

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 20, 2021**

**ATTENDANCE:** M. Evette Brantley, Co-chair; Maria Valle, Co-chair; Scott Burns, Jeanette Herron, Mary McBride-Lee, Rosalina Roman-Christy

**STAFF:** Bill Coleman, Deputy Director, OPED; Max Perez, Senior Analyst; Obiora Nkwo; Frank Croke; Isolina DeJesus, Director of Central Grants; Joseph Haig; Constance Vickers, Director of Legislative Affairs; Vincent Mobilio; Thomas Gaudett, Mayoral Aide; Thomas Gill, Director, OPED

**OTHER:** Council Member Matthew McCarthy; Joseph Katz

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-chair Brantley called the meeting to order at 6:10 P.M. There was a quorum present.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES: AUGUST 18, 2021**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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

Council Member Brantley provided a roll call of those present.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOTIONED TO ADD ITEM 133-20 FOR AN ANNUAL FUNDING THE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY TO DO DIGITIZATION AND PRESERVATION OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS UP TO AN AMOUNT OF \$10,500 TO THE AGENDA.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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

**133-20**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOTIONED TO APPROVE ITEM 133-20 AS SUBMITTED.**

**\*\* THERE WAS NO SECOND AT THIS TIME.**

Council Member Brantley asked if this item could be delayed until after item 116-20. There were no objections to this request.

**116-20**  
**PROPOSED RESOLUTION URGING STATE SENATORS AND STATE**  
**REPRESENTATIVES TO PASS**  
**NECESSARY LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE**  
**INITIATIVE PROGRAM**  
**(TCI-P).**

Council Member Burns came forward to discuss this item. This is a resolution encouraging their state legislators to approve should they come before the General Assembly. The TCIP is a multi-state effort to try and cap emissions. There is a wholesale tax on gasoline. It will not be directly placed on customers. This will benefit Bridgeport as an Environmental Justice community. There is a 10-year projection that this will generate \$1,000,000,000 of revenue.

Council Member Brantley confirmed with Council Member Burns that they were just lending their support to the State level and it didn't require any funding or direct action on their part. Council Member Burns confirmed this.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO APPROVE ITEM 116-20 PROPOSED RESOLUTION URGING STATE SENATORS AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES TO PASS NECESSARY LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE INITIATIVE PROGRAM (TCI-P) AS SUBMITTED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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

**133-20**  
**FOR AN ANNUAL FUNDING THE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY TO DO**  
**DIGITIZATION AND PRESERVATION OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS UP TO AN**  
**AMOUNT OF \$10,500, CONT'D**

Mr. Joseph Katz came forward to discuss this item. He informed the Commission what this grant was for. He pointed out there was a mistake in the funding sources which claimed an amount of \$10,263.12 and it was supposed to be \$10,500. It will preserve land records from October 30, 1974 to December 29, 1983. There is no match required.

*Co-Chair Valle left the meeting due to technical difficulties at 6:19 P.M.*

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO APPROVE ITEM 133-20 FOR AN ANNUAL FUNDING THE CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY TO DO DIGITIZATION AND PRESERVATION OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS UP TO AN AMOUNT OF \$10,500.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

*Co-Chair Valle informed the Commission of her vote in favor via telephone call.*

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

**INFORMATIONAL SESSION WITH THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT TO  
PROVIDE UPDATE ON PROJECTS.**

Mr. Bill Coleman and Mr. Gill came forward to present this item. The provided slides for the Commission. He was planning to discuss major projects with the Commission. The private sector is responding to the progress that has been made on the projects. He reviewed the following and made the following points.

- The Honeycomb has been a tremendous success. It has made the City an entertainment venue.
  - They had come into a tough situation with the arena and the City. They believe they have a good settlement and relationship with the arena and amphitheater.
  - They have made an agreement with the Westchester Knicks to bring in major basketball.
  - They have a full schedule between hockey, basketball, shows, and other things.
- Obiora Nkwo presented this item. The Jason Newfield project has come to fruition.
  - They have looked at 1186 Main Street and 179-205 Ministry.
  - The project is composed of two buildings plus historical buildings.
  - There are 104 residential units.
  - The cost is appx. \$29,000,000 of which the City has injected \$1,000,250.00.
  - They have secured 10 units which is below the 80% AMI.
- The pub at the corner of Middle and Golden Hill has opened. A video was provided.
- The project at Congress Plaza Commons is complete in its excavation.
  - The bedrock was deeper than anticipated and required additional work.
  - They are expecting a high demand for the apartments due to their proximity to the train station.
- The Windward Commons Project has been leasing up and has positive prospects.
- The former Marina Village site has been totally demolished. This has freed up space for the Southwest Community Health Center.
- Mr. Vincent Mobilio reported that the Wakeman Boys & Girls project has undergone remediation.
  - Some of the soil was contaminated.
  - They are opening bids.
- The new library building has been turned over to the library and is expected to be occupied in November.
- The two slabs project is being prepped for development for retail and a grocery store.
  - Piping has started to be placed.
  - There have been supply chain issues that have been resolved.
- Mr. Gill reported that the Rear Bay Tower is underway.
  - The site is a former arms factory site and has a historic nature.
  - It is the only building on the site worth saving as the other ones are in too much disarray and blight and have safety issues.
  - They are planning to stabilize the shock tower to stop dematerialization.
  - The windows and roof have been repaired and secured.

