Outreach Subcommittee of the NRZ Planning Committee shall be charged with the task of ensuring that the majority of participants in the planning process are residents, as required by state law, and that all other stakeholder groups are involved.

3. **Subcommittees.** The work of the NRZ Planning Committee shall take place in 6 subcommittees:
 - Outreach – responsible for keeping the community involved in the planning process; increasing attendance and participation at meetings; overseeing the community surveys; meeting with stakeholders to explain the NRZ process.

In addition to Outreach, five committees shall be responsible for writing the following Sections of the NRZ Plan:

- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Services
- Zoning

Each subcommittee shall be responsible for setting its meeting dates and times, developing a schedule of work, and presenting draft findings and recommendations back to the larger Planning Committee.

4. **Consensus Building.** The NRZ Planning Committee and its subcommittees shall whenever possible operate by consensus. Each subcommittee shall designate a chairperson and a recording secretary, provided however that the subcommittee may elect to have those positions assigned on a rotating basis.

5. NRZ Planning Committee Meetings. The Planning Committee shall establish a schedule of meetings during which each of the subcommittees will present their draft findings and recommendations. The Planning Committee may select a person to chair the meetings, or it may determine to allow chairmanship of the meetings to rotate.

6. Public Statements. Under no circumstances should any person or persons claim to speak on behalf of the NRZ. The recommendations of the NRZ Planning Committee will be contained in the Strategic Plan, which will be approved by the community at large as well as the Bridgeport City Council.

7. Technical Assistance. Each subcommittee shall be provided technical assistance by the City of Bridgeport, Office of Planning and Economic Development, and from other consultants as the City may from time to time retain.

APPENDIX C

Outreach Efforts



Residents speak out on improving Bridgeport's East Side

By edit@ctpost.com (AARON LEO aleo@ctpost.com)
The Connecticut Post

BRIDGEPORT — Aidee Nieves is a native of the city's East Side. Annette Hargrave moved to the neighborhood two years ago.

Despite their different perspectives, the women agree that even though the area needs improvement, all is not lost.

"The East Side gets a bad rap," Nieves said.

"I see things are moving," Hargrave said.

On Tuesday, the two attended the first meeting on the city's plan to create a Neighborhood Revitalization Zone for the East Side. About 60 people attended the meeting at Luis Munoz Marin School.

By designating an area as an NRZ, development projects within it can be expedited. Gaining NRZ status takes numerous steps. One of the first are meetings with residents, neighborhood groups and businesses to plot the future. Those meetings will lead to a plan of specific recommendations that the City Council must review.

The next step is setting up committees to conduct neighborhood studies.

Meanwhile, planning for an NRZ in the West End gets under way at 6 p.m. today with a first meeting at Bassick High School.

The first East Side session gave residents an opportunity to discuss neighborhood issues, and learn how an NRZ might be able to address some of their concerns.

One thing that's symptomatic of the East Side's problems, Nieves said, is the city's half-built firehouse along Old Mill Green on Boston Avenue.

The first builder walked off the job, leaving behind structural mistakes and forfeiting a \$2 million bond on the stalled project. The surety company holding the bond must now hire another construction firm.

"People are disgusted with the firehouse," Nieves said. "This wouldn't be allowed in the North End or the West Side."

Attracting businesses to the East Side should also be a priority, she said.

"We need more businesses to bring businesses into the East Side," Nieves said. "If we had another major grocery store, it would help us."

Stores would attract shoppers — more "positive traffic" — instead of illegal drug trafficking, she said.

Both women said cleaning up and redeveloping vacant lots would encourage people to move there.

"I didn't like the empty lots. The [city] cleans them up and [vandals] trash them again," Hargrave said.

Part of designating the area a redevelopment zone would mean reducing red tape in legal processes, such as eminent domain, which the city could use to seize the vacant lots and blighted properties.

One unidentified man suggested encouraging home ownership instead of renters.

"People just don't have a stake in [the neighborhood]," he said of renters.

