

# Post-Sandy Redevelopment of Washington Village

October 25, 2016

**Joe Canas**, P.E., LEED AP, CFM



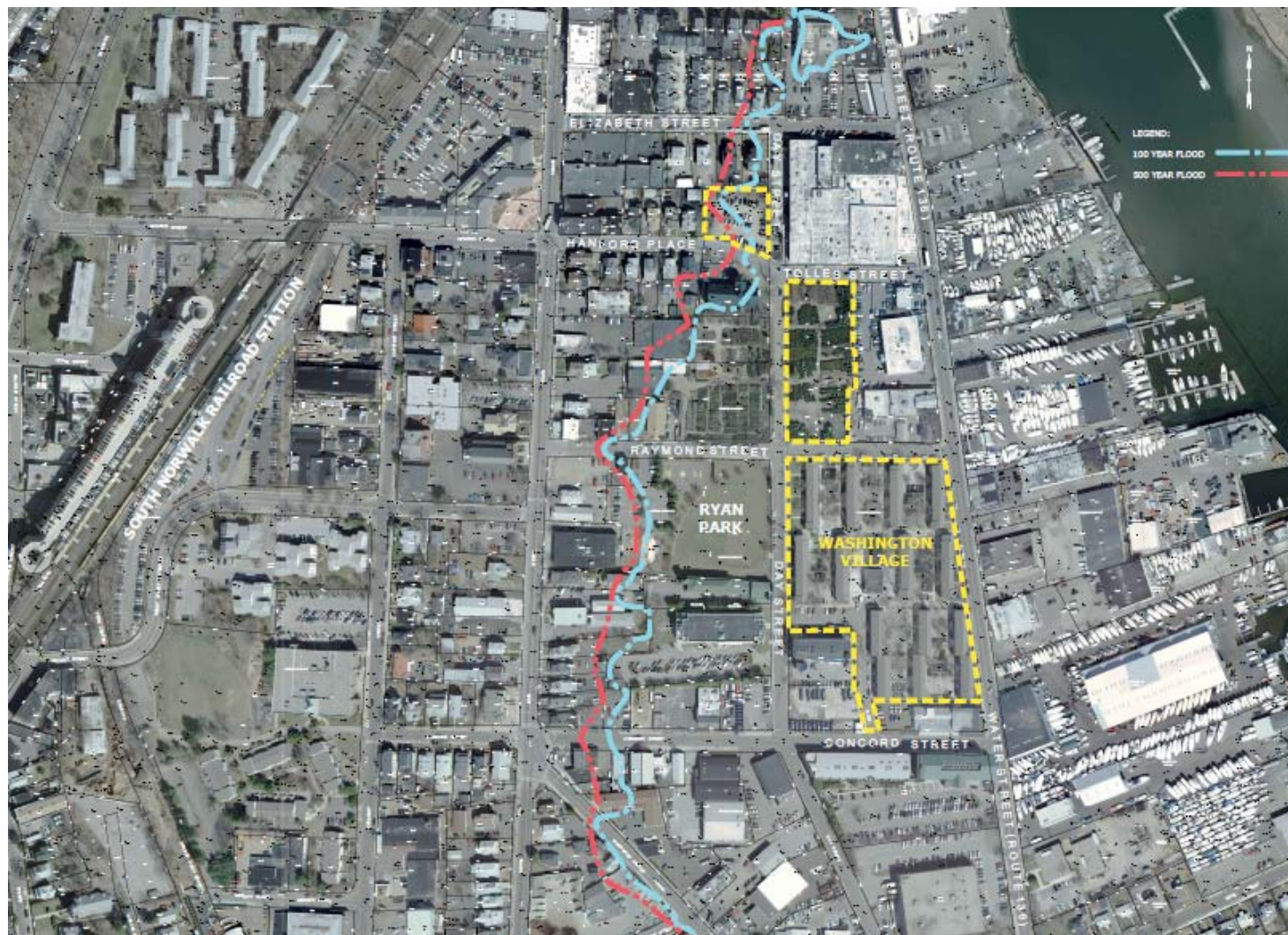
# Existing Conditions

- **Constructed in 1940**
- **Oldest public housing project in Connecticut**
- **136 housing units**
- **Adjacent to public park**
- **Within walking distance of train station**
- **Area subject to localized flooding**





