



City Council

Hearings Meeting

~ Final ~

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Gladys Oyola-Lopez

Monday, April 24, 2023

7:00 PM

Springfield City Hall -- Council Chambers

Hearings

7:00 PM Meeting called to order on April 24, 2023 at Springfield City Hall -- Council Chambers, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Kateri B. Walsh	At-Large Councilor	Remote	
Michael A. Fenton	Ward 2 Councilor	Present	
Maria Perez		Absent	
Tracye Whitfield	At Large City Councilor	Present	
Zaida Govan	Ward 8 City Councilor	Present	
Timothy C. Allen	Ward 7 Councilor	Present	
Malo Brown	Ward 4 Councilor	Remote	
Justin Hurst	At Large Councilor	Remote	
Lavar Click-Bruce	Ward 5 City Councilor	Present	
Melvin A. Edwards	Ward 3 Councilor	Present	
Sean Curran	At-Large Councilor	Present	
Victor Davila	Ward 6 Councilor	Remote	
Jesse Lederman	President	Present	

Moment of Silence - Pledge of Allegiance

Petitions

1. Petition (ID # 7309)

23-02 Rifle Street One Way

HISTORY:

03/27/23 City Council CONTINUE VOTE
Next: 04/24/23

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Hector Velez from DPW spoke to this petition:

Change from 2 way to 1 way. The street is too narrow. From Central to Chester. Will be safer for the community.

There were no questions from the council.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Rifle St map (PDF)
- Rifle St. view (PDF)
- 2-6-2023 Agenda (PDF)

- TRAFFIC comm mins 2 7 2023 (PDF)

RESULT:	ADOPTED [12 TO 0]
AYES:	Walsh, Fenton, Whitfield, Govan, Allen, Brown, Hurst, Click-Bruce, Edwards, Curran, Davila, Lederman
ABSENT:	Maria Perez

Special Permits

2. Special Permit (ID # 7312)

For a Special Permit for Motor Vehicle Sales at the Property Known as 1000 Worcester Street (12525-0080) (Book#24814/Page#493), as Allowed by M.G.L. and the Springfield Zoning Ordinance Article 4, Table 4-4, Section 12.1.

Request:	See Above
Owner:	1000 Worcester Street, LLC
By:	Maria Serra
Petitioner:	Silver Auto, Inc.
By:	Maria Serra

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Petitioner, Maria Serra of Pro Auto Air Service, spoke on permit:

used car license for up to 15 vehicles.

No opposition.

Councilor Govan makes comment on petitioners did reach out and meet with abutters. Received letter of support from the IOCC.

No further questions.

On the reasons:

COUNCILOR WALSH - YES

COUNCILOR FENTON - YES

COUNCILOR PEREZ - YES

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD - ABSENT

COUNCILOR GOVAN - YES

COUNCILOR ALLEN - YES

COUNCILOR BROWN - YES

COUNCILOR HURST - YES

COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE - YES

COUNCILOR EDWARDS - YES

COUNCILOR CURRAN - YES

COUNCILOR DAVILA - YES

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN - YES

ATTACHMENTS:

- Worcester_St_1000_Tax_Formal (PDF)
- Worcester_St_1000_2023 (PDF)

RESULT: ADOPTED [11 TO 0]

AYES: Walsh, Fenton, Whitfield, Allen, Brown, Hurst, Click-Bruce, Edwards, Curran, Davila, Lederman

ABSTAIN: Zaida Govan

ABSENT: Maria Perez

3. Special Permit (ID # 7313)

For a Special Permit Under the Regional Shopping Center Overlay District as Well as the Construction of a New Retail Development (With a Total Floor Area of Over 150,000 Square Feet), to Include a Number of Special Permitted Uses (See Attached Information), at the Properties Known as 1685 Boston Road (01655-0415)(Book#21891/Page#196), 1655 Boston Road (01655-0425)(Book#10726/Page#91), 1719 Boston Road (01655-0405)(Book#19696/Page#240) and NS Fernbank Road (05070-0060)(Book#10726/Page#91), as Allowed by M.G.L. and the Springfield Zoning Ordinance Article 8, Section 8.4 and Article 4, Table 4-4.

Request:	See Above
Owner:	Eastfield Mall Associates LLC, 1685 Boston Road LLC and Boston Road Retail, LLC
By:	See attached
Petitioner:	Onyx Springfield Crossing, LLC
By:	Brian Kaplan

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

SETH STRATTON, SPOKE ON BEHALF OF ONYX SPRINGFIELD CROSSING, LLC:

REGIONAL OVERLAY SHOPPING DISTRICT, REQUIRES A SPECIAL PERMIT. EASTFIELD MALL STRUCTURE NEEDS TO COME DOWN, ALSO REQUIRES A SPECIAL PERMIT. MET WITH THE IOCC AND RECEIVED A FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION.

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN ASKED THAT THE HANDOUT BE SENT TO CITY COUNCIL STAFF TO BE SHARED TO COUNCILORS THAT WERE NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT IN THE CHAMBERS PER THE REQUEST OF COUNCILOR WALSH .

ANTON MELCHIONDA, 140 FARM STREET -ANDOVER, MA, SPOKE AS THE PRINCIPAL OF THE ONYX SPRINGFIELD CROSSING, LLC. SPOKE ON THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE EASTFIELD MALL PROPERTY. SPOKE OF THE OUTREACH, FEEDBACK AND COLLABORATION THAT WENT INTO THE PROJECT. \$65-\$80 MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT. STATED THAT BENEFITS INCLUDE \$1.7 MILLION DOLLAR IN REAL ESTATE TAX REVENUE, 800 PERMANENT NOT INCLUDING THE TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION JOBS.

JOHN HESHEN FROM PHP SPOKE ON THE DETAILS OF THE REDEVELOPMENT. THEY ARE THE CIVIL ENGINEERS ON THIS PROJECT. CURRENTLY THE MALL IS 520,00 SQUARE FEET OF RETAIL/RESTAURANT AND CINEMA, THE NEW STRUCTURE WILL BE 361 SQUARE FEET. REVIEWED THE HANDOUT THAT WAS SUBMITTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING. 20 % OF THE ENTIRE SITE IS GREEN SPACE, 2.9% INCREASE IN OPEN SPACE. WILL ALSO ADD LANDSCAPING IN THE PARKING LOT. DEVELOPMENT WILL REDUCE STORMWATER RUN OFF.

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN NOTED THAT THE PROPONENTS WERE AT 19 MINUTES OF THE 20 MINUTES ALLOTTED TO THE PROPONENTS.

XIOMARA DELOBATO 20 COOLEY DRIVE, WILBRAHAM, MA OF WMASS EDC SPOKE ON THE PROJECT. 43 BUSINESSES AT THE MALL. RELOCATE AND SECURE FUNDING. GOAL TO RETAIN BUSINESSES. WORKED ONE ON ONE WITH EACH BUSINESS. WORKING WITH TENANTS ON RETENTION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. TENANTS WERE PAYING RENT AT A VERY LOW MARKET RATE, WHICH HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST HURDLE. THE GOAL IS TO HAVE TENANTS SUSTAIN AFTER RELOCATION. HOMES LOGIC IS THE COMMERCIAL BROKER WORKING WITH MALL TENANTS. WANTS ALL THE BUSINESSES TO BE SET UP FOR SUCCESS. FUNDING ASPECTS, WORKING WITH SPRINGFIELD, HOLYOKE AND WILBRAHAM AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVE RAMOS PUT AN EARMARK IN. STAKEHOLDERS: MASSDEVELOPMENT LEASING GAP COVERAGE AND COMMERCIAL MORTGAGES, TD BANK IS DOING FINANCIAL ASSESSMENTS. HOPE CDC AND THE LATINO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION HAVE OFFICIALLY COMMITTED \$20K FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND WORKING WITH BUSINESSES ON E-COMMERCE AS AN OPTION.

ATTORNEY STRATTON ASKED FOR MORE TIME.

COUNCILOR FENTON MADE A MOTION TO EXTEND THE TIME BY 5 FOR THE PROPONENTS

COUNCILOR EDWARDS SECONDED THE MOTION

COUNCILOR DAVILA WANTS TO ENSURE UNIFORMITY FOR THE OPPONENTS AS WELL.

COUNCILOR WALSH - YES

COUNCILOR FENTON - YES

COUNCILOR PEREZ - ABSENT

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD - YES

COUNCILOR GOVAN - YES

COUNCILOR ALLEN - YES

COUNCILOR BROWN - YES

COUNCILOR HURST - YES

COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE - YES

COUNCILOR EDWARDS - YES

COUNCILOR CURRAN - YES

COUNCILOR DAVILA - YES

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN - YES

DANESH PATEL OF 1500 MAIN STREET SPOKE IN SUPPORT AND ASSISTING WITH RELOCATING TENANTS.

CHRISTOPHER DUBOIS, 455 BRECKWOOD BLVD, OWNER AND FOUNDER OF THE HOT TABLE SPOKE IN FAVOR OF THE REDEVELOPMENT.

LAMONT CLEMENS, 64 THOMPSON STREET, SPOKE IN FAVOR OF THE PROJECT, SEES AS A HUGE WIN FOR SPRINGFIELD.

FORMER MAYOR MARY HURLEY SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT, STATED EASTFIELD MALL IS A DINOSAUR. MENTIONED \$500,000 IN FREE USE OF THE PROPERTY FOR THE EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE MALL UNTIL IT CLOSES.

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN NOTED THAT A LETTER IN SUPPORT WAS SUBMITTED BY THE IOCC WHICH HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO THE COUNCIL.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD STATED THAT SHE WAS ONLY ABLE TO SPEAK TO ATTY STRITTON TODAY FOR 15 MINUTES, AND NO ONE ELSE ON THE TEAM. THINKS THAT THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL PLAN. LIKES THE OUTDOOR SPACE AND TREES, AND THE FACT THAT IT IS OUTSIDE. THE COMMENT WAS MADE THAT THIS WILL SPUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SPRINGFIELD, BUT THE SAME WAS SAID FOR MGM.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD ASKED ABOUT THE HIRING POLICY AS IT PERTAINS TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.

MR. MELCHIONDA NOTED THAT E.D.I. THRESHOLD IS 10%.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD ASKED ABOUT THE CREATION OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR EMERGING TALENT. MR. MELCHIONDA AGREED TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD ASKED IF THE PETITIONER HAS RECEIVED ANY FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT.

MR. MELCHIONDA SAID NO, BUT EXPLORING ALL THE OPTIONS. COUNCILOR WHITFIELD THANKED THE PETITIONER FOR HIS CANDIDNESS AND WILLINGNESS TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

COUNCILOR GOVAN SPOKE ON THE SPECIAL PERMIT AND NOTED THAT THE IOCC IS IN SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT. SHE ASKED THE WMASS EDC ABOUT THE CURRENT 30 TENANTS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN PLACED AND THEIR FUTURES.

XIOMARA DELOBATO OF WMASS EDC - COMMON CAPITAL AND TD BANK HAVE BEEN PARTNERS AS WELL AS NEIGHBORING MUNICIPALITIES. WILBRAHAM, LUDLOW, AGAWAM AND HOLYOKE. REPRESENTATIVE RAMOS HAS FILED AN EARMARK OF \$150k TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES AS WELL.

COUNCILOR BROWN SPOKE REGARDING HIS CONCERNS AS IT PERTAINS TO THE MALL TENANTS.

SPOKE REGARDING THE KIOSK OWNERS. MS. DELOBATO NOTED THAT THE OTHER 30 ARE IN ACTIVE SEARCHES. 8 ARE NON-RESPONSIVE OR NOT READY TO ADDRESS THE RELOCATION.

WMASS EDC IS WORKING TO ASSIST IN THE RELOCATION OF THE EXISTING BUSINESSES.

COUNCILOR BROWN ASKED IF TOWER SQUARE WOULD BE AN OPTION. MS. DELOBATO NOTED THAT WMASS EDC IS ONE OPTION AMONG OTHERS BASED ON WHAT IS BENEFICIAL FOR THE BUSINESS. TENANTS ALSO LOOKING AT GASOLINE ALLEY, HOME LOGIC IS THE COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE BROKER WORKING WITH TENANTS.

MALO BROWN ASKED WHY NO TENANTS WERE AT THE MEETING TONIGHT. SETH STRATTON NOTED THAT BRIAN KAPLAN FROM ONYX HAS BEEN MEETING WITH TENANTS AND THEY WERE NOTIFIED OF THE PROJECT.

COUNCILOR BROWN ASKED IF THE TENANTS WERE HAPPY ABOUT THE PROJECT. ATTY STRATTON MENTIONED THAT THE TENANTS HAVE SUBSIDIZED RENT AT THE EASTFIELD MALL, AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIND SPACE WITH SIMILAR RENTS COSTS.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD NOTED THAT SHE HAS SPOKEN TO SOME OF THE SMALL BUSINESSES AND NOTED THAT THEY ARE HAPPY TO HAVE SUPPORT OF ANY KIND. ALSO ASKED ABOUT THE STATE FUNDING THAT REPRESENTATIVE RAMOS IS PURSUING. XIOMARA STATED THEY ARE LOOKING FOR A BACK UP IN CASE FUNDING DOES NOT GO THROUGH IN THE STATE HOUSE.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD ASKED TIM SHEEHAN , CDO 36 ECKINGTON STREET, IF THERE WAS ANY SUPPORT THAT THE CITY WILL BE GIVING TO THESE SMALL BUSINESSES. MR. SHEEHAN NOTED THAT HE HAS BEEN WORKING WITH A HANDFUL OF SMALL BUSINESSES WHO ARE CHOOSING TO LOCATE THEIR BUSINESSES IN SPRINGFIELD. THE CITY HAS A SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD ASKED IF THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EXISTING BUSINESSES TO BE PART OF THE REDEVELOPMENT. SETH STRATTON NOTED THAT THERE ARE SMALLER 700 SQUARE FOOT STORE FRONTS THAT WOULD WORK FOR THE SMALLER BUSINESSES THAT ARE CURRENTLY TENANTS OF THE EASTFIELD MALL. COUNCILOR WHITFIELD NOTED HER SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT AND THANKED MR. MELCHIONDA.

COUNCILOR HURST ASKED HOW MANY TENANTS WOULD BE IN THE NEW PROJECT.

BRIAN KAPLAN FROM ONYX PARTNERS NOTED THAT THERE WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY 17 BUILDINGS ON SITE, 6-7 RESTAURANTS, 20 RETAIL STORES.

COUNCILOR HURST ASKED TIM SHEEHAN IF THERE HAS BEEN DISCUSSION REGARDING CITY FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT. MR. SHEEHAN NOTED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF TAX BREAKS HAS BEEN DISCUSSED.

COUNCILOR HURST ASKED PHIL DROMEY IF THE TENANTS WERE NOTIFIED. MR. DROMEY SAID THAT AS PART OF THE SPECIAL PERMIT REQUIREMENT THE ABUTTERS ARE NOTIFIED. HOWEVER, THE TENANTS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO BE NOTIFIED.

COUNCILOR WALSH ASKED IF A TRADER JOE'S WILL BE A TENANT. AS SOON AS THERE ARE FULL COMMITMENTS, THEY WILL SHARE WITH THE PUBLIC. IF THE TRADE SCHOOLS WOULD BE INVOLVED. THEY WILL BE REACHING OUT TO ALL AREA HIGH SCHOOLS FOR MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.

COUNCILOR WALSH ASKED IF THERE IS A TIME LINE FOR HELPING THE BUSINESSES THAT NEED TO RELOCATE. THEY HELP BUSINESSES FROM BEGINNING TO END, NO TIMELINE, THEY WANT TO ENSURE SUCCESS.

WMASS EDC NOTED THAT THEY WILL BE HELPING THE BUSINESSES UNTIL THEY ARE PHYSICALLY OR VIRTUALLY SITUATED TO DO BUSINESS.

COUNCILOR DAVILA ASKED TIM SHEEHAN IF THE PROJECT WOULD GENERATE \$1.7 MILLION DOLLARS IN TAX REVENUE. COUNCILOR ASKED IF THE LOCATION WOULD HOST A SUPERMARKET. MR. MALCHIONDA NOTED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN TALKS ABOUT A GROCERY COMPONENT. SUGGESTED INTEGRATING A WALKING COMPONENT TO THE SITE. WHEN ARE YOU LOOKING TO MOVE FORWARD? ANTON MALCHIONDA: AS SOON AS APPROVAL WAS GRANTED FOR VACANT BUILDINGS. RECOMMENDED THAT MR. SHEEHAN AND THE ADMINISTRATION PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CURRENT TENANTS. TIM SHEEHAN NOTED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL BE WORKING WITH ANY BUSINESS THAT IS LOOKING TO RELOCATE IN SPRINGFIELD.

COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO WORK WITH COUNCILOR GOVAN ABOUT BRINGING THE WALKING GROUP TO THE GREENLEAF COMMUNITY CENTER. SUPPORTED COUNCILOR BROWN'S CONCERNS ABOUT THE SMALL BUSINESSES THAT NEED TO RELOCATE.

COUNCILOR ALLEN SUMMARIZED HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROJECT AND ALL OF THE TESTIMONY AND CONCERNS THAT WERE DISCUSSED DURING THE MEETING. HE NOTED THAT HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO VOTING IN FAVOR OF THE PROJECT.

COUNCILOR BROWN ASKED FORMER MAYOR MARY HURLEY ABOUT HER THOUGHTS ON WHETHER THE PETITIONERS WILL PROPERLY ADDRESS THE CURRENT TENANTS.

MARY HURLEY: SHE NOTED THAT THE TENANTS ENDED UP WITH A MORE BENEFICIAL SITUATION THAN IF THE MALL HAD CLOSED.

COUNCILOR BROWN NOTED THAT HE WILL BE SUPPORTING PROJECT.

COUNCILOR GOVAN URGED THE COUNCILORS TO SHARE WMASS EDC'S CONTACT INFORMATION WITH THE MALL TENANTS. COUNCILOR GOVAN URGED HER FELLOW COUNCILORS TO SUPPORT THE PROJECT.

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD ASKED ABOUT HOURS OF OPERATION. SHE ASKED TIM SHEEHAN TO THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT USING ARPA FUNDS TO ASSIST THE EXISTING MALL TENANTS. COUNCILOR WHITFIELD NOTED THAT THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD HAS THE 4TH LARGEST TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN THE NATION.

COUNCILOR DAVILA OFFERED TO WORK WITH COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE ON THE WALKING GROUP THROUGH THE ELDER AFFAIRS COMMISSION.

COUNCILOR WALSH MADE MOTION TO CLOSE THE HEARING AND IT WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ALLEN.

COUNCILOR WALSH - YES

COUNCILOR FENTON - YES

COUNCILOR PEREZ - ABSENT

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD - YES

COUNCILOR GOVAN - YES

COUNCILOR ALLEN - YES

COUNCILOR BROWN - YES

COUNCILOR HURST - YES

COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE - YES

COUNCILOR EDWARDS - YES

COUNCILOR CURRAN - YES

COUNCILOR DAVILA - YES

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN - YES

ON THE REASONS:

COUNCILOR WALSH - YES

COUNCILOR FENTON - YES

COUNCILOR PEREZ - YES

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD - ABSENT

COUNCILOR GOVAN - YES

COUNCILOR ALLEN - YES

COUNCILOR BROWN - YES

COUNCILOR HURST - YES

COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE - YES

COUNCILOR EDWARDS - YES

COUNCILOR CURRAN - YES

COUNCILOR DAVILA - YES

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN - YES

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1685_Boston_Rd_et_al_Tax_Formal (PDF)
- Boston_Rd_1685_2023 (PDF)

RESULT: ADOPTED [12 TO 0]

AYES: Walsh, Fenton, Whitfield, Govan, Allen, Brown, Hurst, Click-Bruce, Edwards, Curran, Davila, Lederman

ABSENT: Maria Perez

4. Special Permit (ID # 7316)

To Amend an Existing Special Permit (Mechanical Public Car Wash), Originally Granted March 2003, and Amended March 27, 2023, by Allowing a Change to the Hours of Operation, at the Property Known as 1310 St James Avenue (11170-0184) (Book#24734/Page#16B1), as Allowed by M.G.L. and the Springfield Zoning Ordinance Article 4, Table 4-4, Section 12.3(1).

Request:	See Above
Owner:	James Carrier, Debra Chabot, Daniel H Burnett
By:	James Carrier, Debra Chabot, Daniel H Burnett
Petitioner:	RTNC Auto Wash, Inc.
By:	Richard Lemelin, President

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

Councilor Fenton called out of order.

Atty Phillips spoke for the petitioners, Rich Lemon and his son Cory for the St. James Car Wash, extension of the hours by one hour.

Councilor Whitfield asked for clarification on this petition. Councilor Fenton cleared this up for Councilor Whitfield that this vote was for the hours of operation.

On the reasons:

COUNCILOR WALSH - YES

COUNCILOR FENTON - YES

COUNCILOR PEREZ - YES

COUNCILOR WHITFIELD - ABSENT

COUNCILOR GOVAN - YES

COUNCILOR ALLEN - YES

COUNCILOR BROWN - YES

COUNCILOR HURST - YES

COUNCILOR CLICK-BRUCE - YES

COUNCILOR EDWARDS - YES

COUNCILOR CURRAN - YES

COUNCILOR DAVILA - YES

COUNCILOR LEDERMAN - YES

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1310_St_James_Ave_Tax_Formal(PDF)
- St_James_Ave_1310_Amend_2023 (PDF)

RESULT: **ADOPTED [12 TO 0]**

AYES: Walsh, Fenton, Whitfield, Govan, Allen, Brown, Hurst, Click-Bruce,
Edwards, Curran, Davila, Lederman

ABSENT: Maria Perez