



MILL HILL

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ZONE STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared by the
Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee

April 2013

With assistance from

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MILL HILL NRZ PLAN

The Honorable Bill Finch, Mayor, City of Bridgeport

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1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND OF THE MILL HILL NRZ STRATEGIC PLAN

Under the leadership of the Honorable Mayor Bill Finch, officials and leaders of the City of Bridgeport and Mill Hill neighborhood began developing a NRZ Strategic Plan for the Mill Hill neighborhood in 2011 and embarked on an accelerated planning process beginning in late spring of 2012. The Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Process, established by the CT General Assembly in 1995, offered an appropriate vehicle to craft a plan to stabilize and improve the neighborhood. Through this process, various stakeholders (residents, businesses, non-profit organizations, community groups and City officials) were brought together in a partnership to develop 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 06, 1996. The City Council then adopted a resolution establishing the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone and its boundaries on March 04, 2013 (Resolution # 166-11. See appendix).

While the State legislation created a mechanism for City and neighborhood leaders to work together creatively, there was no specific provision for state funding of projects or programs identified within the NRZ Strategic Plan. The Mill Hill 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 they become available. This NRZ Strategic Plan should help the City and the neighborhood to guide the use of limited resources towards the successful revitalization of the Mill Hill neighborhood.

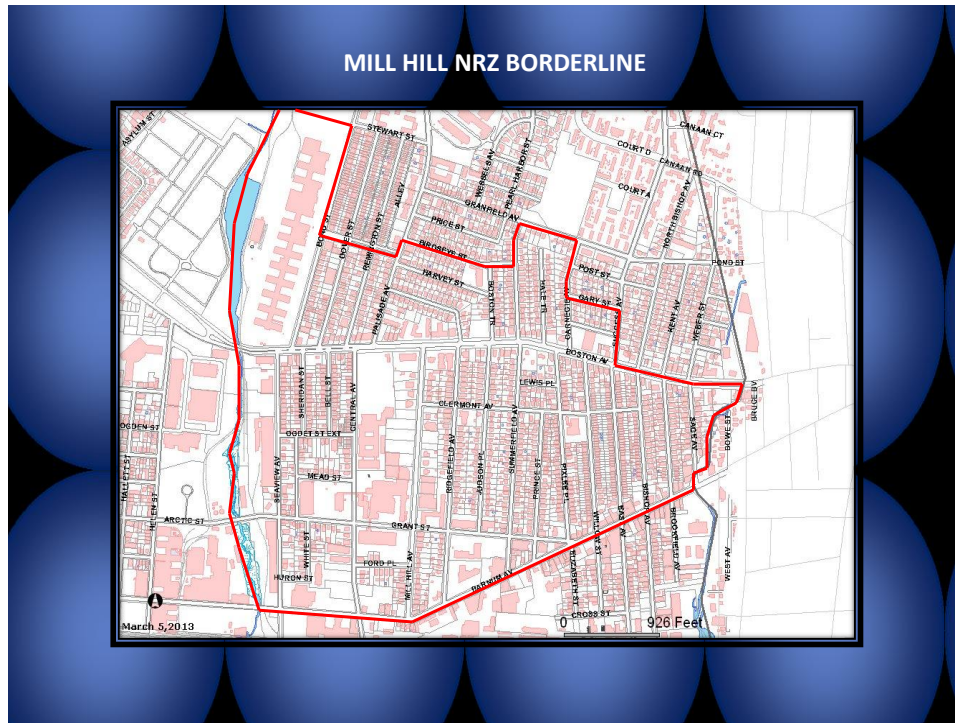
In addition to creating a strategic approach to revitalizing the neighborhood, there are specific tools the legislation established to assist the revitalization process. Upon adoption of the NRZ strategic plan:

- 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) Neighborhood Boundaries

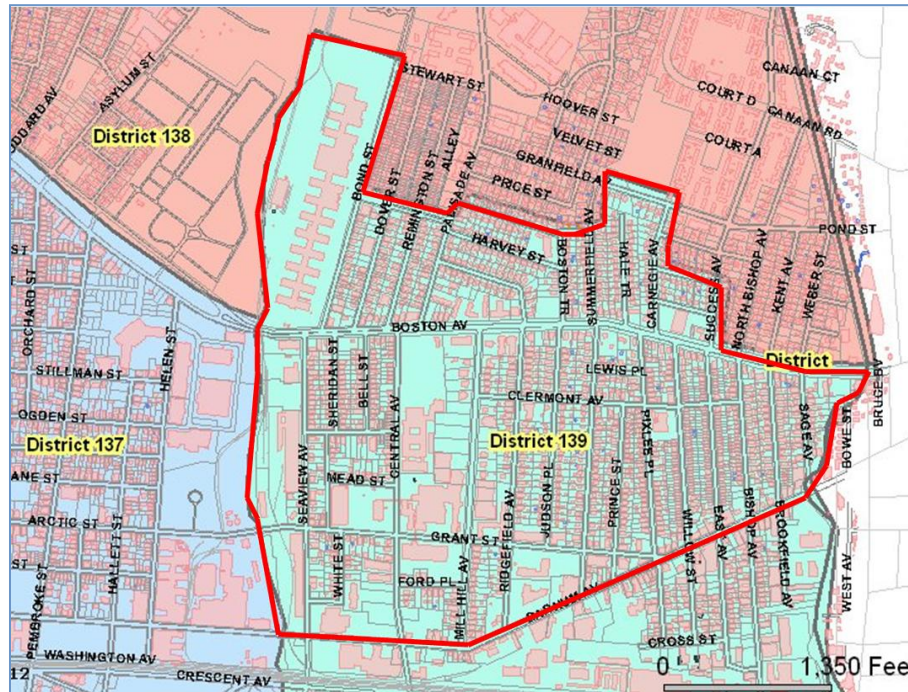
The boundaries for the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone were established by ordinance adopted by the Bridgeport Common Council on March 04, 2013. The established boundaries are shown on the map below. The neighborhood is located in the eastern section of the City, adjacent to the Town of Stratford.



While most NRZ boundaries follow Census Tract boundaries, the City chose to establish the Mill Hill NRZ Boundaries so that they would follow an existing Council District boundary – in this case, Council District 139, which is shown below, with the Mill Hill NRZ Boundary. District 139 extends south of the NRZ boundaries and encompasses the East End neighborhood. As noted in this Plan, there was great interest in seeing the Mill Hill NRZ work with the existing East End NRZ, which was created on May 06, 1996.

It was felt that this boundary would make it easier for the NRZ neighborhood to be represented by specific Councilmen, thereby ensuring greater ease in seeking political support for projects contained within the NRZ boundaries. The Councilmen for the East End (The Honorable Andre Baker and the Honorable James Holloway) were actively involved throughout the NRZ planning process, and numerous political

leaders participated in the major Neighborhood workshop in June and the design charrette in October 2012.



Formal Boundary Description

Beginning at the corner and centerline of Barnum Avenue and the Junction of Yellow Mill Pond travel east along the centerline of Barnum Avenue to the centerline of Sage Avenue then: follow the Bridgeport/Stratford Town Line to the Center line of Boston Avenue then: travel west to the centerline of Success Avenue then: travel two blocks north to the centerline of Gary Street then: travel west to the centerline of Carnegie Avenue then: travel north to the centerline of Granfield Avenue then: travel west to the centerline of Summerfield Avenue then: travel south to the centerline of Birdseye Street then: travel west to the centerline of Palisade Avenue then: travel southwest to the centerline of Tudor Street then: west to the centerline of Bond Street then: north to the centerline of Stewart Street then: travel west to the Yellow River Brook then: south along the Yellow River Brook back to the beginning at the Junction of Yellow Mill Pond and the centerline of Barnum Avenue.

b) Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Planning Process

Since the key to the success of an NRZ Strategic Plan is the degree to which projects reflect the goals of local community stakeholders, the Mill Hill NRZ Process was structured around several components designed to solicit input and guidance from the community on the selected plan and its related projects. Those components included:

- (1) A Neighborhood Planning Workshop was held in the neighborhood (at Harding High School) on June 30, 2012 to initiate the planning project and to obtain direction on

the elements neighborhood stakeholders wanted to see in their plan. The Workshop was widely advertised in the newspaper, by email, with flyers, and also through a direct mailer to all Mill Hill households from Bridgeport Hospital at their own expense. Outreach efforts paid off. Over 65 people were in attendance with a balanced representation of neighborhood residents, business people, non-profit organizations, and the City of Bridgeport. The Workshop included a presentation about the purposes and elements of the NRZ Strategic Planning process and a series of small group discussions in which participants identified neighborhood strengths and weaknesses as well as current opportunities for neighborhood revitalization and issues that need to be addressed in the process. The results of that workshop provided the framework that guided this planning process. A more detailed summary of the Workshop Summary is contained in the Appendix. Also during the Workshop, copies of draft By-Laws for the Mill Hill NRZ workshop were circulated and discussed, and nomination forms were distributed to seek candidates for the NRZ Planning Committee

- (2) NRZ Planning Committee – Following the initial workshop, the NRZ Planning Committee was elected by the broader NRZ Membership at a regular meeting held on August 22, 2012. The Planning Committee became the group of partnership leaders that set policy for the Plan and guided the planning process to completion. That Committee was made up of 21 members and included a balance of the key NRZ partners (residents, non-profit organizations, businesses, and City representatives). The Planning Committee made all decisions regarding agendas, committee structure, selection of preferred strategies and ultimately, ranked the importance of all projects included in the NRZ Strategic Plan, based on input from the broader neighborhood.
- (3) The Mill Hill NRZ By-Laws were adopted by the City of Bridgeport on March 04, 2013 to assure compliance of the NRZ effort with local ordinances and codes.
- (4) A Committee Structure was established to enable smaller groups to look at neighborhood challenges in a detailed fashion. Among the committees were:
 - (a) Open Space and Recreation Committee
 - (b) Housing Committee
 - (c) Transportation/Traffic Committee
 - (d) Safety and Security Committee

The Planning Committee also considered forming a Redevelopment Committee to examine the best approach to guiding major redevelopment projects within the neighborhood. It was ultimately decided that those larger redevelopment issues should be addressed through the Planning Committee as a whole. The assigned Committees met, most of them on at least two occasions, from September to October 2012.

- (5) **Design Charrette** – To enable the neighborhood the opportunity to “visualize” some of the revitalization strategies and projects under consideration a Design “Charrette” was held on Saturday, October 27, 2012 in the Mill Hill neighborhood. As with the Neighborhood Workshop, the broader community was invited to participate through a series of emails, flyers, press releases, and direct mailers to individuals who had provided mailing addresses but no email addresses. The charrette was attended by over 50 individuals, again with good cross-representation of the major NRZ partners. During the charrette, participants were assisted by seven design professionals (architects, landscape architects, and architectural students from University of Hartford) who helped illustrate some of the ideas the neighborhood was considering. In small groups, the NRZ participants focused on topics such as open space and community gardens, design elements for a Mill Hill community center, and general streetscape improvements.
- (6) Upon successful completion of each of these steps, a draft set of projects was developed and circulated for consideration by the NRZ Planning Committee, which ranked the elements of the revitalization strategy as to their timing and their perceived importance to an overall revitalization strategy.
- (7) The attached Plan was prepared by the Planning Committee as a culmination of these efforts and, when presented as a formally adopted Plan by the City, will also have received input and modification as necessary by the NRZ membership, the neighborhood, and the City of Bridgeport Common Council. It will also have been presented to the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management for review and compliance with the statutory requirements for a Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Strategic Plan.

2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

a) Demographic and Economic Trends

The NRZ boundaries align with the 139th Council District - not the local Census Tracts. The 2010 U.S. Census Data for Tracts 737 and 733 were used to develop population and housing estimates for the NRZ. Whereas all of Census Tract 737 is located within the Mill Hill NRZ area, an estimate of 50% of Census Tract 733 was considered the remaining portion of the Mill Hill NRZ neighborhood.

Population

There are currently an estimated 6,154 people living in the Mill Hill Neighborhood as of the most recent U.S. Census American Community Survey (2012) according to research conducted by the City’s Office of Planning (nearly 4,600 of them living within Census Tract 737, south of Boston Avenue, and approximately 1,570 living in Census Tract 733 in the area of the neighborhood located north of Boston Avenue).

Age Distribution:

5 years & under	9.9%
19 years & under	30.6%
65 years & over	11.8%

Race/Ethnicity:

Non-Hispanic	66.3%
White	13.5%
Black	42.0%
Asian/Other	4.9%
Hispanic	41.0%

Household Characteristics

Household size in the Mill Hill neighborhood is an average of 2.59 persons per household.

Housing

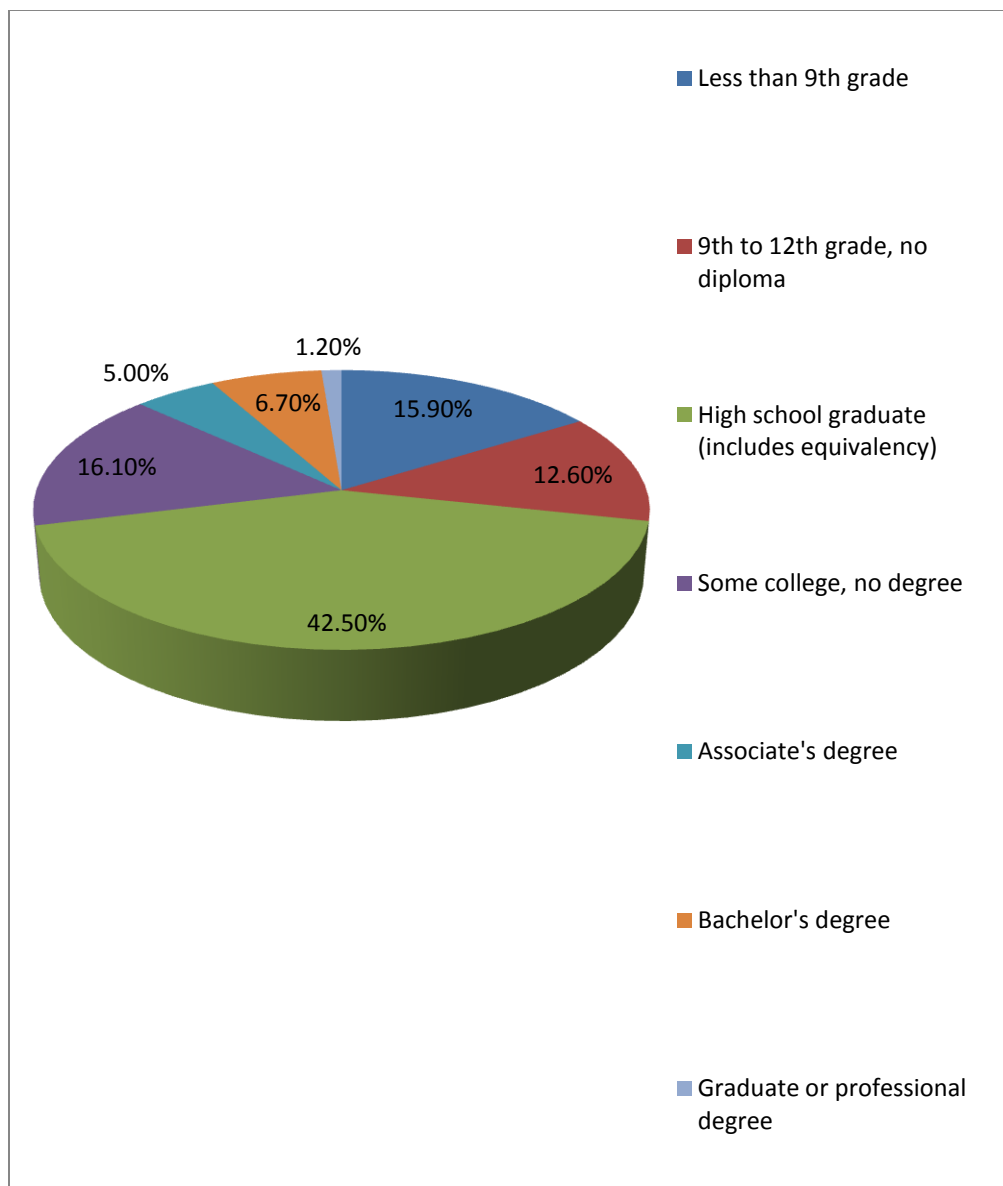
There are an estimated 2,374 housing units in the Mill Hill Neighborhood (American Community Survey, City of Bridgeport Office of Planning) with over 1,760 located south of Boston Avenue and approximately 611 being located north of Boston Avenue.

As of 2010, there was a vacancy rate of approximately 11-12% for the Mill Hill neighborhood (14% for housing units south of Boston Avenue and 9% for housing units north of Boston Avenue), a relatively high vacancy rate overall, which could be the result of deteriorated housing conditions. Vacancy rates have increased since 2000 when they were about 8.8%.

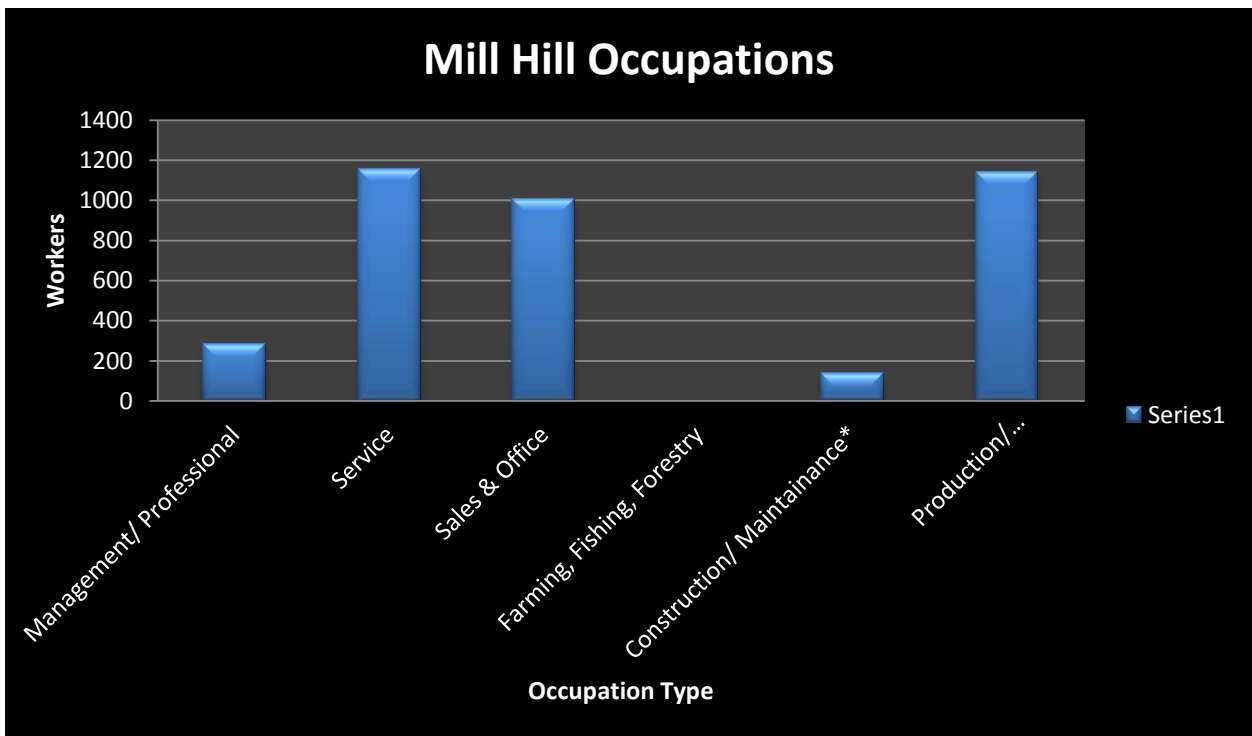
Home Ownership rates are low for the neighborhood (approximately 34% of occupied units). Renter-occupied units are estimated at 66%, a condition which was discussed by the neighborhood leaders as a concern to be addressed. Renters were seen as having less stability overall and were less likely to become involved in neighborhood and church activities.

Educational Attainment

The level of educational attainment for residents of the Mill Hill Neighborhood is generally lower than for the City, region or State. Over 28% have not completed high school, and 42.5% of the population possesses a high school degree or equivalent. Less than 7% possess a Bachelor’s Degree. Only 1.2% of the population has attained a Master’s or Doctorate Degree. Meanwhile 16% have had some college education, and 5% possess an Associates Degree.



Pie Chart, above, illustrates the level of educational attainment within the Mill Hill neighborhood.



Bar Graph above illustrates the occupations of Mill Hill residents in the workforce. Most workers are employed in manufacturing, production and service industries, followed by sales and office work.

b) Physical Development and Existing Conditions

The Neighborhood is very dense and compact, defined largely by its main transportation corridors (Boston Avenue and Barnum Avenue). The overall density of the neighborhood is high: There are approximately 9,882 people per square mile in the Mill Hill Neighborhood compared to the City average of 8,721 people per square mile (over 1,000 more people per square mile). Additionally, there is only two tenths of one percent (.2%) of the City’s total land area dedicated to parks and open space.

The neighborhood is located at a relatively high elevation overlooking the City. As a consequence, most of the lower sections of the neighborhood are located along its western and eastern edges. Areas for risk of flooding include the rear of properties fronting on the western side of Seaview Avenue along the Stillman’s Pond/Seeley Pond/Yellow Mill River Pond area; and the residential and commercial areas located along Barnum and Boston Avenues near West Avenue, Bowe Street, Sage Avenue, Weber Avenue, Bishop Avenue and Brookfield at near the Stratford line. (See map below).



Map of 100 year flood plain within area of Mill Hill neighborhood. Source: FEMA

c) Infrastructure

The neighborhood is served by a full urban infrastructure (sanitary sewer and public water supply), which can support a significantly high level of population growth and development without threat to the environment and public water supplies. An ongoing concern for Bridgeport, however, has been the fact that sanitary sewers and storm water sewers are combined in many parts of the City, a condition that has required the City to set aside capital funds to separate the two systems over time.