# Existing Conditions



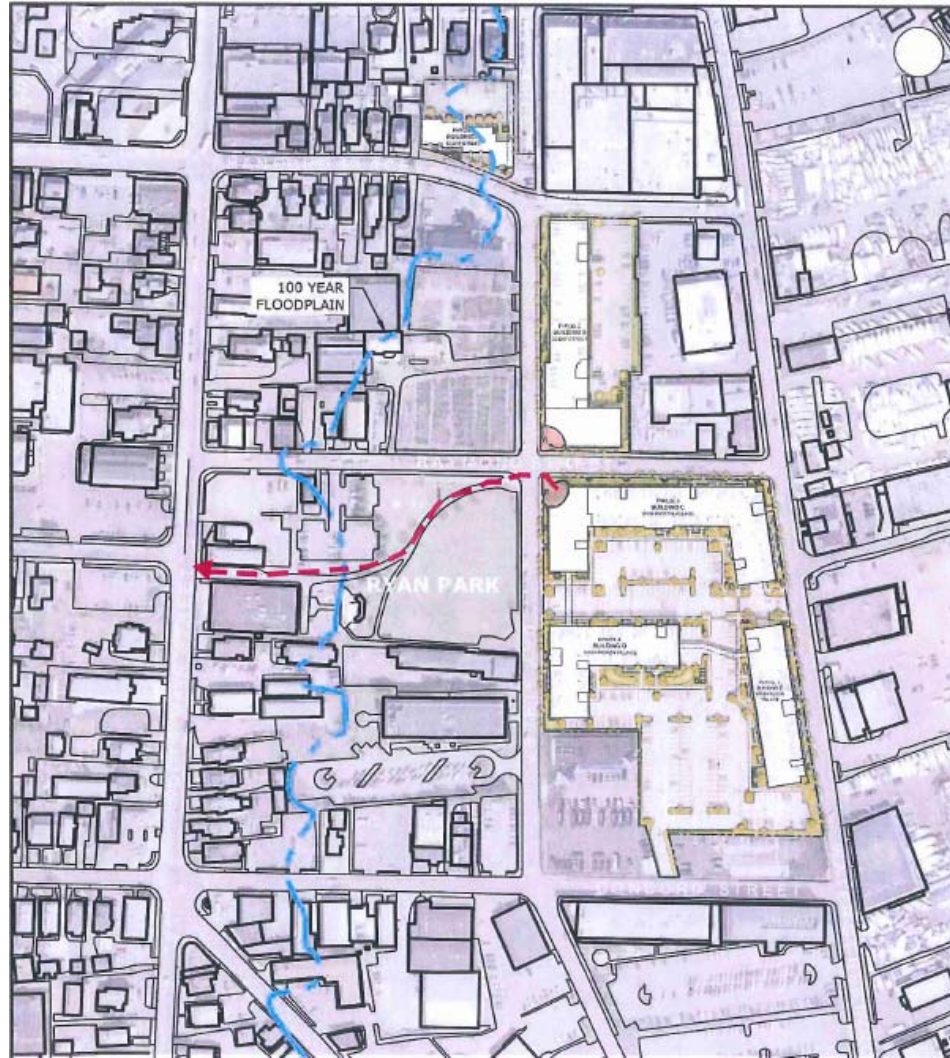


# Proposed Conditions

- **Redevelop Washington Village and adjacent lots**
- **273 proposed units**
  - 136 subsidized units
  - 137 market rate
- **Park improvements planned for separate project**



# Proposed Conditions





# Superstorm Sandy

- **Many units flooded by as much as 4 to 5 feet of water**
- **Norwalk Housing Authority received \$ 30 million Community Development Block Grant from HUD**
- **Trinity Financial selected developer**



