

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN  
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**MINUTES**

*January-16-2007*

**Present**

G. DALEY (CHAIR)  
M. LONG (VICE-CHAIR)  
J. INGLIS  
J. FORTUNA  
H. NOVICKI  
R. WHITNEY  
R. SANTANGELO  
S. BROWN  
J. MAKROGIANIS  
S. SHAPIRO  
J. TINE  
J. ALEXANDER  
P. BUSARI  
F. GANGULI

**Absent**

L. RUSSO

**Also Present**

M. WACKERS  
L. BREWSTER  
M. TAYLOR  
D. BERTO  
I. GREENBERG  
J. SARBAUGH  
J. KOVNER  
J. WINZEL IV  
PASTOR P. HILTON  
J. BIZUSKI  
L. SMEIGL  
C. JOHNSON  
D. MILLCREEST  
H. DUNCAN  
C. HOGENDORN  
J. BISHOP

Gerald Daley called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

Jennifer Alexander distributed notes recording events at the January 10<sup>th</sup> 2007 North End Action Team meeting at the Green Street Arts Center.

Gerald Daley called for the Agency review the minutes from the December meeting. Steven Shapiro motioned to approve the minutes. Fran Ganguli seconded and the motion was approved. Robert Whitney abstained.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>YEA</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Gerald Daley	X			
Michael Long	X			
Jennifer Alexander	X			
Shannon Brown	X			
Peggy Busari	X			
Jim Fortuna	X			
Frances Ganguli	X			
Joan Inglis	X			
John Makrogainis	X			
Hank Novicki	X			
Louise Russo				X
Robert Santangelo	X			
Steven Shapiro	X			
Joseph Tine	X			
Robert Whitney	X			
Vacancy				X
<u>TALLY</u>	<u>14</u>			<u>2</u>

Gerald Daley introduced the new member of the Redevelopment Agency, Robert Whitney and the other members introduced themselves.

Gerald Daley called for public comments for items on the agenda.

Pastor Paul Hilton of the Shiloh Christian Church made comments to the Sumner Brook Redevelopment proposal and asked to be informed about proceedings regarding the Church property. He also stated that the Church was in negotiations to sell their property.

Seeing no more public comments, Gerald Daley moved the next item on the agenda, Old Business.

First item of Old Business is an update on the Richman Ferry Street Development. Bill Warner provided the update in Pam Mikus absence. The project is on track to receive a temporary certificate of occupancy in April with the entire project to be completed in September.

Second item of Old Business is an update on the Broad Park/ Nehemiah North End Homeownership Development. Bill Warner began by stating that the Common Council approved the Conceptual Plan and a preferred Development Agreement (PDA) has been drafted and is being reviewed by Broad Park and Nehemiah.

Michael Taylor of Nehemiah continued by stating that three properties are secured with purchase and sale agreements. These agreements are contingent on the fact that they be reviewed for environmental issues, and can appraise at or greater than the agreed sales price. The last property is close to an agreement. Broad Park and Nehemiah are also waiting on the City taking of 37 and 41 Green Street, since these will provide the capability in leveraging additional funds for various aspects of the project.

Bill Warner reported that relocation is commencing. 8 out of 11 families have been contacted.

Gerald Daley asked when Broad Park / Nehemiah and the Greater Middletown Historic Preservation Trust will conduct a walk through of the properties to determine the feasibility in rehabbing the properties versus new construction.

Michael Taylor and David Berto of Broad Park presented that they will be scheduling the walk through and work with the State Historic Preservation Office to come to a determination.

Jennifer Alexander asked what the process will be in making this determination.

Michael Taylor and David Berto replied that the walk through will give Cross Key the project architect the ability to price the rehabilitation work and with Sterling Realtors will be able to determine the market price of the rehabbed units. This information will be presented to the Redevelopment Agency. The Redevelopment Agency will ultimately choose the outcome.

Shannon Brown asked about the appraised value provided by the tax assessor and current agree sales prices are significantly higher. Bill Warner clarified that the tax assessor's value is fixed to 2002, and since then the market has appreciated.

Gerald Daley stated that significant progress has been made over the past few months. Nehemiah has allowed this project to pass a significant hurdle. Nothing in this project is easy, but we need to be realistic. There needs to be a conclusion to this rehab and new construction evaluation.

Gerald Daley moved the New Business on the agenda.

First item of new business was the information hearing for Sumner Brook Redevelopment Plan.

Michiel Wackers summarized the components of the plans, the project area, and estimated costs relating to acquisition and relocation.

Shannon Brown asked what the process would be to adopt a Redevelopment Plan. Michiel Wackers replied that at least two formal public hearings would be required and an approval by the Common Council. The Middletown Housing Authority would need to approve the plan if it contained a significant housing component.

Bill Warner commented that there are other options to adopting a redevelopment, such as referring issue to the Planning and Zoning Commission to review if the area is appropriately zoned and if development needs guidance.

Gerald Daley opened the floor to public comments.

First person questioned the use of eminent domain. Gerald Daley replied the City is very reluctant to use eminent domain.

James Bizuski stated that discussion of eminent domain is a personal insult and that the neighborhood is not blighted, but affordable for working class people if they want to buy a home.

Joan Ann stated that she moved from the slums of Meriden to come to Middletown so she could buy a house.