About 77 percent of East Side residents rent their homes, said Tony Ball, who is coordinating a separate NRZ project for the East End, as well as in the city's Hollow and West End.

Absentee owners of rundown homes and vacant lots are the problem, said Antonio Diaz.

Diaz said he moved to the North End two years ago after 33 years in the East Side because of the crime and deteriorating buildings in that neighborhood, he said.

Compounding those problems, he said, are the non-resident owners of vacant East Side properties.

"They purchase these dilapidated houses. They're using them as tax shelters," Diaz said.

He cited a ramshackle house on Orchard Street later damaged by fire as an example.

"This guy has let it sit there for close to 10 years," Diaz said.

The owner is now fixing the garage, but not the house, he said.

Illegal car-repair businesses and illegally dumped garbage and automotive fluids also plague the area, Diaz said.

Finally, he said, the 50-acre Steel Point tract should be redeveloped. The city is mapping plans to seize part of the property from the United Illuminating Co., but the process could take years if UI resists, Diaz said.

But the biggest hurdle to revitalizing the East Side will be to overcome the disappointment left by numerous past failed plans, Diaz and Nieves said.

Ball said NRZs can be effective, citing the City Council's recent approval of an NRZ for the Hollow. The plan, which took more than a year to formulate, is beginning to be implemented.

Both Nieves and Hargrave said they would attend future meetings on the East Side plan. The next meeting is slated for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 19 at the Orcutt Branch of the Boys Club and Girls Club, 102 Park St.

Aaron Leo, who covers regional issues, can be reached at 330-6222.

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URL: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/9528655/>

What's wrong with this picture? If you believe bridges are meant to be crossed, come to the East Side Design Charrette!



May 5-7, 2006

Luis Muñoz Marin School
(479 Helen Street)

Kick-Off: Friday May 5, 5:30-8:00 pm

All-Day Planning: Saturday May 6, 8:30 am-5:00 pm
(come for as long as you want)

Wrap-Up, Presentations: Sunday, May 7, 1:00-4:00 pm

For more information, call

Beverly Hoppie (650-9549) or

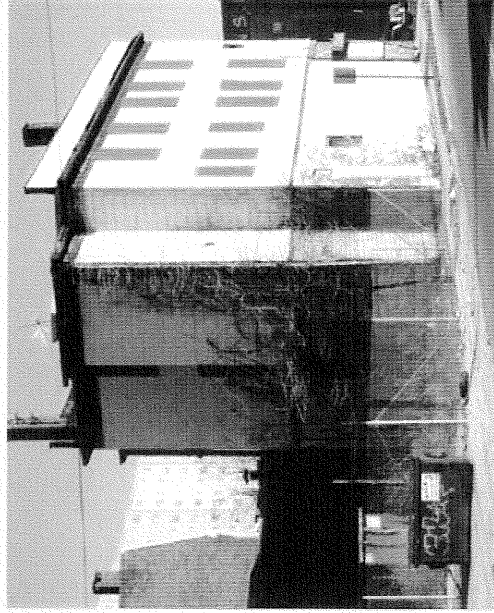
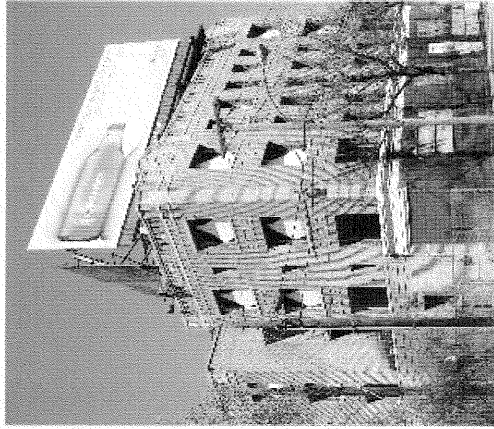
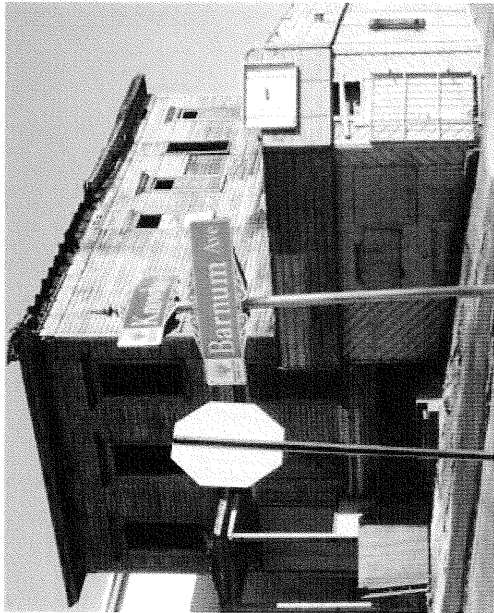
Aidee Nieves (334-2005)

