

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 20, 2011**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Chair; Angel dePara, Lydia Martinez, Michelle Lyons

**STAFF:** Ed Lavernoich, Office of Economic Development; Max Perez, OPED;  
Don Eversley, Office of Economic Development; Valerie Sorrentino, Ms.  
Gupta

**OTHERS:** Council Member Susan Brannelly

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JULY 19, 2011**

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2011**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF JULY 19, 2011 AND JULY 21, 2011 AS SUBMITTED.**

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

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

**77-09 Resolution request that regular informational updates will appear and remain on  
the ECD&E agenda re: the current status and progress of the development project known  
as the Steel Point Harbor Development**

Council Member dePara said that he would like to table this until the Legal Department approves  
the language.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 77-09  
RESOLUTION REQUEST THAT REGULAR INFORMATIONAL UPDATES WILL  
APPEAR AND REMAIN ON THE ECD&E AGENDA RE: THE CURRENT STATUS  
AND PROGRESS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT KNOWN AS THE STEEL  
POINT HARBOR DEVELOPMENT.**

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

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

**165-09 Proposed Tax Assessment Phase-In Agreement with M.O.V.E. Yacht Club for the re-development of 148-220 Waterview Avenue.**

Mr. Eversley requested the item be tabled.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 165-09 PROPOSED TAX ASSESSMENT PHASE-IN AGREEMENT WITH M.O.V.E. YACHT CLUB FOR THE RE-DEVELOPMENT OF 148-220 WATERVIEW AVENUE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

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

**03-10 Grant Submission re: Department of Housing and Urban Development for 2010-2013 Bridgeport Healthy Homes Program Grant.**

Ms. Gupta came forward and said that grant was not funded.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO WITHDRAW AGENDA ITEM 03-10 GRANT SUBMISSION RE: DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT FOR 2010-2013 BRIDGEPORT HEALTHY HOMES PROGRAM GRANT.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

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

**65-10 Grant Submission re: 2011-2012 Dial-A-Ride Program.**

Ms. Gupta said some of the information about this program had not arrived yet.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 65-10 GRANT SUBMISSION RE: 2011-2012 DIAL-A-RIDE PROGRAM.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

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

**116-10 Grant submission re: 2011-2012 Substance Abuse Prevention Program**

Ms. Sorrentino came forward and said that this was a small grant from RYSAP for educational programs for Bridgeport students. No City matching funds are needed, and there is no staff involvement.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 116-10 GRANT SUBMISSION RE: 2011-2012 SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

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

**117-10 Grant submission re: 2011-2012 YSB Enhancement Grant**

Ms. Sorrentino said that there is a main grant, which has not arrived yet, but the Enhancement program funding has arrived. This is focused on teen pregnancy and since the highest occurrence of teen pregnancy is at Bassick, the program is held there.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 117-10 GRANT SUBMISSION RE: 2011-2012 YSB ENHANCEMENT GRANT.**

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

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE IN FAVOR (LYONS, DEPARA AND CURWEN) AND ONE ABSTENTION (MARTINEZ)**

It was noted that this item should appear on the Council's Matters To Be Acted On agenda.

**116-10 Grant submission re: 2011-2012 Substance Abuse Prevention Program CONT'D**

Council Member Curwen said he would like a vote for placing Agenda Item 116-10 on the consent calendar.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO PLACE AGENDA ITEM 116-10 GRANT SUBMISSION RE: 2011-2012 SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM ON THE COUNCIL'S CONSENT CALENDAR.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA SECONDED.**

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

**130-10 Grant Submission: re: 2011 Funding for Medical Reserve Corps Grant.**

Ms. Sorrentino reviewed the regional grant funding and said that Bridgeport received \$6,000 from the regional grant.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 130-10 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE: 2011 FUNDING FOR MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS GRANT.**

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

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

The Chairman requested Agenda item 103-10 to be placed on the Council's consent calendar.

**131-10 Grant Submission: re: State of Connecticut Department of Public Health for 2011-2012 Per Capita Grant.**

This grant is the core grant that funds the Health Department. This is used for salary funding and supplies, along with two small subcontracts. This is a renewal of the grant. No matching City funding is needed. Council Member Martinez asked how the grant funding helps the community. Ms. Sorrentino said that her salary comes from the funding, along with another staff member and when they write and administer, the programs can be run in the community.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 131-10 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE: STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOR 2011-2012 PER CAPITA GRANT.**

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

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

The Chairman requested Agenda item 131-10 to be placed on the Council's consent calendar.

**124-10 Disposition of City Owned Property to Habitat for Humanity and ordering a Public Hearing Relative to the same.**

Mr. Perez came forward and explained that there are 7 pieces of property on the East Side under consideration. Habitat has put up 136 houses in the past, which brings properties back on to the tax rolls and property taxes into the City.

