



**TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
January 18, 2022
Regular Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman, Councilor Kenneth Smith, Councilor Jody Terranova, and Councilor Len Walker

Absent: Councilor James Dobler

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS – None

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS – None

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Walker congratulated Winsome Sears, the new Lieutenant Governor of the state of Virginia. She is a fellow Republican who was born in Jamaica and has excelled and made great strides. Councilor Walker also congratulated his friend and Windsor resident Beverly Redd, the new Director of the West Indian Social Club. Councilor Walker acknowledged that the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. was celebrated yesterday, and he asked that all of us accept people as individuals and not look at skin color. Councilor Walker stated that any policy or plan that looks at people based on their skin color and judges them is wrong. Lastly, Councilor Walker encouraged the support of Windsor businesses.

Councilor Terranova thanked State Representative Brandon McGee for his service representing residents of the Town of Windsor. He is stepping down as State Representative to pursue another opportunity and Councilor Terranova wished him the best of luck. Councilor Terranova reported that Covid test kits are available to be ordered from the government today by visiting one of two sites: www.covidtests.gov or www.usps.com/covidtests. Those who sign up will have four kits delivered directly to their house. Councilor Terranova emphasized the importance of

wearing masks. N95 masks provide the best protection, if they fit properly. Any well-fitting mask will help to protect others. She also encouraged vaccinations and boosters.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman encouraged people to slow down in town. She has noticed a lot of speeding and increased accidents in town, especially with icy conditions.

Councilor Black-Burke discussed Martin Luther King Jr. and the celebration of his life, memory, and legacy which occurred yesterday. She reported that many events were held including virtual events in town. Councilor Black-Burke thanked State Representative Brandon McGee for his hard work and service and wished him the best in his new endeavors. Councilor Black-Burke stated that Covid-19 booster shots can be scheduled at an upcoming clinic on January 25 at 330 Windsor Avenue from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. but registration is required. The link can be found on the Town website.

Councilor Eleveld agreed with what had been said by others relative to Covid. He reports he recently had Covid himself and was unaware he had it, as it presented as a head cold. Councilor Eleveld stated it can be easily spread without even knowing it and that, while for him it wasn't bad, for many others it is. He encouraged people to be safe and careful, especially with winter weather here.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress extended 'get well' wishes to Councilor Eleveld. She reported that the Windsor Public Library, Wilson Library, and Youth Services are very active and offering many programs. There are many positive activities available for youth. Classes have been masked and distanced and have included everything from making cactus plants to writing special thank you cards to creating valentines for service men. Councilor Rampulla Bress encouraged everyone to go to the Town website to see all that is offered.

Councilor Smith - None

Mayor Trinks recognized how fortunate the town is to have the volunteer fire department. There was recently a horrific fire on Tunxis Street. Fortunately, no one was injured. There have been numerous calls for motor vehicle accidents and spinouts with the winter weather. All calls are responded to by dedicated volunteers and Mayor Trinks encouraged people to thank them for their service.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Public Building Commission

No verbal report was given.

b) Metropolitan District Commission (MDC)

John Avedisian gave the following report:

Covid and Staffing

Mr. Avedesian reported that, per the CEO, 70% of the MDC workforce is vaccinated. He also reported that the MDC is at 454 positions for 2021. Going into 2022, there were 18 vacancies that would not be funded. There were 31 terminations/retirements/resignations in 2021.

Operation Fuel

In 2021, the grants to customers exceeded the amounts of the grants awarded in 2020. At this point, it is anticipated that the \$50,000 budget will be exhausted. In the Town of Windsor, there were 14 recipients in 2020 for an amount of \$5,240.74. In 2021, there were 18 recipients for an amount of \$7,701. In 2021, the MDC contributed \$42,000 and \$5,174 were donated by customers through their bills.

Integrated Plan

There was a letter sent to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) regarding the Integrated Plan and a letter received by the MDC approving the Integrated Plan with a few minor changes. This will allow the MDC to spread out the cost when doing different projects, which will help to keep costs down.

Niagara Bottling Report

As of 11/30/21, Niagara has used approximately 22 million gallons for billing purposes between 10/29/21-11/30/21 for an average of 5,000 gallons per day. They had been up as high as 929,000 gallons per day.

South Hartford Conveyance and Storage Tunnel

The current contract value is approximately \$286 million. The project started in Hartford at the sewer plant. A large hole was dug going down about 300 feet, boring equipment was put in and bored underneath the highway in Hartford all the way to West Hartford. Last week they broke through in the hole that was made in West Hartford with phenomenal accuracy. There is a video on YouTube showing the breakthrough. This will help separate runoff water from the sewerage which is part of the consent audit for the MDC.

Drinking Water

Barkhamstead Reservoir and Nepaug Reservoir are both at 100%.

Rates

In 2020, the rate for water was \$4.05. In 2022, the proposed rate is \$4.09 which is about a 1% increase. The total budget for the MDC for 2022 was increased by \$3.5 million or 1.7%. The three areas of increase were chemicals (up 29%), utilities (up 21.8%), and fuel costs (up 73.2%). The service charge went up from \$7 to \$9 and the sewer rate went up 3.1%. In those two areas, for every one percent the Ad Valorem increases, it generates approximately \$515,000 of revenue. For every penny increase in the water rate, it generates \$180,000. For Windsor, that would be an increase of about \$100,000 between 2021 and 2022.

Councilor Eleveld offered his congratulations on the boring tunnel. He saw the video. It was a 28 foot wide hole drilled under 300 feet of ground and amazing engineering work on behalf of the MDC.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

COVID-19 Vaccination Data and Clinics

Per data published by the CT Department of Public Health on January 12th, 74.29% of our total population has been fully vaccinated, while the state wide rate is 70.52%. Our rate is up from 71.66% on December 1st. Of children between 5 and 11 years of age, 33.26% of that group has received at least one dose and 20.89% has been fully vaccinated. 77.07% of town residents, 5 years old and above, have been fully vaccinated.

The following are upcoming vaccination clinics:

For first and second shots for children ages 5-11 and other persons 12 and older:

- **Saturday, January 22, 2022** from 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at 330 Windsor Avenue, Windsor. No appointment is needed.
- **Saturday, February 12, 2022** from 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at 330 Windsor Avenue, Windsor. No appointment is needed.

For first and second shots for children ages 5-11:

- **Wednesday, February 2, 2022** from 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at L.P. Wilson, 599 Matianuck Avenue, Windsor. No appointment needed.

Moderna booster shot clinic for ages 18 and older:

- **Tuesday, January 25, 2022** from 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon at 330 Windsor Avenue, Windsor. Appointment is needed. Please sign up through the statewide appointment software (VAMS system). <http://vams.cdc.gov/>

Residents are encouraged to get vaccinated and/or to get a booster shot as well as to continue to take appropriate precautions including wearing a mask while indoors, social distancing and frequent hand washing. For more information, call the Health Department at 860-285-1823.

COVID Test Kit and N95 Mask Distributions

I would like to thank our many volunteers and town staff members that helped to coordinate and distribute test kits and masks over the past few weeks. This was a challenge in many ways, particularly with the extremely low number of test kits the State made available which equaled to less than 10% of our total population. Thank you to VOYA Financial as well for graciously lending us the use of their property on short notice.

At this time, the Federal government is making test kits available on-line at <https://special.usps.com/testkits>. Every household is eligible to order 4 free test kits.

We have made test kits available to our at-risk elderly population, patrons of the food and fuel bank, members of our Senior Center, as well as through a variety of churches.

In the past two weeks or so, we have distributed nearly 50,000 masks to residents and businesses.

At this time, N95 masks are available at 5 town facilities. Facilities include: Town Hall, Main Library, Wilson Branch Library as well as L.P. Wilson Community Center and the 330 Windsor Avenue Community Center during regular operating hours.

