

ASYLUM HILL NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIC PLAN FOR REVITALIZATION



This statue at the junction of Farmington and Asylum Avenues is of Alice Cogswell to commemorate the efforts made by Hartford residents to help individuals like Alice who have serious hearing and vocal impairments. The Asylum Hill neighborhood received its name from the American Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons. This institution, built in Asylum Hill in the 1800's, was the first American institution of its kind.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Strategic Plan is the culmination of hard work and determination from neighborhood residents, community leaders, and business owners as well as many others who hold a stake in the revitalization of Asylum Hill. The Asylum Hill Revitalization Association (AHRA) would like to thank them for their many efforts, in particular, Gerry Maine, Principle Planner for the city of Hartford for keeping us on task and providing the photographs for the plan; Margaret Brown also with the city of Hartford Planning Department for providing the vacant structures map; Alyssa Peterson for coordinating the writing of the plan; Susan Bosco, graduate intern with the Uconn School of Social Work for preparing the final draft of the plan; the AHRA sub-committees and their chairs Ginny Seeley and Larry Hall for Housing, Mary Hoyer for Economic Development, Enid Lynn and Karin Peterson for Education and Cultural Institutions, and Lois Stevenson for Public Safety. Thank you also to Karin Peterson, Phyllis Reeds, and Bruce Bidwell for proofreading and editing the plan.

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INTRODUCTION

Asylum Hill is an anomaly in terms of successful neighborhoods today: tree-lined streets and avenues with historic buildings that could provide for plenty of potential housing, numerous community serving institutions, schools within walking distance, a park with imminent renovation plans, a library with future expansion plans, an existing commercial strip with great potential, and easily accessed public transportation. It is a neighborhood in which the description "live, work, play and worship" can actually be realized given its numerous attributes. Sadly, our experience as residents of recent years is that this potential has not been realized.

Rather, our neighborhood is plagued with numerous vacant or abandoned historic structures and a population that is extremely transient, or, unnecessarily overcrowded in some buildings. We are crippled by the national attention of the status of our school system, and literally branded by a public perception of being "crime-ridden". Our commercial strip does not serve its population correctly, and our residents have a fundamental need to obtain non-existent jobs within the neighborhood. Herein lies the enigma of Asylum Hill -- so much history, so many attributes, but so many barriers to the elements of basic living and a population that is growing impatient in its effort to overcome these barriers.

Our well-documented Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) plan seeks to overcome these problems and provide one last burst of energy to those who have been searching for the means by which to re-orient and stimulate healthy growth and safer environs in our neighborhood. The asset profiles and action and implementation plans contained in the following pages should reveal the care and planning that went into our efforts. This effort will also enhance the long range plans currently taking shape in the Farmington Avenue business corridor. The Asylum Hill NRZ will embrace this plan and utilize it as a blueprint on which we can build further success, particularly on streets such as Woodland, Laurel, Huntington, Sigourney, etc... These streets will link the "new" Farmington Avenue corridor to neighborhoods that abut Asylum Avenue and Sigourney Park.

The NRZ process has provided a much-needed vehicle to come together collectively as a neighborhood and examine the problem, then put our vision and solutions together in short and long term plans that will finally make this vision a reality. Ultimately, we will work to free our neighborhood from becoming reliant upon additional federal programs, crime-related grants, building subsidies, or large-scale corporate giving on a cyclical basis. We must look to attract, maintain, and be permanently self-sustaining -- continually rejuvenated by the social-economic success factors represented within a successful academic/corporate/working class community that is largely recession proof by design. To do so, we will refocus our efforts towards harnessing the spending patterns of a large commuter population that "lives in our neighborhood campus daily" as well as better meet the residential needs of students, smaller family units, professionals, young and old. Our problems are solvable as long as we work through our vision together, alongside those efforts of neighboring institutions, city government, and adjacent neighborhoods.

I. OUR VISION FOR ASYLUM HILL

Asylum Hill In The Year 2020 - A Neighborhood for All Seasons

Autumn 2020: Asylum Hill is the city's education neighborhood!!

It is with a great deal of excitement that the new school year begins for the family of Maria DelGado, whose middle child has enrolled in full-day Kindergarten, joining Maria's oldest son at West Middle School. Last evening Maria attended the first PTA meeting of the year. Over 300 parents were in attendance to plan the various fund-raising and support activities they will provide throughout the year. Through the effectiveness of the School to Work Consortium Ms. DelGado is about to begin her first full-time job in the Claims Department at Mass Mutual. Fortunately, Asylum Hill is blessed with an abundance of day care opportunities for her youngest son so she can go to her job. With more and more of West Middle parents working, the neighborhood is also fortunate to have a vital and active group of seniors who volunteer and enrich the lives of Asylum Hill children and residents overall.

The enrollment at West Middle and at its associated Charter School for the Performing Arts is booming. West Middle, with its state-of-the-art facilities and curriculum, has been a magnet for families from throughout the city and region. Its neighborhood appreciation curriculum, designed to develop responsible citizenship and cultural awareness among Asylum Hill children, is a model for the nation. After school programs also abound, including those at the YWCA, Hartford High, and especially those at the Hill Community and Recreation Center, another state-of-the-art facility.

For older children and adults, the School-to-Work Consortium of Hartford High, Capital Community Technical College, corporations such as Aetna, Mass Mutual, St. Francis and The Hartford, is a year-round job-training, work-readiness effort which directly correlates the needs of Hill employers to curriculum for high school students and unemployed residents of the Hill. Efforts have been so successful that at the next legislative session, a bill will be introduced to increase funding for the Hartford's proposal to expand its facilities on the Hill.

Winter 2020:

The Farmington Avenue Business District is revising its semi-annual marketing plan that focuses on promoting the numerous student-related businesses that now populate the Farmington Avenue Corridor. Capitalizing on the ready population of 15,000 area students within a 5-mile radius as well as the abundance of charming, very reasonably priced one bedroom and studio apartments, the Hill and the West End have become the "in" place for students of all ages to live and play.

The vital commercial activity on the Hill is due to the diversity of locally owned and operated businesses which serve the culturally and racially diverse population of the Hill. Commuters returning home delight in the variety of shops conveniently located along the Avenue such as: bakeries, butcher shops, dry cleaners, grocery stores, hardware stores, book stores, pharmacies, markets and gift shops specializing in Asian, European, African/Caribbean, and Latino merchandise. The "Twain Trolley", the area's light rail system which circuits the Hill frequently throughout the day, is enjoyed by visitors as

well as resident children and adults and allows the Hill's hundreds of seniors to take advantage of and enjoy the neighborhood's many amenities.

The Alliance of Asylum Hill Agencies is holding its quarterly meeting. The neighborhood has been recognized over and over again for its model support services at every level and for the cooperation network established by its social service agencies to ensure the availability and delivery of services such as affordable day care, transportation, senior programs and services, job training, and recreational activities.

Spring: 2021

Neighborhood block watches and increased policing at the turn of the century, helped return the streets to the residents who look forward to each spring when the Hill comes alive with pedestrian traffic and commerce.

With public safety restored to the area, the walking tradition has returned to Asylum Hill through its award-winning Historic District Initiative. Weekly Saturday tours which celebrate its Victorian housing stock, now 80% owner occupied, cultural and historic resources of the Mark Twain and Stowe-Day Houses, and the Antiquarian & Landmarks Society bring people back to the streets. Visitors enjoy the Victorian lighting, brick walkways, wrought iron fences, trash receptacles, historic signage at entrances and gateways announcing companies, institutions, homes on the National Register of Historic Places, gift shops, restaurants, and cafes.

Three new employees of Aetna meet after work at the coffee bar on the corner of Laurel Street. They have all just graduated from one of the numerous higher educational institutions in the area and have decided to continue living in the area where they loved attending school. They revel in the convenience of living in Asylum Hill, a truly great place to work, worship, shop and dine, and all within walking distance of their condos on Collins Street. As the evening progresses, Farmington and Asylum Avenues come alive as students, couples, families, teenagers, and seniors walk the Avenues in the tradition of all great cities greeting each other, window shopping, stopping for a drink, coffee, ice cream, resting on one of the many streetside benches or at one of the side-walk cafes.

These three students-turned-employees have been invited to a meeting at the expanded Hartford Public Library. It is such a beautiful evening, that the meeting is moved to patio tables in front of the library. The meeting is to recruit Asylum Hill residents to volunteer for the Hill beautification program which utilizes neighborhood residents to plant flowers in the redesigned and landscaped Sigourney Square Park as well as six smaller gardens throughout the neighborhood.

Summer 2021:

The neighborhood is abuzz with plans for the annual Ethnic Festival. It is the largest neighborhood festival in the city and most neighborhood streets are closed to traffic. Merchants, business owners, neighborhood groups, schools, cultural institutions, and corporations come together for the kickoff parade and day-long celebration of Asylum Hill's rich cultural and educational resources, racial and cultural diversity, beautiful residences, gardens, and park. The festival is planned by a committee of over 100 volunteers from throughout the neighborhood.

II. NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

HUMAN RESOURCES

Asylum Hill is a racially and ethnically diverse neighborhood to the west of the City's Central Business District. The residents and workers of Asylum Hill are its strongest asset. The following demographics, however, do not convey the commitment and strength many people bring to the neighborhood. The "Hill" consists of 615 square acres and has a population of 12,451, as of 1990 Census. Approximately 52% are African-American, 25% are White, 15% are Puerto Rican, 5% are of other Hispanic ethnicity, nearly 3% are Asian, and .5% are Native American. This makes Asylum Hill one of Hartford's most diverse neighborhoods. We view this diversity as an asset.

Collectively, there are 2,436 families on the Hill with 2.8 persons per family, lower than the City average. Thirty-one percent of households are headed by a female, the same as the City average. Slightly over one-half (50.5%) of everyone 15 and over is single, and only 23% are married. Of adults 25 and over, 71% are high school grads and 9% are college grads, compared with the City-wide average of 59% and 14% respectively. Median household income was \$18,955 in 1989, while the City average was \$22,140. Per capita income was higher than the City's \$12,999 to \$11,081. This discrepancy is partially due to the differences in household size. Asylum Hill has 1.8 persons per household while the City average is 2.55. (The difference according to the U.S. Census Bureau between *family* and *household* is this: A *household* is all the persons who occupy a housing unit while a *family* consists of a householder and one or more other persons living in the same housing unit who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption).

23% of Asylum Hill families are below the poverty level, compared to 26% City-wide. Of the total 558 families below the poverty level on the Hill, 381 of those were female-headed households with children. The unemployment rate for persons 16 and over in the labor force was 9.2% compared to a City average of 10.7%.

Every weekday, however, Asylum Hill's population actually triples due to the influx of office workers and students. In fact, approximately 15,000 students attend 10 campuses within a five mile radius of the Hill. Economically, this employee and student population may become the most important ingredient of our NRZ "success formula" and the foundation upon which the Hill can rebuild a thriving, self-sustaining academic and business/residential "entity", simply by meeting their commercial and residential needs.

Asylum Hill Demographic Information According to 1990 Census Figures

	Asylum Hill	Hartford	Connecticut
Residents	12,451	138,392	3,287,116
Ethnicity			
African American	53%	36%	8%
Hispanic	20%	31%	6%
Other	3%	2%	5%
White	25%	31%	87%
Median Age	30.3	28.6	
Number of Households	6,787	51,587	1,237,000 (1995)
Families	2,436	31,515	
% Female Head	31%	46%	
% w/Child	96%	32%	
Education Level <i>(% of persons 25+ years of age)</i>			
High School Grad	71%	59%	79%
College Grad	9%	14%	27%
Median Household Income	\$18,935	\$22,140	\$41,721
Families Living Below the Poverty Level	23%	26%	
Unemployment Rate	9.2%	10.7%	5.6% (1994)

BUSINESSES

The following is a summary of businesses in Asylum Hill. Of the 50 businesses listed below 27 are located on Farmington Ave. A more extensive list can be found in Appendix A.

- ❖ ***Banks***
 - Fleet
 - Eagle Federal
 - Mechanics
 - Family Credit Union
- ❖ ***Barber Shops***
 - Queen Barber
- ❖ ***Funeral Homes***
 - Ahearn's
- ❖ ***Grocery Stores***
 - Carlos' Market
 - Express Mart
 - Convenience Store
 - Sigourney Market
 - Brother's Grocery
 - Hilltop Market
 - Lotte Market
- ❖ ***Hair Salons & Supplies***
 - Beanoy Hair Salon
 - Hair Plus Beauty Supplies
 - Essence of Beauty
 - Hair Design
- ❖ ***Health & Medical***
 - Family Clinic
 - Medical Center
 - CT Surgery Center
 - St. Francis Hospital
 - Health and Welfare Office
- ❖ ***Lodging***
 - Hastings Hotel
- ❖ ***Laundry & Cleaners***
 - Coin Laundry
 - SuperWash
 - Budget Cleaner & Tailor
 - Hilltop Cleaner
 - Ashley Cleaner & Tailor
- ❖ ***Package Stores & Bars***
 - A&P Warehouse Liquors
 - Towne Liquor
 - Ashley Cafe
 - Piggy's Cafe
 - Imlay Package Store
 - Pierce
 - Arthur's
- ❖ ***Pharmacies***
 - Pierce
 - Arthur's
 - Kazarian
- ❖ ***Restaurants / Take-Out***
 - Peking Garden
 - Spiros
 - # 1 China House
 - Domino Pizza
 - Congress Rotisserie
 - Taco Bell
 - Oasis/Panchos
 - Dunkin Donuts
 - Capital View Deli
 - Gourmet Coffee
 - Kent Pizza
 - Hastings

PHYSICAL RESOURCES



215 Collins Street.

The romance of Asylum Hill is its brick Victorian era buildings and densely treed side streets. Our sidewalks and avenues provide for a potentially pleasant pedestrian neighborhood, where residents can exit their door and briefly walk to purchase milk and bread, or have a prescription filled, and where children can walk to school or go to the library to find a book.

Juxtaposed to many of these historic homes is the largest concentration of office buildings of any residential neighborhood in Hartford, as well as numerous large and mid-size apartments. For example, Asylum Hill's eastern border is dominated by massive regal structures that house the majority of Hartford's insurance industry, meanwhile a variety of offices, a hospital and community college, form its western border along Woodland Street. Two (2) large, vacant industrial complexes and underutilized rail lines are at the north and south borders of Asylum Hill, reflective of the changing economy of a northeast City. The overall "built" environment of Asylum Hill gives the feel of an urban area more than most Hartford neighborhoods. It also has more cultural institutions and old, established churches than other Hartford neighborhoods.

Three major insurance companies, Aetna, The Hartford, and MassMutual, dominate the eastern portion of Asylum Hill. The western portion is dominated by institutional uses such as schools (Hartford Public High School, Capital Community Technical College, Connecticut State University System Office), St. Francis Medical Center and related facilities. Two major arteries, Farmington and Asylum Avenues, are the major east - west corridors from downtown to the West End and West Hartford. Farmington Avenue is the only major retail strip in the neighborhood while Asylum Avenue is a mixture of apartment buildings, offices, and schools (West Middle, Cathedral). Long range planning for Farmington Avenue is beginning in partnership with the West End Civic Association (WECA). Two strengths of Farmington Avenue must be highlighted. The first is the array of eating establishments concentrated in a 1 1/2 block area. There are nine (9) restaurants ranging from fast foods, Chinese, Mexican, pizza, and family style. A second strength is the significant architecture along the Avenue, the apartment buildings, period homes such as the Mark Twain and Stowe-Day, the offices, and the Cathedral. There are two large vacant industrial buildings on the northern and southern boundaries of Asylum Hill, Veeder Root, to the north, and Hawthorn Center, to the south.

Finally, there is Sigourney Park, a major outdoor recreation area for Asylum Hill residents. The park has recently received \$350,000 which will go towards improvements. These improvements will include two basketball courts, a toddler area, teenage game court, shuffle board court, and park benches.



Pictured above is Sigourney Square Park which will be receiving major renovations this Spring.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHS

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES



Veeder Place at the northern border of Asylum Hill is currently undergoing rehabilitation.

The Hawthorn Center at the southern border of Asylum Hill is another industrial building, part of which is currently being renovated for a weekend collectibles market.



The Farmington Avenue Corridor area of Asylum Hill is the focus of a comprehensive corridor study that will be accomplished with a combination of public/private financing, including Urban Act Funds initiated by the West End Civic Association. This corridor study is the culmination of over a year's worth of meetings that were initiated by West End neighbors, but, now includes a healthy

number of Asylum Hill residents. The broad range goals for the Farmington Avenue Corridor long term will be as "a gateway to the City, a charming and beautiful realm that both serves the diversity of residents of the neighborhoods it passes through, and as a Grand Avenue uniting Greater Hartford's western suburbs with Downtown Hartford." (Source: Toni Gold Consulting, Hartford.) The following outlines the vision of this corridor study.

The Farmington Avenue Joint Committee seeks to realize a vision for the commercial corridor of our two neighborhoods. We envision Farmington Avenue in Hartford as a gateway to the City, as a charming and beautiful public realm, as a vital urban place that serves the residents of the neighborhoods it passes through, and as a Grand Avenue uniting Greater Hartford's western suburbs with Downtown Hartford. This renewed Avenue supports a high-quality mix of unique commercial, cultural, professional, residential, and academic activities; it is home to some of the most important institutions in the Capitol Region. The Avenue is a place where elderly people feel safe and where parents are comfortable bringing their children. It is a profitable business location. It is a center of entertainment and recreation. Streets and facilities welcome pedestrians and bicyclists. Commercial buildings and public improvements complement the architectural heritage of the adjacent residences to create a unique sense of place. The Avenue reflects the diversity of families and lifestyles that is one of Hartford's most valued features. People are drawn from around the region to this vibrant center of community life.

The Veeder Root complex, which closed in the late 1980's, is presently being rehabilitated. This project, when complete, will provide jobs in light industry, as well as some office space. Veeder Place, as it is now named, can have a major impact on the northwest corner of Asylum Hill. During the summer of 1997, the Department of Economic Community Development released funds for the project. They are requiring the City of Hartford to submit a listing of problematic properties on Homestead Avenue (between Garden and Sigourney) and their plan for them. If the project progresses on schedule from this point on, the entire project should be completed in approximately one year. However, it has been scaled back from the original concept due to cost considerations. The most dramatic of these changes is the lack of available incubator space for minority start-ups. It is important that future development, whether in the form of incubator space or not, includes job opportunities for neighborhood residents. Currently there are at least four firm tenants – St. Francis Hospital, Easter Seals, Arrow Drug Stores, and Starrtel. There are letters of commitment from tenants for approximately 90% of the space. It is also hoped that some of these tenants will include a second shift at the site, so as to offer twice the number of jobs to area residents.

The tenant of most interest to the neighborhood is Starrtel, a minority owned firm that will be assembling cellular telephones on the site. They expect to begin operations in mid 1998 and employ 200 to 250 people. The jobs are assembly, testing, and packaging of phones. The average wage will be around \$20,000 annually.

As Veeder Place borders Asylum Hill, Upper Albany and Clay Arsenal, this project will have a pivotal effect on all three neighborhoods. The City has committed housing money to rehab vacant houses along Sargeant Street. SHARP 20 (Strategic Housing and Redevelopment Project), has incorporated into its' Phase I development plan two properties on Sargeant Street and one on Garden.

However, there are more blighted properties in the immediate vicinity, which will be dealt with through the recommendations of the NRZ Housing sub-committee. An unused rail line, the Griffin Line, may be developed for light rail, with a stop at Veeder Place, adding more stimulus for economic recovery.

The Hawthorn Center, at the southern border of Asylum Hill, is a significant, largely vacant industrial building (presently, the Hawthorn has sixteen small businesses and is 10% occupied). Attempts to convert this space for a school or offices have failed. Currently, plans to utilize some of the space as a weekend flea market with approximately 80 to 100 vendors are being developed. The potential for light industrial or incubator space is there and needs to be explored as a separate project, to make it possibly eligible for Urban Act funds, such as those being utilized for Veeder Place and the Capewell Factory.

The Asylum Hill Economic Development Committee (AHED), founded in July 1995 by neighborhood residents, activists, workers, and members of the religious community with support from the Trinity College Center for Neighborhoods, is an unincorporated voluntary organization which voted in November 1995 to increase its influence by formally affiliating with the Asylum Hill Organizing Project. AHED was formed to provide a democratic forum for addressing economic development in a proactive fashion, improve the quality of life through job creation and appropriate business development, and work with nearby neighborhoods on economic projects of mutual concern. AHED negotiates with major neighborhood construction projects and institutions for jobs for neighborhood residents, has been part of neighborhood business development via the Asylum Hill/West End Economic Development Loan Fund, has been instrumental in working with West End residents and business people to secure a Farmington Avenue Merchant Coordinator, and has been exploring innovative strategies such as asset-based surveying and peer lending/microbusiness development for creating jobs in the neighborhood.

There is a Neighborhood Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund (NEDRLF) funded by the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and administered by the Hartford Economic Development Corporation (HEDCO). Its goals are to stimulate and assist in the creation and growth of small and medium-sized businesses in the Asylum Hill and West End neighborhoods. The primary focus of the fund is job creation, retention, and full utilization of commercial and residential space. The Revolving Loan Fund is designed to meet the credit needs of businesses experiencing difficulty securing financing from traditional sources. Every effort will be made to leverage NEDRLF dollars whenever possible to promote investment of private capital and expand the capacity of the funds. Eligible activities are: acquisition and/or renovation of commercial or industrial real estate in which the applicant occupies a significant portion of the available space for the operation of his/her business; purchase of machinery and equipment; short term working capital loans to assist with the acquisition of inventory, equipment or the financing of receivables. Those businesses located within the following borders are eligible: north/south from Homestead and the Westerly portions of Albany Avenue as far as the University of Hartford border, and east/west from the train overpass (Spruce Street) downtown to Prospect Avenue.

The Farmington Avenue Business District (FABD) has been an idea in progress for over three years. In 1996, the city council approved a funding request to hire a merchant coordinator for Asylum Hill and the West End. The purpose of the FABD board and its members is to improve the climate for businesses in Asylum Hill and the West End by initiating projects to promote, recruit, retain and encourage growth of businesses while developing short and long range plans to improve the economic

stability of businesses, neighborhood character and building conditions within the district boundaries. The organization exists to serve its diverse mix of businesses and institutions while collaborating with neighborhood groups. FABD's Business Coordinator began work in November of 1996. Job duties include expanding FABD membership, providing member services, coordination of FABD projects and programs, and serving as a conduit for information and available programs/services between city departments and area businesses.

EDUCATION



Pictured above is Hartford Public High School, the second oldest high school in the nation.

The Hartford Public school system is in crisis and Asylum Hill is directly effected. The State of Connecticut, in an unprecedented move last year, took control of the entire system. Here is a stark, snapshot view of Hartford's population and the startling realities of its school age population:

Overall Hartford Population:

- only 18 sq. miles with a population of approximately 125,000 of which 28% are below poverty level
- ONLY 34% have a high school degree
- 61% are under 34 (It is a YOUNG city!)
- 15% of the teenage women become pregnant (2nd in nation!)
- fastest shrinking city in USA (10% decline from 90-96)
- Fifth poorest in the nation for cities with populations over 100,000

Hartford's Schools:

- 32 schools overall with 4,000 employees
- 93% minority students (50% Hispanic and 43% African American)
- 23,500 students (down 10% in last 5 years)

- 45% are non-English speaking
- highest yearly dropout rate in State (19%)
- Class of 1996 had a cumulative dropout rate of 49%
- lowest spending per pupil in textbook/supplies in the State
- 2nd highest per student overall in spending in state (\$9,000/pupil)
- highest teacher salaries in state \$59,000
- last in CT in testing results
- 50% of students are designated SPECIAL ED.
- lowest pre-school attendance in state
- more high school girls are leaving the schools pregnant than are graduating
- out of 3 high schools, two are on accreditation probation
- over \$300,000,000 in renovation costs for the schools at this time
- 4 superintendents in 5 years
- unions that are often at odds with educational reforms
- policy manuals have not been updated in 6-20 years; depending on area
- inadequate evaluation of performance reviews of personnel
- history of Board of Education interference in personnel, performance, etc....

As mentioned above, Hartford Public High School, located in Asylum Hill, the second oldest high school in the nation, nearly lost its accreditation. Only through a legal appeal did it not lose its accreditation and instead has been placed on probation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The local elementary school, West Middle, has problems of overcrowding, low test scores, and a poor reputation.



Pictured above, West Middle School, located on Asylum Avenue.

Quirk Middle School, although not in the Asylum Hill neighborhood, is the school to which children continue upon graduating from West Middle. The charts below offer a more detailed description of these three schools based on the State Department of Education's Strategic Profiles from the 1995-96 academic year. Information on the district and State level is also provided as a means for comparison.

Vital Statistics for Hartford Public High School, West Middle School, and Quirk Middle School

	Hartford Public High School	High Schools in the Hartford District	State of Connecticut High Schools
Total Enrollment:	1,904	5,584 (proj. 1999)	
Ethnicity:	0.1% Am. Indian 1.2% Asian Amer. 34.7% Black 59.1% Hispanic 4.9% White		
% of students with non-English home language:	57.9%	45%	11.2%
CT APT scores(grade 10) % receiving cert. of mastery:	Language Arts - 6 Math - 9 Science - 6 Interdisciplinary - 10 All Four Tests - 1	Language Arts - 9 Math - 8 Science - 4 Interdisciplinary - 12 All Four Tests - 1	Language Arts - 35 Math - 41 Science - 34 Interdisciplinary - 36 All Four Tests - 12
Dropouts - class of 1995 cum. 4 year rate:	48.5%	43.6%	17.4%

	West Middle School	Elementary Schools in the Hartford District	State of Connecticut Elementary Schools
Total Enrollment:	824	14,963 (proj. 1999)	
Ethnicity	0.0% Am. Indian 2.3% Asian Amer. 64.0% Black 34.0% Hispanic 0.1% White		
% of students with non-English home language:	24.3%	42.5%	12.0%
CMT scores(grade 6) % meeting State goal:	Reading - 14.7 Writing - 3.0 Math - 1.5 All Three Tests - 0.0	Reading - 16.8 Writing - 13.7 Math - 8.1 All Three Tests - 3.3	Reading - 59.4 Writing - 39.6 Math - 47.7 All Three Tests - 25

	Quirk Middle School	Middle Schools in the Hartford District	State of Connecticut Middle Schools
Total Enrollment:	1,252	3,159 (proj. 1999)	
Ethnicity	0.0% Am. Indian 1.2% Asian Amer. 29.9% Black 66.0% Hispanic 3.0% White		
% of students with non-English home language:	71.2%	50.9%	10.9%
CMT scores(grade 8) % meeting State goal:	Reading - 18.2 Writing - 12.5 Math - 8.9 All Three Tests - 3.3	Reading - 18.4 Writing - 15.4 Math - 8.8 All Three Tests - 4.0	Reading - 58.9 Writing - 45.5 Math - 47.3 All Three Tests - 29.6

This data is compiled from the Connecticut State Department of Education Strategic School Profiles for 1995-96

The charts above describe some staggering statistics regarding schools in the Hartford school district, specifically Asylum Hill's Hartford Public High School and West Middle School, and Quirk Middle School which Asylum Hill children attend. Test scores at both the high school and elementary school level are far below those of the entire State. For example, at Hartford Public High School only 9% of the students passed the Math portion of the Connecticut Academic Performance Test while 41% passed on the State level. The test scores for Language Arts and Science are equally discouraging. At West Middle School, only 3% of the students passed the writing portion of the Connecticut Mastery Test while 59.4% passed on the State level. West Middle school also falls far below Hartford's other elementary schools where 13.7% passed the writing portion of the test. Only 1.5% passed Math while 47.7% passed on the State level. At Quirk Middle School, 8.9% passed Mathematics compared to 47.3% at the State level.

It is important to note that West Middle school has had an increase in student scores on the Fall 1997 Connecticut Mastery Test. Mathematics has increased by 7% in grade 6. Writing scores increased by 28% in grade 4 and 15% in grade 6. Reading scores increased by 10% in grade 4. Superintendent Patricia Daniel congratulated West Middle School with a certificate for their achievements. There is a tremendous need to challenge students academically at West Middle so that they perform better throughout their future years. If students do not qualify for special education services, there is a great need to provide remedial services in reading, writing, and mathematics. In the upcoming year, Reading Recovery staff will be hired to provide remedial services to students in need. Additional staff will be added to teach mathematics to those students who present difficulty in this discipline.

Also of relevance is the fact that the Hartford Public School System remains heavily segregated. The Hartford Public High School student body is 34.7% Black, 59.1% Hispanic, and only 4.9% White. At West Middle School, 64% are Black, 34% are Hispanic, and .1% is White. The Quirk student body is 66% Hispanic, 29.9% Black, and 3% White. Finally in terms of dropouts, 48.5% of Hartford Public High School students did not graduate from the class of 1995. This is compared to 17.4% on the State

level. West Middle School also continues to be plagued by overcrowding. Student enrollment for the 1997-98 school year has increased over the past two years to over 900 children. This is far too many children for an elementary school. Issues such as these were the impetus for the Sheff vs. O’Neil school desegregation case. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs that the Hartford school system is segregated and that this segregation effects the quality of education for Hartford children.

For Asylum Hill to attract families these critical issues within the schools must be dealt with immediately. However, with a new superintendent, Patricia Daniel, to lead the system and a new principal at West Middle, Thomas Danehy, as well as \$20,195,000 allocated to Hartford Public High School this is a time ripe for change. Presented below is West Middle School’s plan for the next three years.

**West Middle School
Three Year Organizational Plan**

1998 - 1999	1999 - 2000	2000 - 2001
Global Studies Pilot Grades pk-6 / Bil / Sp.ed. Niles Street	Global Studies Evaluate - Refine Niles Street	Global Studies Evaluate - Refine Niles Street
A+ Arts Academy Planning & Training	A+ Arts Academy pilot Grades pk-6 Location - Main Bldg.	A+ Arts Academy Evaluate - Refine Main Bldg., 2nd Floor
Primary Classes Grades pk-3	“To Be Discussed” Planning & Training Main Bldg.	“To Be Discussed” Main Bldg.
Intermediate Classes Grades 4-6 Sigourney Street	“To Be Announced” Sigourney Street	“To Be Announced” Sigourney Street

Finally, a footnote on education, a major component missing in the Hill, as in most of Hartford, is meaningful intergenerational education. We must recognize seniors as having skills and talents to teach to school children (tutoring, crafts, language, etc.) and that school children can teach seniors (data processing, foreign language, new math, etc.). Intergenerational programs will help to bridge the gap between these two populations. Most important, stereotypes around growing “old” will be stripped away as children see seniors as mentors and active members of the community.

INSTITUTIONAL AND CULTURAL OFFERINGS



The Antiquarian & Landmarks Society, Inc. located at 66 Forest Street.

A distinguishing characteristic of Asylum Hill is its numerous cultural, religious and institutional entities. No other neighborhood has such a concentration and they have a positive effect on the Hill -- both as tourist attraction, and, for what they offer residents, as well as some outstanding architecture. The best known of these is of course, the Mark Twain House, which draws over 50,000 people per year, and is about to undergo a major expansion. There is also the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, which includes the Stowe House and Stowe-Day Library, the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, the Hartford Camerata Conservatory, and the Hartford Courant Arts Center which houses the Hartford Ballet, Symphony and Orchestra. These institutions offer numerous programs to City youth, and many Asylum Hill children are active participants.

No other area in the city has such a wide range of institutional and cultural offerings located within its boundaries, except possibly the downtown area. The **KEY** for Asylum Hill residents is how to better utilize and partner with some of these institutions so that residents, students, children and people citywide can be better exposed to the learning, assistance, or enrichment that naturally accompany these offerings. They include:

◆ **Hartford Ballet**

The Ballet has several programs:

- Dance Program for City Youth
A scholarship program that operates during the school year which had 60 Hartford youth enrolled for the summer, 1997.
- Discover Dance
Offers dance classes in Hartford Public schools, including West Middle, to over 300 students city-wide.
- Pre-Ballet
Targeted to youth in the immediate neighborhood and has 10 scholarships.
- Summer Pre-Ballet
For 3-8 year old children, offers 50 scholarships for classes in August, funded through City's Recreation Department.

◆ **Hartford Camerata Conservatory**

Offers a six (6) week program to 100 youth - 80% of whom live in Hartford. Program lasts 6 weeks and is free. Classes are in music, dance, theater, and jazz. The program continues on Saturdays during the school year and has scholarships available for private lessons. The Conservatory also offers a 2 year college diploma program with accreditation from New England colleges and universities.

◆ **Mark Twain House**

Runs a Writing Program with students from Hartford Public High School (approximately 10-20) to support and encourage creative writing. They are also involved in several curriculum projects with Hartford Public High School, collaborating with faculty and students. They also offer free summer lawn concerts.

◆ **Harriet Beecher Stowe Center**

Sponsors a program entitled Courageous Connections for women of all ages on leadership for women. Conducts summer concerts and free house tours for neighborhood people, usually with a theme and collaborates with the West Middle School Committee on a summer project.

◆ **Hartford Public Library – Mark Twain Branch**

- Holdings
Books, audiobooks, large print books, business materials, reference books, Spanish books and magazines, videotapes, newspapers, magazines, and on-line journal indexes for adults and children. Special collections include an ESL section, a Business Information Center and a Community Information Center.

- **Community Use**

The branch is used as a site for literacy training, neighborhood meetings and special neighborhood events.

- **Computers**

The public has free access to the internet and numerous Microsoft and other computer applications. The Hartford Public Library system has an on-line Community Information Database for information about city and neighborhood organizations, events, and services. The Branch has scheduled classes in computer applications.

- **Programs**

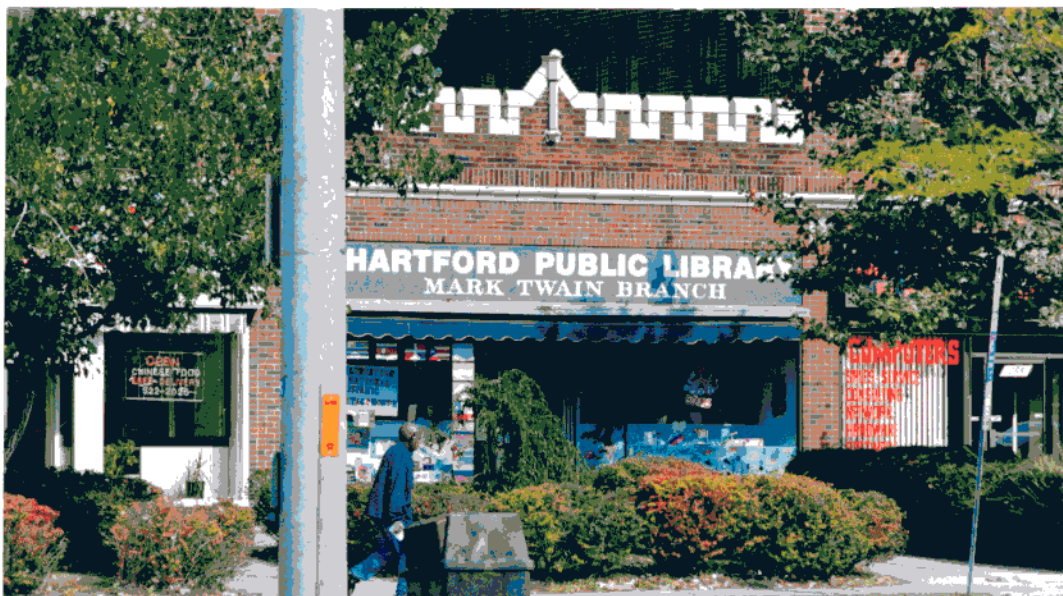
The Branch provides adult and children's programs for day care centers, schools, and neighborhood residents. These include story telling, movies, arts and crafts, computer classes, book discussion groups, special guests, and reading incentive programs.

School Readiness Programs:

- ♦ The new Story Bag Program has been designed to bring reading readiness programs and packet collections to the HeadStarts and other daycare agencies and also to the Home Care Providers, creating a virtual library at many sites in Asylum Hill.
- ♦ Family Place is a series of 6-week parent/child workshops designed to teach caregivers about child development, health, nutrition, school readiness and reading in a section of the library created for family play and reading.

- **Services**

Reference and reader's advisory services are provided. Staff and volunteers assist with homework study and use of the computers.



Pictured above is the Mark Twain Branch located at 256 Farmington Avenue

PROGRAMMATIC INSTITUTIONS



The Asylum Hill Organizing Project located at 350 Farmington Avenue.

◆ **Organized Parents Make a Difference (OPMAD)**

OPMAD, which has recently moved into its own office on Forest Street engages and organizes parents and caregivers in the Hartford Community to design and develop quality enrichment activities for elementary and middle school age children.

OPMAD offers prevention education training, specifically peer leadership, peer mediation, conflict resolution to parents and students, and parenting skills to young parents. OPMAD works in collaboration with community groups, City services and Hartford schools.

◆ **Hartford Region YWCA**

The YWCA runs a wide array of programs at their Health and Fitness Center. They also operate:

- A Child Care Center at Asylum Hill Congregational Church.
- A Neighborcare Program for children from Kindergarten to 6th grade
- Options, a domestic violence prevention program for Latina women.
- PACT Peer Education Program, a positive youth development program for teenagers.

◆ **Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP)**

AHOP's purpose is to bring together all the age, ethnic, racial and economic groups within the neighborhood to address their concerns through a democratic process. Through its member groups and Board, AHOP organizes and mobilizes neighborhood residents, empowers them through a democratic decision making process into action to address neighborhood issues. Through this process, AHOP develops and implements service delivery programs to strengthen

the bonds of community and create a healthy functioning neighborhood. Some of AHOP's programs include housing rehabilitation; organizing to create and implement a legal strategy to assure that landlords maintain their properties; social and educational programs for neighborhood youth and seniors; the formation of the Neighborhood Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund; and the Welfare to Work Employment Network to provide a foundation of transitional supports for unemployed parents effected by the State's 21 month countdown for AFDC recipients. AHOP is consistently and aggressively developing ways to empower community residents into complete self sufficiency and self reliance.

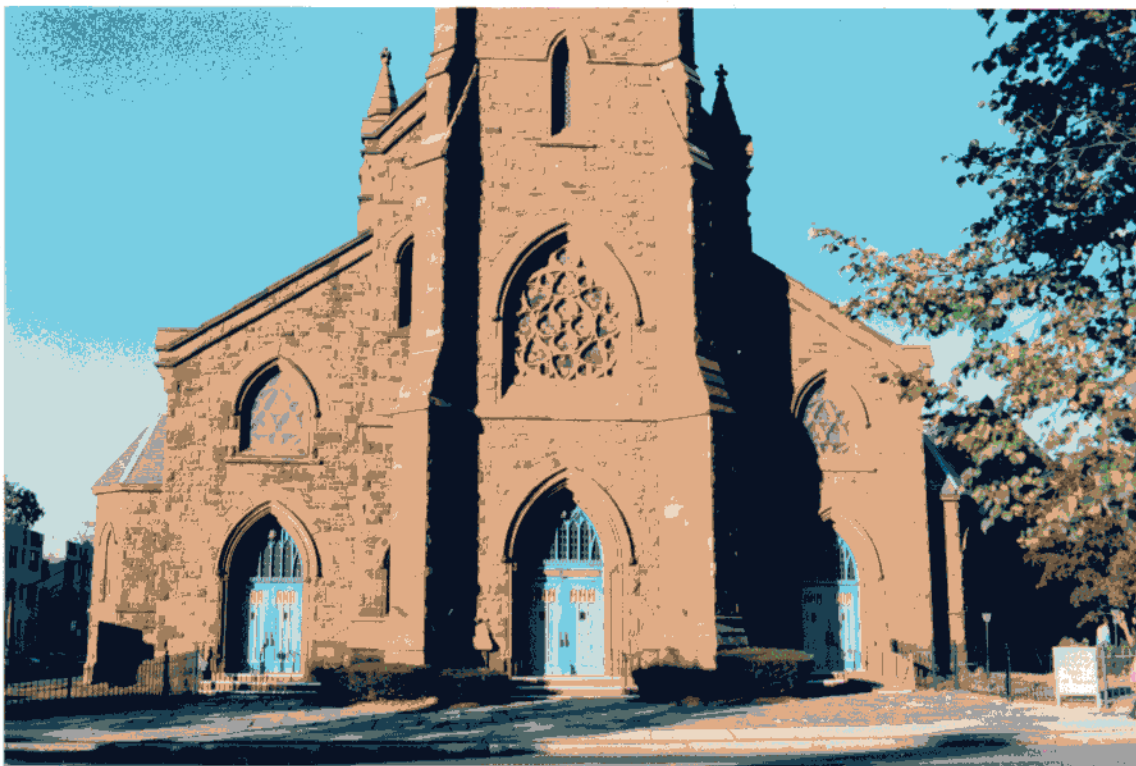
◆ **Hill Housing, Inc./Strategic Housing and Redevelopment Project (SHARP)**

In 1994, Asylum Hill residents, with the leadership of AHOP, began addressing some of these issues by developing a partnership between Hill Housing, Incorporated (a 100% fully owned subsidiary of AHOP), Greater Hartford Realty Management Corporation and Case Enterprises. Together they formed the Strategic Housing and Redevelopment Project (SHARP). The goals of this collaboration were to (1) decrease density, (2) reconfigure efficiency and one bedroom market rate units to two, three and four bedroom low to moderate income housing, (3) provide home ownership opportunity, and (4) demolish blighted properties. The SHARP initiative completed all but one of these goals, targeting Huntington, Collins and Sumner Streets. The SHARP initiative lowered density by reducing seven buildings with a total of one hundred seventy units to six buildings with a total of eighty six, reconfigured large family units. Families who were once living in the properties, under-housed were relocated to newly reconfigured units, with the proper living space for each family. While the demolition of 197 Collins Street contributes to lower density, it also provides green space for children to play. All buildings have on site parking. The home ownership goal is currently in the development stage of its first phase. Permanent financing, gap financing and a bank of pre-qualified buyers are currently in place for the first ten of the twenty planned units. The home ownership project is called SHARP 20.

◆ **Neat Neighborhoods**

The Neat Neighborhood project is supported monetarily by various concerns in Asylum Hill, headed up by the Triangle Coalition. Projects include: painting boards on abandoned buildings; painting porches on abandoned buildings; trimming trees; supplying flowers, flower boxes, soil, hardware at well below cost; 12 metal decorative trash containers to be manufactured and permanently installed in the Sigourney Park area; 12 self-watering planters; the boarding up of abandoned buildings; planting of flowers in large vacant areas. Work has already begun. Two flower sales have been held to help bring in some proceeds and disperse flowers economically.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS



Asylum Hill Congregational Church located on Asylum Avenue.

The Churches are also a major force in Asylum Hill with numerous programs to meet a variety of neighborhood needs. In fact, it may be necessary to change our name to “Church Hill” at some point. In addition to these specific programs, the churches offer numerous public programs including concerts and religious festivals. The active churches on the Hill and their programs are:

◆ **Asylum Hill Congregational Church**

The church sponsors several programs:

- West Middle School (WMS) Committee
An after school program that runs 5 days per week. Program includes tutoring, computer training, science, music, swimming lessons, karate, and field trips. Serves 150 students from West Middle School.
- Summer School
A six week summer program that has 250 participants from Hartford and surrounding towns.
- I Have A Dream
The first church in the country to adopt this program, AHCC promised West Middle graduates in 1988 assistance to go to college of those who have not moved away. Nearly 90% graduated from high school and over half are attending college or trade school.

- Iglesia Christina Adonay
A Hispanic Church is housed here, also.
- Thrift Shop
The Thrift Shop makes clothing and household items available to neighbors on the Hill at a very reasonable price. Open every Friday, 9:30 to 2:00 and the third Saturday of each month, 9:00 to 12:00.

◆ **Trinity Episcopal Church**

Houses the Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen that feeds Asylum Hill neighbors five (5) days a week. They also house the Asylum Hill Food Pantry that supplies food in emergencies to Asylum Hill neighbors. The Food Pantry is under the aegis of the Asylum Hill Christian Community. They also house the “Welfare to Work” program run by Loaves and Fishes Ministries that teaches commercial sewing skills to women. Trinity is also a tutoring site for the WMS Committee’s program.

- Trinity Asylum Hill Arts Program for middle school students after school from October through May. This includes a theater workshop and dinner and transportation home. Asylum Hill residents form the target audience.
- Offers two week-long summer camp with scholarships for needy. Cosponsored by the church and Camp Washington.
- Sponsors both a boy scout and cub scout troop which meets once a week at the church.

◆ **Immanuel Congregational Church**

Provides office and program space for AHOP/Hill Housing in a building next door to the church. Also, houses the Northend Community Church.

◆ **Glory Chapel**

Started by the Youth Challenge program years ago. They are a positive presence in the neighborhood as they fight drug and alcohol addiction through their intensive residential rehabilitation program.

◆ **Asylum Avenue Baptist Church**

Saturday Soup Kitchen

◆ **Christ Temple Church of God in Christ**

Moved to the Asylum Hill neighborhood just last year.

◆ **Grace Lutheran Church**

Houses a Day Care Center. Also, home of the Silver Service Outreach Program.

◆ **Cathedral of St. Joseph**

Has a food pantry.

SENIOR POPULATION



Pictured above is Immanuel House, a senior housing complex on Woodland Street.

Asylum Hill is home to about 12% of Hartford's 26,000 over 65 population. There are five (5) senior housing complexes in the Hill with approximately 920 units. They are all subsidized with tenants paying 30% of their income for rent and utilities, unless their income indicates they can pay market price. Thus all income, educational and cultural levels live together in great diversity. Presently, under remodeling is a 79 unit senior housing residence on Sumner street due to open in May 1998.

Two city-owned buildings for seniors are shared with younger disabled tenants. This has caused some friction as some of these tenants have substance abuse problems. This federal mandate was lifted last year and seniors are pressing the legislature to restrict senior housing to seniors only and provide other suitable housing with special program activities to meet the needs of this younger disabled or addicted population.

There are a large number of seniors in market-priced housing who require services. Every effort is made to keep seniors in their own homes as long as possible with many City, State and Federal Programs, but safe, secure, well supervised affordable senior housing should be an option which we must pursue. At the same time, we must also see that other low income and variously disadvantaged people have housing throughout the City (not only in Asylum Hill), in which they are not just "housed". Rather, they have whatever services are needed to make them less disadvantaged and more capable and productive to the City. This may mean that a Program Director be provided for each senior or disadvantaged residence.

HOUSING	EFFICIENCY	ONE BEDROOM	TWO BEDROOM	TOTAL NUMBER OF SUBSIDIZED APARTMENTS	TOTAL NUMBER OF TENANTS
Immanuel House 15 Woodland Street	144	57	-----	201	220
Kent Apartments* 188 Sigourney	-----	50	-----	50	50
Betty Knox Apartments* 141 Woodland Street	132	67	-----	199	135
Shepherd Park** 170 Sisson Avenue	17	230	66	313	450
Sigourney Square Housing 280-282 Sigourney Street	-----	42	-----	42	45
Ten Marshall House 10 Marshall Street	32	83	-----	115	83

**City owned "Low Cost" Housing: Presently trying to combat problems of mandated disabled and addicted who have no supervision or programs to make a meaningful life. Although these both started as senior housing, the mandate (since reduced to no more than 10% of total space) has still not resulted in better housing for these groups of disadvantaged.*

***Shepherd Park: Technically located in the West End, its senior tenants (many former Hill residents) utilize senior services at Salvation Army, Immanuel House, St. Francis Hospital and the new Senior Health and Wellness Center, various churches and senior education and services at Capitol Community Technical College, all in Asylum Hill.*

Transportation for Seniors

Asylum Hill's senior population is served by Connecticut Transit buses for which seniors pay half fare, or Dial-A-Ride Vans for which they pay \$20.00 a year for one daily round trip ride. The ADA Van for mobility impaired is available at \$2.00 a ride. Both must be reserved 24 hours in advance. On a regular route seniors can hop a grocery shopping bus on stated days.

SENIOR PROGRAMS

Asylum Hill churches all have senior groups with varying degrees of activity.

- ◆ Salvation Army Senior Center: Full service nationally approved senior center offering recreation, enrichment/education; health programs; lunch nutrition site; City, State and Federal Assistance programs and a Summer Vacation Program for 80 seniors each. Funding is from the City of Hartford, Salvation Army southern district office, the United Way, and other private funding.
- ◆ Hill Center at AHOP: Provides many services for seniors through SAAH (Seniors for Action in Asylum Hill). The group is politically alert and works with other community groups to lobby for senior legislation. Also provides education/enrichment programs and outreach to Asylum Hill housing units.
- ◆ St. Francis Senior Health and Wellness Center: Provides speakers and programs of health related interest, and runs its own programs at 95 Woodland Street.
- ◆ Immanuel House: Encourages neighborhood people to join seniors in lunch room provided by Hartford Hospital which has a senior Day Care, nurse on duty, hairdressing, library, entertainment and health and fitness programs to which all seniors are encouraged to come. Mr. and Mrs. Gelback, Managers, work closely with other community entities.
- ◆ St. Francis Hospital: Offers clinic and regular healthcare throughout a selection of top quality personnel and services. Specialties such as heart, cancer and arthritis attract large numbers of seniors to these programs. The hospital is part of a group offering other assistance to Asylum Hill.

CORPORATE INSTITUTIONS

Asylum Hill is the proud home of several major corporations: Aetna, The Hartford, Massachusetts Mutual Insurance Company, and Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center. Each of these institutions is involved in making Asylum Hill a better place to live and work, both financially and with volunteers. For an overview of their involvement on the Hill, see Appendix B.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus service is important to Asylum Hill as over 41% of Asylum Hill households do not have a car. Bus service provided by Connecticut Transit has four (4) bus routes that service Asylum Hill. The "E" bus on Farmington Avenue is at ten (10) minute intervals all day and five (5) minute intervals during peak morning and afternoon. The "A" bus travels Asylum Avenue every 15 minutes. Both routes continue west to West Hartford. The "S" bus goes on 30 minute intervals on Asylum Avenue going north on Woodland Street. The "F" bus travels up Ashley Street at 20 minute intervals. As more people come off welfare, transportation to jobs, especially in the evening and to the suburbs, becomes an additional problem. The development of light rail on the Griffin Line would assist potential workers in getting to their jobs as would development of light rail along the I-84 West corridor which is currently under study.

