

**WILSON DEERFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(WDAC)
Regular Meeting
330 Windsor Ave.
7:00 PM
April 4, 2024**

Members Present: Alvin Bingham, Lakisha Hyatt, Debbie Baker, Carolyn Joseph, Kathleen Woodward

Members Absent: Karen Zak, Charles Jackson.

Staff Present: Flavia Rey de Castro, Community Development Specialist; Cailey Klasson, Wilson Library Branch Manager

Guests: Galen Semprebon

Public: Will Pelkey

1) CALL TO ORDER

Bingham called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM

2) PUBLIC COMMENT - none

3) INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

4) DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Windsor River Trail Extension

Semprebon, a representative of East West Engineering, the firm that was selected to do the trail's planning and design, provided updates on the river trail extension efforts. He indicated that the multi-use trail would connect East Barber Street Boat Launch and Windsor Center and that the project was going to be done in phases. He explained that the first phase would be the creation of the trail from the boat launch until the Loomis property and the second phase would be at the Loomis property, the northern portion of the trail that would allow the trail connection with town center. He noted that at the moment there were two possible trails going through the Loomis property. One option would be to make the trail go near the railroad and the second one near the river. He indicated that it would be more likely to proceed with the trail that goes near the railroad, given the priorities and concerns shared by representatives from Loomis. Semprebon also explained other parts of the design phase such as the wetland surveying process and the need for an archeological exploration at a specific trail location.

b) Wilson Library and Engagement with Wilson Deerfield Advisory Committee

Klasson introduced herself and passed promotional materials for the library. She indicated she was hoping to establish a connection with the committee to get feedback on how to improve the library's services but also to offer the library as a resource for the needs of the committee and the public. She indicated she was hoping to attain a sign to give the library more visibility. She also mentioned other ideas such as raising funds to expand the gardening program and adding more children's programs. Committee members provided some recommendations. Hyatt, suggested adding volunteer opportunities for young adults and exploring different ways to promote the library. Baker suggested that the library collaborate with the committee for beautification purposes and Woodward asked about programs for children.

5) ITEMS FROM THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Baker indicated that in addition to planting trees at the median on Windsor Ave. Public Works staff would also add plants. She also mentioned that the Executive director of the Chamber of Commerce was hoping to connect with businesses in Wilson to expand their membership.

Hyatt asked for updates in regards to the mayor attending a WDAC meeting. Rey de Castro indicated that it was very likely that she would attend the May meeting. Hyatt mentioned that WDAC meetings normally overlap with the Democratic Committee's meetings and that she hopes the group could revisit the typical meeting dates and times for 2025. Rey de Castro suggested that the group revisit that conversation when the schedule for the year gets approved, in the December meeting. Also, she noted that depending on the revision of meeting dates and times, the bylaws would have to be amended.

**During Staff Reports discussion:* Committee members expressed frustration with the lack of maintenance of different private lots on Windsor Ave. Hyatt indicated that the committee had made progress in cleaning the neighborhood and that cleanup efforts had made a difference but that having property owners who do not care for their properties was counterproductive to these efforts. Rey de Castro noted that the Health Department typically deals with complaints regarding private property maintenance and suggested inviting a staff member to discuss the process and any specifics on the properties being discussed. Rather than taking this approach, Bingham suggested that Rey de Castro brings information on how the town has dealt a neglected properties on Windsor Ave.

6) STAFF REPORTS

Rey de Castro indicated that she would like to revisit the routes for the upcoming clean up event. She noted that the event was promoted as a Wilson and Deerfield neighborhoods and that there weren't any routes for a group to go to Deerfield. The group discussed a possible route and committee members agreed to lead this group. Woodward, Baker and Rey de Castro agreed to meet on 4/12 to prepare for the event.

Rey de Castro provided economic development updates for different sites in Wilson. She indicated that the project at 29 Windsor Ave. was seeking a land conveyance through the state legislature to make the project viable. She explained that the conveyance would make it possible to realign Violet Street at a traffic signal that would service the site. She also informed committee members on a new business, a convenience store, which might open on Wilson Ave. Rey de Castro also informed committee members

that the town was not successful in securing funds for planning on the development of scattered vacant sites in Wilson. Capitol Region Education Council, who owns a property on Wolcott Street, was not awarded funds from the Community Investment Fund Program either.

7) APPROVAL OF 1/25/24 MEETING MINUTES

Hyatt moved to approve the 1/25/24 minutes. Woodward seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8) ADJOURNMENT

Baker moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 PM.