Annual Bridge Builder's Award Event

The annual Bridge Builder's Award event which was scheduled to be held on January 27, 2022 has been rescheduled to March 10, 2022 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. and will be held, in a limited capacity, in the Council Chambers at town hall. During this event, the Human Relations Commission will recognize residents/organizations who have contributed to equity, inclusion and community relations. The event is free. For more information call 860-285-1984.

Thank You to Our First Responders

I would like to extend my appreciation to all of our first responders in town. The past few weeks have been extremely busy with various storms and freezing temperatures resulting in a large number of accidents and service calls for all three public safety agencies and our public works department.

I'd like to send an extra thank you to our volunteer firefighters for continuing to provide quality professional service day in and day out. We are fortunate to have a cadre of men and women who volunteer their time to help keep us safe. Thank you for your dedication and professionalism.

Councilor Eleveld congratulated and thanked Town Manager Souza for an excellent job on the second round of Covid test distribution. It was well run and a marked improvement over the drive through done previously.

Councilor Black-Burke asked if there has been any guidance as it relates to home test kits and reporting. She stated that having home test kits is a benefit but wondered about the data. Town Manager Souza stated that there is no requirement from the State Department of Public Health (DPH) for an individual using a home test kit to report it to the State or to municipalities. Municipalities would not be able to readily compile and coordinate this data. Therefore, the numbers will look different over the next several weeks as they start to report out and this is a consideration. Questions have been posed to DPH regarding what new metrics will be used which remains an open question at this point.

Councilor Walker echoed the sentiments of Mayor Trinks regarding the volunteer fire department. He stated that Windsor is way ahead of the pack when it comes to volunteers at the fire department and we need to make sure they are taken care of. If volunteers went away and the Town had to consider a paid department, the Town would be in trouble. Councilor Walker asked Town Manager Souza if the Town Attorney was asked for an opinion on whether an individual from the Registrar of Voters is allowed to sit on a town commission because they are being paid with taxpayer money. Town Manager Souza stated that he has asked the Town Attorney to do research on if there had been a previous opinion and, if not, he asked Attorney Deneen to provide such an opinion.

Councilor Walker stated that there has been a question that has been pervasive about one of the current Registrars having the ability to sit as Chair of a town commission. Councilor Walker wanted to be sure the entire Town Council was aware because questions are being asked by

residents. Councilor Walker stated that the entire Town Council should be made aware of when the Town Attorney is being asked for an opinion.

Town Manager Souza stated that, over the years, a variety of opinions have been requested and he has been following past practice in terms of requesting information from the Town Attorney's office. When the opinion on this matter is received back from the Town Attorney, it is his intention to share it with all nine Council members. The opinion is expected in the next several days.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance Committee – Councilor Terranova reported that the Finance Committee reviewed the fixed assessment agreement from Chewy, Inc. and found no material issues and voted in the affirmative for it to come back to the full Council for a vote. It is anticipated that it will be on the next agenda. The Finance Committee will likely be meeting within the next few weeks with the external auditors to review the audit from FY 21.

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Black-Burke reported that the Health & Safety Committee will meet on January 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Town Improvements – Councilor Black Burke- None

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress reported that the Personnel Committee met and had wonderful interviews. The committee is looking to meet every other month. There are ten candidates lined up for the next meeting anticipated to take place in early February.

10) **ORDINANCES** – None

11) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None

12) **NEW BUSINESS**

a) Authorize acceptance of police department grant

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke, to authorize the Police Department to accept a grant from the State of Connecticut in the amount of \$25,000 and to utilize \$35,000 in expected vacancy savings within the police department's FY22 budget for the purchase of the dispatch software for police, fire, and EMS services.

Police Chief Don Melanson reported that in 2004, Connecticut began requiring call centers to have emergency medical dispatch (EMD). Windsor's public safety dispatchers have been using the EMD protocols since 2016 with success. The software system is provided by a firm called Priority Dispatch. It has allowed for standardization and appropriate call questioning for all EMS calls, along with providing appropriate response guidelines for EMS and first responders. EMS calls make up only approximately 25% of emergency calls received at our Dispatch Center. Police calls at 70% make up the majority of emergency calls for service, with an additional 5% being Fire calls.

