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Not often, but occasionally, events in a city so combine as to suggest to its leaders and its residents that events which are naturally in motion can merge in a special way for the public good.

It would seem likely that such a time has come for Middletown.

The confluence of forces is not hard to identify. The expansion of Pratt & Whitney, first to 5000 employees and then to more, seems a practical certainty. The location of a new major manufacturing company seems most probable, the opening of North & Judd with 2000 to 3000 employees is predictable, the development of I-91 and other industrial areas, with careful promotion will expand this industrial base to an even greater degree.

Finally, the combination of the new Xerox building, and the 30-acre Institute for the Future campus plan, combined with the Hill Redevelopment plan for the "farm properties" will provide the basis of a golden tier of an imaginatively planned and executed community of the future.

These events will provide a predictable growth of residences, and a balanced community that can be led and fashioned in a manner which now could hardly be predicted. But perhaps its greatest contribution will be the attention which it will focus on the City.

In the past, Middletown has always suffered from an inferiority complex. This has limited the reach of the City. But today, thanks to the imaginative work by many City agencies and private endeavors, this old image is in the process of change.

But more than that it is important that Middletown use the great resources it has to the best of its abilities.

These resources include a half million dollars in the East Side Development Fund which is unrestricted, the City's proportionate share of CDAP funds which will be available to Middletown, a healthy treasury available to the MIDC, and a steadily mounting Jones Fund, which has every

indication of increasing as beneficiaries die off.

Private development agencies include the Hill Corporation, the Greater Middletown Community Corporation, the organization which has just completed Wadsworth Grove, the Chamber of Commerce, MIDC, the United Fund and the Middletown Council on the Arts.

Middletown, like most cities, is concerned with industrial development, downtown renewal, educational progress, recreational opportunities, as well as the usual duties of a city, providing water, sewer, police and fire protection. In addition, a new Transit Authority has been formed.

Middletown is beginning to undertake other objectives of social concern; anti-poverty and anti-discrimination programs, housing for those who are inadequately housed, physical and mental health services, better conditions for the elderly. These on-going activities should be given continued support.

The Chamber of Commerce, as a catalytic agency in the City, might wish to bring about the participation of more people in the planning program. It could attempt to assist the City in setting goals that have a broad base of support, or have a potential for such support. This report suggests some objectives, and a financing plan to accomplish them.

Let us look at each in turn.

Although MIDC has made great progress and persuaded two major industries to locate in this area, it suffers because it remains a profit-making organization. Its first order of business should be to devote its efforts to becoming a public organization paying no more than interest to its investors. This should be a stipulated amount, the excess profits, if any, should be devoted to the public good of the City. An even more desirable public stance would be the payment of no-interest, with profits going to public works.

① The development of small lots for smaller firms should be undertaken, and the City should continue to accelerate ② the location of roads, water and sewer in the areas to be served. Because of the rapid development of STOL aircraft, the industrial area should at least be equipped to serve such ③ aircraft, service helicopter, and perhaps be prepared to accept standard aircraft out of the residential living pattern.

It is probable that Middletown should also consider harbor development -- south of the area that would be developed recreationally -- because of the two-thirds State aid. It should be noted that as of January 1, the unassigned community affairs development monies that have not been requested by individual cities will be available to any city that applies. Middletown should be ready to move.

It would seem wise for the City to consider a stated amount each year which would be appropriated for the joint use of the Chamber of Commerce and MIDC to promote Middletown as an industrial site.

As part of its general plan, Middletown might wish to review its downtown renewal. All the effort to date has been both effective and rewarding. But to guard against serious mistakes being made in the North End, a total plan should be developed before the Parking Authority establishes more parking areas, or the Recreation Department moves to establish mini-parks.