Help Redesign the East Side. All are Welcome, Refreshments Provided.

What Do You See?

- A. Abandoned Buildings.
- B. Opportunities.

If you chose "B", come to the East Side Design Charrette!



Help Redesign the East Side. All are Welcome, Refreshments Provided.

May 5-7, 2006

**Luis Muñoz Marin School
(479 Helen Street)**

Kick-Off: Friday May 5, 5:30-8:00 pm

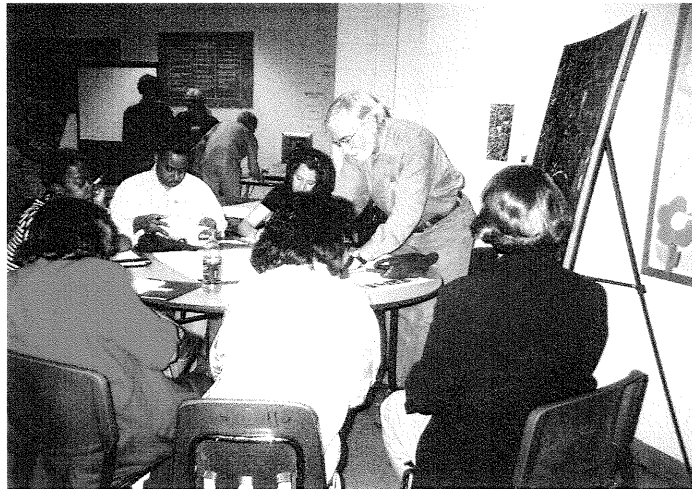
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**For more information, call
Beverly Hoppie (650-9549) or
Aidee Nieves (334-2005)**

*Sponsored by the East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
Planning Committee, Holy Rosary Church, and the Achievement
First Bridgeport Academy*

What Do YOU Want For the East Side???



Come voice your opinions at a
**Neighborhood Revitalization
Workshop**

On Saturday, March 14, 2009
10:00 AM to 2:30 PM at the
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy
391 East Washington Avenue; Bridgeport, CT 06608

The East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Planning Committee will present some of their ideas for making the neighborhood a better place to live and to work. You will be given the chance to react to these ideas and make your own suggestions.

Refreshments and Lunch Provided by
The East Main Street Revitalization Association and
The City of Bridgeport

Please confirm your attendance to Paul T. Barnum at 366-1226 or
Angie Staltaro at 673-6345 by March 11 if possible.

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

Meeting Date: SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH, 2009

Facilitators:

Place: ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
R Emerald Casvins	591 Brook St.		993-9314	shilovechild@yahoo.com
Monica Victor	134 Linden Ave.	BWB.	203 5124730	monivv@gmail.com
David Barbours	202 Pearsall Place, Bpt.	Architect	395.4474	DBarbour@optonline.net
ROVENA MOUNING	JOHN MOUNING			
Karen McIntosh	McGivney P.O. Box 5220 Bport, ct	McGivney Community Center	333-2789	Kmcintosh@mcgivney.org
Iris Cordero Taylor	1470 Barum Ave Bpt., CT 06610	Habitat for Humanity	333-2642 X 110	families@HabitatCFC.org
D/MIENI KVAPIZYK	595 E WASH AVE Bpt	AVC Powsu62t	208.4808	
Marilyn Feliciano	498 Hallett St Bpt CT 06608		870-1503	marilynfeliciano@yahoo.com
SBS W. MAYER	300 Congress St BPT CT	BAT P.D.	581-5150	
Bernice Williams	571 Brooks St Bpt CT	QCC		

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Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
CAROL LEVINSON	1070 PARK AVE	ABCD	366-8241 X240	
Denise Thompson	319 Burnham Ave	Washington Park Assoc	521-0938	cpjrt@sbcglobal.net
Rick Toenes	108 Midland	PRP	610-4724	
Ed Pignette	34 Hackley St Bpt	PRP	333-3033	
Katrice Bullock	242 Dover Street	Groundworks Bridgeport	408-5984	Katrice.Bullock@gmail.com
Veronica Ortiz	88 Rutledge St. BPT 06606	CITY OF BPT. Social Services	576 7472	VERONICA.ORTIZ@BPTCT.C
Karen Zucker	Pearl St.	ABCD	354 6904 X 3011	
Bill Coleman	City →		576 3980	
Maria Ramos	659 Noble Ave Bpt Ct	Huelks	203 9236099	aleimycastro@yahoo.com
Sabrina Jean-Baptiste	83 Highland Ave.	buildOn	203-60-5096	sabrinajbaptiste@yahoo.com

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

Meeting Date: SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH, 2009

Facilitators:

Place: ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
Lud Spittelh	982 E. Main St	Optima		lspittelh@optima.com
Museen Lindertfel	227 Autumn Ridge Rd Fairfield Ct	UCPA So Ct. Inc	203 372-1723	mlindouopase@gmail.com
JANET WALKER	376 E WASH AVE Bpt. Ct.	RETIRED	367-8124	
Maribel Sagnabir	248 Red Oak Rd	Habitat for Humanity	522 5828	families2@habitatct.org
Aidee Nieux	348 Park St	EAST SIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL	5566129	Aideenieux@optonline.net
DORNA STOVER	2 TRAP FALLS SHELTON	REGIONAL NETWORK OF PROG.	929-1954	DORNA.STOVER@RNPINC.ORG
Lyn Salsajur	360 Thayer Bpt Winton	Bpt Hospital	384 3946	KCSALS@BTHESPI.ORG
FRANK DERICO	510 Bosnam Ave	MACH	366-3300 x224	fderico@muscandartcenter.org
Jacqueline Romero	1057 E Main St Bpt Ct of	ASPIRA OF CT	502-9204	jromero@ct.aspirainc.org
Elise P. Pratt	634 N. Ridgfield	Seamless	334.3205	

vsiben
@ct.
aspirainc.org

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING	Meeting Date: SATURDAY, MARCH 14 TH , 2009
Facilitators:	Place: ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
Vonda McKenithan	347 Huntington RI		3	laborista@gmail
Jeff Reichman	60 Silo Hill Rd Madison			
MARINA BERNARD	175 MADISON			
Betty Connolly	562 N Ridgewood Bpt		366 - 5743	
Stephen T. Hyslop	7 Trumbull Rd Trumbull, CT 06611	Bridgeport Parks & Recreation	576 - 7140	stev.hyslop@ bridgeportct.gov
Thomas Burns	60 CROWN ST	Trash - busters	367 - 3893	tomburns@ optonline.net
Julio Reinos	Friends of Bridgeport Public Library	1241 Main St BPT 06604	338-8146	JPreino@yahoo.com
Daphne Scott	Harbor Vices			
MATTHEW PRESTON	285 Knowlton	Bridgeport Design Group	367-7126	m.preston@bridgeport design.com
KEN PAUL				ACHIEVEMENT FIRST BOARD CHAIR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING **Meeting Date:** SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH, 2009
Facilitators: **Place:** ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
PAUL T. BARNUM	177 Maple	CHAIR	366-1226	Paul.Barnum@yahoo.com
Hea Brown	564 North RIDGEFIELD AVE		367 9822	
Maria Alicea	267 Grant Street	Bpt Hosp.	384-3761	fmalice@bpthosp.org
Iris Molina	752 East Main st	City of Bpt	576-7472	Iris Molina @ bridgeport CT. gov
SYLVESTER SALCEDO	326 E. WASH AVE BPT		650-0116	SSALCEDO98@aol.com
Joe Kolar	82 Porter St.	Groundwork Bridgeport	335-6126	joseph.gwbpt@svcglobel.net
Esteban J. Sebourne	112 Center St BPT CT, 06604	NRZ Member	581-4567	esebourne@aol.com
R. Buccilli	524 Banks St	-	333-5042	-
Mary Lou Thompson	115 A William St. Bpt, CT 06608		382-9477	timetowin-2009@yahoo.com
Flore Soto	171 Judson Pt. Bpt.	Holy Rosary Church	333-5002	