Chief Melanson stated that for police and fire calls, public safety dispatchers rely on experience to gather information from callers to identify an appropriate response and relay it to first responders. Many times, callers are emotional due to the nature of the emergency. Newer dispatch software offers Police and Fire modules that, in conjunction with EMD, would provide efficient, consistent, and measurable dispatch services for all emergency calls. Asking specific questions and scripts in a sequence that has been validated to gather essential information consistently and efficiently would ensure that emergency responders have the information they need and that callers in distress receive clear instructions.

Chief Melanson added that determining the appropriate emergency response based on caller information is an essential responsibility of our public safety dispatchers. Using a complete dispatch software suite allows for a customizable response guide for all types of emergencies. This response guide can be updated and changed to meet the needs of our community. An area where identifying the appropriate response is changing is in the area of mental health. Having the ability to modify dispatch and response protocols will be critical in providing the best services possible for our residents. Using a structured dispatch protocol during the initial emergency call will assist our dispatchers in identifying the appropriate response based on key critical questions regarding public safety for our citizens and first responders alike.

Councilor Smith asked if the new software would interface with the existing computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. Chief Melanson confirmed it would interface with the current CAD system. He stated that there may be some costs involved in making sure they get the connections to go through with that. Some companies they are looking at have dispatch centers in CT that are using their software along with their current CAD vendor so those connections are available.

Councilor Walker expressed his support for this and stated if Windsor goes along with a modern and updated CAD system, that prompts the EMTs or dispatchers to do what is necessary. The burden now lies on the State of CT to make sure that all the different companies and vendors match with what the State EMS services require.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

- b) Accept submittal of application to the State of Connecticut Communities Challenge Grant Program

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, that the Windsor Town Council supports the efforts by 144 152 Broad Street, LLC in the redevelopment of the Windsor Center Plaza for a mixed-use project in keeping with recommendations of the Windsor Center Transit Oriented Development Master Plan and further approves of the submission of a Connecticut Communities Challenge Grant application in the amount of \$2,500,000 to the Department of Economic and Community Development to assist in project funding.

Town Manager Souza stated that the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) is soliciting applications from municipalities for the Connecticut Communities Challenge, a competitive grant program geared to spur investment across the State through high quality transit-oriented development (TOD) projects in Main Street districts. The Town has had a long-

standing Master Plan for the town center related to TOD. The parcel to be discussed was a key priority within that plan, a community-based planning effort that was completed in the 2012-2014 timeframe. Through this venture, Windsor has the opportunity to assist a private sector developer, 144 152 Broad Street, LLC, led by Greg Vaca, in the redevelopment of a prominent town center property. Town Manager Souza introduced Greg Vaca, the proponent of this redevelopment, who has done a substantial amount of preliminary work to get to this point. Town Manager Souza stated that staff had to submit the application last Friday to meet the State of CT schedule so they are now seeking the Council's support and authorization.

GRAVA is a Windsor-based venture formed to develop village centers in the Greater Hartford area. Founder Greg Vaca provided an overview of the development proposal. GRAVA has formed a joint venture with the PAC group of Torrington focused on mixed-use infill projects. Mr. Vaca stated that the aim is to build on the work of local leadership and meet the development goals that have been manifested in the Plan of Conservation and Development and the TOD Master Plan. The goals of the project are to reconnect key town assets, contribute to the center vitality, increase housing options, and strengthen and diversify of the tax base. The plan identifies the former Arthur's Drug site as it provides an opportunity for strategic, multi-story reinvestment that can "top off" Broad Street.

Mr. Vaca stated that what is being proposed is a three-phase development that would provide a total of 100 new housing units, a 10,000 square foot amenities building, as well as first floor retail in the first phase. The first phase entails three-story buildings along Broad Street with first floor being commercial. This phase anticipates including 40 one-bedroom units that average 717 square feet. It is contemplated that 20% of the units, or eight units, will be deed-restricted workforce housing for persons or households earning 80% of Area Median Income. Currently, the income limits for households with 1 or 2 persons are \$58,480 and \$66,800 respectively. The monthly rent limit for a one-bedroom unit is presently set at \$1,556. The State of Connecticut determines the income and rent limits on a regional basis and makes periodic adjustments.

