

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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**MINUTES**

*March-15-2006*

**Present**

L. Wallace, Chair  
D. Mitkoski  
A. Kelly  
A. Marino  
V. Amato  
A. Watson  
E. Noglow  
D. Bauer

**Absent**

E. Bogdan  
J. Robinson  
E. Roberts  
B. Plum  
L. Caditz-Peck  
R. Bantum  
R. Pelletier

**Also Present**

M. Wackers  
N. Bishop  
P. Pessina  
B. Simon  
L. Green  
P. Cacciolia  
H. Phelps  
L. Brewster  
D. Berto  
Sis. P. McKeon  
P. Harding  
J. Saines  
J. Elmore  
A. Meyers  
C. Cappetta  
R. Morris  
M. Taylor  
P. Patricka  
B. Graham  
B. O'Connor  
B. Miller

Linda Wallace called the meeting to order at 5:05PM.

Linda Wallace tabled approval of the minutes until the next meeting and opening the public hearing to hear presentations from applicants for the 2006 CDBG funding.

First, Positive Solutions presented an application entitled PSI Job training program. Norman Bishop of Positive Solutions explained that the PSI's job training program will work with 20 men and women who are very low income, HIV positive or are living with AIDS teaching them basic computer skills so that they can fit into today's job market or move to PSI's data archival program. The data storage program began this past year and to date has worked on PSI's files as a practice run before going out to local companies for work. Students in the computer program will learn basic computer skills such as Word and Excel on the six computers in PSI's classroom. Each session will run for four weeks. At the end of the four weeks students may choose to enroll in the data archive program for another two weeks or go out into the job market with the help of PSI staff. Program participants will come from other PSI programs and area agencies. Linda Wallace asked what the direct costs would entail as noted in the program budget? Norman Bishop explained that it would be used for all of the supportive equipment such as a high-speed scanner and server to house the website. David Bauer asked what level of experience would the participant have at the end of the training? Norman Bishop replied that the participants would be able to provide computer related services at an entry-level proficiency that involve Microsoft applications. Avery Watson asked if there was any reason for this program to be isolated from other types for job programs. Norman Bishop explained that the participants do not need to be isolated from other similar programs, but this program will incorporate the medical needs the persons with HIV/AIDS require. Other programs would not provide the similar flexibility.

Second, Middletown Police Department presented an application entitled Operation View. Phil Pessina of the Middletown Police Department explained that in an effort to create a safe environment for our

community, through a law enforcement technology-based solution to crime and anti-social behaviors, is proposing this pilot 'Operation View' (YPS) video patrol system. The enforcement and detection system will be composed of two cameras that are also known as 'line of sight' video surveillance system, with a permanent and portable outdoor dome and antenna applications, which will afford out policing efforts to monitor criminal activity and antisocial behaviors, within our community's lowest economic area, which has destabilized the entire residential and business neighborhoods. Donna Mitkoski asked if the Police Department visited any other City's to see other similar systems. Phil Pessina replied that they had visited Hartford that has a similar system that they set up with CDBG funds. Vincent Amato asked if the cameras would require hiring additional personnel or increase in overtime hours? Phil Pessina answered that it would not require additional manpower. Andrew Kelly asked if such a system would only force crime to hide out of sight of the cameras? Phil Pessina replied that it is challenging to address quality of life crimes and anti-social behavior, but we want those individuals who carry out these acts not to feel safe on the street. David Bauer asked if this project is in the Police Department budget? Phil Pessina replied that it is not in the budget, it is entirely a grant funded project.

Third, Gilead Community Services presented an application entitled Social/Vocational program computer grant. Barry Simon of Gilead explained that the proposal would purchase five (5) new Dell Computers to support their Recovery-oriented and vocational-orient activities. The program currently provides self-advocacy and empowerment by developing vocation skill, educational opportunities to over 200 adults with psychiatric disabilities. Linda Wallace asked if seeking donated computers was an option? Gilead replied that there are not many programs that donate new computers, ones that allow for current applications to be used. Avery Watson asked what type of warrantee or service agreement would be purchased? Gilead responded that these would have a one year warrantee. Avery Watson suggested that Gilead also look at Walmart and other computer venders to ensure the lowest price is found.

