

A brief overview of the West End Neighborhood Study City of Bristol, CT

The City of Bristol has embarked on an in-depth planning study of the West End neighborhood. This brief summary explains the background and purpose of the study, as well as how you can get involved.



WHERE IS THE WEST END NEIGHBORHOOD?

The West End neighborhood is located just west of downtown Bristol; it contains about 40 city blocks and covers four-tenths of a square mile. For the purposes of the study, the neighborhood is loosely defined by Rockwell Park and Jacobs Street on the north, Divinity Street on the southwest, Gridley Street on the southeast, and West Street on the east. Much of the West End is residential in nature—containing mostly one-, two- and three-family houses—but it's also home to Rockwell Park, historic Muzzy Field, a section of the Pequabuck River, several churches, a public school, and a variety of small businesses. Its location makes it the primary residential neighborhood adjacent to downtown Bristol.

WHAT'S THIS STUDY ABOUT?

In recent years, the West End neighborhood has experienced a number of significant changes. In 2006, the city began to focus greater attention on the neighborhood and to think about ways to stabilize and strengthen it. In 2007, the city decided that a comprehensive study of the West End was needed in order to better understand just how the neighborhood has changed and to develop an action plan to revitalize and improve the neighborhood in the coming years. The study, begun in January 2008, will use both professional expertise and neighborhood-based participation to develop a collective vision for the neighborhood and an implementation program intended to guide future revitalization activities there.

WHO IS THE CAPSTAN GROUP? WHO IS THE YALE URBAN DESIGN WORKSHOP?

In September 2007, the City of Bristol issued a Request for Qualifications to hire a professional planning consultant to assist with this neighborhood-based planning process. The Bristol Planning Commission selected The Capstan Group, a New Haven-based firm specializing in economic and community development, and its partner, the Yale Urban Design Workshop, a community design center, to guide this study. You can learn more about The Capstan Group at www.cpstn.com and the Yale Urban Design Workshop at www.architecture.yale.edu/UDW.

WHAT'S THE TIMETABLE FOR THIS STUDY?

The West End Neighborhood Study began in January 2008 and will take 12-15 months to complete. The first three months will focus on detailed data collection and analysis and, as importantly, on identifying and reaching out to stakeholders in the West End who want to play a role in this project. During this time, we will assemble a Neighborhood Advisory Committee—including residents, business and property owners, and community leaders—to advise and guide us throughout the study. Starting in the spring, we will begin to hold community-based public meetings to help define the vision for the neighborhood, to identify and better understand the major problems and opportunities that exist in the neighborhood, and to start to develop ideas to address these issues. These meetings will be widely publicized, and everyone interested is invited to attend and participate.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

The City of Bristol, The Capstan Group, and the Yale Urban Design Workshop all warmly invite community members to participate in this planning process. We understand that people have limited time, and we welcome your input in any form that you can provide it: you can serve as an advisor, participate in public meetings, help us collect the data needed, recruit others to get involved, or provide your input individually. If you would like to participate in any way, please call The Capstan Group at 203.785.0130 or the City of Bristol Land Use Office at 860.584.6225, or send an email to either westend@cpstn.com or landuseoffice@ci.bristol.ct.us.

A project website located at www.cpstn.com is expected to be active by March 1, 2008.



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