



TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD

Planning and Economic Development Department Report November 2013

Peter D. Gillespie,
Phone (860) 721-2838

Town Planner and Economic Development Manager
e-mail: peter.gillespie@wethersfieldct.com

RECENT PROJECTS

- A demolition permit for a portion of the former NU property at 176 Cumberland Avenue has been issued and work is well underway to accommodate the plans for the CREC Magnet School Discovery Academy.
- Substantial improvements including a new elevator have been made at the Putnam Park office Building at 100 Great Meadow Road to accommodate the Art Institute of Connecticut. The applicant is now waiting for State licensing before the school can open.
- The following new businesses have opened over the past few months:
 - OMG Sushi - 740B Silas Deane Highway
 - Pet Supplies Plus – Marshall's Plaza
 - Ann's Beauty Salon – 326 Silas Deane Highway
 - The Jones Group - 7 Rail Road Place
 - Be Beautiful Salon – 365 Silas Deane Highway
 - \$3.99 Dry Cleaners – Silas Deane Highway
 - Cinderella's Attic – Wells Road
- Work is advancing on the addition for the Hartford Hospital medical building at 1260 Silas Deane Highway.
- Plans were approved by the Historic District Commission for renovations/additions to the former Masonic Hall at 245 Main Street for residential use.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

- The Commission is discussing the formation of a Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Subcommittee to monitor progress on the various recommendations included in the recently adopted Plan. The Commission set an effective date for the Plan of June 2013. Copies of the Plan are now available.
- Has been discussing the need for regulations for the licensing of medical marijuana dispensaries and production facilities. The Town has been approached by several interested parties looking for sites/space for dispensaries.
- Plans were approved to open a Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant in the Goff Brook Shops in the space formerly occupied by World/Home Town Buffet.
- Plans were approved to build a new free standing restaurant pad site in the southern portion of the parking lot of the Goff Brook Shops. The restaurant is a Connecticut family style breakfast restaurant known as Chip's.

- Approved plans for a home occupation at 239 Griswold Road.
- Approved plans for a new church building at 648 Russell Road.
- Reviewed plans for a series of new bus shelters to replace existing shelters throughout the community.
- Staff attended the Southern New England Planning Conference in Worcester, Mass.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

- Recently closed on a facade loan for the repairs and repainting of the American Legion building on Main Street.
- Recently approved a façade loan for the repainting of the mixed use building located at the corner of Hartford Avenue and Main Street.
- Recently approved a façade loan for the renovation of 376 Silas Deane Highway to accommodate Be Beautiful Salon.
- The 24th Annual Salute To Business Holiday Social is scheduled for December 12 at the Wethersfield Country Club. Tickets are available.
- Staff are working on the details for the 2014 Town Guide and Calendar.
- Staff are working on a new comprehensive on-line Wethersfield business directory.
- Attended a meeting of the Old Wethersfield Shopkeepers Association.

TOURISM COMMISSION

- The Commission is working with the Pita Group on a number of marketing initiatives. Specifically, we have just completed the design of our Fall and Spring rack cards which are being distributed at visitor attractions throughout Connecticut. In addition the Pita Group is assisting the Commission with some technical assistance with the design and distribution of the monthly event calendar and newsletter.
- We recently placed an ad in the September/October edition of AAA Journeys magazine.
- A grant of \$17,500 was received from the Hartford Foundation For Public Giving to assist with the funding of the Heritage Interpretive Trail.
- An additional grant in the amount of \$35,000 was awarded by Connecticut Humanities for additional funding for the Heritage Interpretive Trail.
- The Commission will shortly be announcing the winners of the Fall 2013 Wethersfield Community Photo Contest.
- The Historic Wethersfield Stakeholders Alliance continues to meet on a quarterly basis to monitor progress on the implementation of the Old Wethersfield Master Plan.
- Coordinated a visit for a travel writer from the Boston Globe for an article that appeared on October 30th.