

## **DRAFT**

### **BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, December 12, 2016 in Council Chambers, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Present were: Mayor Joan Gamble, Deputy Mayor Schulman, Councilors Wayne Hypolite, Patrick DeLorenzo, Joseph Merritt, Joel Neuwirth, Derrick Seldon, Leon Rivers and Joseph Washington

Also present were: Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager, James Wren, Director of Finance, Jose Giner, Director of Planning and Economic Development, Sharron Howe, Assistant to the Town Manager, Jonathan Thiesse, Town Engineer, Marc Needelman, Town Attorney and India M. Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Guest were: Mr. William Britnell, P.E. – State of Connecticut – Department of Transportation Highway Design Unit

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS**

#### **Presentation by Mr. William Britnell, P.E., Principal Engineer, Connecticut Department of Transportation State Highway Design Unit on Traffic Roundabouts**

Mr. Jonathan Thiesse, Town Engineer gave a brief update on the traffic roundabout presentation. The current proposal is for single land roundabouts in the Town Center, Rt. 178 & Rt. 189. It was noted that statistics have indicated numerous crashes and traffic congestion in this area. During a review of the past three years, there were 63 crashes with 16 injuries. These roundabouts would make it more pedestrian and bike friendly on Wintonbury and Tunxis avenues due to their proximity.

Mr. William Britnell, P.E., Principal Engineer, Connecticut Department of Transportation State Highway Design Unit on Traffic Roundabouts gave background/general information for the roundabout proposal in the Bloomfield Town Center.

Mr. Britnell reviewed the proposal for the installment of a modern roundabout. These roundabouts are similar to old traffic circles and have significant differences from rotaries. Some of the characteristics include: drivers yield on entry, much smaller circle, and reduction in speed, congestion and accidents. There is no weaving or lane changing. Some of the advantages include: lower speeds, improved safety, and reduction in delays, congestion, and pollution, less pavement, improved aesthetics and lower maintenance costs.

Currently in the town center, there are 17 existing lanes and 6 crosswalks. The proposed roundabout would reduce 17 lanes to 11 and crosswalk lengths reduced from 75 feet to 15 feet.

The estimated total cost for this project is \$4.7 million, of which potential would breakdown as 80% federal and 20% state dollars. The raised median between intersections would also be included and the earliest schedule for completion is 2020.

Councilor Washington commented on the flow of traffic at a faster rates. The differences in rotaries and roundabouts were explained. He also inquired about the property acquisition on the corner of town hall.

Councilor Hypolite commented about the close proximity to both proposed roundabouts. He asked about the function of volume of traffic. Councilor Hypolite also wanted to ensure that town residents would have an opportunity to comment at public meeting.

Councilor Merritt inquired about less asphalt being used and the need for no on street parking, to make it more pedestrian friendly.

Councilor Rivers stated that the main basic complaint is east of Park Avenue. He inquired about longer wait times and no stopping at all with proposed roundabouts.

Councilor DeLorenzo expressed concerns about project design on Rt. 178 westbound (# of islands). He also inquired about acquiring a section of town green for this project. The population of Bloomfield is comparable to similar towns and traffic volume is an issue in the Town Center.

Councilor Seldon asked about other advantages, such as no more left turns, two roundabouts larger in size of the two options and a bigger diameter for more deflection.

Deputy Mayor Schulman asked if studies can be done at Cottage Grove Road and Blue Hills Avenue. He also inquired about the realistic availability of funding from the federal and state governments.

## **CITIZENS STATEMENTS & PETITIONS**

1. **Joe Toner, 15 Francis Avenue, Enfield, CT** is the President of the Hartford Building Trades Council, which is a unionized construction industry. He spoke of several issues with the workforce at Niagara Bottling. He inquired about preference should be given to town residents. There are over 200 families that could have worked on the project. He would like the Town Council to consider incorporation of language in tax abatement agreement about local hiring.

Deputy Mayor Schulman asked for a list of trades' personnel who live in town. This is a proposed topic of the draft tax abatement policy.

2. **Mike Robinson, 1192 Blue Hills Avenue** expressed his frustrations as a resident in town with no work incentives offered by any current or past construction development within town.
3. **Donna Landerman, 6 Rundelane** thanked members of the Council who participated in the viewing of the movie "Tapped". She also supports the hiring Bloomfield workers and congratulated the town on the new website.
4. **Kevin Gough, 5 Bear Ridge Drive** expressed some concerns regarding the Trader Joe's proposal relative to the draft tax abatement incentive policy:

- Targeted sectors – warehouse not listed – not determine yet
- Sustainable and quality
- Value added products and services
- Wage scale
- Environmental impact study

He further stated that the town would like Trader Joe’s retail outlet in the town center, in which would coincide with areas in the Plan of Conservation & Development.