The preliminary site plan indicates that there would be a net decrease in parking from 137 to 125 spaces. It also includes a new public gathering place.

Mr. Vaca stated the redevelopment project will need to comply with the Center Design Development's zoning regulations, which were recently amended to further encourage TOD. In addition to the benefits of new housing units and town center vitality, the project is expected to significantly increase the local property taxes generated from the property.

Mr. Vaca explained that the key factors driving the need for public support through this State grant include market land deal dynamics, cost and revenue considerations, and the phased nature of the project. The grant triggers a State prevailing wage requirement costing the project approximately \$1 million.

Town Manager Souza stated that, if the town were to be successful in this competitive grant process, any grant award over \$1,050,000 would require a town meeting because this grant would come to the Town of Windsor and then the Town of Windsor would have an agreement with the State of Connecticut as well as an agreement with the developer. That is considered an appropriation and therefore a Town Council Special Meeting would need to be held. Town

Manager Souza said that this is the beginning of the process and, from a land use perspective, Mr. Vaca and his team would have to go through all of the steps with the Planning and Zoning Commission for town center development.

Councilor Terranova expressed support of the project but asked if there will be any two-bedroom options in Phase 2, as all of the apartments in Phase 1 are one bedroom. She stated that many couples are working from home now and can use that extra space. Mr. Vaca stated that a typical luxury development has approximately 5,000 square feet of amenities. This would be a 10,000 square foot building that will be retrofitted for amenities, one of the biggest components being the work from home infrastructure. The apartments are a mix of one bedrooms and one bedrooms plus dens. Mr. Vaca reported that the current literature supports that people don't necessarily want to be in their home while working, they just don't want to commute. A space will be created that is a 3,000 square foot work from home area where residents can have quiet time and work among other people working. It would include conferencing/video conferencing capability and free Wi-Fi to enable the work from home lifestyle. Phase 3 will likely have two-bedrooms. Windsor is over supplied in two-bedroom apartments. One-bedrooms are filling the need at hand and the demographic currently seeking apartments is mostly singles or older residents.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress thanked Mr. Vaca for the presentation and visualizations. She asked if the affordability factor would be available in the other phases. Mr. Vaca stated that Phase 1 is being submitted for the CT Communities Challenge grant where the workforce housing is a requirement. The mix of the future units and affordability has not yet been defined.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress encouraged Mr. Vaca to apply for more grants.

Councilor Eleveld inquired about the finances of this project. He stated that there is nothing in the presentation that discusses the economics. Mr. Vaca stated that the first phase is approximately \$13.6 million of the total budget and the overall project is about \$25 million.

Councilor Eleveld asked if financing had been arranged. Mr. Vaca stated that only the first phase is being capitalized at this point. He also stated that with the application to the State, a letter of support from a private lender was provided and the equity capital is lined up as well.

Councilor Eleveld expressed concerns about parking, as the project will be removing 20% of available parking spaces and the remaining spaces equate to one car per unit. He asked if the retail parking was being taken into consideration as well. Mr. Vaca stated that, per zoning, one parking stall per one bedroom unit is permitted. There will be 125 parking spaces which is about 25 spaces for businesses. It is about 6,000 square feet of retail. The majority of the retail will be taken by existing tenants in the complex and is mainly nine to five. The two dozen spaces for the retail are contemplated and integrated. The synergistic relationship between the residents who, a large portion will be out during business hours, works well with the retail. When people are at work, retail customers can be using that parking.

Councilor Eleveld asked why the project develops property with already existing tenants while there are several reasonably sized vacant lots in the center. He asked why those vacant lots are

not being utilized. Mr. Vaca stated that he could not speak to those sites, as he believes they are in the hands of another developer.