Fourth, Gilead Community Services presented an application entitled The Rehabilitation Center Roof. Barry Simon of Gilead explained that the proposal would replace the existing roof at 31 DeJohn Drive at a cost of \$20,000. The facility provides housing management, case management, rehabilitation and psychiatric care to 450 adults with severe and persistent mental illness who live throughout Middlesex County. Evan Noglow asked about the optional repair that is noted in the bid from the contractor? Barry Simon replied that Gilead has already exercised that option and if lasted two weeks before if failed. Andrew Kelly asked if the work has been sent out to bid? Barry Simon replied that we have preliminary estimates, but this project will go out to bid as required by CDBG.

Fifth, Nutmeg Big brother Big Sister presented an application entitled Mentoring at CT Juvenile Training School. Laura Green of Nutmeg Big Brother Big Sister explained that the project would provide monitoring, ongoing training and professional support for the mentor and child at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School. The goal of the program is to transition the incarcerated youth back into independent living and help them become productive adults. David Bauer asked who does State funding play in this program? Phil Rutherford replied that it does not play a role in this project. Vincent Amato asked do you go to other communities and ask for funding, since participants do come from all over the state? Phil Rutherford answered that they have sought United Way funds, but the program has not made requests to other communities.

Sixth, ADA Coordinator of Middletown presented an application entitled Accessibility Partnership Project. The South Central Area Center for Disability Rights and the Middletown Office of the ADA Coordinator want to partner to provide local residents with the funds and management with requests to make their homes accessible for people with disabilities. This will be done on an as needed basis. This partnership can do far more by splitting costs to provide greater impact for this special needs group in the Middletown area. Linda Wallace asked what are the amounts of the grants? Phil Cacciola answered that these grants would be a maximum of \$1,000 of CDBG funds and any balance that is still needed would come from other sources. Evan Noglow asked if this is a program that would continue in future years and where would the funding come from? Phil Cacciola replied that if it is successful we would want to continue it in the future with CDBG funds. Avery Watson asked about the income guidelines? Phil Cacciola replied that HUD income guidelines would be used.

Seventh, Middlesex Community College presented an application entitled Preschool Program at Macdonough School. Hilary Phelps explained that this proposal is to make the necessary improvements to the classroom and the preschool playground so that they meet the Department of Public Health Child Day Care licensing regulations, and to purchase furniture, equipment and instructional materials. The space will be used to provide preschool program to children living in the North End. Vincent Amato stated that access to daycare was not a problem with supply of daycare, but of transportation, and asked that would it not make more sense to have a daycare transportation program? MXCC replied that it is not cost effective to provide transportation to very young children would be 3 and 4 years of age. Linda Wallace asked how many preschool programs are there in Middletown? MXCC replied that there are 18 programs. Linda Wallace asked if this program would be restricted to low income households? MXCC replied that it would be restricted. Vincent Amato stated that MacDonough School is congested and dangerous location for a daycare.

Eighth, North End Action Team presented an application entitled Project Pride. Lydia Brewster of NEAT explained that Project Pride will include coordinating efforts to empower the North End business district through activities aimed at encouraging: 1) collective strategies to improve the image of the NE business district; 2) events that promote arts and business collaborations; 3) marketing strategies to increase the visibility and awareness of the business community; 4) developing collaborations and membership in the DBD and Chamber of Commerce; 5) coordinate a NE business support program that offers mentoring and consulting support to individual business owners; 6) developing a neighborhood marketing plan that promotes a positive image of the neighborhood including arts, culture, diversity, restaurants, and small business development and; 7) working with the city, and the chamber of Commerce to attract new investment that will enhance the NE business district. Vincent Amato stated that the North End projects will chase crime to other neighborhoods to the west. Andrew Kelly asked what is going to happen with the disbursement of the criminal elements? Linda Wallace asked what happened to the police trailer? Vincent Amato stated that historically participation of North End Businesses in City projects has been difficult. Lydia Brewster replied that she realizes that that has been true in the past, but NEAT has had success recently in getting their involvement in new programs.

