

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETINGJANUARY 15, 197614th BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVESSTAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

A Special Meeting of the 14th Board of Representatives of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, was held Thursday, January 15, 1976, pursuant to a "CALL" issued by President Frederick E. Miller, Jr., under the provisions of Section 202 of the Stamford Charter.

The meeting was held in the meeting room of the Board of Representatives, second floor, Municipal Office Building, 429 Atlantic Street, Stamford, Conn.

The meeting was called to order at 8:15 p.m. by the President, Frederick E. Miller, Jr.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: Led by Mr. Miller, the President.

MR. MILLER: "We won't do any voting this evening, so we don't have to check the voting machine, but we will take a Roll Call. The Clerk will please call the Roll.

ROLL CALL: At the time there were 24 present and 16 absent. Other members arrived somewhat later, and the final count was 27 present and 13 absent. The absent members were:

George Baxter	(D-7)	James Loboza	(R-17)
Theodore Boccuzzi	(D-9)	Barbara McInerney	(R-20)
Audrey Cosentini	(R-13)	Matthew Rose	(D-3)
Handy Dixon	(D-2)	John Sandor	(D-4)
George Hays	(R-20)	Jeanne-Lois Santy (ill)	(R-18)
Leonard Hoffman	(R-11)	Peter Walsh	(D-7)
Jeremiah Livingston	(D-5)		

Also present and sitting at the podium were the following persons:

Mrs. Nancy L. Mitchell, Development Coordinator  
 Jon A. Smith, Planning and Zoning Director  
 Barbara Forman, Mayor's Executive Aide  
 Elizabeth Rosenbaum, Asst. Development Coordinator

CALL OF THE MEETING:

THE PRESIDENT read the "CALL" of the Meeting, as follows:

"I, Frederick E. Miller, Jr., President of the Board of Representatives of the City of Stamford, pursuant to Section 202 of the Stamford Charter, hereby call a SPECIAL MEETING of said Board of Representatives for:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1976 at 8:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76

MRS. BARBARA FORMAN (continued)

"3. In accordance with HUD regulations concerning the time-table for the summation of this application, we shall work to achieve the following schedule:

"No later than April 15, 1976, application must be submitted to HUD, therefore, all appropriate boards and agencies whose approval is required, should plan to take positive action on the application no later than March 1, 1976. I am requesting that the affected boards and agencies begin now to plan for this timetable. If there are any questions, please call upon me or Mrs. Mitchell, Director of Community Development, so that we can answer them as soon as possible.

"In order to meet the above deadline dates, and not to jeopardize Stamford's funding under this new Act, I will need the full cooperation of all boards and agencies to whom this is addressed. I know that I can count on your full cooperation, even though I fully recognize that the limited time frame does pose some problems, however, I do feel that by working together we can develop and get approval on an application that will meet early HUD approval.

"And it is signed: Sincerely, Louis A. Clapes, Mayor."

MRS. MITCHELL then introduced Mr. Jon A. Smith, Stamford's Planning and Zoning Director, with whom her staff had established a close working relationship during the first program, and he will explain how the city's planning and zoning processes directly relate to the community development programs.

MR. JON A. SMITH said that about a year ago, they began in this same room a Community Development Program, and at that time he was called upon by the Mayor to review some of the data that the Planning Board's staff had at that time gathered, which was resource to the staff at that time to evaluate what problem areas existed. He said that some of the maps that you see displayed on the back wall were here then, and that a great many had been added since, in the year's time. He said that if those present had not looked at them on their way in, he would encourage them to do so on their way out. They are resource basically to the Planning Board as part of the up-dating of Stamford's Master Plan, but they deal basically with such areas as community facilities, transportation, housing, population, economic base and environment. And, he said, that many will find that some of these will be of use in a variety of ways in projects in which they may be interested, specifically. He said they have limited quantities available and if anyone is interested, they could make use of the data.

