



The Sheldon/Charter Oak Flyer

September 2005

Dear CSS/CON Friends and Neighbors:

This first edition of our newsletter is comprised of our monthly minutes and a few articles of interest. Going forward, we'll include notices of upcoming events, and other items of interest. In the meantime, we've had a productive summer here in the neighborhood.

Our Youth Interns from the neighborhood spent six weeks doing community organizing and neighborhood beautification. Wilbert Ruperte and Ilvin Sanchez worked with Arthur on organizing projects. Johnny Salazar, Braulio Maysonet, and Dante Felix focused on clearing and landscaping at Porter Park, at the Charter Oak Monument Park, on Pulaski Mall, and on major arteries in the neighborhood, including Charter Oak Avenue and Charter Oak Place.

Our Youth Volunteers, Maya Hamilton and La'don Mackey, tracked police activity in the neighborhood, using the daily police blotter to pinpoint hotspots and response. They also pulled together a community meeting in response to an incident at the Sheldon Oak Co-Op. An unprecedented 40 people attended the meeting with Lt. Even of the Hartford Police. Folks surfaced issues of concern, and agreed that they'd like to see more of this kind of communication.

Lt. Even, Lt. Bair, and CSO Robeles spent several hours with the summer youth employees discussing ways to interact in certain situations with the police. Feedback from our kids tells us that this was a valuable discussion, and has already benefited several neighborhood youth.

Senator Lieberman and Mayor Perez came to the neighborhood to announce an \$8.5 million package for streetscape improvements and an opening to the riverfront at the end of Charter Oak Avenue.

CSS/CON residents and staff made appearances and spoke at the Planning Commission and at the Zoning Board

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BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 11, 2005

Call to Order: President Bernadine Silvers called the meeting to order at 5:37PM. Anne Snyder read the mission statement. June minutes were unanimously approved (moved and seconded by Ziobro and Ansari.)

Good News: Neighborhood Youth helped the Knox Park foundation with their Green Team clean up of the South Green. Pat Williams commented that this Green Team event was one of the most well attended in recent history. CSS/CON held a successful community-wide picnic on June 24. The "School's Out Block Party" was a solid success with people from all over the neighborhood in attendance. Without the help of Sheldon Oak Central, Carabetta Corporation, The Church of the Good Shepard, and various community members, this picnic would not have been nearly as successful. Monday marked the first day of the mural project. This six week summer program will produce a mural at the Martin Luther King Housing development. CSS/CON has five interns working with us this summer. Three interns are working with Carol on neighborhood beatification, while the other two will be working with Arthur on community outreach. These paid interns were made possible by CREC's Summer Youth Employment program. Joaquin Rebello, a former Dutch Point resident, has been working with a group of young people from the Martin Luther King housing development on a community garden located behind the Church of the Good Shepherd. Mr. Rebello has been going to the garden just about every day to tend to the "Elder/ Youth Plot." The Knox Park Foundation had started to install a new fence for the garden but had to leave it unfinished. Mr. Rebello finished the fence and, as a way of thanking him, he will be receiving an award from Knox

Park.

Executive Director – Carol Coburn reported that the Hartford Collaborative for Community Organizing has informed applicants that it will need another 30 days to decide on grant awards. CSS/CON has submitted a grant ask of \$150,000 with a work plan that will include expanding organizing activities into the South Green and South Downtown neighborhoods. The current finances of CSS/CON are tight. The Community Builders, a sub-contractor of the Hartford Housing Authority Hope VI project, currently owes CSS/CON over \$20,000. Currently CSS/CON has \$1700 in the bank. CSS/CON has been awarded a \$25,000 line of credit. The closing is scheduled for the end of July. Pat Williams suggested that CSS/CON be listed as a United Way agency. This would allow employees to designate their donations for CSS/CON.

CSS/CON is collecting the daily police blotter and sharing the information with Sheldon Oak Central. This information will allow Sheldon Oak Central to follow up on possible lease violations.

Executive Committee – Has been conducting a review of executive director, Carol Coburn. The review will be concluded during an executive session during this board meeting.

HOPE VI – Pat Williams reported that final building permits are being completed for phase one this week. At this point, HHA is looking forward to starting construction by mid August. There will be some type of public event in mid-September to celebrate the start of construction.

Public Safety Committee – Ann Snyder reported that the next public safety committee meeting will be July 20. She complimented Lt. Harold Even for increased police presence and visibility.

Development Committee – Linda Osten
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CSS/CON Board Members

Bernadine Silvers
President

Linda Osten
Vice-President

Tim Cole
Secretary

Carmen Dornan
Treasure

Dionne Abrams
Mohammad Ansari
Donna Berman
Bruce Douglas
Claire Fonseca
Bill Fournier
Veronica Garay
Ed Kaeser
Danny Merida
Bob Sandalo
Anne Snyder
Charles Teale
Patricia Williams
Bruno Ziobro

CSS/CON Staff

Carol Coburn
Executive Director
509-3705

Arthur Hardy-Doubleday
Operations Manager
509-3706

Catherine Lathrop
Workforce Development Coordinator
509-3707

Sergio Melendez
Community Organizer
509-3708

Evelyn Figueroa
Community Organizer
509-3709

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reported that Marty Hennessy, developer of the hotel development at Capewell, would like a special sub-committee to oversee community involvement in his project. He also complimented CSS/CON for the working relationship he has been able to form. Legislation for the Capewell Condo development has not come through as planned. There is still a financing gap of \$2 million that needs to be filled. The good news is that the administration building on the property has been completely renovated and is currently occupied. Hopefully the next Development Committee meeting will be held in the newly renovated building. The zoning sub-committee has been meeting and is looking to re-zone parts of our neighborhood in order to control future development. They will be reporting back the Development Committee at the next meeting.

Hartford 2000 – Bernadine reported that H2K is still looking for volunteers to help with their various subcommittees.

Porter Park ad-hoc Committee – Carol Coburn reported that the Committee met on June 2 at the Wheeler Clinic. Barbara McGrath of CULI had assigned an intern to look into solutions previously proposed by the group. Solutions included closing two of the park's three gates, posting signs regarding park use and times of use. Carol Contacted Bhupien Patel of Public Works, agreed that the gates could be chained shut. He also agreed that Kevin Hickey of the Wheeler Clinic and Sister Delores Anne of SS.Cyril and Methodius School will hold the keys to the locks. Patel also agreed to have signs posted that the park is for the use of women and children, and is closed from dusk to dawn. Lt. Harold Even of HPD agreed that this should help police with enforcement there. Carol will contact the Public Works yard to order the signs. Kevin Hickey of the Wheeler Clinic will chain and lock the gates.

Other Business: Hartford Public Library. Deborah Perry announced that the Library will be providing free lunches to youth ages 6-18 this summer from 11:30 to 12:30p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Action Items:

Public Allies - Public Allies is a program under AmeriCorps. This 10

month program gives young people the opportunity to work with grassroots organizations while also receiving professional development once a week. At the conclusion of the program, the Ally receives \$5,000 for Higher Education. CSS/CON, at the suggestion of Board member Tim Cole, submitted an application and was approved for a Public Ally. The Board approved the expenditure of monies to allow for a Public Ally to work for CSS/CON for a 10 month period starting in September. The motion was moved by Osten and seconded by Ansari with unanimous approval by the board.
Colt Gateway – Rebecca McFarlane of Colt Gateway has informed CSS/CON that they have received the private financing they were seeking for the renovation of the armories. Currently there are residents living in those buildings. A motion was made to send a letter to Colt Gateway reminding them that, because of the use of federal money, they must abide by the Federal Uniform Relocation Act. Pat Williams added that this reminder be made as a suggestion and be CC: to HUD in order for the federal government to enforce their own laws. The motion was moved by Williams and seconded by Osten with unanimous approval by the board. Linda Osten asked that the letter also include that CSS/CON is pleased with the fact that Colt Gateway is making such a significant investment in the neighborhood.

Board meeting went into Executive Session at 6:20PM

Board meeting ended executive session at 6:35PM.

Executive Director Review – Linda Osten - Carol Coburn has been an outstanding asset to the Coalition To Strengthen The Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood. Our organizational growth of the last few years is directly attributable to her dedication to CSS/CON and to our mission. When Carol joined us in 2001, the organization consisted of a staff of one and a budget of \$20,000. We have since grown to a staff of five and an annual budget of \$170,000. Carol has been instrumental in CSS/CON's progress in advancing many of the goals of our Strategic Plan and related Business Plan, such as involving youth, advancing development projects, and historic preservation. While the Executive Director has been asked to make improvements,

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Dutch Point Gardner Wins Award For Community Garden Work

Dutch Point resident Joaquin Rebello, also known as "Jr.," is retired but has worked with plants most of his life. Having worked the tobacco fields in the suburbs of Hartford, he is no stranger to hard labor. However, one might think that after suffering a heart attack last year, Mr. Rebello's green thumb might have faded a bit. No way! His love of gardening is so deeply ingrained in his being that even walking with a cane won't keep him from working all day in Knox Park Community Garden located behind of the Church of the Good Shepherd.

Neighborhood youth have been working with Mr. Rebello and his wife Ms. Carmen Sanchez on the CSS/CON Elder Youth Garden. As part of an ongoing initiative to get youth to increase their interaction with the elderly, this group of young people have been working under the guidance of Mr. Rebello on making one of Hartford's most productive garden plots. The garden plot includes Tomatoes, Strawberries, Cosmos, Peppers, Onions, and a variety of other fruits and vegetables.

Mr. Rebello went way beyond the call of duty when he finished a post and beam fence Knox Parks had started at the garden with volunteer help. A frequenter of the garden, coming nearly every day to check on his prized plants, Mr. Rebello saw that all the materials to finish the fence were left out. Mr. Rebello finished the fence without any fanfare until Charmaine Craig, community network builder, from Knox Parks noticed. For his hard work Mr. Rebello is receiving an award from the Knox Parks Foundation. Thanks you Mr. Rebello for making the Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood such a special place to live.

