

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETINGDECEMBER 16, 197413TH BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVESSTAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

A Special Meeting of the 13th Board of Representatives of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, was held Monday, December 16, 1974, 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, Connecticut.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG: The President led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

CHECK OF THE VOTING MACHINE: A check of the voting machine was conducted and it appeared to be in good working order.

ROLL CALL: In the absence of the Clerk, THE PRESIDENT appointed Dr. Lowden to be the Temporary Clerk. Roll Call was taken by the Temporary Clerk. At that time there were 32 members present and 8 absent. Three members arrived late bringing the total to 35 present and 5 absent. The absent members were:

Linda D. Clark (D), 6th District  
Marilyn R. Laitman (D), 20th District  
Billie Perkins (R), 18th District  
Thom Serrani (D), 17th District  
Anthony D. Truglia (D), 5th District

CALL OF THE MEETING

THE PRESIDENT read the "Call" of the meeting, as follows:

"I, Frederick E. Miller, Jr., President of the 13th Board of Representatives of the City of Stamford, Connecticut, pursuant to Section 202 of the Stamford Charter, hereby call a SPECIAL MEETING of said Board of Representatives at the following time and place:

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1974

Meeting Room of the Board of Representatives  
Second Floor, Municipal Office Building,  
429 Atlantic Street, Stamford, Connecticut

At 8:00 p.m.

for the following purpose:

"To hear a presentation concerning the new Housing and Community Development Act which has replaced seven categorical grant programs including urban renewal, water and sewer, and the open space program. This presentation will help explain the changes and the decisions that will have to be made in order for Stamford to qualify for the new funding."

THE PRESIDENT asked the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader to escort the Mayor to the podium so that he could introduce Mrs. Mitchell to the Board. He also asked Mr. Smith and Mr. Hibben to come forward so that they would be available to answer questions if needed.

MAYOR FREDERICK P. LENZ, JR., thanked all of the members who were present. He commended the members of the Board for the time they spend in public service without compensation. He also thanked the Board for the opportunity to make this presentation on the new Community Development funding. He said this is a matter of great importance to all. He said that the Community Development Act is a special revenue sharing law replacing some separate HUD grant problems. He said the purpose of this meeting is to acquaint the Board members with the law and regulations and to set up a framework for working together to prepare and approve the Stamford application for the funds designated for this City. He said each member has on his desk a letter from him which notes that he has designated himself as the person responsible for the carrying out of this program with the City's Development Coordinator, Mrs. Nancy Mitchell, who will be working out of his office. He said this designation of responsibility is required by law and for a number of reasons he determined that the Mayor's Office was the appropriate place to put this responsibility. He said he has also designated staff personnel from several departments and agencies to help to put the data together for this application. He said these staff people will in no way be involved in policy-making decisions or in determinations of what the actual Community Development Program shall be. He said that decision will be made by the duly elected officials. He said in accordance with the applicable laws the final decisions on the program shall be made by the Mayor and by the Board of Representatives.

THE MAYOR said another important aspect to bear in mind is the time schedule. He said the Community Development Act was signed into law by President Ford on August 22, 1974 and at this moment regulations are still being drafted for some parts of the law. He said the application must be received by HUD some time between December 1, 1974 and April 15, 1975. He said that with everyone's full cooperation the deadline can be met successfully and HUD approval received so that funding is assured for fiscal 1975-1976. He then called on Nancy Mitchell to explain the act and to answer questions. He said he wanted to note that he is very pleased to have Nancy aboard as she is well qualified and has a great background and will be a tremendous asset to the City.

THE PRESIDENT said the Board is very pleased to have Mrs. Mitchell speak tonight. He said the format will be first Mrs. Mitchell's presentation and then questions from the Board members.

