

OUR VIEW

LET'S FIGHT MORE BLIGHT

The Hartford Financial Services Group's recent announcement that it will help the city acquire and raze the blighted Capitol West building on Myrtle Street next to I-84 is most welcome news. It would be even better if it inspires other major corporations or institutions to partner with the city to remove or improve properties near their campuses.

Two possibilities: The former Hartford Office Supply Building on Capitol Avenue is looking increasingly shabby. The three-story brick structure, once part of the line of factories that

TWO PROPERTIES

► What if others followed The Hartford's example?

abutted the avenue, was going to be developed for housing, but that plan has apparently fallen victim to the recession. It is an excellent location for the

walking-distance-to-downtown housing that Hartford needs. Aetna is nearby. Could the company help make a deal happen?

Another increasingly blighted, although smaller, property is the former Washington Diner building on Washington Street. This once-popular breakfast locale seems to be falling apart. In a best-case scenario, Washington Street would be spiffed up for a mix of uses including medical-related businesses, which would be to the Hartford Hospital complex's advantage. Could the hospital or the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance help make the diner building part of this vision?

Public-private partnership may be the form that progress takes in upcoming decades. These would be good ways to start.