

# ***WECA Priorities***

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Not all of the Recommended Actions can be achieved right away. Therefore, in the short term (2001-2002) the following actions will be undertaken. Some of these are already being worked on.

## ***I. Farmington Avenue Development***

1. Complete revitalization plan for Farmington Avenue.

*Schedule:* December, 2001 – First Year.

*Responsible Party:* Farmington Avenue Joint Committee

2. Develop a funding strategy to implement the recommendations of the Farmington Avenue Plan.

*Schedule:* First and Second Year

*Responsible Party:* Constituency groups of the Farmington Avenue Joint Committee, representing Asylum Hill and West End.

3. Re-design Farmington Avenue to improve pedestrian comfort and safety, aesthetic appeal and traffic flow.

*Schedule:* Second Year

*Responsible Party:* Farmington Avenue Joint Committee, Public Safety Committee.

4. Support commercial revitalization efforts on Farmington Avenue.

*Schedule:* On-going

*Responsible Party:* Farmington Avenue Committee, Cheese and Stuff Committee, Farmington Avenue Business District, Colonial Theatre Renaissance Corporation.

## ***II. Public Safety***

Public safety remains one of the most important issues for West Enders. It encompasses many quality of life issues of paramount concern to the neighborhood. From crime to rats, we in the West End have banded together to improve the quality of life here for all of our residents.

1. Continue to advocate for Community Service Officer's position for the West End.

## ***WECA Priorities (continued)***

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*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Public Safety Committee, Communications Committee, and the entire WECA membership

2. Utilize Block Club network to identify and seek remedies for nuisance activities (litter, loitering, loud music, etc.).

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Block Groups, Sector Representatives, and Organizer

3. Identify specific conditions within the neighborhood that serve as “pre-cursors” to public health threats (drug use, trash accumulation), that effect the quality of life in the neighborhood. Support both enforcement and educational programs to address them.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Public Safety Committee, Block Groups, Zoning Committee

### ***III. Improve Education***

Noah Webster School is scheduled for a major restoration and expansion in the next few years. This presents opportunities to expand Noah Webster’s role in the community, to make it more of a community school. At the same time, it is important to recognize that education is first and foremost the mission of Noah Webster and that the quality of education offered there affects all of us whether we have children in the system or not.

1. Work on getting a library branch incorporated into the renovation of the school..

*Schedule:* First and Second Years

*Responsible Party:* Youth & Recreation Committee. Partner with Chief Librarian’s Office

2. Work on getting a community center incorporated into the renovation plan.

*Schedule:* First and Second Years

## **WECA Priorities (continued)**

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*Responsible Party:* Community Center Committee. Partner with Community Renewal Team, and Boys & Girls Club.

3. Continue to look for opportunities to strengthen the quality of education by recruiting community volunteers to work with the staff of Noah Webster to enrich and enliven the curriculum and maintain a high quality of education.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Education Committee

4. Review renovation plans at Noah Webster to encourage sensitivity to the building's architectural integrity and take account of its status as a National Register of Historic Places Landmark and neighborhood icon.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Architectural Resources Committee

### **IV. Housing**

Housing is one of our greatest resources. Because of the variety and age and historical significance of much of our housing, the NRZ working group identified the need for a committee of WECA to deal with these issues.

1. Facilitate use of Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program by identifying eligible homeowners, corporate tax credit buyers, and lender institutions willing to participate. Host a workshop with the above to promote the program and assist homeowners in applying.

*Schedule:* First Year

*Responsible Party:* Architectural Resources & Housing Committees. Partner with Local Initiatives Support Collaborative, State Historic Preservation Office.

2. Market programs that assist homeowners and landlords with rehab money.

*Schedule:* First Year.

*Responsible Party:* Housing Committee. Partner with City's Department of Housing and Community Development, The

## ***WECA Priorities (continued)***

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Connecticut Housing Investment Fund (CHIF), the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA).

3. Review City's Housing Programs and zoning requirements and request modifications as appropriate.

*Schedule:* First and second year

*Responsible Party:* Zoning Committee, Housing Committee

4. Work with the Department of Licenses & Inspections to establish a coordinated code enforcement plan to include a monitoring mechanism to document progress to the City.

*Schedule:* First year

*Responsible Party:* Block Groups.

5. Support the establishment of a rent receivership program and work with tenants to demand receivership where appropriate.

*Schedule:* First and Second Year.

*Responsible Party:* Community Block Organizer, Block Groups. Partner with Connecticut Urban Legal Initiative.

6. Work to strengthen tenant management dialog and where needed help to negotiate schedule of physical improvements for targeted multifamily properties.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Community Block Organizer, Block Groups.