Within the zone now being considered as urban renewal Area Number Two, modifications should be made to inject greater visual impact in the area of the South Green, and efforts should be made to enliven the project in terms of providing a city that is used more than 8 hours a day. Special care should be taken to insure that the demands of the market do not result in private developers being so squeezed as to deprive the project of its esthetic character. Constitution Plaza is what it is because of its planned

*Waterfront  
Commission*

*PR*

*Multiple Use  
of downtown*

nature. Its effect is only in part contributed by the several high-rise buildings. Middletown, because the funds are available could very well provide a similar point of attraction. The scale of such an undertaking could well be different: more intimate and lively, perhaps less monumental. But the existing plan can not be relied upon to provide such amenities, nor can a private developer, no matter how well intentioned, be relied upon to provide such advantages. Middletown must insure the plan.

By the same token, the Main Street itself could be greatly improved by malls, pedestrian ways, re-designed street furniture, covered walkways and a programmed planting plan. Funds for such progress now exist, for a starter, in the East Side Development Fund. But it would also be possible to return to the program initiated by Mayor Steve Bailey and abandoned in 1966. This one-mill tax built the East Side Development Fund to where it is today. By phasing in a quarter-mill tax the first year, a half-mill the second year, and so forth, this one-mill tax technique could be re-instituted and great strides could be made at little tax impact. This would make possible the plaza that distinguished Hartford, as well as make possible a great many other notes of progress by the City.

There is, for instance, no reason why Middletown should be bound by the parameters of urban renewal. The Redevelopment Agency could well operate in other areas if the market appeared to justify such action. Many cities have accomplished such a program. Indeed, the entire initial urban renewal of Indianapolis has been accomplished without federal funds -- but with condemnation powers. Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle and the Charles Center project in Baltimore are other, and perhaps far better examples. This approach would make a beginning in the North End, without foreclosing federal aid later. The program would work this way: areas to be redeveloped would be purchased by the Agency for a developer who would

take over the buildings at the cost paid. Funds of the Parking Authority could be used for this purpose in those areas where it would be wise to provide public parking as part of the project. This provision of parking would enhance the value of the land purchased. The Park Department might also decide to purchase specific contiguous areas for parklets or plazas.

It should be emphasized that the gradual re-institution of the one-mill tax would make possible a bonding program of two (2) million dollars. With other funds that are available, a major program could be undertaken by the City on many fronts. It should also be realized that the East Side Development Fund should never be depleted; it is needed for funding purposes, loans etc. to operate the Redevelopment Agency in between federal grants. On the other hand, it also should be put constructively to work.

A few of the projects that might be considered include:

A harbor development project which would provide facilities for docking larger river steamers, major landscaping and which would also include the preparation of an area that would be developed privately as a marina. The large steamer docking facility would be south of the area that would be designed for marina use (which would provide assessed valuation because of the presence of boats),

Local share \$250,000 - State share \$750,000.

A transportation center south of the Sears Service Center on DeKoven Drive making provision for handling interstate bus traffic, local bus traffic, possible use of a station for the scenic train proposal now being advanced by the Empire State Railway Museum, and as the surface transportation headquarters of the Gateway Unit of the Connecticut River National Recreation area. Parking would be provided for bus passengers at the Riverview Garage. Major financing could be obtained from the State by the Transit Authority as an experiment in revitalizing bus transportation.

Local share \$50,000 - State share \$200,000.

These two projects would be tied together by a pedestrian bridge as envisioned by the urban renewal plan.

A major plaza to be located in the urban renewal area, much like Constitution Plaza.

Land acquisition (1½ acres) \$ 75,000

Local share \$37,500 - Open Space Grant \$37,500

Design and execution \$250,000

Local share \$200,000 - Rockfall Corporation  
Grant \$ 25,000

Contributions by  
adjacent developers  
\$ 25,000

Major landscaping of Main Street

Design and execution \$250,000

Local share \$250,000

Development of the Middlesex Theatre into a theatrical center,  
encompassing its restoration and an outdoor shed for concerts. \$500,000

Local share - Ultimate recapture \$250,000

It would be anticipated that the theatre property would provide in rental about half the cost of retiring this loan to a specially created quasi public agency. The Theatre property can be acquired by the State for about \$20,000. Main Street land rentals would provide income as would rental of the theatre to a professional group. Programs for the schools, the underprivileged, the elderly, Community Concerts, the Circle Theatre, Junior Matinee, public forums, etc., would be conducted in the theatre.

In the area of public transportation, Middletown should consider the operation of its school busses, which return a profit, in order to finance the losses that would occur as a result of transporting people over those routes that are not currently popular enough to return a profit. The use

of mini-busses should be considered. As Middletown becomes a center for the Gateway unit of the Connecticut River Recreational Area, summer mini-bus tours of the area could be considered, thereby utilizing the equipment that would not be used for the schools. The route would include the Goodspeed Opera House, the Gillette Castle, Cockaponset State Forest, etc. Smaller tours could be run covering the new Wesleyan Art Center, the Middlesex Historical Society, and the new downtown Middletown Plaza. It would also be expected that national attention will focus on the research-employment-living-area of tomorrow represented by the complex in the area of the Wesleyan Farm Properties. The combination of the Institute for the Future campus plan, the Xerox building, the unique design of the Hill "Farm Property" development, plus the school of the future that could be located on the free land being donated, should become a great focal point in Middletown.

Capital required would be furnished for the busses by the State. No local share.

Because of the vital importance of the Farm property area to the future of Middletown, the city should consider erecting a "school of the future" on the land that is to be donated. First, the money that is being saved by the acquisition of a free site should be built into the building. The city might consider bonding a specific amount to build into the school experimental techniques for testing purposes, and it might ask for a specific federal grant for this purpose. The argument would, of course, arise that a specific area was being favored; the counter argument is that this area will serve as a magnet, a focal point for display, and hence will benefit the whole city. It can be shown to doctors who are thinking about practicing here, industrialists who are thinking of locating here, teachers who are thinking of teaching in either the public, or private school (and competition for teachers at all levels will soon come down completely to the amenities offered by a community).

Local cost, if no grant is obtained \$100,000...It is also anticipated that another \$100,000, the sum that does not have to be spent for the site, would be spent by the city.

In the field of public housing, the city might wish to consider a "jewel box" project in the Farm property area -- again to build on the strengths of the specific area. An effort should be made to attain a local low-cost loan (about 1½ per cent), or consultations should be held with HUD to see if a specific federal grant could be made for an attempt to make a major environmental change in low-cost housing. CDAP grants could also be used for this purpose.

No local funds, or merely "in kind" services (in lieu of a local contribution).

Plans to move ahead with a golf course have been stymied because of the conflict between the community college site and the golf course site, all to be located on Connecticut Valley Hospital land. It would appear that the best interest of the city would be served by moving the golf course site. One area that should be considered is the 100-acre site on Newfield Street that the city has long considered buying. Combined with the Middletown Nike site, a golf course site could be acquired at reasonable cost to the city.

Land cost \$180,000

Development cost to be decided.

In considering the downtown plan, Middletown should focus on two or three centers of interest. The green is one area. The area of the Middlesex Theatre is another. It is likely that a third area of focality should be developed. In the case of the green, the limits of the project have restricted the thinking and planning. The Redevelopment Agency, in co-operation with Middlesex Memorial Hospital, should consult to agree that ultimately an alley from the green should run through to the hospital to create



an approach reminiscent of Hartford Hospital. This vista would run from the green to the hospital, and in the future would include hospital buildings on one or more sides. This would give the green what it does not now have under the present plan for redevelopment -- a distinct area of focus.

The area of the Middlesex Theatre is one natural point to consider a plaza, especially if the old insurance company building, which fronts on Main Street is removed. The city should be conscious of the possibilities involved when the Post Office moves and when the old Police Station is vacated. It would seem possible to create in these areas, a contribution to downtown that would enhance the life of the city.

Always it should be remembered that tomorrow's city, in part because of the inexorable trend to evening hours, will be as alive at night as it is in the day. The investment in downtown is idle too much of the time.

In brief, the City of Middletown should attempt to develop a city which is vibrant. The present redevelopment plan, excellent as it is, does not accomplish this purpose. The city should lead from its strengths and develop its potential as a river gateway. It should also try to develop the Farm property area with great care, so that in its entirety it will represent the best that we know about building, environment, space, and architecture. Finally, only through co-ordination of all city agencies, the City Plan Commission, CDAP, the Redevelopment Agency, CAGM, the Parking Authority, the Park and Recreation Commission, the School Board, the Transit Authority members, etc., on the public side, the various private organizations on the non-public side, can the city escape grave errors. Because of the numbers involved, it is understandable that many of the members of these boards don't even know each other, much less have a concept of what the other fellow is planning. But the city is an inter-related enterprise. The efforts to relate all actions of the city by an exchange of information amongst the

professional staff should be continued. At the same time, the city should continue its search for those ideas which will improve the quality of life, build the tax base, and in that manner stabilize taxation to the degree possible.

ADDENDA

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>	<u>LOCAL SHARE</u>	<u>STATE SHARE</u>	<u>OPEN SPACE GRANT</u>	<u>OTHER</u>
Harbor Development	1,000,000.	250,000.	750,000.		
Transportation Center	250,000.	50,000.	200,000.		
Major Plaza (land cost)	75,000.	37,500		37,500.	<u>Contributions</u> Rockfall Corp. 25,000.
Design & Execution	250,000.	-200,000.			Adjacent Bldgs., 25,000.
Major Landscaping (Main St.)	250,000.	250,000.			
Middlesex Theatre **Ultimate recapture	500,000.	250,000.**			
Public Transportation (Mini-busses)		0			
School of the Future		100,000. (if no grant)			
Public Housing - (Local low-cost loan or consultation with HUD, about grant, or CDAP grants can be used.)		0			
Golf Course (Development cost to be decided)	180,000	90,000.		90,000,	
	2,505,000.	1,227,500.	950,000.	127,500	50,000.

HOW THE PLAN WOULD WORK:

It is presumed that a one-quarter mill tax would be instituted in 1969, a half-mill tax in 1970, a three-quarter mill tax in 1971, a one-mill tax in 1972, and then the program would stabilize at one mill. Interest figures cited here are figured at 5 percent only.

Year	Tax Yield	Capital Requirement	Interest	Bonds	Yield	Available for Operations	Income from interest earned by E.S.D.	Return Funds to E.S.D.
1969	43,750	60,000	60,000	1,200,000	(76,250*)	0	0	0
1970	87,500	60,000	57,000	1,140,000	(29,500*)	18,000	18,000	0
1971	131,250	72,500	66,500	1,330,000	( 7,750*)	18,000	18,000	0
1972	175,000	72,500	62,875	1,257,500	39,625	39,625 xx	0	0
1973	190,000	72,500	59,250	1,185,000	58,250	38,250	0	20,000
1974	190,000	72,500	55,625	1,112,500	61,875	41,875	0	20,000
1975	190,000	72,500	52,000	1,040,000	65,500	45,500	0	20,000

Interest decreases \$3625 each year	Yield increases \$3625 each year	Continues for 2.5 Years
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\* Borrowed from E.S.D. (East Side Development Fund)

xx Funds available at this point to amortize golf course construction.  
(Total \$270,000 or \$15,000 per hole) Work could start in '70 - 1971.

It should be noted that the projects described here could be phased in, and amount to less than a \$2,000,000. bond issue.

One mill actually raises \$174,401. The bond issue suggested here could be retired over 20 years at the beginning rate of \$60,000. a year, plus interest, leaving funds available for operational costs, if necessary, such as operating fountains in the plaza, financing seasonal planting of flowers, heating the theatre, and other such maintenance programs. The program outlined here amounts to \$1,227,500 in local funds. There is approximately \$500,000. in the East Side Development Fund.