

# \$2.6M contract put forward to clean up Ryan Park

By Robert Koch



Photo: Alex Von Kleydorff / Hearst Connecticut Media

Ryan Park in South Norwalk is fenced in for remediation, but no work at the site was visible on Monday.

**NORWALK** — The cleanup of Ryan Park — in advance of its rebuilding as part of the Washington Village Transformation Plan — could begin within weeks.

The Common Council this month will consider hiring Charter Contracting Co., of Boston, to perform environmental remediation at the 2.2-acre city park at Day and Raymond streets for a cost not to exceed \$2.6 million.

“The project transitioned from an assessment phase (soil testing, etc.) to

active implementation (soil removal, capping etc.),” wrote Susan Sweitzer, senior project manager at the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, in an email explaining where the project stands. “Assessment was completed in April of 2017, the remediation scope of work developed, bid out in July. Project bids came in high so the project scope was reduced and rebid.”

The council is expected to take up the proposed contract with Charter Contracting at its Oct. 24 meeting. If approved, remediation work will begin shortly afterward, according to Sweitzer.

Charter Contracting was one of a dozen firms that answered the city’s request for bids on the environmental remediation work. The bids ranged from \$2.6 million to \$4.35 million,

according to the Norwalk Purchasing Department.

Weston & Sampson, the consultant hired by the city to assess the contamination at the park, was among those reviewing the bids.

“Charter Contracting (Charter) and Weston & Sampson have collaborated on many environmental and civil engineering projects over the past 20 years,” wrote Weston & Sampson Vice President Frank Ricciardi in a letter provided to the council’s Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs Committee. “Many of these projects are very similar to the Ryan Park remediation project, and the scope of work is ideally suited to their power alley of services including PCB remediation of public owned land.”

The former presence of a junkyard, nearby hat factory and other industry have left between a half and two-thirds of the Ryan Park area contaminated to various degrees. PCBs, metals and petroleum products are among the contaminants that must be removed before improvements can be made to the park, according to Weston & Sampson.

Representatives of Weston & Sampson, as well as Stantec, the consultant that

prepared the master plan for the park, updated residents on the remediation strategy during a meeting at the Choice Neighborhoods Initiatives Office on Water Street in April.

A lawn area, basketball court, children's playgrounds, pavilion and splash pad are among the improvements put forward for the park by Stantec.

Redevelopment of the park is part of the Washington Village Transformation Plan, which calls for razing Washington Village and building in its place 136 public housing units, 67 workforce housing units and 70 market rate units in two-, three- and four-story buildings.

The Norwalk Housing Authority and Redevelopment Agency are spearheading the plan. Trinity Financial of Boston is the developer. The first phase of the plan — 80 new apartments built on the city-owned parcels at 13 and 20 Day St. — is nearing completion.

The transformation plan is being funded, in part, with a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Choice Neighborhoods program seeks to replace distressed public housing with quality mixed-income units, while providing residents job training, educational opportunities and other support services.