



City of Middletown
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, CONSERVATION, & DEVELOPMENT

MILLER-BRIDGE PROJECT

EXISTING PROJECT AREA CONDITIONS

Project Area

The study area is bounded on the east by State Route 9, on the north by the Mattabaset River and the wetlands associated with the Cromwell Meadows State Conservation area, on the west by the rail yard which is state owned but leased on a long term basis to the Providence and Worcester Railroad and on the south by railroad tracks and the right of way for the Arrigoni Bridge.

The project area contains twenty (29) lots, twenty-two (22) principal buildings, thirty-six (36) residential units, one (1) church and one (1) full service restaurant.

Figure 3 displays the study area in relation to surrounding environs.

Roads

The only public roads within the study area are Miller and Bridge Streets. Bridge Street runs parallel to State Route 9 and terminates at its southerly end at a pedestrian/emergency rail crossing at Portland Street. Bridge Street terminates at the northerly end in a turnaround just prior to reaching the Mattabaset River. Miller Street runs perpendicular to Bridge Street. From Bridge Street it rises quickly to a crossing of the Providence and Worcester rail line. This rail line is proposed to run to Hartford. The grade in this area is in excess of 10 percent. It then drops back down on the westerly side of the track. This “hump” in the road causes poor visibility at the rail crossing and makes it difficult for maintenance and emergency vehicles to access the western end of Miller Street. Miller Street terminates at the Providence Worcester Railyard, There is no turnaround at the end of Miller making turning movements difficult,

Utilities

The area is serviced with all utilities common to an urban setting. Buildings are serviced by city water and city sewer. Electric, phone and cable television is also available via above ground poles and wiring. The area is in the city sanitation district and the City Fire District.

Rail Lines

The operation of an active railroad is a major land use in and around the study area. The main line between Middletown and the Mattebaset Treatment Plant, and in the near future Hartford, bisects the study area. The rail line to the businesses on CT. Route 3 forms the study areas western boundary. At the southern extreme of the study area is the point where trains can switch from the Hartford line to the State Route 3 line. From this point trains can continue southerly to Pratt and Whitney Aircraft or southwesterly to New Haven, or easterly across the river to Portland.

Wetlands and Watercourses

Development within areas designated as wetlands and watercourses and a fifty- (50) foot buffer around these areas is carefully regulated by the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Agency. The presence of wetlands and watercourses represents a severe development constraint to any activity in the northern extreme of the study area.

Figure 4 displays the wetlands and watercourses located within the study area.

Flood Areas

The areas displayed as flood plain are those areas, which are located within the 100-year flood plain. This flooding is due to backwater from the Connecticut River during the annual spring freshet. The Planning and Zoning Commission carefully regulates areas displayed as flood plain. Any development within the flood plain requires the granting of a special exception from the Planning and Zoning Commission. Residential development is prohibited in the flood plain. During the hearing process the applicant is required to show that the building will be above the flood elevation and that proper compensation for the lost storage capacity has been provided on site so as to not increase flooding on adjacent properties. Considering the difficult permitting process, the required flood insurance and the relative undesirability of property located in the 100 year flood plain, the existence of flood plain on a property represents a severe development constraint.

Figure 5 displays the extensive area of flood plain within the study area.

City and State Property

Figures 6 and 7 display those areas owned by the City of Middletown and the State of Connecticut. The majority of the State land is leased to the Providence and Worcester Railroad. The City land includes Roosevelt Park and properties acquired through tax foreclosure.

Existing Plan of Development Designation and Zoning Designation

The city's Plan of Conservation and Development includes a future land use plan. This plan was last updated in 1976. This plan designates the area as high density residential. The city's Zoning Map for the area designates the Bridge Street area as Riverfront Recreation (RF) and the Miller Street area as Mixed Use (MX).

EXISTING STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

A survey of exterior structural conditions was conducted of the 23 buildings in the Project Area. As a result of the survey, each of the buildings was classified in one of the following five categories:

- Sound condition
- In need of minor repairs or adjustments
- In need of significant repairs; one or more deficiencies requiring significant rehabilitation.
- A combination of major deficiencies requiring reconstruction.
- Major defects not suitable for rehabilitation or reconstruction.

The results of the building condition assessment for the entire area are shown in Table 5.2

The original Structural Condition Survey as conducted by the Building Department with exterior conditions only. The updated structural conditions map also includes knowledge of interior conditions, using the resources of the City Health Department. Full code compliance inspection (Connecticut Fire and Life/Safety and Middletown Housing Code) may indicate additional significant structural and/or other deteriorating conditions within the structures.

