

## BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

### LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a special meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Monday, March 21, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

**Committee members present were:** Mayor Gamble, Councilors Washington, Rivers, Hypolite, Neuwirth, DeLorenzo, Merritt, and Deputy Mayor Schulman

**Also present were:** Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager, India Rodgers, Clerk of Council, Sharron Howe, Assistant to Town Manager and Jose Giner, Director of Planning & Economic Development, Roberta LaMonaca, Director of Library Services

**Guest were:** Mark Weisman, Chair of Prosser Library Building Committee, Lois Hager, Michael Johnson, Dusty McMann – Goman & York and Henry Withers – CR3, LLP - Land Planners & Architects – Simsbury, CT

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 p.m.

#### **Update from the Library Building Committee**

Mr. Mark Weisman, Chair of the Prosser Public Library Building Committee gave a brief introduction and status update regarding renovations and/or new build with the existing site and the Town Hall site.

The committee has been diligent in developing a new program designed for a 21<sup>st</sup> century library and reviewing other town facilities for possible sharing use.

Mr. Henry Withers of CR3 – Land Planners and Architect firm located in Simsbury, CT presented preliminary plans for several options for Prosser Public Library

In reviewing the possibilities with the Wintonbury Mall site, the state owns a significant portion of this land and was not feasible for follow through.

Scheme A - connecting Prosser Public Library wrap through to site (west) and add additional parking spaces, 55 existing spaces – can gain additional 34 spaces. However, this option may encroach over Wash Brook for the west addition overhead.

Scheme B – parking in lower elevation (47 spaces), expand to the North, additional 34 parking spaces, remediation of flooding issues will be determined by cost to possibly changing exterior of skin of the outside and raising the building – basement level of 3 feet.

Scheme C – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor added to the existing site, need northern parcel for parking, downside – 2 independent driveways (additions completely north oriented).

Scheme D – Town Hall site of 2 stories footprint, closer to the road, courtyard, wrap around with parking, shared with retailers, 100 proposed parking spaces.

Scheme E – Town Hall site of 3 stories, totally separate buildings, 115 parking spaces.

Mr. Dusty McMann of Goman & York presented preliminary information regarding the reuse and redevelopment options for the existing Prosser Public Library site. The overall characteristics are favorable for commercial use and mixed use. The market analysis, specifically the Retail Gap Analysis identifies significant opportunities for additional retail businesses in Bloomfield Town Center. It was noted that there is approximately \$188,000,000 in leakage from the Center.

Mr. McMann stated that Goman & York is confident that this site can be sold, reused and/or redeveloped. In regard to economic development, it was noted that relocating the Library to the Town Hall site provides greater opportunities to enhance Bloomfield Center and the Plan of Conservation & Development. The plan called for a viable, walkable and vibrant town center; since the site would move from non-tax paying public ownership to a tax-paying private ownership, generating new tax revenue.

There was a brief discussion of the committee on the possibility to review an analysis of combining the Prosser Public Library and the Human Services Center located at 330 Park Avenue. It is the consensus of the building committee to maintain the library in the Town Center for the various reasons mentioned from the architects and the town's economic development consultants.

**Discussion and Possible Recommendation regarding traffic/environment studies and cost benefit analysis for:**

- **Niagara Bottling**
- **Wintonbury Mall**
- **Other potential companies interested in locating to Bloomfield**

A traffic/environmental study was completed by the State of Connecticut – Department of Transportation.

Mr. Jose Giner, Director of Planning and Economic Development stated that the REMI model is widely used nationwide for economic impact studies. The estimated cost to complete this study is approximately \$15,000 - \$30,000.

In addition, UCONN – Economic Development Center stated that they do not have a budget to complete this study and the town would have to pay for this to be done.

The Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) utilize the implants model, awaiting cost and methodology for this study. The committee would like to determine the methodology, time and cost moving forward with any other potential projects pending.

Mr. Schenck, Jr. stated that after review of various options in exploring options to complete a cost benefit analysis, there are a wide variety of variables plugged into a formula that has to be agreed on, to generate data that is objective in nature. This REMI model is used by the Department of Economic Development with the State of Connecticut.

In regards to the environmental impact study, Mr. Giner has been in contact with personnel at Fuss & O'Neil and DEEP for suggestions.

At this time, the best option is to submit an application with the Ombudsman at the DEEP for review regarding this development and provide results to the applicant about additional permits, if needed. It is the applicants'

responsibility to submit required information to the DEEP for evaluation and issue permits for the project. This process has already been completed with Niagara Bottling.

The committee discussed having an independent vendor complete an environmental study at a reasonable cost.

#### Update on Wintonbury Mall

Councilor Neuwirth suggested that Council should communicate with Ms. Stephanie Pious, Senior Associate with Colliers International. Deputy Mayor Schulman also suggested to invite Ms. Pious to the next Land Use & Economic Development subcommittee meeting to discuss the current status and future of the Wintonbury Mall and its tenants.

Goman & York has met with the new owners of Wintonbury Mall. There is a focus of revitalizing the utilities in the complex, to possibly participate with the Business Energy Solutions program. The owners did state that he is not interested in any major redevelopment of the project, roof modifications, painting, etc.

Deputy Mayor Schulman stated that he would like the Bloomfield Business Association to list any changes or issues/concerns about the Mall. He suggested to e-mail committee members prior to the next Land Use & Economic Development subcommittee meeting.

#### Other potential companies interested in locating to Bloomfield

There is one potential company moving to Bloomfield, ABB Robotics. ABB is a leading supplier of industrial robots, modular manufacturing systems and service. They will employ approximately 40 rocket scientists at their Bloomfield location.

#### Adjournment

**It was moved by Councilor DeLorenzo, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m.**