



# TOWN OF THOMPSON

Mill Sites Redevelopment  
Advisory Committee (MSRAC)

815 Riverside Drive  
P.O. Box 899  
North Grosvenordale, CT 06255  
PHONE: 860-923-9475  
E-MAIL: [planner@thompsonct.org](mailto:planner@thompsonct.org)  
[www.thompsonct.org](http://www.thompsonct.org)

Regular MEETING- MSRAC

Mill Sites Redevelopment Advisory Committee (MSRAC)

Friday – June 9, 2023 – 9:00 AM

Hybrid – Merrill Seney Community Room and Zoom

Members Attending: J. Blanchette – Chair, K. Beausoleil, B. Davis, S. Lewis, N. O’Leary

Staff Attending: Tyra Penn-Gesek, Director of Planning & Development

## MINUTES

Zoom Recording link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/UUUenwyKGUfuoh8aeKOMKYaUNzIDHCe-IK-kDiAOcch3N1yWkbQcEblIrOFLk6\\_v.HaB2qiRlqBBt1Elk?startTime=1686315614000](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/UUUenwyKGUfuoh8aeKOMKYaUNzIDHCe-IK-kDiAOcch3N1yWkbQcEblIrOFLk6_v.HaB2qiRlqBBt1Elk?startTime=1686315614000)

Passcode: 0XQHe9.q

YouTube recording link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHr-OnbxVSw>

1. CALL TO ORDER: 9:01 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 12, 2023 Regular Meeting

K. Beausoleil moves to accept the minutes; B. Davis seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

## 3. CORRESPONDENCE

T. Penn-Gesek received an email from the UConn School of Engineering, soliciting project proposals for the rising senior class. She requests input from the MSRAC members. The deadline for the request is 18 August. J. Blanchette suggests engaging a student team to work on the planning of the permaculture park at 65 Main Street. K. Beausoleil suggests asking for a concept for a recreational area on the Town-owned open space parcel at Lillian Ave.

## 4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizens are in attendance.

## 5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

### a. Main Street Reconstruction

T. Penn-Gesek confirms that the LOTCIP application was already sent to NECCOG. She recently asked J. Larkin again if he agreed that the timeframe for funding through LOCTIP is 4-6 years in the future. In her opinion, the application she is currently working on for the CIF grant through DECD is the best chance of getting Main St renovated in the near term.

### b. CT DEDC Community Investment Fund grant application

A copy of T. Penn’s working grant draft was distributed to the MSRAC members for their comments/feedback. The grant is due on 30 June. She is particularly looking for thoughts on how to identify the measurable outcomes for the proposed project components (Main St/65 Main/Swanson Park). K. Beausoleil brings up the prior investment of DECD through the BAR Grant, and that these renovations are the realization of that investment. J. Blanchette also points out that the Main St/Swanson Park improvements are filling in the gaps in the renovated loop. J. Blanchette wonders if there are studies that can be referenced to show the economic

effect of building walkability. **T. Penn** suggests that possibly information could be drawn from walkscore.com, and she will look into that. **J. Blanchette** also mentions the Downtown Mill Rehabilitation District tax incentive for construction or improvements to multi-family housing in the district. **B. Davis** suggests emphasizing the relationship of the proposed improvements to the River Mill project. **T. Penn** requests that the MSRAC members forward any additional thoughts/comments to her while she continues to work on the application draft.

### **c. Swanson Park**

#### **a. Review Steve's sketches**

**S. Lewis** and **T. Penn** met with a gentleman from Mercer Monuments to look at the existing monuments and their placement. **S. Lewis** then produced some renderings and spec sheets for the monument company, which were used to produce cost estimates for that component of the project. The specs include relocation and creation of new bases. The members discuss whether or not the monuments at the north intersection of Main St/Riverside should be relocated to Swanson Park. There is no monument dedicated to WWII at either of the two locations. **N. O'Leary** believes there is one located in Fabyan.. **K. Beausoleil** will check on that location to confirm. In the discussion of whether to relocate the 3 monuments on the island, **K. Beausoleil** also mentions that there were some prior UConn studies of that intersection. N. Main St/Riverside and Buckley Hill intersections were also studied under the BAR Grant by CME. **T. Penn** mentions that the current draft of the CIF grant does include the costs to relocate the monuments to Swanson Park. **B. Davis** suggests taking the project to a public input meeting. The grant deadline is 30 June, but **T. Penn** can include a planned public engagement event as part of the narrative. **K. Beausoleil** points out that the VFW and American Legion membership has already indicated their general support. **J. Blanchette** doesn't have strong feelings about whether to move the monuments, but she does feel that the current location isn't safe for anything like a bench or a reflection area. **B. Davis** feels that the best option is to relocate all the monuments to Swanson Park, as long as there is community support.

#### **b. Veterans meeting date? – get ideas, reviews possible concepts, discuss shrub removal**

The First Selectman was going to follow up with the Veterans' groups to try to schedule a visit by the MSRAC members to one of their meetings. **J. Blanchette** will send a reminder to see if that has been pursued.

### **d. Ongoing Committee business**

#### **a. Riverside Drive LOTCIP Sidewalk Project**

The punchlist items are almost complete. The last piece will be 2 stamped asphalt crosswalks, which will be finished in conjunction the Blain Rd intersection project. DOT did accept the Town's request to leave the crosswalk in place across from the gas station/convenience store, and they have added the ADA pad on the gas station side as part of the department's crosswalk/RRFB project.

#### **b. Blain Road Intersection**

NC Inc will return to complete the work after Labor Day, when the granite curbing comes in. **K. Beausoleil** asks if the connection was ever made with Community Fire vis a vis their needs drawing water from the river. **J. Blanchette** had sent an email to the DPW Director and the Fire Marshal, to meet them on-site for their input. **K. Beausoleil** still recommends connecting specifically with Community Fire. After some additional discussion, **K. Beausoleil** suggests that a stand-pipe may be a potential solution. The goal is not to disrupt the accepted design of the intersection. ECCD did get their CT DEEP funding issue resolved, and they will be coordinating on the installation of the rain garden at Blain Rd and the pervious pavers at the Library. A touchbase call will be set up with ECCD, the Town and NC. Inc. **J. Blanchette** asks **T. Penn** to forward her the construction bid from NC.

### **c. River Mill**

**T. Penn** reports that the two attorneys for the Town and the developer have a call scheduled to go over a checklist of documents sent by DECD.

**d. 630 Riverside Dr**

**T. Penn** has been speaking with a potential buyer for the property. She has put him in touch with W. Bugden to give him the rundown on the Transfer Act and some other state requirements. She believes an offer was made, but she does not know the status. The UConn student team completed their partial concept design for recreational space on the unbuildable portion. **B. Davis** asks if it would be worthwhile to engage another student team. **T. Penn** suggests that possibly pulling in some of the interns from the UConn TAB program might be worthwhile.

**e. 65 Main Street**

**T. Penn** reports that there was a break-in at the property by some local kids. They painted graffiti on the walls and may have done some interior damage, but the renovation hasn't started yet. The locks have since been changed to a more secure deadbolt-style. The executed planning grant contract has been received from USDA UAIP, and a planning partners zoom call is being scheduled for Weds 14 June. B. Santos is completing the bid documents for the first step on the renovation project, and that should be posted during the week of 12 June. B. Santos and T. Penn will be bidding out the project components one-by-one in order to control costs. The funds to fill the gap are being requested in the CIF application.

**e. Other/New Committee Business – Ryan discussion on biodiesel tank farms**

**R. Cournoyer** is not in attendance to give his presentation to the committee. **T. Penn** gives a rough summary of what he has shared with her vis a vis a USDA REAP grant application he has been developing. **J. Blanchette** had given R. Cournoyer contact information for B. Cummings at Spicer Gas. **T. Penn** will also connect him to A. Johnson, the farm energy specialist at CT RC&D. There is some question by the committee members if the project is more suited to EDC than MSRAC. **T. Penn** believes that the expertise of MSRAC is better suited to consulting on the project, and the Reardon Rd site is on the margins of MSRAC's focus area. The agenda item will be carried into the July meeting.

**6. MEMBER COMMENTS**

None additional.

**7. ADJOURNMENT – 10:13 a.m.**

Respectfully Submitted, Tyra Penn-Gesek, Director of Planning & Development