

MINUTES

Members Present: Chair S. Ferrigno, B. Okeson, L. Watson

Members Absent: C. Chukwuogor, D. Fecho

Ex-Officio Member Present: A. Moran

Ex-Officio Member Absent: B. Shaiken

Staff Present: C. van Zelm, Executive Director - Mansfield Downtown Partnership, L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development, and M. Ollennu, Administrative Assistant - Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Guests: R. Aylesworth (Town Manager)

Haven Campus Communities Team- John Knuff & Sara Sharp (land use lawyers), Brian Boyles, Jeff Bord - **Bohler** (professional engineers) Leslie Fanger, **Bohler** (landscape architect), Marlon Roxas & T.J Reed, **Dwell Studio** (architects), Dean Davies (architect), Chase Powell, Jay Williams and Sherry Sadai

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was no quorum to approve the April 15, 2021 Minutes.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS AT MEETING

A. Presentation- Haven Campus Communities Proposal

John Knuff, attorney at Hurwitz, Sagarin, Slossberg & Knuff, presented for the Haven Campus Communities (HCC) team. He introduced the team working on the mixed-use residential development initiative in Mansfield. He gave a brief overview of HCC's mission to work within existing development footprints in all their projects throughout the State.

Mr. Knuff pointed out that the proposed project will be a gateway into Mansfield and will strive to maintain the Town's multifamily mixed-use development regulations reflected in the Town's POCD. According to Mr. Knuff the development will have a total of 398 units of 1, 2, 3 bedroom studio apartments, 80 of which will have more family friendly features with buildings pulled in close to the street. Also provided for will be 17 units of on-site affordable housing and \$1.65

million fee-in-lieu contribution to the town. A 1500 square feet of space will be earmarked for commercial purposes. The project will be use approximately 23 acres spanning across four (4) parcels with Frontage at 1717, 1733, 1753 Storrs Road, and Parcel ID 8.15.9-1 (adjacent vacant parcel).

T.J Reed and Marlon Roxas, architects from Dwell Studio, took members through the main amenities and design elements that will add to the community and commented on the great deal of research that went into the structural designing of the project. Highlights include the use of existing housing models in Mansfield with an urban twist for uniformity with features like gables, dormers and balconies. For interior and exterior designs, varied textures, finishes, cultured stones, colorful bricks, different metal roofing panels and hidden roofs for mechanical considerations. The idea is to create an intimate community village centered feel with a courtyard feature for congregation amongst residence and townsfolks.

Sara Sharp, land use attorney for HCC also briefed members on some aspects of the development's concentration on maintaining a pedestrian feel in the interior and exterior of the project with downtown light fixtures. She emphasized a strong focus on landscape development with conservation areas, a dog park on the east of the property with high tech synthetic turf specifically designed for canine usage, a waste station, sitting benches and double exits and entrances.

The property will be flanked on the south by a walking trail that will transition into a conservation area with a small pond to soften the look and a creation of a rain garden with aesthetically pleasing native flowers and shrubs. Fencing will be added for security of residences and the Mansfield community at large. Residents will also enjoy the use of a private pool, fire pits for year round usage, a circular space to encourage gatherings and interactions, a well-lit garbing wall, paver walk with fire pits, a pergola with swings in a calming space, an outdoor kitchen and a grill station amongst others.

In conclusion, Mr. Knuff touched on the benefits to the Town in the form of taxes, other fees and job creation. This includes an estimated \$1.8 million in yearly local property taxes, \$1.6 million in development impact fees, utility connection fees, permitting fees and \$750,000 in local engineering and consulting fees. With regards to job creation, 375 direct construction jobs and additional 180 indirect jobs will be created and induced over the course of construction. Sixteen to eighteen direct management jobs plus twenty five induced jobs and over fifty commercial jobs dependent on commercial type.

Mr. Knuff thanked members for the opportunity and welcomed questions, suggestions and objections from members.

Mayor Moran asked about the maintenance plan of all the amenities detailed in the proposal, Chair Ferrigno asked about the plans for the provision of bus/ van shuttle services to and from UConn, parking slots for commercial spaces and whether there's been an approach to businesses in the Holiday Mall. Watson asked about their plan for water usage and suggested that if HCC has not already, there should be adequate preparation before their meeting with the Water Advisory Committee.

In answering the above, Mr. Knuff told members that they have a professional management team that will maintain amenities detailed in the proposal, that the HCC is considering bringing on board some form of public transit /shuttle and that the project is specifically design to handle

varied motor usages. On the businesses in the Holiday Mall, Mr. Knuff said he does not know what the plans are yet, and that he anticipates that the HCC will be interested in finding out from businesses in the Holiday Mall whether they might be interested in transitioning to their commercial spaces.

On water usage, Engineer Jeff Bord of Bohler shared that they have received a letter of service from Connecticut Water stating that they can handle their requested demand with no issues with an approximate figure of 700 gallons of water per minute for the total project.

Mr. Knuff, said if the EDC favors the project, a letter of support to the Planning and Zoning Commission would be much appreciated. The HCC team exited the meeting at 6:55 pm.

B. Follow up on Agbotic Smart Farm Proposal

Chair Ferrigno commenced discussion on the suggested submission of a follow up letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission and asked members who have followed or watched the last public hearing on the proposed Smart Farm on their thoughts on the proceedings, and whether the EDC should send a letter specifying that required actions needed to be taken by the applicant to address concerns of local residents. For clarification, members asked Painter about their plan water usage, light and sound pollution and the issue of odor in the applicant's planned growing of commercial hemp.

Painter informed members that the Planning and Zoning Commission does not approve water usage or the building of wells. That jurisdiction, according to Painter is under the Eastern Highlands Health District. She also shared that, Agbotic Smart Farms is expected to provide information on water usage at their New York property and what traffic the project would generate on Brown's road.

Painter noted that the applicant has provided information on lighting standards. On possible odors from commercial hemp production, Painter shared that the PZC has reached out to UConn for their knowledge about odor emanating from large scale hemp cultivation and that Agbotic Farms needs to update their special permit application to reflect this use since it was not noted in their initial application.

Watson suggested that the EDC should look at its criteria for endorsement of projects in order to confirm whether any edits are required or not. Members agreed to table this discussion for the next meeting.

Mayor Moran, asked that the minutes show that the EDC is waiting to see the answers to some of the questions raised and will not have time to schedule a meeting prior to June 7th for any further comments at this time. Members did not object to this suggestion.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Member Updates- New EDC Members

No comments

B. Staff Updates

Van Zelm, updated members on the Partnership's negotiation of a contract for strategic planning process related to Downtown Storrs with StreetSense. She also updated on exciting spring and summer events scheduled such as the John. E Jackman Bike Tour, Celebrate

Mansfield Festival, musical concerts and movie nights at the Square. She informed members that residents will be notified via the latest edition of the Town's newsletter.

C. Business Updates (Closings/Opening)

Chair Ferrigno and van Zelm commented on the encouraging news of businesses opening in the East Brook Mall. Painter also shared on the submission of a special permit for the HCC project with a public hearing scheduled for July 6, 2021.

D. Housing Updates

Painter updated on incoming and pending applications and public hearings such as the J.E Shepard/ Capstone proposal scheduled for July 6, 2021 and an application for CMC Storrs scheduled for June 21, 2021 for a change to allow town house styled design for a four story with a rooftop deck amongst others. She also informed members of a creation of a digital story map of information on proposed projects and upcoming hearings which will also highlight new business.

Town Manager Aylesworth encouraged members to access the tool and thanked Painter for a good job done. Van Zelm will provide members with the link to the webpage.

Watson suggested that the Town as a matter of urgency find a Mansfield resident to fill the space on the Water Advisory Committee.

Van Zelm commented on the continuation of virtual meetings since the State's provision for virtual meetings will be coming to an end in June 2021. Members agreed to discuss the transition to in person meetings at the next meeting.

E. EDC Calendar

There was no discussion on the calendar.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

All noted.

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

A. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Next regular meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Future Meeting Topics

Ferrigno will meet with staff to discuss future topics.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Mary Ahima Ollenu
Administrative Assistant