Councilor Eleveld understood that this grant has already been entered into the State grants system and asked Town Manager Souza why the Council is approving something that has already been submitted. Town Manager Souza explained that the State's timeline required that the grant be submitted by January 14, 2022. It requires an endorsement or formal authorization to meet all the requirements of the grant submittal.

Councilor Eleveld asked why it did not come up at the last Council meeting as he understood it was supposed to. Town Manager Souza stated he doesn't believe it was supposed to come up. The Town had been working with the developer and getting together pieces of information. By the time they were able to get that information together, the January 14 timeframe came so the grant was submitted to keep Windsor's eligibility open.

Councilor Eleveld stated he would vote no because he has not seen the financials on this project and he received a slide presentation less than two hours before the start of the meeting which he did not have the chance to thoroughly review. Councilor Eleveld stated that, while it may be a great project he cannot, in good conscience, approve it due to the hasty manner in which it was presented. He expressed concerns about what the Town would be liable for and stated there is not enough information to support going forward.

Town Manager Souza stated that the complexities of a development timeframe when trying to match up with the State of Connecticut's timeframe creates a challenge. The Council received a memorandum in late December which gave an overview of the project with reference to the potential for this grant and potential for tax abatement or fixed assessment agreement consideration. That is a policy decision that the Town Council has. It does not need to be made at the time of grant application. That is a decision that the Town Council will need to review because the current tax abatement policy adopted by the Council does not include residential as an eligible use, although the State of CT law does allow it. That is a policy conversation that would need to be taken up by the Council if this developer or any other developer wishes to have a tax abatement. The developer has 12-14% in equity set forth. Town Manager Souza asked Mr. Vaca to highlight to the Council what his revenue financing stack is.

Mr. Vaca explained that the bulk of that is private lending/construction financing. They receive support from several lenders as part of their application. That would be about \$9 million of the \$13.5 million. Then there is the \$2.5 million grant. There is \$1.5 million of their equity, being GRAVA and the PAC group and a financial partner (an asset manager out of New York). They are also considering a mezzanine loan of \$1 million. A mezzanine loan is a subordinated loan. There are a few transit oriented sources at the State and elsewhere that offer this type of financing to close financial gaps. It is a loan, not a grant.

Councilor Black-Burke asked about the current tenants' receptiveness to this proposal. Mr. Vaca stated that all tenants are aware of the transaction. The idea is to move tenants into street facing retail and they would find a place for anyone who wouldn't go there.

Councilor Black-Burke asked Town Manager Souza if this grant was different than the Community Development Block Grants. Town Manager Souza stated that this is a brand new grant that the State of CT created this fiscal year.

Councilor Walker stated that this is a bold concept and he has no issues with looking at the downtown Windsor concept. However, for all of this to work, he feels there would need to be a nightlife component. He believes that people who are attracted to one-bedroom apartments in downtown Windsor will expect a nightlife. Councilor Walker also expressed concern about the lack of community input and that the Council is being asked to approve funding for a project that no citizen in Windsor has had input on. Councilor Walker stated that he will vote no because there was not enough information and not enough time to digest any information that was provided. He stated that research does not support what he is hearing as it pertains to residents occupying storefronts.

Town Manager Souza asked Mr. Vaca to speak to the issues of retail and occupancy. Mr. Vaca stated that they are looking at fair market rents in the vicinity of \$1,500 in today's marketplace and depending on where the market is in two years. In recent years, it has been going up a lot more than 2% or 3% each year in terms of rent. This is the beginning of the process. If we do not have our application in, we cannot move forward. This is not the end of the process, it is just the beginning. If the Town were awarded these funds, they would go back to the Town Council, then the Town Council would decide if they would call a Special Town Meeting to accept it. The process in terms of the planning for town center TOD was very much community based in the 2012-2014 timeframe. Residents were asked what they wanted their town center to be. This has the potential of transforming the town center but it doesn't need to destroy it. The goal is to enhance it. In 2012-2014, the community said they wanted a mix. They didn't want a West Hartford/Blueback square and they didn't want any large scale development west of Broad Street. Throughout the strategy in the TOD, it would be appropriately scaled. Mr. Vaca has read and taken to heart the TOD strategy to add buildings that fit that scale. There is a version of this site that has over 300 units that could be placed here, which town staff rejected out of hand because of the scale and how it would change the nature of this part of town center. This is the continuation of a town planning process that was started many years ago when the town approved Windsor Station Apartments and 33 Mechanic Street and the redevelopment of the dilapidated mill building. This has been a community-based planning process.