TABLE 5.2

Table 5.2 includes a breakdown of structural conditions of all buildings in the Project Area.
EXISTING BUILDING CONDITIONS
 (Entire Project Area)
 North End/CBD Project Area

<u>Building Conditions</u>	<u>No. of Buildings</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Sound Condition		
In need of minor repairs		
In need of significant repair		
Combination of major deficiencies		
Major defects not suitable for rehabilitation or reconstruction		

TOTAL		

Condition Type and Use of Structures

<u>Address</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>Type of Unit</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Condition</u> Good/Fair/Poor
12 MILLER ST	JANIS DAVID J & MORELAND DALE W	Four family	Rental	Poor
15 MILLER ST	EVANS PETER C SR & JOYCE A	Single Family	Owner Occupied	Good
17 MILLER ST	JONES SADIE MAE	Single Family	Rental	Good
19 MILLER ST	TURNER ERENCE P	Single Family	Owner Occupied	Fair
25 & 27 MILLER ST	RICHMOND JOAN AKA RICHMOND	Two Single Family Homes	Owner Occupied	Poor
31 MILLER ST	KILGORE BRUCE R	Single Family	Owner Occupied	Fair
50 MILLER ST	BOWERMAN JAMES JR	Single Family	Rental	Good
77 MILLER ST (REAR)	HART GERALD & ROPER REID	Two Family	Rental	Fair
<u>79 MILLER ST (REAR)</u>	<u>HART GERALD & ROPER REID</u>	Two Family	Rental	Fair
Units -15				
121 BRIDGE ST	WELCH, PETER	Three family	Rental	Fair
125 BRIDGE ST	MCARTHUR RAYMOND L	Three family	Rental	Poor
127 BRIDGE ST	DALESSANDRO SALVATORE &	Single Family	Rental	Poor
129 BRIDGE ST	DALESSANDRO SALVATORE &	Two Family	Owner Occupied	Poor
135 BRIDGE ST	LITTLE BENJAMIN	Three family	Owner Occupied	Fair

133 BRIDGE ST (REAR)	ALFREDOS RIVERSIDE REST INC	Two Family	Rental	Poor
141 BRIDGE ST	ALFREDOS RIVERSIDE REST INC	Restaurant/apar tment	Rental	Good
115 BRIDGE ST	MOUNT HOPE F.B.H. CHURCH	Church/two apartments	Rental	Poor
109 BRIDGE ST	ROSS DAWN S	Single Family	Owner Occupied	Poor
<u>103 BRIDGE ST</u>	<u>LILJEDAHL GILLIS JR(EST)</u> <u>JOANNE T (EXEC)</u>	Three family	Rental	Good

Units -21

Project History

The primary concern impacting the viability of the neighborhood is its lack of connection to the City in that the neighborhood is bounded on the north by wetlands, on the west by railroad tracks and on the east and south by Route 9 and railroad tracks. Currently a consensus exists that safe and convenient access to the neighborhood is unavailable and the current access from Route 9 has been previously identified as one of most dangerous intersections in the State of Connecticut.

In May of 1998 the Yale School of Architecture in conjunction with the North End Action Team (NEAT) conducted an exhaustive two-day charrette planning process. One of the conclusions of the charrette was that the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood could not be viable without improved access. This process included the development of four options to improve access to the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood.

On the Common Council meet to determine the fate of four buildings in the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood which the city acquired through tax foreclosure. At that meeting NEAT demanded that the Common Council address the safety issues in the neighborhood. NEAT felt that access must be improved or the residents of the neighborhood must be compensated for their properties and relocated out of the neighborhood in a fair and equitable manner.

Based on this meeting the Mayor and the Common Council concluded that the time had come to address the Miller and Bridge Street problem.

The Mayor and the Economic Development Committee instructed the Director of Planning to convene a meeting of the long dormant Redevelopment Agency. The Redevelopment Agency's charge was to determine if any of the access options presented by the Yale School of Architecture were feasible and if so to determine a proper course of action to implement an access solution. If the proposed access options were deemed unfeasible the Agency was to utilize its redevelopment powers to acquire the properties and relocate the residents, the church and the restaurant.

The Redevelopment Agencies Involvement

On April 12, 1999 the Redevelopment Agency convened an organizational meeting. At this meeting the Agency addressed organizational issues, reviewed the statutes relating to redevelopment and began a discussion of the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood and the access solutions proposed by Yale.

