

**CRDA Neighborhood Committee Meeting
June Meeting
Tuesday, June 14, 2016 at 2:00PM**

PRESENT:

Directors: Mayor Luke Bronin, Board Chair Suzanne Hopgood, David Jorgensen, Mayor Marcia Leclerc, Joanne Berger-Sweeney

Advisory Member: Donald Chapman

Staff: Michael Freimuth, Anthony Lazzaro, and Lauren Vaz

The meeting was called to order at 2:03pm.

1. Committee Chair & Meeting Schedule

The Committee passed the motion to recommend Mayor Bronin as its Chair. The suggested monthly meeting schedule is each second Friday at 8:30am as needed.

2. Funding & CRDA's Role

A large portion of the funding is allocated to the designated Promise Zone primarily located in the city's North-end. CRDA's Board Resolution defines the Authority's project range to those that promote Housing, Economic Development, and/or Infrastructure in the City of Hartford. The full \$40 Million (\$20 Million for each of two years) will become available as of July 1, 2016 to aid in funding suitable projects.

Set-asides

Additional set-asides have been requested within the Promise Zone to implement the Neighborhood Security Fellows Program (NSFP) & Neighborhood Security Project (NSP) requirements to include employment or internships for the "difficult to employ". These added set-asides will add additional costs to eligible projects. CRDA will absorb these costs using a portion of the \$40 Million.

Further details about how to implement these processes need to be clarified before any projects become active. \$500,000 is allocated to cover administrative costs, training, and preparation for this segment of the workforce.

City Referral Process

The suggested process is for the Mayor's Office/Developmental Services to refer prospective developments to the Neighborhood Committee for review and approval. Committee approved developments are forwarded to the CRDA Board for further approval, and then to the Bond Commission.

Dr. Berger-Sweeney advised the entire process must be clarified including, but not limited to, priorities, goals, and the referral/selection method. Mayor Leclerc recommended that a required contractual mechanism or safeguard to ensure the new developments have funds allocated for maintenance and property preservation.

Mayor Bronin stressed that developments must have the potential to serve as anchors for neighborhood rebuilding and redevelopment; they should also be spread out throughout the City, not just concentrated in the downtown area. Mr. Jorgensen suggested that developments must also focus on main arteries and gateways into the City of Hartford.

3. Potential Development Projects

a. Chester Bowles Park & Westbrook Village, Public Housing Transformation: *Approximately 800 units (400 each). Bowles to start first with demo in the Fall of 2016 (mixed income affordable housing. Westbrook

Village will follow in 2017. (Mixed income affordable and homeownership housing) Westbrook will also have a retail component. The Developer of Bowles Park is looking for money for demolition.

- b. Terry Square, Land Assembly, infrastructure: A potential town center plan ideally comprised of mixed used housing/retail development requiring street realignment
- c. Albany Ave commercial upgrades/gateway projects: Albany/Woodland Town Center Project will ideally contain senior housing and retail. Centerplan's prior plan included a Rite Aid and a restaurant.
- d. South Green or Park & Main Street: *Milone & MacBroom, consultants retained to study/propose redevelopment concept for gateway project.
- e. Metropolitan AME – housing – 2063 Main St.: 50 units of Senior Housing
- f. Homestead Ave corridor (city owned industrial sites): *Brownfield cleanup; home to new energy fuel cell development
- g. Salvin Shoes (Block – West side of Main Street between Ely and Pleasant Streets): *Facade Improvement & Housing rehabilitation
- h. Park Street Library: includes potential retail space.
- i. Farmington Avenue: Improvements along Farmington Avenue

4. Next Meeting: July 8, 2016.

Review project selection guidelines, and any potential development proposals.

5. Adjourned at 3:15pm.



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CRDA Neighborhood Committee

Cancellation notice

The CRDA Neighborhood Committee Meeting, scheduled for Friday, July 8, 2016 has been cancelled.

**Neighborhood Committee Meeting / Conference Call
Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
Friday, August 12, 2016
8:30 a.m.**

PRESENT:

Members: Mayor Luke Bronin, Board Chair Suzanne Hopgood, Joanne Berger-Sweeney, Mayor Marcia Leclerc (via phone), David Jorgensen (via phone)

Advisory Member: Donald Chapman

Staff: Michael Freimuth, Anthony Lazzaro and Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m. The minutes of the June meeting were approved with one change: Ms. Hopgood ask that the minutes be amended to reflect that members discussed opportunities for improvements along Farmington Avenue.