MRS. MITCHELL thanked the Board for the opportunity to come before it to explain the recent changes in Community Development funding. She said that according to the Community Development Act of 1974, the Mayor's Office is required to inform members of the community about the Act, its provisions,

## Minutes of Special Meeting of Dec. 16, 1974

requirements and the decisions the Stamford community must make in order to receive the funding. She said the plans are to reach as many people as possible in the next month through meetings and use of the press. She said this meeting is the launching of the public information program. She said she is going to explain the mechanics of the Act. She noted there was a Guide to Community Development Block Grants on each members desk which she has prepared to explain the highlights of the program.

MRS. MITCHELL said the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 will go into effect on January 1, 1975 and a section of the Act, Community Development Block Grants which is also known as special revenue sharing, allows the Federal Government to distribute money on a formula basis to assist Stamford in meeting its community development objectives. She said this program is like all traditional Department of Housing and Urban Development Programs, principally aimed at aiding persons of low and moderate incomes. She said this new Act consolidates several categorical programs and noted that the ones Stamford had previously participated in were the Urban Renewal, Neighborhood Facilities, Water and Sewer and Open Space Programs. She said this grant replaces the funds received under the former programs. She said the Act transfers the control of the funds from the federal government to the City and also transfers the responsibility for setting priorities and policies for the use of funds to the Office of the Mayor and the Board of Representatives. She said the purpose for these changes is to streamline and simplify the funding procedures. She noted this program does not replace general revenue sharing which will continue. She said that Stamford will be receiving \$2,034,000 annually for the first three years of the program and approximately \$1,800,000 for the fourth year and \$1,500,000 for the final year. She said the grant was determined by the average level of federal funds received by Stamford during the period from 1968 to 1972. She said the funding will be entirely federal and no more matching funds from the State or the City are required.

MRS. MITCHELL said the funding for the program has been authorized under the Act but Congress has not yet appropriated the money nor has it decided whether it will appropriate all of the funds authorized or only part of them. She said it is hoped that the decision will be made by Christmas. She said that she has listed all of the possible activities that could be funded by this grant. She said that in deciding which programs Stamford wants to adopt from this list the needs, commitments and priorities of the community will have to be reviewed. She said the primary objective of the program is to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. She said that basically all activities eligible under the separate programs will continue to be eligible under the new consolidated program. She then reviewed the list of activities listed in the brochure, as follows:

- A. Payment for completion of projects funded under Urban Renewal, such as relocation payments, acquisition costs, interest, etc.
- B. Acquiring real property, which is blighted, inappropriately developed or appropriate for preservation or restoration of historic sites, urban beautification and recreation and which is to be used for the provision of eligible public works, facilities and improvements or other public purposes, including housing sites.

## Minutes of Special Meeting of Dec. 16, 1974

- C. Acquisition, construction, reconstruction or installation of public works, facilities and site or other improvements including neighborhood facilities, senior centers, historic properties, utilities, streets, lights, water and sewer facilities, foundation for air right sites, malls, walkways, and recreation facilities. Parking and fire protection services are eligible only if located in or serving designated community development areas.
- D. Code Enforcement in deteriorated or deteriorating areas expected, together with public improvements and services, to avert area decline.
- E. Clearance, demolition, removal, and rehabilitation of buildings and improvements including interim assistance and financing rehabilitation of privately-owned properties when in support of other Community Development activities. Demolition and modernization (but not new construction) of publicly-owned low rent housing are eligible activities.
- F. Special projects to help the elderly and handicapped in getting around.
- G. Relocation payments and assistance to those having to move because of development activities.
- H. Disposition of real properties.
- I. Providing public services otherwise not available in areas of concentrated fund activities, such as improving the community's public services or facilities in such areas as employment, crime prevention, child care, health, education, recreation and coordinating programs already there.
- J. Payment of a local share needed for other federal grant-in-aid community development programs.
- K. Activities necessary to manage and develop a comprehensive community plan.
- L. Payment for reasonable administrative costs.

