

WILSON/ DEERFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(WDAC)  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
May 27, 2021  
Regular Meeting

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Alvin Bingham called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Present were committee members, Karen Zak, Kathleen Woodward, Tyler Cote, Charles Jackson and Lakisha Hyatt. Absent: Kim McCloud.

Staff: Jim Burke, Economic Development Director; Flavia Rey de Castro, Community Development Specialist; and Michael Pepe, Health Department Director.

Guest Presenters: Marc Nicol, Riverfront Recapture; Deborah Baker, Riverfront Recapture.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.**

**3. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**a) Approve Amended By-Laws**

MOTION by Zak, seconded by Cote to approve the amended By-Laws as presented by staff prior to the meeting. Motion Passed 5-0-0.

**b) Town of Windsor Health Department: COVID Vaccination Outreach**

Pepe indicated that as part of the Health Department's Vaccine Equity Program, the Committee will received \$1,000 for the dissemination of information for vaccination. He noted that the full amount needs to be spent by August 30, 2021. He provided a brief explanation of the efforts being conducted by the Town. These included pop-up clinics, door-to-door canvassing and community events. He indicated that in June the town will have a finalized schedule of the vaccination clinics and that these will be free and will not require registration, insurance information or computer access. Pepe introduced the idea of maybe having WDAC members doing public service announcements as trusted community members. Hyatt indicated that, before the vaccination clinics take place, it is important to have more signage available. She also offered to be a part of the public service announcement. Jackson offered to be a spokesperson at a Public Service Announcement as well. Hyatt asked about the vaccines that are being used and the options for adolescents. Pepe indicated that currently the town is only using the Moderna vaccine due to the storage capacity; however, he highlighted that Moderna submitted their request to vaccinate the 12 and up group and that in the next month hopefully they will have the approval to vaccinate this group. Bingham recommended that a sub-committee work in tandem with the Health Department and that the full committee be

updated through Rey de Castro. Hyatt and Jackson expressed interest in being part of the sub-committee.

### **c) Riverfront Recapture Developments**

Nicol provided a summary of Riverfront Recapture and its work over time. He explained that Riverfront is a non-profit organization that works to develop public parks in East Hartford and Hartford; he indicated that currently, they are expanding up to Windsor. He noted that in 2019 the organization purchased land on the Connecticut River in both Hartford and Windsor. He explained that the goal for the acquisition is to create a community space and provide public access to the river. He noted that they are early in the planning process and identified three main development phases for this site: 1) Remediation of the land (given the property's prior uses); Build the Riverwalk (that would connect Hartford and Windsor) and create a cove (to create an access point for the public and provide sand to elevate the ground to potentially create a commercial/residential development near the railroad area of the property). 2) Explore programming options for the site. He provided examples for potential community uses at the cove (i.e. dragon boating, crew, canoe, kayak and paddleboard rental) and indicated that for the meadows area (open field) Riverfront is hoping to get community input to determine potential uses. 3) Exploring a future commercial or housing development on the area near the railroad. He explained that this development would generate revenue to maintain the parks over time.

Nicol highlighted that the organization is still at the early stages of the planning process and that it will be years before this plan is completed. He offered to take committee members on a tour of the property in the future if there was interest in doing so. Cote asked for details about their timing on phase one work. Nicol indicated that he was hoping for the work to start in late-2021/early 2022 and have the majority of the remediation completed by the Spring of 2022. He explained that ideally the Riverwalk will be finished, and cove will have significant progress by the fall of 2022. Nicol then briefly explained the project funding plans, current funding structure and the organization's fundraising efforts.

Bingham invited Nicol to join the committee again in the future once he has updates on the development of the site. Nicol agreed and indicated he would join again when Riverfront is ready for community input in the development of the meadow section of the park.

### **d) Beautification Efforts**

Woodward indicated that she joined the Walk Audit led by Transport Hartford and sponsored by the Windsor Chamber of Commerce. She explained that while walking the group observed various obstructions to the walkways, trash and disarray to the area. She noted that the main street area in Wilson needs more attention. Bingham asked if she knew whether this was on private or public areas. Woodward noted this seemed to be in public spaces. Bingham asked Burke how to handle these concerns. He questioned whether they should be handled by WDAC or by the town. Burke explained that based on the findings, a report will be created by Transport Hartford. He indicated that it will be presented to the commission and leadership and that then it's up to each of the community partners to decide what action to take.

Hyatt, explained that her intention in adding this item in the agenda was to organize a clean-up effort in the Wilson Neighborhood and to explore if this was an event the committee members were interested in working on. Woodward and Cote expressed interest in being involved. Cote noted that he had heard from residents of dumping in small parks and roads. Hyatt asked Rey de Castro if the town had any resources to be used for this. Rey de Castro indicated she was not sure and promised to get back to the committee members with more information. She then explained that First Town Downtown hosted a similar event recently in Town Center. She indicated that she would find out the logistics and follow up. Hyatt requested a quick communication to set up a meeting to identify locations, and routes. Bingham suggested a sub-committee and asked if Rey de Castro could communicate with those interested to set up a separate meeting.

## **5. ITEMS FROM THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

No items raised.

## **5. STAFF REPORTS**

Burke explained that following approval by a Special Town Meeting, the Town Council approved a purchase and sale agreement to sell the former Roger Wolcott School property to Capitol Region Education Council (CREC). He noted that the sale was being finalized and that it is expected that it will be completed later in the summer. He indicated that the plan is for CREC to have a head-start program and maybe early childhood programming. A requirement of the sale, he explained, was for the building exterior, outdoor space and play area to be improved. He explained that the play area will be available to the neighborhood residents during after school hours.

Rey de Castro listed various upcoming events hosted by the Wilson Branch Library and summer programs and events hosted by the Youth Bureau.

## **6. APPROVAL OF 3/25/21 MINUTES**

Jackson moved to accept the 3/25/21 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Zak. Motion passed 6-0-0

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Jackson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15PM.