There is a significant transportation system serving the Mill Hill neighborhood, including Boston Avenue/Route 1, Barnum Avenue, and Seaview Avenue. U.S. Interstate 95 and State Route 8/25 are both readily accessible from the neighborhood as well.

d) Architecture

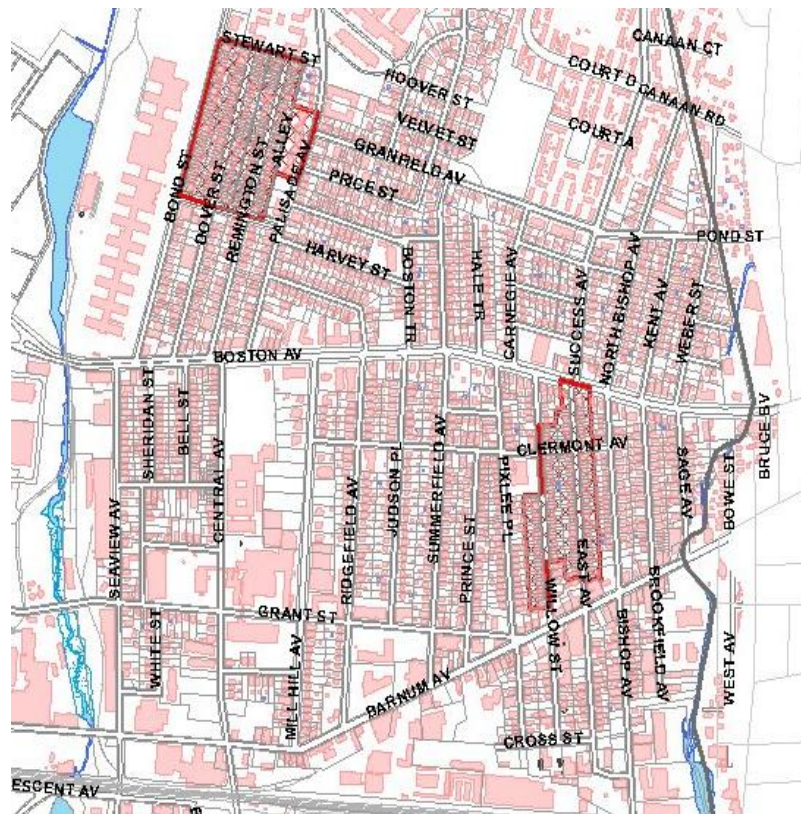
According to U.S. Census data, approximately 70% of the housing stock in the Mill Hill neighborhood was built prior to 1960. Many buildings date back to the late 1800s and early 1900s when the Industrial Age was a strong influence on construction in the Mill Hill neighborhood and the City as a whole. There is a vernacular Victorian and colonial revival influence in the architecture of the area, especially homes and churches. In fact, the architectural quality is so important in the neighborhood that two areas within or near the Mill Hill neighborhood have been designated as National Register Historic Districts:

REMINGTON VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

This area was listed on the National Register Historic District in 1990. It is generally bounded by Willow and East Avenues, and between Boston and Barnum Avenue. This district is approximately 17 acres with 69 buildings.

REMINGTON CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT

Although three larger apartments are located on Palisade Avenue, the district is generally located west of Palisade Avenue between Remington and Bond Streets, and between Tudor Avenue between Stewart Street. This area was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990; includes 164 buildings; and, is approximately 18 acres. While this historic district is located just outside of the Mill Hill neighborhood, it is immediately adjacent to the neighborhood and its characteristics should be incorporated into the direction to be taken with the NRZ Strategic Plan. It is also a natural extension of one of the areas considered by the NRZ leadership to be a potential target area for NRZ activities.



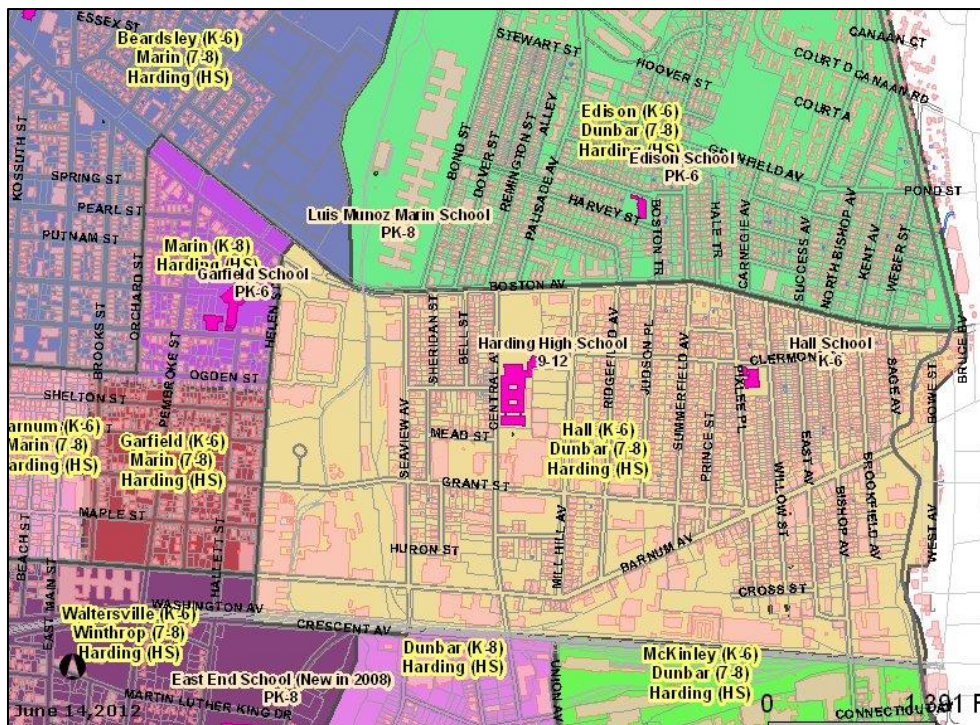
Map of National Register Historic Districts in Vicinity of Mill Hill Neighborhood

e) Neighborhood Resources/Assets



Pictured above is Hall School, an Elementary School service the Mill Hill Neighborhood

There are many services and organizations serving the Mill Hill Neighborhood, which are seen as assets to the community, including schools and churches. Pictured below is a map of the existing school district boundaries. The NRZ Planning Committee learned that the Board of Education’s long-range facility planning will likely not consider changes to the Hall or Dunbar Schools for the next 4 or 5 years or so. The focus in the near term will be the relocation (and likely renaming) of the Harding High School.



Overlapping school district boundaries are illustrated above. Please note that the Dunbar Middle School and Harding High School boundaries overlap several neighborhoods. To help define the boundaries, the color code

used above differentiates the boundaries of the elementary schools: the boundaries of the Hall and Edison Elementary Schools, located within the Mill Hill Neighborhood, are shown above in tan and light green.

f) Neighborhood Organizations and Activities

There are a number of non-profit organizations

Bridgeport Neighborhood Fund

This local non-profit has had considerable success with a multitude of neighborhood improvement projects, ranging from housing rehabilitation to Lead Based Paint abatement programs, home ownership counseling/ financing, and major capital investments.

GBAPP, Inc. (Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program) – this non-profit organization is located in the neighborhood and was formed with the mission of reducing teen pregnancy; reducing the spread of HIV; increasing access to care and supportive services; enhancing positive relationships; and promoting a sense of personal responsibility. The organization provides a Maternity Home on 25 Ford Place, a group home for single girls and teen moms on Mill Hill Avenue, an after-school program at 1470 Barnum Avenue, and several prevention and early intervention programs on teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS on school and community sites across Bridgeport. GBAPP is also the lead agency for the Ryan White AIDS funding in the region and the grantee for the Drug Free Communities Grant in Bridgeport.

Habitat for Humanity

This national faith-based housing organization is located on Barnum Avenue near the Mill Hill neighborhood. The organization expressed interest in promoting the rehabilitation of deteriorated structures and construction of new units where they are able to acquire property for little or no monies. Their model emphasizes owner-occupancy for low income households.

Recovery Network of Programs, Inc. (RNP) –Recovery Network of Programs, Inc. restores hope, health, and wellbeing for individuals and families in a recovery environment that embraces compassion, dignity and respect. The organization provides case management and treatment services with individuals with substance abuse, mental health and/or housing needs.

Trash Busters –

This community group has been around for years within the Mill Hill and the Upper East Side Neighborhoods and has been an advocate for neighborhood improvements. The group has actively participated in the NRZ process, has testified on Community Development Block Grant projects, has organized countless cleanup campaigns, and has sponsored significant community activities and events. While some of its members live just outside of the Mill Hill NRZ boundary, they have actively participated in this NRZ Strategic Planning process and has expressed interest in playing an important role in continuing to organize the community and rally support for implementing recommendations of the Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan.

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Southern CT, Inc. –

The organization has been implementing “Project Independence” which is a multi-site, scattered housing project designed to provide the opportunity for home ownership for individuals and families facing barriers resulting from the disabilities of an individual and/or a member of the family, and families with earning capacity at or under 50% to 80% of the Area Median Income. Phase One of Project Independence calls for the creation of seven (7) three-bedroom homes of approximately 1,250 square feet with a universal access design, and the capacity to handle the most sophisticated types of assistive and adaptive technologies such as “handi-movers”. Of these seven homes, two (2) were located in the Mill Hill neighborhood and were reaching completion as this Strategic Plan was being finalized. The two houses are situated on White Street. During the NRZ planning process, members of the Planning Committee supported a proposal for use of Community Development Block Grant funding to improve/replace sidewalks and plant street trees in this location. While the funds weren’t approved in this round, this kind of application is a very good example of how target areas can be created through which limited funds are used to make significant change in a significant area.

g) Existing Land Uses and Patterns

According to the City’s recent Plan of Conservation and Development, current land use patterns are roughly as follows:

Single Family housing	28.6%
Two-Four Family Residential	25.8%
Multi-Family (5+) Residential	15.4%
Commercial	7.3%
Mixed-Use	1.8%
Light Industrial	0.8%
Heavy Industrial	1.4%
Utility	0.1%
Park/Open Space	0.6%
Institutional	9.0%
Vacant	9.4%
Brownfields	4.6%*

*A proportionate amount of the land uses listed above

h) Development Regulations

ZONING

The neighborhood is zoned in several land use categories:

Residential:

- R-A – Low density Residential, Single Family, 7,500 - 9,000 s.f.
- R-B – Medium Density, 3-6 Family Dwellings, 7,500-9,000 s.f.
- R-C – High Density, MF, Apartments, Condos, 9,000 s.f.

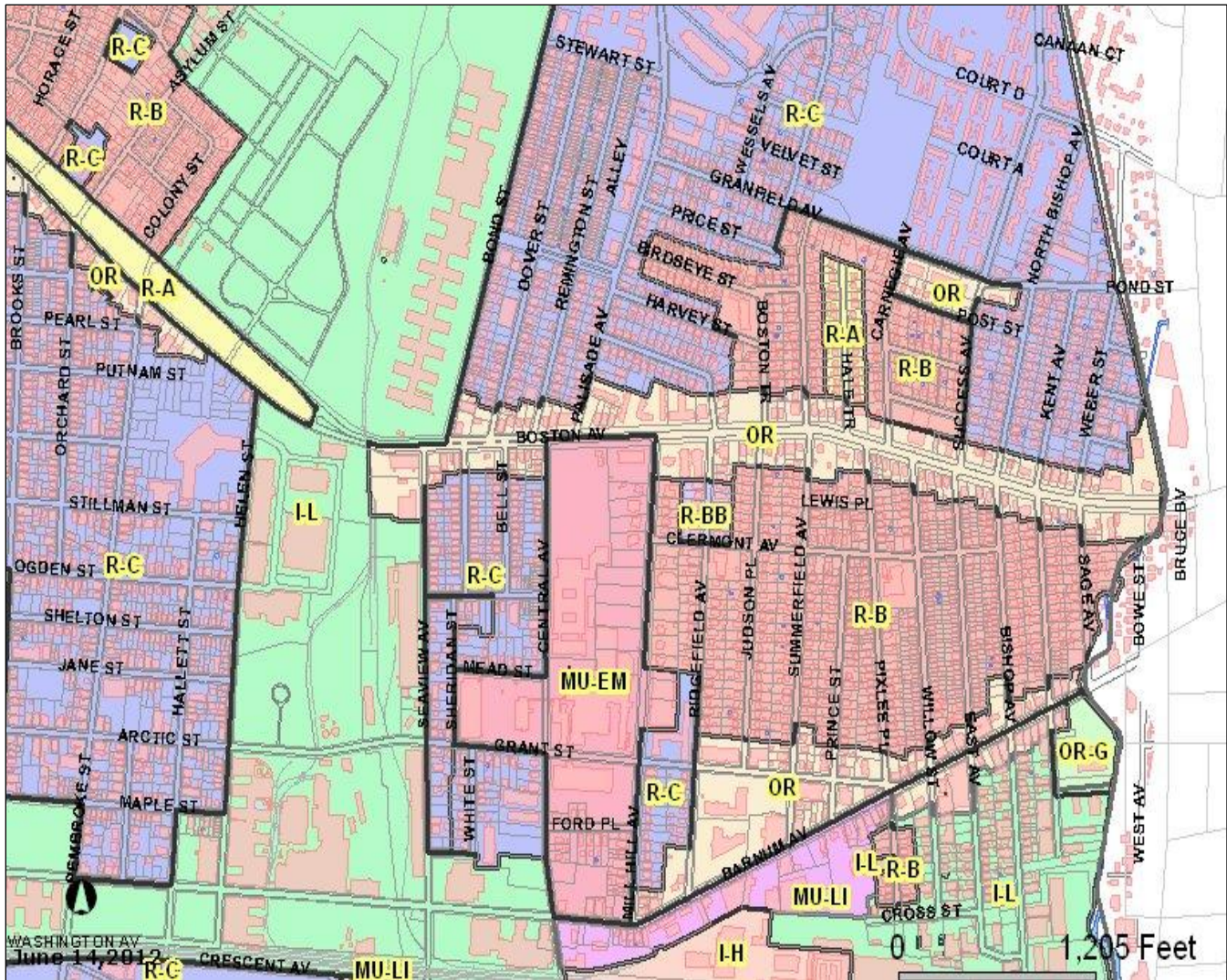
Business:

- OR-N – Office/Retail Neighborhood
- OR-S – Office/Retail Storefront
- MU-EM – Mixed-Use. Educational/Medical, 5,000 s.f.
- MU-P – Mixed-Use Perimeter, 6,000 s.f.
- HI – Heavy Industrial

The existing Zoning Map is shown on the next page. The Plan of Conservation and Development identified a series of recommendations for land use change throughout the community, which should serve as a guide for the Mill Hill NRZ Plan.

Selected Recommendations from the City of Bridgeport 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development, March 2008:

- Mixed-Use Development of the General Electric property
- Diversification of economic development
- Emphasis on Health Care and other sustainable employment



CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CT ZONING MAP

-Zoning Classifications for the Mill Hill Neighborhood

3. REINVESTMENT/DEVELOPMENT CLIMATE IN THE MILL HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhood deterioration is, in many ways, a process of disinvestment by individual property owners, residents and businesses. These choices to either invest or not invest in improvements to property, ongoing maintenance and other property investments send strong signals that influence other individuals in their decisions to purchase in the community, take on a mortgage or finance expansions, etc. To be successful, the revitalization strategy has to recognize the general reinvestment climate of the neighborhood and build on those natural market forces. In the case of the Mill Hill Neighborhood, that reinvestment climate is influenced mostly by the overall condition of the City and the examples of investment that are occurring and scheduled to occur within the neighborhood itself.

As a result, it is also important to make investments in the revitalization effort in a way that is very visible. Improvements along major transportation routes or in central areas where people congregate are certainly going to have a greater impact than building or renovation projects located in remote areas that no one sees. Within the Mill Hill neighborhood, there are a number of significant projects that are contemplated on the horizon and are in various stages of planning. These projects are also located along Route 1 (Boston Avenue), the central artery to the Mill Hill neighborhood. As a consequence, these redevelopment initiatives have the potential for becoming very visible signs of change within the neighborhood – to residents and passers through alike.

RELOCATION OF HARDING HIGH SCHOOL



Harding High School, pictured above, will be replaced by a new High School to be located on the site of the former General Electric industrial complex on Boston Avenue.

The City's plans to relocate Harding High School will have an important influence on the revitalization of Mill Hill. The two-story school is overcrowded, but expanding it would be impossible since it sits on just eight acres and is sandwiched between Boston Avenue and Bridgeport Hospital. The school was originally built in 1924 and is in serious need of replacement. The City has been negotiating with the General Electric Company to relocate Harding High School from its current site on Central Avenue to rebuild it as a new school on a portion of GE's Boston Avenue site. The project is in the design phase and a timeline for completing the new school is roughly 18 months with a target opening of September 2015. The estimated cost is \$78 million, and the school will house 800 students in grades 9-12. The facility will include an athletic complex with full football and softball fields and will occupy approximately 15 acres towards the rear of the GE property. Early designs show the new school to be built on 4 levels.

BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL EXPANSION

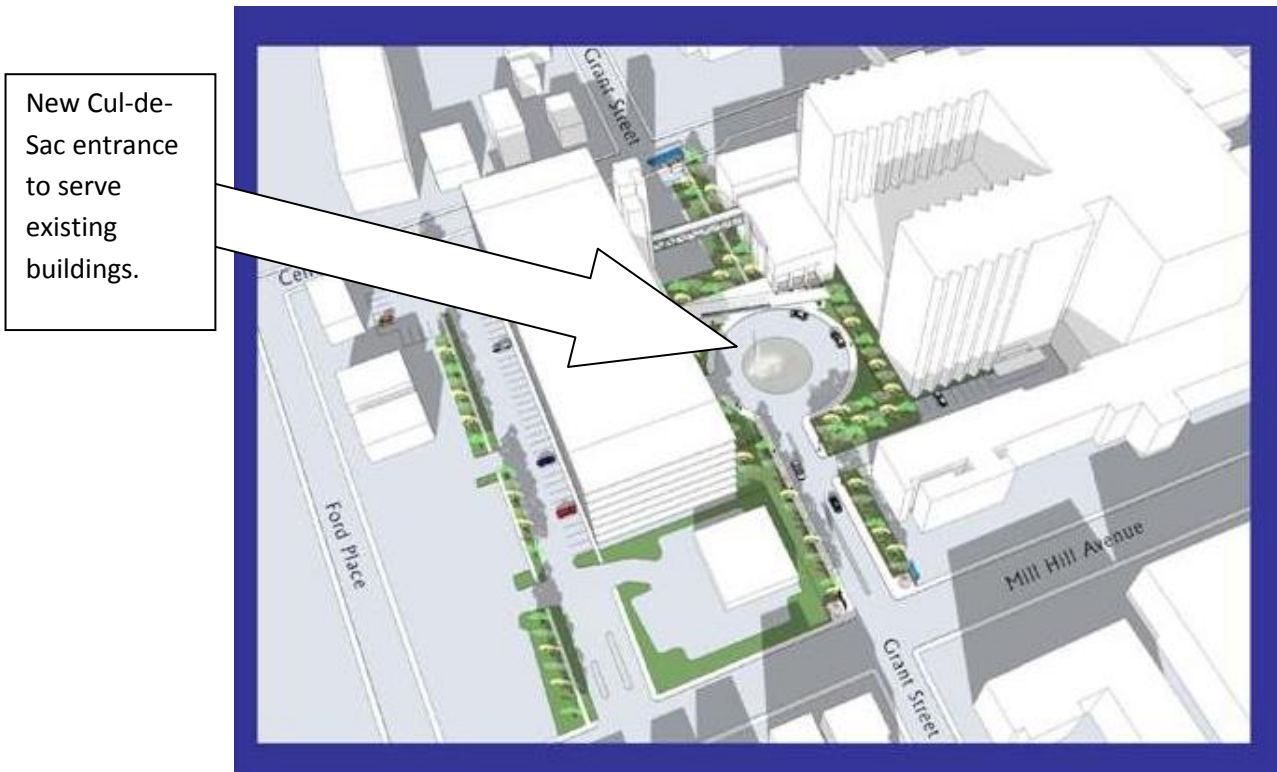
Bridgeport Hospital, seen as a major stabilizing element of this neighborhood, has plans to expand in the short to mid-term to construct additions to accommodate future growth and expansion into land that will be vacated with the relocation of the Harding High School. This expansion will represent a significant investment in the community that will result in increases to jobs and services within the Mill Hill neighborhood. During the NRZ Planning process, the Hospital began improvements to its entrance, by obtaining permission from the City to close Grant Street to through traffic and to construct a reconfiguration of its accessways to the hospital and garage and its main entrance (see below).

The Bridgeport Hospital Emergency Department expansion and renovation project included a 10,000 square foot addition and 21,000 square feet of renovations to waiting areas, administrative offices, triage and treatment rooms and 75 parking spaces.

Renovations to the CT Burn Center have also been a clear sign of reinvestment in the neighborhood.



Recent Bridgeport Hospital Improvements have included the Emergency Department Expansion and Renovation Project, pictured above.



New Cul-de-Sac entrance to serve existing buildings.

The rendering above illustrates the reconfiguration of Grant Street to accommodate a more functional gateway entrance into the Bridgeport Hospital complex. The project should provide an opportunity for a unique beautification and landscaping element at the center of the neighborhood.

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE GENERAL ELECTRIC PROPERTY

General Electric has spent the year dismantling the massive former arms and munitions factory that gave the city the name Arsenal of Democracy built by Remington Arms in 1915. This has been seen as one of the most significant “deconstruction” projects in the State. The Company has demolished a series of 13 interconnected, five-story buildings and has removed contaminated soil in the upland area adjacent to Seeley Pond in an effort to prepare the 77-acre site for redevelopment. As noted, the City has been negotiating to locate the new Harding High School on approximately 15 or 16 acres to the rear of the site.

According to an article in the *CT Post*, “The plant was sold to GE in the spring of 1920 for \$7 million. At first, it was used to make armored cable, outlet boxes and the like. Electric fan production began in 1926, and between the early 1930s and the 1980s, countless coffee percolators, electric mixers, toasters and other small appliances poured out of the plant. By 1990, GE had scaled back operations there considerably, and by 2007, the plant was more-or-less empty.”



The original manufacturing buildings that housed the General Electric Company operation on Boston Avenue in the Mill Hill Neighborhood, pictured above. The buildings were razed by the beginning of 2013 to make way for the remediation and redevelopment of the former industrial site.

4. SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

During the Neighborhood Planning Workshop in June 2012, the neighborhood leadership identified a number of areas they saw as creating development issues or opportunities for the Mill Hill neighborhood. In the final analysis, those discussions served as a good overall summary for this section:

STRENGTHS

Participants identified several strengths that made the neighborhood a desirable place to live and/or work. Among them was convenient transportation access to the neighborhood; the presence of Bridgeport Hospital; the racial and ethnic diversity of the neighborhood; its location high on the hill with views overlooking downtown Bridgeport and Bridgeport Harbor; and, good public transportation and a neighborhood of concerned citizens.

WEAKNESSES

Participants also identified their concerns or weaknesses, particularly the deteriorated sidewalks and secondary streets in the neighborhood; pedestrian safety and traffic dangers (e.g., speed, lack of crossing lights); and, the lack of parks and open space.