# Floodplain Management Certification

- **CGS 25-68 requires any state agency proposing an action within a floodplain obtain a Floodplain Management Certification from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection**
- **Must demonstrate compliance with National Flood Insurance Program requirements and State floodplain management regulations**



# Floodplain Management Strategies

## Requirement

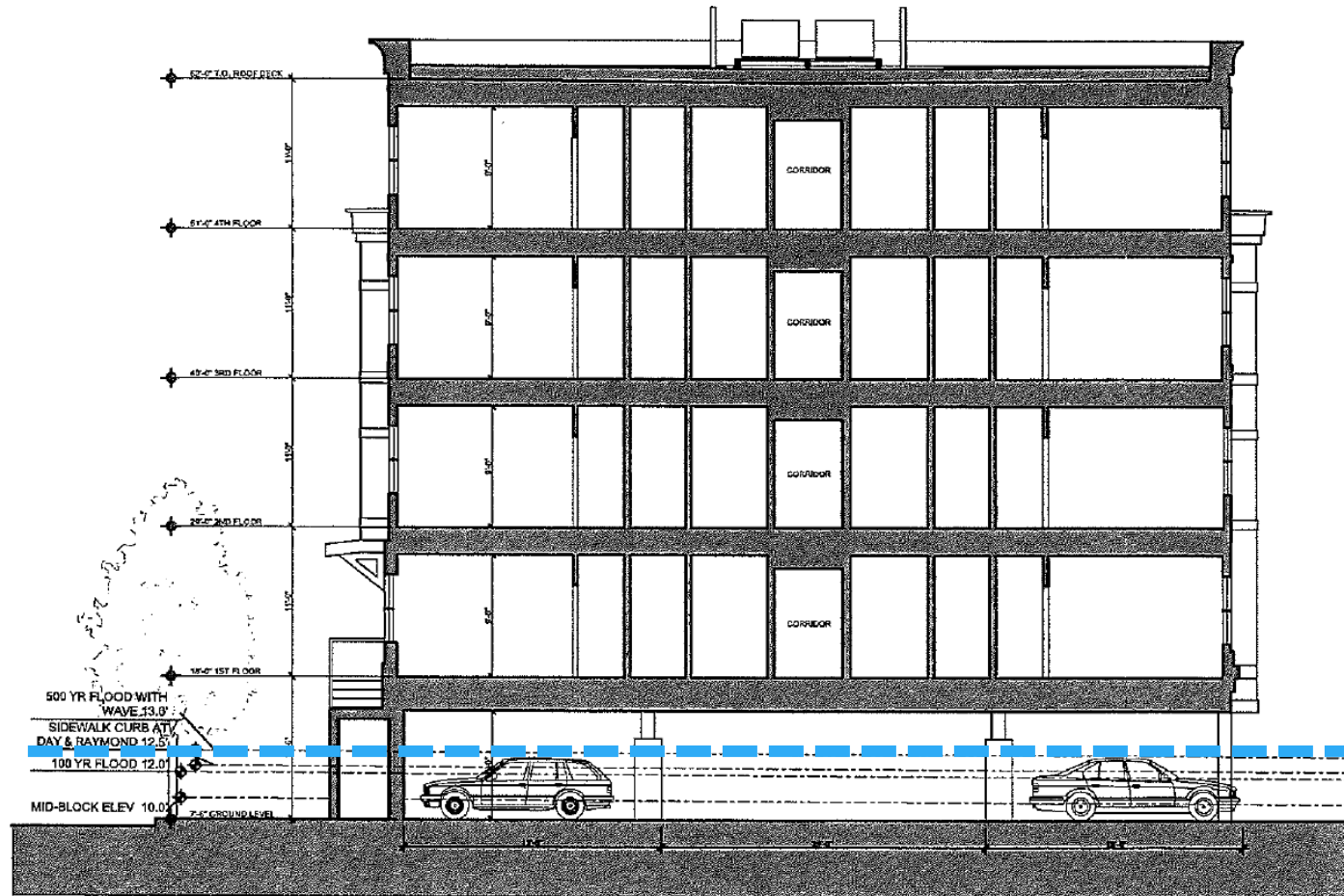
- CT Dept. of Housing considers public housing to be a critical activity, therefore must be designed for the 500-year flood

## Strategy

- Parking was placed at grade beneath the building, and the residential units placed on the floor above
- Lobby and elevators to be floodproofed to 500-year plus 1'



# Floodplain Management Strategies



# 500-Year Coastal Elevation?

- **Flood Insurance Studies only publish the 100-year coastal flood elevation**
- **FEMA technical guidance:**
  - 500 year elevation =  $1.25 \times 100$  year elevation
  - (or conduct detailed study)
- **500-year using FEMA guidance: 15 NAVD88**
- **Detailed study: 15 NAVD88**



# Floodplain Management Strategies

## Requirement

- CT DEEP policy requires “dry access” from the site to contiguous dry land

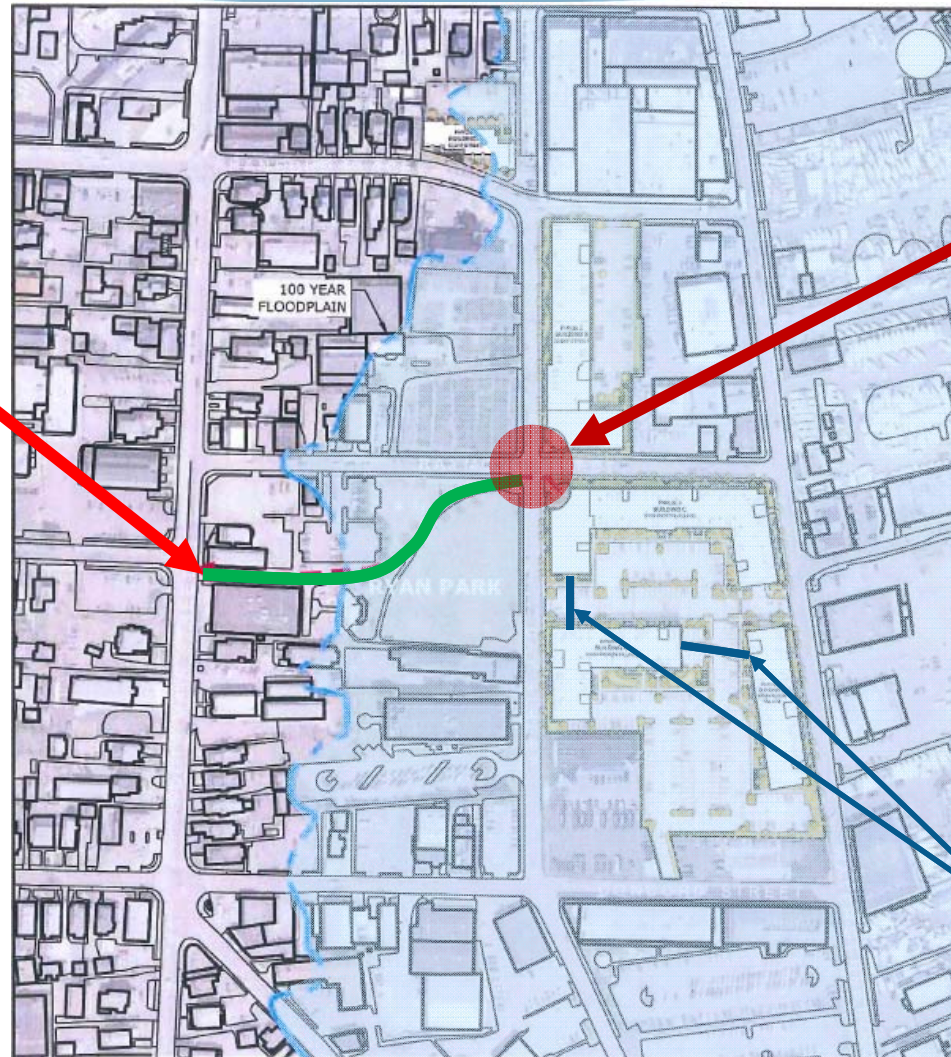
## Strategy

- Elevated bridges between units
- Infrastructure improvements, elevation of Raymond and Day intersection
- Berm across Ryan Park



