

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
March 14, 2016

Mayor Paul M. Shapiro called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Kegler, Kochenburger, Marcellino, Moran, Raymond, Ryan, Sargent, Shaiken, Shapiro

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Ryan moved and Mr. Kegler seconded to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2016 minutes as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Ms. Moran who abstained. Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Shaiken seconded to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2016 special meeting as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Mr. Kegler and Mr. Sargent who abstained.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Proposed Amendments to Ordinance Regarding Alcoholic Beverages
The Town Clerk read the legal notice. Mayor Shapiro asked for comments, hearing none, the public hearing was closed.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth Cowles, Meadowood Road, read into the record a 2010 letter regarding student apartment complexes from Alison Hilding. (Statement and letter attached)

Charles Naumec, Riverview Road, requested the Council answer whether or not they support his efforts to seek a constitutional review, through the Secretary of the State's office, regarding voting rights of UConn students living in University housing and paying no taxes to vote in Town financial matters. (Statement attached)

Rebecca Shafer and Bill Roe, Echo Road, presented information on the history of Mansfield and the effects UConn's increased enrollment has and will have on the Town of Mansfield. Ms. Shafer and Mr. Roe itemized nine suggestions whose implementation, they believe, would mitigate these effects and balance the needs of the Town and the University. (Statement attached)

David Freudmann, Eastwood Road, expressed his concerns regarding the number of students able to be accommodated in university housing and called on the Democratic and Republican Town Committees to nominate candidates who will represent the Town and not UConn.

Mr. Marcellino moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to Move Item 3, Presentation: UConn Enrollment Projection, and Item 4, Proposed Sale of Region 19 Campus to UConn, as the next items of business prior to the report of the Town Manager.

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Ms. Raymond moved to amend the motion to schedule Item 4, Proposed Sale of Region 19 Campus to UConn, prior to Item 3, Presentation: UConn Enrollment Projection.

Seconded by Mr. Sargent the motion to amend passed unanimously.

The amended motion passed unanimously.

V. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

In addition to his written report, the Town Manager noted that Mr. Naumec's remarks during public comment included a request for action by the Council.

VI. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Shapiro reported that he attended a Special Olympic swim meet in Windham on Saturday calling it a wonderful event. Mr. Shapiro attended the Eagle Scout ceremony for Travis Kornegay and offered his congratulations. The Mayor also volunteered to serve Meals on Wheels as part of the annual March participation program for first selectmen and mayors. He complimented the volunteers, residents and staff for their work.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

2. Proposed Amendments to Ordinance Regarding Alcoholic Beverages

Mr. Sargent moved and Mr. Marcellino seconded to suspend the Council Rules of Procedure and to consider the amendment to the Ordinance Regarding Alcoholic Beverages.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sargent moved and Mr. Ryan seconded, effective March 14, 2016, to approve the proposed amendment to the Ordinance Regarding Alcoholic Beverages, which amendment shall be effective 21 days after publication in a newspaper having circulation within the Town of Mansfield.

Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

3. Presentation: UConn Enrollment Projections

Town Manager Matt Hart introduced Deputy Chief of Staff Mike Kirk commenting that he and Mr. Kirk have had many conversations about enrollment and other Town/ University issues. Mr. Kirk introduced the UConn staff members in attendance including Assistant Vice President of Enrollment and Director of Admissions Nathan First, Vice President of Student Affairs Michael Gilbert, Director of Planning Beverly Wood, Master Planner and Head Architect Laura Cruickshank, Head of Residential Life Pam Schipani and Director of Off Campus Services John Armstrong. Staff members discussed enrollment and housing figures and challenged some of the often held assumptions regarding increases to enrollment and the housing capacity at the University. Councilors discussed the effects of increased student rental of single family homes on the quality of life and the values of homes in

neighborhoods; the benefit of having UConn capture the local addresses of students living off campus; and a process by which the Town could comment on major changes to the enrollment numbers. Mr. Kirk stated that he would be pleased to provide updates to the Council either directly or by way of the Town University Relations Committee. Mr. Kirk also commented on the existing collaborative relationship between the Town and the University which he stated would continue if UConn does take over ownership of the Region 19 facility.

4. Proposed Sale of Region 19 Campus to UConn

Superintendent Bruce Silva updated the Council on the actions and thoughts of the Regional Board of Education as they explore a possible initiative to sell their current facility to UConn and build a new school on 100 acres of land on the Depot Campus. Mr. Silva stated that he doesn't know if it is realistic but at this point it is an opportunity worth exploring.

Councilors discussed their concerns including the efforts to include the project on the November 2016 ballot; the potential future uses of the school and sports fields; the impact on the expected K-8 school project; and the possible changes to students' abilities to access UConn classes and other opportunities.

Superintendent Silva volunteered to provide future updates for the Council.

5. Historic Documents Preservation Grant

Mr. Shaiken moved and Mr. Sargent seconded to approve the following resolution:

Resolved, that Matthew W. Hart, Mansfield Town Manager, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the Connecticut State Library for a Historic Documents Preservation Grant.

Motion passed unanimously.

IX. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Ms. Moran reported on the following committees:

- The Ad Hoc Committee on Rental Regulations and Enforcement has met a number of times and members are looking at existing ordinances and zoning regulations.
- The Ad Hoc Committee on Police Services toured the Willimantic Police Headquarters in February and the Committee is in the process of reviewing a series of delivery options. A meeting with the Commissioner of Public Safety is also scheduled.

Mr. Ryan, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported that the Committee reviewed the fee waiver ordinance and the Parks and Recreation Fund and recommended that the Council reconstitute the Ad Hoc Committee on Fee Waivers after the budget process is completed.

X. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

No comments offered.

XI. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

6. A. Hilding (02/22/16)
7. T. Luciano (02/22/16)
8. Mansfield Commission on Aging re: public transportation
9. P. Shapiro/J. Goodwin re: UConn South Campus Development EIE
10. P. Shapiro/J. Goodwin re: UConn Student Recreation Center
11. M. Hart – Testimony Regarding House Bill No. 5049, An Act Implementing the Governor’s Budget Recommendation Regarding General Government
12. Eastern Highlands Health District re: Governor’s FY17 Budget
13. CRCOG re: Current CRCOG Transit Initiatives
14. CT Trust for Historic Preservation re: Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant Award Letter
15. Project Green Space Update for Grassroots Supporters
16. Mansfield Minute – March 2016

XII. FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Sargent requested Mr. Naumec’s request to the Council during public comment be added to a future agenda.

Mr. Kochenburger requested the problem of crumbling foundations in northeast Connecticut be the subject of a public hearing at a future meeting. The Town Manager reported that the Lieutenant Governor is convening a meeting on March 28th after which staff will report to the Council.

Mr. Ryan moved and Ms. Moran seconded to move into executive session to discuss Personnel in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6)(a), Town Manager Employment Agreement and to include the Town Manager in the discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Council reconvened in regular session.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Personnel in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6)(a), Town Manager Employment Agreement

Present: Kegler, Kochenburger, Marcellino, Moran, Raymond, Ryan, Sargent, Shaiken, Shapiro

Also included: Town Manager Matt Hart

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

To give a historical perspective, and in light of the recent accident involving a UCONN student who was kneeling in Spring Hill Road at 2AM and was hit by a car (a student who I understand lives in a fraternity on Hunting Lodge Road), I would like to read the following letter which was presented to this town council by one of my neighbors in **2010 – six years ago.**

*Elizabeth Cowles
50 Meadowood Rd.
Storrs*

To: Mansfield Town Council
Mansfield Planning and Zoning
From: Alison Hilding
17 Southwood Road
Storrs, CT 06268
Date: June 21, 2010

Mansfield Should Close the Apartment Door

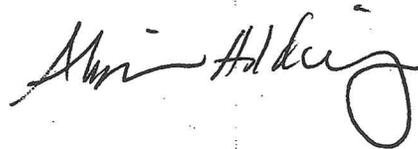
Mansfield should say no to the construction of more student apartment complexes in or near residential neighborhoods. A small town with a similarly small staff and budget, the town has been unable to control unsafe student behavior in off-campus student apartment complexes for three decades. As a result, residential neighborhoods near student apartments have deteriorated significantly. Families have been forced to sell their homes to escape the students' mayhem. Absentee landlords have bought up these formerly well-kept family homes and created a student ghetto of poorly maintained and unsightly properties close to the University of Connecticut campus. Ignoring zoning regulations, these landlords rent to more persons per home than allowed. This rental practice creates safety problems as well as the aesthetic decline of properties. Many front lawns have become unattractive parking lots, in order to accommodate renters' vehicles. The quality of life in these neighborhoods has been compromised by noise from parties, property damage caused by inebriated revelers, and unsafe road conditions, due to drunken drivers.

The safety of the students themselves is threatened by such a high concentration of young people in an off-campus setting. Mansfield's volunteer fire department and part-

time police department are ill equipped to handle the safety demands of so large a mass of students. Likewise, the local community hospital does not have the facilities to handle a disaster of the magnitude that thousands of unruly students could create. To increase this already problematic mass with yet more students from an additional apartment complex would be unwise.

Compounding the complexity of the problem is the reluctance of Mansfield's town council to create new housing restrictions or even enforce existing ones. Mansfield has behaved heretofore like the permissive parent who cannot say no. Instead of raising an unruly child, through its inaction, Mansfield has created an environment where thousands of drunken students can roam through residential neighborhoods, menace neighbors, and destroy their property while robbing them of a safe and peaceful existence.

Given the severity of the existing problems, the limits of both the town budget and staff, limited safety services, and the town council's ineffectiveness in resolving the problem, Mansfield should close the door to more student apartment complexes in or near residential neighborhoods. Meanwhile, the State of Connecticut should invest in more on-campus housing to ensure the students' safety as well as the town residents' peace.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Alden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped final letter.

Fair Treatment of Mansfield Tax Payers

Presented by Charles R. Naumec
52 Riverview Road, Mansfield Center, CT.
860-450-1355
charles_r_naumec@sbcglobal.net

Town of Mansfield Town Council Meeting
March 14, 2016

I would like to quote the normal introductory statement made prior to the OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL at Town Council Meetings. "If you have a question for us or Town staff, know it may not be answered tonight. We will make note of the question and try to get you a response when we can." I assume all questions will be answered in a timely manner.

I would like an official YES or NO answer to the following question:

Does the Town of Mansfield Town Council support the efforts of Charles R. Naumec through the Connecticut Secretary of the State Office seeking a constitutional review by the Legislation and Elections Administration Division attorney of the voting rights of UConn students living in University housing and paying no taxes related to voting on Town of Mansfield financial issues? Town financial issues include but are not limited to Referenda and town budget.

Thank you,



Charles R. Naumec

To: Mansfield Town Council

From: Rebecca Shafer, Bill Roe, Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group

RShafer@MansfieldNeighborhoodPreservation.org

BRoe@MansfieldNeighborhoodPreservation.org

Date: March 14, 2016

Re: University Housing in Town of Mansfield

We are at a juncture where the Town and the University need to move forward in a way more beneficial to the Town residents.

Since 1702, Mansfield has been an incorporated town made up of 17 small farming villages. These were thriving communities with industries, inventors and general stores. There were trains and taverns, an orphanage and a poorhouse, doctors, graveyards and churches. And, there were schools in each village, many of which have been converted into residences which are still here today.

There was a thriving economy which included tourist homes, silk mills, saw mills and steel yards. There were cranberry bogs, grist mills and tanneries. Our manufacturing operations made buttons, gun powder, horn combs, carding machines, and bronze cannons. Bells, organ pipes, optical parts, cedar shakes and clover seeds (for premium clover hay) were also produced here. Many of these products were shipped around the world.

In 1881, two men from one of those villages, Storrs, gave the money and a small plot of land to build a school named Storrs Agricultural School. Over the past 135 years, that school has grown to become a major university with more than 20,000 students.

We have now reached a critical mass where we must make some decisions about the future of our Town. UConn's increased enrollment has had major impacts on the Town. Many wells have run dry; rivers have run dry (and are often too low to support fishing and swimming); our wetlands are being filled in and the water quality of our brooks has been compromised. Our back roads (and main roads) are clogged with traffic as the number of students now outnumbers the number of residents.

Students not housed on campus have infiltrated every part of our community. Over 400 homes in family neighborhoods have been converted to profit-making student rental businesses; likewise, student apartments have been shoe-horned into other residential areas. Furthermore, since the university houses only 30% of its fraternities and sororities, the remaining 70% are in our neighborhoods.

This overflow of university students has attracted investors from as far away as NC and FL; they come here simply to buy homes to convert into student rental **BUSINESSES** in our neighborhoods. Our community and the quality of our lives has changed due to this phenomenon. Thus, we need to change directions. In this case, Less is More.

We ask:

1- that all off campus students be required to **provide their local addresses** to the University and the Town (something we were shocked to hear was not required at present);

2- that enrollment be limited to only as many **undergraduate** students as can be housed on campus (which leaves 4,300 grad students in our neighborhoods),

or

that **90% of ALL students (grad & undergrad) be housed ON campus;**

3- that the university house all **freshmen and sophomores ON campus;**

4- that all **fraternities be moved back ON campus;**

5- that any necessary student apartments and dormitories be built ON campus rather than in the community;

6- that limits be placed on the **number of cars** brought to the area;

7- that enrollment be **increased in regional campuses, while capping enrollment in Storrs;**

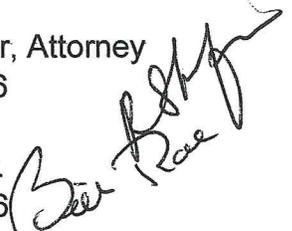
8- that the state work with Mansfield to assist families in **buying back 50%** of the houses in the apron neighborhoods of campus that are currently being used as student housing in order to restore them to respectable family neighborhoods (E. Lansing, MI);

9- and finally, that several **academic departments be moved to other CT locations.** For example, the Schools of Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health could be shifted to Farmington or Hartford locations nearer to the School of Medicine and Dentistry. In this way, *all* health-related departments would have easier access to internship opportunities in central Connecticut hospitals, as well as, expanded access to a diverse cohort group in the other medical professions.

These things, together with a number of changes Mansfield is making, should balance the needs of Mansfield with the needs of the University.

Rebecca Shafer, Attorney
1-860-786-8286

William Roe, Jr.
1-860-690-3676


Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MansfieldNeighborhoodPreservation/>

CC to:

Representative Gregory Haddad

Senator May Flexor

Senate President Martin Looney

Representative Brendan Sharkey, House Speaker

Senator Len Fasano

Co-Chairs of Appropriations Committee

Senator, Beth Bye

Representative Tony Walker

Co-Chairs of Environmental Committee:

Senator Ted Kennedy

Representative James Albis

Co-Chairs of Public Safety & Security

Senator Timothy Larson

Representative Stephen Dargan

Co-Chairs of Higher Education & Employment Advancement Committee

Senator Dante Bartolomeo

Representative Roberta Willis

Chair of UConn Board of Trustees

Lawrence McHugh

Ms. Shari Cantor

UConn President Susan Herbst