

South End NRZ Zoom Minutes
Lathan Wider Closing Meeting with Bridget Fox-Mayors Chief of Staff
January 29th, 2025

Draft

Present: **15 Participants**

The meeting began at 6:30 pm

Bridget Fox-Mayors Chief of Staff gave an overview on the closing of the Lathan Wider center.

Background:

- January 2nd, 2025 -the city Facilities Department was notified of a flooding incident in the basement of the Lathan Wider Community Center caused by a failure in a piece of mechanical equipment.
- Due to the impact on critical building services, the facility was closed.
- July 1, 2025-Targeted reopening date for Lathan Wider Community Center

Tenant Relocation:

- **DMV**- Government Center 1st Floor
- **The Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut, Inc. (CAAWC)**-Old Town Hall
- **CIRI CT** -Pending decision
- **Ferguson Library**- BLT building in the Waterside Neighborhood
- **CLC** – Assigned to other CLC locations at William Pitt and Palmers Hill
- **Pacific House** – Old Town Hall
- **City of Stamford Health Clinic** – Optimus Site
- **Clothes for Kids** – Pending decision
- **Urban League of Southern Connecticut**-Government Center

Matt Quiones -Director of Operations gave an update on the Next Steps and offered to discuss priorities suggested from the South End residents for The Lathan Wider Center.

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Next Steps

Step 1: Relocation of tenants:

- The city has been working with impacted tenants to relocate from Lathan Wider. All but two impacted tenants have been relocated
- The city will honor the lease agreement for all tenants with active leases. Any tenant operating on an expired lease will be offered 6 months of space for temporary relocation.
- The city is continuing to define the scope of work to remediate the building for the purpose of reopening as soon as possible
- Currently the City is targeting July 1, 2025, for re-opening the building.

Step 2: Remediation and Community Engagement:

- Following the completion of step 1 the city will leverage information gathered from Re-Imagine Lathon Wider Study, and re-engage the community to establish the purpose, operation, and tenants of the building for when it reopens in 2025.
- The city will leverage an existing \$1.5M appropriation (details next slide) to remediate the building and the mayor is committed to seek additional funding to support a renovation scope of work. (6-8) months, Jan – July).

1.5M Federal Earmark for Lathan Wider:

- To refurbish one of the two gymnasiums on the property. The gymnasium is in desperate need of repair and is currently used as a storage space for city-owned equipment and files.
- Funding to clear the gymnasium, bring the space into compliance with building code, refurbish the floor and open the space to the community for basketball and recreation.
- As part of this renovation, the city would like to add a glass garage door that would allow for indoor and outdoor play and recreation.

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Step 3: Re-opening:

- Once Step 1 has been completed and the building is safe for reentry, the city will reopen the building to tenants who are selected during the 2nd step of this plan.
- The city hopes to retain as many of the existing services of the Lathan Wider building but reserves the right to invite new tenants to replace those on expired leases provided their services are aligned with the needs of the community captured during the 2nd step of this effort.
- The city will complete renovations during this step until the work is finalized (12 months: January-December)

Questions / Answers:

Question:

Al Koproski - were the people or organizations impacted due to a broiler section breaking?

Answer:

Matt -yes, a broiler failure basically flooded the building and made it inhabitable for any tenant.

Al Koproski stated for a building the size of Lathan Wider you would think a steam broiler would be in the building.

Answer:

Matt -he would have to check since he did not have the specifics.

Questions:

John Wooten

- 1). Please give more detail why the broiler system would take so long?
- 2). Any Plans to re-do the parking lot since it is a trip hazard?

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Answer to question 2

Matt – we missed the scope of opportunity to get the parking lot done since the work was beyond one hundred thousand and the work was not procured through the city. The city will absolutely look into getting the parking lot re-done.

Answer to question 1:

Matt-The system is so old it does need to be replaced and there is some abatement work. Six months is the best guess for lead time.

Question:

Sue Halpern - Since Trump talked about stopping federal grants is there a possibility, we might lose the 1.5M or is it locked in?

Answer:

Bridget Fox – At this point we feel confident that any funds earmark and already appropriated will be honored. That could change but right now the city feels confident the money will be available for draw down when they are ready.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm