

# Town of Wethersfield

## Monthly Economic Development Report



### PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

January 31, 2008

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#### **A Monthly Update of Business and Development Activity in Wethersfield**

Prepared By Peter D. Gillespie, Town Planner and Economic Development Manager

Phone: (860) 721-2838 E-mail: [peter.gillespie@wethersfieldct.com](mailto:peter.gillespie@wethersfieldct.com)

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#### **APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

##### **Marsh Street - Olsen House**

Renovation of this building is now underway.

##### **Stillman Walk - Nott Street - 55+ Housing**

Additional permits have been approved.

##### **580 Silas Deane Highway - Wild Rover Restaurant and Pub (Bunker Café)**

A CO should be issued soon for the renovation of this building into and Irish Pub to be known as the Wild Rover Pub.

##### **Folly Brook Commons - Folly Brook Boulevard**

Completion of the first building and occupancy is anticipated in the next few weeks.

##### **943 Silas Deane Highway - Tranquil Moments Massage Therapy**

Plans have been approved for use of this second floor space for a massage therapy business.

##### **Silas Deane Highway - former Porch and Patio - Pelton's Home Health Care**

Interior demolition is underway to renovate this building for the new headquarters of Pelton's. The Town has agreed to provide façade funds and a tax incentive towards this project.

### **9/11 Memorial Sports Center - 30 Greenfield Street**

PZC approval was recently issued for the renovation and remodeling of the Pitkin Community Center.

## **PLANNING/DESIGN STAGE**

### **Comstock Ferre and Co. - Main Street**

An application to the HDC has been approved for the demolition of the rear portion of the building to accommodate the creation of a mixed use retail-office and residential project and a new building fronting on Church Street is also planned. The HDC decision has been appealed. A meeting was held with the CT Trust For Historic Preservation to investigate the possible reuse and renovation of the buildings and we have received some sketches with recommendations as to which portions of the barn they believe should be incorporated into the design. A PZC application is anticipated shortly.

### **1260 Silas Deane Highway - Hartford Hospital**

An inland wetlands application and a PZC application have been approved for plans that include an expansion of 13,000 s.f. to the existing building and parking lots to accommodate the growing needs of this medical facility. Applications to the DEP and Army Corps will need to be approved before construction can commence. Army Corps has requested additional information to justify the wetland activity.

### **61 Arrow Rd. - Phase 3**

The PZC has a pending application for a new free standing cold storage building of approximately 5,000 s.f.

### **Town Line Road - KFC/Hines Sudden Service**

The PZC has approved plans for the demolition and reconstruction of buildings on this site to accommodate 2 new buildings, a new restaurant and larger office building.

### **Former Fire House Grill - 1151 Silas Deane Highway - Humphrey's**

An interior demolition permit has been issued to conduct some interior work to this building. An application has been submitted to Design Review and a building permit application has been filed.

### **912 Silas Deane Highway - Façade Improvements**

Plans have been approved to renovate the exterior of this office building at the corner of Maple and Silas Deane Highway. Façade improvement funds have also been granted towards this project. Spring construction is anticipated.

### **Lot 4 Progress Drive - Office Building**

Plans have been submitted for pre application review for the construction of a 2 story medical office building at this site, the building is roughly 20,000 s.f. and will be known as the Connecticut Center For Cosmetic Enhancement.

### **Progress Drive - CREC - Soundbridge School**

Met with representatives to discuss permit issues associated with an expansion to the school.

### **251 Main Street - The Bean and Grape (Former Crown and Kringle)**

The PZC has approved plans to reopen this space as a coffee house which will also sell select foods and wine.

### **740B Silas Deane Highway - Take out Restaurant**

The PZC has approved plans to convert this vacant space into a take out restaurant specializing in chicken wings.

## **DEVELOPER/PROPERTY OWNER CONTACT**

### **1000 Silas Deane Highway - Former Weight Watchers**

Continue to discuss potential redevelopment potential of this site with an out of state interest.

### **Arrow Road/Berlin Turnpike**

Preliminary Plans were submitted to the PZC for several small buildings that would accommodate retail/restaurant and office space at this corner site.

### **Jordan Lane/Silas Deane Highway - Former Porter and Chester School**

Have been contacted by engineering firm preparing plans for new retail and restaurant site.

### **Former Amici's Restaurant - Pal's Pub -Silas Deane Highway**

On January 2 the PZC granted approval for the renovation of this building and for the use of an outdoor patio for a new restaurant/café in this building.

### **Silas Deane Highway - Office/Retail Building**

Working with developer who has acquired several properties and is interested in tearing down buildings to accommodate larger office/retail building.

### **Berlin Turnpike Property**

Met with engineers and developer looking at development feasibility of property on the Berlin Turnpike.

### **Fun Zone**

Met with developer representatives investigated existing conditions at this site. Test borings have been performed as part of this research.

### **1380 Berlin Turnpike - Jordan Lane Shopping Center - Little Caesar's Pizza**

Waiting for permit application's to renovate former Fashion Bug space for Little Caesar's Pizza Restaurant.

## **974 Silas Deane Highway - New England Patio and Hearth**

Plans have been submitted to expand showroom space into vacant rear space of this building.

## **638 Silas Deane Highway - Natalia's European Deli**

Plans have been submitted to convert this vacant storefront into a takeout deli restaurant.

## **SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY REVITALIZATION PROGRAM**

- Continue to meet with property owners interested in the façade program. Have committed funds to 10 business/property owners to date totaling \$256,212.
- Working with Colassale Construction on the streetscape project and are presently waiting to hear on the final details of our State Bonding of additional funds.
- Preparing Federal grant application through Congressman John Larson's office for an additional \$1,000,000 for traffic and streetscape improvements for the Silas Deane Highway.

## **OTHER NEWS AND INITIATIVES**

### **Tourism**

- We will continue to work with Allegra Farms from East Haddam to operate the Horse and Carriage rides in Old Wethersfield through our recent State grant. The effort was very successful and we are discussing the continuation of this program throughout the rest of the year on select weekends.
- Met with representatives from the Webb Deane Stevens Museum and the Historical Society to discuss possible cooperative marketing grant applications to the State Commission on Culture and Tourism. A grant was filed for funds to conduct a strategic marketing plan.
- Working with the Town's IT Department to activate a new online database of all the properties in the Historic District. Through a grant with the CT Trust For Historic Preservation the Town has developed an electronic searchable database for use by citizens and the historic district commissioners. We expect the system to be online in February.
- Met with representatives from the Webb Deane Stevens Museum and the Historical Society to prepare a grant application that would provide assistance with Billboard advertising on the major highways in Connecticut during the months of June and July. We have been advised that we have received this grant and we are waiting for a contract.

### **Redevelopment Agency**

- Will be working with the Agency on a public information strategy to solicit additional public input on the Bond issue. Tentatively set date for early May and second session in early June.

### **Preserve America**

- The next Committee meeting will be held in February at which time we expect to receive a draft report.
- A grant application was filed to request \$150,000 to be used for gateway improvements and a wayfinding signage program.

### **Planning and Zoning Commission**

- The Commission has approved a series of amendments to the sign regulations.
- The Commission has approved the first rear lot application under the new regulations.
- A subcommittee has been formed consisting of representatives from Design Review, PZC and the Redevelopment Agency to discuss the establishment of an overlay commercial zone on the Silas Deane Highway and the refinement of our design standards.

## MEETING/EVENT SCHEDULE FEBRUARY

February 5	PZC 7:00 p.m.
February 6	Redevelopment 5:00 p.m.
February 6	DEAC 6:30 p.m.
February 7	Chamber 8:30 a.m.
February 14	EDIC 12 noon
February 19	PZC 7:00 p.m.
February 20	Redevelopment 5:00 p.m.
February 20	Design Review 6:30 p.m.
February 26	Tourism 5:30 p.m.

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