Ninth, Kuhn Employment Opportunities Inc. presented an application entitled Mobile Work Crew. This project provides disabled and economically disadvantaged individuals with training and employment opportunities while providing the City of Middletown, Parks and Recreation Department, with maintenance and beautification of the City's parks. Evan Noglow stated that he has seen them at Pat Kidney field and thought it is a great program. Tony Marino asked what is critical about your project cost wise? Kuhn replied that the cost of the program continues to rise and if we receive less than what we ask for then we would need to reduce the number of individuals or reduce the hours of operations.

Tenth, Broad Park Development Corporation presented an application entitled Green Street Home Ownership Redevelopment. David Berto of Broad Park explained that the proposed project would provide 4 families with affordable home ownership opportunities in Middletown's North End. The project would require acquisition of the properties, relocation of the current residents, demolition and redevelopment of the site on Green Street. Vincent Amato asked how would you get the assessor not to assess these properties at actual value? David Berto replied that would have to be an agreement between Broad Park and the City of Middletown that is approved by the Common Council. Vincent Amato asked is it not possible to reduce the interest or extend the term of the loan? David Berto replied that these are possibilities. Tony Marino stated that Broad Park is requesting a large amount of CDBG funds for this year. David Berto replied that he knows it is a large request but it is also a request that would allow for the Green Street project to move forward and accomplish something that is recognized as a priority by the CDBG program. Avery Watson asked to clarify who is benefiting? David Berto replied that those who will benefit will be of low- and/or moderate-income residents of Middletown. Tony Marino asked will there be condo management collectively with the other properties? David Berto answered that the management will be spread out over all of the properties.

Eleventh, Mercy Housing and Shelter presented an application entitled Maintaining Mercy's Shepherd Home Code Compliance. Sister Patricia McKeon explained that the Mercy Housing Shelter located at 112 Bow Lane needs to repair the building's fire sprinkler system in order to maintain fire compliance and replace a heavy duty shop-vac/sump pump machine to maintain health code compliance. Linda Wallace

highlighted that the shop vacuum was not allowable under CDBG regulations. Evan Noglow asked if the State was responsible for any of the up keep of the property. Mercy Housing replied that their agreement with the State only related to anything structural, for example walls, roof, floors. Avery Watson asked why can't the State be fined for the state that the facility is in. Staff replied that the State is exempt from municipal oversight.

Twelfth, St. Vincent DePaul presented an application entitled Amazing Grace Food Distribution Initiative. Peter Harding of St. Vincent DePaul explained that the proposed program distributes donated food, and volunteers operate the day-to-day stocking and distribution of food. Program expenses are limited to the salary of one part time (30 hour) coordinator, office and program supplies and utilities and rent for the facility. Avery Watson asked if other faith based entities could set up their own food pantries. Peter Harden replied that St. Vincent DePaul is a collaborative with Middletown churches to provide a food pantry service.

Thirteenth, Friends of McCarthy Park presented an application entitled McCarthy Park Rejuvenation. Jennifer Saines and John Elmore explained that this proposal is to make improvements to McCarthy Park located between Hotchkiss and High Street. The improvements include resurfacing of the existing tennis courts, installation of new basketball hoops, installation of a small swing set, regrading and terracing the existing slope, the construction of a new brownstone gate, and the creation of a new entry way from Hotchkiss Street Vincent Amato asked if it is a City-owned park? John Elmore replied that it is a City owned park. Evan Noglow asked where the Wesleyan right-of-way was located from High Street. John Elmore replied that is was across the street from Huber Street.

Fourteenth, the Russell Library presented an application entitled Children's Mezzanine. Arthur Meyers explained that the Russell Library proposes to make the Children's services area accessible for those who have disabilities. Currently aisles only have a clearance of 17 inches, not enough to allow someone in a wheel chair to access the resources. This area can be made accessible by building a mezzanine above the area that would be accessible via the existing elevator in the Information Center and Hubbard Room. Tony Marino stated that the Committee has limited funds.

Fifteenth, Middletown Board of Education presented an application entitled Adult Education Even Start Family Learning Program. Cynthia Cappetta and a program participant explained that this proposed program offers adult education to help parents gain skills to help them further their education or get better jobs. The program also offers early childhood education classes for children ages six weeks to 3 years so that parents can attend school. Tony Marino stated that the Committee has limited funds. Avery Watson asked what is the main benefit of the program. The presenter explained that the main benefit is that the parent can continue to get an education and the child is also getting the opportunity to learn the skill they need at a young age.

