

Town of Wethersfield

Planning and Economic Development Department

Monthly Report

April 2012

A Monthly Report from the Planning and Economic Development Department

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RECENT PROJECTS

- A CO has been approved to renovate the former Angelino's restaurant at 1115 Silas Deane Highway in the Wethersfield Shopping Center into a Thai restaurant, the **Tamarind Grill**.
- A CO has been approved for interior renovations to accommodate a furniture and clothing consignment store at 732 Silas Deane Highway, **Kids At Heart**.
- A new veterinary clinic has opened at 60 Beaver Road, **Beaver Brook Veterinary**.
- An application has been filed with the Planning and Zoning Commission to convert the former Porter and Chester building at **125 Silas Deane Highway** to a six unit retail building. A hearing is scheduled for April 3.
- Nearing completion of the renovation of 334 Silas Deane Highway to accommodate **Maggie's Hair Salon**.
- **Prove It Golf** has opened in the Goff Brook Shops on the Silas Deane Highway.
- **Panera Bread** is nearing completion at 1129 Silas Deane Highway and a ceremonial opening is scheduled for April 11 at 10 am.
- A building permit has been filed for **Lane Bryant** at 1053 Silas Deane Highway.
- The **Tilted Kilt Pub and Eatery** has opened at 1155 Silas Deane Highway.
- An application has been filed for site modifications by a new buyer of **7 Railroad Place**. A similar use is anticipated.

OTHER NEWS AND INITIATIVES

Developer/Tenant Contacts

- Discussing plans for the redevelopment of the former **Fun Zone** at 1178 Silas Deane Highway.
- Met with potential buyer and tenants of the office building at **1290 Silas Deane Highway**. A façade improvement application has been filed for this property.
- Reviewed preliminary plans for the redevelopment of the former NU property at 176 Cumberland Avenue for a **CREC magnet school**. Applications are anticipated in May.

Planning and Zoning

- On January 31 the Planning and Zoning Commission hosted a community meeting and workshop at the Community Center to facilitate public input on the **2013 Plan of Conservation and Development** update. Approximately 125 people participated in this event. Results of the meeting and preliminary findings can be found at the web site www.planwethersfield.com The PZC will be meeting on the third Tuesday of each month to work on the Plan update. Interested persons are encouraged to attend or offer input via the website.
- The commission is working on a draft series of amendments to the **subdivision regulations** and will be discussing the status at their April 3 meeting.
- Staff are in the midst of implementing a new computer permit tracking and review software, **ViewPermit**, to assist with the development review process. A similar system has recently been initiated in the Building Department.
- The commission is in the midst of a review of a seven lot residential subdivision at **214 Goff Road**. The proposal has generated significant public interest and comments.

Redevelopment Agency

- A special meeting of the Agency is scheduled for April 4 at 5 p.m.

Economic Development and Improvement Commission

- Received the State Assistance Agreement from the DECD for the next phase (IV) of the **SDH Streetscape** improvement program. An additional \$250,000 grant has been provided to the town from the STEAP program. We are discussing the specific improvements planned for this work.
- The Farmers' Market is exploring a potential move to the **Solomon Welles House** to accommodate the growth of the Market. The first market date is scheduled for May 24.
- The **Shops Local Alliance** hosted a business meeting on March 28 to discuss improvements to the program. An additional follow up meeting is scheduled for April 11 at 8:30 a.m. at Town Hall.
- The commission is in the midst of a series of **business visits** with the business community as a means to improve communications with our business owners.
- In March staff released our quarterly report on **available properties**. The number of vacancies has dropped over the last 3-6 months.

Tourism

- The Commission is working with the Pita Group on a number of marketing initiatives relative to our recent grant from the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism. Specifically, we are just completing the design of our fall and spring rack cards.
- Work continues on the implementation of the **Wayfinding Signage** project. We are presently working with Sign Lite (low bidder) on the engineering and fabrication details for Phase 1. Installation has begun on the first of these signs.
- The commission is considering an application for funding to the CT Trust For Historic Preservation through their **Vibrant Communities Initiative**.
- A meeting of the **Historic Wethersfield Stakeholders Group** is scheduled for April 10 at 8:30 a.m. at Comstock Ferre on Main Street.
- The Wethersfield Historical Society has scheduled their **Taste of Wethersfield** event for April 14 at the Keeney Center.
- The commission has just released their **Annual Report**.

Economic Development Department