

## MINUTES

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION VIRTUAL ON-LINE MEETING SOUTH WINDSOR TOWN HALL

REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, June 24, 2020  
TIME: 7:00 P.M.

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**PRESENT:** Chairperson Paul Burnham, James Murray, Louise Neary, Vice Chairperson David Marsh, Linda Jeski, Susan Burnham, William Jodice, Joseph Kennedy

**ABSENT:** Edwina Futtner, Victor Dorobantu, Scott Kelley, and Alternates Mindy Lewis, Wayne Kilburn, and Shailesh Velma

**ALSO PRESENT:** EDC liaison Mayor Andrew Paterna, Assistant Town Manager Scott Roberts, Town Manager Michael Maniscalco, EDC Consultant Matthew Galligan

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**1. Call Meeting to Order:** Chairperson P. Burnham called the meeting to order at 7:31pm.

**2. Roll Call:** The above-mentioned members were introduced.

**3. Presentations**

**(a)** Metro Realty - Buckland Gateway: Geoffrey Sager, Principal of Metro Realty, and Phoebe Sager, developer of the site, were introduced. Mr. Sager stated that they have been in South Windsor since 2001, and recently worked on a few big projects such as Aldi, Chase Bank and two apartment complexes. He believes in the long term prospects of the town and is excited about their newest project. He usually buys land with potential, before it's zoned and without a project in mind. The current project is located south of M&R Liquors. At the front of the site is Chase Bank. An ALDI supermarket will be located behind this with a planned opening for the 1st quarter of 2021. Ms. Sager reviewed site plans and stated that at the front of the site, they are planning a mixed-use development with five buildings. Two of which will be twin retail buildings and at the rear, two medical office buildings. A third medical office building would be positioned to the north. They have not done a lot of retail in the past but the site has a good location and good visibility. The current health crisis makes retail challenging. Smaller retail sites are in demand and they are hoping to break ground in the spring. However they do have lots of experience with medical buildings and most recently completed the ProHealth building in Manchester and others in Farmington. There is no interest yet in the development but with the current situation, it's understandable that it will cause a pause. There will be two different elevations. The north-most building drawings show branded spaces and the south-most building is still open. The site planning is not yet represented in the renderings. Ms. Sager shared the rendering of one of the medical buildings, which is in the process of design review. The buildings will look more modern.

Chairperson P. Burnham asked about the property to the north, where the hotel was to be located, and whether it is the location for the 3rd building. and Mr. Sager confirmed that it is.

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco thanked Geoffrey and Phoebe for taking part in the meeting and expressed his appreciation for their interest in building in South Windsor and that he is pleased to continue to work with them.

Mayor Paterna echoed the town manager's sentiments.

Commissioner Neary asked for clarification of the medical buildings in Farmington.

Chairperson P. Burnham thanked Geoffrey and Phoebe for participating in the meeting.

Mr. Sager requested the ability to remain in the meeting to listen in on Costco presentation and was granted permission.

**(b)** Windsor Federal Bank: George Hermann and Scott Andrusis introduced themselves. Mr. Hermann stated that he has been in South Windsor since October at 152 Deming Street. The location was converted to a full-service branch in February. The bank is a mutual institution which means there are no shareholders and

is owned by its depositors. The institution was founded to promote housing during the Great Depression. They currently have a limited amount of capital and want to make sure that they get their return on investments. The project located on the corner of Buckland Road and Deming Street, will be under 2,700 sq ft and has already gotten variances to widen the driveway. They will have 17 more parking spots than they need which could benefit the nearby funeral home since busy times are opposite. Windsor Federal Bank is the only bank headquartered in Hartford County and will employ approximately 100 people. They expect to have 10+ people at this new location. 70% of their business is commercial and focuses on 'small' business. 2019 was a good year with 180 commercial loans and in 2020 they completed 225 paycheck protection loans as of last month. Service is part of their culture, 'neighbors helping neighbors', they volunteer in the community, and see growth potential in South Windsor. They are completing the final sketches and hope to have them ready in the next few weeks and will include sidewalks along both Buckland Road and Deming Street.

Scott Andrusis thanked the commissioners and stated that he feels Windsor Federal will be a good fit for the town. It's a great opportunity and he's excited about the project. He invited members to visit the temporary branch.

Commissioner Neary asked if anyone has targeted the bank for a takeover. Mr. Hermann explained that it cannot be taken over since it is not a public stock bank. Mr. Andrusis explained that the bank board is committed to remaining independent.

Commissioner Jodice stated that he likes the plan and the location of the entrance off of Deming Street instead of Buckland Road. Mr. Hermann is hoping to get things done in this building season-working on approvals and hoping to get started as soon as possible.

Chairperson P. Burnham shared that he is looking forward to having a community bank back in town. Mayor Paterna thanked the presenters, offered a welcome to South Windsor, and expressed his appreciation for their involvement in the community.

