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**August 8, 2003**

**To:** US Representative Christopher Shays  
**From:** Laurel Lindstrom, President East Avenue Neighborhood Association  
**Cc:** State Representative Bob Duff  
**Subject:** Reopening the Postal Substation at the Rite Aid Pharmacy in  
East Norwalk, CT

Representing the East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA) I am contacting you to request your assistance in restoring a valuable service that was taken from the residents of East Norwalk when the postal substation was closed.

A postal substation has serviced the East Norwalk area residents for several years. The most recent location was at the Rite Aid Pharmacy on East Avenue. It had been at that location for four years before its recent closure.

In my contact with several residents in the neighborhood, business owners, officials, the postmaster and the pharmacy manager I have heard all the concerns that individuals have.

You have already received detailed information from Norwalk Councilman Fred Bondi and an area resident Angela Van Acker, so I will not repeat information that you have. Several members of the Neighborhood Association have been inconvenienced by the loss of the postal service. We fully agree with the correspondence you have received regarding the need to restore this service.

Thank you for your time and attention to resolving this situation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if needed.

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**June 26, 2003**

Alex Knopp, Mayor  
Norwalk City Hall  
125 East Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851

Dear Mayor Knopp:

I am writing to you about the traffic problem that has been identified by the residents of Olmstead Place concerning vehicular traffic on East Avenue that blocks the intersection, so that egress from Olmstead Place is difficult.

This concern was explored during the traffic summit a year ago. Residents of Olmstead Place have contacted the Police and the Public Works Departments since that time. Although various ideas have been suggested no improvements have as yet been made.

The concern of the Olmstead Place residents related to this issue was raised by David Brown, chairman of the Third Taxing District, at the April meeting of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA). It was again an agenda item for discussion at the June 22 EANA meeting.

At this June 22 meeting, those present were in favor of creating more noticeable signage and indicators so that the northbound vehicles waiting for the traffic light to change to green would not block the intersection. Additional pavement paint, lighted signs, reworded signs and an overhead sign were suggestions. At the conclusion of the discussion a decision was made by those present to contact you, the involved city departments and residents from Olmstead Place so as to facilitate a satisfactory outcome.

I suggest that a meeting of area residents and representatives from the pertinent city department(s) take place as soon as possible. Residents could be available for a meeting scheduled solely for this purpose, or as an agenda item of a regular committee meeting.

I will be waiting to hear from you. Any other ideas that you have regarding how to proceed, so that the Olmstead Place residents see some positive results soon, would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Laurel Lindstrom, President  
East Avenue Neighborhood Association  
Cc: David Brown (Chair TTD), Harry Rilling (Chief NPD), Richard Linnartz (Acting Director DPW)

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## **June 25, 2003**

**The Norwalk Advocate: Postal site could be restored in E. Norwalk** by Brian Lockhart

Article quotes EANA president, Laurel Lindstrom. regarding concerns in our letter to the postmaster.

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## **June 24, 2003**

Robert Pilkington, Postmaster  
US Postal Service, Norwalk Main Office  
16 Washington Street  
Norwalk CT 06854

Dear Mr. Pilkington:

Thank you for taking my telephone call this morning. Since I understand from you that the chairman of the Third Taxing District Commission, David Brown, will be your contact person regarding the prospective establishment of a postal unit by consignment in East Norwalk, I will direct future communication to him. As the president of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association I am writing this letter to provide a record of our activity, and the position we've taken, since the recent closure of the contract postal unit at the Rite Aid Pharmacy located on East Avenue at St. John Street.

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA) has members in several neighborhoods along the extent of East Avenue. In monthly meetings, and through email, we address the concerns that residents identify as being important to them.

This month's meeting agenda was posted on the EANA homepage of the calmtraffic.org website on the morning of Saturday, June 14, listing the closure of the postal site at the Rite Aid Pharmacy as a discussion item for our June meeting, after concerns came to me from some of our members. The email, with agenda, that I sent out the following day to people in the community brought further comments of concern regarding the loss of service for East Norwalk.

At our June meeting that was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> those present talked at length about the convenience of having a neighborhood post office and the hardship that the closure has created, especially for elderly residents that have difficulty traveling to the other branches. The ample parking at the Rite Aid made this site ideal.

EANA has been in conversation with local officials, in an effort to find a workable solution. We had also started some preliminary canvassing to find a replacement location for a postal site in East Norwalk....

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association is encouraging you to reconsider keeping the postal site in place at the Rite Aid Pharmacy. We strongly favor placement of a post office substation at some other location within our East Norwalk neighborhood if the US Postal Service's decision is to permanently remove the postal site from the Rite Aid, as would seem the case from our conversation this morning.

Sincerely,

Laurel Lindstrom, President  
East Avenue Neighborhood Association  
Cc: David Brown, Fred Bondi, Kevin Poruban

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## **June 22, 2003**

Tod Bryant, President  
Norwalk Preservation Trust  
23 Morgan Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851

Dear Tod:

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA) was formed in 2001 and is gradually attracting members in several neighborhoods along the extent of East Avenue. In monthly meetings, no matter what the topic of discussion, the consensus is one that respects the natural, historical and traditional components of our area while supporting sensible development.

The mission of the Norwalk Preservation Trust (NPT) is one that EANA fully supports. EANA has advocated to "protect and preserve" some of the same culturally significant buildings, neighborhoods and streetscapes as have you and the other members of the NPT.

As the NPT partners with groups in Norwalk please know that the East Avenue Neighborhood Association is available to you. EANA is looking forward to future endeavors that we share and to continue to work together to accomplish mutual goals.

Sincerely,

Laurel Lindstrom, President  
East Avenue Neighborhood Association

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## **June 5, 2003**

**The Norwalk Advocate: Field of Dreams** by Matt Breslow

Article with photo outlining the proposal of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association's Andrews Park Restoration Committee.

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## **May 22, 2003**

**The Hour: Speakers support village district designation** by Ryan Flinn

Article quotes EANA president, Laurel Lindstrom. Unfortunately 2 out of 3 quotes were not accurate.

Corrections: **1)** EANA supports public access to the waterfront/Norwalk River. Separate from the issue of public access the Norwalk River, as a valuable asset worth protecting, needs special mention in the written regulations. **2)** Selection process of an architect needs to be better defined. Needs to have knowledge/expertise on historic structures. One architect to be selected from a minimum of 3 candidates.

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## **May 12, 2003**

Date: May 12, 2003  
Subject: Wall Street Area Master Plan Update  
To: The Cecil Group

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association was formed in 2001 and is gradually attracting members in several neighborhoods along the extent of East Avenue. In monthly meetings, no matter what the topic of discussion, the consensus is one that supports sensible development that respects the natural, historical and traditional components of our area.

At our April meeting there was enthusiastic anticipation expressed from those present of the revitalization efforts on Wall Street and along the Norwalk River. Following are the areas that are in line with the values that the members of our neighborhood association share. Many of these points are already in the proposed Master Plan for Wall Street that the Cecil Group has presented but in

that plan they are placed cosmetically such that they could easily be eliminated by a developer. These components instead need to be forefront, integral and indispensable.

Diversity of uses & diversity of users (all ages, cultures, socioeconomic levels, Norwalk residents and tourists, singles and families)

- Street fairs, with closure of Wall Street on a Saturday or Sunday
- Ethnic restaurants and shops
- Outdoor eateries
- Housing with range of affordability that is integrated into the whole such that characteristic Wall Street architecture is retained
- Office and commercial space placed such that the character of the district is preserved
- Metropolitan atmosphere with active pedestrian streets
- Ensure alternate modes of travel to the automobile rather than ensuring parking
- No new structured parking within Wall Street proper since building them would reinforce and perpetuate dependence on automobiles
- New Metro North station with shuttle and/or bus links within walking distance
- Pedestrian links throughout area that are safe, attractive and enjoyable to walk
- Bicycle consideration: bike racks
- Find means of minimizing bus traffic in pedestrian-sensitive areas
- Add housing only if parking can be provided with underground parking, street parking, current parking or parking outside Wall Street area

#### **Pedestrian connection to adjacent areas: East Avenue; West Avenue; and the Norwalk River in 4 directions (north and south on the east and west banks)**

- Smooth transition that encourages residents living in the neighborhoods that connect with East Avenue, along its entire length, to walk or bicycle to and from the Wall Street area
- Mill Hill Museum complex and the Norwalk Green would seamlessly transition to and from Wall Street
- Ensure that the pedestrian and bicycle walkways into and out of Wall Street proper are safe and pleasant to travel
- Adjacent to the Wall Street area provide some parking and adequate access to public transportation
- Consider moving the Wheels Pulse Point outside the Wall Street area, but within walking distance of the area

#### **The Norwalk River**

- Continue water-dependent uses
- River and Harbor to be respected as an environmentally sensitive resource
- Allow for public access, views and usage but only to the extent that the river is not harmed by the public access

Views of river and architecture, aesthetic detailing

- Attention to river views from bridges, between buildings, windows, parks and open spaces
- Outdoor dining, public courtyards, benches, alleyways
- Attention to posterior view of buildings

- Maintain structures at 4 stories or less, in keeping with historic structures already in place
- Yankee Doodle garage refurbishing

#### **Creative traffic calming measures**

- Retain the landscaped traffic island across from the library in some form that allows satisfactory traffic flow but maintains the island
- Textured pavement with appealing aesthetics
- Use of landscaping in chicanes, curb extensions, medians
- Raised crosswalks and pedestrian refuges
- Consider selective angle parking

#### **Trees and plantings**

- Street trees and abundant greenery
- Pocket parks with large trees
- Use of planters on sidewalks and to use as curb extensions for traffic calming, to create pedestrian and bike lanes

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurel Lindstrom, President  
East Avenue Neighborhood Association

Advocates for Calm Traffic (ACT) of Norwalk contributed to this letter

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### **May 9, 2003**

**The Norwalk Advocate: Rush hour at Norwalk High - City to study area traffic congestion**  
by Alison Damast

Front page article, with photo, with quotes from EANA members regarding the traffic concerns and issues related to the safety of students crossing Strawberry Hill Avenue.

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### **May 5, 2003**

#### **Letter of support**

Dear Mayor Knopp;

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association would like to add its support to your plan to purchase the old Fitch School on Strawberry Hill Avenue, recently vacated by the nursing home, to use as a school once again. There has been anxiety expressed by area residents about the property and the possibility of it being purchased and used in any number of ways that would diminish the quality of our neighborhood. Your proposal is an excellent fit for the building and the location. It also will benefit Norwalk financially because special education children that now are taken out-of-district for school could attend at this location.

However, since you were present at our last EANA meeting on April 27, 2003, you are aware of some safety concerns that may need to be addressed if the facility becomes a school for preschool and special education preschool programs combined as a residence for those with medical needs. The concerns expressed at the meeting are included below.

The facility, especially outdoor play areas and possible exit areas, would need to be secured to protect the children, especially those with special needs, from accidentally running onto the busy street or into the residential neighborhood.

The abutting contractor's yard would need to be inspected for any violations or risk of harm to the children related to air and noise pollution. Heavy truck traffic into and out of the contractor's yard from Strawberry Hill Avenue could pose a risk to the children when they are outside. The drop-off and pick-up of children by parents in cars may result in increased accidents and stopped traffic because of the combination of this new source of traffic, existing traffic and the contractor yard's trucks that currently create problematic and dangerous traffic on this portion of Strawberry Hill Avenue.

Subsequent to the meeting I have provided some neighbors living within the immediate vicinity of the property, and other EANA members, with a draft of this letter and have received only positive responses to your proposal to purchase the property.

Sincerely,

Laurel Lindstrom, President  
East Avenue Neighborhood Association

Cc: Stuart Opdahl, Chief Operating Officer for Norwalk Public Schools

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**May 3, 2003**

**Email to Clean & Green Director Don Nelson re Adopt-A-Spot**

The location on East Avenue at the westbound onramp to the I-95 would be ideal for our neighborhood association. Thanks for thinking of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association.

Since we just had our monthly meeting and our next meeting is not until the 25th of May I'll have to call a few of the other members this weekend before I say EANA will definitely take on this Adopt-A-Spot.

You mentioned a sign that already exists. Where is it now? Does Clean & Green have any guidelines or special requirements on signs above and beyond what the zoning regulations state? Also, is this location on State or City land? It may make a difference when it comes to regulations and who we communicate with if problems come up.

Laurel

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**April 30, 2003**

## **Email to Recreation & Parks Director Mike Mocciaie**

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA) met this past Sunday, April 27. As an agenda item I presented your idea regarding an aerator on the pond at Taylor Farm. After discussion it was decided that an environmental assessment would need to be done first to determine the condition of the pond. Comments/questions included: if an aerator is necessary; if aeration is required could improved circulation be accomplished in other ways; if it is determined that the pond is a salt marsh it would be protected by DEP regulations that would limit what can be done; do we want an aerator that would give this natural open space an artificial golf-course appearance; if the pond and drainage is healthy an aerator would be an expense that the third taxing district (TTD) rate payors would not want to pay.

David Brown, chair person of the TTD Commission, was present at the EANA meeting so has received the above input from us. The mayor, as a resident of East Norwalk, was also present at the meeting.

A basic impact assessment of the pond could probably be done in a couple of hours by an environmental consultant. It will be to everyone's advantage to know what we have before installing equipment or making changes to the pond.

Thanks for approaching me about this item. Let me know if you will continue to advance plans for the Taylor Farm pond or if other items come up in which EANA would be interested.

Laurel Lindstrom,  
President East Avenue Neighborhood Association

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**Sunday, April 13, 2003**

### **Letter of support**

Michael P. Meotti  
President  
Connecticut Policy and Economic Council  
179 Allyn Street, Suite 308  
Hartford, CT 06103-1421

Dear Mr. Meotti:

On behalf of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA), I am pleased to write a letter in support of your City Scan project.

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association was formed in 2001 and now has members on 30 streets along the East Avenue corridor in Norwalk. Our association acts as a liaison between the residents of the area and the city departments and agencies in an effort to prevent actions that may damage the integrity of the area and to improve quality of life for the residents by promoting actions that preserve, enhance and protect the aspects of our surroundings that we value. We have become involved in issues related to protecting historic structures, street trees and public access to the river. We have advocated for neighbors in protecting their rights when there are zoning violations on abutting property and we were actively involved in the recent designation of East Avenue as a Village District.

Members of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association participated in scans of five different neighborhoods recording 85 issues for repair or resolution. We had several issues such as overgrown tree branches and clogged catch basins resolved very quickly. Some of the scans, however, required zoning or ordinance changes or a more detailed process, such as erecting a new stop sign, for which we are using the scan reports as an organizing tool. In addition, EANA actively participates in the Mayor's Neighborhood Preservation Task Force and several of our neighborhood scans are in progress under the watch of the Task Force.

We look forward to continuing and expanding our neighborhood scans throughout 2003. Thank you for providing our organization with this valuable tool that helps us to improve the condition of our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Laurel Lindstrom  
President

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### **March 3, 2003**

**The Hour: City Scan gets high grade so far** by Brian Lockhart

Mentions the request to the Mayor's Neighborhood Preservation Committee made by EANA leader at its Feb 5 meeting to "consider addressing a contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill that has be the focus of residents' concerns."

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### **February 7, 2003**

**The Hour: Two new village districts approved** by Dirk Perrefort

Front page article with quote from the East Avenue Neighborhood Association applauding the decision.

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### **February 7, 2003**

**The Norwalk Advocate: ZBA OKs extra floor for condo complex** by Matt Breslow

Front page article covering the February 6 ZBA hearing regarding a proposed 17-unit condominium at 134 East Avenue. Reference made to input from East Avenue Neighborhood Association regarding concerns of increased vehicular traffic.

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### **January 31, 2003**

**The Norwalk Citizen-News: Neighbors vow to Continue Fight Against Storage Yard** by Elizabeth Keyser

Page A9 article covering the January 9 ZBA hearing regarding the contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill Avenue. The East Avenue Neighborhood Association is profiled. A main focus is EANA's involvement in assisting the neighbors in controlling expansion at the site of the contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill Avenue.

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**January 27, 2003**

**The Hour: Size does matter** by Jill Brodach

Page A3 article with photo profiling the East Avenue Neighborhood Association. A main focus was the EANA's work to assist the neighbors in controlling expansion at the site of the contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill Avenue.

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**January 10, 2003**

**The Norwalk Advocate: ZBA upholds contractor's appeal on yard** by Matt Breslow

Front page article covering the January 9 ZBA hearing regarding the contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill Avenue reads "the East Avenue Neighborhood Association collected about 60 signatures on a petition supporting the city's cease and desist."

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**December 27, 2002**

**The Norwalk Citizen-News: Residents Upset by ZBA Decision** by Elizabeth Keyser

Page 6 article with photo profiling the East Avenue Neighborhood Association's involvement regarding the contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill Avenue.

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**November 22, 2002**

**The Norwalk Advocate: Couple wins part of case before ZBA** by Matt Breslow

Front page article covering the November 21 ZBA hearing regarding the contractor's yard on Strawberry Hill Avenue reads "the East Avenue Neighborhood Association collected nearly 60 signatures on a petition supporting the cease and desist order."

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**October 25, 2002**

**The Hour: Zoning officials get first look at Gibbs proposal** by Brian Lockhart and Ryan Flinn

**Excerpt:** Resident Laurel Lindstrom, who heads both the East Avenue Neighborhood Association and another grassroots group called Advocates for Calm Traffic, attended Thursday's presentation by Kim Morque, one of Norden Place's new owners, and attorney Frank Zullo. The pair are asking for a zoning change to allow a college/university in existing buildings on the property. "My initial reaction was that it sounds good, but everyone knows schools generate a lot of traffic," Lindstrom said. She added "whenever you change a zoning regulation, although it looks good for what's needed, what does it mean down the line?"

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## **October 20, 2002**

Click [here](#) for pictures of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association represented at the Police Activities League 1st Annual Pumpkin Festival

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## **October 18, 2002**

**The Hour: CPEC head says lawmakers need better info** by Ryan Flinn

**Exert:** Laurel Lindstrom, president of the newly formed East Avenue Neighborhood Association, has worked with CPEC on the scan project in her neighborhood. The group scanned several streets in August, and by the second scanning in September, some problems noticed by the group had been taken care of by the Department of Public Works. "A lot of people will complain about things, but they won't do anything to address them," said Lindstrom. The city scan program, however, gives people a chance to be active about local problems, she said. "This is a really good tool and a good way to engage people in their neighborhoods."

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## **October 13, 2002**

**The Sunday Advocate: City Scan: 'Government in action'** by Matt Breslow

**Exert:** Laurel Lindstrom, East Avenue Neighborhood Association president, pointed out a large tree that had been photographed because residents complained it is deteriorating and home to raccoons. "Within less than a month, (the city) came out and tagged the tree for removal," said Lindstrom, who called City Scan "government in action."

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## **September 2002**

**Inside Your Third: The Newsletter for the Third Taxing District Electric Department, Volume 3, Issue 7.**

**Article: East Avenue Neighborhood Association:**

A local neighborhood advocacy group is gaining momentum in East Norwalk. The group named the East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA) is the brainchild of Laurel Lindstrom. Laurel saw a need for this advocacy group while attending different committee meetings at City Hall in past years and realizing the common resident did not know how to have their issues heard.

Lindstrom, representing the Advocates for Calm Traffic (ACT) at a City-Wide Traffic Summit, says she saw more frustration from the neighborhood participants in not knowing how to get an issue heard at City Hall rather than the obvious traffic violations they had witnessed that made them concerned for their safety.

Originally formed to address the problems of her immediate neighborhood along East Avenue just south of the Thruway, Lindstrom continues to expand the scope of the EANA to incorporate the full length of East Avenue and its adjoining streets. Most recently other East Norwalk neighborhoods recognizing the accomplishments of the EANA interacting with City Hall to get problems solved and remedies initiated have attended meetings asking for help.

As far away as residents unhappy with noise and pollution near Roxbury Road at Strawberry Hill to a City Scan of First Street from Gregory Boulevard to the Mill Pond, EANA has lent its ear to their concerns. Ms. Lindstrom on behalf of the EANA attended and supported the residents who spoke at a Public Works committee public hearing about the Second Street law enforcement vs. access to the harbor controversy. EANA opposed restricting access to the water for boaters and monitored the success of the neighborhood representatives in having the newly constructed barriers on Second Street taken down.

If you live in East Norwalk and have a problem you would like addressed or would like to join the EANA to help improve your neighborhood, call Laurel Lindstrom at 855-7668 or visit their website through their association with Advocates for Calm Traffic at [CalmTraffic.org](http://CalmTraffic.org).

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## August 23, 2002

**Norwalk Citizen-News: Discover Norwalk**, Clubs and Organizations Listing:

East Avenue Neighborhood Association.

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## August 18, 2002

**The Sunday Hour: Leaders supportive of City Scan possibilities** by Brian Lockhart.

**Exert:** Laurel Lindstrom, president of the newly formed East Avenue Neighborhood Association, supports City Scan but believes its success depends on the knowledge, and variety, of the residents leading CPEC on the scanning tours through their neighborhoods. It's too difficult to take in a large area unless you have specific people who know the streets," Lindstrom said. "To have someone living in one section trying to identify problems in another section gets a little cumbersome... Things are not the same from one neighborhood to the next." She is currently reaching out to neighbors to try and encourage their participation in a City Scan walking tour. Lindstrom acknowledged that while City Scan is good for targeting problems like abandoned cars,

it might not be the best way to address other concerns, such as the presence of illegal apartments.

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**June 10, 2002**

Dear Neighbor,

Although the Traffic Summit is over it is not finished. As the neighborhood coordinator for the East Norwalk Traffic Summit I have been in frequent contact with officials at city hall and at the police department working with them to organize all of the information gathered.

As the coordinator for our meeting, I was pleased at the turnout – and even more appreciative of the opportunity to listen to the many traffic-related concerns that were presented. Thank you for your attendance and participation. Every specific concern was documented. The city is about to begin assessing the information and strategizing actions aimed at improving the traffic situation in Norwalk.

You will be hearing more in the days to come. Thank you again for taking the time to participate. It is through this willingness to get involved that life gets better for all of us.

Truly yours,

Laurel Lindstrom,  
Chairperson

Advocates for Calm Traffic (ACT)  
The East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA)

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**May 30, 2002**

Dear Mayor Knopp:

Thank you for initiating the Citywide Traffic Summit. This letter is being submitted to the city representative attending the East Norwalk Neighborhood traffic meeting to be included as part of the information that will be used by the city to formulate a traffic strategy plan for Norwalk.

Your decision to hold a citywide Traffic Summit in Norwalk is very much appreciated. The decision underscores the priority this issue requires and indicates that Norwalk is serious about addressing the problem. Through the neighborhood meetings you have asked the residents and business owners to identify local traffic problems and offer solutions.

The East Avenue Neighborhood Association (EANA) had the privilege of co-coordinating the East Norwalk Traffic Summit meeting . EANA has members on the streets that connect with East Avenue along its entire length. Currently 17 streets and about 30 households are represented. We hold monthly meetings. All discussion items at the meetings have centered on traffic concerns or contain a traffic related component. Advocates for Calm Traffic (ACT) is also part of every meeting agenda since there are members from both groups at our meetings. The following documentation contains information specific to the East Norwalk traffic/transportation issue -- and is a compilation of contributions from EANA and ACT activities.

Sincerely,

Laurel Lindstrom,

President, East Avenue Neighborhood Association

EANA Street Reps that have contributed traffic-related ideas: Tony Rossi (Raymond Terrace), Josephine Martuccio (Myrtle Street), Michael Pavlicin (Olmstead Place), Douglas Nissing (St. John Street), Lisa Coville-King (Lockwood Lane), Marija Bryant (Morgan Avenue), Kosmas Kalmanidis (Sherry Street), Xavier Cronin (Sunset Hill Avenue), Claudia Boerest (Eversley Street), Kathleen Morrow (Willow Street), Emil Albanese (Bettswood Avenue)

## **INTRODUCTION**

East Norwalk has many unique characteristics that are attractive and yet create challenges related to transportation/traffic planning. It is the oldest section of Norwalk and maintains much of the original road system. The area has compact residential properties and a resulting large population of people and vehicles. East Norwalk includes beautiful beaches that are a destination for thousands of people outside of the area. Festivals, parades and most Norwalk mega-events are held in East Norwalk. The waste-water treatment plant, the animal shelter, the transfer station, a train station, Exit 16 and Norden Place are all within the boundaries of East Norwalk and are traffic generators.

## **EAST AVENUE AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION**

This main artery is heavily congested, particularly during peak hours. Most automobiles, trucks, Wheels and school buses travel to and from East Norwalk from areas outside of East Norwalk heading for exit 16, exit 17, Rte 1, South Norwalk and beach locations. Drivers become impatient and speed down side streets to avoid the congestion -- or get into fender-benders as they make unsafe moves.

■ DOT plan for 2003 to widen East Avenue at the I-95 bridge from Raymond Terr. to Colony St. will encourage more vehicles to use Exit 16 and will make East Ave. into even more of a major thoroughfare and less of a residential neighborhood.

■ DOT plan for 2006 to widen and lower East Ave. at the railroad bridge would allow bigger trucks to take this route to exit 16 rather than using exit 15 or exit 17 thereby further increasing traffic. This negative impact needs to be considered prior to making any changes.

■ DPW preliminary design plan to widen East Ave. in 2008 from Rowan St. to St. John St. to match the widening done by the State would complete the Connecticut Avenue feel. A speedway would result during lower volume hours and even more congestion during peak hours with the increase in vehicles that would be drawn by the widened street. Leaving the width as is may be the appropriate decision.

- Keeping the traffic signals better synchronized would benefit traffic flow

- Using a video monitoring camera at exit 16 to take license numbers and issue warnings routinely would result in less traffic violations -- including vehicles that obstruct the entry to Olmstead Pl. while waiting for the light to change.

- Citywide Traffic studies need to be done so that traffic can be distributed throughout the city to minimize overall negative impacts

- A Transportation Master Plan for Norwalk needs to be in place that will focus on getting more motor vehicles off all the streets -- including East Avenue.

## **SPEEDING AND TRAFFIC CALMING**

Side streets off of East Avenue, streets used by drivers to get to the beaches -- and the main roads during off peak hours -- have problems with speeding motor vehicles.

Requests to the DPW for speed bumps have been submitted by the following East Norwalk streets: St. John Street, Raymond Terrace, Myrtle Street, Pine Hill Avenue, Cloveny Circle, Sasqua Road, Harvey Street, Betts Place, Cove Avenue, Marion Avenue, Roland Road, River Road and Gregory Boulevard (south of Fifth St.). Residents on Fitch Street, Gregory Blvd. (north of Fifth), First Street, Winfield Avenue and other streets have contacted ACT with concerns about speeding vehicles. The city should continue to provide funding for speed bumps and for striping but also needs to look at other traffic calming engineering measures in addition to speed bumps -- and follow comprehensive traffic calming guidelines that include setting up a steering committee with residents for each new project that is requested by a neighborhood. Keeping the public informed and having a systematic process in place that includes the community and all involved city departments is essential. The Traffic Calming Toolbox is a 1998 SWRPA handbook available in the DPW at City Hall that is an excellent resource. The CT DOT has responsibility for Rte. 136 and needs to be engaged by the city to be involved with the overall traffic improvement plan -- including speeding vehicles.

## **MOTORCYCLES**

A special mention is needed regarding motorcycles since the speeding vehicles are often motorcycles and the motorcyclists are often drawn by the beaches and the long, uninterrupted roads to the beaches. The speed and noise that is generated negatively affects the quality of life of residents. Police presence and issuing tickets will continue to be necessary in addition to speed bumps and other traffic calming devices. Working with state legislators to change the law to require helmets could also help change the image and, therefore, the negative behaviors of some motorcyclists.

## **POLICE**

Building on the community policing concept is essential.

- Increased police presence and visibility not only in vehicles but on foot and on bicycle would be beneficial.

- Officers that are assigned to this area need to get their name and face out to more residents by scheduling frequent get-acquainted meetings in the neighborhood

- Creation of neighborhood speed watch programs
- The regular use of radar trailers is beneficial as a public education tool

## **ZONING**

A number of zoning areas are present in East Norwalk. The amount of traffic that is generated is often a result of the type of development a zone allows or the variance that is granted. Currently, at 89B Strawberry Hill Ave. an industrial-type landscape supply loading facility is being constructed because of a variance. As the Master Plan of Development indicated variances need to be kept to a minimum, especially if increased traffic could result. The Village District designation currently proposed for East Avenue, if extended from the Interstate to Fitch Street would provide protection for the historic structures still standing on that stretch of East Avenue and would help keep the empty lot where HoJos stood from being used for a business that is incompatible for this historic residential area and could generate large volumes of traffic. The functionality of the changes that the DOT plans for the bridge work over the I-95 could be improved aesthetically if the area was designated as a Village District.

### **EAST AVENUE IS A CORRIDOR FROM THE SEA TO THE GREEN**

The Master Plan of Development needs to be changed. Currently it encourages zoning districts based on artificial dividers such as the Interstate. The East Avenue Neighborhood Association was created to bridge the gap and to unite residents north of the I-95 with those south of the I-95 since we have the same issues. The dividing line for the new Village District that is being proposed should, therefore, not be the Interstate. Ideally, the district should run the length of East Avenue, but realistically -- based mainly on the existence of four filling stations south of Fitch Street on East Avenue -- needs to extend to Fitch Street/Prowitt Street. The inclusion of this stretch would also provide image enhancement for East Norwalk.

### **NORDEN PLACE**

Norden has a history in East Norwalk of creating a severe traffic problem for surrounding residents when it was operating at full capacity. The positive economic benefits that the current owners could bring to the community by increased development on the site must be weighed against the traffic concerns.

Spinnaker, the owners of Norden Place recently succeeded in having the Zoning Commission amend the Restricted Industrial Zoning area for the existing office space to allow for office use without a manufacturing component. This kind of decision should not have been made without an up-to-date citywide Master Plan of Development in place and without immediate plans to change the promotion focus for new office workers away from one person occupancy vehicles. ACT and EANA are on record as addressing these concerns at the Zoning Commission Public Hearing.

Future plans for Norden Place include additional buildings which will generate more traffic. A Norden Master Plan is being prepared by Spinnaker that is said to include plans for bicycle and pedestrian access and promotion of mass transit alternatives to the automobile. The city needs not only to work closely with Spinnaker but needs to keep the public informed about all activities at Norden since the traffic impact will reach widely through the neighborhoods of East Norwalk.

### **AIR POLLUTION FROM VEHICLES**

The more vehicles -- and the greater the congestion -- the worse the air pollution that results, which adds to the incentive to establish alternatives to single occupancy automobile travel.

Wheels warrants special mention in this category. As mass transit it warrants adequate funding and expanded routes. It gets our support in concept. However, the size of the vehicles used may not be required for some routes and could in the future be replaced with some smaller buses. The buses -- Wheels and school buses -- also need to operate without the use of fuel that causes unhealthy emissions.

### **EAST NORWALK TRAIN STATION**

To decrease the number of vehicles on the roads there needs to be convenient alternatives in place. Rail travel is an excellent alternative. The presence of a train station to locals who don't need it or don't make use of it can seem unnecessary. The benefits need to be better promoted so as to increase interest in rail travel

- Formalize a public awareness campaign
- Explore all avenues for funding including but not limited to grants
- Install safe bicycle racks and bicycle lockers at the train station
- Provide adequate parking in commuter lots -- and maintain the street signs that help eliminate parking by commuters on residential streets

### **PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS**

If people are going to walk more and drive less they will need to feel safe walking. Sidewalks and pedestrian foot paths need to be maintained and need to link destinations so that walking is convenient. Unfortunately, the number of streets currently without continuous walkways is greater than those with safe walkways in place.

### **BICYCLE LANES**

The plan for bikeways and walkways along the Norwalk River because of grandfathering will only occur as new development is put in. Also, like the Greenways these paths are fine for recreational travel and cycling from one town to the next -- but for getting around Norwalk they are impractical. A network of citywide connecting bicycle lanes is necessary in order to get people to use this means of travel regularly. Bike to Work days are a good way of educating the public to this means of travel.

A bicycle lane placed from Calf Pasture Beach, along Gregory Blvd, Strawberry Hill Avenue and then forked at County Street to go east to Westport or west toward East Avenue would be a good place to start. The existence of four schools along this stretch makes the location chosen even better. Students could then bicycle to and from school rather than bus or be driven by parental SUV.

### **SCHOOLS**

A city committee to examine the traffic that is generated related to schools would be beneficial. Subcommittees could be formed for each school and to look at specific issues. East Norwalk residents are impacted by the traffic from not only the one school located in our area but also the other schools along Strawberry Hill Avenue.

- Student drop-off and pick-up by parents

- Special events at the school

- School buses

- Safe roads for students walking and bicycling. A Safe Routes to School grant is available and can be applied for -- but since funding is limited the city needs to prioritize funding for these projects by other means

## **AESTHETICS, TREES, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

Streets that are aesthetically pleasing because of appealing lighting fixtures and signage, maintained curbing and infrastructure, restored historic buildings and railings, healthy street trees, plentiful parkland and open space and landscaped traffic islands are not only pleasing to the residents but also will help calm drivers in vehicles. Finding funding for these areas becomes more of a priority when seen fully for the positive gains they provide. Conversely, large-scale additions -- like the soccer fields that were proposed for Calf Pasture Beach -- should be avoided. East Norwalk is already burdened with more than its share of traffic-generating activities where the vast majority of those in attendance are from outside of East Norwalk.

Clean and Green and the TTD have arranged with many businesses to maintain landscaping on traffic islands in the Adopt-A-Spot program. This type of arrangement needs to be encouraged and supported by the city and the community.

## **SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

Residents need to be encouraged to get involved in their neighborhoods.

- The East Norwalk Library is not used by most residents. If it were to be set up more for

- Community activities when construction is done on the building the residents would

- Have a place of their own that they would use.

- City programs in place -- and public awareness campaigns to inform the public -- are needed. A street speed reduction program, neighborhood watches and tree inventory teams are examples.

- Neighborhood associations, litter cleanup days, block parties and donation of time and money to community projects give people a sense of community.

People that care about their neighbors and their neighborhood are less likely to speed and are more likely to join together with their neighbors to help solve the traffic problems.

## **CITYWIDE STRATEGY**

East Norwalk, like other sections of Norwalk, needs the city to make citywide changes in order to improve the traffic situation of each section -- and throughout the entire city.

- Restructuring the DPW -- or hiring another employee -- so as to create a Transportation Planner position. Currently all positions are traffic oriented. If we are going to solve our traffic

problems we need to be pro-active by orienting ourselves to transportation that works -- that means, a person exclusively planning and designing for alternatives to traveling alone in an automobile. Regularly involving the Transit District in planning and implementation is also an option.

- Create programs that involve the neighborhoods: safe schools, speed control, traffic calming, bicycle lane network and pedestrian walkways. We can learn from what other cities have done by going to their websites - Portland, Ore. is a good example

- Restructure the city website to have a transportation section with pages on traffic calming, bicycle lanes, etc. -- specifying clearly how the public can get involved

- Examine traffic studies already done by DPW and P+Z and Developers

- Do traffic studies selectively as needed

- Research and apply for all available grants and work with developers to fund projects

- Update the Master Plan of Development to decrease the emphasis on the use of main roads as Zone dividers, create a Village District as outlined above, re-examine -- and eliminate where possible -- zoning for large retail on Rte. 1 and trucking companies like FedEx on MLK Boulevard. Create a separate detailed Transportation Master Plan that would include traffic control issues

- Better adherence to the Master Plan once it is in place

- Establish initiative to increase amount of affordable housing in Norwalk so as to decrease commute time

- Regular contact with the commissioners of the Third Taxing District (TTD) so that the TTD can work with the city regarding a traffic improvement strategy plan

- Contact with local and state advocacy groups that can offer sound guidance and assistance in establishing strategies to improve traffic problems.

- Education and Public awareness campaign. School programs, posters, radio spots and regular press releases and press interviews of Norwalk legislators talking about transportation solutions and alternatives to one person in a speeding vehicle.

- Continue to fully engage the public in all initiatives throughout the total process because we are impacted by all decisions that the city makes

## **REGIONAL PLANNING AND STATE DECISIONS**

The city also needs to be in regular contact with regional transportation planners and State legislators to get funding and change laws that will help solve the traffic problems locally and throughout the Tri-state area since we in Norwalk are impacted by decisions that are made throughout the region.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurel Lindstrom

Website: **CalmTraffic.org** (Pathways to Calm Traffic page has links to key Web Sites)

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**May 24, 2002**

**Norwalk Citizen-News: Village District Plan Meets With Support, Designation proposed for Rowayton, East Avenues** by Jill Bodach.

**Exert:** The members of the public who spoke... May 14 advocated the creation of the districts. "I think this proposal is testament to a trend in Norwalk for preserving history and character, especially on East Avenue and Rowayton Avenue," said Laurel Lindstrom, who also suggested that the commission consider extending the village district boundaries to include the harbor and the Norwalk Green.

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**May 15, 2002**

**The Advocate: Firms seek zoning changes at industrial sites** by Jonathan Lucas and Matthew Strozier.

**Exert:** The partnership that owns the recently renovated NordenPark complex is looking to win city zoning approval to allow more office space. The 530,00-square-foot building in East Norwalk was the exclusive home of airborne radar manufacturer Norden Systems. After a \$10 million renovation, there is less manufacturing space at the site and more room for commercial offices.....Laurel Lindstrom, president of the East Avenue Neighborhood Association, said her group has been keeping track of the NordenPark project and is concerned about the amount of traffic. "I don't want to be anticommercial or against economic growth, but we have to have a balance here." Lindstrom said. "If this (zoning change) were to happen without looking at the impact of what it really means, it could be a nightmare."

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**April 14, 2002**

**Sunday Hour: River resource being wasted, says activist** by Harold F. Cobin.

**Exert:** The banks of the Norwalk River along Main and Smith streets are used for many things, says Diane Lauricella, but none fulfill the river's potential. Escorting a member of the Sierra Club, the president of a neighborhood association, and a reporter along the river's east bank in uptown Norwalk Saturday, Lauricella called for revisiting the city's plans for the river so it could become a mixed use corridor bordered by commercial, industrial and residential facilities.

**Note:** although the neighborhood association above was not identified by the Hour -- it was the East Avenue Neighborhood Association. EANA's president was there advocating for the river and Wall Street revitalization.

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