



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Planning & Development

815 Riverside Drive
P.O. Box 899
North Grosvenordale, CT 06255
PHONE: 860-923-9475
E-MAIL: planner@thompsonct.org
www.thompsonct.org

Last week, on Wednesday 19 July, Thompson's Economic Development Commission hosted a special presentation on the status of the project to renovate the historic River Mill. EDC Chairman Brian Yacino introduced the program with a synopsis of the history of the project to this point, and then brought up the developer, John Gumpert of Camden Management Partners and River Mill Redevelopment LLC.

Mr. Gumpert provided a summary of some of his comparably-scaled projects in North and South Carolina, and shared with the public some of the processes that the project team has been working through, as part of the pre-development groundwork. One of the challenges that arose was FEMA's revision of its Flood Insurance Rate Mapping for the French River, which initially calculated an unfavorable result for the redevelopment project. After almost a full year of investigation and a formal appeal supported by verifiable data, FEMA accepted the Town's appeal of the original proposed mapping, resulting in a much more favorable outcome for the redevelopment project.

Both of Thompson's State Senators attended the meeting, and both spoke enthusiastically about the potential for the renovation of River Mill to breathe new life into the Town. Also providing comment were representatives of US EPA and CT DEEP, who have worked closely with the Town for years to help facilitate the project. All of the attending officials, both State and Federal, commented on how pleased they were to see such strong support from the community.

An important element of the strategy to move the renovation project forward was covered by First Selectman Amy St Onge, Tax Collector Rene Morin, Attorney Ken Slater of Halloran Sage and Director of Planning & Development Tyra Penn-Gesek. They described a plan for a graduated tax assessment incentive which will benefit the Town financially as soon as the sale of the property is finalized, with a schedule of increased assessment value over a 25-year period that, at its conclusion, will add over \$700-thousand dollars per year to Thompson's tax revenues, making the mill the largest taxpayer in the community. In order to enable that strategy, Thompson residents will be asked to vote on a proposed Ordinance for the Control of Vacant, Abandoned and Tax Delinquent (VAD) Structures, to be applicable only to large multi-family or commercial properties in the Route 12 & 131 corridor districts. More information will be available to the public regarding that ordinance soon.

The evening concluded with a half-hour of Q&A for the public. While some concerns were expressed regarding the current condition of the mill and the added density coming to the neighborhood, the bulk of the comments showed intense interest from residents in the future of this iconic local landmark.

[Click here for Meeting Minutes \(including presentation slide deck and live recording link\)](#)

PLEASE NOTE: There were some issues with the sound quality of the live recording. Please contact the Director of Planning & Development with any questions: planner@thompsonct.org