

MINUTES

WILSON DEERFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2005
ACTIVITY ROOM #1
WINDSOR COMMUNITY CENTER
330 WINDSOR AVENUE
WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT

1) CALL TO ORDER

The May 25, 2005 regular meeting of the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Members Present

Lee Paslaski
Shirley Morrission

Guests

Bradshaw Smith
Carolyn Pokey
Patrick McMahon
Jim Hallisey (staff)

2) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

None

3) REPORTS

Library

The tutoring program at Wilson Branch Library has wrapped up for the year. 62 children participated and it was considered successful and a much needed program.

The Wilson Branch Library has been holding pottery class on Saturdays for children. The program has been well received.

There has been some discussion about utilizing the meeting room at the branch for a computer center.

The front door of the Branch is being replaced. In addition, there is asbestos abatement and ceiling tile replacement scheduled for the front foyer area..

Public Works

Public works replaced 15 pear trees in the Windsor Avenue median. These are trees that have been lost to traffic incidents over the last few years.

Storm water drainage improvements at the eastern end of Wilson Avenue are complete. This was done in anticipation of the replacement of the water lines by MDC (for which the schedule is not known). After that work is complete the road will be repaved.

Public works plans to repave the following streets in the coming year:

- Lovell Avenue
- Highland Avenue
- Portman Street

Valley View & Hayes will be reclaimed and subsequently repaved

Traffic issues (Route 159)

Hallisey noted that ConnDot did respond to the Town's request to consider changes to the traffic issues at the curb cuts at the Windsor Shopping Center (the northern entrance to Windsor Ave.) and the curb cut for the gas station immediately across the street. Apparently ConnDot is not willing to install retrofit the light with a turn signal because it would result in stacking of traffic. The existing right of way would not accommodate a dedicated turning lane that would alleviate the stacking problem anticipated. They did, however, agree to take the appropriate steps to provide a uniform speed limit of 35 mph.

Police Department

Police chief reports that there is a new telephone system at 330 Windsor Avenue that will enhance communication between the Center and the Town Hall/Police Department resulting in a big improvement in the computer and telephone connections and will allow for improved Rec Department and Police Department programming.

Windsor Automotive - 20 Windsor Avenue

Zoning enforcement action against the owners of Windsor Automotive has been ongoing, although basically the action has involved a string of continuances.

There is a proposed zoning text amendment slated for public hearing at the June TPZ meeting. The proposed amendment, submitted on behalf of the owners of 20 Windsor Avenue, would allow for the sale of the used cars as an accessory use to the sale of automobile fuel (as opposed to gasoline). The sale of diesel fuel would meet this requirement. In addition, the proposed change would allow for a specific number of cars to be offered for sale along with additional cars (not for sale). Hallisey noted that the major problem with the site has been the sheer number of cars. The ability to distinguish between cars for sale and cars pending delivery (or whatever) has made it extremely difficult to enforce the conditions of approval. It was suggested that an absolute number of cars on the site be incorporated into the proposed amendment and that it should be based on square footage of the particular site.

It was suggested that the landscaping requirements of the original special permit, if enforced, would enhance the appearance of the site. It was also noted that court action stays any enforcement action.

CT Telephone Building

The former Connecticut Telephone building appears to have new tenants, a barber/hairdresser.

Community Development Block Grant – Small Cities Program.

Hallisey noted that the federal administration has put forward a proposal to consolidate most of programs, including the Community Development Block Grant Program, and place them under the Department of Commerce. As proposed, the total budget for the programs involved would be greatly reduced. It was further noted that there has been considerable opposition to this proposal at the congressional level and may not occur, at least at this time. He further noted that other changes are possible, including amendments to the resource allocation formula. More specifically, the northeast has historically fared well under this program because a key component of the formula is the age of the housing stock. Given population gains in faster growing areas such as the south, southwest and western states, the formula may shift to place less emphasis on factors which would ultimately direct more funds to there area.

Survey of commuter lot patrons

The issue of the possible sale of the existing commuter lot (Corey Street/Fanueil Street and Windsor Avenue) was discussed. It was noted that a questionnaire has been developed for the purpose of gathering information from the individuals

using the lot. Specifically, the Office of Community Development would like to identify where the individuals using the lot reside, why they are using this particular lot and what alternative sites they would utilize should the site be sold for another use.

Shopping carts

Hallisey noted that a letter is being sent out to the owners of businesses that utilize shopping carts indicating that the abandonment of carts is an issue that the Town takes seriously and requesting the help of businesses in addressing the problem. The local access television station will concurrently be running a series of public service announcements asking residents to help by returning carts and contacting the stores whose carts are found abandoned.

It was suggested that a multi-faceted approach to this issue is necessary to affect a solution. More particularly, it was suggested that there needs to be some enforcement action taken. It was also suggested that the bus service available to seniors could be more fully utilized to cut down on the number of carts abandoned.

Bus shelters

Hallisey noted that a letter of intent has been submitted to the greater Hartford Transit District requesting funds for six shelters. It was further noted that the Office of Community Development is working with Public Works to prioritize shelter locations. It was further noted that the replacement of existing shelters is an eligible activity under the program the Greater Hartford Transit District intends to utilize for this activity.

It was noted that damage to the bus shelter at the southern end of Deerfield Road was reported to the Police and the matter investigated. The Town's Risk Manager will be submitting a claim to the insurance company of the contractor working on the site.

The Wilson carnival will be taking place between 7/21-7/23 on the Wilson redevelopment parcel.

Maintenance of Public Space

It was noted that a list of general maintenance issues raised at previous Wilson Deerfield Advisory Committee meetings will be submitted to Public Works in the near future.

4) NEW BUSINESS

None

5) OLD BUSINESS

a) Wilson Redevelopment Parcel

The Town is currently negotiation a purchase and sale agreement with Konover Properties and HD2. The conceptual design, at this point in time, involves owner-occupied, live-work residential units with some commercial space at the northern end of the property. The sale of the property is subject to Council and Town Meeting approval.

b) Wilson Neighborhood Strategy

Hallisey distributed a summary of the residential component of the survey undertaken as a preliminary step in the development of a strategic plan for the Wilson neighborhood. It was noted that the survey results did not include all of the responses. The information will be updated to reflect same.

6) MISCELLANEOUS

It was noted that there was considerable litter between the parking area behind 330 Windsor Avenue and Decker's Brook.

There was an inquiry as to the current number of clients served by the Adult Day Care facility. Hallisey indicated that he would get an update and report the number at the next Wilson Deerfield Advisory Committee meeting.

It was noted that the plantings at the front of 330 Windsor Avenue warrant attention.

7) ADJOURNMENT

The 5/25/05 meeting of the Wilson Deerfield Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Hallisey, Community Development Coordinator
5/26/05