Sixteenth, Community Health Center presented an application entitled Energy Efficiency for the CHC's Mental Health Practice. This proposed project is to replace the second floor windows at 631 Main Street, which houses the waiting room of the Community Health Center's mental health waiting room. Tony Marino stated that the Committee has limited funds.

Seventeenth, the Green Street Arts Center presented an application entitled After School Program. Ricardo Morris explained that the proposal is to support the Green Street Arts Center After School program that provides art enrichment, homework assistance, tutoring, mentoring and a safe, inclusive, respectful atmosphere for about 50 students. Enrollees are predominantly residents of the North End neighborhood. Avery Watson asked how many people are low-income? Ricardo Morris replied that a majority are low income. Tony Marino stated that the Committee has limited funds. Ricardo Morris replied that they do not turn away any funding.

Eighteenth, Nehemiah Housing Corporation presented an application entitled North End At Three Rivers-Planning. Michael Taylor of Nehemiah Housing explained that this request is to help develop a revitalization plan for Middletown's North End and would like to access planning funding to help further develop this plan. The proposed plan focuses on housing, increasing homeownership, promoting the

neighborhood as a artists and environmental area. Andrew Kelly asked how different Tony Marino stated that the Committee has limited funds.

Nineteenth, Nehemiah Housing Corporation presented an application entitled North End At Three Rivers-Acquisition. Michael Taylor explained that this proposed project will purchase and rehabilitate two vacant properties and sell them to first time homebuyers. This funding request will assist in gap financing required to make the project successful. A gap exists because the purchase price and renovation costs will be more than the target homebuyer can afford to pay. Andrew Kelly asked how different are you from NEAT? Michael Taylor replied that we serve the same area, but we de mainly with housing, whereas NEAT deals with advocacy for the residences.

Twentieth, The Connection Inc presented an application entitled Middletown Housing Partnership Trust. Phil Patricka of the Connection explained that this proposal is to replace the above ground oil tanks on the properties of the low- and moderate-income affordable homeownership development that was created in 1990 on Military Road. The approximate cost to replace the deteriorating oil tanks is about \$1,000 per tank. Evan Noglow asked if all the residents qualify? Phil Patricka replied that they all had to qualify in order to purchase the properties and they continue to be very low income. Tony Marino stated that half of the funding should be a loan and half should be a grant.

Twenty-first, Cross Street Training and Academic Center presented an application entitled After School Tutorial Program. Bettye Graham explained that the proposed program will provide after school programs to Middletown children. Donna Mitowski asked what building on Cross Street is the program located in? Cross Street replied that it is located in the church basement and has 43 participants.

Twenty-second, Business and Industry Foundation Inc. presented an application entitled the Middletown Worker Preparation program. Brian O'Connor explained that this proposed program focuses on finding work for the unemployed or displaced workers in Middletown. Counselors provide coaching, help prepare clients for interviews and assess their skills and strengths. Linda Wallace complimented the presenters on the program.

Twenty-third, I Have A Friend Youth Center presented an application entitled After School Programming. Barbara Miller explained that this proposal is to provide after school programming for inner city children ages 5 to 13 and their families in the Middletown area. The Center is open two evenings per week from 5pm -8pm. The Center currently serves a maximum of 32 children, with the majority being minority and low-income. Programming include academic support, games, art, and field trips, as well as a hot meal. Linda Wallace asked where do the children come from? IHAFYC replied that they come from all over Middletown. Avery Watson asked what will the funding go towards? IHAFYC replied that will go to food, arts and crafts, field trips and labor, and grants writer.

Twenty-fourth, City of Middletown presented an application entitled Harbor Park Handicapped Accessible Boat Ramp and Dock. Michiel Wackers explained that this proposal would construct a handicapped accessible boat ramp and dock for the northern end of harbor park. The dock would meet the federal guidelines for handicapped accessibility and accomplish the City's long-term goal of providing a docking facility for transient non-trailer recreational vessels.

Twenty-fifth, City of Middletown presented an application for the program administration of Middletown's CDBG program. Michiel Wackers explained that the project administration of Middletown's CDBG program, includes all HUD reporting, bill paying, and subgrantee monitoring.

Respectfully submitted,

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Michiel Wackers, Deputy Director of Planning, Conservation and Development