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

Meeting Date: SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH, 2009

Facilitators:

Place: ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
Christina Luu	6024 GRAND STREET	Build on		CHRISTINA.T.LUU@gmail.com
Tom Coble	999 Broad St	City of Apt		
Rev. MARJORIE NUNES	116 Clermont Ave.	Sumnerfield UMC		RENUNNES@optimum.net
Angie Stallone	999 Broad St			
MARIAN EVANS	752 East Main St	HEALTH DEPT 1		marian.evans@bridgeportct.gov
Edgar Rodriguez	426 E Washington Ave Apt. C 06608	Luz de Paz F.H.	330-8081	Luzdepaz@optonline.net
Manolito Diaz	114 So. Broadway Lawrence, MA		978/685-5732	

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING	Meeting Date: SATURDAY, MARCH 14 TH , 2009
Facilitators:	Place: ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
Paul Mendes	72 George St	Naval Army Development Corp	394 9957	PMendes123@MSN.com
Damilola	1335 East main		762 5748	Dami 952 @yahoo.com

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: EAST SIDE NRZ STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING	Meeting Date: SATURDAY, MARCH 14 TH , 2009
Facilitators:	Place: ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ACADEMY

Name	Address	Company (if applicable)	Phone	E-Mail
Kweta Henry	242 Shelton Street	Build On	(203) 335-1021	KwetaHenry91@yahoo.com
Shad Nando				
Diamond Hawthkins	Downing Ave	Build On	(203) 9082048	shadbabyfoaerea@yahoo.com

What Do **YOU** Think of the NRZ Plan for the East Side??? Come voice your opinions on the proposed NRZ Strategic Plan...



Come voice your opinions at a
**Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ)
Community Meeting**

Wednesday, March 3rd, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
(Snow Date: Wednesday, March 10th)

Holy Rosary School Hall
(formerly Achievement First Bridgeport Academy)
391 East Washington Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06608

The East Side Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Planning Committee will present the final proposal of the East Side NRZ Strategic Plan, prior to it being presented to the Common Council for review and approval. This will be your opportunity, as community stakeholders, to give input on the neighborhood's vision and ideas for making it a better place to live and to work. Prior to the meeting, copies of the plan will be available for your review at the Office of Planning and Economic Development / City Hall Annex, the Clerk's Office / City Hall, the Burroughs Public Library, the Old Mill Green Public Library and the McGivney Community Center. Or if you would like to obtain a copy by email, please contact Beverly at beverlyhoppie@sbcglobal.net or Dave at david_killeen@comcast.net.