On May 10, 1999 the Agency meet a second time to walk the neighborhood and discuss the access options. The agency then reconvened back at City Hall and conducted a discussion with the public and then listened to a presentation from the Director of Planning discussing previous studies and a more detailed discussion of the access options.

Previous Studies

The Director indicated that previous studies have concluded that improved access must be provided or the neighborhood will continue to deteriorate.

- The 1978-80 file on the neighborhood resulted from a desire to discontinue REHAB loans to the area and to convert the park to industrial. While severe blight was documented the Council refused to discontinue loans. It appears that the city concluded that the state's plans to improve the Rt.9 interchange would improve access to the neighborhood;
- The 1988 North End Task force study concluded that access needed to be addressed, but gave no alternatives;
- The subsequent 1989 Urban Renewal Plan for the north end did not include this neighborhood; and
- The 1998 Yale study concluded that improved access into the neighborhood is essential to the revitalization of the neighborhood. The Yale Study gave four alternatives.

Proposed Access Options

The four access options proposed by Yale are displayed in Figure 2 and are described as follows:

Option 1

350 ft. road construction	\$ 70,000
1 Major rail crossing	\$ 200,000
3 rail siding crossings	\$ 150,000
TOTAL	\$ 420,000

Option 2

700 ft. road construction	\$ 140,000
2 major rail crossings	\$ 400,000
Bridge & topography issues	\$ 500,000 (at least)
TOTAL	\$ 1,040,000

Option 3

1400 road construction	\$ 280,000
2 major crossings	\$ 400,000
TOTAL	\$ 680,000 (major flood plain concerns)

Option 4

200 ft. road reconstruction	\$ 30,000
1 major crossing upgrade	\$ 100,000
TOTAL	\$ 130,000

- Option 4 requires a special act of legislature. Significant opposition from the DOT, the railroad and residents of Portland Street is predicted. If the city were to open Portland Street, they would most certainly have to close the Rt. 9 access to Bridge St. this would be a major impact on the restaurant. Almost 100% of Bridge Street is in the floodplain and could be underwater which would block emergency access. The Yale study concludes that this option alone is not an acceptable option.

On May 10th the Agency determined that three (3) of the four (4) options were not feasible and made a preliminary determination that the Miller Street section of the neighborhood did not appear to be viable.

Option 4

The Yale study concluded option 4 alone was not an “ideal solution”. It stated that:

“The neighborhood becomes a quarter mile long, convoluted dead end street starting at the intersection of Portland and St Johns Street...”

Regardless of this conclusion, the agency questioned if the fourth access option via Portland Street over the rail line was viable. Prior to making a final decision on this alternative the Agency requested the following additional information;

- Cost/Benefit Analysis;
- Information from the DOT regarding opening the Portland Street railroad crossing;
- Commentary from the Public Works Department.

On June 14th, 1999 the Agency met and received the requested information from the Director of Planning.

The Director indicated that prior to discussing actual costs it was be important to discuss if the Bridge Street neighborhood has the potential to be a viable residential neighborhood.

The Director pointed out that the neighborhood developed before the highway, before the rail line to Hartford, before the impacts or air and noise pollution were appreciated and before the federal government regulated flood plains. He indicated further that:

- There are 11 structures on Bridge Street. These structures contain 36 residential units, one (1) restaurant and one (1) church.
- All of these buildings are located in the 100-year flood plain. New residential structures are prohibited in the 100-year flood plain.
- All of the houses on Bridge Street are within 100 feet of the rail line some are within 40 feet. The DOT indicates that traffic will be increasing significantly on this rail line.
- All of the houses on Bridge Street are within 100 feet of the highway some are within 60 feet. Air pollution has always been an issue in the downtown area. This neighborhood is in a carbon monoxide “hot spot”. The primary urban design strategy to avoid the negative effects of air pollution is to separate residential from the pollution source, idling cars.
- There are, currently 22 school age children living in these conditions.

Regardless of the access issue, the Director presented the following two questions to the Agency:

- 1.) Should this area be planned for residential? and
- 2.) Is this an area that is realistically going to attract reinvestment for residential purposes?

The Director felt that, even with good access to this area, the area is inappropriate for residential uses and the city should not be promoting this area as an affordable housing option to the city’s lower income population.

The Director then indicated that the City is the single largest property owner and Miller Street produces \$9,163 in taxes and Bridge Street produces \$11,980 in taxes. Together the neighborhood produces \$21,143 in taxes per year.

The Board of Education indicated that there are 22 public school children in the neighborhood. The Board has indicated that an education in the public school system costs approximately \$7,500 per child per year. This translates into a cost to taxpayers of \$165,000. Other costs would be snow plowing, police and fire protection, police overtime and road maintenance and repair.

Input from Department of Transportation

Randy Ike of the *DOT Traffic Engineering - Rail Highway Crossing Division* indicated that an at grade rail crossing over a main line needs a special act of the legislature and DOT tends to oppose them because of how dangerous they are.

Mr. Ike then referred the Director to Robert Seaman of the *DOT Rail Regulatory Division*. Mr. Seaman indicated that the current crossing exists as a result of a special act and is restricted to a pedestrian and emergency crossing only.

Because of this restriction, another action by the legislature would be required to open to a full-blown crossing. In Mr. Seaman's opinion The *DOT Rail Regulatory Division* would be opposed to opening the Portland Street crossing.

Mr. Seaman went further to indicate that an opening would require a widening of the roadway, moving the instruments and new gates. He indicated that if the widening went into the point where the train's wheels switch from one track to another rail relocation would be required which could be very costly considering the slopes in the area.

He indicated that the Rail Regulatory Division would be fully in favor of closing the Portland and Miller Street crossings totally. He indicated the amount of freight through the area would be increasing significantly in the near future. Freight from New Haven will go through Middletown directly to Hartford. Rail lines in Cromwell, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield are being reconstructed to facilitate this movement of freight.

The Providence and Worcester Railroad and the city's Department of Public Works submitted written commentary seriously questioning the Yale options and opening the Portland Street crossing to vehicular traffic.

After this presentation the Agency approved a motion instructing staff to prepare a "resolution of finding that the neighborhood is not viable as a residential area".

Resolution of Findings

On July 12, 1999 the Redevelopment Agency approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Middletown is committed to preserving and enhancing viable neighborhoods which contribute to the City's affordable housing stock; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Agency is committed to providing a decent and affordable living environment for all of its residents and in particular, its children; and

WHEREAS, the viability, suitability and safety of living in the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood has been in question for several years; and

WHEREAS, the primary concern impacting the viability of the neighborhood is its lack of connection to the City in that the neighborhood is bounded on the north by wetlands, on the west by railroad tracks and on the east and south by Route 9; and

WHEREAS, safe and convenient access to the neighborhood is currently unavailable and the current access from Route 9 has been identified as one of most dangerous intersections in the State of Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, the Yale School of Architecture has conducted an extensive study of the north end including the development of various access options; and

WHEREAS, it was determined that the access options were not feasible and/or practical; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Providence and Worcester Railroad have indicated that these options are unacceptable from a safety perspective; and

WHEREAS, the City continues to acquire properties through foreclosure in this neighborhood indicating a disinvestment in the area; and

WHEREAS, the presence of an active railroad and the highway creates hazardous and unhealthy conditions, including air and noise pollution; and

WHEREAS, the sale of drugs and other illegal activities have increased in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the City has invested heavily in the neighborhood through the Residential Rehabilitation program only to see an accelerated deterioration in the same properties;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Redevelopment Agency has found that the area is no longer viable or suitable for residential purposes and that the agency intends to develop a formal Redevelopment and Relocation Plan for the area; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER that the Agency intends to identify and work directly and pro-actively with and for the residents of the Miller and Bridge Street neighborhood to facilitate their relocation in a fair and equitable manner to a more suitable living environment in the City of Middletown; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER that the Redevelopment Agency will encourage the city to demolish vacant properties acquired through tax foreclosure and will seek to acquire vacant properties on the open market; and

BE IT RESOLVED FURTHER that the Redevelopment Agency will encourage the city to fully and aggressively enforce its codes and laws to force absentee landlords to provide safe housing to residents until that time when all residents have been relocated.

Proposed Land Uses

Due to conflicts with flood areas, rail operations and poor to no access, this plan is not advocating any new land uses. This plan and *Downtown Vision 2000 and Beyond* recognize the value of enhancing the most prominent gateway into Middletown. Therefore, it is recommended that after demolition no new construction occur in the Bridge Street area. This land should be carefully landscaped and could potentially accommodate a bike path heading into the Cromwell Meadows and other types of passive recreation such as a dog park, canoe launch and possibly an emergency boat launch.

Due to the areas' adjacency to the rail yard, the Miller Street area should be marketed for rail dependent economic development opportunities in conjunction with the Providence Worcester Railroad.

The State Department of Transportation is currently studying the Route 9 interchange at Hartford Avenue and the Arrigoni Bridge. The land, which the city acquires, may be an integral part of the states plans to improve the interchange. In this case the city should insist in an enhanced gateway and direct access to the downtown and the north end industrial area.

Benefits of Implementing Proposed Land Use Plan

1. Beautification of major gateway into Middletown;
2. Elimination of a hazardous intersection at Ct. Rt.9;
3. Elimination of two dangerous at grade rail crossings;
4. Possibilities for a bike path, canoe and boat launch and other types of passive recreation;
5. Relocating residents out of a blighted area;
6. Removal of residential units from an area of known or suspected environmental contamination;
7. Relocation residents away from sources of noise and air pollution
8. Removal of homes currently located in the 100 year flood plain; and
9. A section of the acquired property could play an important role in the State Department of Transportation's plans for a reconstruction of Rt. 9 which would eliminate hazardous conditions on Rt. 9.

Proposed Plan of Development designation and Zoning Regulations

In accordance with the proposed land uses this Redevelopment Plan recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission amend its Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Map in the following manner:

- Designate the Miller Street area as industrial on the future land use plan;
- Designate the Bridge Street area as open space on the future land use plan;
- Retain the Riverfront Recreation (RF) zoning along Bridge Street and change the Mixed Use (MX) zoning in the Miller Street to Industrial Redevelopment Area (IRA).

Acquisition and Clearance

The procedure of acquisition, relocation, clearance and redevelopment by the Agency is applicable to all four (4) phases of the project. Acquisition, relocation and clearance is applicable where necessary to achieve one or more of the following:

- Removal of buildings that are structurally substandard to a degree requiring clearance or that have a number and type of other deficiencies which in combination can be remedied only by modification or replacement of major parts of or all of the basic structure;
- Removal of conditions having a blighting influence; or
- Assembly of land for redevelopment, and other plan objectives.

To achieve such purposes, properties acquired may consist of two or more contiguous parcels or may consist of individual properties: The Middletown Redevelopment Agency, upon adoption of this plan, may initiate acquisition of those areas in the acquisition and relocation schedules. The acquisition of property shall be pursuant to Sections 8-128 through 8-133 inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes. It is recommended that the Redevelopment Agency either form a Real Estate Subcommittee of its members to guide the negotiating process of acquisition or meet as an agency of the whole to review appraisals and to authorize land acquisition offers. When the Agency determines that a particular acquisition area should be acquired, the Agency should cause to have prepared at least two independent appraisals prepared by qualified appraisers as the basis for negotiating for property.

The Redevelopment Agency may acquire real property by eminent domain with the approval of the Common Council of the City of Middletown in accordance with Sections 8-129 through 8-133, inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes. Once acquired by the Agency, the Agency may clear, repair, operate or insure such property while in its possession or make site improvements essential to preparation for its use in accordance with the approval Redevelopment Project Plan. The estimated market value was determined using the resources of the City of Middletown Tax Assessor's Office. The basis for the estimate is the 1998 re-evaluation figures.

SCHEDULE OF ADOPTION

1. Forward the Redevelopment Plan to the Planning & Zoning Commission for its study and comments. In addition, request a written opinion of the Middletown Planning and Zoning Commission as to general conformance of the Redevelopment Plan to the Local Plan of Development.
2. Request the written approval of the Plan from the City of Middletown Housing Authority.
3. Hold the required Public Hearing. (Publish legal notice at least twice in newspaper of general circulation within municipality. The first publication shall not be less than 2 weeks prior to scheduled hearing date.)
4. Approval of Plan by Redevelopment Agency by resolution which finds the following:
 - a. The area in which the proposed redevelopment is to be located is a redevelopment area;
 - b. Carrying out the redevelopment plan will result in materially improving conditions within the Project Area;
 - c. Sufficient living and business accommodations are available within reasonable distance of the Project Area or are provided for in the Redevelopment Plan for persons, families and businesses displaced by the

- proposed improvement, at prices or rental within the financial reach of such persons, families and businesses;and
- d. The Redevelopment Plan is satisfactory as to site planning, relation to the comprehensive or general plan of the municipality and, except when the redevelopment agency has prepared the Redevelopment Plan, the construction and financial ability of the redeveloper to carry it out.
5. Approval of the Redevelopment Plan by Legislative body.
 6. Forward the Relocation Plan to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for it's review and approval by the Commissioner as it pertains to those persons, families and businesses to be displaced by the Relocation Plan.

DESIGNATION

Urban redevelopment designation is essential for the Project Area described within this document. Chapter 130, Section 8-124 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as revised, contains the requirements for designation based on applicable measures for the definition of urban blight. As the earlier sections of this document demonstrate, conditions of blight are prevalent in the Miller and Bridge Street area. The blighted conditions which exist within the Project Area can only be addressed by legislative action to provide a redevelopment designation and thereby- enable mechanisms to apply the power of eminent domain to the acquisition and disposition of properties to qualified public and/or private organizations under the authority of this Plan.

FINANCING

Public project funding resources should be assembled from a variety of program sources, which are appropriate for the Miller and Bridge effort. These include but are not limited to, the use of funds from the City's annual Community Development Block Grant entitlement from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, City General Fund monies, public improvement financing using City bonding and DECD and DOT funding.

IMPLEMENTATION

Begin with Phase 1 acquisition area. Assemble project funding and secure appraisals. Conduct acquisition and relocation.

Phase 1-Year 2000

Phase 2-Year 2001

Phase 3-Year 2002

Phase 4-Year 2003

As displayed on the acquisition and relocation schedules Phases 3 and 4 are substantial financial commitments. Therefor the Mayor's Office, the Common Council and the Finance Department should be planning now for these future expenditures.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

The administrative responsibilities for this project will rest with the Middletown Redevelopment Agency, as the Designated Development Agency by the Common Council. The Redevelopment Agency has considerable experience with the administrative duties as required by a project of this nature.

The Redevelopment Agency was reorganized in the mid-1980's from ten (10) to sixteen (16) members. In September 1984, the staffing functions of the Redevelopment Agency were brought into the Municipal Development Office situated within the Municipal Building.

Since 1984, the Agency and its staff have successfully marketed a large residential project in the Metro-South Urban Renewal Area and have negotiated with the owners of a parcel of land in the former Center Street Renewal Project Area which is now under development as a State Courthouse facility.

From 1986 to the present, the Middletown Redevelopment Agency has been responsible for the Middlesex Mutual Assurance Development Project with public participation funding coming from the State of Connecticut Department of Economic Development and the City of Middletown. The value of private sector construction in the project area, to date, exceeds \$40.0 Million Dollars. In 1998 the Redevelopment Agency was transferred to the Department of Planning, Conservation and Development. The staff for the Redevelopment Agency also has a great deal of experience in the Community Development Block Grant Program and has a strong relationship with the Mayor and Common Council in the decision-making process that is required in projects of this type.

The administrative duties to be performed during the development phase of this project will consist of; the procedural and legal requirements for the project land acquisition and project land sale negotiation, the coordination of the contract document preparation and bid phase for demolition and the maintaining of required financial records in accordance with the State and Federal regulations.

The Middletown Redevelopment Agency, assisted by the City, will organize and provide the services necessary to facilitate meetings required for various Federal, State and City agency approvals for the proposed project and will provide general project assistance to expedite all project matters that arise.

The Middletown Redevelopment Agency, assisted by City staff, will carry out the day-to-day functions for project administration including contracting for preliminary and final engineering and construction inspection for the project development, overseeing the physical development to verify the extent of development within the project boundaries in accordance with an approved project plan, and making the required submissions to the appropriate State and Federal agencies as may be required by the funding sources.

The legal services required for the various aspects of this project will be the responsibility of the City's Legal Department who will be responsible for all deeds, contracts, title searches and other project-related legal matters. These services will be in accordance with the acquisition and disposition schedules as determined by the Redevelopment Agency.

The staff of the Redevelopment Agency with the assistance of a part time Relocation Officer will also be responsible for implementing the Relocation Plan, which is a part of this document. As determined by the Mayor and Common Council, other City staff may be required to assist in the relocation effort, particularly where significant numbers of families and individuals are involved.

The Planning, Conservation & Development Office staff presently consists of five (5) professionals with experience, skills and expertise in economic development, housing, planning, public administration, real estate, land use law, historic preservation and grantsmanship. These professionals are backed up by three (3) skilled clerical staff employees with expertise in computer applications, budget and financial processing and capacity out-put on wordprocessors and computers.

Grant writing/administration and the coordination of projects with many other City departments, departments of the State and Federal Government, and various elements of the private sector are part of the daily fare of the Planning, Conservation & Development Office in their efforts to achieve the City's development goals. Many of Middletown's more significant achievements are initiated through these grants and coordinated project services. Middletown's Planning, Conservation & Development staff members are active in State-wide organizations promoting economic development, community development, planning and preservation.