Council Member Martinez said that she saw Habitat building single family homes rather than multiple family homes. Mr. Perez explained that the lots were 40x90, and most of the homes were three bedrooms. Council Member Martinez said that she felt that if a piece was available that could be a multiple family location, it should be used that way

Council Member dePara asked why these properties were chosen over others. Mr. Eversley said that there is a continual review of the City owned properties. The City is continually acquiring parcels through foreclosure or other means. When the lots are small and can be used for single family homes, then the office looks at various organization, like Habitat or Cerebral Palsy to develop the lot for low income families. Larger parcels are auctioned. These were on the auction list, but there were no bids. When asked if the odd shaped parcels would clear zoning, Mr. Perez said that these properties formerly had houses on them. Letters were sent to the abutters and there was no response.

Council Member dePara asked why the developers were not bidding. Mr. Eversley said that the developers want the larger lots for multi-family units. The use is driven by the size and location.

Council Member Lyons asked what the taxes were on the lots right now. Mr. Perez gave her some ball park figures. Mr. Lavernoich said that Habitat works very hard to insure that the owners indebtedness is low so that the home owners can pay the taxes. He said that he believed that the taxes default on Habitat houses was zero.

Council Member Martinez said that while Habitat people work with the families on budgeting and other issues. She said that Habitat should do more follow up to prevent debris and help the families become better neighbors.

Council Member Curwen asked about the property at Berkshire Avenue. Mr. Perez said that this was a WPA foreclosure on half a duplex. Habitat will have to rehab the half of a duplex and put a new family in there.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 124-10 DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY TO HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AND ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE SAME**  
**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED FOR A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON OCTOBER 3<sup>RD</sup>.**  
**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**132-10 Disposition of City Owned Property located at 2836 Fairfield Avenue; Black Rock Bank & Trust Company.**

Mr. Lavernoich came forward and said that the resolution would allow the Mayor to negotiate and execute the contract for the Black Rock Bank building. Mr. Lavernoich gave a brief overview of the history of the building since acquiring the building from the Salvation Army. He said that the letter of intent contained the details of the agreement. After the Performing Arts tenants were evicted, an RFP was sent out. The response was very limited. A second one was issued in 2010. This time there was a slightly more encouraging response. There were some inquiries about the parcel. Recently, Silver Springs Properties submitted a proposal to the City. Mr. Lavernoich said that the letter of intent is being developed now. He then reviewed some of the details of the proposal.

Council Member Lyons had several questions about the details, which Mr. Lavernoich then answered. Mr. Lavernoich stressed that from the moment the developers take ownership, they start paying taxes and must improve the building.

Council Member Brannelly said that she had met with the developers who were proposing this. She said that the developers have a proposal that is something that can be accomplished. Their relationships with those in the restaurant and entertainment businesses are solid. Silver Spring has a proven track record. This is a key piece of having the corner developed correctly. She stated that both she and Council Member Martin McCarthy were in favor of this project.

Council Member Brannelly said that the parking lot behind the building is currently a municipal lot with 32 spaces. Right now, because of the nature of Brewster Street, the neighbors are utilizing it for parking their vehicles at night.

Council Member dePara asked what the current assessment was. Mr. Lavernoich gave him the figure. The assessor has the power to downgrade it when it is in municipal possession. Mr. Eversley said that he expected a downgrade. A year ago, it was 1.2 million, and now it is \$819,000. While the facade is attractive, there are no mechanicals, no electric, and no water except for a flooded basement. The building needs significant work. Discussion followed about the details.

Mr. Lavernoich said that the public hearing was held in 2009 and that the application does not have to go back to Planning and Zoning because it was presented previously.

Council Member dePara asked what was not acceptable on this parcel. Mr. Lavernoich indicated where this was in the letter of intent and reminded everyone that it would be in the LDA.

Council Member Curwen said that he supported any reasonable deal that put the properties back on the tax rolls. He said that this was not a brownfield property. Mr. Lavernoich agreed that there was no brownfield contamination.

Council Member Lyons asked if there was a downgrade, whether the assessment would be increased. Mr. Lavernoich said that the Assessor would evaluate the property in the future and determine the value at that time based on physical condition.

Council Member dePara asked about the potential commitment of City funds for the project. Mr. Lavernoich said that there had not been. A request would be subject to the developer approaching the City for help.

Council Member Lyons said she would approve because the developer has 9 months to repair the building. She said that she felt it would be a good thing for the neighborhood.

Council Member Curwen asked about the window for closing date. Mr. Lavernoich then reviewed the details with everyone.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 132-10 DISPOSITION OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2836 FAIRFIELD AVENUE; BLACK ROCK BANK & TRUST COMPANY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

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

The Chairman requested Agenda item 132-10 to be placed on the Council's consent calendar.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services