



## ***Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee - Board of Representatives***

Elaine Mitchell, Chair

Lila Wallace, Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Tuesday December 16, 2014  
**Time:** 6:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Republican Caucus Room 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Government Center, 888  
Washington Boulevard

The Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee met at the above time and place. In attendance were Chair Mitchell, Vice Chair Wallace, and Committee Member Reps. Giordano, Mahoney, McNeil, Moore and Watkins. Also present were Erik Larson, Community Development Office: Ellen Bromley, Social Services: Johnnie Malloy, Liberation Programs; Vin Tufo, Charter Oak; and Fernando Alvarez, Chairman of the Board and Interim Director, Yerwood Center.

Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
<sup>1</sup> 1. <a href="#">HCD29.17</a>	REVIEW; Procedures ( <a href="#">Current</a> and <a href="#">Proposed</a> ) for Social Services Relocation. 05/23/14 – Submitted by Anne Fountain 06/17/14 – Held in Committee 07/22/14 – Held in Committee 08/19/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee 09/26/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee 10/21/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee	<b>Report Made</b>
<sup>2</sup> 3. <a href="#">HCD29.24</a>	APPROVAL; Request by the Westside Neighborhood Revitalization Zone to modify its CDBG Scope of Services to allow them to engage the Women's Business Development Council, rather than hire an employee, to carry out their program. 10/08/14 – Submitted by Tim Beeble 10/21/14 – Held in Committee 5-0-0	<b>Approved 6-0-1</b>

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<sup>1</sup> Video Time Stamp 00:00:28

<sup>2</sup> Video Time Stamp 00:01:00

The Committee next considered Item No. 3. Mr. Tufo explained that Charter Oak Communities is a member of the WNRZ, although not an officer. The item description is somewhat misleading, because the WNRZ has always used different consultants, rather than an employee. They are hoping that the WBDC, as an entity, will be more effective than a single individual as a consultant to introduce the NRZ to the businesses in the neighborhood and introduce them to changes in the neighborhood and available services. Most business owners have not been receptive to date. As the area changes, WBDC will help connect businesses with the trends in the area; make technical services available to business to help them grow and sustain them and connect residents to jobs. The amount to be transferred is \$30,000 (\$25,000 for the first year, plus \$5,000 for the previous year). Citibank is providing additional funding. A motion to approve this item was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-1 (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, McNeil, Moore and Watkins in favor; Rep. Mahoney abstaining).

- <sup>35</sup>. [HCD29.26](#) APPROVAL; Request by Friends of Liberation Programs, Inc. to permit \$22,489 of CDBG funding allocated to Fire Suppression Hood to be used for Fire Panel System replacement. **Approved 7-0-0**  
10/30/14 – Submitted by Erik Larson

The Committee next considered Item No. 5. Ms. Malloy explained that this refers to the property at 115 Main Street. The kitchen serves over 70,000 meals per year and the Department of Health had been adamant about the Fire Suppression Hood, which was one of many things wrong with the kitchen. In seeking funding for the rest of the repairs, they were able to secure funding for a total repair of the kitchen, including the repair of the Fire Suppression Hood. The next item they need to repair is the Fire Panel System, so they would like to use the CDBG funding for the Fire Panel System. A motion to approve this item was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, Mahoney, McNeil, Moore and Watkins in favor).

- <sup>42</sup>. [HCD29.20](#) REVIEW; Status Update re: Yerwood Center **Report Made**  
08/06/14 – Submitted by Pres. Skigen  
08/11/14 – Held at Steering  
09/08/14 – Held at Steering  
10/21/14 – Report Made

Mr. Alvarez gave an update regarding the Yerwood Center:

- The afterschool program and summer program are currently on hold because the license was revoked on May 27, 2014 due to 40 violations in connection with management of the childcare and afterschool programs, along with building violations
- The building violations were the result of the failure of the contractor to complete the construction to the building
- The City is working with the Yerwood Center to get the building completed as quickly as possible
- 35 of the children are currently at the Boys & Girls Club, along with the Yerwood staff
- It has been difficult to raise money without a building

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<sup>3</sup> Video Time Stamp 00:36:08

<sup>4</sup> Video Time Stamp 00:42:23

- There are 3<sup>rd</sup> party programs using the building as long as they are insured; they can't be an afterschool program, including performing arts programs. These are using the gym and the pool, which are up to code, as is the lobby; the Seniors also use a room that is free of violations
- The Yerwood Center has insurance on the building for their current uses but all of their programs are running at the Boys & Girls Club only
- Yerwood Center, Inc. had the license for the afterschool program, which was revoked. It takes a year to reapply for a license; Hartford recommended that they create a 2<sup>nd</sup> 501(c)3 (Yerwood Center Community Alliance), but the violations still need to be corrected
- They need to complete the building before the private equity for a new Executive Director will be available
- He has no prior experience turning around a community center

Ms. Bromley explained that

- the afterschool license of Yerwood Center Inc. was revoked by the State Department of Health due to management violations, not building violations:
  - Too many children in the program
  - Too little supervision
  - Incomplete medical forms
- A year wait is required to apply for a new license. They contemplated forming a new corporation, but they did not because the construction went badly. The repairs are going very slowly. They can't apply for a new license until the entire building is up to Code. The part being renovated is not being rented out.

Mr. Alvarez explained that the management violations could be resolved with a new, good director. He will provide the Board office a list of all of the violations and an update on the status of the construction.

They have brought in a new comptroller to create procedures and ensure they are followed. The Lessee of the building is Yerwood Center, Inc. so they must take all funds for the leasing of the building.

Chair Mitchell stated that the Committee needs to be informed the state of the building and when they anticipate the building going back into service. Rep. Wallace recommended that he reach out to community leaders, including herself, Rep. DePina, Rep. McNeil and Rep. Pratt. The Committee will ask him for an update in March.

- <sup>5</sup>4. [HCD29.25](#) APPROVAL; Year 41 CDBG Budgeting Schedule. **Approved 7-0-0**  
10/30/14 – Submitted by Erik Larson

Mr. Larson reviewed the proposed schedule with the Committee. A motion to approve the public hearing date as February 5, 2015 and the workshop to develop the recommendations to the Mayor as March 7, 2015 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, Mahoney, McNeil, Moore and Watkins in favor).

Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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<sup>5</sup> Video Time Stamp 01:37:11

Elaine Mitchell, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).