

ANNUAL REPORT

78-79

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE -- William M. Kuehn, Jr., Coordinator

Municipal Development Committee, Michael J. Cubeta, Jr., Chairman

During the fiscal 1978-1979, the Municipal Development Committee dealt with a range of matters in their role as a developmental clearing house and recommending body to the Common Council.

The following are some highlights of the Committee's activities:

- . The Committee heard a report from Industry for Middletown in December, 1978 and initiated engineering studies for the extension of Industrial Park Road in spring of 1979. The Committee recommended a Bonding referendum of \$700,000 for the construction program which was approved by the electorate on June 12, 1979.
- . In recreational matters, the Committee was instrumental in the acquisition of property abutting Crystal Lake Park. Additionally, the Committee, along with the Park and Recreation Commission, interviewed and hired consultants for the long range use of Palmer Field, Vets Park, and Pat Kidney Field.
- . The Committee interviewed and recommended the retention of a consultant to conduct feasibility studies for a multi-level parking structure in the block bounded by Main, College, Broad, and Court Streets. In other parking

matters, the Committee dealt with parking alternatives for the period during which the Arcade would be under renovation.

The Committee continued to make adjustments to the fire districts, including recommendations for dealing with the Middlesex Theater Block as a preservation project.

The subject of surplus public buildings required much of the Committee's time during the past fiscal year. A variety of buildings were declared potential surplus although most attention was directed to two school buildings -- Stillman and Central. During the latter months of the year, the Committee conducted public hearings and initiated detailed studies of the buildings.

Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Agency, Vincent J. Loffredo, Chairman

The Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Agency is charged with protecting and controlling development in and along those areas of the community which are designated as wetlands by the Soil Conservation Service in accordance with Public Act 155 of the 1972 General Assembly, as amended. During the past year the agency met on ten occasions which include several public hearings.

The following is a summary of its actions:

Permits granted - 9

Review comments forwarded to state agencies - 1

Public Hearings - 2

Permits extensions granted - 4

During the past year, modifications have been made to the Agency's field inspection system. The monitoring function has always been with the Health Department in the form of one compliance officer. The eyes and ears of the Agency have multiplied so that each of the four sanitarians play a role by monitoring wetlands activities in their respective districts.

The Agency is grateful to the Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team which, for the second year, spent considerable time reviewing and offering advice regarding a particularly difficult application.

Harbor Improvement Agency, Arnold W. Ackerman, Chairman

The Agency is charged with the responsibility of planning and implementing the development along the banks of the Connecticut River within the corporate limits of the City. After much hard work, beginning in 1972, the majority of the Agency's activities were brought to a culmination during the past fiscal year.

The Economic Development Administration/City funded \$1.25 million project was completed and accepted by the City. This project has provided bulkheading, board walk, docking facilities, yacht club restoration, and utilities. Additional funding from EDA under the local Public Works Program provided a Middletown rowing boathouse which was accepted by the Agency during the summer of 1978. The final phase of construction was authorized with the acceptance of a construction bid from the Clark Corporation of Essex in the fall of 1978. Artist Mary Geary designed a

logo and the Agency named the project Harborpark.

After multiple baptisms, through spring floods, Harborpark was officially dedicated on June 10, 1979. The City and Agency were presented with an award from the Connecticut Society of Architects for their efforts in rejuvenating and reclaiming the waterfront.

Also, the City received a grant of \$4,500 from the Connecticut Commission on the Arts to study the reuse of the former power plant building, and the Agency initiated discussions for a restaurant in the yacht club and excursion boat service to the City.

The year saw a temporary setback in the development of Town Farms Park. After all permits were secured for construction, the City was informed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture that its funding source had been temporarily lost. At the close of the year the Agency was optimistic for restoration of monies with construction slated for early 1980.

Main Street Modernization Committee, Paul P. Parisi, Chairman

The Main Street Modernization Committee was created for the purpose of planning and guiding the use of funding from the Economic Development Administration of the U. S. Department of Commerce.

During the past year the Committee, after reviewing construction

bids, recommended the DeMatteo Construction Company be retained for the development of new sidewalks and street amenities along Main Street between Washington Street and St. John's Square.

The Committee has met monthly and views with anticipation the completion of the project in late 1979.

Citizens' Advisory Committee, William Pillarella, Chairman

The Citizens' Advisory Committee is appointed by the Mayor and is responsible for recommending to the Common Council matters regarding the Community Development Block Grant Program.

Following the adoption of a Citizen Participation Plan by the Common Council in May 1978, the Committee entered the fiscal year by meeting on a regular monthly basis. Following are highlights from the year's activities:

- . Following the submission of a full application for a 1978 Small Cities Grant, Middletown was awarded \$600,000 for a Comprehensive Community Development Program which includes several innovative features.
- . The City was invited to file a full application in mid-1979 for an additional \$600,000 of Small Cities Funds.
- . The Citizens' Advisory Committee and the Block Grant Program have, in the past year, become the funding vehicle for the completion of all developmental activities in the Metro South Urban Renewal Project. In excess of \$7.7 million

will be channeled through the CAC.

- . In developing 1979 funding applications, the CAC recommended, and the Common Council approved, several extensions to the South Farms Neighborhood Strategy Area. This change enables the exercise of rehabilitation loans and grants to additional households in need.

The City also received and successfully exercised the use of "Section 312" low interest rehabilitation loans from HUD which are applicable in the neighborhood target areas.

- . The City hired on a part-time basis an Acquisition and Relocation Officer to assist in the outworking of the 1978 Small Cities Grant.

- . Numerous contracts were signed during the year, highlighted by: the Greater Middletown Community Corporation and Equity and Housing of Middletown, Inc., for the Housing Cooperative Program; GMCC and Parish, Pine and Weiner, Inc., for the Main Street Mixed-Use Program; and, the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust for the publication of a book entitled "Middletown's Neighborhoods -- a Heritage to Save".