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
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.

Tighe & Bond
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 x 100 year elevation
  - (or conduct detailed study)

- **500-year using FEMA guidance:**
  - 15 NAVD88

- **Detailed study:** 15 NAVD88
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<td>• CT DEEP policy requires “dry access” from the site to contiguous dry land</td>
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<th>Strategy</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Elevated bridges between units</td>
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<td>• Infrastructure improvements, elevation of Raymond and Day intersection</td>
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<td>• Berm across Ryan Park</td>
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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**

[Image of a pedestrian pathway]

**What the opponents said we were going to do**

[Image of a traffic congestion on a busy road]
Misinformation!

Ryan Park Butterfly Garden

How FORP represented it

Reality
CTDEEP Appeal Process

CT DEEP Tentative Decision

Yes

Appealed?

No

Wait for CT DEEP Hearing Officer to be Appointed

Legal Discovery

CT DEEP Public Information Meeting

CT DEEP Hearing (Hartford)

Decision?
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, Hartford

Two sessions: December 18, 2014 and January 6, 2015

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<th>Support</th>
<th>Opposition</th>
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<tr>
<td>• CT DEEP Staff</td>
<td>• Friends of Ryan Park (self-representing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• CT Dept. of Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Norwalk Redevelopment Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Norwalk Housing Authority +</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorneys</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Trinity Financial + Attorneys</td>
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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’
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
Questions?

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