MRS. MITCHELL said the primary thing to remember is that the goal of the program is to stop deteriorated and deteriorating areas in the community. She said the resources are limited and, therefore, the most effective program possible has to be structured. She said it has to be kept in mind that the activities must be related to the problems and needs of an area predominantly composed of low and moderate income residents. She said the application is made up of three parts which include a summary of a three-year plan of community development, a program to stop deterioration and provide improved community facilities for the first year including a budget and a housing assistance plan designed to revitalize the community, promote greater housing choice, specify a realistic goal for increasing the housing supply to meet the needs of the community and assure the availability of public facilities and services for any proposed housing. She said the current updating of the Master Plan is very timely for this program and will help in designating problem areas.

## Minutes of Special Meeting of Dec. 16, 1974

She noted that money from this Act can not be used to construct new housing but can be used to acquire sites. She said monies for construction must be applied for separately under other federal programs. She said in addition to the three-part application assurances have to be submitted that there was an active and effective citizen participation program. She said two public hearings are required and participation from the residents of the affected areas is necessary. She said other program requirements add to the deadline problems. She said all activities must meet the national environmental protection regulations. She said the program also has to conform with civil rights legislation. She said all workers employed in construction under these programs must be paid the going wage in the area and training and work opportunities available under this Act must be given to lower income residents and businesses located in the area of activity as much as possible.

MRS. MITCHELL said that community members will play an important part in the determination of areas of need and development and how these should be met. She said local control of funds provides for more flexible usage of the grant but also places greater responsibility on local government. She said responsible community participation will insure that development programs have been conceived in a manner which will give maximum opportunity to residents of this City to meet the needs of the low and moderate income families and aid in the prevention and elimination of slums and blight. She said HUD continues to stress that planning and development of the program will be the responsibility of the local officials. She said that HUD, however, does have veto power and will review all planned activities in conjunction with the needs and objectives as identified by the community. She said if a planned activity does not coincide with the stated objectives HUD can reject the application.

THE PRESIDENT then opened the meeting to questions from the Board members.

MR. COSTELLO asked who will disburse the monies received?

MRS. MITCHELL said it would depend on the structure of the program and noted that if part of the money is designated for urban renewal it would go to the URC. She said the City has the control to set up the program and then designate which agency will carry out different parts of the program.

MR. COSTELLO asked what part would be played by the URC in determining what the activities would be.

MRS. MITCHELL said the Task Force that is responsible for gathering data will be working with the URC to determine their needs. She said the final responsibility lies with the Mayor and this Board to determine which community needs will be funded under the Act.

MRS. FORMAN asked what the actual procedures would be regarding the setting up of the program and which offices and/or Boards would be involved.

MRS. MITCHELL said the primary Boards that would be involved are the Planning Board, Urban Redevelopment Commission and the Housing Authority. She said after the Task Force has evaluated all existing programs and identified areas where no programs exist, the data will be given to the Mayor and then the Board of Representatives. She said the Board of Finance would be involved somewhat in determining objectives but Board of Finance approval is not required for the application.

MRS. FORMAN asked if eliminating the Board of Finance from the approval process was in violation of the Charter.

MRS. MITCHELL said she has been told that since this grant is entirely federally-funded, approval by the Board of Finance is not required. She said she will continue to look into this question as there may be conflict between federal, state and local law.

MRS. FORMAN asked about the possibility of recouping funds that have already been appropriated for programs that would fit into the framework of this grant.

MRS. MITCHELL said that would depend on the specific program and what stage the program was in. She said if funds have been appropriated for planning an activity and actual construction has not been started, the activity could be considered and evaluated.

MRS. FORMAN asked how this program would affect the applications for other grants that the City has been receiving and how would it affect the department heads' initiative for making applications for other grants.

MRS. MITCHELL said this program only applies to the seven categorical grants previously available from HUD and would not affect grants from other sources and funding agencies.

MRS. FORMAN asked if a list of the HUD grants of 1968-1972 would be available.

MRS. MITCHELL said she had the list in her office and can make it available. She said the grants received by Stamford during that period totaled approximately \$9 million, of which \$5.7 was for URC and the rest was for Neighborhood Facilities programs, an open space program and a water and sewer project.