**(c) Costco:** Mark Marchisano introduced himself and shared that the project is to be located at Evergreen Walk. Costco is excited at the prospect of coming to South Windsor. Costco is a large international company, with more than 535 locations in U.S., is good to its employees and members. The company offers wonderful benefits to its employees. 80% of employees are eligible for benefits and 97% take advantage. Costco believes in benefiting its employees, which carries to its members and partners. The project includes a new warehouse and plans to have 250 new employees. As a company, they are very community oriented. Mr. Marchisano shared the site plan and explained that it is one of the last developments on the site. It will be located near LA Fitness, with a gas station and parking, and between Evergreen Way and the wetlands. They are working with town hall staff to combine lots and in working with wetlands onsite, will be adding to the total non-developable space which is fully surrounded by trees. The loading dock is 25ft below the surface, and vehicles passing by would be able to see just the top section of the building when driving by. Access to the site will be from both the direction of Evergreen Walk and from Deming Street. Mr. Marchisano shared a rendering of the project and explained that they have already met with the architectural review board and received positive feedback. He then shared renderings of views from various roads passing by the property. Chairperson P. Burnham asked where the entrance to property is located and Mr. Marchisano explained that vehicles could enter from Cedar Street, off of Deming Street, and from Tamarack Avenue. He then showed an image of the truck routes. The general plan was approved June 23, 2020 and he is now requesting a change in the restrictions for truck deliveries to 4am-10pm from 7am-10pm.

Chairperson P. Burnham asked that once the text amendment is made, what the timetable for the project is. Mr. Marchisano responded that he hopes to break ground in fall, with a 2 season build- doing site work next year, and in 2022 start constructing the building. Since the land is raw, it's a little more complicated.

Commissioner Jeski expressed excitement about Costco and the gas station coming to town. She does have an issue with the proposed truck delivery times and is concerned about people in the area and the noise from the trucks. However, she wants the project to continue moving forward to see what else will happen. She stated that the town has already received lots of letters of support for the project.

Mr. Marchisano explained that the delivery trucks will access the building from the highway, through Deming Street and 2 residential developments in Evergreen Walk. The loading dock is 25ft below ground level of other

parts of the site. It is dangerous and difficult to have deliveries during the day when shoppers are there, and it complicates their end of day process. With no restrictions, trucks that arrive in the morning, will come along the perimeter, up to the seal, and once in position the trucks are turned off. Off loading can take 1hr+ per truck so the time in the early morning to accept deliveries and be ready to open is crucial. Since the elderly will continue to have early hours to shop, delivery times impact the choices of going into new locations.

Commissioner Neary asked if Costco will revert to a 10am opening hour once the health crisis has passed. Mr. Marchisano replied that businesses are allowed in 1 hour before the general public and that access by the elderly will remain after the health crisis passes.

Commissioner Jodice asked about the number of jobs being brought to South Windsor and Mr. Marchisano replied that they are aiming for 250 with 25% upper management brought in for training resulting in a net gain of 200 +/- .

Chairperson P. Burnham stated that the tax abatement was reviewed in 2019 and that he is hoping Costco will be able to get their approvals and start on the construction.

Town Manager Mike Maniscalco highlighted Mr. Marchisano's comment that the team approach in working with town hall has been critical to moving the project forward and that this is not uncommon for what happens in South Windsor.

Mayor Paterna asked if Costco uses their own trucks and if they have complete control of all of the deliveries. Mr. Marchisano replied that Costco logistics dictates what path the trucks take once they enter the region. The timing can vary day by day but the physical aspect of trucks getting from the distribution center to the site is controlled by Costco and their trucks have to follow the routes that have been outlined.

**4. Public Participation:** None.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from Regular Meeting on 2/26/2020:

A **motion** to approve the February 26, 2020 minutes was made by Commissioner Jeski and **seconded** by Commissioner Murray with the following corrections:

P.1. Item 3. Public Participation: should read "MB Tractor, a Kubota dealer,..." and "He added that Kubota..."

The motion was **approved by majority**. Commissioner Neary abstained. **Motion approved.**

**6. Old Business**

(a) Economic Development Strategy: None

(b) Economic Development Commission Brand, Identity, Administration: None

(c) Town Ordinance Economic Impact Analysis: None

(d) Mayor TV: Chairperson P. Burnham contacted the company and has a new contract for the Town Manager's review for an update to the video which would include the town manager. Production would most likely be late summer and the new video contract would include a business guide with listings that would help to defray the cost of video production. Access to the guide would be free to businesses.

(e) Follow-up Discussion on Tax Abatements: Assistant Town Manager Scott Roberts stated that he has met with the town hall staff that are part of the process. Town Manager Mike Maniscalco explained that they are all trying to come up with a more standardized format for how these are dealt with by different departments. They would like to develop templates to use instead of creating new documents for each application. Commissioner S. Burnham asked to see a sample of the form when it's ready. Mr. Maniscalco replied that he is not sure of the timeline since the Assessor's Office is currently busy with tax season but that he will try to work on something for the next meeting. Commissioner Jeski stated that the other key part with tax abatements is as they come off of their abatement is communication with the Board of Assessment Appeals. Mr. Maniscalco announced that he just negotiated terms with Home Depot so that they cannot go before the Board of Assessment Appeals the year after they come off an abatement.