5. **Tollie Miller, 88 Kenmore Road** enjoyed the roundabout presentation, which would be very user friendly for town residents. She also want to hear more about businesses coming to town earlier in the process. Ms. Miller supports local hiring and inquired about supporting immigrant status and becoming a sanctuary community.
6. **Andrew Walter, 47 Lincoln Terrace** stated his discontentment against Niagara Bottling and tax abatement projects. He also stated that roundabouts are great. Mr. Walter recommended the need to synchronize lights on Cottage Grove Road. He also reiterated not to give 100% tax abatement to any business.
7. **Paul Butler, 679 Bloomfield Avenue**, advocated for the tax abatement request from Trader Joe’s. This company has agreed to bring 600 new jobs to Bloomfield. He urged the Council to consider a tax abatement.
8. **Connie Clifford, 162 School Street**, inquired about contacting Niagara to present an update regarding their facility. The Town Manager indicated that Niagara has not responded as of yet.
9. **David Mann, 1 Adams Road** stated that negotiating with developers is key is requesting benefits to the town to have a retail/outlet store in town center.

## **REPORT FROM COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES**

Community Services – Councilor Seldon gave a brief report of activities and events from Social & Youth Services, Senior Services, Leisure Services, Beautification Commission and the Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee (CEEC).

Administration & Education – Councilor Rivers gave a brief report from the last meeting held of this subcommittee. The topics of discussion included MDC funding issues with the City of Hartford, Bond Refinancing, Town Manager’s Goals and Objectives.

Public Safety – Councilor Washington will give a detailed report of this subcommittee meeting at the next scheduled Council meeting January 9, 2017.

Committee on Committees – Councilor Washington deferred this subcommittee report for agenda under Council business. The next scheduled meeting for December 19, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. has been cancelled.

Finance – The next meeting of this subcommittee will be held on December 19, 2016 at 5:45 p.m. in Conference Room #5.

Land Use & Economic Development – Deputy Mayor Schulman stated that the next meeting will be held on December 20, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. This will be a joint meeting with the Finance Subcommittee to discuss tax abatement agreements with potential applicants.

### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**It was moved by Deputy Mayor Schulman, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to add Item FY 16/17-30: Consider and Take Action regarding Settlement of Pending Tax Appeals.**

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **FY 16/17-27: Consider and Take Action Regarding Appointment to the Board of Education**

It was moved by Councilor Washington, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to appoint Ms. Donna Banks to the Board of Education with a term ending November 13, 2017.

#### **FY 16/17-28: Discussion and Possible Action (Referral Regarding Request for Tax Incentives, Fixed Assessment “Abatement”)**

The item was referred to the Finance and Land Use and Economic Development Subcommittees for further review and recommendation.

#### **FY 16/17-29: Consider and Take Action Regarding Street Acceptance Request (Phoenix Crossing)**

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Schulman, seconded by Councilor Merritt to postpone the Council vote until the next Council meeting scheduled for Monday, January 9, 2017. This item was referred to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission in accordance with Section 8-24.

#### **FY 16/17-30: Consider and Take Action regarding Settlement of Pending Tax Appeals**

This item was referred to Executive Session for further discussion and review.

### **REPORT FROM THE MAYOR AND TOWN MANAGER**

#### **Mayor’s Report**

Mayor Gamble stated that the Public Works Accreditation recognition is remarkable for town.

She also urged pedestrians to wear reflective gear and ensure safety for children during evening hours.

### Town Manager's Report

Mr. Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager reported the following updates to the Town Council:

- Construction will begin on Park Avenue in the area of Prospect Street and Crestview Drive. A 4 ft. culvert of Filley Brook collapsed and the emergency repair should be completed by December 17, 2016.
- As a reminder, the 2<sup>nd</sup> tax payment is due at the end of January 2017.
- The Public Works Accreditation Team will meet with staff and administration on 12/12 & 12/13/16.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Rivers and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of November 28, 2016.**

### COUNCIL COMMENTS

The entire Town Council and Town Administration wish everyone safe and Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Councilor DeLorenzo stated his excitement about roundabouts and would encouraged residents to give donations of support to Filley Park. As a fundraiser, calendars are available at Wade's Farm Fresh Market.

Councilor Merritt also expressed his excitement of the roundabout presentation. He encouraged all to keep an open mind about the proposed project.

Deputy Mayor Schulman encouraged residents to donate to our local Foodshare for the holidays.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 10:40 p.m., the Council entered into Executive Session A – Pending Claims and Litigation.

At 10:43 p.m., the Council exited Executive Session A and entered into Executive Session B – Settlement of Pending Tax Appeal.

At 10:52 p.m., it was moved Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to exit Executive Session B and enter into regular session.

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth to authorize the Town Attorney to enter into settlement with Mallory Ridge vs. the Town of Bloomfield.

VOTE:            AYE: J. Gamble, S. Schulman, J. Washington, L. Rivers, D. Seldon, J. Merritt, J. Neuwirth, P. DeLorenzo

NAY: W. Hypolite

ABSTAIN: None

**The motion passes 8-1.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Schulman, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 p.m.