OPPORTUNITIES (Development Opportunities)

The most significant opportunities for encouraging development were seen as follows:

- ❖ Support for current large development projects planned for the neighborhood:
 - Relocation of Harding High School to General Electric property
 - Expansion of Bridgeport Hospital into Harding High School property
 - Redevelopment of remainder of General Electric property
- ❖ Boston Avenue Redevelopment and Commercial Revitalization
- ❖ Seaview Avenue Corridor Redevelopment and waterfront reclamation
- ❖ Long-term growth and development associated with the proposed East Bridgeport Train Station

THREATS (Development Issues)

Neighborhood leaders were concerned about a number of issues that need to be addressed in the revitalization strategy if it is to be effective: limited activities for neighborhood residents (especially the youth and the elderly) low homeownership levels, crime, blight, and graffiti.

When the City adopted its Plan of Conservation and Development recently, it made reference on page 130 to the development climate, noting that "...Bridgeport's tax rate is significantly higher than those of other Fairfield communities. This places an undue burden on property owners, hindering property investment".

All of these factors must be recognized in developing the NRZ strategy, as well as anticipating the timeframe for achieving a successful revitalization.



Photo above, shows current view of Barnum Avenue in an easterly direction near Central Avenue.

5. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted, four committees were formed to address the major identified areas of concern to the NRZ Strategic Plan (Housing, Open Space and Recreation, Transportation/Traffic, and Safety and Security). It was of great interest to see common themes emerge from the various committee discussions, most notably between the Housing Committee, the Open Space and Recreation Committee, and the Safety and Security Committee. All of these committees discussed the critical importance of addressing crime and creating a sense of security within the neighborhood as the revitalization strategy is pursued – especially in areas targeted for the development of new family housing. With each committee, addressing crime was seen as the top priority in the strategy. Addressing the element of crime was also examined from several different angles (increasing neighborhood involvement in monitoring and reporting crime, developing positive alternatives for youth who may have little better to do than stand on street corners, and attempting to broaden the police presence within the community). All of the committees discussed the critical importance of addressing crime and creating a sense of security within the neighborhood as a safe environment. Those common themes helped to guide the rankings of Housing, Open Space and Recreation, Safety and Security, and Transportation and Traffic. Those four major topics are divided in committee charges, issues, resources, and recommendations as shown below.

a) Housing Committee

Resource People:

Sabine Kuczo, City of Bridgeport Lead Free Families Program
Elizabeth Torres, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust
Thomas Corso, Seaview Avenue Business Alliance
Iris Cordero Taylor, Habitat for Humanity
Beverly Hoppie, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust

Charges of Committee

- To identify and promote programs and strategies to encourage property improvements by absentee land owners
- To identify and promote programs to increase home ownership
- To develop strategies for adaptive reuse and conversion of existing multi-family properties for home ownership purposes
- To identify and promote housing rehabilitation programs
- To encourage non-profit organization involvement in the Mill Hill NRZ strategy

Issues

- Blight, deterioration
- High levels of absentee ownership (approx. 50%)
- Soil conditions (hot spots require remediation before new construction)
- Asbestos, lead contamination

Available Resources

- City of Bridgeport's Lead Free Families Program (HUD funded)
 - \$8,000 forgivable loan to eliminate lead health hazards (windows, doors, soil).
 - Inspection program
 - Combined with UI weatherization program
 - Combined with Fire Dept. free smoke detector program
 - Education, focus on families with children under 6
 - Requires code compliance
 - Interest in expanding program to incorporate Healthy Homes Initiative (State program, LAMP, uses volunteers)
- Community Development Block Grant Program (traditional project eligibility)
- HOME program

The HOME program is authorized under Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, as amended. HOME provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use-often in partnership with local nonprofit groups-to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.
- Seaview Avenue Business Alliance
 - For 15 years, they have been building on the Seaview Avenue Corridor Study
 - Their efforts have been based on successful plans from Hartford and New Haven
 - Businesses invest in area neighborhood as part of overall business corridor enhancement
 - Lighting programs at intersections, through UI – increased 30% in area, requires involvement of alderperson and City Council (Also Light the Night, but with a cost to businesses)
 - Land donations to nonprofit organizations (Habitat, BNT) on perpendicular streets to promote home ownership – City land less available in recent years. Efforts on Holly, Williston, Deacon
 - Focus on Seaview Avenue widening to Stratford Avenue. Underpass/viaduct is major obstacle
- Community Development Block Grant funds for sidewalks
- Down Payment Assistance. The CT Housing Finance Authority often has down payment assistance program funds available, and the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (see below) can be helpful in locating current down payment assistance funds. In some communities, local sponsors (corporations, businesses) will provide down payment assistance to employees. Yale New Haven Hospital has provided funding of this type in New Haven, CT for example. These funds can be useful to bridge any gaps to helping a family qualify for a home mortgage to purchase a home.
- Habitat for Humanity
 - Very interested in the neighborhood
 - Primarily looking for vacant land for new construction, rehabilitation more costly. City needs to get property in tax base (only 49-51% of taxable land currently)

- Focus on single family and two family to increase home ownership
- Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust
 - Few current opportunities for housing development that meet organization's model, but organization is open to future involvement (too many absentee owned properties being held, and mortgages and taxes are being paid. Meanwhile, effort to repair and maintain homes are low)
 - Emphasis on home ownership promotion
 - Counseling programs
 - Education
 - Down payment assistance
 - Can also work with rental properties, Section 8, etc.
- Special Needs Housing
 - United Cerebral Palsy Association of Southern CT, Inc. – homes with handicap accessibility
 - Two modular homes on White Street were constructed during the planning process
 - Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program (GBAPP, Inc. – Housing for pregnant adolescents)
 - Located at Ford Place and Mill Hill
 - Center for Women and Families (promotes housing and support programs, especially for female single parent headed households)
 - Liberation Program – Behavioral health program, 399 Mill Hill (addresses needs of individuals struggling with drug addiction)

b) Open Space Committee

Resource People:

Steve Hyladun, Parks and Recreation Department
City of Bridgeport, CT

Having sufficient open space and recreational opportunities is a key element to maintaining the livability of a neighborhood. Open space and green streetscapes can provide important breaks in a built urban environment and soften the appearance of a community characterized with 'hard edges' (paved roads and parking lots, sidewalks, large buildings, utility poles, and other utilities). Studies have shown that parks, open space, and recreational facilities can be important to the general well-being and health of a neighborhood as well. The presence of well-maintained landscaped areas and street trees are important signs of the City and its property owners caring in their community enough to invest in enhancing it. Recreational facilities can help improve the overall health of the neighborhood's residents and, in urban areas, have also provided an outlet to younger people and an alternative to loitering or possibly getting involved in gangs or other criminal activities.

According to the City's Parks Master Plan 2011, there are forty-five (45) parks in the City of Bridgeport, which in total comprise 1,346 acres of open space. In the Boston Avenue/Mill Hill

neighborhood, there are two (2) parks with a total of 9.8 acres of open space. The neighborhood is ranked among the lowest compared to national standards for all parks and neighborhood parks. The larger neighborhood area for this study is populated by approximately 10,322 residents (slightly different boundaries than the NRZ neighborhood, which has approximately half that population).

The Mill Hill Neighborhood has a number of obstacles to address, beginning with its existing physical characteristics:

1. The Mill Hill Neighborhood has one of the highest densities of population in the City of Bridgeport, indicating that the number of apartments and homes in the neighborhood are proportionately higher than other neighborhoods.
2. The amount of open space in the Mill Hill Neighborhood is, conversely, very low. According to The Parks Plan, the Mill Hill Area is ranked as having “High” park needs, especially the area between Boston Avenue and Barnum Avenue where there are no existing recognized parks or open space.

c) Safety and Security Committee

Resource People:

Officer Nicholas Ortiz, Bridgeport Police Department
Officer Roger Reid, Bridgeport Police Department
Ivan Miranda, Bridgeport Hospital Security Department

To keep existing residents and businesses within a neighborhood – and to attract new ones – it is important that there is a general feeling of safety and security within that neighborhood. Residents need to feel comfortable walking in their neighborhood without feeling threatened, that their children are safe from harm when they play outside or walk to and from school, and that their homes are protected. In a similar way, businesses need to have a sense that their property and inventory are protected from thieves and vandals and that their customers will feel comfortable coming to do business within the neighborhood. In reality, there are many elements that contribute to a neighborhood’s general sense of well-being and safety.

During the June 2012 Neighborhood Workshop, participants raised concerns about incidents of drug dealings, gang activity, and isolated shootings in the Mill Hill area that lessened the sense of public safety and security in the neighborhood.

The charges of the Committee were to:

- Review and discuss current issues surrounding safety (crime, lighting, pedestrian crossings, etc.)
- Recommend projects/proposals for consideration in plan (block watch formation, police substation concept, patrol needs, lighting improvements, etc.)
- Blight programs and clean up efforts (e.g. litter control, graffiti removal)

Officer Ortiz agreed to obtain current statistics for the NRZ as the process continues. This could be useful information to guide specific neighborhood strategies for highlighting issues of crime for the Police Department to address.

Conditions Affecting Security:

- Criminal activity generally occurs most frequently in areas that are dark, where there is little surveillance, and where building conditions are deteriorating.
- Visible police presence can decrease the level of crime in an area
- Areas that undergo revitalization and which involve neighborhood people in managing the area show decreases in levels of crime
- Sufficient lighting of an area tends to reduce crime
- Crime tends to grow in areas where there are no suitable alternatives to hanging on streets or getting involved in criminal activity

Available Resources

- Mill Hill is remote to the central Police Department, however, there is an office at Bridgeport Hospital that is dedicated as a police substation. If the neighborhood wishes to pursue a more formal police substation, the neighborhood leaders will need to make a case to the City to secure funding in a difficult time. Neighborhoods that are successful in obtaining resource commitments must invest time in documenting their case and their need and present their case to the City and demonstrate there is a major amount of community backing.
- Bridgeport Hospital has a surveillance crew that periodically patrols by car the areas adjacent to Hospital properties (main campus, remote offices, daycare for employees, REACH program, etc.) Because the Hospital is central, their surveillance covers a good portion of the subject neighborhood.
- The City Board of Education has formed a program called Safe Corridors and has established this program on a pilot basis at three different Bridgeport Public Schools, one of which is Harding High School
- The local non-profit organization GBAPP offers programs to youth to help keep them productively occupied.
- According to Officer Ortiz, the best solution to crime in a neighborhood is the formation of Block Watches. While there have been past inquiries into forming block

watches in the area, there are currently NO active block watches within the Mill Hill NRZ boundaries.

d) Transportation and Traffic Committee

Resource People:

Doug Holcomb, Executive Director, Greater Bridgeport Transit District

Charges of Committee

- To consider enhancements to road infrastructure such as Boston Avenue reconfiguration
- To address parking problems, especially along narrow streets
- To promote pedestrian safety (pedestrian crossings, intersection improvements, traffic calming, bikeways)
- To improve road and sidewalk conditions
- To promote Safe Routes to Schools Program and Safe Corridors Program
- To coordinate improvements in service with the Greater Bridgeport Transit District re: bus service and facilities

Conditions to be Addressed

- Road and sidewalk improvements are needed throughout different sections of the neighborhood to improve carrying capacity and safety. The Committee is in the process of scheduling a meeting with representatives from the Engineering Department and possibly the Public Works Department to obtain any condition assessments that may have already been performed and a list of current road and sidewalk capital projects scheduled for completion over the coming five (5) years.
- The design professionals involved in the design charrette should be asked to illustrate some optional treatments for intersection improvements and road crossings that could enhance pedestrian safety.
- The NRZ Plan should support the Safe Corridors Plan and the Safe Routes to School Plan as a method for implementing safety improvements that will make the neighborhood more walkable.
- Certain intersections within the Mill Hill neighborhood are too tight to accommodate safe turning radii for the full-size GBTD buses, a condition which lengthens vehicle trips for the buses and reduces traffic safety, for vehicles and pedestrians. The most critical intersections are:
 - Central Avenue and Grant Street
 - Barnum Avenue and Mill Hill Avenue
 - Seaview Avenue and Grant Street

- Future service needs will be influenced by development choices within the neighborhood, such as the redevelopment of the General Electric Property, the relocation and redevelopment of Harding High School, and the expansion of Bridgeport Hospital.
- When the East Bridgeport Transit Station is constructed near the southwestern corner of the neighborhood, there will be the potential for significant impact on transit connections to the Hospital and within the neighborhood generally.

Available Resources

- I. Doug Holcomb reviewed the current infrastructure and capacity of the Greater Bridgeport Transit District, highlighting the availability of 57 buses and 29 mini-buses that currently operate along 20 routes throughout the region. The level of service within the Mill Hill Neighborhood is high when compared to other neighborhoods. This is especially true because of the location of Bridgeport Hospital centrally within the neighborhood.
- II. There are multiple improvements in bus service occurring in relation to technological advancements such as the introduction of GPS tracking units on buses, which have enabled passengers to follow the anticipated arrival of their bus by location – and in real time.
- III. There are five primary bus routes of the Greater Bridgeport Transit District that serve the Mill Hill neighborhood:
 - a. Route # 1 – Along Barnum Avenue
 - b. Route # 13 – Travels up the length of Central Avenue through the neighborhood. This route is seen as the most heavily used.
 - c. Route # 15 – Enters from the west and serves Bridgeport Hospital
 - d. Route # 23 – Also enters from the west and serves Bridgeport Hospital
 - e. Route # 17 – Travels along Seaview Avenue and Boston Avenue in the vicinity of the General Electric property.
(Note: Route #15 and Route # 23 will be re-routed when Grant Street is partially closed to accommodate enhancements to the Bridgeport Hospital entrance.
- IV. The Greater Bridgeport Transit District has received a \$1.2 Million grant that is immediately available to fund the installation of at least eighty (80) new bus shelters within the Bridgeport area, and approximately 1,400 new signs. Since there is a major level of service within the Mill Hill neighborhood, it is believed the neighborhood would stand a good chance of making a compelling argument for approximately two (2) or three (3) of these shelters to be located within the Mill Hill NRZ plan area.



- Plan view of neighborhood, above, illustrates multiple elements of the Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan and their relationship to one another.

-Stuart Sachs, PRE/view Landscape Architects

6. MILL HILL NRZ PLAN

Elements of Strategic Plan

1) SEAVIEW AVENUE UNDERPASS

In order to develop adequate access on Seaview Avenue for commercial and local traffic, an underpass is required to provide adequate truck clearance and added lanes. At present, the ongoing work at Fairfield Avenue shows a potential method to accommodate the construction technique along with drainage. In this case, it pumps should be located well above flood levels.

2) NEW RAILROAD STATION

As a graphic inclusion on this plan, the building shape demonstrates a welcoming form to the neighborhood and provides a commanding view over the waterfront and adjacent park.

3) MIXED USE GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT

The plan shows three general categories of site improvements:

ACCESS: Including new pedestrian scale bridge, bicycle and walking paths, and improved vehicular/pedestrian bridge; (see comments Seaview Ave. Realignments)

ENVIRONMENTAL: Stream restoration, tree planting that include park-like settings in adjacency to commercial & residential uses, urban gardening on commercial and private residential scale with available large green houses, and water access for kayak and canoe users and services;

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL: In conjunction with the Seaview Avenue improvements and the stream improvements, several new buildings could provide commercial and residential uses with structure footprints ranging from 10,000 SF. to 80,000 SF.

4) BOSTON AVENUE REALIGNMENT WITH PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE

ACCESS UNDER ROADWAY

Perhaps the most important view of the Mill Hill area is seen coming from the west on Boston Avenue. Starting with a roadway alignment that uses a single gentle curve over the stream and former railroad tracks below, many more street trees can continue the Boston Avenue Green up onto Mill Hill. The former dual track rail access (adjacent to the channeled stream) under Boston Avenue can provide pedestrians and bicyclists an ideal greenway separation and increased parkway settings for the existing and future adjacent neighborhoods.

5) **WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT & ACCESS**

The existing parking lot wedged between Lakeview Cemetery and Stillman Pond offers a unique urban asset: a flowing stream over a small dam. Along with providing improved fish access both upstream, site improvements offer a unique location for a restaurant, or an extension of mixed use development from the nearby future greenway.

6) **GENERAL ELECTRIC REDEVELOPMENT**

Much has been speculated about this site because of its size and location. Along with future area improvements, this site lends itself to a variety of much larger land uses that will accommodate industrial, educational (a new Harding High School site), and mixed use commercial and residential.

7) **SEAVIEW AVENUE REALIGNMENT**

There are three general roadway concerns that expressed in this plan :

The improved intersection alignment between Boston Avenue and Bond Street facilitating larger vehicular access to the GE site and beyond;

Carriageway improvements with wider turning radii at select local streets as well as at least one added vehicular lane and two bicycle lanes for the entire length of Seaview Avenue

A Complete Streets program with drainage improvements, plantings, and separated pedestrian & bicycle access.

8) **GREEN SPACES AT LOCAL STREET INTERSECTIONS**

There are eight (8) intersections on Boston Avenue between Seaview Avenue and Ridgefield Avenue at the top of the hill. In an effort to provide additional street tree planting and include traffic calming details, these streets should include intersection design improvements. A modest design detail could consider curb line changes for not only wider turning radii, but also using the 25' from intersections (a non-parking zone) as a place to provide trees and streetscape improvements.

9) **COMMUNITY AND SENIOR CENTER**

One of the notable products of the NRZ design charrette was a consistent request for a community center that also included services and activities for seniors – a good fit with the nearby Bridgeport Hospital.

10) **BOSTON AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS**

One of the recurring comments from participants at the design charrette was the Boston Avenue traffic pattern west of Ridgefield Avenue. With plans for an increased

development at Bridgeport Hospital, the former GE site, and Remington Woods, it appears that more entering and turning traffic will require additional highway design that should include more street tree plantings as well as *Complete Street* design ideas. The alignments of through traffic lanes, as well as the need for turning lanes, cross walks, signal, etc. are needed to assure safe neighborhoods.

11) BOSTON AVENUE STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

Along with the previously mentioned avenue improvements, additional concern to improve parking and sign controls on the east end of Boston Avenue is important for the support of local businesses. The Mill Hill NRZ committee also supports Gateway improvements typical in Bridgeport such as thematic signs and streetscapes in all plans. Many of the parking spaces are unmarked and encourage driving across sidewalk and pedestrian areas. Along with defined areas for sidewalk cafes, trees, and parking, the plan recommends the use of back-in-angle parking. When compared to current parking practices, the recommended pattern reduces the amount of time and street area drivers needed (driving in and backing out into traffic); when car doors are opened, children are directed away from traffic; when opening a trunk, vehicles are opening on to a safe sidewalk; and perhaps most importantly, when re-entering roadways, driver can look directly at oncoming traffic – not needing to back a vehicle out passed an adjacent view-blocking vehicle before seeing traffic while simply entering the traffic flow.

12) BARNUM AVENUE STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Barnum Avenue is a major artery in the Mill Hill area and as such needs careful attention given to it for more than just tree plantings and lights, but perhaps more importantly for *Complete Streets* with the use traffic calming details and improved turning radii for commercial vehicle service. One immediate detail that could be the considered is the intersection of Pixlee Place, Barnum Avenue, & Elizabeth Street. This intersection is one of the major access points to Bridgeport Hospital from the east and should have simplified turning lanes and access procedures for emergency vehicles and the general public.

13) STREET TREE PLANTINGS

Although the graphics demonstrate plantings on Grant Street, the tree planting is for all of the streets in Mill Hill area. This effort can involve individual sites or the coordinated efforts for entire blocks and streets. As an awareness of dramatic or extreme weather patterns, this detail starts with individual efforts that demonstrate a global concern to improve air quality and reduce heat island effects in urban areas.

14) BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL EXPANSION

Bridgeport Hospital is the area's largest employer and acts as the primary medical service for the region. They have announced intended plans to grow their facility and expand care

services. It is evident that if they want to expand their facility that they could use a good deal of the Harding High School site, especially for much needed senior services.

a) Action Plan: Strategic Plan

The revitalization of the Mill Hill neighborhood will result from the dynamic interaction of efforts by individuals and groups that are working in close coordination. The Planning Committee is well aware that the revitalization of the neighborhood will hinge largely on major investments that are beyond the direct control of the NRZ. It will be incumbent on neighborhood leaders to support these efforts and to build the strength of the community organizations that will be working to improve the overall desirability of the neighborhood. The Plan is presented as a series of separate community programs and projects that could collectively revitalize the Mill Hill neighborhood. The NRZ should monitor and support the completion of these programs and projects and advocate for City, State and Federal resources to help in their implementation.

b) Vision Statement

This NRZ Plan sees the Mill Hill Neighborhood of the future as being a walkable, livable and culturally diverse neighborhood that is considered a community of choice for residents and business owners alike, and one which possesses safe, attractive streets, quality housing choices, a strong sense of community supported by a diverse selection of faith-based organizations, and a full range of neighborhood amenities.

c) Plan Overview

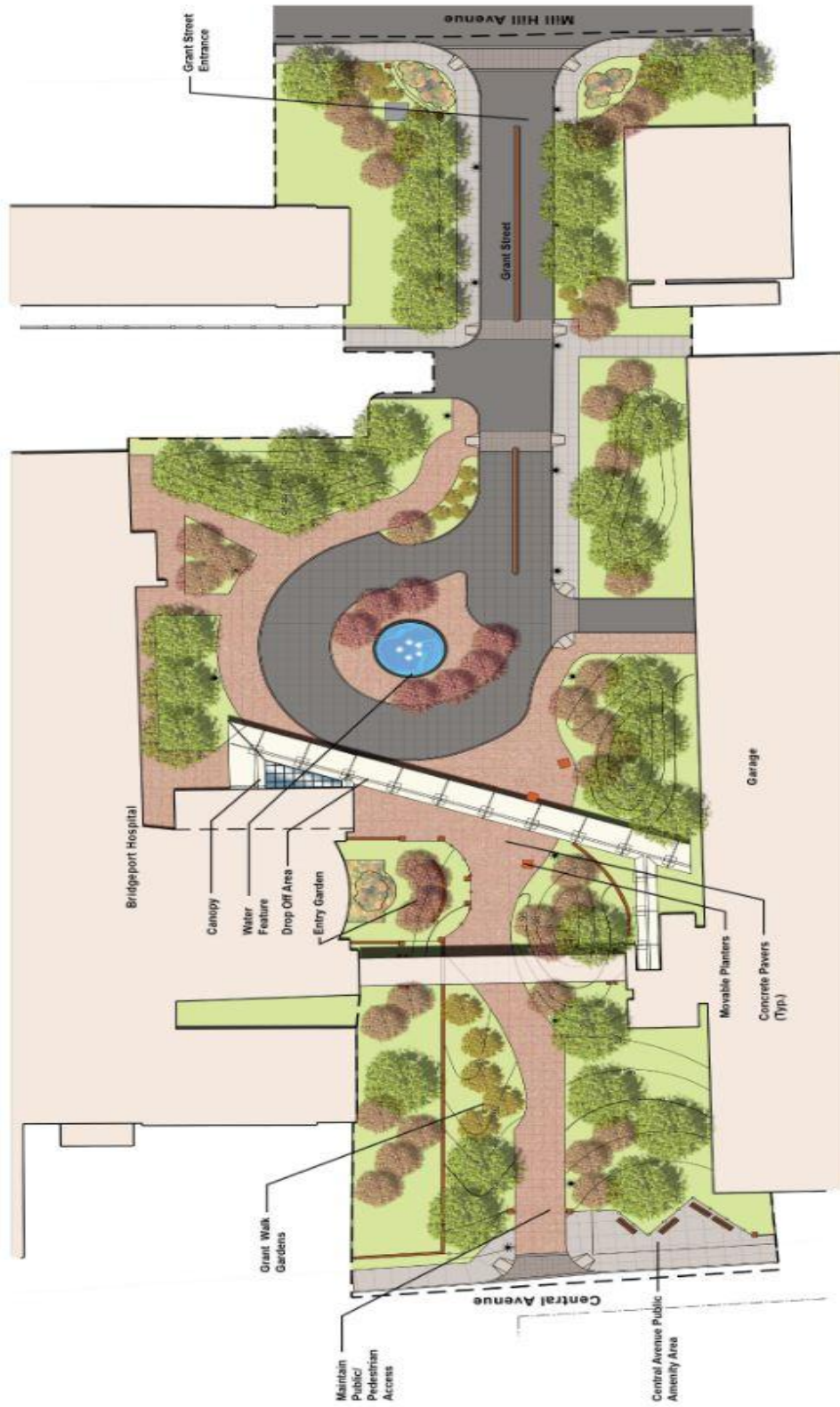
The Mill Hill Neighborhood is seen as a good place in which to live and to work. It has a strong neighborhood identity, and the neighborhood possesses characteristics and opportunities that will help the neighborhood become a neighborhood of choice within the City. The key components of the NRZ Revitalization Plan are designed around the elements of the neighborhood that offer its greatest strengths, including:

- Strong leadership among residents, politicians, businesses, and nonprofit organizations
- A wide variety of faith-based choices and organizations
- Active support from the City of Bridgeport
- The presence and “good citizenship” of Bridgeport Hospital
- Convenient location and access to multiple transportation modes
- Development projects on the horizon that will have a strong influence on the future of Mill Hill
- The historic character of the neighborhood

Redevelopment of a neighborhood requires key investments that help to improve overall market conditions and create a “climate of investment” to attract new residents and businesses to the area. The Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan seeks to support three (3) redevelopment projects already planned for the Mill Hill neighborhood and to implement neighborhood improvement projects that will build on these redevelopment efforts and address pressing issues around road and sidewalk conditions, neighborhood security, limited open space and low home ownership levels. As noted, the Plan seeks to support efforts in the short term (one to five years) that would encourage completion of three (3) large scale expansion and redevelopment projects as follows:

- **Bridgeport Hospital expansion** – The NRZ Plan supports the efforts of Bridgeport Hospital to expand its operations into the adjoining Harding High School property as plans are finalized for the High School’s relocation to the General Electric site on Boston Avenue. If possible, the Mill Hill neighborhood would like a portion of the property to remain as open space. The Plan also supports current road improvements near the entrance to the Hospital that will result in a change in traffic flow along Grant Street as a portion of the road is closed and will terminate in a cul-de-sac. The project will introduce a landscaping element and will create enhanced pedestrian connections to the entrance of the hospital (pictured next page). The Hospital began constructing these improvements in early 2013.
- **Redevelopment of the General Electric property** – A private redevelopment project for the reuse of a former Brownfield property operated by the General Electric Company for over a century. Current plans call for Harding High School to be relocated to a new school/campus on this 14-acre site. It is not expected to fill the entire site. While this property was included within the approved NRZ Plan boundary for Mill Hill, there was a reluctance to plan for the redevelopment of this site prematurely. The owners recently demolished the buildings formerly located on the site and are now addressing the remediation of the property to prepare it for redevelopment. While it would be difficult for the NRZ Plan to recommend a specific reuse of the property at this time, it would be beneficial to the NRZ Strategic Plan if the property’s redevelopment could incorporate some or all of the following concepts:
 - Commercial, service or industrial uses that promote jobs for the Mill Hill Neighborhood, especially jobs that are expected to create opportunity for future growth in the City of Bridgeport as a whole, such as the health industry, as recognized in the City’s recent update to its (Master) Plan of Conservation and Development 2008. Creation of supportive medical services could possibly be pursued in collaboration with expansion efforts of Bridgeport Hospital.
 - Mixed uses that could support Transit Oriented Development in the Mill Hill Neighborhood when the East Bridgeport Train Station is developed. (Note proximity of site to the proposed station is less than ¾ miles). The uses could include retail, service, and office uses and, possibly mixed-income residential uses if the remediation standards are met (although these are more costly. Primary issue would be approved density, which could be 30 or 40 dwelling units per acre or higher).

- Publicly accessible open space or walkways to connect the neighborhood with the river and to provide much needed open space for the neighborhood. This component could be designed in connection with the new High School development.



Rendering, Above, shows Detail of Grant Street Reconfiguration to provide enhanced entryway to Bridgeport Hospital.

- **Harding High School Relocation** – A public sector/partnership project (the relocation and construction of the new Harding High School, which is planned as part of the redevelopment of the General Electric property). The High School is currently located on Central Avenue. Once the new High School is constructed on the General Electric property (likely with a new name), the property will be available to support the expansion of Bridgeport Hospital. During the NRZ process, it was noted that this property is the only current City-owned property large enough to offer some degree of open space or recreational opportunities for the neighborhood. The NRZ is hopeful some open space or a community park could be included as part of the Hospital’s expansion plans. There may also be opportunities here for creating open space or some form of beautification project along the Boston Avenue Corridor. Based on the NRZ’s early meetings with Jorge Garcia of the Bridgeport Board of Education, the new building is expected to be open and available for community use, including the cafeteria and gymnasium.

Redevelopment of the Harding High School Site. As the City proceeds with its plans for a new High School, thought should be given to include open space and recreational needs of the neighborhood as part of that plan. The Parks Plan shows the potential need for one additional playground for example. Additionally, there is a strong interest in having facilities of the school available to meet specific community needs (e.g. night time basketball for youth, community activities and library access).

d) Neighborhood Projects: Phase 1 - High Priority Projects

1. FORMATION OF NRZ COMMITTEE

This NRZ Strategic Plan recommends a focus on specific neighborhood projects that, if done properly, will build on the success of these larger redevelopment projects and allow impacts to radiate throughout the neighborhood. One of the primary recommended actions is the formation of a Mill NRZ Committee to implement the recommendations of this Plan after adoption by the neighborhood, the City and the State. The Planning Committee recommends that the NRZ Committee establish a regular schedule of meetings, preferably on at least a monthly basis. The City's Office of Neighborhood Revitalization will provide staff support to the Mill Hill NRZ during this implementation phase. The following principles should guide the Committee:

- Membership on the Committee should generally include the same partnership of stakeholders that existed on the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee (residents, businesses, nonprofits, churches, etc.). Assuming members are interested, there is a strong benefit to having existing Planning Committee members becoming part of the implementation committee since they already understand the importance of the Plan's components.
- The NRZ Committee will help guide neighborhood stakeholders as they work together to integrate these projects and to allocate limited resources to maximize impact. By having a committee structure in place, there will be a regular opportunity for members to identify funding sources to implement these neighborhood projects and monitor overall progress against the plan. It will also be important for the Committee to interpret the plan when it is necessary and to modify it along the way to meet future needs and future changes in the community. The Committee should submit projects to various agencies and funding sources, such as the Community Development Block Grant program, to obtain funding support.
- The Committee should serve as an advocate for the neighborhood on City and private proposals within the Mill Hill area. This could include providing written or oral testimony at Common Council meetings, Planning and Zoning Commission meetings or Zoning Board of Appeals meetings, for example.

NOTE: Based on some of the early priorities identified for the Mill Hill NRZ Plan, the following Subcommittees are recommended:

- Transportation Committee – Boston Avenue Reconfiguration and Improvement project; Road Improvements; Pedestrian Crossings; Sidewalks; and Circulation (possible one-way streets along roads with heavy on street parking)
- Boston Avenue Commercial Revitalization Committee
- Community Center Committee
- Community Outreach -- Block Watch Formation; Target Areas, housing programs

In general, it will be hard to accomplish all of the NRZ Plan with public funds alone. Public funds should therefore be applied strategically to leverage private investment within these areas. Public sector investments should be used to: a. support private sector projects and activities (e.g.

streetscape improvements, public improvements, subsidies) and b. leverage investments. Local public/private partnerships should be developed wherever possible. The ultimate key to success will be the degree to which the NRZ leaders are able to build strong partnerships with other groups and funding agencies to assure sufficient resources and the commitment to complete important projects.

2. Program of Road and Sidewalk Improvements – “Complete Streets” Concept

Throughout the development of the NRZ Strategic Plan, neighborhood leaders reiterated the importance of road and sidewalk improvements throughout the Mill Hill Neighborhood. During the Neighborhood Workshop in June and again, at the Design Charrette held in October, NRZ leadership and other neighborhood representatives underscored the importance of establishing a program for the Mill Hill neighborhood that would focus available resources on the systematic improvement of existing roads and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood. When this item came up for ranking by the NRZ Committee in November, it was ranked as having perhaps the highest importance of all neighborhood improvement projects. In general, the neighborhood sees the following as being of the greatest importance:

- Roads to be improved to a good or excellent condition, with an ongoing maintenance program to promote easy circulation through the neighborhood for cars and for public transit.
- Completion of safety improvements at key intersections to minimize the risk of walkers traveling from their homes to neighborhood retail and service establishments, schools and churches, parks and other neighborhood amenities, jobs and social gatherings. Improvements should include enhanced safety crossings, improved traffic controls and well-designed traffic calming measure where feasible, and ample street lighting.



(Above are examples of traffic calming measures that help to remind motorists that the road is a shared resource. By defining crossings with painted markings or changes in texture with the use of stamped concrete or pavers, pedestrian crossing zones are clearly identified...which helps slow

drivers down and make them aware of pedestrians in the road).

- A sidewalk improvement program to assure that sidewalks are maintained in good repair to enable safe passage through the neighborhood.
- Introduction of bicycle lanes on major roads and thoroughfares such as Boston Avenue, Mill Hill, Barnum Avenue and Seaside Avenue, to encourage alternate transportation choices for residents of the City and the neighborhood to get to work, bus stops and the future East Bridgeport train station.

This program will require careful coordination between the NRZ leadership, the City of Bridgeport Engineering Department, and the Public Works Department. Moreover, it will require the concerted political force of the neighborhoods elected representatives to assure that sufficient resources are allocated to this program.



Photo at left illustrates how streets in Montreal, Canada have been re-organized in a way that enables “sharing” by motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists.

3. **Boston Avenue Reconfiguration and Streetscape Improvements**

The NRZ Plan sees the reconfiguration of Boston Avenue as being a critical step in improving safety and convenience of access into and through the Mill Hill Neighborhood. It is also seen as providing a significant opportunity for improving the “face” or appearance of the Mill Hill neighborhood since it is a major thoroughfare serving this area (State Route 1).

At the western edge of the neighborhood, there are several issues that need to be addressed along Boston Avenue, including the poor alignment of some of its intersections (e.g. Seaview, Bond, Dover, Sheridan, Bell). The opportunity also exists for creating a much-needed landscape treatment and introducing a limited (but important) open space opportunity by continuing the existing esplanade that begins at East Main Street and Boston Avenue in the Upper East Side.

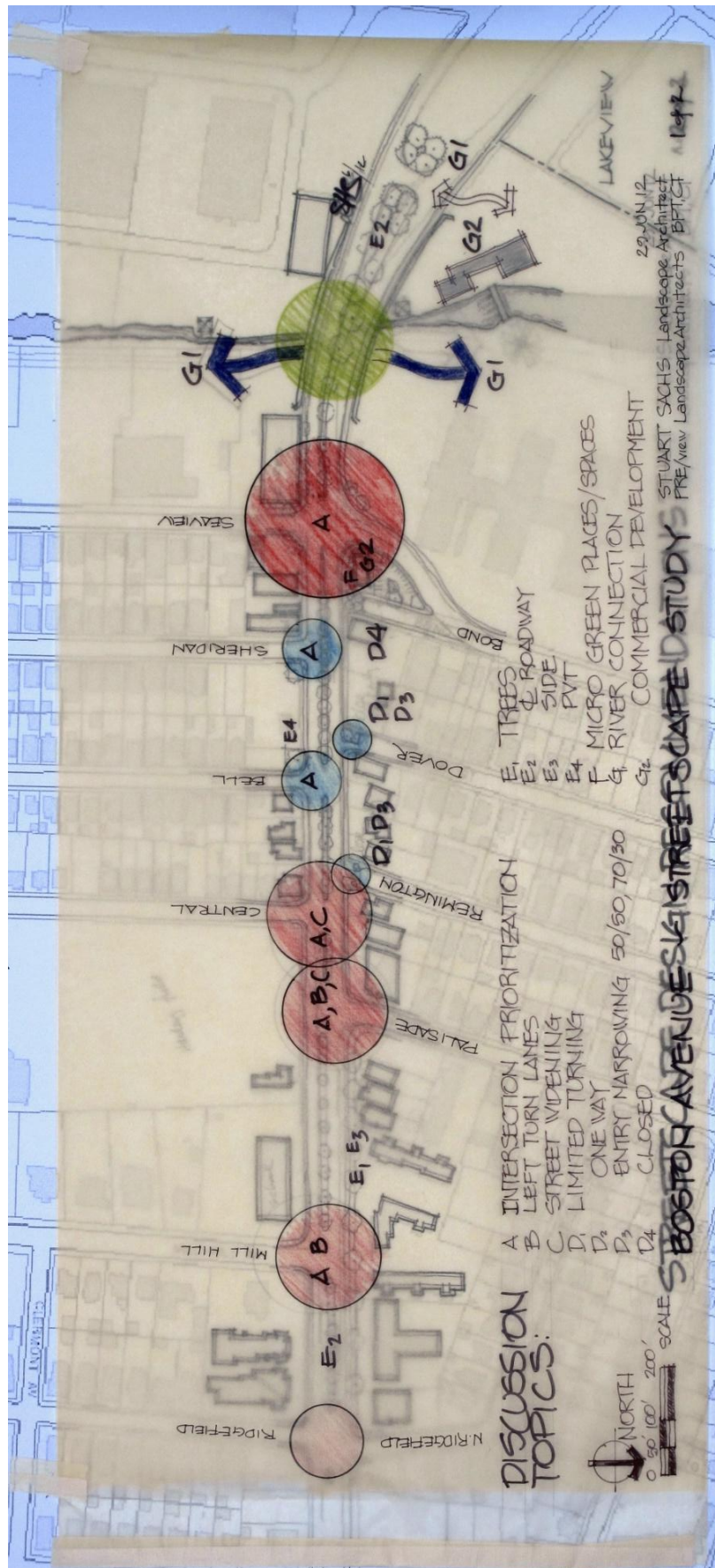
Specific efforts need to focus on improved pedestrian crossings in problem areas. The biggest current area of concern is crossing over Boston Avenue at the top of the hill near the intersection of Boston Avenue and Mill Hill Avenue.

- *Graphic, next page, illustrates various design issues that should be addressed along Boston Avenue from realignment to widening to landscaping. Streetscape design recommendations are shown on the next page.*

- *-Stuart Sachs, PRE/view Landscape Architects*

Open Space Committee Recommendations – As part of its effort, the Open Space Committee made the following additional observations about Boston Avenue:

- Boston Avenue Esplanade.** The NRZ supports the extension of the Boston Avenue esplanade into the Mill Hill neighborhood as a method for:
 - i. Creating centralized, visible open space within the neighborhood
 - ii. Providing a suitable gateway entrance into the Mill Hill neighborhood from the west
 - iii. Providing an opportunity for reconstruction of Boston Avenue to address current road condition and alignment problems.



- Seaview Ave./Bond St. ---→
- Sheridan St. ---→
- Bell St., Dover St. ---→
- Central Ave,
Remington St. →
- Mill Hill Avenue --→



Undertaking streetscape and roadway improvements along Boston Avenue will not be an easy task, especially since it is a State road. It is recommended that the NRZ Committee approach the City to undertake a detailed assessment and traffic engineering study of Boston Avenue in conjunction with the State Department of Transportation, integrating other recommendations contained within this Plan. The study should explore the best options for upgrading and improving the functionality and design of Boston Avenue to support the revitalization of the neighborhood and to improve the overall carrying capacity of Boston Avenue. A project of this magnitude could take 5 years or more, depending on the extent of land acquisition that is required and other funding priorities the project would compete against. As proposed in this Plan, it may also be necessary for the City to assume maintenance of some of the proposed roadway enhancements.



During the planning for the Design Charrette, Landscape Architect Aris Stalis came across the concept of rear-end parking as illustrated at right.

This seems it could have some potential use for certain sections of Boston Avenue as it is reconfigured.

Streetscape improvements

Proper treatment of the streetscape should address sidewalk and curb pavement/detail, street trees, planters, and street lights. Storefront improvements can include properly designed signage, attractive entryways and windows to activate the street, as well as outdoor seating, umbrellas, canopies and the use of public art.

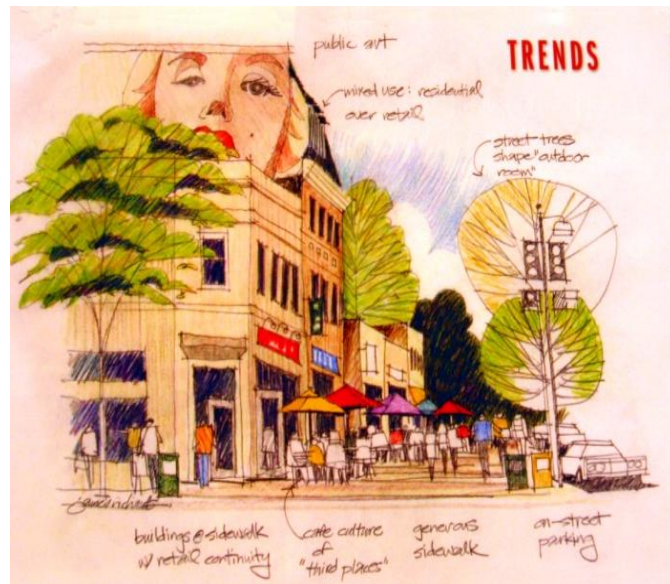




Illustration above, shows how introducing bike lanes, pedestrian sidewalks and landscaping can change the physical character and appeal of the street dramatically while significantly enhancing its functionality.



Photo above illustrates how streetscape improvements can change the appearance and appeal of a commercial street. The main difference between the two photos is the introduction of sidewalks with an amenity strip containing brick pavers, planting areas and street lights and street trees.

4. Dedicated One Way Streets

During the planning process, the Planning Committee identified a concern about parking and traffic circulation on some of the residential streets in the eastern section of the neighborhood between Boston Avenue and Barnum Avenue. Impacted streets include Willow Street, Pixlee Place, East Avneue, Bishop Avenue, Brookfield Avenue, and Prince Street. In this area, there is limited off-street parking, and there is a concentration of two to four-family dwellings. As a consequence, there are a high number of vehicles parking on the street along both sides of some of these residential streets. The situation is further compounded by the fact that the roads are narrow in this location,

and it makes it difficult to pass through these areas easily. The Committee agreed that it was a priority to work with the City Engineering Department and the Police Department to designate certain of these roads as one way streets to improve safety and traffic flow.

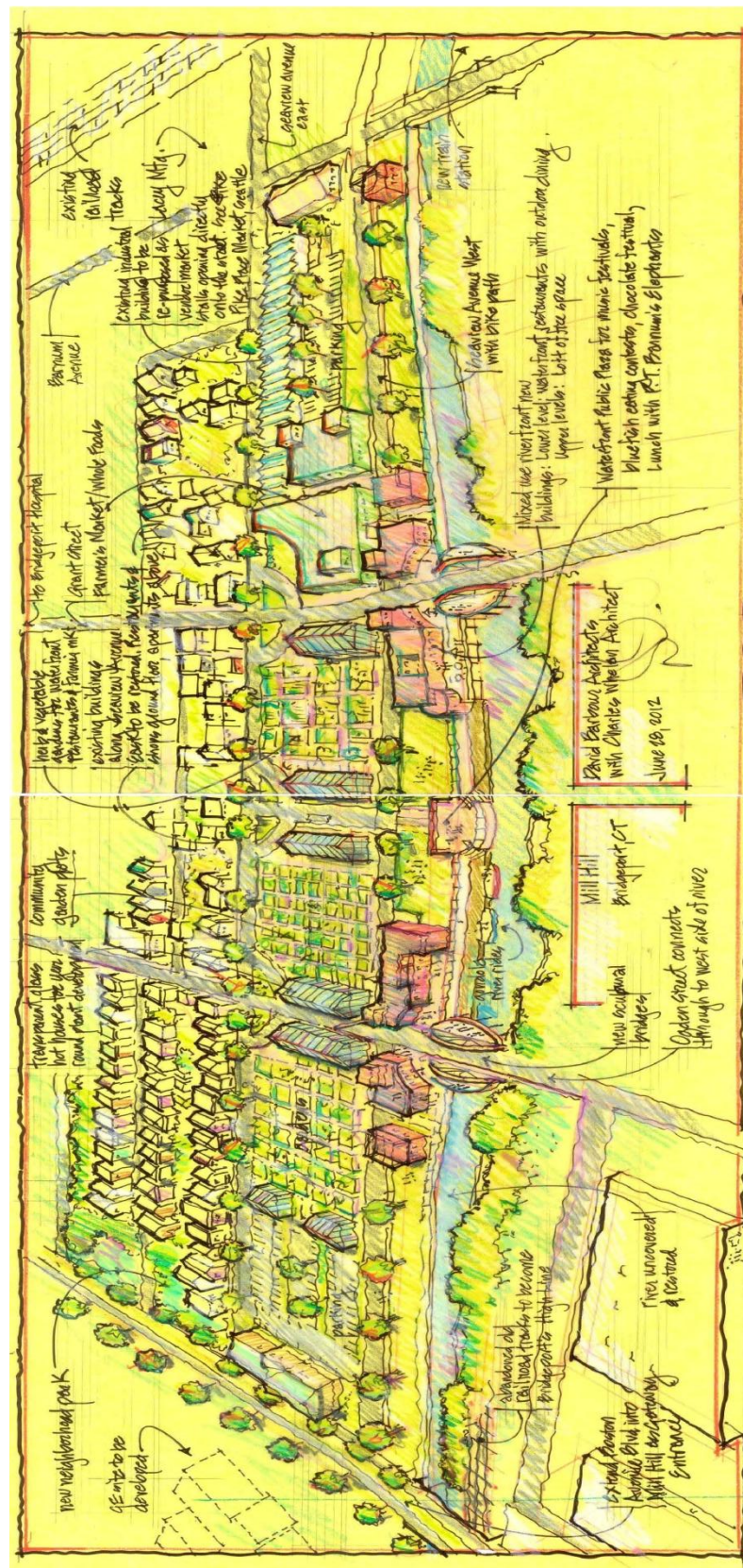
5. Seaview Avenue Redevelopment

Early in the NRZ process, Architect David Barbour consulted with peers in the field to envision what the Mill Hill neighborhood could become. As illustrated above, neighborhood potential is seen in multiple ways:

- Broad series of improvements to the Seaview Avenue Corridor as planned over the years by the City in order to access Remington Woods Property. Such improvements will likely require long term consideration of improvements and widening of viaduct underpasses, etc.
- Redevelopment of the waterfront at the western edge of the neighborhood
- Introduction of new economic uses along Seaview Avenue
- Potential for transit connections to East Bridgeport Train Station.
- The ultimate completion of the East Bridgeport Train Station, which is envisioned along Barnum Avenue near the border of the Mill Hill and East Side neighborhoods, will create opportunities for new Transit Oriented Development (TOD) within the southwestern corner of the Mill Hill Neighborhood, which is discussed further in the NRZ recommendations. In summary, TOD is tailored to the unique opportunities created by placing mixed-use development in proximity to public transit, and especially fixed route transit such as the train station. The feasibility for high density residential housing, retail and service uses, and office uses is significantly increased when located within a walkable distance of a train station (approximately one-half mile.)
- Streetscape improvements along main transportation corridors of neighborhood
- Increased open space and recreational opportunities
- Use of community gardens to reactivate vacant lots and create potential small business opportunities for residents

Illustration on the next page depicts the Mill Hill neighborhood as seen looking east, with the Seaview Avenue Redevelopment/Yellow Mill Pond riverfront recapture project in the foreground.