RECREATION

Recreational resources in Asylum Hill, as in most of Hartford, could be better. Progress has been made but there is still a serious lack of recreational programs for neighborhood youth. Last summer a new playscape for West Middle School was built and as mentioned earlier, Sigourney Park has received \$350,000 which will be allocated towards improving the park. A neighborhood community center is badly needed. The AHRA's Education/Cultural sub-committee has made further recommendations for improving recreational resources in Asylum Hill, which are listed in their report under part III of this plan.

Listed below is a summary of some of the recreation resources currently available.

- **Swimming:** The YWCA has a pool that is open to the public. Youth drop-in is \$1/member (\$12 yearly membership required) or \$3/non-member. The YWCA also offers Youth swim lessons. This is an 8 week course. Rates are \$45 for aquababes, tots, and kinderswim, for youth levels 1-6 the cost is \$50. (Rates are from fall/winter brochure 9/2/97 - 5/30/98) Hartford Public High School has a pool which is open to the public Monday to Thursday, 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- **Basketball:** The City of Hartford Police Department in conjunction with the New England Blizzard will be coordinating a basketball program at West Middle School for 4th to 6th grade girls. The YWCA is also planning a girl's Basketball Program which will be open to girls aged 8-14.
- **Teen Aerobics:** This program will also be run by the YWCA and is scheduled to begin in February 1998. It will be open to teens aged 11-16. The cost will be \$45 for 8 weeks.
- **The Asylum Hill Organizing Project** has a Recreation Director on staff. AHOP does provide various recreational programs throughout the year but there are no programs which take place on a regularly scheduled basis.

SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS/NEEDS

HOUSING



Pictured to the left is 3-11 Huntington, scheduled for demolition.

To the right is 54 Huntington, also scheduled for demolition.



A unique feature, not necessarily a positive one, is the nature of Asylum Hill's rental housing stock. Nearly 50% of these units are in structures of 10-49 units, and 28% are in structures of 50 or more units. Many of these are efficiency and one-bedroom units, which has made Asylum Hill more transient, and provided less housing for families with children than most neighborhood residents would prefer. (This helps explain why Asylum Hill has only 1.8 persons per household.) Only 10% of the housing units are owner-occupied, well below the City average of 23%. In 1990, there were 7,546 housing units in Asylum Hill and a vacancy rate of 11.3%, 3% higher than the City-wide average. This rate has increased dramatically this decade.

The condominium conversion craze that began in late 1970's through the 1980's had a much greater effect on Asylum Hill than the rest of the City. There are 1,143 condo units on the Hill, 40% of the total in Hartford!! The next highest is downtown with 421. However, only 37.8% of these units are owner-occupied. Of those not owner-occupied, 516 are rented and 94 vacant. The value of condominiums has plummeted since the late 1980's. Since the 1990 Census, some of these condominiums have been reconverted to apartments, while at least two, 54 and 100 Huntington Street, are completely vacant and a blight on the neighborhood.

The large number of vacant residential buildings is a major problem. The City's population has shrunk approximately 10% since the 1990 Census, a loss of 15,540 residents. This has led to widespread abandonment, particularly of mid and large size apartment buildings. There are presently 49 vacant residential buildings on the Hill, according to a survey by the City Planning Division, in November, 1997. (To view the Asylum Hill Vacant Structures Map see Appendix C.) Asylum Hill is also home to approximately 13 Halfway Houses. Generally these institutions fit into the neighborhood fabric. The general feeling of people in the neighborhood is that any more Halfway Houses will over burden Asylum Hill and should not be located here.

The over supply of small apartments in large apartment buildings remains a major problem. Of the 7,546 units in Asylum Hill, 5,538 are efficiencies or one bedrooms (1,393 efficiencies, 4,145 one bedroom units). Of all the efficiency units in Hartford, 47% are in Asylum Hill! This means 74% of the units are not appropriate for families, and contributes to the lack of stability in the neighborhood. However, this could be an opportunity to market the Hill to college and law school students

A major focus of AHRA's Strategic Plan will address these housing problems. Several buildings have recently been rehabbed and redesigned to provide larger units, several vacant houses are being rehabbed through the City's Urban Homesteading program for home ownership, and the City has obtained Urban Act funds from the State that will be targeted for demolition. Hill Housing Incorporated, the local community development corporation, is taking an active role in addressing many of these issues, and is an active participant in AHRA. Hill Housing is working on plans to renovate seven vacant houses on the Hill at this time. These houses will be marketed to first time home owners.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

While housing has been a major issue in the neighborhood for some time, another issue is the lack of jobs for neighborhood residents. According to the 1990 census, 23% of the families in Asylum Hill were below the poverty level, and 12% were on public assistance, while City wide 26% of families were below the poverty level and 22% were on public assistance. The recession for much of this decade, combined with the loss of population, undoubtedly has increased these figures. The insurance industry, a major employer in the City, and particularly in Asylum Hill, has had major layoffs throughout the decade.

The decline in manufacturing in the Hartford region is another reason for the high jobless rate. According to Labor Department statistics, there was a loss of 18,350 manufacturing jobs in the Hartford Labor market from 1983 to 1992. In the City of Hartford, the loss has been more dramatic. There were approximately 25,000 manufacturing jobs in the city in 1963, and by 1993 there were only 5,020 manufacturing jobs left. The region's reliance on the aero space industry plays a large part in this dramatic shift in the region's economy. The loss in manufacturing jobs in Hartford is responsible for the drop in income in Hartford's households. Manufacturing jobs are the second highest paying jobs in the economy behind Finance/Insurance/Real Estate. As manufacturing jobs often require less formal education than the FIRE sector the decline in manufacturing represents a major setback in job opportunities for many area residents, since residents' skills no longer match those skills and qualifications currently required by employers in Asylum Hill. Also, as Connecticut has adopted some of the most severe regulations regarding welfare reform there is a need for a Jobs Bank file to facilitate connection with employers and help identify training needs.

CHILD CARE



Pictured above is the Garden Street Day Care opening soon.

Child care is another critical issue for the Asylum Hill neighborhood. Access to affordable quality day care is a most necessary component for the State's welfare to work program. The severe lack of quality day care in the area is a problem which must be addressed if Asylum Hill is going to succeed in getting people back to work. AHOP's parents group, PAVE (Parents Against Violent Environments), reports:

- In the Asylum Hill neighborhood, two day care facilities have closed down within the past year.
- The demand for day care is doubling at a time when slots are decreasing by over 50%.
- As reported by Infoline, infant care is the most requested service and largest unmet need in Asylum Hill.
- Only one center in Asylum Hill has openings for infant care.

The cost of day care is also expensive. The average cost for pre-schoolers is \$132 per week, while it costs \$170 for infants. There is a need in Asylum Hill for a cooperative network of licensed in-home child care providers. Also, most day care slots in Asylum Hill are filled by non-residents. While it is important to meet the needs of Asylum Hill's corporate workers, it is equally important to meet the needs of neighborhood residents, not only in terms of available slots but also affordability. On a positive note, according to a *Hartford Courant* article on Friday October 17, 1997, Hartford will be receiving \$3.3 million to expand and improve preschool and day care programs city-wide.

Listed below are child care establishments in Asylum Hill. In addition to those listed, a Community Child Care Center at 205 Garden street is scheduled to open in January 1998. The Center will be accepting children from 6 weeks to 5 years old. This information was furnished by AHOP and the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Licensed Day Care in Asylum Hill

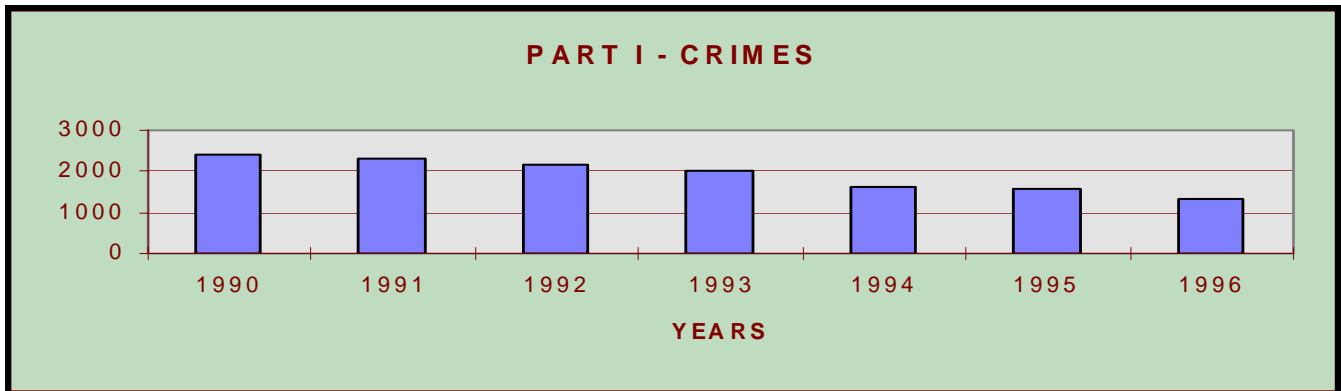
Day Care	Location	Ages	Capacity
Capital Community Technical College Lab School	61 Woodland St.	3 yrs. to 5 yrs.	20
Cathedral Day Care Center	805 Asylum Ave.	12 months to 5 yrs.	38
CRT Head Start - Grace Lutheran Church	6 Woodland St.	3 yrs. to 4 yrs.	18
St. Francis Child Care Center	129 Woodland St.	3 yrs. to 5 yrs.	30
St. Francis Infant/Toddler Center	137 Woodland St.	6 weeks to 2 yrs.	22
Univ. of Hartford Early Child Care Center	10 Woodland St.	3 yrs. to 5 yrs.	24
YWCA Child Care Center	814 Asylum Ave.	6 weeks to 5 yrs.	30
6 Licensed Family Day Care Homes		not specified	36 (6 each)
		Total:	218

PUBLIC SAFETY

Asylum Hill suffers from a perception as an unsafe neighborhood with open drug-selling and prostitution. While this was true in the past, thanks to increased police surveillance, sting operations, and community policing, there is a definite drop in these activities. In fact, serious crime has decreased consistently every year in Asylum Hill since 1990. In 1996, serious crime dropped over 15%. A campaign to change this perception of the Hill will be part of the revitalization efforts.

Thanks to a federal grant, Asylum Hill has an added police presence including a police sub-station on Huntington Street. Aside from two (2) Patrol Officers and the Community Service Officer, there is an additional four (4) man unit and a Sergeant assigned to the neighborhood. Although this has been a most welcomed addition to the neighborhood, there is still a lack of bike patrol officers in Asylum Hill.

The following graph shows the drop in Part I - Crimes from 1990 to 1996. Part I - Crimes are murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, robbery, larceny, and auto theft.



While this consistent drop in serious crime is significant, there has not been a corresponding drop in the “All Other Crimes” category. The increased police presence in Asylum Hill is the major reason for the increase in reported crimes in the neighborhood. Many are Police initiated and deal with quality of life issues (public drinking, trespassing, etc.) and many are also standing complaints. The increased presence naturally leads to higher reporting of crime.

The following chart shows the lack of change in all other crimes from 1990 to 1996.



In a survey prepared for the Asylum Hill Organizing Project by the Citizens’ Research Education Network, “Taking Care of Business”, the long term need most identified by 82% of businesses was security. Clearly, even with declining Part 1 Crime data, there is a need for better police protection. A more detailed breakdown of Crime Statistics in Asylum Hill is available in Appendix D.

III. ASSESSMENT AND ACTION / IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

The Asylum Hill Revitalization Association has four sub-committees, Housing, Economic Development, Educational/Cultural, and Public Safety. The following pages contain their reports regarding assessment and action/implementation plans.

HOUSING

Pictured to the right is 246-248 Sargeant Street, planned for rehabilitation.



Pictured to the left is 225 Garden Street, currently being rehabbed.

During the late fifties and early sixties, the Asylum Hill community experienced a housing development boom in response to the housing needs of corporate employees, spawned by significant growth in the insurance industry. Historically, the Asylum Hill neighborhood has housed, and continues to house, a number of major corporations, Aetna, The Hartford, MassMutual, and St. Francis Hospital. However, a changing economy led to many insurance industry layoffs, leaving Asylum Hill with an abundance of efficiency and one bedroom apartment units, without the market base necessary to support them. Today, many of Asylum Hill residents living in these units are families, not “corporate singles, couples or transients”. Occupancy rates in most of these high density properties are extremely low, prompting desperate landlords to rent to low income, large families. Large families are living in under-housed conditions, with no green space for children to play, inadequate parking and common areas that allow for covert crime activities. The result: many landlords have simply walked away, leaving Asylum Hill with forty-nine (49) vacant residential properties. Most of these properties are not spread throughout the neighborhood, but are clustered, rendering devastating impact on those streets where landlords and homeowners are fighting for a healthy community.

Asylum Hill is home to the largest intact Victorian neighborhood in Hartford. Our ultimate goal is to preserve and enhance this Victorian heritage by reducing density, creating off street parking, and establishing owner-occupancy. To achieve our goal selective demolition of buildings that do not fit this criteria and the reconstruction of buildings resembling those original to this area (circa 1880-1890) are our priorities. We have researched the historic significance of each building and weighed out its significance to our neighborhood. We are looking to demolish buildings which do not lend themselves to the character of the neighborhood to allow for off street parking and green space. We are also looking to demolish buildings which create extreme density. We have assessed these needs in a careful block by block study. Contingent upon the results of an asset-based survey of the neighborhood, the direction of future housing needs will be addressed.

VACANT / ABANDONED STRUCTURES

There are scattered as well as large pockets of vacant and/or abandoned structures throughout the Asylum Hill neighborhood. In total, there are forty-nine (49) vacant buildings. Most of these vacant and abandoned buildings add to the blight and deterioration of the neighborhood as they have been the sites of criminal activity including prostitution, drugs, and homicides and are aesthetically unpleasant. These buildings have reduced the quality of life for those who live and work in the neighborhood because of the visual impact they create as well as the specific criminal activity they harbor.

Target Dates:

Actions

on-going

- All vacant buildings have been carefully researched as to their historical significance. The AHRA bases its recommendations on this criteria. With this consideration we have identified structures for demolition, rehab, and warehousing. Buildings which have no historic value, or are not economically feasible for rehabilitation, or add to extreme density have been identified for demolition. These buildings will be replaced with green space, pocket parks, off street parking, or new construction. New construction will be planned to fit into the overall scheme of the Victorian neighborhood with consideration for historic proportions, materials and position. A more detailed description and photographs of AHRA’s priority list of properties to be demolished, moth balled, and new construction can be found in Appendix E.

- Some of the vacant structures which have been scheduled for mothballing have already been boarded up. Others are still in the recommendation stage.
- *Neat Neighborhoods* (a pilot program which is being tested in the Sigourney Square neighborhood) has overseen the painting of plywood covered windows and screened all other facade windows in an effort to increase the aesthetics of these vacant structures.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE VACANT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN ASYLUM HILL

In most cases, 1 - 3 unit buildings are recommended for rehabilitation. Most large apartment buildings and the two (2) condominiums on Huntington Street are scheduled for demolition. In the cases where there was a question as to the viability and future needs in the area, mothballing is recommended for now. Reuse to be determined later. The recommendations are:

Ashley Street

8	Rehab (Hill Housing) 12/98
18	Rehab (Hill Housing) 12/98
44	Rehab (Hill Housing) 12/98
50	Rehab (Hill Housing) 12/98

Atwood Street

24 - 26	Mothball	Possible B&B in conjunction with St. Francis Hospital
87	Demolish (II)	New Construction (1-2 family)
88	Rehab completed (Urban Homesteading)	
91	Mothball	Future rehab
95	Mothball	Future rehab (Hill Housing Inc.)

Case Street

11	Mothball	Future rehab/possibly move to South Marshall
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Collins Street

148	Rehab in process (Private)	
181	Mothball	Future restoration
207	Mothball	Future rehab/needs rezoning to R-2

Garden Street

219	Mothball	Future rehab (Hill Housing) / Possibly demolish
221	Rehab (Hill Housing)	
225	Rehab in process (Urban Homesteading)	
230	Demolish	

Huntington Street

3 - 7	Demolish (I)	Pocket Park
9 - 11	Demolish (I)	Pocket Park

23	Mothball	Future rehab
50	Demolish (I)	Parking for apartment building
54	Demolish (II)	Parking for 181 Collins
100	Demolish (II)	Pocket Park / future new construction (1-2 Family)
121	Mothball	Future rehab
126	Demolish	Pocket park / future new construction (1-2 Family)

Laurel Street

366	Rehab in process (private)
370	Rehab in process (private)

May Street

53	Demolish	Future new construction (1-2 Family)
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Niles Street

47	Mothball	Move to 271-73 Laurel Street / rehab
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Sargeant Street

21	Demolish	Parking for 27-29 Sargeant Street
27 - 29	Rehab (Hill Housing)	12/98
77 - 79	Demolish	Pocket park / Future new construction (1-2 Family)
83 - 85	Rehab (Hill Housing)	12/98
133	Rehab in process	
199 - 201	Mothball	Future rehab (try to combine with May Street lot)
227 - 229	Rehab (Hill Housing)	12/98
246 - 248	Rehab (Hill Housing)	12/98
256 - 258	Demolish	Pocket park / Future new construction (1-2 Family)
262 - 264	Mothball	Future rehab
266 - 268	Mothball	Future rehab
272 - 274	Mothball	Future rehab
275 - 277	Rehab in process	
311 - 319	Demolish (St. Francis Hospital)	for parking

Sigourney Street

200	Mothball front half	Demolish modern rear portion for parking
215 - 221	Demolish (II)	New construction (possible 1-2 family model home)

South Marshall Street

240	Mothball	Future rehab
277 - 79	Mothball	Future rehab

Sumner Street

31	Demolished	Asylum Hill Cong. Church / The Hartford: Parking Lot
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NEED FOR FAMILY HOUSING

The Asylum Hill neighborhood rental units consist primarily of efficiency and one bedroom units. Many households in the Asylum Hill neighborhood have children and need two to four bedroom units.

Actions

12/98

- Conduct an asset-based survey of Asylum Hill.
- The AHRA plans include rental units in 2- and 3-family houses for low to moderate income families under the Sharp 20 Program. These houses will not exceed three units and will be owner-occupied (with low to moderate income owners). The owners of these houses will receive assistance from Hill Housing, Inc. (HHI) for financial and rehabbing support of the structures. These houses and rental units will be marketed first to Asylum Hill residents who are presently living in under-housed conditions.
- Target middle income population.

Lead Group

The Citizens' Research Education Network (CREN)

HOME OWNERSHIP

Only 10% of the units in Asylum Hill are owner-occupied. The AHRA has determined that the most significant stabilization factor is home ownership.

Actions

12/98

- The AHRA supports HHI in its development of home ownership opportunities through the SHARP 20 program. Upon the completion and sale of the first ten rehabilitated units of housing (phase I) the AHRA will make recommendations to HHI for phase II properties. Properties will be identified with a priority given to AHRA Action Areas. The AHRA will also work with the Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP) and HHI to encourage local corporations, businesses and colleges to market these houses and units to their employees and students.
- The City's Housing Department through its Urban Homesteading Program is also actively matching prospective owners with vacant houses for rehab with some properties already successfully completed.
- The AHRA will also work to develop a marketing strategy to attract new home owners to the Asylum Hill community.
- Market to a variety of income levels by coordinating with groups such as Habitat for Humanity, Mutual Housing, Co-Opportunity Inc., City Planning, and the department of community and economic development.

Lead Group

Hill Housing Inc.

THE STABILIZATION OF OPERATING PROPERTIES

Several properties are operated by landlords who do not conduct proper screening of rental applicants and do not operate their properties in compliance with Hartford's housing codes. Further, there is an increasing number of out of state landlords. AHRA is beginning to see a concentration of criminal activities associated with these properties.

Action

1/98

- AHRA recommends that AHOP and HHI offer landlord / tenant workshops to educate landlords in property management (which includes proper screening of residents). AHRA also recommends education for these tenants of their rights and responsibilities and supports them in forming tenant associations.

Lead Group

AHOP

LACK OF AFFORDABLE FINANCING FOR PROPERTY REPAIRS

Owner occupants of single and multi-family dwellings find it very difficult to find affordable financing.

Actions

on-going

- AHRA will work with AHOP and HHI to encourage Hartford banks to include in their CRA plans financing opportunities with more lenient qualifying ratios and lower points and interest rates for owner occupants.
- Continue to support work with *Christmas in April*, a program sponsored by individual and corporate donations hard at work helping homeowners make major repairs. They have been responsible for at least four major renovation projects in our neighborhood and they have pledged their support to our neighborhood for future projects.

LACK OF GREEN SPACE

The lack of green space is a quality of life issue which does not allow for children and family recreational activity. It forces children to play in the streets or seek unsafe or undesirable activities.

Actions

on-going

- Consideration for green space / pocket parks has been reviewed wherever demolition has been planned as well as for already vacant lots. Presently, 3-11 Huntington Street has been identified as a pocket park. Grass, bushes, benches, walks, and fences on these designated areas have also been planned. We will be asking neighboring churches, corporations and local civic groups to maintain these pocket parks. In an attempt to enhance our architectural plan we have avoided the use of corner properties for green space.

period lighting, landscaping, etc. for homeowners in an effort to beautify the neighborhood and encourage the Victorian theme at an incentive price.

- AHRA is looking forward to a series of walking House Tours to show off the beautiful architecture of Asylum Hill. The preparation of these tours would begin once the neighborhood shows stabilization.

Lead Groups

Historic Properties Commission and AHRA Housing Committee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Asylum Hill is a densely populated, ethnically and socioeconomically diverse neighborhood. Residents are largely working class and moderate income, but significant pockets of poverty persist. Potentially Asylum Hill could be a model mixed income neighborhood. There are many small businesses, large corporations, professional offices, and important institutions located here. The main commercial corridor, while busy, is characterized by aesthetically unpleasant facades, a lack of products and services useful to neighborhood residents, and heavy rush hour traffic.

A positive and relatively recent development involves Asylum Hill participation with adjoining neighborhoods in development initiatives. The most major of these projects, Veeder Place, involves rehabilitation of the historic Veeder Root factory into office space, and light manufacturing. This is a tri-neighborhood initiative that includes the Asylum Hill, Clay Arsenal, and Upper Albany communities. Also, the development of a regional flea market is being explored for a portion of the Hawthorn Building. More recently, Asylum Hill has been working with the West End on several projects. The Farmington Avenue Business District is a merchants' association spanning the two neighborhoods, while the Farmington Avenue Joint Committee is working on physical and economic rejuvenation of the Farmington Avenue commercial corridor from downtown to West Hartford. As a result, these two neighborhoods are in regular communication with one another.

With these realities in mind, the goals and strategies listed below will help the Asylum Hill Neighborhood work toward a more livable and vibrant community.

GOAL ONE: INCREASE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS.

Strategy A: Conduct an asset survey to identify residents' skills, certifications, and interests as well as institutional and programmatic resources.

Time Frame: January to December 1998

Lead Group(s): NRZ Committee / Citizens' Research Education Network (CREN)

- Actions:**
1. Meet with the Citizens' Research Education Network - month 1
 2. Meet with the Trinity Center for Neighborhoods - month 2
 3. Review and revise the Sheldon/Charter Oak survey instrument - months 3 & 4
 4. Implement the survey - months 5-7
 5. Compile and analyze the data - months 8-10
 6. Use the data to expand the Jobs Bank file (below) and possibly in conjunction with the Peer Lending Project - months 11-12.

Strategy B: Create, promote, and maintain a Jobs Bank file of neighborhood residents' skills, certifications, and interests to facilitate connection with employers and to help identify training needs.

Time Frame: January to December 1998

Lead Group(s): Parents Against Violent Environments (PAVE) / Asylum Hill Economic Development Committee (AHED) / Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP)

- Actions:**
1. Meet with PAVE organizer to determine what has been done already - month 1
 2. Identify appropriate computer software for use at AHOP and the public library - month 2
 3. Devise a promotional method in conjunction with PAVE and AHOP - months 8-10
 4. Gather additional data on jobs - months 3-5
 5. Gather additional data on residents' skills - months 3-5
 6. Gather information on training programs - months 6-7
 7. Provide job-hunt skills training - months 1-12
 8. Request that staffing to support this project be included in AHOP fundraising proposals and NRZ submissions for funds - months 1-12
 9. Integrate affirmative action information and strategies to increase opportunities - months 3-5
 10. Promote a neighborhood workforce of contractors to rehabilitate and maintain buildings and parks - months 10-12

Strategy C: Promote work opportunities for youth.

Time Frame: To begin January 1998

Lead Group(s): AHED / AHOP

- Actions:**
1. Explore and promote entrepreneurial and job placement programs for youth such as "Our Piece of the Pie" - scheduled to begin 1/98
 2. Explore and promote youth internships and apprenticeships with major neighborhood corporations and institutions - months 1-12

Strategy D: Explore the health care arena as a growing employment sector.

Time Frame: Phase II / 1999

Lead Group(s): AHED / PAVE / AHOP

- Actions:**
1. Identify local health care provision agencies and training programs - months 1-2
 2. Meet with health care providers and trainers to discuss the market - months 3-4
 3. Develop a plan for increasing access to health care jobs by neighborhood residents - months 5-6
 4. Implement the plan - months 7-12

GOAL 2: CREATE JOBS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS.

Strategy A: Establish a cooperative network of licensed in-home child care providers.

Time Frame: June 1998 - June 1999

Lead Group(s): AHED / PAVE / Hartford Working Group on Community Economic Development (HWGCED)

- Actions:**
1. Meet with PAVE to clarify what has been done already - month 1
 2. Identify various technical assistance providers - months 2-3
 3. Meet with technical assistance providers - months 4-6
 4. Select a model and technical assistance provider - month 8
 5. Pursue funding and staffing to implement the program - months 9-12

Strategy B: Establish a neighborhood “doorman” enterprise that can provide security and grounds clean-up for multi-unit residences, businesses, and parks.

Time Frame: Phase II / 1999

Lead Group(s): Hill Housing, Inc. / NRZ / HWGCED / AHOP

- Actions:**
1. Organize Asylum Hill landlord association - month 1
 2. Meet with landlords to explain the concept and identify if there is need and interest - months 2-4
 3. Meet with ICA group representatives to explore a worker-ownership design - month 5
 4. Meet with local security companies to discuss the project - month 6
 5. Select a model and technical assistance provider - month 7
 6. Secure funding and staffing for the project - months 9-12

Strategy C: Explore uses for the Hawthorn Building.

Time Frame: on-going

Lead Group(s): AHED / Hill Housing, Inc. / CREN

- Actions:**
1. Meet with building owner, Bill Bellock. Tour the building.
 2. Determine what the environmental problems are and how to correct them.
 3. Meet with representatives of the Coalition to Strengthen the Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood and CREN to discuss the process for reclaiming a whole building.
 4. Meet with people to discuss the viability of a small business incubator model.
 5. Meet with people to discuss ideas on light manufacturing.
 6. Pursue development plans for weekend flea market site.

Strategy D: Explore the possibility of setting up greenhouses at the south end of Laurel Street.

Time Frame: Phase II / 1999

Lead Group(s): AHED / Hill Housing / Knox Foundation

- Actions:**
1. Meet with Mike McGarry and representatives of the Knox Foundation - month 1
 2. Develop a plan for next steps - months 2 and 3
 3. Implement the plan - months 4-12

GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

Strategy A: Establish a neighborhood Business Resource Center that will provide (or make referrals to) technical assistance for businesses, information on availability of capital, an inventory of available commercial space, and support for the new merchant association.

Time Frame: on-going

Lead Group(s): AHED / Hartford Public Library / AHOP

- Actions:**
1. Determine what materials and equipment are needed.
 2. Explore the viability of placing the project at a newly-located Mark Twain Branch of the Hartford Public Library.
 3. Explore the possibility of locating the project at the Capital Community Technical College library.
 4. Determine funding sources for the project.
 5. Request that part-time staff to support this project be included in AHOP fundraising proposals and NRZ submissions for funds.
 6. Decide whether the project should eventually move to the new AHOP building.

Strategy B: Support efforts to identify desirable businesses for Asylum Hill.

Time Frame: January to December 1998

Lead Group(s): Farmington Avenue Business District (FABD) / City of Hartford

- Actions:**
1. Review City of Hartford documents that discuss what is missing - month 1
 2. Review the CREN/AHED Business Survey for ideas - month 1
 3. Refer possibilities for new businesses to FABD for outreach - months 1-12
 4. At meetings of the Asylum Hill Economic Committee, talk with FABD representatives about next steps - months 4, 8, 12
 5. Work with the West End Civic Association, Amadon and Associates, and local small businesses and major corporations to generate ideas - months 1-12

Strategy C: Support marketing and promotional efforts of Asylum Hill businesses.

Time Frame: January to April 1998 and Phase II / 1999

Lead Group(s): FABD

- Actions:**
1. Coupon promotions - Phase II / 1999
 2. Restaurant and recreational activities brochure - months 1-4

Strategy D: Set zoning and design standards for the neighborhood.

Time Frame: Phase II / 1999

Lead Group(s): NRZ / Farmington Avenue Joint Committee (FAJC) / FABD

- Actions**
1. Create an Asylum Hill / West End zoning committee.
 2. Analyze zoning designations that are detrimental to the neighborhood.
 3. Establish recommendations for zoning changes for the neighborhood.
 4. Determine standards for design regulation such as commercial architecture, signs, landscaping, parking, and pedestrian walkways.
 5. Meet with City Council members, Planning Commission members, and Zoning Board of Appeals members to promote recommendations.

Strategy E: Gather and disseminate information on and develop plans that are congruent with city, regional, and state efforts that address economic planning and development.

Time Frame: January to December 1998

Lead Group(s): NRZ / AHED / AHOP

- Actions:**
1. Identify which efforts we wish to monitor - month 1
 2. Designate contact person for each effort - months 2-4
 3. Designate which organizations will receive the information - months 5-6
 4. Arrange for in-kind copying and mailing of documents through neighborhood institutions and corporations - months 8 on

Strategy F: Endorse, advocate for, and help develop independent projects that contribute to neighborhood economic viability and development such as Veeder Place, local daycare centers, Capital Community Technical College, the Griffin Line, the Peer Lending Project, and the coffee importation project. Expand transportation alternatives especially to get neighborhood residents to suburban jobs. Improve overall transportation without highway expansion.

Strategy G: Actively market vacant office space in Asylum Hill.

Time Frame: Phase II / 1999

Lead Organization(s): AHED / Hill Housing / FABD / NRZ

- Actions:**
1. Compile a list of properties - months 1-2
 2. Determine what is currently being done to market these properties - months 2-3
 3. Determine what additional strategies could be helpful - months 6-8
 4. Develop a proposal to hire a “marketing coordinator” to promote all aspects of Asylum Hill

EDUCATIONAL / CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

As noted earlier, Asylum Hill is home to some of the most troubled schools in Hartford. West Middle is an elementary school that consistently scores among the lowest in the State Mastery Test and Hartford Public High School is on academic probation. Asylum Hill is also home to many cultural organizations, several of national reputation.

It is the goal of this committee to champion the improvement of our schools, to encourage the collaboration of these fine cultural institutions and to invite their help in addressing some of the educational/recreational issues in Asylum Hill.

GOAL I: IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS IN ASYLUM HILL SO THEY BECOME COMMUNITY ASSETS.

Strategy A: Help improve the schools in Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Explore alternative models for improving West Middle School, Quirk Middle School and Hartford Public High School – ongoing – Education/Cultural Council
 2. Publish an annual bilingual listing of all after school programs on the Hill and distribute through school to all parents.
 3. Encourage participation in PTO/PTA's by parents.
 4. Publish bilingual listing, which is updated regularly, of educational resources available at Mark Twain branch library and on bookmobile. Distribute with above.
 5. Encourage principals/teachers to promote parent involvement at schools by publishing a bilingual listing of volunteer opportunities and to provide procedures for their successful implementation.
 6. Support existing tutoring programs in Asylum Hill and promote expansion as possible.
 7. Support city-wide initiative to improve schools.
 8. Open discussions to encourage after-hours use of schools by the community, both physical facilities and staff. 1/99
 9. Support and encourage improvement of physical condition of school physical plant facilities. on-going
 10. Support proposed computer lab and homework study hall at 241 Sigourney Street.

Strategy B: Help improve “school readiness” for young residents of Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Support existing program at West Middle School. on-going
 2. Tie in with existing programs at Y-sponsored childcare programs at AHCC and Garden Street. 9/98
 3. Explore opportunities to expand such programs.
 4. Promote visibility of parent materials and programs available at library. Penny Rusnak - 9/98

Strategy C: Explore concept of a charter and/or magnet school in Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Facilitate development of charter/magnet school, performing arts, to be considered to mesh with existing community assets. on-going
 2. Meet regularly with Capital Community Technical College to monitor development on their future move downtown. on-going
 3. Maintain open dialogue with current charter school developer. on-going

GOAL II: RECOGNIZE AND USE THE MANY CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN ASYLUM HILL.

Strategy A: Encourage Asylum Hill cultural organizations to work together.

