

APPROVED

JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
AND
TOWN CENTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 29, 2013
Mulvey Municipal Center – 7:00 p.m.
North Conference Room

PRESENT: TCRC – Marilyn Ozols, Darlene Briggs, Jim Crawford, Deb Rie
EDC – Jim Crawford, Darlene Briggs, Sylvia Guinan

ALSO PRESENT: Meg Parulis, Town Planner; Peter and Natalie Miniutti, UCONN Collaborative; Lisa DeMaria, Recording Secretary

JOINT MEETING:

1. Call to Order

Ms. Ozols called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2. UCONN Study –Progress Report

Mr. Miniutti began his presentation by showing the Members a SketchUp model of the Town Center area including the three roads that have consequences for the Green: Westbrook Place, Essex Road and Boston Post Road. The concept plan showed Essex Road, on the north side of the Green, and Westbrook Place on the east side of the Green being narrowed. Essex Road could accommodate one travel lane and two parking lanes. Westbrook Place could accommodate two travel lanes and two parking lanes. The area of pavement that would be removed could be added to the Green. This plan would slow traffic, add additional parking spaces and create better traffic circulation. Mr. Miniutti explained that when cars have more pavement than needed for travel, it causes confusion as to which direction to go. The plan shows nodes being placed at the three corners of the green. These areas could be utilized for temporary signage during Town Center events or four season planters. The plan shows a visually light fence and sidewalks surrounding the green.

Ms. Parulis stated that vehicles would need access to the Green. Ms. Ozols stated that boat trailers and trucks would need to be able to make turns from Westbrook Place onto Essex Road.

Ms. Rie asked Mr. Miniutti what the width of a standard road lane was. Mr. Miniutti stated that a standard road lane can be as narrow as ten feet. The lanes on his plan are eleven feet wide.

Mr. Miniutti went on to explain how the parking could be re-arranged on the Gowrie property located at 36 Westbrook Place to work with the proposed new access from Westbrook Place. Currently, the property has ten thousand square feet of parking. By shifting and redesigning, there is a potential for an additional 2,400 square feet of parking, which would add 40 additional parking spaces.

Ms. Miniutti continued with the presentation to explain ideas for the Westbrook Place area. The proposal shows some buildings being redesigned by adding a second story and levels of details such as awnings, roofs and doorways to break up the facades, create continuity, better site lines and a small village scale for the area. This plan would also give front and rear access to the buildings and create a mixed use area with up to 50 residential units.

Ms. Parulis reported that she is currently evaluating the feasibility of creating an Incentive Housing Zone in Town Center and whether there is grant funding through this program to conduct a study of wastewater disposal options to support increased density.

Ms. Rie suggested that it would be better to have several options when looking into wastewater treatment. Ms. Ozols stated that when an analysis of wastewater treatment is done, there would need to be a total design flow but take into account future development and how much development could be accommodated.

There was some discussion about pervious, impervious and decorative finishes for parking areas and sidewalks. Ms. Parulis will provide Mr. Miniutti a copy of the Town's standard sidewalk detail.

Mr. Miniutti indicated that the vision for the mixed use buildings on Westbrook Place will be refined and attention will be given to streetscape elements. The next session will focus on the redesign of the roads with the possibility of Transportation Engineer, Norm Garrick, attending.

3. Minutes

Mr. Crawford made a motion to approve the August 28, 2012 and December 18, 2012 Joint Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Briggs and unanimously approved.

4. Adjournment

Ms. Briggs made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crawford and unanimously approved.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING:

1. Call to Order

There was no quorum.

2. Update on New Development Applications – Town Planner

Ms. Parulis reported that the former General Store at Pilot's Point Marina has a new tenant and will be opening in mid March.

The property located at 662 Boston Post Road, formerly M&D Auto, has a new automotive repair tenant.

The New Deal Steak House restaurant, located at 704 Boston Post Road, appears to be out of business.

The tenant located at 433 Boston Post Road, formerly Venetucci's Home, is intending to be out by the end of February.

Bassett Boat located at 631 Boston post Road has been sold to Marine Max.

Wilcox Fuel Oil Company is looking to add propane tanks at their property at 92 Essex Rd.

Pilot's Point Marina is preparing to apply for a permit to begin building residential apartments. They received approval from the Zoning Commission on November 11, 2011.

Ms. Parulis stated that there is a nonprofit developer interested in purchasing the vacant land located at 17 Willard Avenue to construct affordable housing. The property abuts 88 Pond Meadow Road, the former Turnpike Auto Wreckers site. The developer's offer would be contingent on the Town taking ownership of 88 Pond Meadow Road. The Town is awaiting word on a Brownfields Assessment Grant that was applied for through the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission.

Ms. Parulis reported that the Town is now a member of the CT Main Street Program, which provides advice and support from state and national experts, workshops and resources and solutions for downtown revitalization.

Jim Crawford noted that the Economic Development Commission currently has three member vacancies and welcomes anyone who is interested.

TOWN CENTER REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

1. Call to Order:

Ms. Ozols called the meeting to order at 8:35 p.m.

2. Minutes

Mr. Crawford made a motion to approve the August 28, 2012 and December 18, 2012 Town Center Minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Briggs and unanimously approved.

3. Bills:

General Funds - Recording Secretary..... \$58.44

Ms. Briggs made a motion to pay the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crawford and unanimously approved.

4. Town Center Parking Project/STEAP – Project Update

There has been no decision on the 2012 STEAP Grant. Ms. Parulis reported that the budget for the 2010 STEAP Grant has been amended to reallocate money from the remediation line item to engineering and design since the actual costs for remediation were less than what was budgeted. A reimbursement request will be submitted as soon as the amended budget is approved.

5. Adjournment

Ms. Briggs made a motion to adjourn at 8:40p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crawford and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa DeMaria, Recording Secretary