### ***V. Traffic/Traffic Calming***

Speeding traffic is a problem in all parts of the neighborhood. Traffic calming involves taming out-of-control traffic without increasing traffic congestion. It represents a new and more effective way to manage the long-standing traffic problem. Traffic calming uses physical devices like traffic circles and speed bumps to keep traffic moving but at a safer pace.

1. Support the findings and recommendations of the Farmington Avenue Joint Committee's initiative regarding traffic and pedestrian improvements, parking, and traffic calming.

## **WECA Priorities (continued)**

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*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Traffic Calming Committee. Partner with FAJC.

2. Prioritize areas needing crosswalk improvements, changes in signalization and/or timing, and other upgrades. Integrate these areas in future plans and streetscape design.

*Schedule:* First and Second Year.

*Responsible Party:* Traffic Calming Committee. Partner with Department of Public Works.

3. Support physical improvements to shift the focus from a vehicle dominated environment to one that is pedestrian friendly throughout the neighborhood.

*Schedule:* First and Second Year.

*Responsible Party:* Traffic Calming Committee

### **VI. Recreation, Arts, Education**

Two over-riding issues have been identified through the drafting of this plan, and are being actively pursued by WECA. They are: (1) the need for more active recreation, especially in the area south of Farmington Avenue; and (2) the need for a community center to provide meeting space for the youth and seniors in the neighborhood.

1. Pursue the use of vacant land behind the Sisson Avenue Fire House for recreation, especially basketball courts. Work with Department of Public Works and Recreation Services.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Youth and Recreation Committee

2. Pursue establishment of a West End Community Center. Identify programs and funding that can meet needs of youth and elderly.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Community Center Planning Committee, Finance Committee

## **WECA Priorities (continued)**

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3. Work with Noah Webster School to increase recreation programs for neighborhood youth.  
*Schedule:* Ongoing  
*Responsible Party:* Youth and Recreation Committee
  
4. Publicize current activities by a variety of means (flyers, distribution in schools, web-sites, churches, institutions).  
*Schedule:* First Year  
*Responsible Party:* Youth and Recreation Committee, Education Committee, Communications Committee
  
5. Sponsor a user-survey of patrons of existing programs, parents, and other stakeholders to determine needs and desires. Partner with Citizen's Research Education Network (CREN) for an Asset Survey.  
*Schedule:* First Year  
*Responsible Party:* CREN with appropriate WECA committees
  
6. Meet with City's Recreation staff to implement West End Neighborhood Recreation Plan.  
*Schedule:* First and Second Year  
*Responsible Party:* Youth & Recreation Committee
  
7. Apply for private grants, corporate sponsorship, and conduct fundraising activities with neighborhood businesses and institutions. Pursue needed equipment directly from manufacturer.  
*Schedule:* First and Second Year  
*Responsible Party:* Youth and Recreation Committee, Finance Committee.

### **VII. Strengthening the Neighborhood**

The West End is fortunate to have a well organized network of Block Groups in all parts of the neighborhood. Strong block groups and sector

## ***WECA Priorities (continued)***

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organizations are a vital force in strengthening the neighborhood and keeping it strong.

1. Capitalize on the Block Group Network, Sector Representative, and Community Block Organizer to identify needs and to increase involvement of residents.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Sector Representatives, Block groups, and Block Group Organizer

2. Establish a good working relationship with the media to ensure the “neighborhood” position is clearly and effectively communicated.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible Party:* Communications Committee

### ***VIII. Promote Our Historic, Cultural and Social Assets***

The West End is rich in architecture, history and cultural institutions. In addition, the physical layout in many quarters of the neighborhood, that is small lots, front porches and tree lined streets, contribute to the livability and neighborliness of the West End.

1. Prepare a brochure on the history and development of the West End. Use as a basis for identifying walking tours. Offer tours in the spring and fall and in conjunction with other neighborhood events.

*Schedule:* First and Second Year

*Responsible Party:* Social Activities Committee and Architecture Resources Committee

2. Conduct a neighborhood-wide cultural assets survey to determine skills and interests residents have to offer.

*See item 5 Arts and Recreation for timetable and responsible committees*

3. Link these cultural assets with neighborhood pride through block parties, exhibits, street fairs, and other neighborhood programs.

*Schedule:* First and Second Year.

## ***WECA Priorities (continued)***

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*Responsible Party:* Sector Reps, Block Groups and Social Activities Committee.

4. Review and comment on new development in the West End at appropriate city boards and committees for architectural compatibility with the neighborhood.

*Schedule:* Ongoing

*Responsible:* Architectural Resources Committee