(203) 853-2350

N. E. O. N.

Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc.

33 SO. MAIN STREET, SO. NORWALK, CONN. 06854

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MR. ROBERT BURGESS
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CORPORATE COUNSEL
ANTHONY PIAZZA, ESQ.

June 26, 1979

Commissioner Ronald E. Manning
Department of Human Resources
1179 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06101

Dear Commissioner Manning:

I am writing this letter as a preliminary request for consideration for funding of a facility for the South Norwalk Community Center, which is a delegate agency of N.E.O.N., Inc.

The South Norwalk Community Center (SNCC) was first organized as St. Joseph's Center, under the auspices of the Catholic Church, to provide multi-purpose social services to the Hispanic community. It was located in an old community facility which had been purchased by the Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport and was located on South Main Street in South Norwalk, which is the area where 90% of the Hispanic residents live.

It soon became evident that additional funding was needed to continue to serve the Hispanic community and to offer service to the other disadvantaged residents of the area who were not being served.

The South Norwalk Community Center was incorporated and applied for funding, as a multi-purpose community center, from the Connecticut Department of Community Affairs. The funding was allocated and the SNCC started serving the total community.

Since then, the SNCC has expanded its' scope of services to include tenant agencies whose programs coordinate with the SNCC program to offer assistance with all the social problems which plague the disadvantaged family. Some of these tenant agencies are: the NEON/CETA Manpower Center, Community Anti-Crime Program, Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance (the only office in Norwalk), the Norwalk Community Federal Credit Union, Immigration Service, Well Baby Clinic, IRS assistance, Catholic Family Services and a Mental Health Clinic.

In 1972 the SNCC facility was completely destroyed by fire. Since then the SNCC has been located in storefronts and is now housed in a renovated food market on South Main Street.

Recently, the Mayor announced that three million dollars would be spent for revitalization of the inner city South Norwalk area. A task force has been appointed to work on the plan, but, so far, the only concrete information that has been forthcoming is that the buildings which house N.E.O.N., Inc., the SNCC, Nor-

walk Human Relations Commission and Connecticut Legal Services will be offered as prime development properties. This means that the agencies will have to relocate.

The Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport has offered to lease SNCC the property which was the site of the first center, to build a new facility, provided the SNCC continues to provide the same community services.

In addition, the SNCC has received a grant of $300,000 in Community Development funds for this project.

It now appears that the city is not willing to have the SNCC relocate on that particular site, as it is considered part of the prime development plot.

The Diocese may allow the SNCC to use the profit from this land toward the cost of a facility on another site.

SNCC, NEON, Inc., and the South Norwalk Revitalization Task Force will jointly select a site, which may require new construction or renovation of an existing building.

The facility will be owned by the SNCC because this will be a condition of the lease or land sale arrangement with the Diocese of Bridgeport but, the facility will house NEON, Inc., the NEON/CETA Center and the other tenant agencies.

If SNCC does not receive funding for this project, it is conceivable that the various agencies will be forced to relocate at scattered sites, out of the inner city area, which will minimize their effectiveness and break down the coordination between agencies.

As soon as a site has been selected for the facility, I will forward a formal proposal and cost estimate to you.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Burgess

Robert Burgess
Executive Director

cc: Rev. Herbert L. Eddy, Chairman NEON, Inc.
Mimi Burgess, Chairlady SNCC
Andrew Brucker, Chairman SNCC Building Committee
Daniel Maldonado, Director SNCC

Community Center contract signed

The contract for construction of the South Norwalk Community Center was signed Tuesday. Contractor for the $1,974,300 project will be Deluca Construction Company of Stamford, Connecticut.

Present at the contract signing were William A. Collins, Mayor of the City of Norwalk; Francis M. Deluca and Jerry Sarnelli of Deluca Construction company; Robert E. Burgess, executive director of Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Incorporated; Mary E. Burgess, chairperson of the South Norwalk Community Center; Andrew Bruckner, esq., building committee chairman; Daniel Maldonado, executive director of the South Norwalk Community Center and Jan Hampert, assistant director of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency. Representing the architectural firm of Milton Lewis Howard Associates, Inc. and Henry Schadler & Andrew Dragat Architects, was Andrew Dragat.

Funding for the project came from the State Department of Human Resources ($650,000) and Community Development ($325,000). In addition, property at 65 South Main Street, site of the former South Norwalk Community Center, has been deeded to the South Norwalk Community Center by the Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport. This property will be sold and the proceeds used for construction of the new Community Center.

The new building will be approximately 28,900 square feet and will house the South Norwalk community center and NEON Central Offices. Other agencies planning to relocate in the new building are the Department of Income Maintenance, Girl Scouts of America, DHR Social Service Cluster, Legal Services, Norwalk Community Federal Credit Union, Christian Community Action, Greater Norwalk Community Council, Citizens Participating Committee Staff, Connecticut Housing Investment fund, the WIC Program (Women, Infants and Children), Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and all CETA Programs (CETA Intak Unit, Youth Employment an Training Program (YETP), wor Experience Program (WEP Youth Conservation and Com munity Improvement Progra (YCCIP), CETA Outreach Worke and the Job Developer).

REAPPORTIONMENT

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Although the "Hartford Courant" had said Saturday that, "Some Republicans also solidified their hold in so-called swing areas, like Norwalk..." Anastasia said that, "I don't know who they're talking about. My district didn't I know I am because Silvermin fits in with my district; they're th same type of voters you find i West Norwalk, and Bonnyton mostly Republican."

"I have no complaints about i anyway," he added.