MR. SMITH went on to say that basic of those maps displayed is the quality of housing map which is a large one on the rear wall, which shows in color condition of housing in central Stamford in 1974. This map was compiled with the cooperation of the Housing Code Enforcement Task Force of the Health Department of Stamford, and primarily it should be noted that clustered there the darker the color, the worse the physical condition of the residential structures, pockets of problem areas in and around Rogers and the East Side, and parts of the West Side, and probably more substantially in the South End, as well as a small part of the Waterside area.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76

MRS. NANCY MITCHELL reviewed the Community Development Block Grants, referring to the final rules published on Nov. 13, 1974 and Feb. 7, 1975, and then the recent changes published in the FEDERAL REGISTER under date of June 9, 1975. She explained the basis on which Stamford's \$2,034,000 was determined, population, previous categorical grants, etc. She mentioned general provisions, and specific uses to which these funds can be put, as well as the objective and purpose of the program itself. She stated that last year, the Board of Representatives approved her application on March 3, 1975 and it took until October 1, 1975 to get the final go-ahead by HUD. She said the Second Year Program will be a 15-month one, from June 30, 1976 through September 30, 1977. She said Stamford's population was supposed to have dropped from 108,000 to 104,000 according to the Federal figures.

MRS. ELIZABETH ROSENBAUM detailed work currently going on with respect to various projects such as parks, playgrounds, architectural barriers, recreation centers; some of which are in the design stage, some being studied, others in process of construction. The rehabilitation and preservation of the Rogers School neighborhood was described. The Demolition program should be finalized for February and work completed by June. Various City Departments are involved in much of this work, such as the Public Works Department, Planning, etc. She touched upon the Economic Base Study and the Steering Committee's work in this respect. A Housing Study is planned to determine the status of Stamford's housing. Mrs. Rosenbaum spoke about the funds which are allocated to the Urban Renewal Area and what they hope to accomplish there. A design architect is expected to come up with a preliminary design by April or May for St. John's Square (park), she said, and construction should start in June. There are eighteen projects in different stages of completion.

MRS. NANCY MITCHELL explained the complicated procedures to be followed to secure the funds, the application forms which are not yet available, the short time span in which to accomplish all the requirements, and the final public hearings which must be held on the finalized programs. Performance reports must be filed in detail, for the second-year programs.

MR. RAVALLESE asked where did they plan to locate the proposed park and playground for the Lawn Ave. people.

MRS. MITCHELL said they had a couple of sites in mind, but are seeking others.

MR. RAVALLESE said he did not see how they could use the ones they had in mind at this point, and how about the Bacco Property? Are they still playing games with that, and did we now have \$99,000 for it?

MRS. MITCHELL said the additional dollars came from the housing sites acquisition funds, but there was a problem of zoning of high-rise construction versus low-rise for elderly.

MR. RAVALLESE pointed out there is a piece of property right next to Bacco which would be ideal, due to the fact that two buildings on it could be used for recreation. He asked what particular property she had in mind. Was she referring to the piece that had so much slope to it that it would be suitable only for sleigh-riding?

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76

MR. FOX said he was not on this Board last year and he has one or two questions he would like answered. He asked who has the final determination as to what funds go to what project. He said he understood that after a lot of in-put, the decision is made by the Mayor, with approval by a majority of the Board of Representatives?

MRS. MITCHELL said that was correct.

MR. MILLER said that it would be a majority of those present and voting.

MR. FOX said his question was how did it come about that the City of Stamford was eligible for this program. Was it because of size communities, or how did we come about to be entitled to these funds?

MRS. MITCHELL said that Stamford participated in certain categorical grants before, between 1968 and 1972; and that cities which so participated, were invited to file applications to participate in this program, if they so wished. If we had not chosen to participate, the money would have gone back to HUD in Hartford and they would have distributed them to other cities in the State. New Haven gets \$15 Million a year. Poughkeepsie gets a little over \$3 Million a year, with a 33,000 population. It is based on how much you got between 1968 and 1972. Stamford got a lot of money in 1967 and a lot in 1973, but the Federal government chose the years of 1968 through 1972 so we got stuck with a smaller portion.

MRS. BARBARA FORMAN said she would like to also answer Mr. Fox's question. She said that last year we had the same thing. That final approval comes in a package which must be either accepted, the whole package accepted, or the whole package rejected. That is why she made the point before, that the public participation and this Board before that time.

MRS. RAYMOND asked is there was a moral commitment, once funds had been allocated, such as the \$5,000 to South End Community Center, to continue additional funding. That once the need had been identified, say last year, more funds must allocated this year to complete the needs.

