



**TOWN OF WINDSOR
TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
HYBRID MEETING
February 3, 2025
PUBLIC HEARING**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Black-Burke.

Present: Mayor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Deputy Mayor Darleen Klase, Councilor Mary Armstrong, Councilor Ojala Naeem (virtual), Councilor William Pelkey, Councilor Leroy Smith (virtual), and Councilor Lenworth Walker

Absent: Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman

Mayor Black-Burke read aloud the notice of the public hearing to hear public comment on:

- FY 26 Budget Development
- AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$6,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH BROAD STREET TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES, \$1,000,000 FROM STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT URBAN ACT GRANT FUNDS AND \$3,000,000 FROM UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FUNDS TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Linda Alexander, 155 Fieldstone Drive, stated that in her opinion this is an outrageous amount to spend. She doesn't think this will achieve the stated objective of slowing down cars. She also stated that she believes putting in traffic cameras would be much easier and successful and she feels this would not increase the business development in the center. She wants to encourage the town to use other resources that they have instead of spending all of this outrageous amount of money.

Eric Weiner, 130 Palisado Avenue, said that he thinks this proposal is fantastic and the cost is very low for the scale of the project. He stated that the town staff and the legislators have done an amazing job of seeking outside funding and he is fully

confident in the work of the engineering consultants. Mr. Weiner also stated that he wants to urge the Town Council to give the people of Windsor a change to be heard.

Bonnie Waterhouse, 49 Early Dawn Circle, stated that she has a nonprofit called Voices Against Lyme Diesels and she is also on the board for First Town Downtown. She has attended a number of the committee meetings that have talked about the road diet, but mainly talked about the pedestrian safety piece of it. She believes it is an excellent idea and hopes it will work. She is very pleased with the committees on how many meetings they had, how they have explained the road diet, and how they took the questions and responded to the questions regarding this matter. She asked the Town Council to please approve the resolution to set the referendum and let the people of Windsor decide.

Janette Coffin, 35 Hobson Avenue (Experienced audio technical difficulties between 7:10 PM – 7:14 PM)

Cora Lee Jones, 71 Matianuck Avenue, said that she wants to set a fee that will set the cost of processing and that will get drivers' attention and increase it the second or third time if they are ticketed. She stated that other things that can be considered such as what she refers to as 'wash boarding' areas of the road. She stated that the state currently using this type of road to prevent people from swaying into oncoming traffic. She also stated that we can use this method to keep cars in the desired lanes and even narrow the road lanes as cars enter the green. She doesn't understand why they would make such dramatic changes in the center of town and why they wouldn't try and moderate change first to calm traffic. Ms. Jones added that whatever they end up doing she would prefer they do not touch an inch of the green.

Armando Gomes, 35 Ridgewood Road, said that he and his wife moved here about three years ago and are in walking distance from everything they need in the downtown area. He stated that it is silly to him that they are talking about walking not being dangerous and having pedestrian safety when most of the things they want to get to is across four lanes of traffic. He said that they moved to this town to eliminate vehicles as much as possible and for them to ride their bikes more so, he strongly supports the traffic calming and the roundabouts. He hopes that they can move forward and put this to a referendum.

Kathy Cunningham, 1235 Windsor Avenue, stated that she agrees with everything that was said before her. She said that Windsor is a quaint town and agrees that they don't need four lanes in the center of town. She stated that she isn't comfortable with doing her nightly walk from the center to her home. She urges the referendum go forward and she thanked the Council for putting it before the taxpayers.

Karen Hatcher, 7 Pheasant Run, said that she understands that people have concerns about this project but she can only offer her experience which is that every day she

goes through two traffic circles on Prospect Hill. She is a huge fan of them ever since they were put in. She stated that it slows down traffic, it is easier to get through, and it is also easier than stop signs to navigate through. She stated that she understands that this program has been looked at for years and years. She believes that traffic engineers and other consultants have looked at this and concluded that a traffic circle would help with safety and traffic flow. Ms. Hatcher stated that she does support this goal of the project trying to make downtown a place to go to rather than a place to get through. She urges the Council to put it back to the voters and let them decide.

Patrick Hatcher, 7 Pheasant Run, stated that he observed that the Federal Government has offered to give \$1,000,000 to this project. His concern is that in the interest of not disrupting things he does not think we should pass up this offer that is crucial to what is being done downtown. There is a lot of money that is coming in. He stated that it seems to be short sighted and anyone who gets a bill from MDC can see how much they pay because the MDC did not take the money that was available in the 70's to clean up the river. He believes that this should be put out to the town as a whole.

James Durant, 166 Sunnyfield Drive, stated that he just wanted to remind the Town Council about the children. He stated that the increase of the property taxes in the town becomes unbearable toward the parents. The more money that is being spent on paying property taxes, the less money is being spent to feed the children. He stated that the road diet is very expensive. He believes that there are other alternatives and would like to hear cheaper alternatives that may be available.

Mark Harrington, 1217 Windsor Avenue, said that he has been traveling for 30 years through downtown and has noticed how dangerous the road has gotten and it scares him. He stated that was the reason why he has become involved with this project and has done the research and has listened to the experts. This is why he believes that this will make our center safer. He strongly recommends that the Council brings it to the referendum so the people can decide.

Jeff Lance, 1203 Windsor Avenue, said that he wants to talk about the safety issue here and how important that is. He stated that recently New York's congestion ban came into effect on January 1st where you will have to pay a fee to come into the city. He stated that in the first 3 weeks of the ban they saw a reduction of 51% in accidents. He believes that traffic calming is the issue here and it's the wave of the future. In order to ensure safety, you have to ensure a rational traffic flow. He wants to keep people focused on the pedestrian safety because that is the issue here.

Paul Panos, 48 Brookview Road, stated that the road diet is supposed to be for speeding downtown but that it doesn't make any sense because there are red lights on every end of downtown. He said that this a result of failed attempts to enforce speed

limit by the police. He feels that people will feel the need to drive faster and go down the side streets when the traffic gets backed up. Mr. Panos stated that safety was not the original reason for the road diet. He also stated that the road diet only works where there is now low traffic in areas that were once high traffic. Mr. Panos said that if speeding is a problem, then they should add speed bumps instead as well as video cameras to record the speeders. He believes that the road diet is a poor idea and they shouldn't go forward with it.

Greg Vaca, 150 Broad Street, he said that he urges the Council to look at the facts that are outlined by the DOT at a federal level that makes everything pretty clear on how road diets and rotaries impact is on safety. He believes that enforcement traffic lights will never slow people down. The only thing that slows people down is the environment that encourages them to slow down. He feels that this is the only way to enhance the safety here in town. He stated that a lot of people who are not accustomed to the roundabouts feel the concept is unsafe because they are unfamiliar with them. However, studies have shown pedestrians at roundabouts are safer than at traffic lights because of the slow down effect. Mr. Vaca stated that reducing the amount of people coming through the center is a noble idea. He also stated that enhancing the downtown as a way of enhancing our tax base is the most tried and true thing there is and that is why the center of town is here. He stated that he hoped the Councilors puts it to the voters and lets them decide.

Susan Wimsatt, 1255 Windsor Avenue, said that she just wanted to speak out in support of bringing this to a referendum and letting the citizens vote on it. She also stated that she supports the project itself as well.

Adam Gutcheon, 19 Mechanic Street, stated that he has been in politics for almost 29 years. He asked the question if they believed in a future for American and for Windsor. He asked if they believed that they are capable in building a better future for our town. He believes that the road diet is to make our town better than it is today. He knows that we are capable we just have to believe it ourselves.

Tim Keating, 131 Tobey Avenue, said that he moved here about 5 years ago looking for a town that had a lower mill rate than Bloomfield. He stated that his taxes went up 45% last year. He also stated that he sees cars speeding down route 159 and that he never sees any police officers sitting on the Island. He doesn't see anything wrong with the center as it is now. He stated that they need to enforce the laws that we have now and put in a few speed bumps.

Keller Glass, 72 Hayden Avenue, stated that there has been a traffic related death on Connecticut roads every single day this calendar year. He said that Windsor has a traffic accident averaging one a day over the last 10 years. He also stated that Broad Street has a traffic accident once a month. He is concern that if they do not do anything that someone will die. He asked that the Council bring this to a referendum and let the people do the rest.

Mike Zager, 146 Giddings Avenue, said that he has a background in engineering but not in traffic engineering. He has listened to all the traffic engineers that have spoken here at the meetings and he trusts their judgement on the matter.

3) ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Black-Burke declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachel Collins
Recording Secretary