

**CITY OF NORWALK
MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 7, 2005**

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Knopp, Chairman; Tom Closter; Connie Blair; Pam Stark; David Shockley; Michelle Boccanfuso; Iliana Navarro; Derick DeMarche; Don Nelson.

OTHERS: Laurel Anderson, City Scan; Kelly Straniti, Broad River Association; Laurel Lindstrom, ENNA; Dorothy Romanelli, Harbor Shores; Al Raymond, Spring Hill; Janet Brown, 3 Aiken Street; Jacob Frank, 2 Aiken Street; Belinda Clark & Katherine Griffing, Golden Hill Association; Mark Pierce, Wilton Avenue Association.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by the Chairman, who spoke of the establishment of the Customer Service Center, which is now up and running. Connie Blair is the Manager, and it is staffed by Ms. Blair, Ms. Boccanfuso and Ms. Navarro.

GOLDEN HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Clark said their neighborhood family picnic from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., preceded by a tag sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 41 Elmwood will take place on September 17th.

44 Bayview is a concern. The property has been purchased. They would like clarification on the usage of this property. Mr. DeMarche will look into it. It was used as a three-family, but is zoned as a two-family.

The Chairman said they will be meeting tomorrow or Friday with the Cedar Street Business Association.

EAST NORWALK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PLANS FOR THE OCTOBER 8TH CLEANUP

Ms. Lindstrom said that the cleanup will take place on October 1st, not October 8th in the Hendricks Street area.

Ms. Lindstrom said there would be an event on September 26th at Mill Hill in terms of comparing past history to now. It will start at 7 p.m. with a planning meeting at 7:30.

STATUS OF 73 STRAWBERRY HILL AVENUE DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Lindstrom said they are working on this. There is the possibility of 26 condos or single family homes.

Ms. Lindstrom said there is a plan to put in over 300 condos in Norden Park.

HARBOR SHORES NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Romanelli said that they are now holding monthly meetings. They are pleased to have Woodward Park but it is in really bad condition. She showed pictures of the park. The tennis court is a disgrace, playground equipment is in bad condition. Parking on the sidewalk is the biggest issue, especially on Saturdays and Sundays. They are requesting fencing and a parking lot. She said they are very happy with their neighborhood policing.

Mrs. Romanelli said their other concern is Darien Asphalt. They are concerned about putting up a building they are not zoned for. Mayor Knopp said they had a meeting with Ms. Wilson. Darien Asphalt has not submitted a zoning application. Mr. DeMarche said that the first 100 feet is a C Residential Zone and the back would require a Special Permit and a public hearing.

Mr. Shockley said that Mr. Mokkaie told him that the tennis court contractor will be at the park within 10 days. The playground equipment has been ordered and should be completed by November 1st. The new playground will include new swing sets. Parking would do away with regulation fields.

Mayor Knopp said he was pleased with the development of a new soccer league in Norwalk. They have to look at the parking issue. They may need better signage to point people to the parking in back, which is difficult to find.

MEADOW STREET

Ms. Langley was not present for discussion. Mr. Shockley reviewed a written report from Mr. Mokkaie regarding the Meadow Street park (attached).

BROAD RIVER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Straniti brought up the issue of past buffer zones in the area of Wendy's. Mr. Shockley said restrictions are on the land records and have to be researched file by file, year by year.

Mrs. Straniti said there are littering concerns throughout the City. Regarding the crosswalk, Mr. Linnartz said it has been installed (New Canaan Avenue & Silvermine Avenue). Mrs. Straniti said they are concerned that the owner of Joe's is trying to

purchase the Fairfield County Savings Bank property, which is historical, to tear it down and use for parking. The Historical Commission has said there is not much that can be done. It was recommended that Tod Bryant be contacted.

Regarding the sidewalk behind the Senior Center, Mr. Shockley said they are waiting to hear from the DOT.

Mayor Knopp asked if there was an existing business association. Mrs. Straniti said there is not, but businesses are involved in the Broad River Association.

WEST MAIN STREET

Ms. Abraham was not present for discussion. Mr. Shockley said they are looking at a fall neighborhood cleanup in October. Mayor Knopp said that the First District is looking into plans for Willie Moorer Park. The plans are quite impressive.

SPRING HILL/HOSPITAL AREA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

25 SPRING HILL AVENUE

Mr. Raymond said that the Health Department took care of the problem.

10/22 NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP

Mr. Raymond said they are planning this event but may have to shrink the area involved. Mr. Shockley said he spoke with Mr. Chieffalo, who suggested sending a letter to the First Taxing District Commission, who will then vote on providing assistance.

