



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of the Mayor

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**City to Enter Discussions for Purchase of
Historic Downtown Property**
Elementary School Overcrowding in Focus

STAMFORD, CT – Mayor David Martin announced that the city is entering into discussions with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery for the potential purchase of a 10.8 acre parcel located at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue in downtown Stamford. Martin stated that the property represents a historic and strategic opportunity for the city to pursue.

The property is the former site of Sacred Heart Academy, which closed in 2006, and is currently home to the Stamford Campus for The Stanwich School. The 10.8 acre campus includes several buildings and in 2012 was assessed for \$14.7 million.

The campus also includes the C.J. Starr Barn and Carriage House, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. In the application submitted by the Sisters to the National Park Service, they stated the structure is “the sole remaining structure of its kind in the city” and that it “provides the residents of Stamford with a link to a previous era.”

“Opportunities like this come around once in a generation. The property is a chance to preserve part of Stamford’s history and character. It will protect open space in an area that has become highly developed over the years. This is truly a unique and strategic opportunity,” Martin said.

The Board of Education informed Martin of the potential opportunity shortly following his election to Mayor. Martin and the Board have worked diligently throughout the transition and Martin’s first two weeks as Mayor to explore the opportunity.

Martin recently briefed members of the Board of Finance, the Board of Representatives Fiscal Committee, the District 11 members of the Board of Representatives, and the Chair of the Planning Board on the status of the property with details available to the administration.

Martin stated that while he intends to utilize the property for a school, more information and input from our elected boards and the public would be required before making a determination. The Administration expects that renovation and expansion would be

necessary in order to effectively utilize the space and would require additional capital investment. Martin explained that further study and evaluation is required.

“I am committed to ensuring that all children have access to a quality public education and bringing a new school to the Strawberry Hill location is an attractive option. More information and discussion is required before we can say with certainty that the city should invest in a new school and I look forward to participating in that discussion,” Martin said.

Martin concluded his announcement by reaffirming the merits of the property and his plan for the city to pursue further discussion.

“The bottom line is that this opportunity is presenting itself now and with urgency. If we are successful, I am certain the property will be an enormous asset and make a positive contribution to our city. Whether the property is utilized for a new school or one of several alternative public uses, it will be a historic purchase,” Martin said. “This is a low risk investment for the city to make and we will be aggressively negotiating to secure the best deal possible.”

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