# Floodplain Management Strategies

Berm across  
Ryan Park @  
El. 12.1



Raise  
Intersection of  
Raymond &  
Day to El. 12.1

Elevated  
Bridges  
Connecting  
Buildings

# Localized Flooding Strategies

- **Installed tide gate on local drainage**
- **“Stacking” the impervious coverage allowed for more pervious coverage on the site**
- **Other LID retrofits**
  - Porous pavement
  - Rain gardens



# Executive Order 13690

- **Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, effective January 2015**
- **Applies to federally funded actions**
- **Choose one of three compliance paths**
  - Build two feet above the 100-year flood elevation for standard projects, three feet above for critical projects
  - Build to the 500-year flood elevation
  - Use best-available, actionable climate science





# Intensity of Development

- **CGS 25-68d does not allow FM Certifications for projects that increase the intensity of development in the floodplain.**
- **Agency may ask for an exemption**
- **Exemption was required for this project because we were going from 136 to 273 units**



# Floodplain Management Exemption

**Must demonstrate the project meets four criteria:**

- **Project is in the public interest**
- **Project complies with the National Flood Insurance Program requirements**
- **Owner is aware of the increased flood insurance premiums**
- **Demonstrate that project will not cause harm or injury to persons or property**

# Floodplain Management Exemption

- **Safeguards to prevent injury to persons or property**
  - Dry access
  - Prepared detailed flood contingency plan
  - Coordination with City Emergency Operations Plan
  - Document how cars would be moved off site and parked in City Garages





# Floodplain Management Exemption

- **Tentative decision to approve Exemption granted by CTDEEP on August 26, 2014**
- **30 day appeal period**
- **Friends of Ryan Park submitted appeal on September 25, 2014**
  - 200 signatures obtained, 25 required