A special thanks need to be made to Greg Vickers, Brenda Schack, and Shannon Raider for their contribution of time in guidance in this garden endeavor.



Dutch Point resident Joaquin Rebello with wife Carmen Sanchez and grandson working in the community garden during the early spring. Behind them the now demolished row houses of Dutch Point.

Board Meeting Minutes Continued from Page 2 particularly in communicating more clearly with the board and providing better financial reporting, we nevertheless salute her abilities and results. The Coalition To Strengthen The Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood is fortunate to have her as Executive Director.

The Board unanimously approved a salary increase of \$3,000 to be effective July 1, 2005. The board also approved a 2% increase for cost of living for all staff as the organization is able to pay this cost (moved and seconded by Osten and Williams.)

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM (moved and seconded by Ansari and Williams.)

Respectfully Submitted,
Arthur Hardy-Doubleday

Upcoming Meetings

Public Safety Committee:
Wednesday, September 21, 2005, 5:30PM,
Parish House

Next Board Meeting:
Monday, October 3, 2005, 5:30 PM,
CREC, 111 Charter Oak Avenue.

Hartford 2000:
Thursday, September 21, 2005, 5:30
– 8:00PM, 34 Sequassen Street.

Executive Committee:
Thursday, September 21, 2005, 7:30AM
– Ashleys, Main Street.

Development Committee:
Wednesday, September 7, 2005 at 1:00 pm
in Capewell
Administration Building.

Neighborhood Teenagers Find Summer Jobs through CREC

Ilvin Sanchez and Wilbert Ruperto are interns working for CSS/CON this summer. Their internships positions were made possible by CREC's Summer Youth Employment program. As part of their job they interviewed Maryanne Pascone and James Rodriguez from CREC about the program:

Ilvin and Wilbert: What is your program this summer?

Maryanne and James: CREC is running a Summer Youth Employment program in the CSS/CON neighborhood. The goal of the program is to reach out to young people who may have not either qualified or gotten jobs through the Capital Workforce Partners program. This summer we are working with 12 neighborhood teens. The teenagers are placed: CSS/CON, Hispanic Health Council, and the Hartford Neighborhood Mural Project (a collaboration between CSS/CON and CREC.) We want the participants to have a positive first experience working, earning some pocket change for this summer, and learn how to function in a work environment.

Ilvin and Wilbert: So any teenager could have applied for these jobs?

James and Maryanne: No. The money that allows us to run this program is intended to employ teenagers from this neighborhood.

Ilvin and Wilbert: Did you have enough applicants from the neighborhood?

James and Maryanne: Yes! In fact we had too many applicants. We had a lot of strong candidates that gave solid interviews. The hard part of this program is deciding who ends up with the jobs.

Ilvin and Wilbert: What do you want teenagers to learn from this program?

James and Maryanne: The most important thing we want teens to learn is coming to work every day on time. We want participants to learn how to work with others, and hopefully come up with some ideas for what they want to do in the future.

Ilvin and Wilbert: Do you have any plans for programs in the future?

James and Maryanne: Yes. In September we are having an after-school computer program for teens who need help on school projects. We have a computer lab in this building that will be open during the afternoon once school begins. Tutors will be available for young people to work with on school work. In order to use the lab, participants need to get a permission slip filled out by their parents.

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of Appeals in a show of support for development at Coltsville and at Dutch Point.

Patty Lathrop joined the staff as our Workforce Development Coordinator. She assists with resume writing, interview skills, and job searches. She can be reached at 509-3707.

Our Public Ally, Daryll Yopp, is slated to begin working with us at the end of the month. He will focus specifically on implementing the Youth portion of our Strategic Plan.

We've got a jam-packed fall schedule. As always, money is tight and we're doing a lot with only a little. The enthusiasm of our staff, our residents, and our volunteers is inspiring and serves to keep our momentum going.

Sincerely Yours

Carol Coburn
Executive Director



The Coalition To Strengthen the Sheldon/
Charter Oak Neighborhood, Inc
34 Sequassen Street
Hartford, CT 06106

CSS/CON holds monthly board meetings. The meetings are held the first Monday of every month at 111 Charter Oak Ave from 5:30pm-7:00pm For more information please call Arthur Hardy-Doubleday at 860-509-3706.

Join Us to Recognize the Summer Youth Beautification Team And other Young Volunteers.



CSS/CON youth and brothers Braulio Maysonet, Wilfrank Rodriquez, and Wilbert Ruperto pause from a hard day of working during Hartford Rebuilding Together day with CSS/CON Executive Director Carol Coburn and appreciative homeowner Refus Shepard



CSS/CON youth Jesus Hernandez, Braulio Maysonet, Johnny Salazar, Ilvin Sanchez, and Rey Fontanez and CSS/CON staff member Arthur Hardy-Doubleday pose for a picture during the Knox Park Foundation's Green Team day this summer at South Green's Barnard Park.

Join the community as we recognize the volunteer spirit of our young people.

***The Restored Capwell Administration Building
60 Popieluszko Ct.
Thursday September 29th
6:30pm-7:30pm***