MRS. MITCHELL said it was hard to determine at the beginning on some of these projects on just what might be needed to complete them, but that at Glenbrook Community Center, the architect determined there was not too much that needed to be done there, but at the South End Community Center, it was a whole different ball game. The surrounding neighborhood, being a prime target area, had many and great needs, housing, etc.

MRS. RAYMOND asked once you submit your final plan to the Federal Government, are you allowed in any way to alter that plan? Can you move the money around from one program to another, if you find that one takes less and another needs more?

MRS. MITCHELL said they had a discretion of 10%, the Mayor did.

MR. SIGNORE asked where the Water Street park?

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76

MR. JON SMITH (continuing) but they have limited funds, and they, in effect, they let it go where the money's welcome, so they have been negotiating at some length on the idea of express bus systems, etc. These have been explored and several people have been looking into the very idea that Mr. Blum is talking about. He said you should be aware also that the Planning Board has a representative who attends Parking Authority meetings regularly, and have met and discussed what might be a determination for a Master Plan parking site, what are the limitations, at which point do we cease moving parking and get to mass transit. We have to work on concert with ... we're looking but we don't have the answers yet.

MRS. MITCHELL said she had one comment about transportation which doesn't come under Community Development and that if something can be funded under any other source, she could not fund it. However, she could match a program under another source but because of that, the flexibility in this program and out of necessity, over the last couple of months they have developed a very, very extensive grants library which deals with everything. Every day the Federal Register comes in, every day the Congressional Record comes in, they have a Foundation Directory, they have all the latest periodicals on the types of grant programs so that they are aware of all the funding, the latest bills from Washington, etc. They have taken every request they have received and have gone through all this source material to see if any of these requests can be funded through another program and/or if they can match it. They are trying to initiate some kind of system to do this because there are requests coming in for a lot of programs that we know there are dollars for. One of the goals of this program is to use the Community Development funds as seed money for other Federal and State monies, like they are trying to match on the West Side park, a recreation grant....50% grant, we can match 50% with that. But that when you are talking about transportation and other items, if we can run into a grant program, and hopefully they will get things coordinated on time tables, they can use this as a grant flexibility to get more dollars in.

MR. BLUM said he would like to take this opportunity to get an answer from Mrs. Mitchell about a piece of property on Glenbrook Road, that he had been trying to get in touch with her but that they kept missing each other.

MRS. MITCHELL said that the Glenbrook Road housing site was brought to the Housing Site Development Agency, and it is currently under application to the Connecticut Housing Agency for a high-rise to be subsidized under Connecticut Housing financing program under sub-section a, and she understands that they will be going for construction in the late Fall of this year. This is the site across from the Cadillac automobile agency.

MR. BLUM asked if, in the meantime, they could keep that property cleaned up.

MRS. MITCHELL said that she has talked to the Public Works Department once a week about that and they told her they cleaned it up; and that if that is not true, she would get after them to go back and take care of it.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76

MR. ALFRED PERILLO referred to page two, to the Housing Study. The figure of \$25,000 should be \$2,500. He questioned several other figures, as well as stating that the total does not add up properly, and he felt there was an error in addition. Mrs. Mitchell said she would re-check the arithmetic, but that the programs were correctly stated.

MRS. RITCHIE asked about prices of sidewalks per foot, and other detailed items, and was told by Mrs. Mitchell if she would contact her office, they would help her to work up any figures she needed.

MRS. FORMAN said that they might be interested to know that at all the neighborhood and public hearings, they had over thirty proposals and the dollar amount of those proposals, at this point, is Four Million Dollars, so obviously, they can't do everything, but this would help to put things in perspective.

MR. MORGAN spoke about the fact that Mr. Loomis discussed the implementation of the recommendations of the Economic Base Study and he felt they were good comments. He said recently he wrote the Mayor a letter proposing the creation of an Office of Economic Development which he felt would be a fine vehicle for implementing recommendations that would derive from an Economic Base Study. He said that he and Blum have had some preliminary conversations about introducing an resolution for the Board to consider urging the Mayor to at least take some preliminary steps toward creating such an agency to serve that function. It is something he feels is a worthwhile effort.

MRS. FORMAN said she would like to reply to Mr. Morgan. She said the Mayor did reply to that letter and the gist of his reply was that it is a good idea and should be pursued. However he thought it was premature until they see what the outcome of this study is. Perhaps they may decide they don't want to grow any more.