# Misinformation!

## Dry Access

Proposed Concept



What the opponents said we were going to do



# Misinformation!

## Ryan Park Butterfly Garden

How FORP represented it

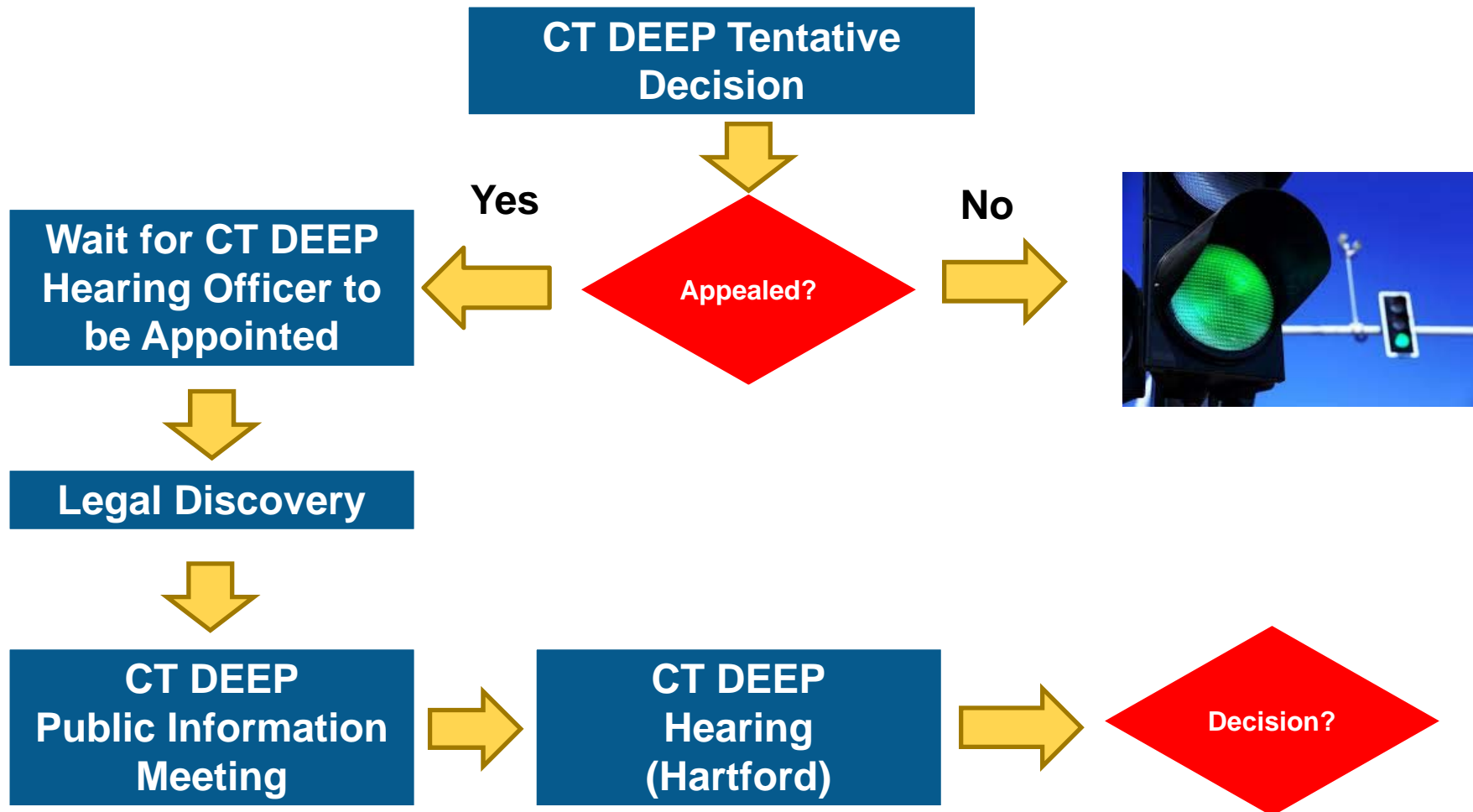


Reality





# CTDEEP Appeal Process



# CTDEEP Public Information Session

- **South Norwalk Community Center**
- **Site walk before information session**
- **Project team introduced the project**
- **Members of public allowed to speak, limited to three minutes each**



# CT DEEP Hearing

- **CT DEEP, Hartford**
- **Two sessions: December 18, 2014 and January 6, 2015**

## Support

- CT DEEP Staff
- CT Dept. of Housing
- Norwalk Redevelopment Agency
- Norwalk Housing Authority + Attorneys
- Trinity Financial + Attorneys
- Tighe & Bond

## Opposition

- Friends of Ryan Park (self-representing)



# CT DEEP Hearing

- **April 30, 2015 CT DEEP Hearing**  
Officer rules in favor of Department of Housing
- **June 23, 2015 Friends of Ryan Park files appeal**
  - Hearing officer didn't consider alternatives
- **April 20, 2016 Connecticut Superior Court dismisses appeal**
- **20 day appeal period passes without incident**