For additional information
Contact Angie at 203.673.6345 or Beverly at 203.650.9545

¿Qué piensa **USTED sobre el Plan del NRZ para el East Side?
Venga, déjenos saber sus opiniones sobre el propuesto Plan
Estratégico del NRZ...**



Venga, déjenos saber sus opiniones
durante la próxima reunión de la comunidad del
Comité de Zona de Revitalización de Vecindad (NRZ)

Miércoles, 3º de Marzo, 2010 de 6:00pm – 8:00pm
(En caso de mal tiempo – sera el dia, Miércoles, 10 de Marzo, 2010)

Salón de la escuela Holy Rosary
(anteriormente Achievement First Bridgeport Academy)
391 East Washington Avenue; Bridgeport, CT 06608

El Comité de Planificación de Zona de Revitalización de Vecindad presentará la oferta final del Plan Estratégico del East Side, antes de presentarlo al Consejo Común para revisión y aprobación. Esta será su oportunidad, como miembros de la comunidad, de dar sus recomendaciones sobre su visión e ideas para mejorar nuestra vecindad y hacerla un mejor lugar para vivir y trabajar. Antes de la reunión, habrán copias del plan disponibles para su revisión en la Oficina de Planificación y Desarrollo Económico (Office of Planning and Economic Development), City Hall Annex, Oficina del Clero (Clerk), City Hall, Biblioteca Pública Burroughs, Biblioteca Publica Old Mill Green, y Centro Comunitario McGivney. Si le gustaría obtener una copia por correo electrónico, por favor de contactar a Beverly a beverlyhoppie@sbcglobal.net o a Dave a david_killeen@comcast.net.

Para información adicional
Contacte a Angie @ 203.673.6345 o Beverly @ 203.650.9545

APPENDIX D

Cost Estimates for East Side NRZ Projects

An Estimate for EAST SIDE NRZ - LIMITED IMPROVEMENTS

ALL NUMBERS ARE PRESENTED AS A REPRESENTATION OF THE MAGNITUDE OF COST - NOT EXACT MEASURED QUANTITIES

			UNIT COST		AMOUNT	
	UNIT	QUANTITY	MODEST	CONSERVATIVE	MODEST	CONSERVATIVE
KNOWLTON STREET						
Trees, Street Lights, Signs, Benches, Curbs, Walkway, St. Pavement	LF	3850	\$ 475.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,828,750.00	\$ 2,887,500.00
Overall Length is 1925 LF						
PEQUONNOCK WATERFRONT WALKWAY						
Pedestrian Walk, Lights, Benches, Mitigation, Plantings, etc.	LF	1125	\$ 1,150.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,293,750.00	\$ 1,968,750.00
Arctic Street to East Washington Avenue 1125 LF						
ARCTIC STREET - WATER FRONT ACCESS						
Mitigation, Plantings, etc.	LS	1	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Construction	LS	1	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 750,000.00
BARNUM STREET - WATER FRONT ACCESS						
Mitigation, Plantings, etc.	LS	1	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
Construction	LS	1	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 300,000.00
CONGRESS STREET - VILLAGE CONCEPT						
Streetscape, signs, trees & shrubs, sidewalks, etc.	LS	1	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 125,000.00
Rebuilt Street Construction	LS	1	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00
WATERVIEW PARK RENOVATION						
Street Closing - Amalgamated to park	LF	1000	\$ 350.00	\$ 425.00	\$ 350,000.00	\$ 425,000.00
Mitigation Planting	LS	1	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 75,000.00
Construction	LS	1	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 175,000.00
1000 LF Walk & Curbs, street pavement (Both sides of street)						
SHORELINE STAR HOUSING (Not Housing/buildings)						
Waterfront Walkway w/ some trees, etc	LF	1850	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 925,000.00	\$ 1,850,000.00
Metro North/Shoreline Park	LF	1650	\$ 350.00	\$ 425.00	\$ 577,500.00	\$ 701,250.00
West Side of Pequonock Landscape budget included	LS	1	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 750,000.00
I-95 LANDSCAPE BUFFER						
Parklike setting at Street	LS	1	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 450,000.00
ESTIMATED COST RANGE					\$ 6,765,000.00	\$ 11,627,500.00
CONGRESS STREET PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE						
Mitigation Planting	LS	1	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Construction	EA	1	\$ 10,000,000.00	\$ 15,000,000.00	\$ 10,000,000.00	\$ 15,000,000.00
ESTIMATE WITH PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE					\$ 16,780,000.00	\$ 26,647,500.00