THE PRESIDENT noted that Mr. Connors had arrived and there were 33 members present at this point.

MR. RAVALLESE asked for a definition of low and moderate income and asked how it was determined.

MR. JON SMITH, Planning Director, said he doesn't have the figures with him but they have been calculated according to a federal guideline and he can make them available.

MR. MORABITO said it is his opinion that there is too much federal control connected with this program.

MRS. HANDLEY asked how the amount of funding for each community is to be determined in the future.

MRS. MITCHELL said future funding will be determined by a formula which will be based on the amount of funding received in the first years of the program, on population and on the extent of overcrowding in housing and on the extent of poverty in each community.

MR. LOUGHRAN asked if the annual application has to have individual project amounts.



## Minutes of Special Meeting of Dec. 16, 1974

MRS. MITCHELL said the application for the first year has to include the amount needed for each separate project, but not for subsequent years.

MRS. McINERNEY asked if the funds that might be available for public housing would be restricted by a stipulation that says all public housing should be racially balanced.

MRS. MITCHELL said that a restriction of that nature would not be applicable to Community Development funding as the money from this act can only be used for site acquisition.

MR. DIXON asked what kind of follow-up work does the federal government do to see that the money is spent on the projects for which it is requested.

MRS. MITCHELL said auditing will be done by the federal government in 1976 to see that the money was spent for its intended purpose. She said there will also be internal monitoring. She also said the federal government will reevaluate the entire program after three years and determine at that time whether or not to continue it.

MR. CROSBY asked if it would be possible for Stamford to apply for additional funds if some other cities don't apply for the entire amount that has been allocated to them and there are excess funds in the program.

MRS. MITCHELL said yes. She said that money that is not distributed will go back to a general fund for redistribution. She said there is also a discretionary fund provided for in the Act for hardship cases and she believes Stamford can apply for that to provide for the transition for Urban Renewal to get out of a high-funding level into this low-funding level. She said that application is on an appeal basis and is made directly to the Secretary of HUD and can be made at any time from now on. She said it is also possible to make application at this point for a 10% advance payment on the application. She said this Board would decide whether or not an application for advance funding is made. She also mentioned that the application for Community Development funding has to have a 45-day environmental review period by the State which means that the final application has to be in Hartford by March 1 and, therefore, local approval should be finalized during the month of February.

THE PRESIDENT asked that the minutes indicate that Mr. Martino has arrived and there are now 34 members present.

MR. CONNORS complimented Mrs. Mitchell for her presentation. He asked if part of the funds are designated for urban renewal would the URC have to provide the utilities and services as noted in Paragraph C.

MRS. MITCHELL said that the URC would be responsible for completing whatever projects or activities that are assigned to them by the Mayor and this Board. She noted that no more money will be given to the URC except through the Community Development Act.

MR. DAVIDOFF asked what would happen if a plan for these monies comes to the Board of Representatives and the Board only approves part of the plan.

MRS. MITCHELL said it is hoped that a draft application will be ready some time in January with options which can be reviewed by the community and by this Board so that by February a finalized application for the entire \$2 million can be approved.

MR. DAVIDOFF asked if it would be possible to staff the new fire house on Washington Boulevard with these funds.

MRS. MITCHELL said the Board has to first decide where Community Development activities are going to be concentrated. She said if a large amount of the funds are going to be used in the area that is serviced by this fire house then it might be possible to use funds from this program to provide manpower for the fire house.

MR. THEODORE BOCCUZZI asked for more specifics regarding payment of administrative costs.

MRS. MITCHELL said the specifics would vary depending on the activity. She said if a project is to be carried out by the URC, some funds from the grant could be used to pay the administrative staff of URC. She said the same would apply to a project designated for Code Enforcement or for the Planning Board. She said if the Board decides to pursue an activity for which there is no existing staff, then additional personnel would have to be hired. She said the federal guideline indicates that 10% of the grant is for administrative costs.