Catherine Johnson provided comparison minutes of the December meeting for the Agency's review. She did not think the City should have another redevelopment plan. That there should be an alternative to redevelopment plans, such as a master plan. She commented that Miller Bridge Redevelopment plan is still unfinished. The City should promote diverse uses and aesthetic design. Whereas demolition is wasteful.

David Millcreest stated that he wants to retain ownership of his land.

Pastor Paul Hilton added that his Church is historic and asked if it is in the proposed redevelopment area.

Michiel Wackers replied that the Church is not in the proposed redevelopment area.

Linda Smeigl, the owner of the laundry mat, stated that she understands why there would be a redevelopment plan for Baer and Dunham Street. But she doesn't see why she should be included. She worked to get her property rezoned to TD. A development on East Main Street would conflict with Main Street businesses.

Henry Duncan stated that his father-in-law lives on Baer Street, in his own house. He is elderly, and can he get an affordable home if the City buys it. How will relocation work? Redevelopment is an insult to people who worked hard for the property they own.

Chris Hogendorn a nearby resident was surprised by the plan to reduce density. The plan is demolition, which reduces walkability. It is hard to see how it is good for the neighborhood, therefore bad development. Would like plan with sidewalks, historic rehab and public improvements.

Joan Bishop is concerned that 70% of Middletown residents can not afford a home in Middletown at today's prices. How can you relocation people if they can not afford to live here. She like living in the neighborhood, because she does not need a car. She can walk to work and walk to get groceries.

Jennifer Alexander stated that she finds it very hard to adopt a plan that reduces density in an area. Why implement a redevelopment plan on a thriving affordable neighborhood. Redevelopment is a painful process for residents. I think we have lot of active business before the Redevelopment Agency. I am

interested in Bill Warners idea of sending this issue to Planning and Zoning for consideration. Private development should pay for its own development.

Steven Shapiro added that as a Main Street retailer he has a problem in promoting business development outside the downtown when there are vacant Main Street buildings. We should encourage retail in the downtown. The day of redevelopment has seen its day. The proposal is the wrong position for the Redevelopment Agency to be taking.

Michael Long stated that I agree with the position of Steven Shapiro and Jennifer Alexander. I am a lot more sensitive to the homeowners. I would refer this issue to Planning and Zoning.

Robert Santangelo added that we need to finish the North End.

Gerald Daley commented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> option of allowing Planning and Zoning review the issue should be explored.

Steven Shapiro motioned to refer the Sumner Brook issues to the Planning and Zoning Commission and not to proceed with a Redevelopment Plan. The motion was seconded by Robert Santangelo.

Steven Shapiro commented that this issues should also be sent to the Economic Development Committee.

Bill Warner commented that Planning and Zoning would need to see if it was interested in review this area. However it is too earlier to send this to the Economic Development Committee. Bill Warner reiterated for the benefit of the public and the Agency that with no Redevelopment Plan, eminent domain is no longer on the table.

Joe Tine stated that this issue should be dropped all together.

Shannon Brown stated that he was uncomfortable sending it to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Steven Shapiro withdrew his motion. Robert Santangelo consented to the withdrawal.

Joe Time motioned to drop the issue. Steven Shapiro seconded. The Agency approved the motion unanimously by those present.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>YEA</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Gerald Daley	X			
Michael Long	X			
Jennifer Alexander	X			
Shannon Brown	X			
Peggy Busari	X			
Jim Fortuna	X			
Frances Ganguli	X			
Joan Inglis	X			
John Makrogainis	X			
Hank Novicki	X			
Louise Russo				X
Robert Santangelo	X			
Steven Shapiro	X			
Joseph Tine	X			
Robert Whitney	X			
Vacancy				X
<u>TALLY</u>	<u>13</u>			<u>2</u>

Second item under new business is the request by Catherine Johnson for taping of meetings. Gerald Daley stated that this meeting has been taped, but we see no reason to provide transcripts.

Shannon Brown commented that he has reviewed the minutes from past and found them informative, but has reviewed state statutes regarding recording of minutes where they require all motions to be recorded and all votes to be recorded.

Catherine Johnson commented that lots of communities rely on volunteers who would be happy to transcribe minutes.

Joe Tine asked that the issue be tabled until next month since the Agency needs to vacate the Chamber for the Common Council.

Gerald Daley stated that this issue will be revisited at the next meeting.

Gerald Daley moved to Other Business.

Gerald Daley commented that the Miller and Bridge Street meeting notes. Gerald Daley stated that this issue will be on the agenda for the February meeting. Gerald Daley also commented that the State recently has seemed receptive to blocking off the crossing of Route 9 to Bridge Street and reopen the Portland Street crossing.

Gerald Daley moved to Public Comments for items not on the agenda.

Seeing none Gerald Daley entertained motions to adjourn.

John Makrogainis moved to adjourn the meeting. Robert Santangelo seconded the motion was approved unanimously by those present.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>YEA</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Gerald Daley	X			
Michael Long	X			
Jennifer Alexander	X			
Shannon Brown	X			
Peggy Busari	X			
Jim Fortuna	X			
Frances Ganguli	X			
Joan Inglis	X			
John Makrogainis	X			
Hank Novicki	X			
Louise Russo				X
Robert Santangelo	X			
Steven Shapiro	X			
Joseph Tine	X			
Robert Whitney	X			
Vacancy				X
<u>TALLY</u>	<u>13</u>			<u>2</u>

There being no further business, Stephen Shapiro motioned to adjourn the meeting. Robert Santangelo seconded and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Michiel Wackers, Deputy Director of Planning, Conservation and Development