

Renaissance Place project to get \$75,000 state grant

BY PAUL HUGHES
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HARTFORD — The State Bond Commission on Wednesday approved a \$75,000 grant to assist the planning of the proposed Renaissance Place development in Naugatuck.

The state grant will help finance an evaluation of environmental effects of the proposed development on 60 acres near the borough's downtown.

The bond commission went through an agenda of 63 spending requests at its monthly meeting on Wednesday.

The commission also approved \$2.25 million in financing to purchase new and replacement lab equipment for Naugatuck Community Valley College. It provided another \$261,690 for other campus improvements.

The commission also approved \$351,000 to replace the roof at the Department of Developmental Services' regional center in Cheshire and \$77,000 to improve two group homes there.

The town of Wolcott received a \$300,000 grant to expand Peterson Park. The commission approved \$500,000 for roof replacement at the Cheshire Correctional Institution and \$398,398 for renovations to the prison's North Block.

Family Services of Greater Waterbury received \$7,800 for boiler and air handler repairs.

The money for Renaissance Place was welcomed by Naugatuck leaders.

State Rep. Kevin DelGobbo, R-Naugatuck, said starting the evaluation process is a key milestone in moving forward with the project, which is envisioned as a multi-phase development that will bring residential commercial construction to downtown Naugatuck.

"It is a critical requirement in being able to apply for and secure other state funds for the project, such as brownfield remediation," he said, adding that the \$75,000 allocation signals Gov. M. Jodi Rell's support for the project.

The environmental impact evaluation is a process performed by the state Department of Economic and Community Development.

The bond funds will allow the process to begin.

The commission also authorized a \$1.9 million loan to the Women's Institute on Housing and Community Development to help finance an affordable housing development in New Milford.

The nonprofit group plans to develop a 40-unit apartment complex on 7.5 acres on Fort Hill Road. The project, which is sponsored by New Milford Affordable Housing, will consist of 10 one-bedroom units, 15 two-bedroom units and 15 three-bedroom units. The project is targeted for low- and moderate-income families.

In addition, the commission approved \$605,000 for improvements to the Training School. The money will pay for fire alarm upgrades, floor and elevator repairs and improvements under the Americans with Disabilities Act.