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mr. Raymond thanked the Mayor for taking care of the Jefferson School traffic problem. Mayor Knopp said there will be a meeting on Friday for evaluation purposes. There is an option regarding the basketball court. They would like to relocate some faculty parking. Public Works is evaluating whether a pathway could be cut, but they have to make sure it is safe. Mr. Raymond said there are many cars parked in the parking lot after hours and in the morning when children come to school. He will contact Chief Rilling with license plate numbers. Mayor Knopp said that Jefferson School will become a magnet school, and traffic will be re-looked at by an architect at that time.

Mr. Closter said there have been issues with garbage at 1 Spring Hill and 25 Spring Hill; he will be looking into this.

Mr. Raymond said that Stuart Avenue has 5 houses that have been purchased by a developer. They are to be demolished and condos are to be constructed. Two of these houses are historic homes. Mr. DeMarche will follow up.

Mr. Raymond said he is sick and tired of the face of Norwalk being changed. Discussion took place on supply and demand as relates to the prevalence of condominiums.

Mr. Raymond said that finally received their crime watch signs.

Mr. Raymond said they have been trying to obtain "Adopt A Spot" signs for the intersection of Stuart Avenue/Stevens Street since February. Mr. Shockley said he would follow up with Mr. Alvord.

Mr. Raymond spoke of problems with gang activities on Spring Hill. Ms. Paladino will contact the Police Chief and Deputy Chief.

Mr. Raymond said he agreed with Mrs. Straniti about the issue of trash in the city. Every artery coming into town is a disgrace. Ms. Blair will talk to Lisa Bardon.

Ms. Stark addressed the benefits of using the customer services bureau, such as immediate work orders, etc.

Mr. Shockley spoke of the possibility of an "Adopt A Street" program.

WILTON AVENUE ASSOCIATION

Mr. Pierce said that their neighborhood cleanup would be held on September 17th. There have been issues with dumping at MBI. Mr. Shockley said that the Project Engineer at Public Works is looking into cleaning this up. Mr. Shockley will talk with Mr. Mauro about bush on Horton/Fair. Mayor Knopp said a Special Services Task Force has been set up in the Police Department to visit hot spots, and it has been very successful.

CITY SCAN UPDATE

CURRENT INVOLVEMENTS WITH BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Ms. Anderson reviewed City Scan, an anti-blight project where they record issues of blight with volunteers from Briggs High School. She works with Mr. Shockley. They have asked the Starbucks Foundation for a grant to conduct water and soil testing.

TREE COMMITTEE

Mr. Nelson said that the Tree Advisory Committee is working hard with Public Works and has a revised arrangement for a fall planting. There are 50 types of trees available for

the City's tree planting. The City will now prioritize to concentrate on where there are no trees. Anyone who wants a tree put on their property can call Ms. Blair. The Tree Advisory Committee conducts an inventory of City street trees to allow the City to program, maintain and plant street trees. There is a tree liaison from most neighborhood committees.

GRAFFITI REMOVAL UPDATE

Mr. Shockley said since June, the AIC program from NEON has helped, and they have done a great job. The Chamber of Commerce has made a \$300 donation and they are seeking to obtain more donations.

NEW BUSINESS

1 AIKEN STREET

Ms. Brown said that the unsightly property is on 3 Hudson Street, owned by John Alberta III. The Health Department has not provided an adequate. The grass is never cut; there is a bus and two cars and there was a fire in the attic. All of the debris from the fire is still on the property. Mr. Frank said that the house is on 3 Hudson and the garage is on 1 Aiken. Mayor Knopp said that the Health Department, Zoning, Mr. Shockley, etc. will look into this, take action and report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Closter said that the owner of this property has been arrested and is very non-cooperative. The Health Department is pushing for a faster Housing Court date. Mayor Knopp will look into accelerating the Housing Court date.

Mayor Knopp said that El Charro has been the source of a lot of trouble over the years. The owner applied to the State Liquor Control Commission for a license expansion to have exotic dancers. Mayor Knopp and Police Chief Rilling are working against it, including sending a letter to the Liquor Control Commission. The City is not required to receive official notification. He would like to encourage neighborhood associations to notify the City when they see this type of application. Mr. DeMarche pointed out that El Charro is also looking for an adult use designation, which is not allowed under the RP design regulations.

Ms. Lindstrom spoke of concerns about speeding and noise on Strawberry Hill Avenue; no storm drains on Ludlow Manor; inadequate sidewalks (Marvin School); deterioration of Ludlow Shopping Center; lack of safe cycling and need for additional signs; traffic light at Norden Place & Strawberry Hill (complaints about traffic backup); visibility complaints on Myrtle Street/Strawberry Hill Avenue; speeding at Ludlow Park and lower Gregory Boulevard (suggested a crosswalk with good signage for the safety of children); parking problems at Partner's Café; business sign on William Street (a residential area).

Mr. DeMarche will look into the complaint filed with P&Z regarding the business sign on William Street.

ADJOURN MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Telesco
Telesco Secretarial Services