MR. MORGAN said the Mayor did reply and that it was a good idea, but he also indicated there was not going to be any immediate action on this; and he, Mr. Morgan, is concerned about the timeliness of the whole question particular since the light manufacturing industry is leaving town. In the past year both Phillips and Branson Instruments have left Stamford and both he and Mr. Blum feel that action further along than January, 1977 might be

MR. JON SMITH said Mr. Morgan may or may not be aware that the Planning Board serves this function, to some extent, through such as the displays you see on the wall. It is very timely in these economic times when people are looking that they are in the process of up-dating the Master Plan and can readily handout information, so to that extent they have always been traditionally the first stop on the trail for people who are trying to get a thumb-nail sketch of the community. That service they provide. He agrees this would be one of the objectives of the program, to set up this function, how it can be staffed, and to what extent.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76

MR. BLUM said as long as they were talking of areas, he'd like to ask about the outer fringes, such as the district which he represents. It is on the outer fringes of the Urban Renewal Area and there are blighted areas on streets in his district. He can name them very readily: Forest St., Grove St., Hillandale, Lindale, and so on. Are these streets, or is this area being contemplated for improvement. (No, not Hillandale.)

MRS. MITCHELL said did he mean for neighborhood preservation, like Lockwood and something? At the workshops, we need the citizens to tell us we want the program there. The Social Action Committee, the PTA Council, the homeowners, in this program, usually say they want help. The reason that is important is because there is tandem participation by the homeowner and the City in terms of the subsidy dollars. There is bank participation. The homeowner is seeking a loan for ten years at a low mortgage interest rate but he has to do it. So in order to make these programs work, in this particular type of program, we want to make sure that the community wants us to go there, so if the homeowners in any particular area of the City want this type of a program to stabilize their neighborhood, we need to hear from the specific homeowners. What happened in some older programs was that an area was picked arbitrarily, they went in there and tried to make something work, and it tended to fail because the community did not want it either. In order to succeed, it must have the cooperation of the particular street. It can be one street, a neighborhood. In one instance, Mrs. Mitchell said they had to move the line back to include five other whole streets that weren't even included.

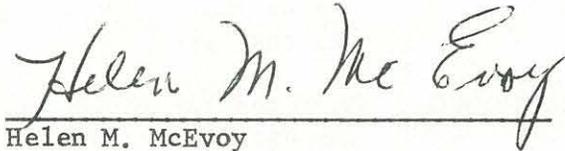
MR. BLUM said people seemed to feel that where the workshops were held was where the programs were scheduled for, and that workshops were not held in the Burdick School area, which is in his district, so they felt they were excluded. Two were held at Cloonan School and another some place else.

MRS. MITCHELL said they did not intend to exclude any area and they had press articles to try and stress that they changed the program of citizen participation from last year. Last year they went to each neighborhood. This year they just centralized the locations of the workshops and opened them up to anybody and everybody. This way, the Community Development not only heard their needs, but everyone was able to hear the needs of everyone else in relationship to other neighborhoods and their own. She said they were definitely not excluding any area. That they just picked a place that had good parking and was accessible. They even offered bus service from the West Side and South End, and although no one used it, the people would know that if they didn't have cars, they could still get to the central location where the workshop was being held. That was the intent of what they did, and she feels it worked very well. There was a larger turn-out this year and there was a discussion between citizens in choice of priorities, rather than having just their own priorities for their particular neighborhood.

MR. WIESLEY asked for a point of information for his own personal use, in the previous workshops that generated some five million dollars of requests, did they hear from Southfield Village Association.

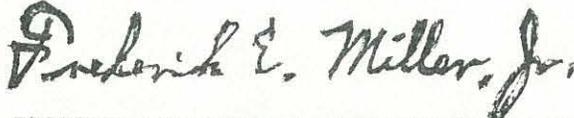
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING 1/15/76ADJOURNMENT:

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:00 P.M., there being no further business to come before the Board, on motion, duly seconded and CARRIED.



Helen M. McEvoy  
Administrative Assistant and  
Recording Secretary

HMM:ms

APPROVED:

Frederick E. Miller, Jr., President  
14th Board of Representatives

NOTE: The above meeting was broadcast in its entirety over Radio Station WSTC.