- Actions:**
1. Encourage the formation of an informal consortium among the education/cultural organizations to promote enhanced communication and coordinate programming. 6/98
 2. Encourage cultural institutions to work together on common project, such as public tour of their facilities. 6/99

Strategy B: Explore ways to promote interaction between Asylum Hill residents and local cultural institutions. 6/98

- Actions:**
1. Encourage institutions to offer summer jobs and internships to Asylum Hill students. on-going
 2. Disseminate timely information on public programs offered by cultural institutions, especially free outdoor concerts, free tours, and other programs. 6/98
 3. Encourage educational projects between the local schools and the cultural institutions, including development of relevant curriculum units. 9/00

Strategy C: Encourage the appreciation of Asylum Hill and its history and architecture.

- Actions:**
1. Work with organizations to sponsor an Asylum Hill house tour. 6/99
 2. Encourage program of walking tours of Asylum Hill to be offered periodically during warm weather and for groups upon request. 6/99
 3. Explore publication of self-guided walking tour of Asylum Hill and/or map of National Register districts. 6/99 - Karin Peterson
 4. Disseminate information on historic marker program and encourage home owners to mount register plaque. 6/99

Strategy D: Work with Hartford Public Library to continue to provide quality programs and resources to the community.

- Actions:**
1. Support staff in efforts to relocate branch to more convenient location and help explore possible facilities. on-going
 2. Keep in contact with Louise Blalock on this issue to ensure her of community support and involvement. on-going
 3. Offer other support, as needed, to library staff. on-going

GOAL III: ESTABLISH AND IMPROVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN ASYLUM HILL.

Strategy A: Explore the concept of “pocket parks” with multiple uses (i.e., grassy areas for sitting, playing baseball, rollerblading, playscapes, etc.).

- Actions:**
1. Working with the Housing Committee, designate appropriate locations for same and potential use, soliciting input from immediate neighbors. 1/99
 2. Working with the Housing Committee, identify who develops and maintains these parks. 5/99

Strategy B: Reclaim Sigourney Park.

- Actions:**
1. Support improvements by the city. on-going
 2. Promote increased recreational use to counter balance less appropriate use. on-going
 3. Support other activities such as Trinity Church summer camp held at the Park.

Strategy C: Explore the establishment of a recreational center and/or Boys-Girls Club. 5/99

- Actions:**
1. Support AHOP’s plan to develop 241 Sigourney Street.
 2. Explore off-hours recreational use of local schools.

Strategy D: Explore the idea of intergenerational recreation.

- Actions:**
1. Encourage Knox Park Foundation to establish a garden program combining seniors and students. 5/00
 2. Talk with representatives of senior organizations on Asylum Hill about establishing an oral history project; promote same with Hartford High. 5/00
 3. Encourage the establishment of a parallel oral history project with local cultural institutions. 5/00

Strategy E: Ensure Asylum Hill neighbors are kept informed of recreational activities.

- Actions:**
1. Publish a bilingual listing of recreation programs available and disseminate throughout the schools. 9/98
 2. Ensure offerings by local cultural institutions are included. 9/98

PUBLIC SAFETY

Violent crime in Asylum Hill has decreased significantly since 1990, as is true with the City of Hartford. However, during September and October of 1997, the Hill has begun to experience a resurgence in violent crime evidenced in five murders, increased drug and prostitution activity. Two of the recent murders appeared to be drug turf related. Additionally, quality of life crimes are also on the rise; panhandling, illegal parking, loitering, noise pollution and traffic violations. It is a community consensus that lack of police presence and poor resident selection policies of local landlords are significant factors.

POLICE PRESENCE

While Hartford Police have a community sub-station located in Asylum Hill, this is not sufficient as police visible presence is needed throughout the community. This presence must include: patrol officers to park and walk, bicycle police and increased foot patrol. Some residents are reluctant to report crime in progress, fearing their personal safety due to poor response time and a lack of sufficient officers stationed specifically in Asylum Hill.

LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES & SUPPORT

Many local landlords rent to anyone who, seemingly, has the ability to pay. Once problem tenants are under an annual lease some landlords feel trapped, not knowing how to deal with the problem, while others do not care as long as they are collecting the rent. Many landlords only initiate eviction proceedings for non-payment of rent, as grounds for material non-compliance are difficult to prove. This is a critical issue as material non-compliance eviction is the statute used for lease violations due to illegal activities, excessive noise or nuisance, property damage, etc. Also landlords need a referral network to prevent undesirable residents renting from property to property, within Asylum Hill. Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP) is organizing a landlord association to address these and other landlord issues. This association will give local landlords a forum to share experiences, give support, use peer pressure when needed, and receive landlord training specific to managing inner-city properties.

COMMUNITY & POLICE COLLABORATION

It is necessary to foster a collaboration between the police, community residents, local corporations, small businesses and churches by utilizing existing neighborhood associations and AHOP block watches and landlord associations.

GOAL I. ENSURE RESIDENT SAFETY BY REDUCING CRIME.

Strategy A: Work with AHOP to establish Block Watch on all residential streets.

Start Up Target Dates

- Actions:**
1. Conduct community anti-crime rallies. 10/97
 2. Organize block activities on every block. 10/97
(marches, picnics, parties, meetings).
 3. Receive daily arrest reports from police and circulate to block watches. 12/97
 4. Give residents public safety training. 02/98
 5. Teach residents who and where to call for help. 02/98

Strategy B: Work with AHOP to increase police presence and visibility in Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Have community meetings with police. 10/97
 2. Have police participate in block watch training. 11/97
 3. Retrieve police staffing schedules. 11/97
 4. Lobby Police Chief, City Manager, Mayor and City Council to increase police staffing and visibility. 11/97
 5. Lobby to have police park and walk. 11/97
 6. Lobby for bicycle and foot patrol. 11/97

Strategy C: Promote the direct contact of Corporate security officers with police, each other and AHOP.

- Actions:**
1. Organize meetings with police, corporate officials residents and business owners. 12/97
 2. Create formal system of communication between corporate security and Hartford police department. 12/97

Strategy D: Improve lighting both on public streets and private property.

- Actions:**
1. Identify streets that need increased lighting. 11/97
 2. Work with AHOP on "Light Up the Neighborhood" 11/97

Strategy E: Work with AHOP to establish a landlord association.

- Actions:**
1. Organize landlords to form an association. 01/98
 2. Hold monthly landlord association meetings.
 3. Conduct landlord training sessions.
 4. Give property management information and training referral.
 5. Encourage landlords to set Asylum Hill resident selection standards.

6. Encourage landlords to establish a resident referral and screening network.
7. Assist landlords in effective eviction processes.
8. Encourage landlord peer support and pressure.
9. Encourage and train landlords in developing resident associations.
10. Hold landlord/block watch collaboration meetings.
11. Establish “Doorman Enterprise”.

Note: The doorman enterprise is a security measure, and a tool for building a sense of neighborly spirit within each property and creating an economic development opportunity.

GOAL II: IMPROVE TRAFFIC SAFETY AND CIRCULATION.

Strategy A: Form an AHRA committee to analyze street safety and present traffic patterns particularly on Asylum Avenue.

- Actions:**
1. Make recommendations to the City based on the effects of previous street changes (late 1970’s) and traffic calming efforts.
 2. Evaluate the need for more STOP signs and traffic signals.

Strategy D: Aggressive ticketing of illegally parked cars.

- Actions:**
1. Ask corporations to warn employees who park on street all day.
 2. Target worst streets.

Strategy E: Lobby for police to target streets with speeding problems.

- Action :**
1. Identify worst streets and give data to police.

Strategy F: Remove unnecessary light and telephone poles (Sargeant, Ashley, Huntington).

- Actions:**
1. Identify exact locations.
 2. Contact appropriate company.

GOAL III: IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS WITH POLICE.

Strategy A: Ensure that police assigned to Asylum Hill continue to attend block watch and community meetings.

- Action:**
1. Confirm this support with a formal written request to the Dep. Police Chief.

11/97

Strategy B: Report any significant police behavior to superiors 527-6300 Ext.604.

Examples: Good response time, thorough work, courteous behavior, responses beyond the call of duty, rude or inappropriate behavior, improper, brutal or inadequate behavior, poor response time, officer in trouble, crimes in progress, tips on potential illegal activities, identification of suspects.

Strategy C: Lobby for increased sensitivity training for all police.

Strategy D: Monitor and improve police response time.

Strategy E: Work with police to strengthen enforcement of quality of life issues (noise, loitering panhandling, public drinking, etc.).

GOAL 1V: SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP EFFORTS AND STRENGTHEN THEM.

Strategy A: Support establishment of Community Court.

Strategy B: Target illegal businesses, especially sale of alcohol to minors and after hours alcohol sales.

Action: 1. Identify suspected violators to police.

CONCLUSION

The attributes already contained within Asylum Hill will provide the foundation upon which the Hill can rebuild a thriving, self-sustaining academic and business/residential neighborhood. To do so, we will focus our attention not only on repairing our neighborhood from “within”, but by focusing on a source of new neighborhood dollars -- the commercial and residential needs of the employers, employees, and students. These groups have demonstrated a continued willingness to call Asylum Hill their social and/or retail home. The Hill's collection of studio and one bedroom apartments and its large historic homes are ideal for this diverse population. The numerous arts, cultural, educational, and religious institutions are a unique asset to which no other neighborhood can lay claim. The opportunities they afford Asylum Hill residents is unparalleled and is a strength we will nurture. Enhanced by the neighboring West End, the Hill has all the potential in the world to create a multi-cultural and safe residential/commercial neighborhood. Most importantly, however, the Revitalization process described in this plan will keep us focused as we endeavor to realize our neighborhood's existing potential and make it a better place to live, work, worship, and play.

Appendix A

Businesses

Business	Location
Banks:	
Fleet	70 Farmington Ave.
Eagle Federal	108 Farmington Ave.
Mechanics Savings	202 Farmington Ave.
Family Credit Union	962 Farmington Ave.
Barber Shops:	
Queen Barber	211 Farmington Ave.
Funeral Homes:	
Ahearn's	180 Farmington Ave.
Grocery Stores:	
Carlos'	198 Farmington Ave.
Express Mart	302 Farmington Ave.
Convenience Store	60 Gillett
Sigourney Market	97 Ashley St.
Brother's Grocery	180 Ashley St.
Hilltop Market	612 Asylum Ave.
Lotte Market	242 Farmington Ave.
Hair Salons and Supplies:	
Beanoy Hair Salon	252 Farmington Ave.
Hair Plus Beauty Supplies	264 Farmington Ave.
Essence of Beauty	301 Farmington Ave.
Hair Design	618 Asylum Ave.
Health and Medical:	
Family Clinic	99 Woodland St.
Medical Center	19 Woodland St.
Medical Center	21 Woodland St.
CT Surgery Center	81 Gillett St.
St. Francis Hospital	114 Woodland St.
Health and Welfare Office	325 Laurel St.
Lodging:	
Hastings Hotel	151 Farmington Ave.
Laundry and Cleaners:	
Coin Laundry	314 Farmington Ave.
SuperWash Cleaner & Laundry	294 Farmington Ave.
Budget Cleaner & Tailor	298 Farmington Ave.
Hilltop Cleaner	241 Woodland St.
Ashley Cleaner & Tailor	112 Ashley St.
Package Stores & Bars:	
A&P Warehouse Liquor	304 Farmington Ave.
Towne Liquor	213 Garden St.
Ashley Cafe	207 Garden St.
Piggy's	69 Hawthorne St.
Imlay Package Store	42 Hawthorne St.
Pierce	247 Sigourney St.
Arthur's	190 Farmington Ave.
Pharmacies:	
Pierce	247 Sigourney St.
Arthur's	190 Farmington Ave.
Kazarian	19 Woodland St.

Businesses

Restaurants:

Peking Garden	244 Farmington Ave.
Spiros	246 Farmington Ave.
#1 China House	260 Farmington Ave.
Domino Pizza	274 Farmington Ave.
Congress Rotisserie	276 Farmington Ave.
Taco Bell	255 Farmington Ave.
Oasis/Panchos	267 Farmington Ave.
Dunkin Donuts	271 Farmington Ave.
Capital View Deli	628 Asylum Ave.
Gourmet Coffee	626 Asylum Ave.
Kent Pizza	211 Garden St.
Hastings	151 Farmington Ave.

Other:

Photo Hut	240 Farmington Ave.
Rent A Center	240 Farmington Ave.
Temporary Labor	316 Farmington Ave.
Nationwide Wig	318 Farmington Ave.
Zip Link	40 Woodland St.
Design Office	51 Gillett St.
Windsor Shade Tabaco	158 Woodland St.
Shoe Repair	620 Asylum Ave.
Color Copy	622 Asylum Ave.
Alpha Business	254 Farmington Ave.
Opul Business Systems	18 Garden St.
Plus Bargain	306 Farmington Ave
WHCN Radio Station	1039 Asylum Ave.

Appendix B

Corporate Institutions

Aetna

Aetna has a strong tradition of corporate philanthropy in Hartford, in Connecticut and across the nation. Aetna and the Aetna Foundation have invested almost \$20 million in Connecticut since 1992, based on two special priorities, children's health and minority education. In the Hartford neighborhood, and particularly Asylum Hill, Aetna has supported: The SHARP Housing Project; Greater Hartford Arts Council for general support and sponsorship of the first "Family Saturday"; Mark Twain House as a presenting sponsor, Hartford Proud and Beautiful for clean-up in Asylum Hill, Christmas in April for housing rehabs, Aetna Center for Families at Trinity College; the Saturday Academy; the Aetna Foundation Children's Center at St. Francis/Mt. Sinai Hospital and Medical Center to improve services for children who are physically and/or sexually abused and, the National Conference of the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, and WRSB-TV 3 presented "A Conversation on Race, Ethnicity and Culture" as part of a daylong celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

Even more importantly, our employees volunteer. Almost every committee and Board in Asylum Hill and in Hartford has an Aetna employee involved. Also, the Aetna Foundation's employee giving programs were revised in 1997 so employees can request matching gifts to most 501©(3) non-profits.

The Hartford

Three years ago, the Claim Department adopted West Middle School's entire first grade class. Employees conduct bi-annual field trips with the students and arrange for visits to The Hartford. During their tour of The Hartford, the students get instruction on fire safety from our safety engineers. The Claim Department spearheaded a major fundraising effort to build a playscape on the grounds of West Middle school that was completed in August of 1997 prior to the start of the new school year! The Hartford Foundation was part of this effort, donating \$30,000 from their matching funds.

Employees from the Information Technology Department participate in a Reading Buddy Program that targets 3rd grade students. Employees visit the school at least once a month during the lunch period to read to their "buddy". The corporate Banking and Real Estate Departments adopted a third grade class at West Middle School. This year they raised funds to purchase school supplies and have established a lending library with 50 Reading Rainbow videos and books. Corporately, The Hartford has been involved with the West Middle School Committee's tutoring program for 15 years.

Additionally, The Hartford is a major contributor to the Strategic Housing and Redevelopment Project (SHARP). The project replaced 274 foreclosed apartments in Asylum Hill with 180 larger, multi-bedroom units in an effort to attract working class families into the area. The Hartford also supports the Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP) in their efforts to train and transition neighborhood residents from welfare into the workforce.

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center has a long-standing tradition of active involvement in virtually all segments of the Greater Hartford community.

The hospital is deeply committed to the Asylum Hill neighborhood, in which its main campus is located, and to the adjoining West End neighborhood. In 1996, Saint Francis led the way with other major corporations, neighborhood agencies and associations in forming the Triangle Coalition, an inclusive task force charged with developing priorities for the two neighborhoods, and providing planning, technical support and funding to address those needs.

The Asylum Hill Family Practice Center, a joint program of Saint Francis and the UCONN School of Medicine, provides comprehensive, primary care services to patients of all ages. Many of the center's patients are low-income residents of the Asylum Hill neighborhood, who otherwise would not have access to regular medical care.

MassMutual




MassMutual has played a significant role in Hartford following its merger with Connecticut Mutual in 1996. The company has focused its efforts on five primary areas: health, human services, education, economic development, arts and culture. The following represent examples from these areas.

- MassMutual worked with St. Francis Hospital and Hill Housing to help facilitate the development of the Community Child Care Center on the site of the former Kinder Care on Garden St.
- The company was also the driving force and major sponsor behind two major art exhibits: a celebration of Norman Rockwell's work and later, a major touring exhibit - *Caribbean Visions* - was showcased at the Wadsworth Atheneum.
- MassMutual also played a key role in the Charter Oak - Rice Heights Health Center's development of a family centered model of medical care. This program focused on creating a program that can be used in the neighborhood to help residents gain a better understanding of the underlying causes and condition that contribute to illnesses and injuries. It also stressed family involvement at all levels of treatment to help ensure that minor medical problems do not escalate into something more serious.
- The Hartford school system's first annual "Read Aloud" day was sponsored by MassMutual. The company provided volunteers and celebrities to read to Hartford children to increase awareness about reading while showing that it can also be fun. The company's involvement with the schools was also demonstrated by the partnerships it formed with Quirk Middle School, West Middle School, and Hartford Public High School.
- MassMutual was involved with the Mark Twain Days celebration by funding many of the programs and presentations, especially those presented at Nook Farm. The company is also a supporter of the Mark Twain House on Farmington Avenue.