MR. HOFFMAN also complimented Mrs. Mitchell on her presentation. He said he has a couple of concerns and noted that this Board tends to lose site of the fact that grant money is taxpayer's money. He said he hoped there would be very close monitoring on the local level.

MRS. MITCHELL said the responsibility for setting up and following through with the monitoring will be in the Mayor's Office.

MR. HOFFMAN said that it is his opinion that City Departments should not be given additional administrative money for any project that might come under their jurisdiction.

MRS. MITCHELL said it would depend on the activity. She noted that there will be no more administrative money for URC after June 30, 1975, except that which is given to that agency through this grant program.

MR. GURIOIAN asked how much influence the general public will have in determining what the final application will be.

MRS. MITCHELL said that federal statutes require two public hearings. She said the starting point for reaching the community is through the Board of Representatives. She said meetings will be scheduled for several nights a week during the month of January with community groups in diverse areas of the City once a preliminary draft is completed.

MR. GURIOIAN said he would like the record to show that he would like to see a portion of the funds received for community-wide development to be used for the widening of Glenbrook Road.

MR. SAINBURG asked if HUD rejects a specific project would the funds planned for that project be lost.

MRS. MITCHELL said the funds would probably not be lost as it will be possible to make some adjustments during the HUD review period.



MR. ROSS said Stamford can now set new priorities on all grant applications. He said this review process will enable the City to take a good look at urban renewal and determine whether to proceed or to stop as other cities have done. He said this is also a good opportunity to look at all other programs to see where the City is going. He said every section in town has problems. He said the input from the public and the Representatives is vital and he hopes these groups can work well with the Task Force.

MR. MARTINO asked if senior citizens will qualify for any programs under this grant.

MRS. MITCHELL said eligibility for this program is determined by income and not by age. She noted that if it is determined that one of the major priorities of the City is to provide some sort of program for the elderly then such an activity should be included. She noted that no housing can be constructed with Community Development monies.

In response to another question from MR. MARTINO, MRS. MITCHELL said the Mayor has appointed a Task Force consisting of staff personnel from the Planning Board, the URC, the Housing Authority and the Housing Code Enforcement Program of the Department of Health. She said this is not a policy-making group but rather will be concerned with gathering data and evaluating existing programs.

THE PRESIDENT asked that the record indicate that Mr. Livingston has arrived and there are now 35 members present.

MR. ZIMBLER asked if there were any restrictions regarding the locations of properties that might be acquired.

MRS. MITCHELL said the Board of Representatives would make the final decision regarding the location of sites to be acquired. She noted that acquisition of housing sites is one of many eligible activities and it will be up to the Board to decide whether or not it is an activity that has top priority.

DR. LOWDEN asked if the definition of low and moderate income that is being used is based on local or national standards.

MR. SMITH said the definition is based on national standards.

MR. WALSH asked if money from this program could be used for the construction of a garage for the Public Works Dept.

MRS. MITCHELL said whether or not a specific project would be eligible would depend on the specifics of the needs and commitments and priorities that will be established.

MRS. McINERNEY asked if there was a time limitation for construction on property that might be acquired under this program and if this money can be used for renovations of housing.

MR. JAMES HIBBEN, URC Director, said Community Development money can be used for housing purchases, for housing rehabilitation but not for construction.

MR. RYBNICK asked if the deteriorated bulkheads on the water front could be repaired or replaced with funds from this grant.

MRS. MITCHELL said it would depend on the priorities that are established for the program.

In response to a question from MR. TRESSER, MR. HIBBEN said a substantial part of the \$43 million federal allocation has been expended and the balance is committed. He said the State and City shares have been allocated for supporting facilities.

In response to a question from MR. DIXON, MRS. MITCHELL said it is possible to use the entire allocation for one activity.

In response to a question from MRS. HANDLEY, MRS. MITCHELL said any activity creating employment would have to be related to the established priorities of the City.

MR. COSTELLO asked if part of this money could be used toward opening the old YMCA.