Chairperson P. Burnham asked about the subcommittee that was formed at the February meeting and Commissioner Jeski stated that no meetings have happened yet. Mr. Roberts said that the current health crisis had derailed their efforts but that they can now be re-energized to continue working on it.

**7. Committee Report(s):** None

## 8. New Business

(a) Tax Abatement Proposal: Scannell Properties, 240 Ellington Rd Distribution Center: Town Manager Mike Maniscalco shared the analysis prepared by the tax assessor. The project is a 210,000 square foot facility for which the use nor the company to occupy has been identified. The building will be built to spec and the enhancement provision could be used to entice a company to come. Mr. Maniscalco is looking for a recommendation from EDC to go before the Town Council.

Commissioner Jeski asked if the entrance was only from Ellington Road and Mr. Maniscalco confirmed that is it. The site is adjacent to Home Depot, which is currently under construction, and the former Bath Fitters site is nearby. The restoration company building will be in front of this proposed building.

EDC Coordinator Matt Galligan explained that Scannell Properties would like to use the same construction equipment for this new construction as they are for the construction of home depot.

Commissioner Jeski Linda asked if with the 30% tax reduction, would another abatement be negotiated with another tenant. Mr. Maniscalco replied that the abatement would be for 5 years and includes a provision to be able to recruit another company. The abatement would be just an enhancement and would not be a restart of the timeframe.

Commissioner Neary asked for clarification of dates on the spreadsheet and Mr. Maniscalco explained that the abatement would begin once the C.O. was issued.

Chairperson P. Burnham stated that the site work has already begun and asked if the timeline could possibly be sped up. Mr. Maniscalco replied that the timeframe is a fairly conservative estimate. Chairperson P. Burnham asked if the 30% abatement would remain steady over the 5 years and Mr. Maniscalco confirmed that it would.

Chairperson P. Burham stated that he can call Donna to assist in writing a letter of support to the town council.

A **motion** to write a letter of support to town council for the proposed 30% tax abatement for the property to be developed by Scannell Properties at 240 Ellington Road was made by Commissioner Murray and **seconded** by Commissioner Neary and was ***unanimously approved. Motion passed.***

## 9. Communications and Remarks

(a) Report from Scott Roberts, Staff Liaison – Buxton Update: Mr. Roberts reported that the town has been using the Buxton Group to analyze customer data and to look at who the town wants to approach. The data allows them to look at existing locations and the customer analytic data and to see how much the company is earning. The data also provides social demographics of their customers which the town can then compare to the demographics of South Windsor to predict how well they'd do in town. The town is currently exploring Sprouts Farmers Market (like Whole Foods) to locate them in Evergreen Walk or another location.

Chairperson P. Burnham asked if the town packet will be going out soon and Mr. Roberts replied that yes, soon, possibly as soon as tomorrow.

Commissioner Neary believes there is a limit to how close grocery stores can be located next to each other. Mr. Maniscalco is not sure about this but offered that there are other locations that are also available. The two stores, Stop & Shop and Sprouts Farmers Market, would service very different demographics. They will wait to see what type of response they get from Sprouts.

Mr. Roberts explained that he is using this as an example to show how the Buxton data can be used to match companies with South Windsor.

Mr. Galligan shared that the store is more focused on farmers and organic types of food.

(b) Report from Town Manager Maniscalco and Economic Development Consultant Galligan: Mr. Maniscalco explained that the Sprouts proposal helps to identify marketing materials for the town that can be tied together and make it easy for prospective companies to get the information they need to locate their business here. He is hoping to scan the packet so that members can view the contents of the packet. Mr. Maniscalco recognized Mr. Galligan and Mr. Roberts for continuing to move forward with projects and keeping companies engaged in the process during this time.

Chairperson P. Burnham stated that he would like to get some information from the packet to share during his visits to existing businesses.

Mr. Roberts reported that he is still looking to grow the website and re-do the EDC section. He is currently working to ensure safety of the town and has been submitting for reimbursements for PPE.

Mr. Galligan thanked EDC members for their support and commented on the strong team in town.

- (c) Report from Paul Burnham, Chairperson: Chairperson P. Burnham is now looking at the former Waybest Chicken property to find ways to revitalize the area.

Commissioner Neary asked about the status of the Valero gas station and Chairperson P. Burnham replied that another company will be located at the site but he doesn't have their name handy.

Chairperson P. Burnham shared that he has a business that is on hold due to COVID-19 but that he is looking to partner them with someone in town. He also reported that the Kubota dealer is between 30-45 days out for having the project up and running.

Chairperson P. Burnham shared that he received a thank you note from Linda Jeski. He explained that he sent a basket on behalf of the EDC to Linda Jeski after hearing that her husband and brother-in-law passed away within a short period of time. EDC members expressed their condolences to Commissioner Jeski.

**10. General Discussion:** None

**11. Executive Session:** None

**12. Adjournment**

Next meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

A **motion** to adjourn at 9:17pm was made by Commissioner Jeski and **seconded** by Commissioner Jodice and was ***unanimously approved. Motion passed.***

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Catherine Potter**  
**Clerk**

**Approved: September 23, 2020**