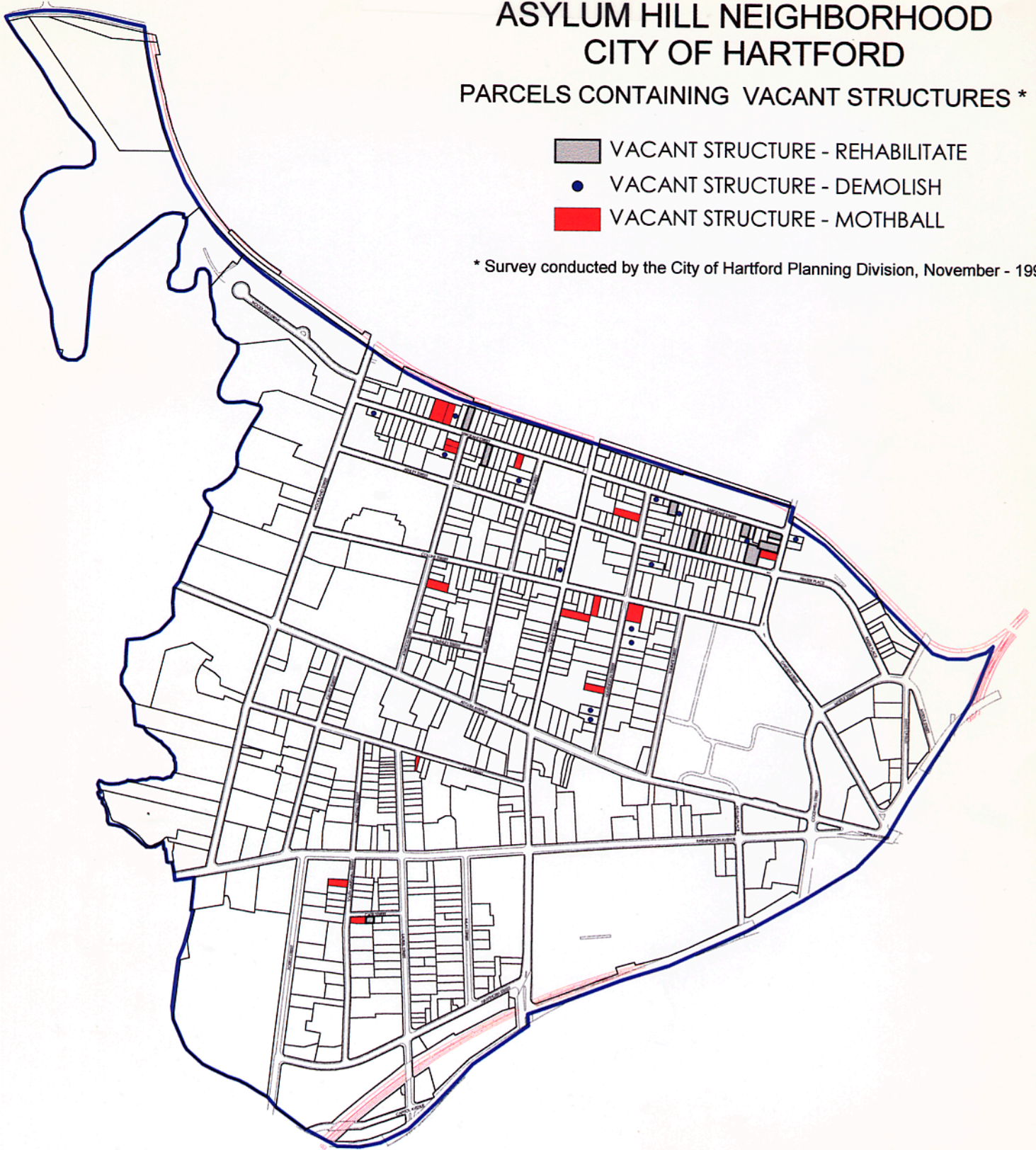
- In an effort to ensure the safety of Hartford’s firefighters, MassMutual donated a specially designed helmet with a “smoke visor”. The visor, which is fitted with a unique infrared lens, allows firefighters to see through the smoke to ensure that every possible effort is made to evacuate occupants of burning buildings.
- MassMutual was also very active in supporting efforts geared toward revitalizing Hartford, through its support (and, in some cases, board membership) on the Downtown Council, the Arts Council, Riverfront Recapture, the Coordinating Council on Foundations, the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Fidelco, the Connecticut Capitol Region Growth Council, and the Urban League of Greater Hartford, to name a few.
- MassMutual’s commitment to the youth of Hartford was evidenced by its involvement with Mayor Mike’s basketball program, the Boys and Girls Club, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, Junior Achievement, and the Hartford Alliance for Math and Science. In addition, the company offered a variety of scholarships for Hartford students attending Connecticut colleges and universities.
- Finally, MassMutual was extremely supportive of First Night, the Race for the Cure, the New England Blizzard, and the Connecticut Pride.

ASYLUM HILL NEIGHBORHOOD CITY OF HARTFORD

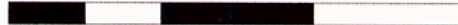
PARCELS CONTAINING VACANT STRUCTURES *

-  VACANT STRUCTURE - REHABILITATE
-  VACANT STRUCTURE - DEMOLISH
-  VACANT STRUCTURE - MOTHBALL

* Survey conducted by the City of Hartford Planning Division, November - 1997



800 0 800 1600 Feet



PREPARED BY THE CITY OF HARTFORD PLANNING DIVISION, JANUARY - 1998

Appendix D

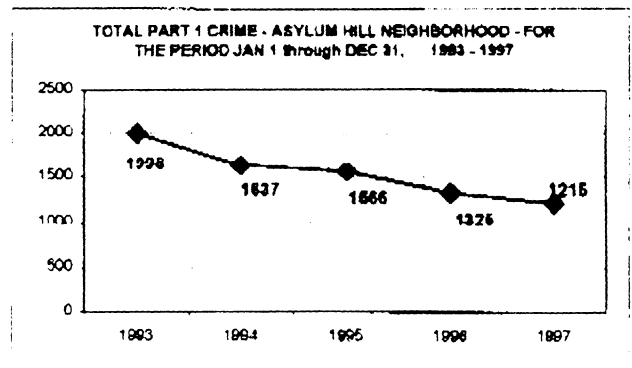
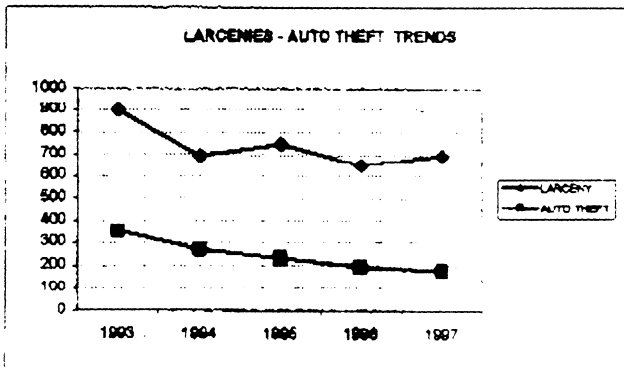
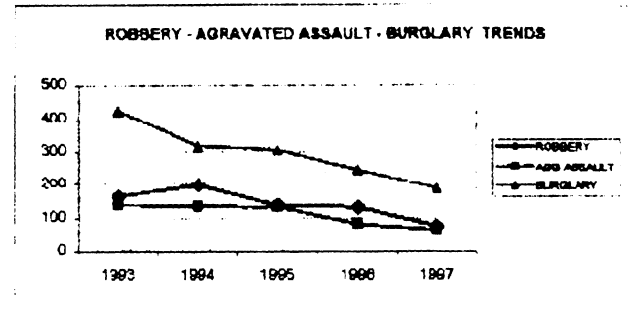
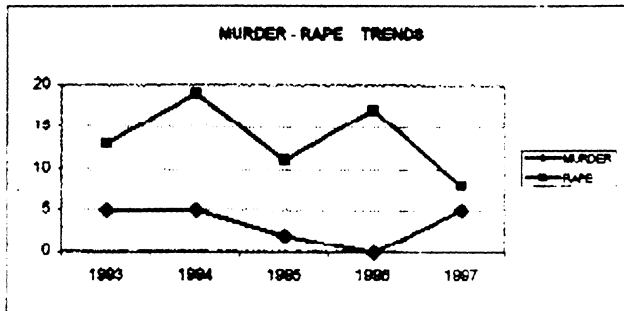
CITY OF HARTFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT - JOSEPH F. CROUGHWELL, CHIEF OF POLICE
PART 1 CRIME STATISTICS - ASYLUM HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1993 - 1997

PUBLISHED BY THE OPERATIONS ANALYSIS AND PLANNING UNIT

	PART 1 CRIMES				
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
MURDER	5	5	2	0	5
RAPE	13	19	11	17	8
ROBBERY	165	199	138	133	79
AGG ASSAULT	138	135	133	84	65
BURGLARY	423	316	304	247	188
LARCENY	900	683	745	649	692
AUTO THEFT	354	270	233	185	178
TOTALS	1998	1637	1566	1325	1215
SIMPLE ASSAULTS	381	332	326	347	286

	% CHANGE FROM			
	1993	1994	1995	1996
	0.00%	0.00%	150.00%	500.00%
	-38.46%	-57.89%	-27.27%	-52.94%
	-52.12%	-60.30%	-42.75%	-40.60%
	-52.90%	-51.85%	-51.13%	-22.62%
	-55.56%	-40.51%	-38.16%	-23.89%
	-23.11%	-0.14%	-7.11%	6.63%
	-49.72%	-34.07%	-23.61%	-8.72%
	-39.19%	-25.78%	-22.41%	-8.30%
	-18.52%	-13.86%	-12.27%	-17.68%



AVERAGE RESPONSE TIMES IN MINUTES

ASYLUM HILL	1996	1997
PRIORITY "A"	6.91	6.42
PRIORITY "B"	26.53	20.02
PRIORITY "C"	40.90	32.15

CITY WIDE	1996	1997
PRIORITY "A"	7.01	6.22
PRIORITY "B"	26.51	19.51
PRIORITY "C"	40.56	32.41

RESPONSE TIME GOALS (PERCENTAGE)

ASYLUM HILL	1996	1997
PRIORITY "A" GOAL 70%	64.22%	69.57%
PRIORITY "B" GOAL 80%	49.72%	56.53%
PRIORITY "C" GOAL 90%	78.71%	85.80%

CITY WIDE	1996	1997
PRIORITY "A" GOAL 70%	60.85%	69.65%
PRIORITY "B" GOAL 80%	51.38%	58.41%
PRIORITY "C" GOAL 90%	84.02%	85.24%

PRIORITY "A" GOAL 5 MINUTES OR LESS
 PRIORITY "B" GOAL 15 MINUTES OR LESS
 PRIORITY "C" GOAL 30 MINUTES OR LESS

**PART 2 CRIME STATISTICS and ARREST DATA
ASYLUM HILL NEIGHBORHOOD**

	PART 2 CRIMES					PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM			
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1993	1994	1995	1996
NARCO	84	113	183	165	190	102.1%	68.1%	-1.6%	15.2%
VICE	50	84	84	48	104	108.0%	62.5%	23.8%	126.1%
WEAPONS	27	30	27	14	28	3.7%	-6.7%	3.7%	100.0%
ORDER MAINT.	1020	1003	875	1128	1279	24.8%	27.5%	46.2%	13.4%
ARSON	4	6	4	1	8	100.0%	33.3%	100.0%	700.0%
OTHER	2666	2764	2690	3616	3533	32.5%	27.8%	31.3%	-2.3%
TOTALS	3866	3980	3873	4970	5142	33.0%	29.2%	32.8%	3.5%

ARRESTS FOR SPECIFIC OFFENSES

	1995	1997
MURDER	4	4
RAPE	11	9
ROBBERY	33	17
AGG ASSAULT	52	70
BURGLARY	35	38
LARCENY	106	92
AUTO THEFT	17	16
SIMPLE ASSAULT	347	288
THREATENING ***	142	192
ARSON	0	2
FRAUD	18	24
STOLEN PROP	8	3
VANDALISM	21	20
WEAPONS	17	21
VICE	75	125
DRUGS - OPIATES	160	190
MARIJUANA	79	83
OTHER NARCO	14	15
GAMBLING	0	7
OFF. VS. FAMILY	29	19
DWI	7	11
LIQUOR	2	5
D.C.	240	274
OTHER OFF.	234	261
TOTAL	1666	1785

*** INCLUDES RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT
& INTERFERING WITH POLICE OFFICER

Directed Patrols

Appendix E

Housing

SHARP 20 / REHABILITATION

8 Ashley, 18 Ashley, 44 Ashley, 50 Ashley Street
21 Sargeant, 83-85 Sargeant, 227-229 Sargeant, 246-248 Sargeant Street
Owner: Hill Housing, Inc.

These properties are part of the SHARP 20 Program. They will be owner-occupied and returned to their original 1 to 2 family configuration. While the insides will be rehabbed to modern standards the facades will retain their historic integrity. The project which involves sweat equity will be completed by 12/98. Off-street parking has been provided for each unit.

REHABILITATION

24-26 Atwood Street

Immediate Action: Mothball

This building has been vacant and abandoned by its owner for many years. A bed and breakfast / Ronald Mac Donald style house is proposed for this location. It has close proximity to St. Francis Hospital and would accommodate families with friends and relatives who are hospitalized at St. Francis Hospital.

REHABILITATION

91-93 Atwood, 95-97 Atwood Street
11 Case Street
217-219 Garden (apartment building), 221 Graden Street (apartment building)
23 Huntington, 121 Huntington
27-29 Sargeant, 69 Sargeant, 83-85 Sargeant, 199-201 Sargeant,
262-264 Sargeant, 266-268 Sargeant Street
200 Sigourney
240 South Marshall, 277-279 South Marshall Street

Vacant
Immediate Action: Mothball

Except where noted these buildings are one to four family dwellings. They are all vacant. The objective is to save them for their architectural value. They can be rehabbed as a rollover from the SHARP 20 Program or by individuals. It is important to keep the density to a minimum, and as most of the buildings located in the Sigourney Square area have been rezoned to R-2 this should be no problem. Off-street parking is available for each unit.

EXISTING VACANT LOTS

179-183 Ashley and 62-64 Atwood Street (parking for St. Francis, rezoning application submitted). The AHRZ supports St. Francis’ effort to clean up this vacant lot. We would hope that in the far future this could become a park adjunct to Sigourney Square park and to the Hospital.

21 Ashley Street
Immediate Action: Mow monthly
Future Proposal: 1 to 2 family house

184 Ashley Street
Immediate Action: Mow monthly, replace sidewalk
Future Proposal: 1 family house

VACANT LOTS



49 Sargeant Street



271-73 Laurel Street



184 Ashley Street

21 Ashley Street



Ashley Street at Huntington Street



RESTORATION

181 Collins Street
Seym House, Architect: George Keller 1880

Immediate Action: Mothball



This building is presently vacant and represents one of the original estates in Asylum Hill and careful restoration is recommended. There is some structural damage due to settling of the foundation. Preliminary estimates are \$125,000 to remedy just the structural problem. The AHRZ with the help of the Antiquarina Landmark Society is looking for an individual or corporation who is willing to take on this project. The AHRZ considers this a top priority.

PHASE I DEMOLITION

230-232 Garden Street • c 1890 National Register
2 family house with 10 units • Owner: Leo A. Girard



This building is located across from the Veeder Root project with no other buildings around it. It is in very poor disrepair and may have structural problems. The AHRZ is recommending demolition or moving the building to a site on Sargeant Street. Because of the immense work this building would require the costs would determine that decision. The AHRZ is considering locating neighborhood basketball courts in this location.

3-7, 9-11 Huntington Street • 1924 National Register
36 unit apartment building • Owner: Robert A. Hansman



This building is determined to be beyond responsible rehabilitation because of its disrepair. The AHRZ is recommending demolition for a pocket park and the Asylum Hill Congregational Church will be formally asked to maintain it as such. The City will take on responsibility for liability.

52 Huntington Street • circa 1960
Owner: 52 condo owners who have abandoned property



This building has failed as condos and the individual owners have abandoned the property for parts unknown. Potentially this is a nightmare for due diligence. The building is a blight and has no architectural value to the neighborhood. The AHRZ recommends demolition for parking for 181 Collins Street.

PHASE II DEMOLITION

50 Huntington Street • circa 1960
Apartment Building: 15 units



This blighted apartment building adds no character to the neighborhood. This end of Huntington Street is over run by apartment buildings with no ownership presence. Condos on this street have repeatedly failed. The AHRZ is recommending demolition and parking be provided for another building on this street or for a back yard extension for 181 Collins Street. A neighborhood group or Dick Whitehouse would be approached to maintain the vacant lot.

