

**THA RECAP**

**PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2015 – JUNE 30, 2015**

From Harriet Polansky, Executive Director

*To include, but not limited to the following:*

**Harriet’s 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast**

In January, I held our 2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast for all the residents that have made a positive impact on Stern Village in 2014. Brueggers Bagels donated Bagels, Stop & Shop donated spreads and additional breakfast food and Luigis Bakery donated assorted pastries. Approximately 45 resident volunteers attended and I am proud that our list keeps growing.

**Congregate – Saved Foods**

Congregants that are unable to dine at Noon can have their meals saved in the refrigerator. If meals are not picked up during the afternoon or evening, they are thrown away on the next day. To ensure Congregants get their saved meals, I have implemented sign-out sheets for the residents/aides and attendants to sign when a meal is provided, as well as a daily log of saved meals with the name of each Congregant. The daily log must be signed by the server and attendant.

**Monroe – Trumbull Public Health Department**

Paulette and I worked very closely with our Public Health Department to make sure residents’ apartments are sanitary and not infringing on neighbors’ health and welfare.

**Medical Alerts for Residents**

After contacting several medical alert providers, Paulette and I found a firm that provides medical alert systems to our residents at a reduced cost. We identified several Congregants and Villagers to get the alert system and several others have signed up for it.

**Mental Health Support Group**

The first Thursday of each month, we have a Mental Health Support Group in the Community Room. This is led by Victor Olsen, M.A., from the Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Center.

**Meeting with Key Directors from the Town**

THA Development Team presented our preliminary plans to the Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal, Public Health Director, Building Official, Town Engineer, Director of Zoning Enforcement, and the Director of EMS. We answered several questions about our project and the Directors were all in favor of our Revitalization and Rehabilitation Project.

**Housing Academy**

Neil and I have continued to attend monthly Housing Academy sessions and participated on conference calls, to prepare us for the SSHP Funding Round, on April 20th. These sessions have been extremely informative and helpful*. In fact, I was asked to present the THA Resident Participation Plan and I was given rave reviews on our processes and outcomes. Several participants requested my PowerPoint Presentation.*

The culmination of the Housing Academy Sessions was called “The Shark Tank”.

This involved demonstrating our needs in front of “judges”, from CHFA, DOH, and Syndicators from two firms. The presentation had to be under 10 minutes and it was timed. The THA was first to present. I created a detailed and in-depth PowerPoint presentation and provided copies to the “judges”.

**Meeting with Chief Lombardo and Stern Village Safety Assessment**

I acquainted Chief Lombardo with Stern Village and presented our plans to him.

Officer Harry conducted another safety and security assessment of Stern Village to augment the one he conducted in 2013. He was pleased that we put in additional lighting, speed bumps and signage, as per his earlier recommendations. We discussed plans for increasing security and safety, once we receive the funding.

**Following Connecticut Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) Directives**

During the course of the last several months, we have received a variety of directives from CHFA in regards to our revitalization and rehabilitation project. For example, CHFA does not want us to add capacity, only replace units that will be demolished due to the addition of a new road and parking. CHFA requested that we cut back on the size of the new community center and eliminate the 3-season porch. CHFA requested that we only use 4% LIHTCs and not phase the project. Based on complying with CHFA, the THA Development Team created Scheme G.

**Meeting with Senator Marilyn Moore and State Representative David Rutigliano**

On two separate occasions, Senator Moore and State Representative David Rutigliano visited Stern Village to learn about our plans. State Senator Tony Hwang and State Representative Laura Devlin could not meet with me, however they are aware of what we are trying to accomplish and everyone is extremely supportive of the Revitalization and Rehabilitation of Stern Village.

**4% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)**

As mandated by CHFA, the THA needs to partner with a syndicator in order to receive 4% Low Income Housing Tax Credits. In order to have a syndicator, we created an organizational chart in draft form for the financing arrangement, as well as assessed syndicators. The THA Board of Commissioner will not select a syndicator until funding is approved.

**Meeting with First Selectman Timothy Herbst**

The THA Development Team met with First Selectman Tim Herbst and Jamie Bratt, the Director of Planning and Zoning to provide them with our vision and plans for the revitalization and rehabilitation of Stern Village. First Selectman Herbst and Jamie Bratt is extremely supportive of our project.

**Sub-surface Investigation**

As part of the pre-development phase, we conducted sub-surface testing to understand the condition of the soil, before we build. The information garnered is needed prior to construction.

**Employment for Intellectually Disabled**

Paulette and I are working closely with the Department of Social Services and Community Based Services, The Kennedy Center, and The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and Career Resources to get our intellectually disabled residents jobs. Career Resources has provided job coaching and training to several of our residents and this organization is currently working with approximately 10 residents.

**Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority**

I have been working very closely with GBT and they have extended our bus services. GBT has provided us additional free bus trips to major stores and residents that need bus service for medical appointments are not charged. Starting June 29, 2015 residents that are not members of the Senior Center contact our THA office to schedule medical appointments. I’ve implemented processes and procedures to make scheduling seamless for GBT.

**United Illuminating (UI)**

Our THA Development Team has had many meetings with upper level management from UI on behalf of the Revitalization and Redevelopment of Stern Village. We provided UI with the scope and details of the project. We provided UI the model numbers of every refrigerator in the units, as well as a sampling of residents’ electricity bills. UI is an integral part of our team. UI provided us a letter of intent for over $300,000 to help fund the energy improvements for our project. This letter was part of the SSHP application for funding.

**Solar for the Congregate**

We were awarded funding through CHFA’s Solarize SSHP (State Sponsored Housing Program) to install Solar on the congregate building. We are in the process of working out the agreements with Green Bank, who is helping to fund this initiative.

**Nichols Garden Club**

For the 2nd consecutive year, the Nichols Garden Club provided us with 10 Valentine’s Day floral arrangements for our residents. The arrangements were given to our 90+ year old residents.

**Long Hill Garden Club**

This organization worked with residents to create beautiful terrariums this spring. Members of the garden club also worked with 10-15 residents to create individual gardens.

**Meeting at the Department of Housing (DOH)**

The THA Development Team met with DOH and CHFA management to discuss our rational, strategies and implementation plan for our project. We walked them through our latest Scheme G and a lengthy PowerPoint Presentation.

**Commissioner of the Department of Housing (DOH)**

In April, Evonne Klein, Commissioner of DOH and Nick Lundgren, Deputy Commissioner of DOH visited Stern Village. We provided them with a tour of our campus and showed them a couple of units. We also had a lengthy discussion about our revitalization and rehabilitation plans. Several residents were in the community room and had a chance to meet the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.

**Connecticut Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA)**

In March, Dara Koval, Vice President of CHFA visited Stern Village, accompanied by James Welter II, Underwriter at CHFA. We also provided them with a tour, showed them a few units and discussed our project and funding sources. Dara and James had a chance to meet our residents.

**Plans for Stern Village**

Millennium, the Board of Commissioners, Neil and I worked very closely with Wiles Architects. We’ve had several conference calls and page-turner meetings to review the plans, prior to the submission for funding. We have included several energy efficiencies, safety design applications and wireless medical alerts into the schematics. What started out as a 3-season porch, ended up as a foyer to provide residents with a more livable area.

**Stop & Shop, Quality Street location**

Paulette and I have established a “Wednesday Bread Day” at Stern Village, courtesy of Stop and Shop. Every Wednesday, Stop and Shop provides us with a grocery cart full of day-old breads, rolls and pastries. The food is distributed to the residents of Stern Village.

**Meeting with Paul Timpanelli, President & CEO, Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BRBC)**

As a Board Member of the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce, which is affiliated with the BRBC, I thought it was prudent to have Paul Timpanelli learn about our project. Thelma, Neil and I had the opportunity to meet with Paul in my office and discuss the project. Paul and the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce are very supportive of the revitalization and redevelopment plans.

**Town of Trumbull**

We asked the Town of Trumbull to help us offset the costs for the revitalization and redevelopment of Stern Village and the Town delivered!

-First Selectman Tim Herbst is extremely supportive of our project and provided us with a letter to CHFA stating that our current PILOT agreement will remain in effect. First Selectman Herbst was also a proponent of reducing the building/town permits and fees (that will be needed for our project) by 50%.

-I met with the Legislative and Administrative Council, as well as the Town Council to request the reduction of building/town permits and fees. The Town Council agreed to split the costs with us 50/50.

**Planning and Zoning (P&Z)**

The THA Development Team had several meetings with Jamie Bratt, Director of P&Z and her team. An amendment to update the text that describes our property was needed for planning and zoning. Our legal counsel, Attorney Ray Rizio appeared before the Planning and Zoning Commission and the amendment was approved. Don Scinto, a resident of Stern Village, is also a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Don was also instrumental in helping us.

**Robo Calls**

Many residents were not receiving my call alerts through a free service called PingTown. After researching several companies, I secured a new robo call system to provide the THA residents with alerts. All residents are now receiving alerts and if they miss it, they can call a special number and the alerts will be played back to them.

**Governor Malloy**

I met Governor Malloy at a Bridgeport Regional Business Council Luncheon and briefly discussed our project. Governor Malloy is a proponent of affordable housing for CT.

**Resident Program Fund**

The THA was awarded funding to subsidize the purchase of outdoor furniture for the Congregants and Villagers. We purchased LED, adult swings with awnings, LED umbrellas, tables, chairs and an outdoor waterfall. Residents are enjoying the new furniture.

**Resident Participation Meetings**

I held several resident participation meetings to discuss the processes and expectations for the SSHP funding round. The major of residents of Stern Village are extremely excited about plans for revitalization and rehabilitation.

**Congregate Upgrades**

We installed ceiling fans in the dining room and installed new carpeting in the foyer, lounge area and office. This has made it more comfortable for residents and THA employees of the Congregate. All windows were cleaned and floors were buffed by an outside firm.

**RWS – Resident Waste Removal Service**

I negotiated for an additional savings of $50 per month for RWS services.

**Vending Machine**

The THA is looking into a vending machine in the Community Room. Residents that attended my June Tuesday’s Tea were provided with surveys to choose the items they would like to have and suggest others. The vending machine will be installed in the Community Room the beginning of July.

**Presentations and Activities:**

-United Health Care discussed “what you should know about Medicare”

-People’s Bank presented “scam alerts”

-Agency on Aging conducted a “shred your documents day”

-Wellcare has made several presentations at Stern Village, including a well care bingo.

-Valentine’s Day Party

-Joe Lucella, Director of EMS talked about taking precautionary measure to ensure safety

-Bridgeport Hospital was a Stern Village several times to discuss pertinent issues with our residents. Some of the presentations dealt with heart disease, diabetes, stokes, nutrition, and sleep disorder.

-Easter & Passover Celebration with Rabbi Schultz and Father Flynn

-Messiah Baptist Church presented Life Choices: Power of Attorney, Conservatorship, Pre-Funeral Arrangements, and the like.

-Long Hill Garden Club, Tea Cup Flower Arrangements

-The Alzheimer’s’ Association presented a Brain Power Workshop

-Get Acquainted with Your Neighbors Luncheon by Gloria Langham and residents of Stern Village

-Wing of Eagles Senior Services discussed senior issues

-The Southwestern CT Agency on Aging (SWACCA) presented caregiver’s support, respite care and Medicare savings.

-Bethel Healthcare, how to manage stress

-Hancock Pharmacy concerning medication management and safety

-State of CT discussed disability benefits

-CT In-Home Assistance talked about home care services

And more!