Mr. Vaca stated that there is 11,000 of 25,000 square feet vacant today and another portion on temporary lease. Part of this is right sizing the retail. The actual space available to new retailers coming in is very small. There is going to be existing tenancies that take the vast majority of the street facing retail. This does not count on attracting new retailers. There are a lot of other examples on how village centers survive on great service-based retail complimented with destination retail and nightlife. He believes there are two projects currently underway that are very exciting in terms of potential impact on nightlife. This isn't West Hartford Center in terms of what is proposed or even what zoning permits, but it can be a very dynamic place that has a critical mass of population to support this level of retail.

Councilor Smith stated that he understands 20% of the units will be at the workforce rate and 20% will be accessible apartments. He inquired about the other 60%. Mr. Vaca clarified that the code specifies that all ground floor units have to be accessible. 20% of the units are accessible

because 20% of the units are on the ground floor. The rest of the units would not be accessible because there are no elevators. It is really 20% of workforce housing versus 80% of market rate housing.

Councilor Smith asked what the market rate would be. Mr. Vaca stated it would be whatever the market would pay for three-story walk-up projects. Amenitized one bedrooms in Windsor (Windsor Station Apartments, for example) are approximately \$1,850-\$1,900 a month for 655 square foot one bedrooms. Those are elevator buildings. When it is a walk up, you usually get a discount from what an elevator rent would be, creating what is called structural affordability. Day Hill has three story walk ups in a different setting for about \$1,600 per month in Great Pond.

Councilor Smith asked for verification that electric vehicle parking would be available for residents. Mr. Vaca confirmed this. He stated they plan on putting in the infrastructure, providing some charges up front but having underground infrastructure to dramatically expand that over the next 10 years.

Councilor Smith questioned the idea that the parking for businesses would be available because people would leave to go to work because it conflicts with the concept of more people working from home or commuting by bus/train. Mr. Vaca stated that the number of people that live in Windsor and commute by train is a low percentage. He clarified that the retail does have its own parking. 25 spaces are exclusive for the retail and, given the type of retail, this should be sufficient.

Councilor Smith expressed concern that the three existing restaurants will be put out of business or have to move to different locations. He also stated that the current parking is used regularly for municipal parking for large events such as the Tavern Trot, Shad Derby, or Chili Fest and was concerned that parking might disappear once apartments go in. Mr. Vaca confirmed that the parking will be for private use.

Councilor Smith stated that he feels the dynamics since 2014 and the anticipation of the road diet improvements to the center and Covid have changed dynamics of what is being proposed. Walling off the north end of the green may not be something the citizens want. Mr. Vaca stated that the 2014 TOD Master Plan did consider the road diet. In terms of Covid, the way this is anticipated in the project is with a vastly larger work from home amenity package which no development has today because nothing has been designed during Covid that has been developed yet.

Councilor Smith stated that Mr. Vaca had great ideas and wished him luck on any future projects.

Mayor Trinks stated that he will support this project and that it is the job of the Council to make these kinds of decisions. He stated that, if the Council abdicates their decision-making responsibility and puts everything out to referendum, they should go back to the authorizing of the police grant and see if that's what people want. Mayor Trinks stated that he has been heavily involved in First Town Downtown and the first thing everyone says is that we need more feet on the street that will drive our retail. Mayor Trinks admitted to having been initially skeptical about new apartments and they are now 100% occupied. The current town center is out of date and not realistic with the times. He appreciates the conversation about the parking, but that parking

is not public now. The current owner could put up sawhorses now on Shad Derby Day or during the Tavern Trot. Mayor Trinks also stated that Mr. Vaca's presentation was received last week and the Council has had time to look through it. He trusts that Mr. Vaca is in business to make a profit and has his experts he relies on.