NHA director: Friends' appeal of DEEP decision imperils \$30M grant

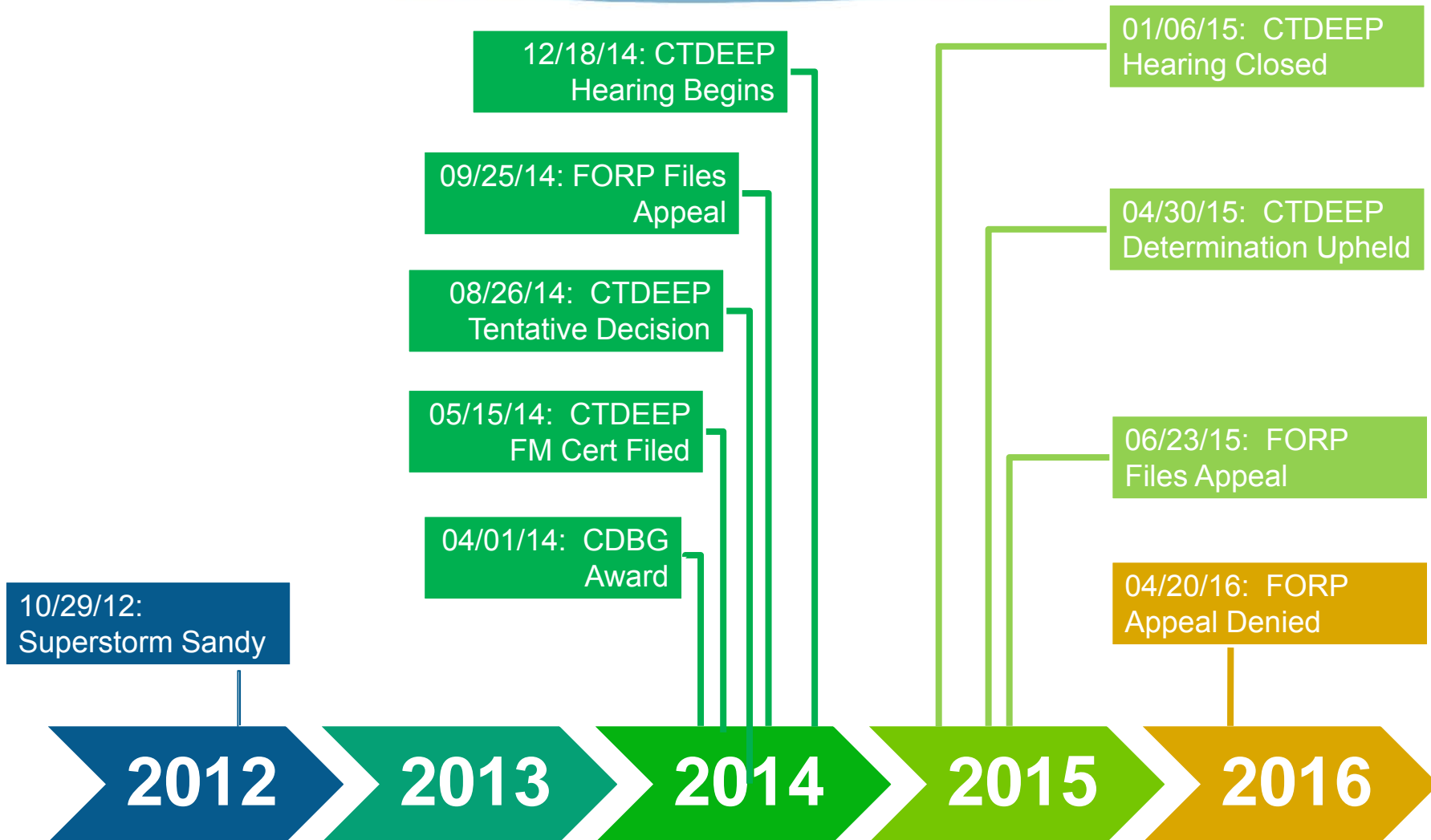
Norwalk Council pressuring Duleep on road block to Washington Village

Duleep urges state to protect Ryan Park murals, trees, from 'malicious' Norwalk

Norwalk lawyer threatens Duleep attorney with treble damages for 'vexatious litigation'

Testimony: Duleep worried 'politician' may have targeted her for Ryan Park 'hit'

# Timeline



# Now What?

- **Construction documents under way for site and off-site roadway improvements**
- **City has awarded Master Plan design services for Ryan Park**
- **FORP “improvements” relocated by Parks Dept. to FORP’s President’s front yard**





[illegible]

**Tighe&Bond**