MRS. MITCHELL said that would also depend on the scope of the program and that project will be evaluated in light of the priorities.

In response to a question from MR. MARTINO, MRS. MITCHELL said that activities under Paragraph K could include planning, surveys, statistical evaluations, etc.

In response to a question from MR. LIVINGSTON, MRS. MITCHELL said an eligible public works project would be one that would be directly related to improving the community area where these funds are being concentrated.

MR. JOHN BOCCUZZI asked if this money can be diverted toward the operating budget to help take the burden off all of the taxpayers in the City.

MRS. MITCHELL said she did not know and would look into that.

MR. ZIMBLER asked if this money could be used for flood control for something like Toilsome Brook.

MR. SMITH said he did not think that project would fall within guidelines of helping low and moderate income persons.

MR. DAVIDOFF said he is of the opinion that the handicapped persons in this community have been overlooked and he hoped that serious consideration will be given to them in formulating activities for this program. He also urged consideration of expanding the child care program, of providing a hot lunch program for the schools and of expanding recreational programs. He said people-oriented services are the most critical.

MR. GURIOIAN said the composition of the Task Force does not include sufficient participation from the community. He said there should be more citizen representation on the Task Force.

MRS. MITCHELL said the Task Force will gather data and make recommendations to the Mayor and the Mayor will make recommendations to the Board of Representatives. She said the draft of the application will have many options.

## Minutes of Special Meeting of Dec. 16, 1974

which will be discussed by the community groups. She said it is hoped that the Board of Representatives will hold a public hearing to get community input. She said there is no intention of not considering the community's recommendation.

In response to a question from MR. DIXON, MRS. MITCHELL said it is not the intent of the Act to acquire a building and rehabilitate it and have the City become a landlord. She said it is her understanding that the intent is to have money available for rehabilitation of buildings. She also said money from this program is not available to help people purchase housing. She said this is not a subsidy program.

In response to a question from MR. SANDOR, MR. HIBBEN said that the anticipated tax yield after all private development is completed in the urban renewal area is \$6 to \$8 million per year. He said the URC estimates that the agency requires an additional \$5 to \$7 million to complete the project as it is presently planned. He said the amount of money the URC receives from this program is up to the Mayor and the Board of Representatives.

In response to a question from MR. LIVINGSTON, MR. HIBBEN said a solution to relocating the remaining ten large families in the URC area is being actively sought at this time. He said constructive efforts are being made by the administration and the URC.

MRS. McINERNEY said she would also urge consideration of activities related to helping the handicapped persons in this community.

MR. MARTINO said he would like to see citizen representation added to the Task Force.

MRS. POBIE JOHNSTON, the Mayor's Executive Aide, said she would convey that recommendation to the Mayor. She noted that the Task Force is primarily concerned with gathering the statistical data for background to help in making judgments on what to include in the application. She said the policy-making decisions on which specific projects to include in the proposal will be developed based on the citizen participation program. She also noted that the families left in the URC will probably be taken care of before this program is in effect.

MR. CROSBY said he hoped the activities listed under Paragraphs F and I would also include projects relating to mental health.

MR. ROSS said the November 1974 issue of National Cities has a complete breakdown on Community Development grants and asked that the magazine be made available to all Board members.

THE PRESIDENT noted that all members have been sent a copy of that magazine.

MR. RYBNICK thanked the office staff for the Christmas decorations in the meeting room. He said the Board members certainly appreciate them.

THE PRESIDENT thanked Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Johnston, Mr. Hibben and Mr. Smith. He said the Steering Committee will meet immediately following this meeting.

10,352

Special Meeting of Dec. 16, 1974

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion,  
duly seconded and CARRIED, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

*Sally Flaherty*

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Sally Flaherty  
Administrative Assistant and  
(Recording Secretary)

APPROVED:

*Frederick E. Miller, Jr.*

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Frederick E. Miller, Jr., President  
13th Board of Representatives

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

SF:dm