

EDUCATIONAL / CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

As noted earlier, Asylum Hill is home to some of the most troubled schools in Hartford. West Middle is an elementary school that consistently scores among the lowest in the State Mastery Test and Hartford Public High School is on academic probation. Asylum Hill is also home to many cultural organizations, several of national reputation.

It is the goal of this committee to champion the improvement of our schools, to encourage the collaboration of these fine cultural institutions and to invite their help in addressing some of the educational/recreational issues in Asylum Hill.

GOAL I: IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS IN ASYLUM HILL SO THEY BECOME COMMUNITY ASSETS.

Strategy A: Help improve the schools in Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Explore alternative models for improving West Middle School, Quirk Middle School and Hartford Public High School – ongoing – Education/Cultural Council
 2. Publish an annual bilingual listing of all after school programs on the Hill and distribute through school to all parents.
 3. Encourage participation in PTO/PTA's by parents.
 4. Publish bilingual listing, which is updated regularly, of educational resources available at Mark Twain branch library and on bookmobile. Distribute with above.
 5. Encourage principals/teachers to promote parent involvement at schools by publishing a bilingual listing of volunteer opportunities and to provide procedures for their successful implementation.
 6. Support existing tutoring programs in Asylum Hill and promote expansion as possible.
 7. Support city-wide initiative to improve schools.
 8. Open discussions to encourage after-hours use of schools by the community, both physical facilities and staff. 1/99
 9. Support and encourage improvement of physical condition of school physical plant facilities. on-going
 10. Support proposed computer lab and homework study hall at 241 Sigourney Street.

Strategy B: Help improve “school readiness” for young residents of Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Support existing program at West Middle School. on-going
 2. Tie in with existing programs at Y-sponsored childcare programs at AHCC and Garden Street. 9/98
 3. Explore opportunities to expand such programs.
 4. Promote visibility of parent materials and programs available at library.
Penny Rusnak - 9/98

Strategy C: Explore concept of a charter and/or magnet school in Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Facilitate development of charter/magnet school, performing arts, to be considered to mesh with existing community assets. on-going
 2. Meet regularly with Capital Community Technical College to monitor development on their future move downtown. on-going
 3. Maintain open dialogue with current charter school developer. on-going

GOAL II: RECOGNIZE AND USE THE MANY CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN ASYLUM HILL.

Strategy A: Encourage Asylum Hill cultural organizations to work together.

- Actions:**
1. Encourage the formation of an informal consortium among the education/cultural organizations to promote enhanced communication and coordinate programming. 6/98
 2. Encourage cultural institutions to work together on common project, such as public tour of their facilities. 6/99

Strategy B: Explore ways to promote interaction between Asylum Hill residents and local cultural institutions. 6/98

- Actions:**
1. Encourage institutions to offer summer jobs and internships to Asylum Hill students. on-going
 2. Disseminate timely information on public programs offered by cultural institutions, especially free outdoor concerts, free tours, and other programs. 6/98
 3. Encourage educational projects between the local schools and the cultural institutions, including development of relevant curriculum units. 9/00

Strategy C: Encourage the appreciation of Asylum Hill and its history and architecture.

- Actions:**
1. Work with organizations to sponsor an Asylum Hill house tour. 6/99
 2. Encourage program of walking tours of Asylum Hill to be offered periodically during warm weather and for groups upon request. 6/99
 3. Explore publication of self-guided walking tour of Asylum Hill and/or map of National Register districts. 6/99 - Karin Peterson
 4. Disseminate information on historic marker program and encourage home owners to mount register plaque. 6/99

Strategy D: Work with Hartford Public Library to continue to provide quality programs and resources to the community.

- Actions:**
1. Support staff in efforts to relocate branch to more convenient location and help explore possible facilities. on-going
 2. Keep in contact with Louise Blalock on this issue to ensure her of community support and involvement. on-going
 3. Offer other support, as needed, to library staff. on-going

GOAL III: ESTABLISH AND IMPROVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN ASYLUM HILL.

Strategy A: Explore the concept of “pocket parks” with multiple uses (i.e., grassy areas for sitting, playing baseball, rollerblading, playscapes, etc.).

- Actions:**
1. Working with the Housing Committee, designate appropriate locations for same and potential use, soliciting input from immediate neighbors. 1/99
 2. Working with the Housing Committee, identify who develops and maintains these parks. 5/99

Strategy B: Reclaim Sigourney Park.

- Actions:**
1. Support improvements by the city. on-going
 2. Promote increased recreational use to counter balance less appropriate use. on-going
 3. Support other activities such as Trinity Church summer camp held at the Park.

Strategy C: Explore the establishment of a recreational center and/or Boys-Girls Club. 5/99

- Actions:**
1. Support AHOP’s plan to develop 241 Sigourney Street.
 2. Explore off-hours recreational use of local schools.

Strategy D: Explore the idea of intergenerational recreation.

- Actions:**
1. Encourage Knox Park Foundation to establish a garden program combining seniors and students. 5/00
 2. Talk with representatives of senior organizations on Asylum Hill about establishing an oral history project; promote same with Hartford High. 5/00
 3. Encourage the establishment of a parallel oral history project with local cultural institutions. 5/00

Strategy E: Ensure Asylum Hill neighbors are kept informed of recreational activities.

- Actions:**
1. Publish a bilingual listing of recreation programs available and disseminate throughout the schools. 9/98
 2. Ensure offerings by local cultural institutions are included. 9/98