-David Barbour, David Barbour Architects



GRAPHIC ABOVE: SEAVIEW AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACT OF RELATED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON MILL HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

6. Boston Avenue Storefront Improvement Program



The commercial properties, pictured above, represent a typical streetscape along Boston Avenue currently. The buildings are simple, but signage and overall treatment of the facades limits the ability to create street appeal at this location. There are too many signs, and there is little or no landscaping (street trees or landscape beds) to make the area attractive. As illustrated on the graphic below, with some creativity, the streetscape can be changed dramatically and enlivened by introducing new fabric awnings, better organized signage, the addition of some unifying architectural elements, and some new street trees. Improvements such as this one could be encouraged through a Boston Avenue Revitalization Project that involves merchants/property owners and community leaders and provides incentives for storefront improvements (such as storefront improvement loan programs administered by the City). Streetscape and road improvements such as the ones envisioned along Boston Avenue, could also provide an incentive to promote property improvements. It could also hope to create a specific revitalization program like the East Main Street Revitalization Association, which looks at improvements to marketing and security of the commercial corridor along

Storefront Improvement Concept.

-David Barbour, David Barbour Architects



7. Block Watch Formation

Numerous stakeholders involved in the NRZ process identified crime as a growing issue within the Mill Hill neighborhood. Nonprofit housing organizations expressed interest in working with the neighborhood to renovate, rebuild or replace deteriorating structures as part of the revitalization effort; but they repeatedly pointed to the need for crime to be addressed in particular blocks in order for new housing units to attract residents to the area. Some of the areas in which these nonprofits could have the greatest impact are also some of the areas where there are isolated crime problems currently... kids hanging out on street corners, drugs, and even some shootings have been reported. Neighborhood leaders did not see crime as an insurmountable problem, however.... but instead, they viewed crime as an issue that can be addressed through NRZ efforts. Based on the work of the NRZ Safety and Security Committee, it was determined that the best approach to pushing crime out of the Mill Hill Neighborhood is to organize block watches within areas that are targeted for revitalization. According to City Police Department representatives, there are a number of benefits to having block watches in the neighborhood. The Police Department is also prepared to support these block watches. It was felt that the proposed Community Center could provide recreational opportunities as a constructive alternative for teens as well as a place to provide resource materials for local residents who are interested in forming block watches. The NRZ Plan could start by designating a goal of creating up to 4 or 5 block watches per year, in conjunction with overall revitalization efforts and any target areas that are selected.

8. Emergency Preparedness

Members of the NRZ want to see a stronger connection between the neighborhood and the City's office of Emergency Preparedness Planning (currently, Scott Appleby). It was felt that the City should pursue programs along the lines of a "Reverse 911" program in which the City could contact residents of any issues of concern, such as severe storms, evacuation of specific areas during events challenging the safety or health of the neighborhood, etc. It was also noted that the use of social media, such as Twitter, should be pursued, to ensue prompt communication with neighborhood residents. The NRZ Committee plans to connect with the CERT program as one way of initiating this connection.

9. Housing Recommendations

- Emphasis should be on building sense of safety in neighborhood first
- Strong emphasis on encouraging and expanding home ownership
- Emphasis should be placed on targeting rehabilitation funding within the neighborhood
- Involvement of nonprofit organizations to the extent feasible
- Consider creation of target areas in conjunction with remaining NRZ strategy (e.g. Remington/Dover/Bond wartime housing; White Street/Ogden Street Extension area; Willow Street/East Avenue
- Establish design guidelines for commercial corridors (Seaview, Barnum, Boston)

- Seek down payment assistance from major employers in neighborhood (similar to the Yale-New Haven model and St. Vincent's for example, in which these employers offer a grant of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to encourage employees to buy in the neighborhood in which they are located).

10. New Bus Shelters – Greater Bridgeport Transit District

The Greater Bridgeport Transit District has received a \$1.2 Million grant that is available to fund the study for bus routing and timing, new bus shelters, signs, and planning for transportation oriented development. Because there is a major level of service demand within the Mill Hill neighborhood, it is believed the neighborhood will stand a good chance of making a compelling argument for more shelters and increased service.

11. Other Recommendations for the Transportation Committee

The NRZ Plan should recognize the locations of current bus routes and incorporate road improvements and enhanced pedestrian crossings to improve connections between the Hospital, other major employers, commercial areas, recreational facilities and the residential community.

- Specific efforts need to focus on improved pedestrian crossings in problem areas. The biggest current area of concern is crossing over Boston Avenue at the top of the hill near the intersection of Boston Avenue and Mill Hill Avenue.
- The Plan should recommend specific improvements to the following critical intersections. These improvements should include increased turning radii, traffic calming measures/enhanced pedestrian crossings, review of traffic signalization and possible streetscape improvements such as bus shelters, lighting, street trees, etc.:
 - Central Avenue and Grant Street
 - Barnum Avenue and Mill Hill Avenue
 - Seaview Avenue and Grant Street
- Traffic signalization needs to be reviewed with the City Engineering Department, the Police Department, and the State Department of Transportation and modifications need to be made to assure the best traffic flow through the neighborhood. The current signal at Seaview Avenue and Boston Avenue needs to be at the top of that list.
- As future efforts focus on the potential introduction of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) near the proposed East Bridgeport Train Station, consideration should be given to working with Greater Bridgeport Transit District to introduce shuttle services within the area (to access employment and health centers).
- The NRZ Plan needs to recognize that the viaduct over Seaview Avenue presents a serious obstacle to expansion of the roadway in this area, which in turn, will place limits on growth potential along the Avenue within the Mill Hill neighborhood.

12. Joint Effort with East End NRZ: Creation of Barnum Avenue Revitalization Program

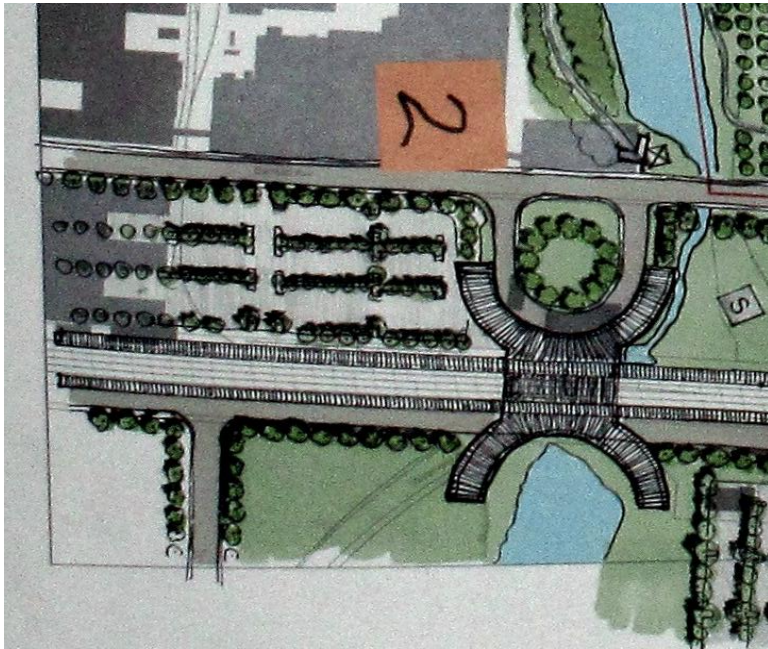
The NRZ Planning Committee is aware of the impact its major commercial corridors could have on the character and redevelopment potential of the Mill Hill Neighborhood. As described in greater detail, the Committee sees the neighborhood's initial efforts focusing on Boston Avenue and, as other redevelopment efforts take hold, to work on the redevelopment of the Seaview Avenue Corridor, a project that is seen as a longer-term solution in the neighborhood's redevelopment.

Meanwhile, the Planning Committee is well aware that the condition of Barnum Avenue needs to be addressed. Concerns include deterioration of certain buildings, outdated and unattractive storefronts, some vacancies, the need for better pedestrian crossings and the necessity for some streetscape improvements to create continuity and market appeal (though the City invested significant amounts to upgrade sidewalks and lighting along Barnum Avenue in the last five to ten years). Barnum Avenue has a unique distinction in the City's overall NRZ programming: this commercial corridor serves as a boundary to two NRZ Programs: The East End and the Mill Hill Neighborhood. Since the extensive commercial corridor is not fully located within the boundaries of one NRZ, it is impossible to directly address the area. Improving the appearance of one side of Barnum Avenue would be futile, since the lack of improvements across the street would work in conflict

The Planning Committee recommends the following actions for Barnum Avenue:

1. Formation of a Joint Revitalization Committee representing leadership from the East End NRZ and the Mill Hill NRZ; This Committee should also include significant representation of the business owners currently operating along or near Barnum Avenue.
2. Development of a Revitalization Plan that will address:
 - a. Potential for formation of a merchant/property owner association
 - b. Storefront improvement Program and Development of design guidelines
 - c. Streetscape enhancements (street trees, sidewalks, lighting, etc.)
 - d. Improvements to Barnum Avenue infrastructure, including the potential for increasing safety of pedestrian crossings, potential for bike lanes, and parking management plan.

13. East Bridgeport Train Station



While the Mill Hill NRZ cannot directly influence the development of the East Bridgeport Train Station, the NRZ Strategy needs to recognize the value the station will have on future redevelopment potential and market value for the neighborhood. Within walking distance of the proposed train station are: Bridgeport Hospital; Barnum Avenue; Seaview Avenue; and portions of the southwestern section of the neighborhood, including areas targeted for redevelopment and neighborhood community projects. The General Electric property is a bit farther, but still a reasonable walking distance from the proposed Train Station.

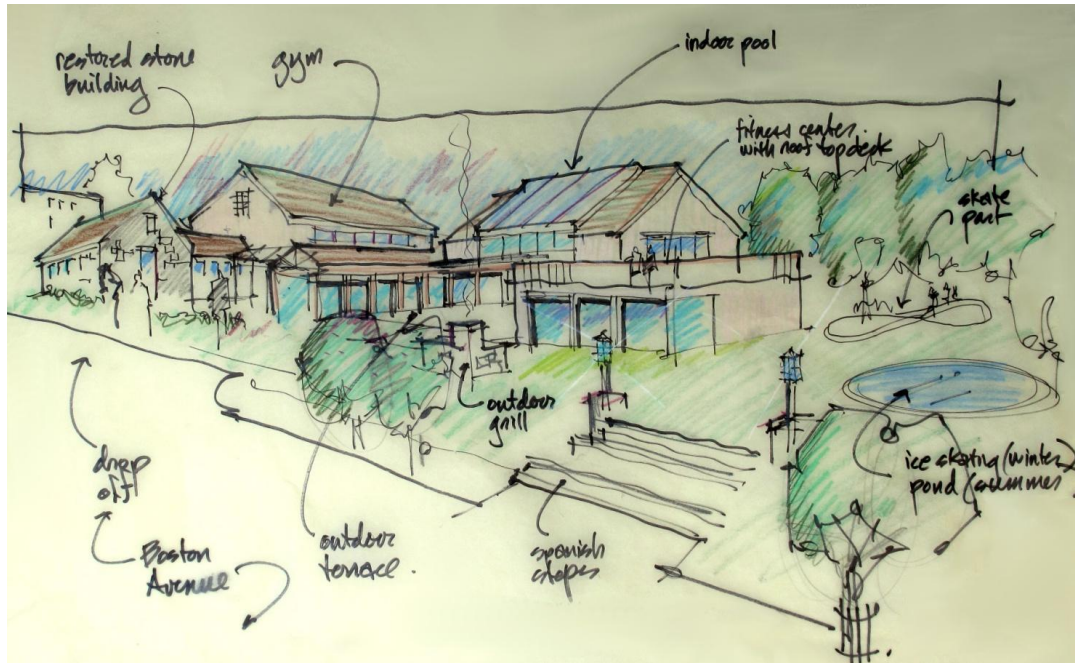
14. Future Transit Oriented Development

With a new fixed-rail train station in place at the corner of the Mill Hill neighborhood, possibilities will be expanded for Mill Hill residents to more easily access employment outside of the City (e.g. New Haven, Stamford, New York, and Hartford). At the same time, existing employees of large employers like Bridgeport Hospital will be offered a more efficient form of transportation to work. Additionally, employers will be able to attract additional employees with the improved access. Aside from employment benefits, communities are finding increased demand for housing in immediate walking distance of the train station – people who are seeking a more sustainable lifestyle with less dependency on the automobile. New housing that is generally more compact and at higher densities, also creates demand for increased retail and service uses within the neighborhood.

As plans for the East Bridgeport Train Station proceed, the NRZ Committee should work with the City staff, and local Planning and Zoning Commission to identify opportunities for modifying existing zoning regulations to support Transit Oriented Development in this area, especially within the half-mile radius shown on the Projects Plan Map.

e) Neighborhood Projects: Phase 2 – Medium-High Priority Projects

COMMUNITY CENTER



Concept for Community Center, as developed during Mill Hill NRZ Charrette Process

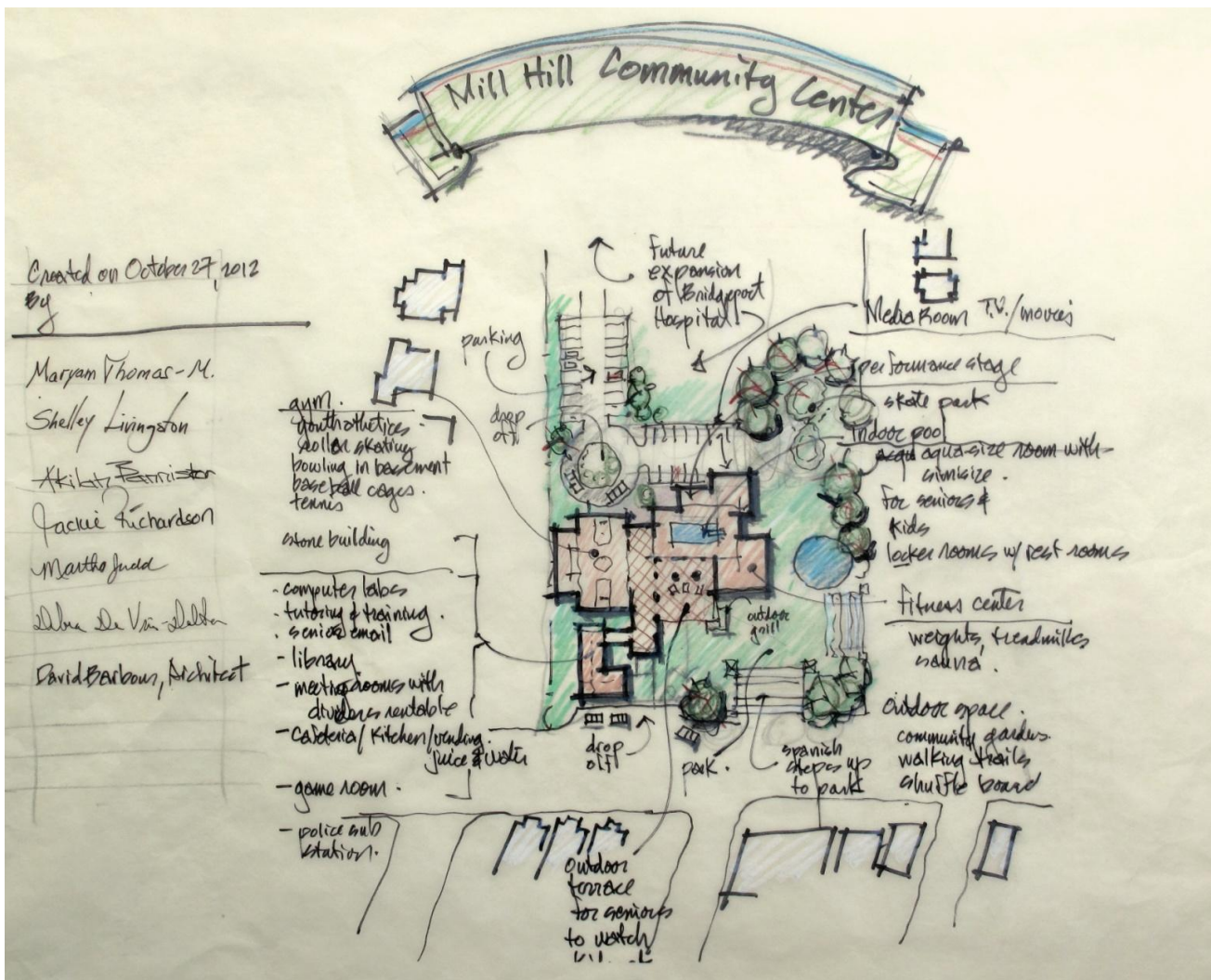
-David Barbour, David Barbour Architects

The Community Center concept was discussed extensively during the NRZ Planning process. While many saw the significant value of creating a Community Center for the Mill Hill neighborhood, the NRZ sees the community center as a concept at this point – though an important one. The community sees the need for a community center to meet multiple needs in the neighborhood (for recreational use, social gatherings, and as a focal point of neighborhood communication, as well as a place for continuing education opportunities). The Planning Committee believes there needs to be further study of the concept to determine the best location for the center, the format for the center and the specific uses to be included in it. It was noted that a community center could address several objectives within the neighborhood:

- Reduction in youth loitering in certain sections of the neighborhood, which should also reduce crime in the streets and increase safety and security levels
- Offer a focal point for social connections by neighborhood residents of all ages.
- Enhance recreational opportunities for the neighborhood
- Improve the level of community organization, which will in turn, enhance the potential for the NRZ Strategy to be successful.

A feasibility study should be conducted to determine if a community or senior center is possible, and if so, to review possible locations.

Note: Locating the community center will be an important decision to be made by the NRZ. This is a topic that will require further discussion to make sure everyone supports the community center concept and its appropriate location. The following pages include suggestions that came out of the neighborhood Design Charrette in October 2012. During that session, the group considered one option for the Community Center, placing it in an existing building on the grounds of the existing Harding High School property.



Plan View of Community Center Concept. -David Barbour, David Barbour Architects

The following are some notes that came from the small group discussion at the Neighborhood Charrette. These notes could be useful to the NRZ's further consideration of the Community Center concept:

Notes from Charrette

This proposed community center is for seniors, youth, and citizens of Bridgeport, CT. The community center will be cost effective and sustainable from rentals, concerts, and other functions and activities. We want jobs for qualified community citizens who have training in crowd control, maintenance, operations, hospitality and so forth.

LOCATION

The group discussed several proposed Locations in the neighborhood:

- St. Ambrose Church
- Lot on corner of East Ave and Boston
- Old fire house on corner of Central and Barnum
- Building on funeral home
- New Harding H.S. – At least one Councilperson suggested that this would be a good location and would offer the opportunity to have a brand new facility for the community center, a condition which could be beneficial when operating budgets are considered.
- The Harding High School site on Central Avenue after the school is moved to its new location on Boston Ave

PRELIMINARY LIST OF PROGRAM IDEAS

(Note: The following ideas came out of the brainstorming session during the October 2012 Charrette. The ideas are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather, as examples to stir further dialogue as a thorough feasibility study is undertaken, which will address location and structure of the Center and will refine the following suggested uses).

MHCC Adult and Youth Activities:

- Multiple Sports fields/Complex e.g. soccer, track, football
- Indoor field
- Computer lab/Game room/bowling alley/exercise room/outside skate board park
- park/skating/tournaments/ /Cultural arts/ housing complexes/youth programs e.g. tutoring by retired teachers
- entrepreneurial programs
- Game room for video games

- *Music room with piano etc.*
- *Weight room*
- *Vending machines*

MHCC Senior Activities:

- *game room/games i.e. Bingo/ vending machines*
- *Computer classes*
- *Sewing, knitting, quilting groups*
- *Swimming pool (exercise classes, and therapy)*
- *Pool table, ping pong table, etc.*
- *Exercise class (yoga, Tai Chi, etc.)*
- *Meeting rooms and dividers*
- *Gym area basketball*
- *Patio/outdoor space for community clubs/activities*
- *Stage for outdoor and indoor concerts*
- *Full Kitchen and Banquet room for family reunions, and other rentals*
- *Community Garden/walking and bike trails*
- *First aid room with Nurse or paraprofessional*
- *Accessibility for Seniors and disabled*

Open Space, Recreation, and Community Gardens

Because there is so little publicly owned open space in the Mill Hill Neighborhood, revitalization efforts to create open space will have to be accomplished in creative ways and, often, by developing partnerships around proposed redevelopment efforts in the neighborhood, especially the General Electric redevelopment and the Bridgeport Hospital expansion projects.

VISUAL ENHANCEMENTS:

The Boston Avenue Esplanade project and other street tree projects will help soften the appearance and feel of the neighborhood and introduce new open space, landscaping and streetscape improvements that will provide visual enhancements.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In addition, it will be important to provide usable open space where residents can sit, relax and recreate (from active recreational activities to more passive recreation such as tables for checkers, bocce courts, etc. which may appeal to Mill Hill's senior population. Unfortunately, the City owns very little land in Mill Hill for this purpose. Suitable public property for that purpose currently is the

site of the existing Harding High School, which is targeted for the Bridgeport Hospital expansion project.

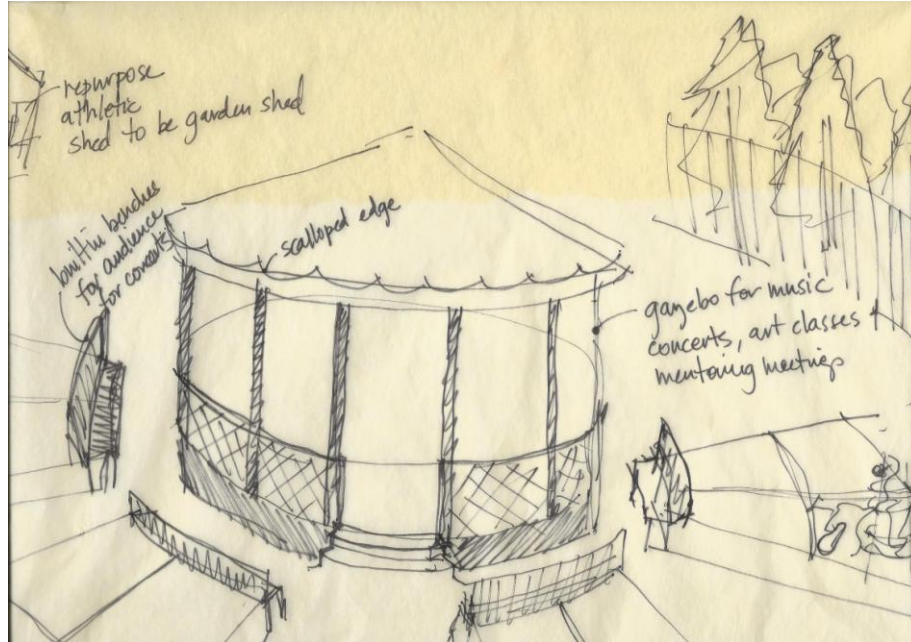
Community Gardens



Many urban communities have utilized community gardens as a tool to create open space in neighborhoods where vacant lots now exist, as well as to provide an opportunity for residents of these neighborhoods to build their own self-sufficiency by growing their own vegetables. In some cases, community gardens can begin to promote entrepreneurial efforts and even the development of farmers' markets, which create excitement in a neighborhood.

For purposes of the Mill Hill NRZ, community gardens are seen as a supplemental revitalization effort. The neighborhood's leadership recognize their potential value, but they are also aware of their limitations (generally, this is not a permanent solution and there are issues of ownership and liability risks. A private owner will seldom want to take on the liability of others being located on his/her property. As reported earlier, there is very little City-owned vacant land in the Mill Hill Area. The NRZ believes it is important to enlist the support and involvement of all potential supporters of this program. For example, there are schools in the neighborhood that are already involved in community gardening, and members of the Planning Committee want to see Board of Education participation in this activity. Additional support should be sought from nonprofit organizations and other agencies that could provide technical assistance, labor or funds (e.g, Green Village Initiative, Groundworks, etc.)

Below is a concept for use of a gazebo as a focal point within a grouping of community gardens, which came out of the Mill Hill NRZ Design Charrette.



- Beth, David Barbour Architects

2011 Parks Plan

- a) The NRZ should support the City's efforts to implement the 2011 Parks Plan (see attached) as supplementing the revitalization objectives of the Mill Hill NRZ. The Plan recommends the formation of partnerships to promote expanded parks, open space and recreational facilities, including the NRZ's. According to that Plan, there are only two existing parks serving the "Boston Avenue/Mill Hill" neighborhood. The boundaries for that neighborhood extends farther north than the area selected for the Mill Hill NRZ (the 139th Council District). Meanwhile, the service areas defined in that plan encompass some portions of the NRZ neighborhood, since the area is based on access to a park within a 10 minute walk.

b) The Parks Plan identifies two parks serving this area:

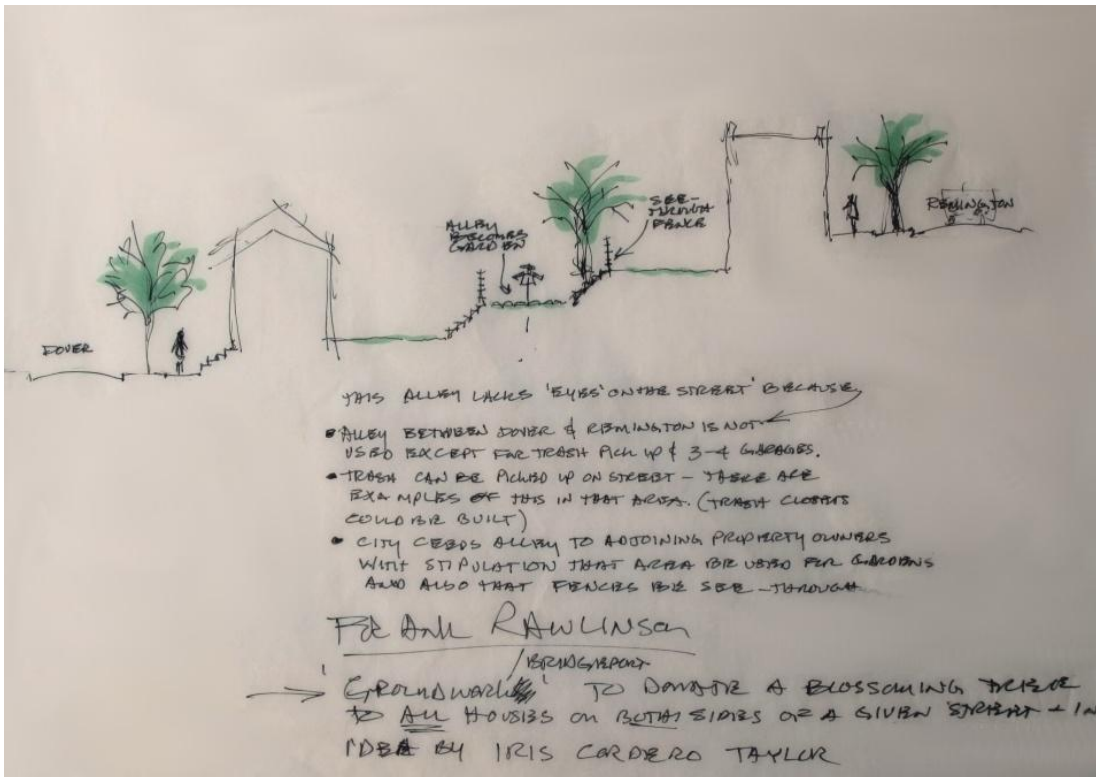
- a. Manila Street Playground – The Plan suggests there is an opportunity to renaturalize a portion of this playground to minimize maintenance and to restore ecological benefits. The Plan recommends the playground remain as a walkable amenity for families in the neighborhood, but with a well-defined path. Specific suggestions:
 - i. Renaturalize the edges and rear portion of the Manila Street lot
 - ii. Define an “active zone” to include a small, maintained turf zone and a perimeter path.
 - iii. Plant street trees to improve the edges of the park and entryways, as well as to provide shade.

While the City anticipates major investment in Success Park, the Parks Plan identifies the redevelopment of the Manila Street Playground as an appropriate NRZ project.

- b. Success Park - The Plan recommends creation of “hyper-parks” for areas that are underserved in the City. The Plan recommends that Success Park be the first Hyper Park in the City. The City envisions the Park to provide the Boston Avenue/Mill Hill neighborhood with much of its needed formal play and sports amenities, which will allow the Manila Street Playground to be returned to a lower-intensity use. The Plan identifies a number of concerns about existing conditions at the Park: Limited visibility, backed by housing and at the end of dead end roads; and the onsite field is in poor condition. The Plan concludes that the neighborhood needs two (2) basketball courts, two (2) playgrounds, and one (1) tennis court. Recommended elements of the Park being developed into a hyper-park:
 - i. Installation of a synthetic turf play field. Committee members were interested in seeing this field be used for multiple purposes.
 - ii. Construction of a new connective road to provide improved access and visibility
 - iii. Installation of two (2) basketball courts and one (1) tennis court
 - iv. Construction of a destination playground to serve the Boston Avenue/Mill Hill Neighborhood
 - v. Buffer plantings and signage to define the edges and entrances. There was concern about lighting and its potential impacts on the adjacent neighborhood.
 - vi. Pavilion

c) While the Plan is an important step in beginning to meet the needs of the broader neighborhood, it’s important to note that much of the NRZ neighborhood below Boston Avenue

is beyond a 10-minute walk to Success Park – and both of the noted parks are physically outside of the boundaries of the Mill Hill NRZ neighborhood. Areas that are furthest removed from the proposed Success Park/Hyper Park include areas along the western and southern borders of the neighborhood, including the primary western gateway entrance into Mill along Boston Avenue, the length of Seaview Avenue, and the length of Barnum Avenue – areas that are expected to be target areas for the NRZ Strategic Plan. Also of importance is the fact that the NRZ Safety and Security Committee has identified a concentrated area along the western border of the NRZ neighborhood in which there are significant crime problems (the Bell Street, Sheridan Street, and Meade Street area). Therefore, the NRZ Plan should supplement the City’s Parks Plan.



f) Neighborhood Projects: Phase 3 – Longer term Medium Priority Projects

Medium Importance

I. Riverfront Reclamation, Open Space and Park Development

Riverfront Reclamation, Waterfront Redevelopment



Yellow Mill River

While residents appreciate the potential value of redeveloping the Upper Yellow Mill River, they feel it would take too many limited resources from critical short-term neighborhood projects. For the long-run, however, there is great hope that this dream could someday be achieved.. public access to the water, a mix of appropriate uses, and creation of an attractive asset for the neighborhood and the City.

II. Home Ownership Promotion

Efforts need to be concentrated on the promotion of home ownership in the Mill Hill Neighborhood. 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 provide 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

III. Creation of Target Areas to Promote Housing Rehabilitation and Home Ownership Promotion

There was strong interest in establishing target areas for undertaking neighborhood improvement projects, especially in areas that require special attention due to vacancies, deterioration, blight and/or incidences of crime. The NRZ Plan has identified three target areas for consideration:

1. Bond/Remington
2. Bell Street/Sheridan
3. East Avenue/Willow Street)

Revitalization efforts are much more successful, when they can be designed to achieve multiple objectives. In these areas, there should be a focus on block watch formation, housing rehabilitation, home ownership promotion and streetscape improvements. The restoration of these areas could have significant positive impact on the success of the Plan.

IV. Intersection Improvements to promote use of Public Transit

- Certain intersections within the Mill Hill neighborhood are too tight to accommodate safe turning radii for the full-size GBTD buses, a condition which lengthens vehicle trips for the buses and reduces traffic safety -- for vehicles and pedestrians. The most critical intersections are:
 - Central Avenue and Grant Street
 - Barnum Avenue and Mill Hill Avenue
 - Seaview Avenue and Grant Street
- The Plan specific improvements to the following critical intersections. These improvements should include increased turning radii, traffic calming measures/enhanced pedestrian

crossings, review of traffic signalization and possible streetscape improvements such as bus shelters, lighting, street trees, etc.

7. Phasing Plan: Short-Term and Long term objectives and strategies

ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

The NRZ Planning Committee was particularly aware that it would be difficult to secure large sums of funding for neighborhood projects, especially in light of the tight economy that has dominated the region over the last four to five years. As a result, members discussed the importance of building partnerships to implement this Plan – partnerships with City agencies, other community groups, church-based organizations and other non-profit organizations serving the neighborhood. Working together with other groups will greatly increase the chances for this Plan to succeed.

a) Short Term Objectives 2013 – 2018 (1-5 years)

Community Organization –

- Form NRZ Committee to begin implementation phase
- Support Trash Busters and Other Community Organizations in efforts to improve safety and security and overall property maintenance, including such efforts as:
- Clean-Up Campaigns, especially in visible target areas
- Block Watch Formation, particularly in conjunction with target area programs to encourage housing rehabilitation and home ownership promotion
- Enhance Communications with Emergency Service Providers, partner with key departments such as the Police Department

Road Improvement Projects, Pedestrian Improvements

- Establish meeting(s) with City Engineering Department and the Greater Bridgeport Regional Council to develop a program of road and sidewalk improvements that would result in improved traffic and pedestrian safety and enhanced walkability throughout the neighborhood
- Support City efforts to fund road and sidewalk improvements along City streets
- Work with the Greater Bridgeport Transit District to coordinate neighborhood transit facilities in conjunction with neighborhood revitalization strategy
- Advocate for and support efforts of the City and the Regional Council to plan for significant road improvements, particularly along the Boston Avenue Corridor, which will need to be presented to the State Department of Transportation for design acceptance and, ultimately, funding.

Secure City and State Funding for Neighborhood-Based Revitalization Projects

- Funding for Boston Avenue Storefront Improvement Program
- Feasibility Study for Mill Hill Community Center
- Housing Rehabilitation Funds
- Funding Commitments to support housing development projects by nonprofit organizations (Habitat for Humanity, (U.C. P.A. of Southern CT, Inc., Bridgeport Neighborhood Fund, etc.)

- Support beautification and gateway-type projects that will enhance the appearance and appeal of the Mill Hill neighborhood, working closely with the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization
- Promote community gardens where appropriate

Support Public Funding for Key Development Projects

- Relocation and Reconstruction of Harding High School
- General Electric Property Redevelopment incentives
- East Bridgeport Train Station Project
- Community Center (capital and operating expenses) and Community Policing Station

Support Private Sector Investment in Redevelopment Projects

- Bridgeport Hospital Expansion
- General Electric Redevelopment

Boston Avenue

- Identify leadership and develop NRZ Committee or separate revitalization organization to focus on commercial redevelopment
- Secure funds for storefront improvements and streetscape improvements
- Work with the City to promote property owner involvement

Barnum Avenue Revitalization

- Develop assessment in conjunction with East End NRZ
- Identify leadership among Barnum Avenue property owners
- Initiate and seek funding for revitalization project with leadership from both NRZ projects.

b) Mid-Term Objectives 2019-2024 (6-10 years)

Continue efforts begun in First Phase of NRZ Project

- NRZ Committee
- Community Organization
- Road and Sidewalk Improvements
- Storefront Improvement Program
- Community Center/Community Policing

Barnum Avenue

- Continue efforts to redevelop underutilized or vacant properties for neighborhood commercial and mixed-use projects
- Promote TOD development as the East Bridgeport Train Station is developed

Update NRZ Plan

- Establish updated objectives
- Expand partnership to include new stakeholders as necessary

- Identify and secure funding to implement neighborhood plans

c) Long-Term Objectives 2025 to 2035 (11-20 years)

Transit Oriented Development Projects

Barnum Avenue Revitalization

Seaview Avenue Redevelopment

8. Performance and Review standards

The Mill Hill NRZ Committee should assess progress against this plan in order to determine the effectiveness of the NRZ process. This should be an ongoing effort. Performance standards should be established around the goals that have been established in this plan. There are a series of performance standards that the Committee (and the City) could monitor, including the following examples:

- Increases in the level of homeownership in the neighborhood
- Reductions in the level of crime in the neighborhood
- Increases in the number of Block Watch groups that have been formed in the Mill Hill Neighborhood
- Reductions in the amount of graffiti and litter in the neighborhood (The national Keep America Beautiful organization has a sample Litter Survey or Index that could work well for this purpose – it can be found at www.kab.org)
- The length (in linear feet) of sidewalks that have been repaired or replaced in the neighborhood since adoption of the NRZ Strategic Plan.
- The number of intersections that have been improved to incorporate traffic calming and safer pedestrian crossings after the adoption of the NRZ Strategic Plan.
- The amount of open space that has been created and the number of planting areas that have been constructed (street trees, esplanades, gateway areas) following adoption of the Plan.
- Reductions in the number or percentage of properties identified as blighted by the City's Blight Office
- The status of efforts to create a community center, either in a new structure, an adaptively reused space, or included as shared space in another facility
- Increases in educational levels and skill levels
- Improved employment/unemployment levels.
- Increased median income levels.

9. Regulatory Issues

The Mill Hill NRZ Committee should be an advocate for the Mill Hill Neighborhood and communicate frequently with City agencies and elected officials concerning the recommendations of this NRZ Strategic Plan. As land use and regulatory decisions are made by the City, which could affect the Mill Hill NRZ Strategy, Committee leaders should speak at public hearings and help to guide decisions by the City as they are made. Of special importance will be decisions made by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals, including topics such as the redevelopment of the General Electric property, Barnum Avenue and Boston Avenue commercial properties, Seaview Avenue redevelopment and future Transit Oriented Development surrounding the proposed East Bridgeport Train Station.

Reference Documents

The Parks Master Plan 2011

Bridgeport 2020: A Vision for the Future, Master Plan of Conservation and Development
BFJ Planning, March 2008

Seaview Avenue Corridor Study; EICON, North American Realty Advisory Services.

APPENDIX A

**Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
Planning Committee By-Laws**

Submitted: ECDE
February 20, 2013

Planning Department
OPED

Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Planning Committee By-Laws

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MILL HILL NRZ BY-LAWS

Article I Name and Office

Section: 1.1 Name

The name of the organization shall be the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Planning Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee.

Section: 1.2 Offices

The principal location of Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall be in the Mill Hill neighborhood of Bridgeport, Connecticut. All meetings of the Mill Planning Committee shall take place within the Mill Hill Neighborhood of Bridgeport. Committee meetings may take place where deemed convenient to the participating subcommittee members.

Article II Mission and Goal

Section: 2.1 Mission Statement

In accordance to Public ACT 94-240 of the Connecticut General Statutes, an Act to Establish the Neighborhood Revitalization Zone, the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall be responsible for formulating an NRZ Strategic Plan:

Section: 2.2 Primary Mission

Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee is to improve and preserve the Mill Hill Neighborhood through the collaborative efforts of the residents and other stakeholders, including but not limited to, representatives of businesses; non-profit organizations; health and other service providers; cultural and religious institutions; and organized community associations.

Section: 2.3 Primary Mission Goal

The main goal of the mission is to improve the quality of life, and to protect and advance the well being of the community. The objectives are to increase the income levels of residents by advancing economic development and job creation; to improve educational achievements; to increase home ownership and to create decent and affordable housing; and to assist in the creation of services for the youth, the elderly, and other disadvantaged members of the community. This will be done through the collaborative efforts of the residents and other stakeholders, with an emphasis on developing and protecting the unique business, entertainment, architectural, environmental cultural and artistic strengths of Mill Hill. It should ensure that land use and development occur in such a manner as to place the highest values on people and the unique natural resources of the community and its quality of life, as well as honoring and preserving the historic nature of the Mill Hill NRZ. This effort will include but not be limited to, representatives of businesses; non-

profit organizations, health and other service providers; cultural and religious institutions; and organized community associations.

Section: 2.4 Intent

The intent of the plan is to contribute to the long term betterment of the community, and the City of Bridgeport, reflect community vision, and develop goals through a commitment to a realistic implementation.

Section: 2.5 Affiliation

This organization shall not be affiliated with any political party, organization or group nor will the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee endorse candidates for political offices.

Section: 2.6 Boundaries

The boundary of the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) shall be the existing Neighborhood boundary of Mill Hill Neighborhood, as defined by the City of Bridgeport Council District 139. The Neighborhood written description of the Mill Hill NRZ (Attachment A) and the Mill Hill NRZ Boundary Map (Attachment B) will constitute a part of these By-laws.

**Article III
Membership**

Section: 3.1 General Membership

The General Membership constitutes those persons who live within the boundaries of the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ). The General Membership shall be responsible for electing the Planning Committee; Adoption and Amendment of the By-Laws and approval of the Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan.

Section: 3.2 Planning Committee Eligibility

Eligible members of the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee include residents, owners of properties located in the neighborhood, individuals and representatives of businesses, cultural, educational, social service agencies, religious and citizen organizations located in the Mill Hill Neighborhood or having a significant impact on the Mill Hill Neighborhood. Each non-resident stakeholder organization, institution or business, if so elected, shall be limited to one representative Planning Committee member each and the total number of non-resident stakeholders may not exceed Forty-nine percent (or 49%).

Section: 3.3 Manner of Admission to Planning Committee Membership

Any person who is eligible for membership on the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee may become a nominee by filing a signed application with the Mill Hill Election Committee, on a form approved by the Election Committee that indicates such person desires to become a Planning Committee member. Applicants shall be reviewed by and approved by a majority vote of the General Membership. The Committee shall approve applications at the regular or special meeting of the committee that follows the NRZ's receipt of an application for membership. The Committee may establish rules of

admission from time to time which it deems desirable or appropriate, provided such rules are reasonable, germane to the purposes of the Committee and regularly enforced as to all members.

Section: 3.4 Planning Committee Officers

Officers of the Planning Committee shall be nominated and elected by the Planning Committee.

**Article IV
Meetings**

Section: 4.1 Operating Procedure

The Committee shall operate under the guidelines of Robert's Rules or Parliamentary Law

Section: 4.2 Notice of Meetings

It will be the responsibility of the Secretary and Officers of the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee to distribute a written notice of the meetings to the members at least five days prior to each meeting. Notification may be delivered by e-mail or postal.

Section: 4.3 Quorum

At all times, a quorum must be comprised of Fifty-one percent (or 51%) or more Mill Hill resident Committee Members. A minimum of five (or 5) Planning Committee Members must be present to constitute a quorum with a majority of at least three (or 3), or more to be residents.

Section: 4.4 Regular Meetings

The Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall meet at least 1 times per Month at a location within the neighborhood boundaries and at a time and date agreed upon by the members.

Section: 4.5 Voting

Decision on any question shall be made by a majority vote of those members constituting a quorum. There shall be no voting by proxy. Any member who has a personal, professional, business or other interest in any parcel of property that might be subject to the Strategic Plan shall be required to disclose said interest and shall recuse himself or herself from any vote thereon. All votes shall be recorded by Secretary of the Planning Committee, and together with minutes of meetings, shall be made available to the community-at-large.

Section: 4.6 Non Resident Stakeholder Voting

Non-resident stakeholder organizations, institution or business, if so elected shall be limited to one designated voting representative Committee member. The same applies in General Membership motions requiring consensus.

Section: 4.7 Ceding the Chair

The Chair of the Committee shall preside over the Meetings and maintain orderly conduct. Should the Chair wish to speak formally on a given subject, the Chair must step down ceding the chair to the next officer in line who will assume the position of the Chair. For the remainder of the meeting, the ceding Chair, may not reclaim the Chair after speaking until the following meeting.

**Article V
The Planning Committee**

Section: 5.1 Membership

The Planning Committee shall consist of seventeen (17) persons. At least fifty-one percent (51%) of the Committee’s members must be residents of the Mill Hill NRZ neighborhood. In addition, the City may appoint a representative as a voting member to the Planning Committee. The composition of the Planning Committee shall be as follows:

- Nine (or 9) Residents (P.A. 95-340 requires that majority of Committee members be residents)
- One (or 1) Youth Resident Representatives (13-18 years old)
- One (or 1) “Small Business” Representatives
- Two (or 2) “Large Businesses/Employers” Representatives
- One (or 1) “Non-Resident Representatives of Owners of Investment Propertie”s in the Mill Hill NRZ Neighborhood (Residential, Commercial or Residential)
- Two (or 2) Representatives of Churches and/ or Legally Recognized Faith Based-Organizations
- One (or 1) Representatives of Community Organizations and Other Non-Profits

Section: 5.2 Stake Holder Definition

For the purpose of this section “small business” is defined as any business operating within the Mill Hill NRZ neighborhood boundaries with ten (or 10) or fewer employees. “Large Business” is defined as any business operating within the Mill Hill NRZ boundaries with more than ten (or 10) employees. Faith Based Organizations with Employees do not constitute a business, large, small or other. *With regard to resident members, individuals will be required to provide proof of residency within the Mill Hill NRZ (e.g., Driver’s License, State Identification Card, Utility Bills, etc.).*

Section: 5.3 Stakeholder Eligibility, and Representation

Resident Property Owners and Resident Tenants must reside within the Mill Hill NRZ. Some members of the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee may reside outside of the Mill Hill NRZ, as long as they represent a business, church or other religious organization, community organization or other non-profit, or public sector entity that is located within the Mill Hill NRZ, or substantially impacts the Mill Hill NRZ community and, that said member has been nominate and elected and designated as the sole representative of said

organization as a Planning Committee Member. Said organization will have one vote through the elected designee.

Section: 5.4 Election and Representation:

Each constituent group shall determine the method of election, setting forth its procedure in writing and provide a copy of same to the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee. Elections of members shall take place within One Hundred Twenty (120) of the first official meeting of the NRZ) or before the approval by the City Council of Bridgeport of a resolution designating the Mill Hill community as an NRZ pursuant to state statute. Subsequent election of representatives to the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall take place once per year.

- Only residents of Mill Hill and one representative from each non-resident stakeholder organization will be eligible to vote. Non-residents who work, attend school, attend religious services, participate in community organizations but are not stakeholders may not vote unless so designated by the stake holder organization and recorded as “representative and “sole vote” by the Planning Committee. Those not designated as “representative and sole vote” are not eligible to vote in general elections nor are they allowed to nominate or second, a candidate.
- Stakeholders living from outside the boundaries of the Mill Hill NRZ entity, falling under this classification will be limited to one seat each, if so elected, on the Planning Committee and are not to exceed 49% or no more than one person less than the majority of the Committee Membership

Section: 5.5 Nominating Committee

Election of representatives to the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall take place within the Sixty days (or 60) of the election of the Planning Committee pursuant to the City of Bridgeport approval of a resolution designating the Mill Hill community as an NRZ neighborhood pursuant to state statute.

- A Nominating Committee will be convened by the By-Laws committee which consists of representation from the representative sectors listed in Article V, Section 1, as well as members of the By-Laws Committee.
- The Nominating Committee members will be asked to inform their constituency about the NRZ and solicit nominations. Candidates for the Planning Committee may self-nominate or be nominated by another person.
- The nominations can be submitted by email or regular mail or brought to the subsequent meeting of the Nominating Committee by members of that committee. The goal of the nominating process is to maximize participation.

- The Nominating Committee will review nominees and convene the persons nominated to explain the purpose of the NRZ and the duties and responsibilities of the members of the Planning Committee.
- A slate of Planning Committee members will be prepared to present at the subsequent stakeholders meeting.

Section: 5.6 Term of Office

Members of the Planning Committee shall serve for a period of one (or 1) year, at which time nominations and a general election will create a new governing body. If the electorate reelects an officer, than that person will serve in the position that the governing body elects that person to. The Committee will strive to replace membership that “retires” from the duties of their office. Upon approval of the NRZ Strategic Plan by the City Council, the membership shall nominate the NRZ Implementation Committee, at which time the Planning Committee shall be dissolved, whichever is shorter.

- Members of the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall serve for a period of one (1) year, or until such time as an NRZ Strategic Plan has been approved by the City and passed on to an NRZ Implementation Committee, at which time the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee shall be dissolved, whichever is shorter.
- If a planning committee member misses two (or 2) consecutive meetings, he/she will not be able to continue in that position unless there are extraordinary circumstances, as deemed by a majority vote of the planning committee or: if a Planning Committee members “steps down,” the Planning Committee will fill the vacated position through a list of potential replacements (alternates) from the nominating process to be kept in case replacements from the same represented group are needed.
- Immediately following approval of the Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan by the City of Bridgeport and prior to dissolution of the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee, the Planning Committee membership will be responsible for the creation of the Mill Hill NRZ Implementation Committee at which point the Planning Committee will be dissolved.

Section: 5.7 Termination of Membership & Resignation

A person’s membership shall terminate upon death, termination, expulsion, failure to pay dues (if any are required), failure at any time, to satisfy the eligibility qualifications set forth in Article III, Section 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, & 3.4 or unannounced absence from Two (or 2) consecutive meetings, or dissolution or expiration of the Mill NRZ. Such termination shall be effected by a majority vote of the Planning Committee. Any member may resign by delivering a written resignation to the Committee Chair or recording secretary. Upon termination or resignation of membership, all rights and privileges of the member on the Committee and its property shall cease.

Article VI Officers and Committees

Section: 6.1 Name and Number

Since the purpose of the NRZ Planning Committee is to formulate a Strategic Plan for the Mill Hill NRZ, the only officers shall be a President, whose responsibility shall be to preside over meetings of the Committee, a Vice-President, who shall act in the President's place in his or her absence, and a Secretary, who shall be responsible for maintaining records of the Planning Committee, recording minutes and votes, and providing notice of meetings to the Planning Committee and notice of public hearings or forums to the community at large. The offices of President, Vice-President, and Secretary shall be elected for one-year terms by a majority vote of the members of the Planning Committee.

Section: 6.2 Subcommittees

The Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee may consist of but not be limited to the following Subcommittees, each of which will be assigned tasks and meet according to a schedule determined by the membership at large: (1) Economic Development; (2) Education; (3) Open Space & Recreation; (4) Health, Safety & Security; (5) Housing; (6) Infrastructure and Transportation; (7) Outreach and Communications; and (8) Employment and Training;

Article VII Procedure

Section: 7.1 Motions and Proposals

Proposals may be introduced to the committee by any member, unless the proposal directly affects a property, project or program of a participating group, in which case only the affected party may introduce the proposal. If more than one group has such an interest, any and/or all of them may introduce a measure. A proposition which is re-introduced after being tabled at a previous meeting may be tabled again if six committee members vote to table it again.

Section: 7.2 Amendments

Amendments to the By-laws may be proposed in writing to the Planning Committee if at least three members of the Planning Committee request an amendment to the By-laws. Any amendment shall require a three-quarters (or $\frac{3}{4}$) vote of all Committee members to take effect.

Section: 7.3 Parliamentary Disputes

In any dispute concerning interpretation of "By Laws" or operating procedures of the NRZ, the Secretary shall be considered "Parliamentarian" and defer to Robert's Rules of Order for guidance. The agreement of seventy-five percent (or 75%) of those in attendance shall be necessary to overcome the application of Robert's Rule of Order, in all case.

Article VIII

Section: 8.1 Presentation of Plan/Dissolution

In no case shall the NRZ Planning Committee present a plan to the City of Bridgeport without first holding at least one public hearing on same, open to all residents and stakeholders within the Mill Hill NRZ community. Notice of said meeting shall be made in writing, and provided the public not less than two weeks prior.

Section: 8.2 Plan Approval

Upon approval of the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Strategic Plan by the City of Bridgeport, and presentation of same to the State of Connecticut, the NRZ Planning Committee will dissolve. Any assets of the NRZ Planning Committee, including all work-product, will be transferred to the NRZ Implementation Committee, a separate 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization, whose mission will be to carry out the particulars of the Strategic Plan.

Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone

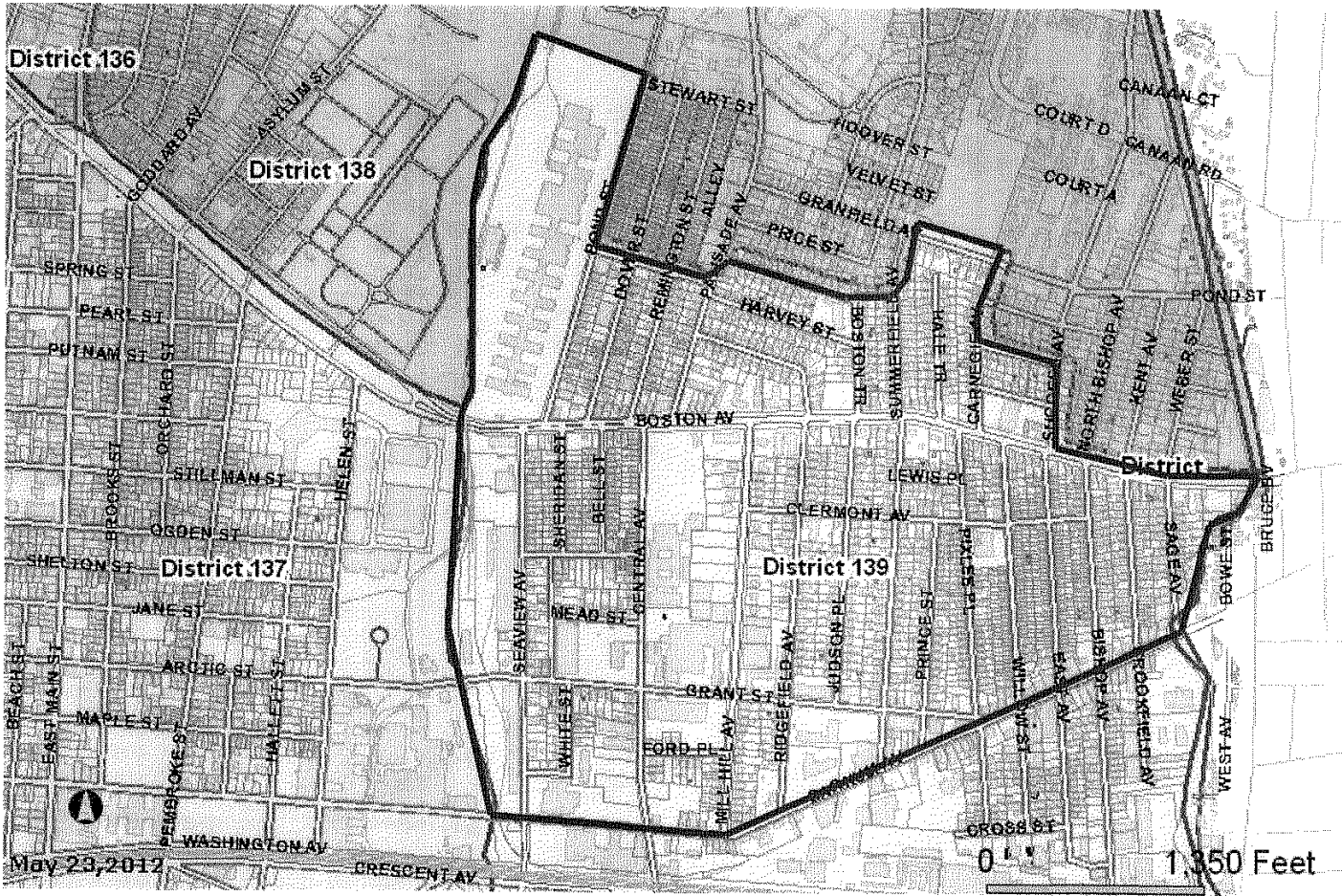
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Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
Boundary Description

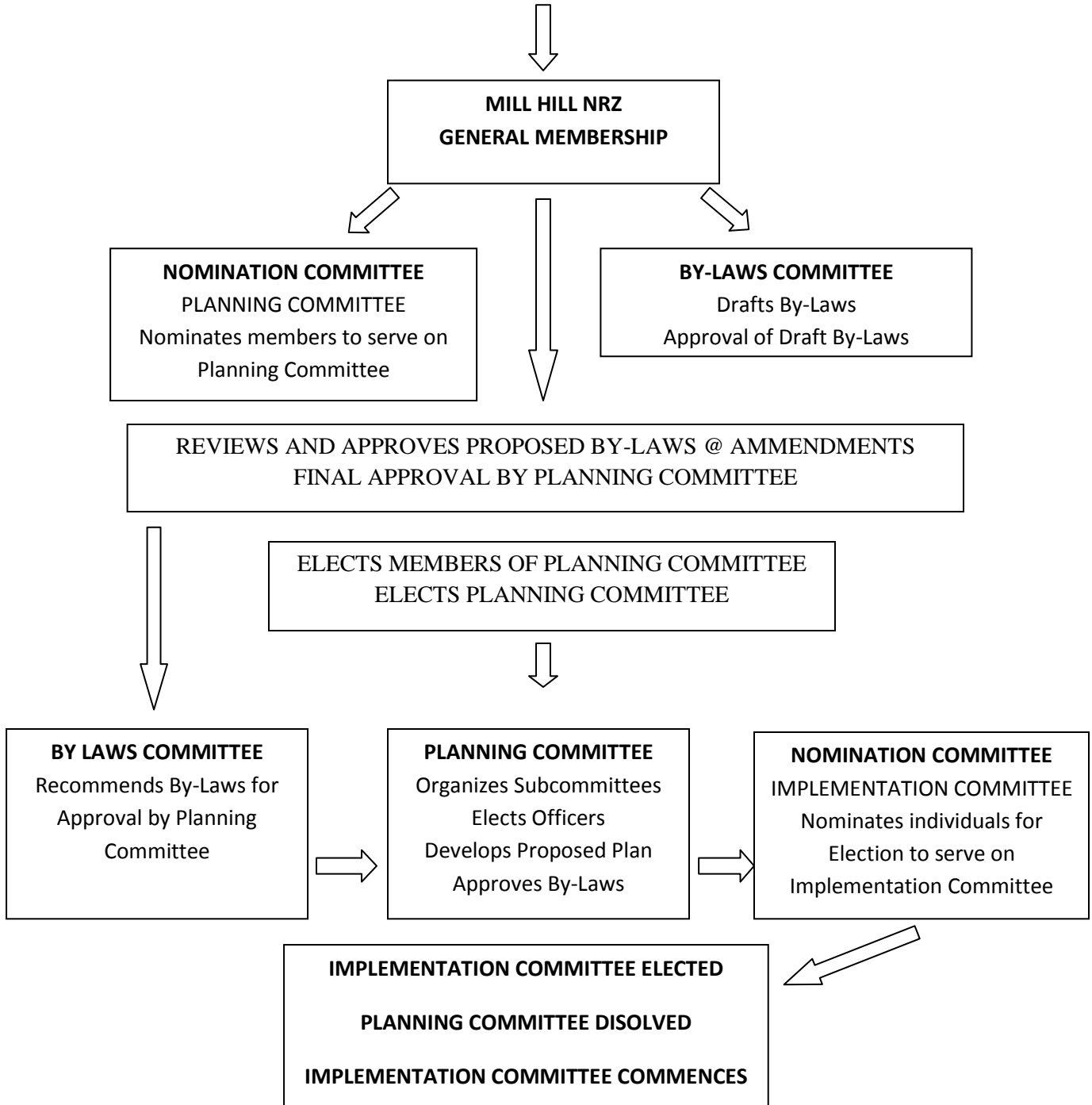
Beginning at the corner and centerline of Barnum Avenue and the Junction of Yellow Mill Pond travel east along the centerline of Barnum Avenue to the centerline of Sage Avenue then: follow the Bridgeport/ Stratford Town Line to the Center line of Boston Avenue then: travel west to the centerline of Success Avenue then: travel two blocks north to the centerline of Gary Street then: travel west to the centerline of Carnegie Avenue then: travel north to the centerline of Granfield Avenue then: travel west to the centerline of Summerfield Avenue then: travel south to the centerline of Birdseye Street then: travel west to the centerline of Palisade Avenue then: travel southwest to the centerline of Tudor Street then: west to the centerline of Bond Street then: north to the centerline of Stewart Street then: travel west to the Yellow River Brook then: south along the Yellow River Brook back to the beginning at the Junction of Yellow Mill Pond and the centerline of Barnum Avenue.

Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone MAP



**Appendix C:
By-Laws & Planning Committee Organizational Chart**

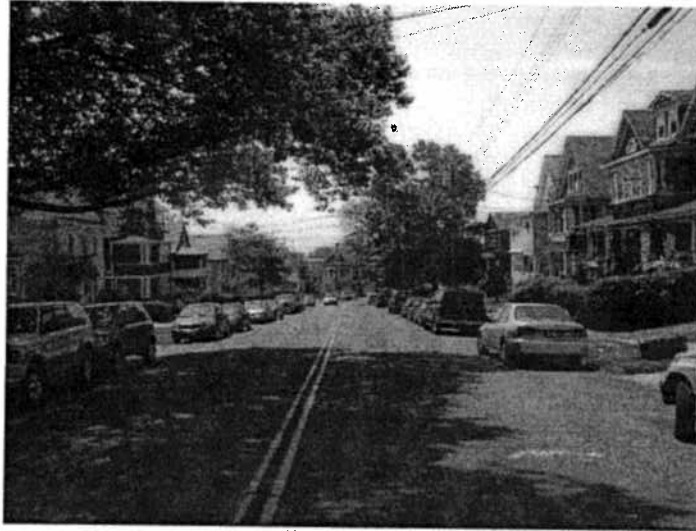
MILL HILL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ZONE (NRZ)



APPENDIX B

Outreach, workshop Materials
June 2012 Neighborhood Workshop

What Do YOU Want For the Mill Hill Neighborhood?



Mill Hill Avenue

Come voice your opinions at a
Neighborhood Revitalization Workshop
On Saturday, June 30, 2012
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Harding High School Cafeteria
1734 Central Avenue 06610

Mayor Bill Finch invites interested citizens and stakeholders in the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone to participate in the planning process for the Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan that will help guide neighborhood development into the future.

Residents, business people, nonprofit organizations and representatives of churches, community groups, and educators, institutions, elected officials, professionals, tradespersons, homemakers and young adults are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Let's make Mill Hill a great place to live and work... together!

Refreshments and Lunch Provided by
Bridgeport Hospital

Please confirm your attendance with Beverly Hoppie at (203) 650-9549 or Samuel Shaw at (203) 576-7139 by June 28 if possible.



BILL FINCH
Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT
999 BROAD STREET
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT 06604
TELEPHONE (203) 576-7201
FAX (203) 576-3913

Contact: Elaine K. Ficarra
(203) 576-7931
c. (203) 275-6417

Mill Hill NRZ Workshop Set for Saturday, June 30

BRIDGEPORT, CT (June 21, 2012) – Mayor Bill Finch invites interested citizens and stakeholders in the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone to participate in the planning process for the Mill Hill NRZ Strategic Plan that will help guide neighborhood development into the future. The Mill Hill NRZ encompasses the Mill Hill Neighborhood as delineated by the 139th City Council district. A Neighborhood Revitalization Workshop is planned for Saturday, June 30, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Harding High School cafeteria, 1734 Central Avenue. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

“The process of creating the strategic plan is very important to the future of the Mill Hill neighborhood. This is an excellent opportunity for members of the Mill Hill community to voice their opinions and concerns,” said Mayor Bill Finch. “I encourage all residents, business owners and stakeholders of this area to please attend this workshop.”

The goal of the NRZ program is to improve quality of life by means of neighborhood consensus. Citizens will be asked for their input on the present conditions of the neighborhood and what they feel is needed. Topics will range from public safety to public open space, economic development, housing needs, retail needs, traffic and parking, to name a few. Residents, business people, nonprofit organizations and representatives of churches, community groups, and educators, institutions, elected officials, professionals, tradespersons, homemakers and young adults are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The Mill Hill NRZ is seeking Planning Committee members and citizens wishing to participate in serving their community. Anyone wishing to be nominated to the Planning Committee must be an eligible stakeholder. For more information about the Mill Hill NRZ Planning Committee please contact Samuel Shaw at City Hall Annex at 203.576.7139.

###

Ad Content Proof

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Set for Saturday, June 30**

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DRAFT QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS
MILL HILL NRZ NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOP

June 30, 2012

For the Small Group Discussions, there will be two sets of questions:

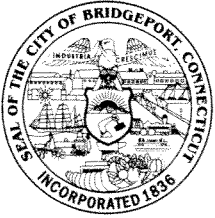
1. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

Each small group should discuss the following questions in the context of this effort to revitalize the neighborhood:

- a. What are the strengths of the Mill Hill Neighborhood (e.g. existing businesses and institutions, community organizations, housing stock, location, etc.)
- b. What are some of the neighborhood's weaknesses that should be addressed in the revitalization? (e.g. Blighted or vacant buildings, lack of identity, need for more open space, etc.)

2. INFLUENCES ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S REVITALIZATION (The Neighborhood Plan will focus on improvements from around 2013 to 2018)

- a. What are some of the current opportunities that could help the revitalization move forward soon? (e.g. Grants, other funding sources? Other planned development in neighborhood? City projects or plans?)
- b. What are some of the threats to seeing the neighborhood revitalized in the near future? (Businesses closing down, loss of jobs in certain areas, planned demolition, etc.)



City of Bridgeport, Connecticut
OFFICE OF PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

999 BROAD STREET
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT 06604
TELEPHONE: (203) 576-7221
FAX: (203) 332-5611

BILL FINCH
Mayor

DONALD C. EVERSLEY
Director of
Planning and
Economic Development

MILL HILL NRZ PLANNING COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM MAEL P. NIDOH
Director of Planning

If you would like to serve on the Mill Hill NRZ **Planning Committee**, or if you know someone you want to serve whom you feel would be beneficial to the Committee, please fill in the information request provided below. Seventeen persons (17) will be nominated to the following positions. Please state if you know what group they should serve under. Multiple options, if applicable, are permissible.

- 9 Residents (P.A. 95-340 requires that majority of Committee members be residents)
- 1 Youth Resident Representatives (13-18 years old)
- 1 "Small Business" Representatives
- 2 "Large Businesses/Employers" Representatives
- 1 Non-Resident Representatives of Owners of Investment Properties in the Mill Hill NRZ Neighborhood (Residential, Commercial or Residential)
- 2 Representatives of Churches and Other Religious Organizations
- 1 Representatives of Community Organizations and Other Non-Profits

Total 17 Planning Committee Members

Nomination: _____ Tel: (203) _____

Your Name - Please Print legibly:

Last Name _____

First Name _____

Street _____

City & Zip Code _____

Tel () _____

Fax () _____

e-mail _____ (be sure to include e-mail address).

Should you have any questions please contact:

Samuel Shaw
Senior Planner, Neighborhoods
City Hall Annex
Planning Department
Tel: (203) 576-7139
Fax: (203) 576-3979
e-mail: Samuel.shaw@bridgeportct.com

APPENDIX C

Summary
Neighborhood Workshop
June 30, 2013

SUMMARY REPORT
MILL HILL NRZ
NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOP # 1
June 30, 2012

The City of Bridgeport scheduled a Neighborhood Workshop on Saturday, June 30, 2012 as a kick-off to the Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) planning process. The session was widely publicized to stakeholders throughout the neighborhood, and there were over 65 people in attendance. There was good representation of the different partners in the NRZ process, including residents, business people, non-profit organizations and the City. Bridgeport Hospital had several representatives present throughout the session, and multiple City departments were represented, including the Police Department, the Office of Neighborhood Revitalization, and the Planning Department. Several key elected officials were present as well, including local Councilmen, the State Senator, and area Representatives. Participants were very pleased that the Mayor came as well and reinforced the importance of the NRZ effort. The purpose of the workshop was to orient the neighborhood leaders to the NRZ planning process and to obtain their input to help the City and the Consultant to better understand the issues and concerns that should be addressed in the NRZ Strategic Plan

The response was impressive. Workshop participants actively engaged in the workshop discussions, and they had many insights about their neighborhood that should be a significant benefit in the development of an NRZ Strategic Plan for the neighborhood. It was clear there is a great deal of leadership among the Mill Hill stakeholders.

There were three small group discussions held during the workshop, with approximately 15-20 participants in each small group throughout the sessions. The focus groups were facilitated by three professionals who helped guide discussion. For each small group, a workshop participant was identified to report the results of that session. The structure of the discussions was modeled after a traditional SWOT process (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). This was a very good starting point for developing the Mill Hill NRZ Plan.

Overall, stakeholders were positive about Mill Hill as being a place to live and to do business. All of the small groups identified convenient access to highways as being a major strength of the neighborhood. The groups also identified as a strength the neighborhood's location on the hill, with its views overlooking the downtown and the harbor. While Mill Hill is seen as potentially a good, walkable neighborhood, participants feel that too many roads and sidewalks are in disrepair, and there are poor pedestrian crossings over major thoroughfares, such as Barnum and Boston Avenue. There is also a concern about existing street lights, which limit the ability of residents to walk the neighborhood safely in the evenings. There is also concern

about limited parking that sometimes creates a congested situation on some side streets.

Participants feel good about the ethnic diversity of the Mill Hill neighborhood and recognize the value of having a diverse population representing various cultures. This diversity helps bring a cultural richness to this community, and participants are hopeful that this diversity can become part of the revitalization effort. Though it was noted there are some apathetic people in the area, they feel that many people are taking leadership to improve the area. There is a concern, though, that the high levels of absentee-owned housing in the neighborhood could be detrimental to the neighborhood in the long run. Many of the renters are transient, and it is harder to get them involved in the neighborhood or to take ownership in the community. Some participants were interested in seeing a stronger community organization (or network of organizations) to improve communications within the Mill Hill neighborhood and with the City. Some stakeholders wanted to see better communication from certain City departments.

The community recognizes the importance of Bridgeport Hospital in this revitalization process. The Hospital is seen as a distinct asset to the neighborhood – and is recognized not only as a medical provider but also as an employer and a “good neighbor” that is deeply involved in their community. One small group talked about the Hospital’s outreach programs, and the neighborhood is interested in backing the Hospital’s expansion programs. The community is pleased that there are good services to the Mill Hill neighborhood and especially pleased about the successful nonprofit organizations there, like Habitat for Humanity and the UCPA, White Street Development.

While some of the groups talked about the positive aspects of trees and landscaping in some parts of Mill Hill, the majority of participants feel that there is too little open space overall. They would like to see more parks in the neighborhood and more street trees – though they caution that the trees have to be the right ones. Some of the street trees planted in the past have large root systems that have seriously damaged sidewalks in the area. There is also a high level of interest in developing community gardens in the Mill Hill Neighborhood. One group felt that should be an early priority of the NRZ Planning process.

Participants were disappointed that there has not been much effort to preserve historic properties or to create a historic district in Mill Hill. They see the history and the architecture of the neighborhood as creating the unique character of this community.

Participants were excited to hear about the potential for waterfront access along the Yellow Mill Pond on the western border of the neighborhood. At the same time, they expressed some skepticism because the current waterfront area is heavily developed by heavy industrial and commercial users, and the water is barely visible.

Neighborhood stakeholders are extremely concerned that there is not enough to do in the neighborhood, especially for the youth. Drugs are an issue, and there have been shootings in the neighborhood. There was concern about gang activity in Mill Hill and a belief that the lack of effective youth programs further promotes crime in the area. Stakeholders see the potential for a community center in Mill Hill to provide youth programs— and also programs or a center for seniors. It is believed that having a gym or a place for youth to be involved in recreational and social programs will offer an alternative to hanging on street corners.

There is a concern that existing police stations are too far from the neighborhood, and more police presence is needed to curb the crime problems currently experienced. There is a stated need for a police substation in the Mill Hill neighborhood. At the same time, neighborhood is willing to consider forming block watches and taking a more active role in working together to improve the well-being of the neighborhood. A number of groups discussed their concern about stray animals roaming the neighborhood as well.

There is optimism about a new Harding High School being built in the Mill Hill neighborhood, and most participants are open to seeing that facility to move to a new location such as the GE site, possibly opening the way for expansion by Bridgeport Hospital. Some participants see the potential for connecting other uses with the new School, including a possible community center and/or a police substation and/or youth recreational programs. It was mentioned that there are not enough after-school daycare as well. There was a lot of discussion of the community's interest in seeing Harding High School renamed.

The General Electric property is seen as having a significant impact on the revitalization of the neighborhood. The group is anxious to learn what will happen at the site and is already talking about potential reuse. It was noted that, if the site was not developed properly, it could be a threat to the revitalization as well.

Another concern of stakeholders is the physical appearance of the Mill Hill area. Graffiti and blight are seen as threats to the revitalization of the neighborhood. At the same time, groups like Trashbusters are viewed as being effective through clean up campaigns and being advocates for the neighborhood, especially with the City.

There is a strong concern that current economic conditions are affecting Mill Hill directly. Unemployment is seen as a problem in the neighborhood, and more jobs are needed. On balance, at least one small group talked about the proximity to jobs as a strength of the Mill Hill area. During the workshop, it was noted several times how important it will be for the NRZ Planning process to connect itself with other neighborhoods and other parts of the City. Working together is key. Area schools are seen as an asset that could provide training opportunities for neighborhood residents.

While there are many convenient stores and services in close proximity to the neighborhood, participants expressed a concern that the neighborhood could use some larger stores, especially a grocery store. Most residents have to travel outside of the neighborhood to do at least some of their shopping currently. Still, one group talked about their interest in seeing family businesses flourish in Mill Hill.

There is a definite concern among neighborhood stakeholders that “adult entertainment” uses, such as stripper bars and liquor stores are, undermining the integrity of the neighborhood and could be a threat to the revitalization of Mill Hill.

Public transportation is seen as strength for the neighborhood, but there is an interest in opening up a dialogue with the Transit District about some of the deficiencies with the existing bus system. The buses are reportedly not always on schedule, the schedules are not always that convenient, and there are not many shelters available to protect riders during inclement weather.

Participants were hopeful that the newly planned East Bridgeport Train Station will be built. They see its potential for improving connections for people who currently work in the neighborhood, but they could also see the value of the train station in creating increasing market demand for housing and mixed-use development within walking distance of the train station.

Overall, the input from this workshop was substantial and will serve as a useful guide for this revitalization effort. The next step will be for the group to identify goals for the NRZ Strategic Plan. The reports from each small group session are attached.

Notes from group 1

Facilitator: Susan Ball

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

Strengths:

Bridgeport Hospital - brings accessible health services and jobs to area
Being high up brings great views
Area has great history and architecture (St. Ambrose)
Good vehicular connections—near i-95, connector
Lots of younger people and families
Diversity of population
Many places of worship offer community support

Weaknesses:

“Nothing to do” for residents and those who work here i.e. restaurants, recreation etc.
Lack of parks
Danger on foot: lighting and sidewalks needed to make walking safer
Traffic is dangerous—Boston Ave needs to be rethought
Blight – need anti-dumping & property owner education campaigns
Stray animals – too many “wild” dogs and cats
Too many absentee landlords

INFLUENCES ON REVITALIZATION

Opportunities:

Block associations to strengthen community
Historic district /historic preservation
Develop alleged stream into water habitat (little water flowing now)
Develop parks and open space
Build ownership through transfer of city owned properties to resident owners; also vacant parcels are potential community gardens, parks
Make new HS a community center too – open dialog with Board of Education
Work with Bridgeport Hospital on all properties it owns
New railway station!

Threats:

Blight
Crime

Traffic

Lack of communication with city

Expansion of "adult entertainment" businesses and liquor stores

GE development can be threat depending on how it's handled

DREAMS:

Parks

Community Center/Library/City info center

Neighborhood Care Teams -- running clean-ups, giving beautiful property awards

Farmers' markets and community gardens

Safe streets with great sidewalks

More family owned businesses – local small business programs

Rename Harding High School

Make GE property a "destination" with lots for community

Find a property ASAP to make into a community garden

NOTES FROM GROUP 2
Facilitator: Courtney George

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

Strengths

- **People**
 - Community of concerned citizens
 - Economic investment
 - Home ownership (some)
 - Community investment
 - Will to organize;
 - Will to improve neighborhood;
 - Crossing neighborhood boundaries for collective good;
 - Number of established civic, social and resident groups

- **Access**
 - Walkable neighborhood
 - Sidewalks
 - Businesses, resources within walking distance
 - Public transportation
 - Bus lines
 - Proximity to I-95
 - Commuting opportunities
 - Accessible to other locations

- **Businesses and Institutions**
 - Bridgeport Hospital
 - Investment in community
 - Building / physical improvements
 - Strong community partner / anchor
 - Small Businesses
 - Products and services available
 - pharmacy, banks, library, laundromat, gas station, bodegas, small groceries

- **Community Organizations**
 - Area non-profits work with schools, Bridgeport Hospital to provide / facilitate resources

- **Location / Physical Characteristics**
 - Mill Hill has a view; on top of a hill
 - Certain areas in neighborhood have lots of trees; green
 - Proximity to river / access

Weaknesses

- **People**
 - Low home ownership ratio;
 - High ratio of renters means transience;
 - Renters viewed as less likely to invest in community, neighborhood improvement.

- **Access**
 - Sidewalks / Roads in disrepair - cracks / heaves / potholes
 - Hazardous
 - Disincentive to walking
 - Damage to vehicles
 - Trees/plants allowed to grow, break up sidewalks
 - Poor planning (need right plant for right location)
 - Buses
 - Inconvenient / infrequent schedule
 - Inconsistency re: punctuality
 - Interferes with commuting; ability to report to work
 - Few shelters
 - Commuters exposed to elements

- **Lack of Recreational Space / Options**
 - Little open space / park space / play space
 - No gym / recreational area
 - Limited options for children to play outside

- **Businesses and Institutions**
 - No large / major grocery store
 - Limited businesses
 - residents feel they have to travel out of the neighborhood for quality, variety

- **Community Organizations**
 - No central community center
 - Limited after-school programs / child care
 - Limited activities/programming for seniors

- **Housing Stock**
 - High percentage of multi-family houses
 - Perception that this encourages renting, transience over home ownership.

- **Location / Physical Characteristics**
 - Proximity to industrial spaces / plants

- **Blight**
 - Graffiti
 - Trash / junk allowed to remain in yards, alleys.
 - Absentee landlords permitting buildings to deteriorate
 - Animals/pets permitted to roam; health/waste issues.
- **Safety**
 - Inadequate lighting (streets/sidewalks)
 - Sidewalks/Roads poor condition - hazardous walking / driving
 - Some gang activity
 - Lack of organized block watch / community patrol programs.

INFLUENCES ON REVITALIZATION

Current Opportunities

- **People / Community Development**
 - Improved access to information to help generate community, communication, engagement.
 - Internet access / Community Wi-Fi
 - More / better public posting of events
 - Capitalize on existing community / social / civic groups
 - Many currently operating/gathering in isolation
 - Bring groups together
 - Grow community / community cooperation
- **Access**
 - Repairs / Maintenance of roads, sidewalks
 - Advocacy re: communicating with Greater Bridgeport Transport Authority
 - Communicate re: improvements to routes; punctuality; shelters
 - Develop carpooling networks / shuttling opportunities
 - Monorail / trolley
 - Traffic lights / traffic controls on busy routes / intersections (control traffic)
- **Businesses / Institutions**
 - Attract new businesses to area
 - grocery store; restaurants (including healthy options, not just fast food), internet cafes, mix of businesses/services
 - Discourage businesses that undermine neighborhood / community (e.g., strip bars, liquor stores, etc.)
- **Community Programming / Initiatives**

- Community Center
- Pool
- Senior Center
- Youth / Senior programming
- **Recreation / Physical Development**
 - Develop park / play space
 - large public park
 - small community park
 - Playgrounds / play areas / water pads (sprinkler parks)
 - Develop green space / plantings
 - Right plant for the right location
 - Walking trails; running track
 - Dog park
- **Eliminate Blight**
 - Neighborhood clean up
 - Take advantage of Trashbuster initiatives
 - Sanctions for owners/landlords who allow trash/junk buildup
 - Designated dog park area
- **Safety**
 - Improved lighting
 - Improved sidewalks/roadways/traffic control
 - Improved block watch / neighborhood patrol
 - Local police presence / anonymous reporting

Threats to Revitalization

- Unrehabilitated industrial spaces (brownfields)
- Closing of certain community mainstays
 - recent church closing
- Safety
 - Crime
 - Gang growth
- Transience / Absentee landlords
- Blight / Cleanliness
- Stigma associated with Bridgeport / difficulties in attracting new residents
- Proliferation of businesses that undermine community improvement
 - Liquor stores
 - Strip clubs
- Unemployment
- Lack of investment (personal and financial)
- Community apathy

NOTES FROM GROUP 3

Facilitator: Patrick Scmincke

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

STRENGTHS:

Convenient location to the highway *

Diversity of neighborhood *

Services * -- including health care (Hospital and other health agencies), schools, transportation, historical landmarks, CVS pharmacy, gas stations, and convenient stores.

The General Electric property

Bridgeport Hospital

New Train Station (Hopefully)

Proximity to jobs, especially large companies located nearby *

Proximity to the water

Space opportunities-commercial *

Owners starting to take ownership of their possessions

Single homes are nicely separated

There is a close community

The Library

WEAKNESSES

Sidewalks and roads need repair

There are a lot of brown fields

Lack of recycling

Noise pollution

Lack of parking

Air and water pollution

Illegal businesses operating out of homes

Graffiti

Poor landscaping

Stripper bars

Lack of child care

Lack of youth activity

There isn't enough police presence

There is too much distance to the nearest police station

There is a need for a police substation

The neighborhood needs more public services

Too much blight, trash and garbage, especially along company properties

Housing ownership is weak

Absentee property owners are uncaring

Crime: drug use and shootings
Difficulty for pedestrian crossing of Barnum Avenue and Boston Avenue (lights are not timed properly to give pedestrians the chance to cross the streets safely)
Lot and Mill Hill and Barnum Avenue needs to be cleaned
Lack of communication with certain City departments

INFLUENCES ON REVITALIZATION

OPPORTUNITIES

T Possible uses of the Eddie's Market location as a police substation *
The NRZ Planning Process *
Hospital job opportunities for students *
here needs to be a better understanding of grants that are available throughout the City
There have been successful programs, such as Habitat for Humanity,
UCPA – White Street Development
New Harding High School
Hospital outreach programs
The New Library
The New Community Center
Proposal to restrict parking to one side of the Green
Talk of widening Sea View Avenue
General Electric baseball field which will be more open to the community
New train station

THREATS

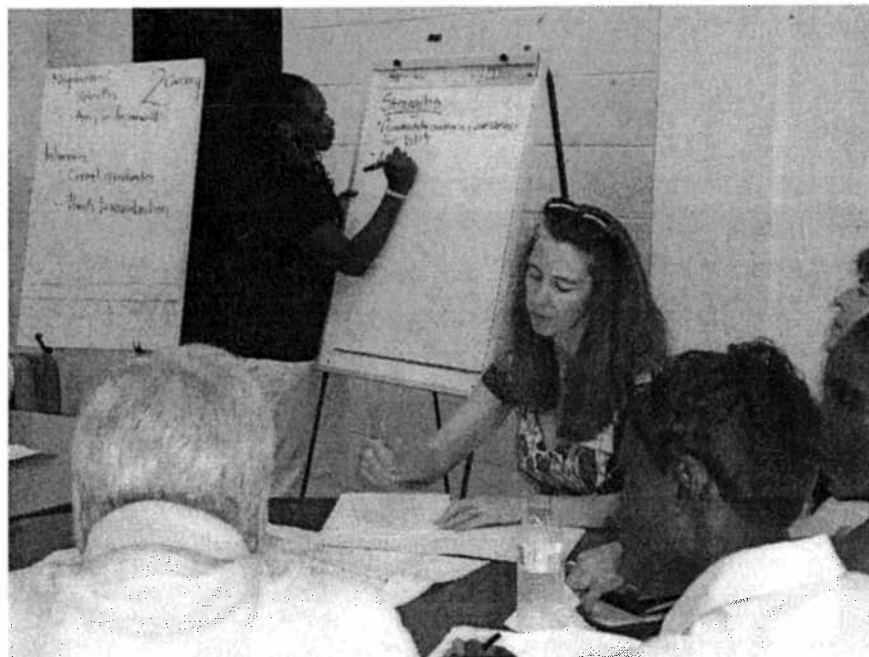
Contaminated soil and water *
Gang activity *
The lack of new jobs *
Potential loss of tax base
Government red tape
Lack of common sense
Unhealthy and unsafe buildings
Blight
Lack of funding
Bad publicity of the city and lack of good publicity
A lack of parking especially with construction projects
The lack of historical preservation
The lack of housing for orphans.

*These were the highest priorities for Group 3

APPENDIX D

Outreach, handout
October 2012 Design Charrette

What Do YOU Want For the Mill Hill Neighborhood???



Come voice your opinions at a
Neighborhood Design Charrette
On Saturday, October 27, 2012
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Harding High School Cafeteria
1734 Central Avenue 06610

Mayor Bill Finch is pleased to invite interested citizens and stakeholders to participate in the upcoming Mill Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Charrette.

This program will involve neighborhood leaders working with planning consultants, architects and landscape architects and City Staff to develop ideas for revitalizing the Mill Hill Neighborhood, as part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Zone planning process. This session will build on a similar neighborhood workshop that was conducted in June. Mill Hill residents, business people, nonprofit organizations and representatives of churches, community groups, and educators, institutions, elected officials, professionals, tradespersons, homemakers and young adults are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Let's make Mill Hill a great place to live and work... together!
Refreshments and Lunch Provided by Bridgeport Hospital

Please confirm your attendance with Beverly Hoppie at (203) 650-9549 beverly@bntweb.org or Samuel Shaw at (203) 576-7139 Samuel.Shaw@bridgeportct.gov .by October 25 if possible.

MILL HILL NRZ - Charrette table breakouts 27 OCT.

Table #1

Boston Avenue (East)

- Community Center location(s)
- Façade improvements
- Bus shelter
- Commercial development
- St. Ambrose school/church uses



Table #2

Boston Avenue (West)

- Seaview Ave. / Bond St. Intersection
- Streetscape Improvement
- Walkable Streets (to Schools, Hospital, etc.)
- Street access/ traffic



Table #3

Open space – Green Space

- Harding High School site – BPT Hospital
- Seaview Avenue greenway urban gardens
- Streetscape improvements (lighting, sidewalks, trees, etc.)
- Bicycle access – Healthy Community



Table #4

Barnum Avenue

- Commercial development
- Housing locations and infill
- Bus access/pedestrian gateways

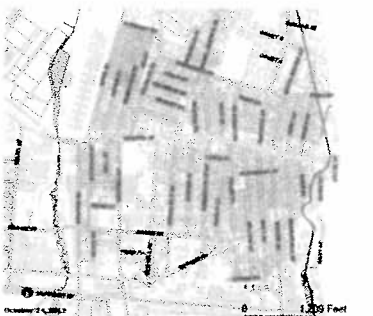


Table #5

Big Picture neighbors

- TOD / Railroad station
- GE/new Harding High School Site
- Remington Woods

APPENDIX E

Cost estimates

MAGNITUDE OF COST RANGES

- 1) SEAVIEW AVENUE UNDERPASS
\$10M
- 2) NEW RAILROAD STATION
\$100 - \$150M
- 3) MIXED USE GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT (Barnum to Boston Avenue, only)
ENVIRONMENTAL: Clean-up & mitigation \$15-\$20M MINIMUM
ACCESS: \$2-\$4M (Bicycle and pedestrian ways, parking, lights)
COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL (Private): \$50 - \$100M
- 4) BOSTON AVE. REALIGNMENT w/PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE ACCESS UNDER RD.
\$12 – \$15M (Bridge quality to be evaluated for longevity, could be 2X))
- 5) WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT & ACCESS
\$1½ – \$4½M (Private)
- 6) GENERAL ELECTRIC REDEVELOPMENT
Municipal / High School \$100 - \$150M
Private (TBD)
- 7) SEAVIEW AVENUE REALIGNMENT
\$7½ - \$15 M Roadway work only – NOT LAND ACQUISITION
- 8) GREEN SPACES AT LOCAL STREET INTERSECTIONS
\$25,000.00 to \$100,000.00 Each (TOTAL, \$250K TO \$1M)
- 9) COMMUNITY AND SENIOR CENTER
\$500,000.00 Renovation to existing shelter and some adjacent site improvements
\$2 - \$5M new facility and site work
- 10) BOSTON AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS
6' wide sidewalk & street trees
\$750/ Tree (\$1000 for tree with guard)
Appx. \$50/LF (in large quantities, i.e., >1000LF)
Complete Streets improvements may add \$600K to \$900K
- 11) BOSTON AVENUE STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS
Use avg. \$3 K to \$5K / Parking space (w/ sidewalk & trees; lights @ \$3500 Ea.)
Appx. \$50K to \$75K per block (one side)
- 12) BARNUM AVENUE STREET IMPROVEMENTS
\$200K - \$350K for Center Island Lights, trees, benches, etc.
- 13) STREET TREE PLANTINGS (Grant Street)
5' wide sidewalk & street trees, \$650/ Tree
Appx. \$40/LF (in large quantities, i.e., >1000LF)
- 14) BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL EXPANSION
Private - TBD