1. **Project Funding Criteria** – As part his Mayor’s Report, Mayor Bronin reviewed a draft memorandum outlining the City’s criteria for recommending projects to CRDA for potential funding. President Berger-Sweeney expressed support for the criteria, but questioned whether the idea of “gateway projects” was too limiting. Mayor Bronin proposed replacing the phrase with a reference to projects in strategic locations in the City and committee members concurred.

Mayor Bronin stressed the idea of remaining flexible and not expecting projects to meet each and every criteria. Ms. Hopgood suggested that two points be absolute: (1) a project must add to the City’s Grand List and (2) it must leverage additional funding on a 2:1 or 3:1 basis. Committee members agreed, but it was suggested that additions to the Grand List could be direct or indirect.

Mr. Freimuth asked that the memorandum indicate that projects will be reviewed and approved by the Neighborhood Committee and then sent to the CRDA Board for final approval. The Committee approved the draft criteria – with the suggested changes – on a voice vote.

2. **Neighborhood Fellows Program** – Mr. Freimuth briefed the Committee on discussions he has had with Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) about assisting with the creation of the Neighborhood Security Fellows Program. CWP suggested working through the existing Jobs Funnel and presented Mr. Freimuth with a draft scope and budget for identification, training and job assistance for an initial 15 Fellows. Costs for this initial phase are estimated at \$2,400 per participant.

Committee members, however, suggested that the need for job placement and retention assistance is greater than the need for additional training programs and asked that CRDA funds be directed to those purposes. The importance of evaluating the success of the program, including a survey of “graduates” was also discussed.

3. **Project Discussions** – Committee members discussed two projects that may come before the Neighborhood Committee in the coming weeks.
 - a. **Swift Factory** – Among other comments, Mr. Freimuth indicated that he is working to secure New Market Tax credits for the project.
 - b. **Bowles Park** – Mr. Freimuth outlined the project, which involves the demolition of 410 residential units currently owned by the City Housing Authority, reconfiguration of the street grid and construction of 91 new units (both rental and owned). CRDA has been asked to provide financial assistance for the demolition phase, in conjunction with DECD and possibly the City.

Members noted that while Bowles Park is not physically located in the Promise Zone, its proximity to the Promise Zone and the impact its revitalization is expected to have on surrounding neighborhoods makes it eligible for this designated funding.

Mr. Jorgensen raised concerns about whether the mix of rental and owned units would discourage buyers in the area. He also questioned whether CRDA was deviating from its original housing strategy and now investing in public housing projects. Mr. Freimuth agreed that project would not be the typical 80/20 split that has characterized most CRDA housing projects. He noted, however, that this would not be a CRDA housing project per se, in that it would utilize funds specifically designated for neighborhood projects, rather than the agency’s housing funds.

Mayor Bronin commented that the Blue Hills neighborhood is already a mix of rental and owned housing and that it still maintains a strong level of home ownership. He sees this project as critical to maintaining that level.

Mr. Freimuth noted that the Bowles Park developer will be invited to the next meeting to make a presentation and respond to questions from Committee members.

4. **Farmington Avenue** - Frank Hagaman, Executive Director of the Hartford Preservation Alliance, briefed the Committee on plans for revitalization of Farmington Avenue between Sigourney and Woodland Street, an area that includes the historic Comet. The Alliance is conducting a feasibility study on mixed-use development in the area. Mr. Hagaman noted that Aetna also has been involved with the project and has provided financial support.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for **Friday, September 9, 2016**.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.



**CRDA
100 Columbus Boulevard
Suite 500
Hartford, CT 06103**

**Neighborhood Committee Meeting/Conference Call
Friday, September 9, 2016
8:30 AM**

1. Introduction
2. Approval of Minutes from August 12, 2016 Meeting
3. Willow Creek Apartments (Bowles Park) Presentation
4. Swift Factory Presentation
5. Request for demolition funds for Bowles Park *
6. Other Business
7. Next Meeting/Conference Call – October 14, 2016 @ 8:30 am
8. Adjourn

* action item

**Neighborhood Committee Meeting / Conference Call
Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
Thursday, November 10, 2016
8:30 a.m.**

PRESENT:

Members: Mayor Luke Bronin, Board Chair Suzanne Hopgood, Mayor Marcia Leclerc (via phone), David Jorgensen (via phone)

Advisory Member: Donald Chapman

Guests: Ralph Knighton, Al Gary and Abe Ford from Toraal Development

Staff: Michael Freimuth, Kim Hart and Jane Bisson (Trinity intern)

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

1. **State Innovation Place Program** – Ms. Bisson reported on the new Innovation Place Program established as part of the Connecticut Innovations / CTNext legislation passed last session. The program is designed to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in compact, mixed-use geographic areas. The Metro Hartford Alliance and a coalition of Hartford and East Hartford entities was recently awarded a \$50k Innovation Place planning grant to develop an action plan focusing on the Parksville, Coltsville, Hartford Hospital/Trinity College, Homestead/Albany and Downtown areas of Hartford, as well as the Goodwin College and Rentschler Field areas of East Hartford.

An RFP has been issued for a consultant to assist with the creation of an action plan and once an action plan is in place, the coalition will look to apply for an implementation grant under the program. Proposals are due in April, 2017 and winners will be announced in June.

It is unclear at this time how the Innovation Place Program will impact CRDA projects in this area, but staff will continue to monitor the coalition's work and offer assistance as needed.

2. **Minutes** - The minutes of the October 14th meeting were approved on a voice vote.
3. **Brackett Knoll Housing Project** – Mr. Knighton walked the Committee through Toraal Development's plan to construct 14 two-family owner-occupied homes on the site of the former

Brackett Park School on Westland Street. This work represents Phase II of a project that was initiated in 2006 with the construction of six such homes. The developer is seeking CRDA assistance with construction of a Naugatuck Street extension required for the project, as well as with additional funding to cover mortgage gaps.

Mr. Knighton explained that the two-unit homes allow buyers to occupy one and rent the other out as a source of income. He indicated that potential buyers have been identified for the new homes, with at least nine tenants already vetted and ready to work with Toraal's identified mortgage partners. Buyers will be required to attend a CHFA home-ownership training program.

Mr. Knighton also indicated that when Brackett School was demolished in the 1970's, the brownstone foundation was left in place and the site backfilled. As a result, contractors encountered large pieces of the foundation during excavation for Phase I of the project and were forced to remove them. Similar issues are expected during Phase II and Committee members inquired as to whether the stone could be salvaged for use elsewhere in the City.

Following a brief discussion, the following resolution was approved on a voice vote:

Resolved: The Neighborhood Committee hereby approves the use of \$1,555,000 in CRDA Neighborhood funds for the Brackett Knoll project on Westland Street. Of this total, \$630,000 shall be used to assist the developer, Toraal Development LLC, with site acquisition and site improvements related to the construction of 14 two-family owner-occupied homes. CRDA shall utilize the \$925,000 balance for the extension of Naugatuck Street through the project site. Such assistance shall be subject to 1) full CRDA Board and State Bond Commission approvals; and 2) such fiduciary terms deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.

4. **Neighborhood Fellows Security Program** - Ms. Hart reported on the Neighborhood Fellows Security Program. Capital Workforce Partners (CWP), the entity that operates the Jobs Funnel, has advised that in order to ensure that CRDA has an adequate number of trained "Fellows" available for neighborhood projects, the Authority needs to fund a specific training class geared toward individuals identified in the legislation. Ms. Hart reminded Committee members that the legislation is geared toward Hartford youths aged 18 to 24 who are at risk of being perpetrators or victims of gun violence.

The Bowles project is the first CRDA project to be required to utilize Fellows and Ms. Hart reported that the nature of the demolition phase is such that only two or three trained individuals would be needed. CWP believes such a small number could be found amongst existing Jobs Funnel graduates and the project would not need to wait for a specific training class to be completed.

Mayor Bronin asked that CWP work with the Youth Service Corps, which he feels would be a good resource in identifying at-risk youth.

The next meeting of the Neighborhood Committee is scheduled for ***Friday, December 9, 2016.***

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

**Neighborhood Committee Meeting / Conference Call
Approved Meeting Minutes
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
Friday, January 13, 2017
8:30 a.m.**

PRESENT:

Members: Mayor Luke Bronin, Joanne Berger-Sweeney, Mayor Marcia Leclerc (via phone), David Jorgensen (via phone)

Advisory Member: Donald Chapman

Guests: David Foster (via phone), Rosanne Haggerty and Patrick McKenna from Community Solutions

Staff: Michael Freimuth, Anthony Lazzaro, Terryl Mitchell Smith and Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m. by Mayor Bronin and the minutes of the November 10th meeting were approved on a voice vote.

1. **Brackett Knoll Housing Project** – Mr. Freimuth reported that he has requested that the \$1,555,000 in CRDA financial assistance approved by the Board in December be placed on the State Bond Commission agenda for January.
2. **Bowles Park Project** – Mr. Freimuth also reported that CRDA staff would be meeting soon with the Hartford Housing Authority and the developer of the Bowles Park Project. Requests for demolition bids are out and approximately 30 families still need to be relocated before demolition can begin. Neighborhood Fellows and local hiring requirements will be written into the CRDA financial assistance agreement.
3. **South Green Project** – Mr. Freimuth noted that the project is still awaiting a plan modification from the City's Redevelopment Agency.
4. **Swift Factory Project** – Mr. McKenna, Mr. Foster and Ms. Haggerty from Community Solutions, the developer of the project, offered the Committee an update. They reviewed the list of committed/potential tenants, noting that they have commitments for 80% of the total rental income and between 65% and 70% of the total rental space for the first two years of operation. Mr. Freimuth noted that CRDA has requested to see letters from tenants outlining their commitment to the project, along with any conditions or caveats.

Community Solutions outlined their various funding commitments and their request for \$4 million in assistance from CRDA. They have made no request of the City, though, Mayor Bronin noted that there is a pending agreement to cover back taxes on the property and that the City would also consider a tax-fixing agreement moving forward. Mr. Freimuth reminded the developer that any issue of back taxes would need to be resolved before CRDA funds would be made available.

President Berger-Sweeney raised the issue of how many people the Swift Factory would likely serve once it was up and running. The developer estimates the creation of 125 jobs in the first year and up to 175 after three years. Some 23,000 people live within walking distance of the site.

Committee members raised questions about the availability of the federal funding assistance under the new presidential administration, particularly the project's pending EDA grant. The developer is confident, however, that any new changes would affect funds in coming fiscal years and that FY17 grant funds are secure. Members expressed concern that while funds might be secure, the application process might grind to a halt under the new administration.

Mr. Freimuth also asked Community Solutions to provide a breakdown of funding uses to accompany the funding sources they provided to the Committee. The developer ran through the list and indicated that they would provide a written report as well.

Members also reviewed the project funding criteria approved by the Neighborhood Committee last August and expressed satisfaction that the Swift project met each of the set objectives.

Mr. Freimuth suggested that if remaining issues are resolved in time, the Neighborhood Committee could formally consider the Swift funding at its February meeting, with the possibility of sending it on to the full CRDA Board for a vote in February or March. Assuming the full Board was comfortable with the project, the funding request would then go to the State Bond Commission in March or April, depending on that entity's schedule.

5. **Albany/Woodland Project** – It was noted that bids are due later this month for development of vacant parcels on the corner of Albany Avenue and Woodland Street. CRDA may be asked to participate in the project.
6. **Neighborhood Fellows Security Program** – Ms. Hart will have a written update on the Neighborhood Security Fellows program for the Committee's February meeting.

The next meeting of the Neighborhood Committee is scheduled for *Friday, February 10, 2017*.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 a.m.



CRDA
100 Columbus Boulevard
Suite 500
Hartford, CT 06103

Neighborhood Committee Meeting/Conference Call
Friday, February 10, 2017
8:30 AM

1. Introduction
2. Approval of Minutes from January 13, 2017 Meeting
3. Project Discussion
 - a. Brackett Knoll
 - b. Bowles Park
 - c. Swift Factory
4. Update on Neighborhood Security Fellows Program
5. Other Business
6. Next Meeting/Conference Call – Friday, March 10, 2017 @ 8:30 am
7. Adjourn

**Neighborhood Committee Conference Call
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard, 5th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
Friday, March 10, 2017
8:30 a.m.**

PRESENT VIA PHONE:

Members: Mayor Luke Bronin (Committee Chair), Joanne Berger-Sweeney, Board Chair
Suzanne Hopgood

Guests: David Foster, Rosanne Haggerty and Patrick McKenna from Community Solutions

Staff: Michael Freimuth and Kim Hart

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 a.m. by Mayor Bronin and the minutes of the January 13th meeting were approved on a voice vote. Ms. Hopgood abstained, as she was not present for the January meeting.