- A fence has been erected around the whole perimeter of the property.
- Clean-up efforts have been performed successfully.
- They hope to go out to bid shortly for the next stage.
- The Marquee project has recently had a bond issue.
  - The City has put in \$5,052,000.
  - The Khrushchev's have invested \$32,000,000.
  - The money is being used to retire debt on some of the parcels.
  - They expect to construct appx. 300 units with a parking facility and about 30,000 square feet of retail space with a 150-room hotel.
  - They are expecting to break ground in April 2022.
  - The bond issue was due to considerably oversubscription.
- The former director's property has been developed into a working boat yard that has attracted two international companies to Bridgeport.
  - One company is North Sails, the other is Hornblower.
  - North Sails is currently hiring. They have appx. 60 people working in their current facilities.

*Council Member Valle rejoined the meeting at 6:40 P.M.*

- Decision Manufacturing has currently hired 80 people with 60% of that being Bridgeport citizens in high-paying positions.
- A cuisine company on the East End has currently 135 Bridgeport locals working there.
- The Porter Chester Institute has relocated from Stratford to Bridgeport.
  - 100% of their graduates go straight to work.
  - It has taken up the space that used to be the Modell Sporting Goods Store.
- Newtown Savings Bank opened recently with a full-service bank.
  - They have already done multiple loans in Bridgeport.
- Two new businesses have been opened on Stratford Avenue; one of which has four units of affordable housing above it.
- The broader strategy for Stratford Avenue was reviewed.
- The old factory on East End has received interest from innovators in New York City interested in reinventing it.
  - They are currently interested in combining a car facility with a brewery.
  - They also are looking to establish a brew restaurant in the location.
  - The Council of Churches has a training chef in the same location for training new chefs.
- 347 Park Avenue is being converted into housing with 30 two-bedroom, one-bedroom, mixed apartments.
- Brew to Juice is going into a second location.
  - It is a family-owned business.
  - They are looking to expand.
- A vacant space in Bank Street is being turned into Cask and Barrel, a high-end bar.
- NBA Labs Downtown Creatives is looking to open at the corner of Golden Hill and Main.
  - It is affiliated with the NBA.
  - They are for creatives who believe they can make products and market them to the NBA.

- The proposed details of the building were reviewed.
- The yearly data was reviewed by the Commission.
- The Mind Factory in Bridgeport is an entertainment business.
  - How the business works was reviewed.
- A new business on Barnum Avenue was reviewed.
- Technicals Wrecking was reviewed.

This concluded the informational report.

Council Member Burns asked what the projected revenue for the amphitheater was for the season. He also asked what the progress on the Congress Street Project was and what leverage they had.

Mr. Gill said that the office building had been vacant for years. The LTP had given estimates for amount of contaminated soil was at the site. An additional contaminated had been found resulting in more delays.

The amphitheater does not have a solid revenue projection yet but will be charging \$3 a ticket with a 5% admission tax.

Council Member McCarthy asked for an update on the AGI site as well as Silver by the River.

Mr. Coleman said that both were proposals that were intended to be brought to the Council in the first quarter. There will be a new concept that will conclude an RFP. Further discussion followed on the details of the AGI site.

Council Member Brantley asked questions on the behalf of Council Member Valle. Council Member Vallie asked Council Member Burns to expound on the Congress Street Bridge. She asked if there had been a new project or an AGI as well as if the shot tower could be considered a mediation and healing garden.

Mr. Gill said that the bridge had been designed and they were in discussion with the Army Corps of Engineers. The project has already been transferred over to Mr. John R. Urquidi Construction is looking to begin in June of 2022 pending permits.

Mr. Coleman said that the site has been a chronic place for dumping. They have been working on a defensive design for the area. It will add value to the waterfront. A pocket park has been created to help protect the waterfront. Discussion followed on the details of the park.

Council Member Valle asked about the possibility of the meditative garden.

Mr. Coleman said he thought the addition would be a great idea. Work would need to be done on it though. Discussion followed on the possibility. Bids are in for between \$8,000,000 to \$12,000,000.

Council Member Brantley asked about the status of the Seaview avenue.

Council Member Burns said the data was still being assembled but the project was moving forwards. They are working with both the general contractor and the with engineering firm that will oversee it.

Council Member McBride-Lee commented on the status of jobs and the increasing number of jobs in Bridgeport. She said she would call about the Windward apartments personally. Council Member McCarthy said he would as well. Further discussion followed.

*The meeting was interrupted at 7:30 P.M.*

*The meeting resumed at 7:32 P.M.*

Council Member Brantley asked if Council Member McCarthy could communicate with Mr. Gill about the profits made on the amphitheater.

Council Member Roman-Christy asked about the marketing firm.

Mr. Coleman said they did not have a marketing firm and it was handled primarily through Rena White. Further discussion followed about how the development was being advertised.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER HERRON MOTIONED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER ROMAN-CHRISTY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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

*The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.*

Respectfully Submitted

Ian A. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services