100 Huntington Street • circa 1960
Owner: various condo owners



This is a blighted modern apartment building turned condo. It has failed as a condo. It is oversized for the lot and the block and abuts Victorian homes on either side. The AHRZ recommends this building be razed, grassed over with one of the nearby landlords maintaining the lot and ultimately a one or two family house be built. Dick Whitehouse would be asked to maintain the lot.

126 Huntington Street • 1928 National Register
12 Units



This building which is a corner lot is oversized for the property and for the buildings that surround it. It offers no off-street parking and no recreational space. The AHRZ considers this an important location and we recommend it be razed for a future 1 to 2 family house to better fit the space.

21 Sargeant Street • 1894 National Register
2 Units • Owner: Hill Housing, Inc.

This building has been gutted by fire and occupies a backyard space. It is too damaged for rehabilitation and its location adds density to the neighborhood. The lot will be used for parking for 27-29 Sargeant Street.

77-79 Sargeant Street • 1922 National Register
Apartment Building: 12 Units



This building is oversized for the lot and for the buildings surrounding it with no off-street parking and no recreational space. The AHRZ recommends demolition. Future plans include new construction of a 1-2 family house.

87-89 Atwood Street • 1911 National Register
Rooming House: 28 units



This building is oversized for the lot and was a replacement for a Victorian house that was destroyed by fire. It offers no off-street parking. It is in an area of Victorian homes and is oversized for the block. The AHRZ recommends this building be razed and a one or two family house be built in its place. St. Francis would be approached to maintain the vacant lot.

215-221 Sigourney Street • 1928 National Register
Apartment Building / 15 units



This apartment building which is an important corner building is oversized for the lot and the block. It offers no off-street parking or recreational space. The AHRZ recommends the building be razed and new construction in its place. As this is such an important corner the committee is recommending a Victorian “showcase house” be built which would be a model home to be replicated on other lots throughout the city. This location would be given top priority for new construction.

256-258 Sargeant Street • 1898 / reconfigured circa 1960
Rooming House 10 units



Apparently, a fire consumed the third floor of this Victorian house in the 1960s and the owner removed what was left of the third floor and attic creating a flat roof. The facade was brick faced and the interior was divided up into one room apartments. The building is easier and cheaper to raze than to rehabilitate. The vacant lot would be maintained by a local organization and eventually it would be replaced by a two family home similar to the other buildings on that block.

200 Sigourney Street • 1928 National Register
Apartment Building 24 units



The building fits into the character of this block of Sigourney street which is lined with other apartment buildings. The front half of this building is historic and adds character to the neighborhood. The back half of the building, however, was a circa 1970 add-on. The AHRZ recommends the back half of the building be demolished in order to create off-street parking and recreation space and allow this building to succeed.

RECENT CONSTRUCTION

229 Sigourney Street & 231 Sigourney Street



This property is example of Hill Housing replacement construction. In 1980 a 40 unit apartment building circa 1960 stood in this space. It was torn down to be replaced with two 4 family homes. Off-street parking was made available, as well as recreational backyard space and the density in the neighborhood was lowered (the prime objective of this project). The materials and proportions genuinely reproduce the Victorian integrity of the Sigourney Square neighborhood and is an excellent example of replacement housing.

250-252 Sargeant Street



This replacement housing was completed by an individual church group. This building replaced a fire damaged 2 family historic house which was razed in 1983. Its proportions and materials suitably tie into the neighborhood. It is a three family owner occupied coop.

Appendix F

ASYLUM HILL REVITALIZATION ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

Article I - Names and Officers

Section 1. Name The name of this organization shall be Asylum Hill Revitalization Association, abbreviated as AHRA. For the purposes of these By-Laws, the Board is also known as the Strategic Planning Committee formed on November 2, 1996.

Section 2. Office The principal office of AHRA, if and when required, shall be located in the Asylum Hill neighborhood of Hartford, Connecticut. If necessary, and for the purpose of convenience, AHRA may establish a corresponding address which is different from the principal office address.

Article II - Purposes

Section 1. Mission and Objectives The mission of AHRA is to improve and preserve the Asylum Hill neighborhood of Hartford through the cooperative efforts of residents and other stakeholders, including business, property owners, religious institutions, cultural services, and non-profit organizations. Further, the objective of AHRA is to address the need for decent/affordable housing, to demolish unsafe buildings, to preserve buildings of historical and/or architectural significance, to encourage people to clean up their streets and beautify the neighborhood, to improve public safety on the Hill, to improve the schools (both academically and the physical plant), to develop and improve recreation sites and activities for the residents of Asylum Hill (both for children and adults), to encourage the use of the many cultural institutions on the Hill, and to involve the many senior residents of the Hill in this process.

Section 2. Implementation AHRA shall plan and implement neighborhood revitalization activities in accordance with the establishment of a “neighborhood revitalization zone” as specified in Public Act 95-340 of the Connecticut State Legislature, endorsed by the City of Hartford’s Court of Common Council.

Section 3. Disclaimer It is not the objective of AHRA to be affiliated with any group, organization, or political party.

Article III - Membership

Section 1. Neighborhood Definition The Asylum Hill neighborhood is defined (westerly) by the north branch of Park River (just west of Woodland and Forest Streets), (northerly) by railroad tracks south of Homestead Avenue, (easterly) by railroad tracks and I-84, and (southerly) by railroad tracks and I-84 consistent with City's established boundaries.

Section 2. Regular Meetings Regular meetings shall be held in alternate months (six times annually) on the first Monday of the month, in January, March, May, July, September, November. Notice of regular meetings shall be sent approximately one week prior to meeting dates to a mailing list of members and attendees.

Section 3. Special Meetings In the event that emergency decisions regarding the Asylum Hill Revitalization Association process need to be made, the Chair may call a special meeting of the Board of AHRA. A quorum of the Board must be present. Decisions may be made by the consensus of the Board members present at this emergency meeting. The decision will then be presented at the next AHRA meeting for discussion and ratification. This process would only be used if necessary.

Section 4. Eligibility Those eligible for membership in AHRA must be residents of Asylum Hill, owners of property in Asylum Hill, and individuals representing business, religious, cultural, or non-profit organizations located in Asylum Hill, or having a significant involvement in the Asylum Hill neighborhood. Membership shall be determined by (minimum) attendance at three meetings out of six AHRA meetings per year.

Section 5. Amendment Process This set of by-laws may be amended by AHRA through the decision-making process (Article IV - Section 5) only after a proposed change is included on the agenda (Article III - Section 2) and discussed at a future meeting.

Section 6. Compensation Members of AHRA shall serve without compensation. Reimbursement for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of AHRA's business and operations shall be made only upon prior agreement of that expense by the members of AHRA at any given meeting.

Article IV - Board of Directors/Planning Committee

Section 1. General Powers The business, property, and affairs of the organization shall be managed by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall function as a Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Strategic Planning Committee in accordance with PUBLIC ACT 95-340.

Section 2. Election, Numbers, and Term There will be an annual meeting of members to elect the Board of Directors. Only members of "AHRA" (as described in Article III - Section 4 - Eligibility) may be nominated and elected to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of no less than 14 no more than 21 Directors as shown below:

- 4 residents to include homeowners and tenants
- 1 rep from area church
- 1 rep AHOP

- 1 rep Hill Housing, Inc.
- 1 rep AHI
- 1 rep City of Hartford
- 1 non-resident property owner
- 1 senior resident
- 1 rep major corp.
- 1 small business rep
- 1 rep cultural organization
- at large members may be appointed as needed

More than half of the Directors at all times shall personally reside in the Asylum Hill Neighborhood. The term of a Director shall be three years. At the organizational meeting of the AHRA, board members will be elected to ensure there is an even rotation as follows: one-third shall be elected for two years, and one-third shall be elected for a term of three years. Therefore, one-third of the total membership of the Board of Directors shall be elected each year for a three year term. After 2 three-year terms, a Board member shall not serve on the Board for one year.

Section 3. Officers The Board shall elect a Chair (or co-chairs) and a secretary. The duty of the Chair is to facilitate reasonable order during the meeting and to keep discussion focused on the agenda at hand. The Chair or someone so designated will represent AHRA at functions and meetings with the City, State, and other institutions. The Chair or someone so designated will also be designated to sign contracts for AHRA with the authorization of the Board. The Chair or someone so appointed will also see that a record of membership and meeting attendance is kept to ensure compliance with Public Act No. 95-340 of the Connecticut State Legislature (see Article III Sections 2 and 4). The secretary shall keep minutes of all AHRA meetings and see that the minutes are distributed to the membership. The secretary will also keep records of the organization.

Section 4. Alternates An alternate shall be chosen by each member of the Board to act as a substitute in the event of an absence or by voluntary substitution. Alternate shall be representative of same constituency as Board member appointing the alternate.

Section 5. Nominating Committee The Chair of the Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee to consist of five (5) current members, who will recommend to the general membership a slate of candidates for election to the Board of Directors. This slate will be consistent with the description in Section 2 - Election, number and term of Directors. The Nominating Committee may include members of the then current Board of Directors, each of whom may also be nominated for the proposed slate of Board members. However, no more than three members of the Nominating Committee may be current members of the Board of Directors.

Section 6. Decision-Making Process In order to foster consensus building among the varied neighborhood interests represented by AHRA, decisions shall be made by a consensus of Board members present at any given regular meeting. A consensus shall be reached when no member states a formal objection to the action being considered. In the event that consensus is not reached because of formal objection by more than one Board member on that action, the Chair shall appoint a subcommittee, which shall meet separately to make recommendations on the action and present those recommendations at the next regular meeting of AHRA. If a consensus cannot be reached on the recommendation (s) presented by the subcommittee, decisions shall be made based on a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of a quorum of the Board.

Section 7. Vacancies of Directors Vacancies in the Board of Directors shall be filled by election. Election shall be made by a majority of a quorum of the Board. Each person elected to fill a vacancy shall remain a Director for the unexpired portion of the term of the person being replaced.

Section 8. Removal of Directors The Board of Directors may remove any Director or officer by a decision of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board, for cause. Proper notice must be given.

Section 9. Compensation Members of the Board of Directors shall serve without compensation except that the Board of Directors may reimburse any member for necessary and reasonable expense incurred in the performance of the business of the organization.

Amended 10/06/97

Appendix G

ASYLUM HILL REVITALIZATION ASSOCIATION

PUBLIC HEARING ON FINAL DRAFT OF STRATEGIC PLAN MINUTES FOR MONDAY, MARCH 2, 1998

6:00 PM

ASYLUM HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
814 ASYLUM AVENUE

I. Presentations from sub-committee Chairs:

Larry Hall, Co-chair, welcomed everyone, stated the purpose of tonight's meeting to review the Strategic Plan, and introduced the sub-committee chairs. Paper and pencils were made available so meeting attendees could write any comments regarding the plan. All comments and corrections are due March 16, 1998.

The housing report was given by Ginny Seeley. Ginny stated that the major points of interest for the housing plan are 1) the need for family housing, 2) homeownership, 3) green space, and 4) off-street parking. This section includes an assessment of vacant buildings in the neighborhood and a block by block design analysis. Special consideration was given to buildings on the national register. Decisions were based on parking and building size in relation to the lot size. Plans for vacant lots include pocket parks and new construction. It was also decided that corner lots should have buildings as opposed to vacant space.

Mary Hoyer reported on economic development. She stated the three goals as being 1) increase access to employment for the neighborhood, 2) create jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for neighborhood residents, and 3) encourage local business development. Strategies for meeting these goals were also discussed. It was decided amongst the group that a health care component should be added to this section as well as a more emphatic statement regarding long-term job opportunities for the neighborhood. Specific marketing strategies also need to be added to the economic development goals.

Karin Peterson gave the education/cultural report. The three goals for this sub-committee are 1) foster improvement of Asylum Hill schools, 2) recognize and use the many cultural institutions in Asylum Hill, and 3) establish and improve recreation in Asylum Hill. Some strategies for meeting these goals include walking tours of the neighborhood, a neighborhood brochure, a youth center, and an Asylum Hill newsletter.

Lois Stevenson gave the public safety report. Since 1990 violent crime has decreased. The major issues are police presence, landlord responsibilities and support, and community and police collaboration. The four goals under public safety are, 1) ensure resident safety by reducing crime, 2)

improve traffic safety and circulation, 3) improve community relations with police, and 4) support comprehensive communities partnership efforts and strengthen them. Some suggestions given regarding public safety include the need to name lead groups and establish a formal public safety committee.

II. Questions and Comments

The overall consensus regarding this draft of the plan was positive. Residents were encouraged to put their comments and/or suggestions in writing and return them to the committee for implementation. Most other comments and questions were covered during the sub-committee reports.

The public hearing was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Capitol Improvements (Downtown) - Adopted

Total membership is 15 Members

More than half shall reside in the Zone

Tenants	3
Property Owners	4
Businesses	2
Non profit/ Religious Organizations	2
At Large	2

*By letter description
amount is correct
at large
present = 15*

Issues

No mention of City Manager Appointee.

Maple Avenue Revitalization Group (Barry Square) - May be Adopted April 29, 1996

Total membership 15

A majority of the committee shall be residents of the zone.

Maple Avenue Merchants Association	2
New Britain Avenue Merchants Association	1
At large Business Owner	1
Property Owner	1
Religious Organization	1
Community Organization	1
Residents	5
Tenants	2
City Manager Representative	1

Frog Hollow - Under Discussion

More than half of committee shall be residents.

City manager shall have a representative

Representatives of following organized groups:

- Affleck Street Gardeners
- Burns School Tenants
- Broad Park tenants
- Block watches
- Casa Nueva
- Columbia Street Blockwatch
- Frog Hollow Revitalization Committee

Hungerford Street Planning Committee
Immaculate Conception/St. Anne
Lawrence Street Redevelopment Project Committee
Park Place Towers Residents
Park Street Development Corporation
Park Terrace Neighbors
Project Christian Hope
Putnam Heights Planning Committee
Spanish American Merchants Association
Templo Fe
Other HART Programs

Asylum Hill - Under Discussion

Composition should somewhat reflect the composition of the Neighborhood

A majority of members must be residents

Constituents may include businesses, property owners, religious organizations, cultural services and non-profit organizations.

Issues

No mention of City Manager representative.

Structure is too loose, allows but does not mandate representation by various interests.

No mention of total membership or of seat allocation..

South End - Under Discussion

51 % must be members of the zone.

City Manager will appoint one member.

Members may be a combination of business, cultural, educational or non-profit organizations. Exact representation is still being discussed.

Behind the Rocks/Southwest - Under Discussion

51 % must be members of the zone.

City Manager will appoint one member.

Members may be a combination of business, cultural, educational or non-profit organizations. Exact representation is still being discussed.

Northeast/Clay Arsenal - Under Discussion

Proposed Committee Composition: 13 members

Total Membership

Residents	7
Community Organizations	2
Businesses	1
Landlords	2
Church	1

Issues:

Discussions are preliminary and additional seats may be added.

No mention of City Manager's representative on Committee.

Consideration should be given to adding an additional business representative give the boundary of the proposed zone.

Upper Albany Arsenal - Under Discussion

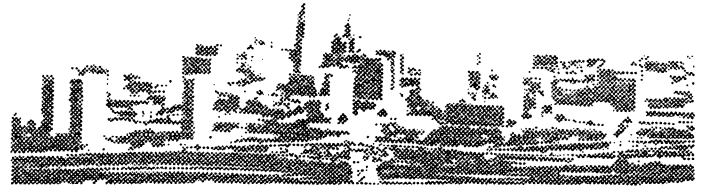
Proposed Committee Composition not received.

South Green, Blue Hills and West End

Preliminary NRZ discussions underway.

CITY OF HARTFORD

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
550 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06103



COUNCIL - MANAGER GOVERNMENT

October 18, 2000

Ms. Jennifer Cassidy
Asylum Hill Problem Solving
Revitalization Association
36 Ashley Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06105

Dear Ms. Cassidy:

In Hartford's continuing effort to support Neighborhood Revitalization Zones throughout the City, I have reviewed the City's NRZ assignments. Some changes were necessary because of Staff turnover and to reduce scheduling conflicts.

As it regards the Asylum Hill Problem Solving Revitalization Association, Tom Phillips, Grants Management, has been assigned as your primary City Manager's Representative and Tony Mein, Registrar of Voters, has been assigned as your secondary Representative. Please add both Representatives to your contact list.

Should you have any questions, please call Gerry Maine, the Neighborhood Planner for the Asylum Hill Problem Solving Revitalization Association at 543-8675. Mr. Maine will contact you in the near future with the necessary mailing address and telephone numbers for your Representatives.

Sincerely,

Sandra Kee Borges
City Manager

SKB:JS:RG

cc: Tom Phillips, Grants Management
Tony Mein, Registrar of Voters
Gerry Maine