

DRAFT MINUTES
MANSFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Special Meeting
Thursday, January 8, 2015
Conference Room, Mansfield Community Center

Members present: K. Dorgan, D. Fecho, S. Ferrigno, M. Hirschorn, J. McGuire, G. Thompson
Staff present: Matt Hart, Town Manager
Others Present: Beverly Wood, UCONN Director of Planning

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chairman Ferrigno.

Public Comment: No public comment received.

Business:

- 1. UCONN Campus Master Plan:** The members reviewed the attached draft set of comments from the Commission to the Town Council concerning the UCONN Campus Master Plan. The members endorsed the section of the letter concerning positive elements of the plan and made various revisions to the section regarding areas and issues to be addressed.

By consensus, the members agreed that the Chair would work with staff to prepare a final set of comments for submission to the Town Council.

Adjournment: S. Ferrigno adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew W. Hart
Town Manager



Town of Mansfield

Economic Development Commission

Date: January 8, 2015
To: Town Council
From: Stephen Ferrigno, Chair
Copy: Matthew Hart, Town Manager
Planning and Zoning Commission
Subject: Draft UConn Campus Master Plan

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On Thursday, January 8, 2015, the Economic Development Commission voted to submit the following comments on the draft UConn Campus Master Plan to the Town Council and Planning and Zoning Commission for review and consideration.

The Commission noted that the draft master plan includes many positive elements for which the University should be commended, including:

- The focus on infill development as opposed to continuing past trends of expanding outward into the community;
- The preservation of open spaces and agricultural lands and the introduction of “woodland corridors” through campus to connect to open spaces on the eastern and western edges of the main campus;
- Changes to the circulation system including improved pedestrian, bicycle and bus transportation linkages to reduce vehicle congestion on-campus;
- The identification of opportunities for additional housing and commercial development at the Depot Campus through a public-private partnership;
- The potential for business growth in Mansfield as the campus expands and the technology park develops; and
- Improvements to campus gateways on the edges of campus.

The Commission also noted the following areas/issues that should be addressed in the final plan:

- *Business Growth.* The University should be encouraged to continue to support development of commercial businesses in the downtown, King Hill Road and Four Corners areas rather than locating new retail and service businesses internal to campus. The type and amount of commercial development contemplated for the Depot Campus redevelopment must be carefully evaluated and limited to ensure that it does not negatively impact the downtown’s existing commercial districts.
- *Local First Procurement.* While the plan includes statements referencing use of local sources when possible, the University should be encouraged to adopt specific procurement measures that provide preference to local vendors and contractors within a certain radius of the campus for provision of goods and services, including local and regional farms.

DRAFT

- *Housing Incentives.* The University should be encouraged to provide incentives for staff and faculty to live in Mansfield, such as a home ownership program.
- *Proposed Hockey/Multi-Purpose Arena Location.* While the Commission understands and appreciates the concept of siting the new multi-purpose arena close to downtown and the benefits such a location could provide to local businesses, it shares the concerns expressed by many residents regarding the impact the proposed site would have on Moss Sanctuary and the scale of such a facility at the southern edge of downtown, where buildings have been reduced in scale to transition into adjacent neighborhoods. The University should be encouraged to find an alternate location for this facility. While a site in close proximity to downtown would be preferred for the benefits to local businesses, alternative locations such as the Four Corners area or Depot Campus area also present possibilities.
- *New Road Connection between Bolton Road and South Eagleville Road.* The Commission understands the concerns expressed by residents of Eastwood Road with regard to the impact the proposed roadway would have on abutting homes. The University should be encouraged to explore alternate transportation improvements to eliminate the need for this connection. Relocation of the multi-purpose arena to another site combined with expanded pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections off-campus could significantly reduce the need for this additional roadway connection into campus. If the roadway is constructed, it should be aligned along the eastern edge of the university's property and include a significant vegetated buffer to protect adjacent residential properties. Depending on the design and ultimate impacts, the Town may need to consider rezoning the Eastwood/Westwood neighborhood to allow for multi-family residential housing.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to comment. The long-term growth of the university offers tremendous opportunity for growing and strengthening businesses in Mansfield and we look forward to working with university representatives to achieve our shared objectives.