



Connecticut General Assembly
DEMOCRATS

SEN BYE, REP. VERRENGIA WELCOME STATE AID FOR WOLCOTT PARK AND NOAH WEBSTER HOUSE

HARTFORD – Senator Beth Bye (D-West Hartford) and state Representative Joe Verrengia (D-West Hartford) today welcomed two investments by the State Bond Commission that will improve educational and recreational opportunities for West Hartford residents.

The State Bond Commission approved a \$750,000 grant – half of the total \$1.5 million project cost – for substantial renovations and improvements to Wolcott Park, located off New Britain Avenue in West Hartford near Corbin’s Corner.

“Wolcott Park has been enjoyed by many residents over the years, and it is great to see this renovation plan moving forward,” **Rep. Verrengia** said. “With all of the comprehensive improvements these funds will facilitate, it will greatly improve on an already beautiful park.”

“The quality of life in West Hartford and in Connecticut in general consistently ranks as one of the highest qualities of life in America. It’s not just our excellent schools and our clean environment, but our continued investment in public amenities like parks,” **Sen. Bye** said. “Parks and playgrounds are places where families and neighborhoods can come together to enjoy the outdoors and build the bonds that make for a stronger community.

Two years ago, West Hartford began to develop a renovation plan for Wolcott Park. In collaboration with the Community Research and Design Collaborative of the University of Connecticut’s Department of Landscape Architecture, West Hartford officials conducted extensive community outreach to numerous stakeholders and park neighbors. The resulting 2017 comprehensive Master Plan for Wolcott Park identified five areas of focus: recreation amenities; lighting infrastructure; park restroom; redesign and repave parking lots; and accessibility throughout park.

The Bond Commission grant will allow West Hartford to upgrade the park’s lighting infrastructure, improve parking, install a handicapped accessible restroom building, improve trails and routes throughout the park with ADA compliant paths, install a new playscape and redesign the parking lots to address insufficiencies, traffic flow and handicapped parking. The much-needed renovations to Wolcott Park will provide effective, efficient and high quality leisure facilities, with amenities and programs for residents and visitors of all abilities.

The State Bond Commission also approved a \$302,700 grant for the Noah Webster House on South Main Street in West Hartford to help pay for an upgraded HVAC system, renovated bathrooms, exterior improvements and office upgrades.

“We are honored that the State Bond Commission has found the Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society to be worthy of investment,” said Jennifer DiCola Matos, executive director of the Noah Webster House. “The National Historic Landmark birthplace of founding father Noah Webster is true Connecticut gem. Beyond the ‘Blue Backed Speller’ and An American Dictionary of the English Language, Webster is responsible for creating the American English we still use and enjoy today. The Urban Act grant will go a long way to make repairs to Webster’s circa 1747 childhood home and the adjoining museum, which for 50 years has preserved, interpreted and championed Noah Webster’s legacy and the evolving history of his hometown of West Hartford.”

“The Noah Webster House is an incredible resource for West Hartford and for all of the residents of the State of Connecticut. I was happy to advocate on its behalf for this state grant in order to improve this historic house not only for those who will visit next week or next month, but also for all the future generations who will take advantage of their workshops, summer camps, history club, and more.”

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