Swift Factory Project – Mr. Foster offered a brief presentation updating the Committee on the project, particularly the status of tenant leases and project funding. He noted that discussions with Hartford Public Schools about utilizing space for a commercial kitchen had stalled and Mayor Bronin noted that he thought a deal with the school board was “highly unlikely”. Mr. Foster assured Committee members that the absence of the school kitchen did not negatively impact the pro forma for the project.

Mr. Freimuth questioned whether private funds provided as a rent “backstop” while the developer secured a health clinic tenant could be utilized for the school board space, now that a health clinic tenant has been identified. Mr. Foster indicated that the backstop funds were specifically designated for the clinic space and the deal would need to be renegotiated for any other area. Mr. Foster indicated that he would look into renegotiating, as well as securing other private funding sources.

Ms. Hopgood asked about federal requirements related to the health clinic. Mr. Foster indicated that the federal approval process is fairly routine and that he was not concerned. He did note that the clinic’s lease would likely include language making its terms contingent on securing such federal approval.

Ms. Berger-Sweeney and Mayor Bronin expressed their support for the project, however, the Mayor questioned the speculative nature of the food incubator and shared office space. Mr. Foster indicated that rents for this space are purposely being kept low to attract new businesses

to the area. Community Solutions' research indicates that there are businesses interested in being part of this type of social enterprise and willing to relocate to the Promise Zone.

Mayor Bronin also asked about the local and minority hiring goals outlined in the presentation and stressed their importance to the City. Mr. Freimuth also noted that the project would likely be included in CRDA's Neighborhood Security Fellows job-training program. Ms. Hart confirmed that CRDA staff has already initiated discussions with Community Solutions on this issue.

Mayor Bronin also raised a question about property taxes on the factory. Mr. Foster indicated that Community Solutions is closing on a pre-development loan next week and proceeds would be used to pay off back taxes. He also reported that he was working with the City on a payment plan moving forward.

The Committee next considered the funding resolution for the project.

Resolved: The Neighborhood Committee hereby approves the use of \$4,000,000 in CRDA Neighborhood funds for the Swift Factory project on Love Lane. Such funds shall be distributed as a loan, with minimum debt service calculated using an initial 1% APR and paid monthly upon stabilization. The developer shall also pay CRDA 70% of net available cash after payment of first lien debt service and other required distributions, per the federal tax code requirements for historic credits. Payment to CRDA shall continue over a 20-year term until the Authority has received all of its capital with a 3% IRR. Such assistance shall be subject to 1) full CRDA Board and State Bond Commission approvals; and 2) such fiduciary terms deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.

Mayor Bronin offered an amendment to formally adopt the City's local and minority hiring goals as outlined on page 14 of the Swift presentation. Ms. Hart read the resolution and the Mayor's amendment was adopted on a voice vote. Mr. Freimuth directed committee staff to work with City staff to draft the hiring goal language prior to the CRDA Board's consideration of the Swift resolution in March.

Ms. Hopgood offered a second amendment, linking CRDA funding to the execution of tenant leases (a) governing no less than 50% of leasable project space or (b) generating no less than 50% of projected rental revenue. This was also adopted on a voice vote.

The resolution, as amended, was adopted on a voice vote. Mr. Freimuth asked Community Solutions to be prepared for a presentation to the full CRDA Board at its monthly meeting on March 16th, where the funding resolution would be considered.

Bowles Park and Brackett Knoll Projects - Ms. Hart gave brief updates on these two projects and Mr. Freimuth noted that more detailed updates would be provided at the March 16th Board Meeting.

The next meeting of the Neighborhood Committee is scheduled for *Thursday, April 13, 2017*.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.



**CRDA
100 Columbus Boulevard
Suite 500
Hartford, CT 06103**

**Neighborhood Committee Meeting/Conference Call
Thursday, April 13, 2017
8:30 AM**

1. Introduction
2. Approval of Minutes from March 10, 2017 Meeting
3. Project Updates
 - a. Brackett Knoll
 - b. Bowles Park
 - c. Swift Factory
4. Neighborhood Security Fellows Program - Options
5. Other Business
6. Next Meeting/Conference Call - Friday, May 12, 2017 at 8:30 am
7. Adjourn