

MINUTES

WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

SWIFT MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2010, 6:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Elaine Adams
Richard DiFederico
Katherine Duplissie
Richard Fusco
Linda Masayda
Raymond Primini, Chairman
Paul Rinaldi
MaryAnn Rosa
Thomas Winn

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Chuck Frigon, Town Manager
Frank Nardelli, Finance Director/Assistant Town Manager

1. Convene Special Town Meeting

Mr. Primini, Chairman, Called the Special Town Meeting to Order at 6:36 p.m.

MOTION: (Ms. Wick, sec. Mr. Mickel) to nominate Elaine Adams for Moderator of the Special Town Meeting.

MOTION: (Ms. Rosa, sec. Ms. Duplissie) to nominate Raymond Primini for Moderator of the Special Town Meeting.

Discussion: **Mr. Primini:** Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

MOTION PASSED BY VOICE VOTE – ELAINE ADAMS FOR MODERATOR

Mr. Killeen asked if a Recess could be called as there were several people still out in the hallway having their identification checked.

Ms. Adams, Moderator, called a Recess at 6:37 p.m.

Ms. Adams, Moderator, Reconvened the Special Town Meeting at 6:48 p.m.

MOTION: (Mr. Rinaldi, sec. Mr. Mickel) to nominate Lynn LaForme for Secretary of the Special Town Meeting.

Discussion: **Ms. Adams:** Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Adams, Moderator, read aloud the Call of the Meeting as follows:

WARNING AND NOTICE
TOWN OF WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
January 19, 2010

The legal voters of the Town of Watertown and those entitled to vote in Town Meetings are hereby WARNED AND NOTIFIED of a Special Town Meeting to be held January 19, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at the Swift Middle School Auditorium, 250 Colonial Street, Oakville, Connecticut to consider appropriating \$65,000 from the General Fund for a retail plan economic development strategy as recommended by the Economic Development and Planning and Zoning Commissions.

Dated in Watertown, Connecticut this 7th day of January, 2010.

Charles Frigon, Town Manager

RETURN OF
WARNING AND NOTICE
TOWN OF WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
January 19, 2010

I hereby certify that on January 7, 2010, I left a duplicate copy of the attached WARNING AND NOTICE of a Special Town Meeting of the Town of Watertown, Connecticut, to be held on January 19, 2010 with Lisa Dalton, Town Clerk.

I further certify that on January 7, 2010 I caused a copy of said Warning and Notice to be published in the TOWN TIMES Newspaper, which has a substantial circulation in said Town.

I further certify that on January 7, 2010, I caused to be set upon the signpost nearest the office of the Town Clerk and all other places with signposts designated by the Town, a written copy of said Warning and Notice signed by me as Town Manager.

I further certify that all the above acts were done at least five (5) days before the holding of the Special Town Meeting on January 19, 2010.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 7th day of January, 2010.

Charles Frigon, Town Manager

**TOWN CLERK'S CERTIFICATION
AS TO WARNING AND RETURN OF WARNING**

I hereby certify that the attached WARNING AND NOTICE of the foregoing RETURN OF WARNING are duly recorded in the records of the Town of Watertown, Connecticut and that Charles Frigon. was the Town Manager of the Town of Watertown on the date the WARNING and RETURN OF WARNING were signed.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 7th day of January, 2010.

Virginia Russo, Assistant Town Clerk

Ms. Adams: The Town Council has a regularly scheduled meeting at 7:30 this evening so if we are still going on with this Town Meeting we will recess for 10 seconds, the Chair of the Council will call that meeting to order, recess immediately, and then we'll go right back to the Town Meeting here tonight.

At this time my understanding is that we have members from Buxton Company here to do a presentation. (Inaudible) Joe McGrail.

Joseph McGrail, 87 Pleasantview Street, Oakville, CT 06795

Mr. McGrail: I am Chairman of the Economic Development Commission. I'm just going to make a few brief comments here and then quickly turn the meeting over to Joe Fackel from Buxton because that's the most important part of this whole presentation tonight, for you to be informed about what this proposal is. I'd like to say regardless of the outcome tonight, I'm really happy to see this many people came out to see what this is all about so we'll try to do this in an open and clear process and I encourage (inaudible).

First and foremost what we tried to do is (inaudible) to do some (inaudible) planning for residents of Watertown. These days waiting for developers (inaudible) most appropriate business to town is long gone. Most often towns have to seek out the right development for their town. In doing so we need some tools to do that. Unfortunately a Town like Watertown doesn't have some big expanse of staff that can go out and do a lot of these things so in those cases we have to hire a company, (inaudible) to do this research for us. (Inaudible) I'd like to turn it over to Joe. We'll be available for questions afterwards but let's get going with the presentation so everybody can see what's going on.

Joseph Fackel, Senior Vice President, Buxton Corporation

Mr. Fackel: Thanks, Joe. Thank you, Madam Moderator. Thank you everyone, I do appreciate your coming out. I'm excited to be here. There's still some seats here if you guys in the back want to come sit down. I'm going to walk you through the tools we have proposed to the Town of Watertown. I want to make sure (inaudible) what it is that's proposed, what we're not proposing and just so that you're clear in your mind in terms of what it is we do as a company and how we might be able to service you. I have a brief agenda tonight. I'm going to introduce our company, we're going to talk about the role of data in economic development, we're going to talk about tools that we provide for local retail businesses, tools for retail recruitment, and tools for community healthcare. Obviously healthcare is a major, major issue for most communities in the country and we have developed a tool that we have included as part of the scope of services to the Town of Watertown that I hope will be interesting to you and then I'll be happy to do a Q & A at the end.

I'm going to give you the background about Buxton Company. We have been in existence since 1994. We are an industry in a very niche space called customer and patent analytics. Our roots are in retail. We've been working with retail clients since about 1994, 1,400 of those kind of companies look to us to answer fundamental questions, who is my customer, where do I find what people that look like my customer so that I can put stores around that location. We do that kind of work for retailers of all shapes and sizes, high and low and mid range across all product categories, we're very (inaudible) in that space. We're becoming a very astute player in the role of healthcare (inaudible) healthcare is (inaudible) being more and more like a retail model. In other words doctors want to be close to patients, patients want to be close to doctors, we want choice, we don't have to drive to Hartford to see a cardiologist if we don't have to so providing those kind of analytics to healthcare clients is becoming an increasing part of our business. We're also becoming a pretty sizable player in the consumer (inaudible) doing a lot of work with brands like Kimberly Clark and Proctor & Gamble and it all revolves around who is my customer, where do I need to put the product. The heart of everything that we do is data, information. I'm going to talk in pretty great detail about our information.

We've been doing this kind of work in the public sector for almost 10 years now with almost 500 communities around this country to answer some pretty fundamental questions: Are there any retail opportunities for our community? And if so what do those look like? I'm not here to tell you what retailers you should be recruiting, all we want to do is present to you in a factual way what retailers by all accounts should be here, but are here currently. In every community we've worked in they are concerned about the impact on local businesses. There is also concern about being overrun by retail. Again, we are not in the retail recruitment business. We have proposed answering some fundamental questions for the community, who should be here, who is the next step for us to talk to so that you're not wasting your time and resources chasing a bunch of retail businesses that don't belong in this community and that would probably fail if they came here. (Inaudible) be successful using our schools. In an area of 500 communities, that have 25,000,000 square feet worth of retail recruitment (inaudible).

Now that doesn't mean all new retail, that's existing shopping centers, where we were able to help bring in a tenant, that could be a refurbished building that was not historically developed for retail but was converted, that's certainly downtown retail, it can certainly be retail development, it's also Brownfield redevelopment. So retail takes a lot of forms and if you think of it in those terms, not all new retail, retail that you want to be here, you've got a lot of existing real estate inventory that if we refurbish for retail, we want to make sure we understand what retailers make the most sense.

What makes our company unique? Really at the core of everything that we use is the data that we have. We have household level data of 120,000,000 households in this country, including everybody in (inaudible) if you've been in your house for more than 6 months. We as consumers have become very comfortable every day of our lives with giving up information. We have credit cards, debit cards, you have Starbucks, (inaudible) cards, we get married, divorced, we have children, we refinance houses, we subscribe to magazines, any activity that you undertake that can be contacted (inaudible) address, trust me somebody out there somewhere knows it, and is using that information to help (inaudible). So we want to just take that data and help you understand who you are as a customer base and how you can marry that in the retail world. We've also modeled a unique location of 5,000 retailers of if you're thinking all we look at is regional chain or national chain retailers, it's not the case. If a retail business has 3 locations or more, we profile them so that includes businesses that might be the TurkeyLizard in Northeastern Ohio that has 10 locations in Cleveland we've got a profile on them. So don't think about our work being only about national retailers. The only way we can't help you is if you are interested in trying to bring in a single location business, because with only one location, we don't know enough about where they put stores to make much of an impact. Now if you have 200 stores now we have a pretty clear idea of the kind of people you can put stores around. We have an online tool called SCOUT which I'll talk about, I'll talk about our healthcare demand analysis which is a really neat tool, and I'll also talk about our consumer propensity report for existing retailers here in town.

Just a smattering of some of the companies we do business with, on the retail side, FedEx, we (inaudible) retailer, they look to us to answer that fundamental question, who is my customer, where do I need to (inaudible). PETCO (inaudible). Our public sector work is really run the complete spectrum, rural communities like a place in New Mexico which is really the most rural community in America, all the way to the City of Atlanta, one of the largest and fastest growing cities in the country and everything in between. If you look at our client roster in the public sector, it's everybody, it's rural, it's suburban, it's a lot of communities like Watertown that have a lot of the same issues that a lot of our clients have, you've got a community right next door that has a lot of retail that sucks up a lot of your retail dollars, just leaving the community, there's no opportunity to spend that here, so again it's about how you (inaudible) with the right kind of retail business.

Our healthcare clients – Florida Hospital, Texas Health Resources, range from large hospitals and health systems to Concentra, the largest occupational medical provider in America and everything in between.

So here's the project goals: We want to :

- Provide tools that will help local retailers better understand the market and its customers.
- Identify specific retailers who fit Watertown's customer profile. Again that doesn't mean you need to go recruit that, we just want to show you what the opportunities are.
- Provide tools to best position Watertown to those retailers most appropriate for the community that we most desire (inaudible). We want to show you what the opportunities are, you then make the decision in terms of those that you want to market to.
- Provide healthcare insights that may uncover needs/opportunities.
- Provide on-going support.

So this question Why Retail? We get asked this a lot. Retail is a critical component of any economic development strategy. We talk about quality of life and I know this community well enough to know that everybody in this room probably in the last 6 months has left Watertown to have dinner, or to buy something. I suspect many in this room have gone to Hartford in the past 90 days to buy something, to eat something. Again we want to provide those choices that are appropriate for the people in this community.

Increases your commercial tax base. This is really a critical piece of it. Retailers, whether you're a 1,200 square foot locally owned retailer, you pay property taxes, most retailers have to pay inventory taxes, some pay like a warren tax, in Ohio they pay points tax so there are a lot of different revenue opportunity with retail and ultimately the goal is to reduce the tax burden of everybody in this community and everybody in this room certainly.

I talked a little bit about how the people probably leave this community to shop in other towns. That's called leakage. Leakage is when you live in a community but you don't spend your money there. You take it elsewhere and spend it. Maybe you spend it in Waterbury, maybe you spend it in Hartford, maybe you went to Danbury, the point is every time you do that, Watertown loses. There's a merchant that could have captured that revenue that didn't.

And then certainly job creation is a component of retail, and expanding other economic opportunities. If a consultant from KGMB comes in and they're representing a corporation that's looking to relocate their headquarters, they will do a quality of life assessment in this community and if they find that you're deficient in healthcare, deficient in retail, deficient in your schools, which clearly you're not (inaudible). It's a market, it hurts you in terms of trying to (inaudible). So retail leakage and surplus, again just examine the quantitative aspect of the communities retail opportunities. It tells how well you're doing in terms of grabbing that demand, uncovers unmet demand, you can kind of understand the strengths and weaknesses of the local retail sector so we have the ability to run this kind of analysis for any geography, anywhere in America. I went ahead and ran a retail leakage and surplus analysis for the Town of Watertown using town boundaries as my geography. And what I found is pretty staggering, but I didn't think it will come as a surprise to anybody in this room.

You sell a lot of automobiles in this town. I mean a lot. If you look at this particular slide, I apologize if you can't see these categories, but I'll show you what they are, this first category, Motor Vehicles, Parts & Dealers, well if you have a leakage factor of one, that means your neither leaking nor do you have a surplus. You're capped at about where you should be. If you go to the right that means people are coming into Watertown to spend money on that product. So you can see in the motor vehicle category, you are collecting 2.5 times what you probably should be. Congratulations, that's good business. Now conversely if you go to the left, for example Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores, big problem, there's a lot of people who have a demands for that product but they can't spend their money here, or they choose to go elsewhere to buy. You can see you've got more categories where you're leaking than where you have a surplus. So again by understanding what retailers can help you fill that need, that opportunity. And it's a (inaudible) this is where it starts to get really (inaudible). whose profile (inaudible) to come to the Town and say look, I'm curious about what I'd look like (inaudible) in terms of consumer propensity. What should I be selling that I'm not, and you can provide that in real time. (Inaudible) shopping centers, this is a big industry conflicts that every retailer and developer of all shapes and sizes participates in and it's a great place for cities to market themselves, so ideally what we do is show you the opportunities you would select the (inaudible) retailers that are appropriate for Watertown and in keeping with what you want to see happen here and then you go to this conference and make an introduction and start that dialogue. So that's what Buxton does. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Ms. Adams: At this point before we start the public comment and questions I'll take a motion for the Town Meeting to appropriate \$65,000 for a (inaudible) geographic (inaudible)?

MOTION: (Mr. Killeen, sec. Mr. McGrail) to appropriate \$65,000 from the General Fund for a retail plan economic development strategy as recommended by the Economic Development and Planning and Zoning Commissions.

Mr. David Minnich: I'd like to make an amendment to that motion if I may.

Ms. Adams: You are not recognized. We are in public now. If you want to be recognized (inaudible).

Mr. Minnich: I see (inaudible). An amendment to the motion is in order at the time (inaudible).

Discussion: **Doreen DeSorbo, 73 Franklin Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779**

Ms. DeSorbo: To the gentlemen (inaudible) I have a couple of quick questions. Do you recommend that the (inaudible) impact study before hiring you?

Mr. Fackel: No.

Ms. DeSorbo: Why not?

Mr. Fackel: I've never been asked that question before.

Ms. DeSorbo: Well you must have reasons why not. What you're doing is just a promoter saying what (inaudible).

Mr. Fackel: Communities engage us to figure out what opportunities from a retail standpoint, from a healthcare standpoint are out there. Some of the sites we look at are redevelopment opportunities with a very long range window that it would be nearly impossible to forecast.

Ms. DeSorbo: Would you have not identified what the client identified, as whether this is the right direction for this? You would assume to say no (inaudible) and that's all taken care of.

Mr. Fackel: No, we are brought in by clients who have questions specifically related to retail.

Ms. DeSorbo: Now, there are many studies done by national economic planning companies that do full fiscal impact reasonably that identify retailers being (inaudible) these are national companies that do the big fiscal impact studies. And we ask if your company has ever done studies on retailers with a positive net gain for a community?

Mr. Fackel: We have examples across this country where, and I've provided those to the Town and I believe they've talked to a number of our clients, it really depends on the city. In California I can point to two dozen clients who have generated literally hundreds of millions of dollars to their community because they (inaudible).

Ms. DeSorbo: Net, net.

Mr. Fackel: Absolutely.

Ms. DeSorbo: Do they have sales taxes?

Mr. Fackel: Yes, they do.

Ms. DeSorbo: So you're (inaudible) any of your clients have a net gain without a sales tax, they only have property taxes?

Mr. Fackel: Yes.

Ms. DeSorbo: (Inaudible) small number?

Mr. Fackel: Well smaller (inaudible) with a local sales tax, yes.

Ms. DeSorbo: Can you tell me how many clients?

Mr. Fackel: Not off hand.

Ms. DeSorbo: A dozen, 5 dozen?

Mr. Fackel: We have almost 500 clients. I would suggest that, I don't know the number, I'm just kind of guessing, I've been with the company since our (inaudible) so I have a pretty good handle on it. I would say that 80% of our clients come from communities that do collect a local option sales tax.

Ms. DeSorbo: Okay 20% don't?

Mr. Fackel: 20% don't.

Ms. DeSorbo: Are you aware of any studies, and you're talking (inaudible) your own businesses, we have to see those figures to know those people, to know that they are showing a net gain in the long run, but are you aware of any study that has ever been done that shows retail having a net positive gain without a local sales tax? Any study ever?

Mr. Fackel: With one of our clients?

Ms. DeSorbo: Any client.

Mr. Fackel: No.

Ms. DeSorbo: So and this is your business and you

Mr. Fackel: We're not a fiscal impact business.

Ms. DeSorbo: But we would have to guess that because you are an expert in this field, that if such a study had been done you would be aware of it?

Mr. Fackel: Maybe, I can't answer that.

Ms. Adams: That's really not (inaudible) to say whether or not somebody else has done something. He wants to do for (inaudible).

Ms. DeSorbo: I understand, I'm just talking (inaudible) and sir, you mentioned the \$55,000,000 leaving Watertown. One of the things that was #1 or #2 that looked like it was a big amount there as furniture and appliances. Interestingly enough and I'm sure you're aware of, Bernie's has just gone under, they are a national chain, furniture and appliances tend to be mostly chain stores, do they not?

Mr. Fackel: I don't know, I think you could go into just about every community in America and find a locally owned furniture store.

Ms. DeSorbo: Well we have one, an unfinished furniture store, I hope you were including that in your

Mr. Fackel: (Inaudible.)

Ms. DeSorbo: I would like to come back and not ask some questions, but give some other information, unless you'd like me to do that now.

Ms. Adams: You have the floor, if you'd like to do it, in 5 minutes we are going to Recess cause we need to Call the Town Council Meeting to Order and then Recess back (inaudible).

Ms. DeSorbo: I think I will wait and come back then.

Jack Traver, 795 Park Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Traver: I would like to give a little input as a member of the Economic Development Commission. First I want to commend the salesman from Texas, Joe, for a great presentation. I've sat with him at a number of meetings (inaudible) great guy to have as a salesman and he's good at what he does. Also I just wanted to say that Joe Seacrist and Joe McGrail, the Chairman of the Economic Development Commission and Joe Seacrist as our staff person do an outstanding job in the area of economic development for the Town of Watertown and especially in these adverse business conditions that we have. So with that in mind I humbly disagree with their position. And I voted that way so we have a difference of opinion and that's perfectly acceptable (inaudible).

What is this brought out by the Buxton representative is that typically what this addresses is the national chains which we don't have a lot of in the Town of Watertown and I think that's great. We have local businesspeople, your friends, relatives, and neighbors who are in business in the retail end of things in the Town of Watertown who as members of the community also give back a lot to the (inaudible) and that's a positive.

Typically national chains take the profits and are sent or returned to France, in the case of one big product that I have in mind, and also (inaudible) one big one in Arkansas, but in terms of the local people that work hard as sole businesspeople, they return wealth, money, activities, donations, contributions back into our Town, so personally I think local businesses are better for the community than national chains. So that's one of the reasons why I don't think, I think that's a good idea to vote no on this proposal tonight. And if you leave before the vote, you might as well have stayed at home (inaudible). Hopefully this won't be long.

What happens and this gentleman is absolutely right, and he gave an example of a town in California, but what happens is the south and west is that the population of the country is moving in that direction so you have hopefully (inaudible) or big community developments where the people all (inaudible) anywhere to shop because the migration in this country is south and west. We are just the opposite where we have a stable economy and you have (inaudible) Watertown (inaudible).

Ms. Adams, Moderator, called a Recess at 7:30 p.m. (to Call the Regular Meeting to Order).

Ms. Adams, Moderator, Reconvened the Special Town Meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Mr. Traver: The national economy, the state economy, and the local economy is terrible and (inaudible) every one of us knows it, it impacts some of us extremely negative, (inaudible) weather the storm and (inaudible) and to think that I (inaudible) about the Economic Development Commission is that we do what we can to help local businesses get through the permitting process to start the business or help them (inaudible) the Chamber of Commerce activities and I think that's great, but in terms of the national chain they really are imposed upon a local community for (inaudible). That's (inaudible) but otherwise the local businesses, they don't help out the community itself. It may be a convenience, and you may not have to travel that far to buy shoes or underwear, but that's the town's price to pay for a little bit of convenience. So anyway at some point the economy is going to turn around and then the retail is going to come knocking on our door at their expense, knocking on our door to locate in Watertown, and it's not going to cost us anything, the taxpayers, the landowners, and businesspeople will trade land for business and that's fine, that's wonderful, but it's not going to cost us anything.

Now in terms of the local revenue, we usually have to look at things in terms of investments or expenses, but in this case we have a third ingredient - that's called gambling. So what we have before us is a proposal for \$65,000 for the Townspeople to gamble on the possibility that the national chains that this will attract will be a positive for the Town of Watertown, so this big guy, the (inaudible) convention in Las Vegas, is the gambling center so the two planes are totally unrelated, but my question to you as residents and taxpayers of Watertown, do you want to roll the dice? Are you here tonight to roll the dice or are you here tonight to make a sobering decision to vote this down? And I suggest you vote no.

Bodhan Wasiutynski, 514 Sylvan Lake Road, Oakville, CT 06779

Mr. Wasiutynski: I don't know what's going on around here. I found out (inaudible) the voters of Watertown are having a meeting to discuss the (inaudible). What I did hear was a 40 minute sales pitch from an out of town company, no (inaudible) 40 minutes, I don't like it, I don't want it, I didn't ask for it. I was here to place a vote, the voters of Watertown, not to get a sales pitch. Now, we look at (inaudible) an annual fee to get updated information.

Mr. McGrail: You're wrong, there are no additional fees.

Mr. Wasiutynski: Thank you for the correction. We also (inaudible). Who is going to pay for that? Who is going to be saddled and who is going to pay for that?

Ms. Adams: That's not part of this proposal here, this is all about the study, that's something additional.

Mr. Wasiutynski: Money, were already committed to spend more money to send somebody here that's not (inaudible). A convention in the (inaudible). Yes, give us the \$65,000 and throw it on red. (Inaudible.) Doing this town any damn good whatsoever.

Leonard Correia, 34 Lilac Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779

Mr. Correia: Mr. Chairman, members of the Council, my fellow taxpayers. I disagree with the previous speaker. Now is the time for this new Town Council to not cater to the needs of a few businesspeople and to listen to the majority of the taxpayers who are forced to pay these annual budget increases. It's time to get some industry and real estate or retail into Watertown, it's long overdue.

Mark Werenko, 636 Platt Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Werenko: What I've done for a living in our town for 40 years is Mark's Garden Center and I didn't want to let this night run long enough where I wouldn't get a chance to stay and I want to vote, I intend to vote no for this for many reasons, but the #1 reason is I don't think that it's fair to have all of us taxpayers pay for a study for a small amount of people that own commercial or retail property. I own retail property, but it's not fair to have all of you pay for me to benefit from that. If I want to promote my business it should be my business responsibility. I intend to vote no.

Guy Buzzancco, 399 Artillery Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Buzzancco: I'm on the Board of Education but I'm not here representing the Board in an official capacity tonight. One of the things I heard is retail development (inaudible). One thing I feel is that it's hard to see how any development at this point could make our economy in this town any worse than it is. (Inaudible) article in the paper last week, comparing Watertown's job prospects. No town in our area, not Thomaston, not Waterbury, not even Naugatuck has lost a greater share of its jobs in the past 8 years than Watertown. In 2000 we had 10,500 jobs in this town, today we have 8,600. We've lost 1,900 jobs in this town in the past 8 years and mine was one of them. We have 9 fewer teachers in our school system this year than we had last year because the townspeople in this town said that they couldn't shoulder the tax burden themselves. They couldn't afford just the current operating budget for our school system. They need help supporting the tax demands of this town. Well folks development helps our economy and so does retail development, it helps increase our jobs and it helps increase the tax money we need to support our essential services and our schools. True, absolutely true, (inaudible) made note of grants but the jobs stay here, (inaudible). The major concern I heard tonight is when retail comes into it can sometimes cannibalize the existing retail, put them out of business. The benefit of this type is they help to find businesses that compliment the existing retailers in this town. Armed with that information we can proactively approach retailers, we can compete with all the towns that don't do studies like this, and we can show them the information that says come to Watertown we have data that says you have a great chance of success here, and folks that information is worth it's weight in gold, and I believe it's a great investment in this town, in its future, and its children. Thank you for listening to me.

Joseph Perugini, 162 Tarbell Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779

Mr. Perugini: I think the problem is business so they can help us pay the taxes. In November I was reading the Town Times, and Mrs. Adams, I believe, made a comment that we had a tough budget and we had no money. Now I have my taxes here, and I have 2 lots that are grandfathered, they are small, and they both went up over 70%. I was paying on one \$930 and now it's \$1,685. Now how can you say we have a tough budget? Anybody here pay less taxes? You all paid more. And all this time we had a tough budget so that means (inaudible). (Tape #1, Side A ended – may have missed some.) I think this was from the Board of Education, one of the Board's members made a comment to the people, well sorry about it, move out. This is terrible. I'm sorry. Thank you.

Frank Brevetti, Malvern Hill Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Brevetti: I (inaudible) tax base but I think the town is blowing smoke again. We've had plenty of opportunities to have a broader tax base. I think we were supposed to have a mall in the Echo Lake Road, of course the Town said we (inaudible) but it brought in traffic, prostitution, (inaudible). We had Stop & Shop, our town fought it for years. We have Kmart wanting to expand, the town didn't want them to expand. So why are we having \$65,000 to have these people tell us what we need and we don't want it?

Barbara DelBuono, 6165 Northfield Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. DelBuono: I came here this evening to hear a presentation from our Town Council as to why we should spend \$65,000 of our tax money on a study. What I was presented with was one of the worst examples of a presentation I have ever seen in my life. We were presented with a huge screen with little tiny cards that no one could read. We are left in the dark and we came out here tonight, spent our time, and I, for one, am angry about this. I will vote no for the simple reason that if they cannot present us with a better presentation than this, what will that presentation look like when they study it?

Gail DeAngelis, 212 Woodruff Avenue, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. DeAngelis: I have a question on a couple of things. The first has to do with, a lot of times within Connecticut we use the example of Canton is really the ideal situation (inaudible) and really turned that into a shopping heaven or (inaudible) for some people and my question to you is were you involved with that economic impact study for that town?

Mr. Fackel: No.

Ms. DeAngelis: Are you familiar with who did that economic impact study?

Mr. Fackel: No, I'm unfamiliar with that community and that project.

Ms. DeAngelis: So you're not familiar with (inaudible) in that community right now?

Mr. Fackel: No.

Ms. DeAngelis: Are you familiar with what's occurred in that economic impact study?

Mr. Fackel: I'm not.

Ms. DeAngelis: For those of you, and I don't know how many of you shop over in Canton, but myself being, my husband (inaudible) being a high end shopper, I will tell you that I would say probably at least 20% or 30% of those stores have closed and they have not been able to fill the vacancies there. They were told I would a (inaudible) that community and what ended up happening now is they have a lot of traffic and very little residents coming into the community.

Another question I have for you, Joe, is you talked about really folks going to Waterbury, Danbury, and Hartford and so can you tell me where are people going in Hartford are shopping, cause I've worked in downtown Hartford now for over 20 years and the only store I know is a CVS on Main Street. People are going to Hartford so I can go there on my lunch hour.

Mr. Fackel: (Inaudible) Hartford and you're right, nobody is shopping in downtown Hartford. They would probably go to West Farms not in Hartford, but West Hartford.

Ms. DeAngelis: Thank you.

Tony Fusco, 192 Bunker Hill Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Fusco: I am related to Mr. Fusco there, but we have nothing in common as far as money goes. My answers or whatever you want to call it to this meeting is we have a town here, I've been in it probably a little over 50 years. In 1952 I was drafted into the service and I went over, went to basic training, left to go overseas to Korea and I ended up in Seattle, Washington. When I went there that was the first time I was ever out of the State of Connecticut. I saw lights out there that I thought I was in a different world. They had mercury lights out there and I couldn't believe the lights, I couldn't believe the system they had out there, the roads, everything. Here when I come back 2 years later I thought to myself Watertown has got to be at least 20 years behind the times because the lights didn't come out in this area, light bulbs that were mercury lights, for about 20 years after I came back. Now as I said, I've been here 50 years in this town, I haven't seen much change in this Town since I've been here.

And I grew up in the area not too far from Watertown, Waterbury, and we have something in the (inaudible) this Town because I appreciate the presentation that the man put up here but I think it was a good presentation, it shows what you have all over the country as far as retail stores, restaurants, and what not, and I can believe what he is saying because I've been around the world. I've been to Florida, California, Mexico, Japan, Canada and I haven't seen anything sprout up in here in Watertown because I think we have trouble in this town with Planning and Zoning. If we could change Planning and Zoning here to open up their eyes a little bit and see that there are other towns, other cities that are prospering. Here in this town I believe we are about 40 years behind the times and I'm not kidding because I've seen many stores open in other places, and like I said, I've been around the world. When I was in Korea, there as nothing over there, absolutely nothing, they had shacks, and I look on the computer now where I was in Pan Lin Jon, I went up one side and down the other in Korea, they had nothing, and today when you look at the computer, the world computer, you can see the buildings there are better than New York City and I can't believe that's the same place I was at when I was in the service.

So here in Watertown I don't see any buildings going up here and if any buildings try to make it here, Planning and Zoning has something around the town that they don't want anything in here. When Stop & Shop tried to come in here, we had a lawsuit against the Town from Stop & Shop. Well I guess we lost the suit, they came into this town. Now of all the people who were against that Stop & Shop, I'd like to know how many of them shop there now (inaudible)? I'm not here for the applause, but this is what gets me in this town. We have 4 or 5 empty stores on Straits Turnpike. They are not filled. I mean I don't understand what the problem is. You have State Dairy there. I understand what's wrong with State Dairy, they have the contaminated soil. Well to me, when you're digging oil out of the ground, and they have oil in that ground, I don't understand what the contamination is. It came out of the ground, why isn't it back in the ground the same way as it came out? They have been kept from doing anything there, and they won't dig up the land because the owners of the land at this point will not dig out the land because it cost them money to do it, and when you have a Zoning Board and you have people that can get on these commissions and get on these boards that have an axe to grind, this is what they hold against the town. They don't want these people doing anything because we don't need them in town. Well I think we do need them because we don't need anymore housing in town, we have a town hall that's falling apart for the last 50 years. We could have bought land many times in this town, but nobody wants to set a foot forward to invest in a little bit of land to do a town hall so here we're looking to spend \$60,000. I don't mind spending the \$65,000 for this study if you have to do it because you will bring in revenue when these buildings come in and set up shop or whatever they're going to do, but when you have a Zoning Board that is so regulated and so that they don't want anybody in this town, you're not going to get anybody.

This is why I said, 40 years behind the times, that's what we are in this town. I said it 20 years ago, that this town eventually is going to be a ghost town and that's what it is getting to be. The children that are educated in this town, not very many of them stick around once they graduate either college or high school to stick around this town. There is nothing here in this town to live on and so they got out of town, they go out and get jobs and better places to live at and this is why Watertown is not going to make it if we don't have retail. We have the place up there on 202, the Fusco junkyard. Everybody is against it. Why? Because it's a big box store? Well if you don't have something in this town it's going to go downhill. This is the way I feel. I've lived here 50 years and that's all I can see, is nothing going up, everything is coming down. We've lost many a job. I used to work at a place that had 232 people, 250 people working. There are no longer 250 people working there, there's only about 30 and I understand that's going to get bought, the place that I used to work at which is ESP on Commercial Street, I understand he's probably going to be moving out of there because he's not going to make it, because of the way things are in town here. It's not because he's paying a lot of taxes, it's just the economy is bad so he won't be able to make it. Thank you.

Tom Winn, 79 Bellemeadow Drive, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Winn: I'd like to talk about (inaudible). Our past, our present, and our future. I moved here 20 years ago (inaudible) because of the schools, good services, good roads, good people in this town (inaudible). Our schools are deteriorating.

Ms. Adams: Order. Whether or not you agree or disagree with him, he has the floor and has the right to speak.

Mr. Winn: All right. If you think that I meant the buildings, I did not. I'm talking about the students and their education. When I came here 20 years ago our school system was one of the best school systems in the State, now we're below 50%. That's what I meant. We had more services that we have now, we had a town hall that was (inaudible), now it's falling apart and that's something that we're really going to need to address. Now are we going to continue to provide the services that we had 20 years ago, or are we going to continue to lose that economic development here (inaudible) past 40 years we've had manufacturing. Manufacturing is gone and manufacturing ever comes back to Watertown there will be plenty of empty buildings (inaudible) but we have no commercial business whatsoever. Now the (inaudible) 20 years, I've been a Republican, I've been a Democrat, I've been an Independent. Make no mistake, the Independents (inaudible but before they were Independents they were Democrats, they were Republicans, and they were responsible in this town for the past 20 years and all we've had for the past 20 years is failed policies. And that's why this town is in the shape we're in now. Now the Republican party ran and (inaudible) better schools, more services, and (people yelling from audience).

Ms. Adams: Okay, he still has the floor.

Mr. Will: And to repair our town hall and (inaudible) and economic development. (Inaudible) if we do not have economic development and we don't do something about this town, there will be no one in the schools, there will be no services, there will be no tax (inaudible) because this town is out of money and if we do not have any kind of increased development in this town, your taxes will go up because there's nothing in this town that we can draw taxes from (inaudible). Cut back? Cut back the schools more and more. Cut back our schools more and more. Well guess what? If we do not learn from our past, if we continue to do the failed policies that we have in the past 20 years and we don't change the attitude and the mindset of this town we have no future. So there are two votes tonight. There is no and there is yes. You can vote no, for the same failed policies in the past 20 years or you can vote yes for the future of our town.

Roger Mitchell, 99 Norway Street, Oakville, CT 06779

Mr. Mitchell: Firestone did nothing to finance the town, (inaudible) Korea, Vietnam, (inaudible) pick up toothpaste, made in China. We don't have any companies that make toothpaste here. As far as raising money (inaudible) the State, Obama our glorious leader, some of our local politicians, better to waste money on something that's not going to happen in your future (Inaudible) put the street lights back in. They should not, (inaudible) should not be used for private land developments. We as the taxpayers are working shorter hours, out of work, or a senior living on a fixed income with no increases for the next 2 years and no stimulus paid out to the seniors which was supposed to be \$250 a year. Burger King (inaudible) two weeks?

(Inaudible) this abuse of money our taxes are going to be paid, goes about \$3.00 a head for everybody in town, and when the taxes go up again this year we will like our other fellow citizens we told them we can't afford it that was by another or the same former school board member. If she wants me to move she better (inaudible). I've been in town for over 60 years, I was raised here, I started here at 3 and I'm 68 now and (inaudible). The (inaudible) puts wear and tear on trucks, not to mention it was all overtime, Christmas night I believe.

Ms. Adams: Roger, you need to stick to the Town Meeting. You can talk about that during Public Participation of the Regular Town Council Meeting.

Mr. Mitchell: (Inaudible.) It just bugs me to see it all being (inaudible). Thank you.

Denise Russ, 135 Porter Street, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Russ: First of all I want to thank Joe for the presentation tonight. I have a couple of questions. When you put this program together does it pertain to all of the (inaudible) in Watertown or just (inaudible)?

Mr. Fackel: That's a good question. What we had proposed was in line (inaudible) community size so it's not going to be intersection, it could be Main Street corridor, it could be more industrial site, the Town (inaudible).

Ms. Russ: Thank you. The other question is I know we have Joe Seacrist (inaudible) that leads to try to bring business or industry into town. What has the Town charged him with in the past year since he has been our employee to try and bring business into town?

Ms. Adams: That would be a question for the Town Council. Do you want to take it Chuck? If you want to ask that question during the Regular Meeting that would be appropriate.

Ms. Russ: (Inaudible.) that's okay I'll come back for that one. (Inaudible) I'm not going to answer it but in an answer to Tony Fusco's question is the Planning and Zoning Commission in the past had (inaudible) not want businesses in town but right now (inaudible) the Planning and Zoning Commission now has people on there that are willing to work (inaudible) policy of change in the way things are going now.

Mr. McGrail: Just to answer a question, Joe mentioned the 3 sections the Town was going to focus on. I've had some very (inaudible) also Planning and Zoning. The key focus or initial focus of this would be Straits Turnpike, Commercial Street, and various sites along Main Street in Watertown and Oakville. That's where we have 40 acres of land and that's where the focus needs to be. If you want to use a better building term, that's about as show ready as Watertown can be. The land needs very little work, things can be built fairly quickly on both sides. We're not talking about every place in town. I'm not going to stand here and tell you that a study like this couldn't support or benefit other parts of town, but the initial focus would be the 40 acres on Commercial Street, Straits Turnpike, and along Main Street in Oakville and Watertown.

Rick Sarandrea, 21 Emile Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779

Mr. Sarandrea: It's a great study. It's actually Real Estate 101. All the national tenants have this done for them. I'll just give you an example. I (inaudible) centers all across the country. Two days before Christmas my tenant calls up and wanted to move into our plaza on 1051 Bluehills Avenue. I (inaudible). I mean I don't think it would benefit the town. The thing is the town and the State have to become more business friendly. It's true. We have a lot of applicants come forth. I was in Vegas 7 years ago. They were ready to put an (inaudible) in this Town. Now Outlook is how many stores. They say 180 day turnover. They can't sit around like Stop & Shop and wait and be stewed and take a year or two to move in. Once they start a lease they have 180 days to open that store. Now with that being said, we have to get more business friendly. I'm not just saying retail. It could be a shoemaker to a hardware store, whatever, you have to look at each application and welcome them and try to help them come in here. It's not just Watertown, it's the whole State. There are factories going up in (inaudible) because it's cheaper to do business and less taxes. We need to hear that? That's what we are getting.

You can do all the surveys you want in the world, nothing is . . . they know where they want to go, trust me. They know. I rode a plane with a fellow 3 years ago that wanted to do an Outpost in downtown Waterbury. I said why don't you spend your (inaudible). They were going to spend all of their money themselves, they wanted no grants, they wanted nothing. Mr. Giordano said wait and see what we do. Look at Waterbury. Look and see what we did. The only good thing down there is Walgreens and we put it in and Walgreens wanted to be there. And they know where they want to be. They know these surveys, they just hit a button. Would it be a good thing to do, and the other thing, correct, that shopping center and convention hall that's not (inaudible). We've sold and bought plazas and we go see national tenants there they are there, it cost you \$400 or \$500 a day to go into that. There's one coming up now in New York in February. That would be a great thing for you to go to and bring your pamphlets, sell Watertown if that's what you want to do, but the thing is we have to be ready cause if you do get somebody that we're ready to look at your application and at least give them the satisfaction to look at it and say you know something, we're going to try to help you. A big box is not coming to this town, so everybody should just get that out of their head. They're not going to go in there and blast all of that rock. The only thing that we may have is a (inaudible) outlet store up there because it's great topo, slab on grade, they're all little houses and maybe that's what we might get, but other than that we have to get Connecticut and Watertown to become business friendly or we're going to be educating, whether it's industry, commercial, retail, like I said, right down to a shoemaker, we have to take everybody's application and look at it in a friendly manner.

Tom Olson, Tarbell Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779

Mr. Olson: Over the past few years I noticed a lot of commercial development in this town. We (inaudible) Davis Street, Main Street, Advanced Auto Store, Carvel (inaudible) but I still pay more taxes every year. I hear a zero tax increase, but I still pay more taxes and (inaudible). And to add injury to insult you took away my street light. Why should the taxpayers in Town spend money on a study that will only profit the landowners – no way. (Inaudible) Waterbury taxes revitalize downtown Waterbury, no it didn't. I don't think it's going to help. Thank you very much.

Kevin Killeen, 430 Northfield Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Killeen: I'm glad to see that this meeting works. And I think it's an important part of our democratic process. Unfortunately we do have an opportunity to have ideas in our community that we don't have at the federal level. There were speakers tonight both for and against this study. I know that in all likelihood I will not convince anybody to change their vote but I would like to share that last year's combined budget for our town was roughly \$61,000,000. Based on that the study was then 1/10 of 1% on the risk that we could bring in some business that could reduce the tax burden to elderly who desperately need it, to our municipal functions and to our education function. I'm very concerned having worked on both sides of our municipal government, both the Board's side and the Council's side that we're left with (inaudible) to the best of my knowledge, we heard two people who (inaudible) speak this evening, all were opposed to the idea. Mr. Traver called it gambling. I would think that I'd like to think that we could look at it more like an investment with risks. The reason I say that is if you have a retirement account, like I did and we saw 50% lost through the market, I still have some (inaudible) so that's the value.

Many of our business owners look to block the development along 262 and I know that's a hotdog issue, I don't want to go there, but Mr. Traver is a businessman, he owns a business called Traver Electric in Waterbury and I was wondering, you do one of two things, if Mr. Traver would be willing to relocate his business in Watertown or if he would be willing to supplement our function, you town function, our education function with more of (inaudible) from his taxes? Similarly I would ask Mr. Werenko given say a zero increase budget like we had last year, there was still an increase our taxes, so there it is, even with a zero increased budget we are looking at increased taxes. On 1/10 of 1% we could try to find some business and the gentleman is correct, some people said (inaudible) explain it because I couldn't read the data and that was a disappointment, but nonetheless the basis of the discussion is a good one and it puts a question in each of our own decisions, which is do you want to pay more, local business owners, do you want to pay more in taxes, local family owners, property owners, do you want to pay more in taxes? We have to sustain our town services (inaudible). Real cuts (inaudible) made, real cuts are made.

When Councilman Winn came up and mentioned some issues about education, he was wrong. We are not at the bottom 50%. If that is correct, if I'm iffy actually, it's much, much lower than that. In many areas of our performance we are the lowest in our DERTH, our demographic reference group, and in terms of (inaudible) we also have fallen dramatically. These statistics are available (Tape #2, Side A ended – may have missed some). ct.gov. Anyway three is just some information for you. Some people to consider. Again, I don't have the hope of telling someone which way to vote, that's just information to consider and thank you for listening to me.

Judy Wick, 1051 Northfield Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Wick: I would like to ask if any analysis has been done on, if the company (inaudible) assuming that we put retail into those 40 acres, because we're in Connecticut we don't get sales tax revenue, we don't get added along revenue and stuff like that so my question is we have (inaudible) on those property and the property tax from it and if you have that number, minus the number that we get in property tax now, either from (inaudible) or from an old building that isn't being used, what that amount would be, how long it would take us to get back the \$65,000 or whatever that would (inaudible)?

Mr. McGrail: Most of the analysis we can come up with we would have to put up a retail building somewhere between 75,000 and 100,000 square feet total. And that would break us even or maybe even slightly ahead of the cost of Buxton's proposal which is now \$59,000.

Ms. Wick: Okay and in one year, once that building was up?

Mr. McGrail: Correct. Just a couple of issues here. The focus, as I mentioned a few weeks ago, is really going to be the 40 acres of useful land that falls in Straits Turnpike, Commercial Street, and along Main Street in Oakville and Watertown. Specifically we're talking about sites like the Sealy property, State Dairy property, next to LaBonne's market there is about 13 acres of land behind LaBonne's (inaudible), there is also a number of empty buildings along Straits Turnpike. I think what this type of proposal gives us is an opportunity to go back to businesses that we want in Town. I'm sort of (inaudible). Here I am I'm here to make the (inaudible) but I don't understand what people are saying about not wanting to pay, have the town pay to support business owners or land owners. But this gives us the unique opportunity to draw the businesses into town that best fit Watertown. So we're looking at the 11 or 13 acres next to LaBonne's, we're looking at the State Dairy property, we're looking at Sealy Mattress, we're looking at all these other sites, we are at the mercy of the developer who has no interest in Watertown whatsoever, he could care less if we want a pawn shop or an Applebee's.

We did a survey a couple of years ago and the majority of residents in Town wanted a bookstore. I think a bookstore is fantastic. If we could get State Dairy property and get a Barnes and Noble up there that would make me happy, but the reality is unless you do a study such as Buxton is proposing we don't even know if Watertown is even suited for a bookstore. What this will tell us is exactly what type of businesses will move to this town. I think that's the key to this whole thing. As Kevin alluded to, hopefully people are not going to get (inaudible) on 262, that's not our purpose. Even if 262 was to happen, we're talking about years and years away. What we are talking about now are 40 acres of land that can be put to use in a relatively short period of time.

Just to show you how well the State of Connecticut is willing to help a Town like Watertown expand its business park and to make it known across the State, 5 years ago Economic Development put together a proposal and requested that the State put up one sign on Route 8 northbound by Exit 37 and one by the southbound coming from Thomaston. It took us 5 years for the State of Connecticut to give us those signs. (Inaudible) signs. Sean Williams got those signs. When we went and asked for a simple sign on the highway because our point was the (inaudible) in that area you can't (inaudible) industrial park. You can't (inaudible) industrial park and people didn't even know we had a business park. So we put a sign on Route 8 that says "Watertown Business Park, Exit 37" took 5 years to do. So if you think the State of Connecticut is going to help us in any way, shape, or form, bring manufacturing jobs back to the State of Connecticut, that one instrument should tell you we're wrong. And when we went to their office, we went to D.O.T., we got shot down at D.O.T. We appealed to D.O.T., we appealed to the Governor who gave our request back to D.O.T. who shot it down for a third time, so if it wasn't for Sean Williams introducing a bill into Congress to get that sign on the highway we still wouldn't have that sign.

So we can talk about what's going to happen with manufacturing jobs, and I've been in manufacturing my whole life, for 35 years I've worked in a factory so that's where my love is and my love is not retail, not for commercial, but the reality is we need retail, we need manufacturing, we need a blend of everything and I think if we can utilize these 40 acres, we don't need a massive study to do this, these are existing retail areas. We're not asking anyone to change zoning or do anything like that. This is just filling the blanks in retail areas where land is already designated for retail, we want to fill in the empty spots there. Thank you.

Tom Walsh, Longview Avenue, Watertown, CT 06795

Mr. Walsh: A lot of people come up here and talk about the future and I'm 39 years old. I have a wife and daughter and we're planning on having another child, we want to raise our kids in this Town. I am the future of this town and there are other people like me, my age and younger. You have to bring some retail here. The responsible Planning and Zoning people do that, the manufacturing comes after the retail, because a manufacturer is not going to bring a company into a town that has nothing. And with manufacturing comes jobs. Think about the future of this town.

Nancy Rahuba, 99 Old Farms Road, Watertown, CT 06795

Ms. Rahuba: The first thing I want to mention is that retail is not economic development, it doesn't create jobs, stores close, others open, and the jobs just move around. So there isn't any economic development increase at all. It feels to me like we're looking at this as kind of like the Field of Dreams approach to development. If we build something (inaudible) it doesn't work that way. Retail is not the best taxpayer for this community. There are many types of retail that are (inaudible) net tax laws because they require more in services than we get from the taxes. Big box generates net tax losses, shopping centers generate net tax losses, fast food restaurants generate net tax losses. I (inaudible) but I don't want (inaudible) impact study to show which kinds of (inaudible) are actually going to help us and help lower our taxes and not go ahead and spend money to attract the kind of taxpayers we know are going to make our taxes go up, because national studies have shown these are not taxpayers to show a positive net tax revenue. Thank you.

Doreen DeSorbo, Franklin Avenue, Oakville, CT 06779

Ms. DeSorbo: You know one thing that is so obvious is that we all, we must love our town a lot or we wouldn't live here or we wouldn't be here. We have so many (inaudible) disagreements. Some of it is because some of us know something that others don't, some of it is because some of us feel something more than others, and it's wonderful because every 20 years we get to go through this retail thing again. That's another thing about Watertown. We always have to have something that's contentious. It's part of the nature of our town, there is nothing wrong with that, but one thing we can all agree on, one thing (inaudible) is that we're all feeling stretched. We're all feeling the burden. We all feel that we don't have enough money, and if there is enough money it's not going to the right places so obviously there is not enough money. This is something we all agree on and let's move it from there.

We all want development in our town that doesn't, okay, we don't want (inaudible) up on 262 okay? (Inaudible). We all want something that is going to benefit this Town, benefit the majority of people in Town. Now retail has become this very small specialized thing. Most of you know that I've spoken against that a few times in the past few years. The reason that I am against retail development, and I'm not against all business, industrial, manufacturing, anything that comes in here that will help our tax base and not interfere tremendously with most of our qualities of life. But the retail thing, I've been a part of C.C.P.W., I built their website. I am a website designer and I do not put anything on a website that I haven't verified. I do the research. Every link to every study on the C.C.P.W. website has been verified by me. This is what I do for a living. This is what I care about.

Yesterday morning I got up and said you know it's been a year or two since I updated that website, there may be some studies that I'm not aware of that may give me a better (inaudible) perspective. I (inaudible) and my (inaudible) approval was retail good for communities. I was looking for the positives. I was looking to see if there were any studies that had been done which is why I asked this gentleman about that. When you Google that phrase, you come up with a whole bunch of negatives. There isn't one good thing in this entire thing. I said okay fine, let's see what (inaudible) just rehashes the same old stuff. And just so you know the same old stuff has to do with an economic impact of local businesses versus chains, and there are studies and studies and studies that will tell you that locally owned stores generate much bigger benefits for the local economy than national chains. Someone just mentioned how it would be great to have a bookstore in town. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a Barnes and Noble. Well if you have, a and here's a quote from one of the studies, "based on your spending \$100 in (inaudible) \$13.00 worth of local economic activity while spending \$100 at a local store generated \$45 in local economic activity." What do you want? I would really hope that some local merchant would (inaudible) bookstore. I'm not all that hot on a chain coming in because we can all get in a car and in 15 minutes we can (inaudible) at Barnes and Nobles, we don't really need this and obviously economically we don't need it. Existing businesses – every study shows that our existing businesses will suffer, many will close, many will have to downsize.

Why do we care? We need to care about this because of our tax base. We can't lose local businesses in favor of some new something and expect that we're being (inaudible) out. We need the taxes, we need those jobs. And a lot of people they say well you know, Bob LaBonne whatever, LaBonne's are against this and all that. How many of your kids have worked for LaBonne's? How many kids have had a good experience and made a decent wage with people who were willing to work with them if it were prom time or something else? How many people worked at LaBonne's full time and actually have benefits? The difference between a WalMart Super whatever and LaBonne's goes beyond that. How much does LaBonne's contribute to the food bank every year? You all know cause you stop at LaBonne's that they are always looking for something like that. They are always giving back to the community. If you take your receipts and you give them to the library, they will give the library a certain amount of that.

I'll tell you my story. A few years ago I volunteered for the Lego team. I was running 3 teams. We realized at 1:00 a.m., and we were leaving very early the next morning, that we needed specialized batteries. Unfortunately the only place that had that in Town was Radio Shack. I ran down to Radio Shack and it's the only place (inaudible) and I asked the manager if he could please give me a discount, considering I needed a \$60 battery coming out of my own pocket. (Inaudible.) I verified what I was doing. I had to stop at Chubba's, a local business who was donating breakfast for these kids, and the manager basically said I'm sorry, everything has to go through corporate. Can you just give me a 10% discount, I kept telling (inaudible) no sorry, have to go to corporate. Okay, compare that to our local. Now Radio Shack you might think is local, but they are run by corporate. These are the things that are not just, these are intangibles. This is important, this is important to all of us. And I will move on very quickly. Thank you so much.

You know the one thing that all of you that are for retail really need to understand or look at or research or something is that every study that has ever been done, and I mean every one, as of yesterday, to my best knowledge, when they analyze what's going on, and oh by the way, the new studies are (inaudible) by the way. They are done by nationally known economic planning firms now. Here's one from RKG Associates, economic planning and real estate consultants, conquered and captured study.

Unidentified Person in Audience: Paid for by C.C.P.W.?

Ms. Adams: Excuse me, she has the floor. You may not agree with what she's saying but she has a right to speak, she has the floor.

Mr. Brevetti: You said they weren't talking about \$65,000. This is not about the \$65,000.

Ms. Adams: She has the floor.

Ms. DeSorbo: This is the \$65,000. You know why it's the \$65,000?

Mr. Brevetti: (Inaudible.)

Ms. Adams: She has the floor, Frank.

Unidentified Person in Audience: (Inaudible) you did everybody else?

Ms. Adams: I (inaudible).

Mr. Brevetti: Yes, you did.

Unidentified Person in Audience: (Inaudible) the floor.

Ms. Adams: Okay, I think we're just about at the end of this, she has the floor, whether you agree with what she's saying or not she has the right to her opinion.

Ms. DeSorbo: I'm not trying to give you an opinion. I'm trying to tell you do the research. 6 hours of research and this is what it says. This is what it says. If you spend dollars in chains in your town, what you're doing is sending most of that money away. That's a fact. The other thing is that the brand new studies show in every case all around this country and you can take a look at the graphs, retail is net loss. It's always under the line. Some residential is also under the line, I don't know how you can have a town without residential but you can live without the retail. If any of you, instead of mouthing back, would like to review some of the research, you too could find this. Anyone can find this. Get on the computer, look at Google. The sad thing is the knowledge is there. I'll be voting against this simply because this is not what we need. If we're going to spend money in this town for an economic impact study we need a full fiscal impact study, not (inaudible) retail. Thanks.

Ms. Adams: Is there anyone else who'd like to address?

Mr. Tom Hill: I have a . . .

Ms. Adams: Tom, you'll have the floor.

Mr. Hill: I'll wait, I'll defer to Denis.

Mr. O'Sullivan: Can we move the question?

Ms. Adams: To move the question will take a 2/3 vote of this meeting. Is there a second?

MOTION: (Mr. O'Sullivan, sec. Mr. Unidentified)) to Move the question.

Discussion: None

MOTION PASSED IN FAVOR OF MOVING THE QUESTION BY SHOW OF HANDS

Ms. Adams: Motion passes. At this time the question has been moved, there is no more discussion, no more public comment.

Mr. Hill: I deferred to Denis.

Ms. Adams: (Inaudible) no there is no Okay at this time if anyone has not received their little green piece of paper where you can circle yes or no, if you circled yes that means you are in favor of the town meeting spending \$65,000 for the study. If you say no, circle no, that means you are not in favor. I'm going to appoint Elaine Ayotte and Sue Ledell as counters of the meeting. There is the box right there.

Ms. Adams: I have the results. In favor, yes votes were 63; no votes, 118. 182 ballots were given out, one was rejected by (inaudible), so they're calling it 182 ballots given out tonight.

In Favor: 63

Opposed: 118

Abstained: 1

MOTION FAILED BY BALLOT VOTE (63-118-1)

Special Town Meeting Adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine H. Adams,, Moderator

Approved: _____
Lynn M. LaForme, Clerk