Councilor Walker stated that the plan is bold and something that we all need to embrace but the appropriate questions need to be asked. He stated that Windsor has people on the Council and on Town Committees who are bright enough to know that they need to ask very specific questions. Councilor Walker stated that he has never seen an item pushed forward for a vote as much as this item has been. He asked why there is a rush to get a vote on this item when all nine Councilors here have not had an opportunity to absorb the presented information. Councilor Walker does not feel it is appropriate to vote on this at this time and believes we need more resident input. He will not be supporting this at this time.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that, with previous Councils, there has been work done with the community to offer input to this plan and we are now bringing it all together. The apartments by the railroad are now up. She stated that, as a town, we have been prudent and diligent ensuring things are done in phases. The grant had to be submitted but there is no guarantee we will get it. Councilor Black-Burke stated that the Council must decide if they are going to act on the will of citizens that was shared years ago as this was their will for a downtown in hopes that we do receive a grant. If the grant is received, there will be a public hearing and residents would come out to share their thoughts and ideas.

Motion Passed 5-3-0 (Councilor Walker opposed, Councilor Eleveld opposed, Councilor Smith opposed, Councilor Dobler absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to move items 12C, 12D, 12E, and 12F to the bottom of the agenda after Item 16 (Executive Session).

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to appoint Donald Jepsen as a Republican member to the Great Pond Improvement District for a four-year term to expire July 29, 2024 or until a successor is appointed.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

a) Minutes of the January 3, 2022 Public Hearing

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to approve the unapproved minutes of the January 3, 2022 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

b) Minutes of the January 3, 2022 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to approve the unapproved minutes of the January 3, 2022 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS – None

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to enter Executive Session at 9:34 p.m. for the purpose of:

- a) Strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining (WPDEA)
- b) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (BC Windsor LLC vs. Town of Windsor)
- c) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (25 Meadow Road vs. Town of Windsor)
- d) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (Ezra Silva Lane, LLC vs. Town of Windsor)
- e) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (777 Day Hill Road Realty Company, LLC vs. Town of Windsor)

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman, Councilor Kenneth Smith, Councilor Jody Terranova, and Councilor Len Walker

Absent: Councilor James Dobler

Staff: Town Manager Peter Souza; Town Assessor Larry LaBarbera; Human Resources Director Amelia Bliss; Police Chief Don Melanson

Guests: Attorney Kevin Deneen of O'Malley, Deneen, Leary, Messina & Oswecki

Ms. Bliss and Mr. Melanson left Executive Session at 9:54 p.m.

Mr. Labarbera joined Executive Session at 9:54 p.m.

MOVED by Councilor Terranova, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman to exit Executive Session at 10:12 p.m. and re-enter the Regular Town Council meeting

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

- 12 c) Strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining (WPDEA)



MOVED by Councilor Terranova, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to accept the settlement of BC Windsor LLC vs. Town of Windsor as discussed in Executive Session

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

- 12 d) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (BC Windsor LLC vs. Town of Windsor)

MOVED by Councilor Terranova, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to accept the settlement of 25 Meadow Road vs. Town of Windsor as discussed in Executive Session

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

- 12 e) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (Ezra Silva Lane LLC vs. Town of Windsor)

MOVED by Councilor Terranova, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to accept the settlement of Ezra Silva Lane, LLC vs. Town of Windsor as discussed in Executive Session

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

- 12 f) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (777 Day Hill Road Realty Company, LLC vs. Town of Windsor)

MOVED by Councilor Terranova, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to accept the settlement of 777 Day Hill Road Realty Company, LLC vs. Town of Windsor as discussed in Executive Session

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Terranova, to adjourn the meeting at 10:16 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Dobler absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Deanna Schuetz
Clerk of the Town Council