

South End NRZ Zoom Minutes  
January 14th, 2025

Draft

Present: **15 Participants**

The meeting began at 6:30 pm

**Luke Daniel** who is working with Dr. Mark Mitchell to create an Environmental Justice Organization in Stamford gave an update on the results of the Stamford South End Environmental Justice issues priority survey:

1. **HIGH PRIORITY-** Requesting the DEEP Geospatial Measurement of Air Pollution (GMAP) to visit the South End of Stamford to conduct air monitoring screening.

Streets Listed for **The** DEEP GMAP Vehicle to visit:

- Streets closet to I-95 (Canal St, Jefferson St, Dock St)
  - Ludlow Street
  - Woodland Ave
  - Kosciusko Park
2. **HIGH PRIORITY** – Air Pollution in the neighborhood from idling trucks and vehicles on I-95.
  3. **Equal Priority-** Odors and Air pollution from the O&G plant.
  4. **Equal Priority** – Seek funding to remove lead pipes.

**Possible Solutions that can be done to reduce air pollution:**

- Electrification of idling trucks and buses.
- Possible events to show Electric Vehicles
- More enforcement for 3-minute Idling
- Community Education

**Sonya Van Norden – The Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut (CAAWC)** gave an update on the closing of the Lathan Wider Center that happened on New Years Eve. The broiler burst in the basement causing an accumulation of 6ft of water that had to be pumped out. The flooding affected mechanical components in the building resulting in **No water, No heat and No electricity**. Since January 2, 2025, the building was initially closed for 2-weeks, extending out to 2 months, extended out again to 6 months then as of January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the building was closed indefinitely.

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Every tenant that was housed in the center is looking for space. The tenants were told on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, that they must remove their property which raises the concerns, where is their property going to be moved? Who is going to cover the cost to move their property? NRZ members and residents raised questions which were sent to Bridget Fox the mayors Chief of Staff:

1. Did the city tell the tenants the reason why they had to remove their property from the building?
2. The Center was given a 1.5 million grant for renovations, what happened to the money? Can the grant money be used for renovations?
3. Since the problem is in the basement and the concentration is on getting the mechanics back up and running, why is the center closed indefinitely?
4. Why weren't the South End residents notified of the Lathan Wider closing prior to the publication in the Advocate?
5. Who made the decision to close the center indefinitely since nothing is wrong with the foundation, the issue is just a water heater?
6. Is there public knowledge (FOI) of the recommendation from the insurance company to the City?

It was also mentioned that instead of always having a maintenance crew on site, there is always a security guard company on site. If a maintenance person was onsite, then the problem could have quickly been remedied prior to closing the center.

**John Wooten** inquired about community policing

**Terry Adams** answered that Jerry Junes is very busy, but he will reach out to him to find out if he would be able to attend some of our meetings.

**John Wooten** asked about the city ordinance for beer and has it made an impact on the South End?

**Terry Adams** responded they created the ordinance for the entire city, but the impact was mostly for problem areas that had 20 or more people loitering and drinking.

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**John Wooten** announced that the New Covenant House is closing and moving to the Knights of Columbus. John asked Sonia will the closing impact some of Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut clientele?

**Sonya** responded **Yes**, the closing will affect some of their clients.

**Sue Halpern** announced the city is working on the Master Plan and the person selected to be the Ambassador for the South End is **Sandra Gottlin** a Stamford Chamber of Commerce Board member. It was recommended that we reach out to Sandra to attend an NRZ meeting so she can introduce herself to the community.

**In Summary:**

1. It was recommended that the GMAP vehicle come to the South End
2. There was interest of looking into more greenery in the South End as being an Environmental Justice issue.
3. The community wants the Center to re-open as soon as possible so services can be re-instated
4. Identified temporary space for the CAP agency at the community room located at the Hazel on 44 John Street.
5. Inquired about the move of New Covenant House from the West Side to Shippan would serve the needs of the current clientele.
6. Requested outreach to Sandra Gottlin to attend and NRZ meeting for introduction.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm**