

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: WHALLEY AVENUE SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT, Imposition of Tax Levy as municipal tax levy and fiscal year 2011-2012 budget (Whalley Avenue Special Services District).
REPORT: 1450-13
ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

On behalf of the Whalley Avenue Special Services District (SSD), Sheila Masterson, the Executive Director of the District requests the approval of the Board of Aldermen for the imposition of a tax levy on the taxable properties within the SSD for the fiscal year 2011-2012 budget, by considering it as a municipal tax levy. At its meeting on April 6, 2011, the Board of Commissioners of the Whalley Avenue SSD approved a budget of \$102,233.00 for the fiscal year July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. Based on this budget, the Board is requesting the Board of Aldermen to approve a tax levy of \$92,939 at a mil rate of **1.83** on properties within the SSD boundaries.

The Whalley Avenue Special Services District was enacted by the Board of Aldermen in 1983. This District was the first Special Services District in New Haven; the others to follow were Ninth Square, Chapel West, Town Green, and Grand Avenue. (Ninth Square and Town Green have since been combined). The WASSD recently amended its Bylaws in 2010 to modify the formula for determining the tax levy (CPC 1436-13, 01/20/10).

The Board of Aldermen may establish such a district *to promote the economic and general welfare of its citizens and property owners through the preservation, enhancement, protection, and development of the economic health of such municipality.*

The Board of Commissioners of the District are responsible for recommending to the Board of Aldermen the imposition of a levy on properties within the district based upon a budget approved by a majority of the Board every year. Based on the Code of Ordinances (Section 33), the proposed levy every year should not exceed ten (10) percent of the levy for the previous year, except upon prior approval by a majority of all holders of record of taxable interests in the property, voting one (1) vote per property. The levy is collected with real estate taxes and held by the City and disbursed to the District in accord with its annual budget.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

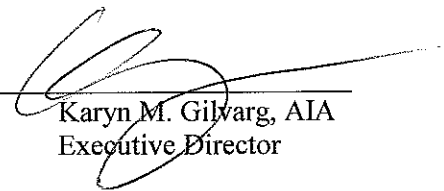
Like the Chapel West SSD, the Whalley Avenue District is mostly commercial, with some residential uses mixed in. The primary intent of the district legislation was to provide a mechanism to collect from business owners to enhance the communal spaces, make public improvements as necessary, and to enhance the growth of businesses in the area, while instilling the pride and involvement among the property owners.

2010 was an active year for the WASSD with streetscape improvements on Whalley between Sherman and Winthrop Avenues and 19 new businesses occupying vacant spaces. Of note the new Start Community Bank opened at 299 Whalley, a new paint store Sherwin Williams will occupy the former remains of Walgreens near the corner of Grasso Boulevard, and Stop and Shop has recently taken over the former Shaw's supermarket space at Dwight Plaza. Auto Zone now occupies the former Hollywood Video also at Dwight Plaza.

ADVICE

The Commission supports the tax levy proposal for the Whalley Avenue SSD for the fiscal year 2011-2012 and recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopt the proposed budget and levy to allow the goals of the District to be realized.

ADOPTED: April 20, 2011
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director