Public Hearing Minutes
East Haddam Village Revitalization Project
Centerbridge Group Presentation
Nathan Hale Ray High School Auditorium
YouTube Live
Wednesday, June 9, 2021

Attendees Present:
Board of Selectmen: R. Smith; C. Quinn
East Haddam Village Revitalization Commission: W. Gerrish; R. Casner; J. Curtin; M. Walter
Board of Finance: W. DiCristofaro; J. Corbett; T. Gelston; T. Gionta; H. Thomas
Centerbridge Group: J. Riley; M. Wilson; J. Pollard: K. Pollard
Also Present: Members of the public in person and via virtual media.

First Selectman Rob Smith opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed all participants. He reviewed what the Town's residents would be voting on in the referendum concerning this project stating that the vote would be whether or not to empower the Board of Selectmen to negotiate a definitive agreement with the Centerbridge Group (CBG) for the transfer of ownership and development of the parcel of land at 1 and 7 Main Street.

Mr. Smith noted that the developers have agreed that the sale of the property will not be finalized until a building permit has been obtained, "*thus allowing the Town to maintain its ownership of the property until it is assured of a financially viable project that meets all regulatory requirements*". Mr. Smith introduced Mr. William Gerrish, Chairman of the East Haddam Village Revitalization Committee.

Mr. Gerrish thanked the participants for coming out and reviewed some of the history of the Village Revitalization Committee (EHVRC) and its work. He reviewed the criteria that was established to evaluate any organization that responded to the Town's RFQ and RFP and stated that the Centerbridge Group was the only respondent to the Town's RFQ and, consequently, the sole proposal responding to the Town's subsequent RFP. He noted that the Committee had spent a good bit of time reviewing CBG's qualifications and development proposal, relative to their established criteria, and unanimously recommended Centerbridge as the preferred developer for the Town owned property.

Mr. Gerrish recognized Mr. William DiCristofaro, Chairman of the East Haddam Board of Finance, and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Jeff Riley, Principal of Centerbrook Architects and Planners.

Mr. Riley introduced his wife, Mary Wilson, and provided some background on Centerbridge Group, LLC and its partners. He stated that he and Ms. Wilson have lived in Town for 10 years and emphasized their love of and commitment to East Haddam. He introduced their real estate advisers, John and Karen Pollard, and stated that they have an expertise in mixed-use development in small towns in CT. He further stated that Michael Goman of Goman and York Property Advisors, the financial advisers for this project, had taped a video providing background on his company and information on the financial aspects of the proposed development.

Ms. Wilson read a prepared statement providing some of her personal and professional background. She stated that she and Mr. Riley are not developers by profession, they are architects, but created a company to pursue the Village revitalization project. She noted the many challenges to developing the old Town

Office site and observed that that is most likely why theirs was the only proposal received in response to the RFQ/RFP. She stated that it has taken a lot of time, focus and resources for her and Mr. Riley to develop solutions to the inherent problems with the property

Ms. Wilson noted the citizens concerns about the rise in the Town's mill rate and noted that there is a corollary between the mill rate and the need for economic development and stated that the "*Swingbridge Landing development would provide the Town with a means to stabilize its mill rate and provide tax relief"* and help keep the Town fiscally strong. She noted the many benefits of a revitalized cultural and commerce center in the Town.

Mr. Riley addressed several core issues raised at, and after, the last public presentation of the Swingbridge Landing proposal:

- It's too big – He stated the original history of the Village was as a very dense and active commercial and cultural center which employed approximately 400 people at one time. He pointed out; however, that three of the original buildings no longer exist and there are currently seven vacant buildings in the Village.

  Mr. Riley provided a comparison of the current East Haddam Village and Chester Village amenities noting that Chester has 14 retail establishments, 11 restaurants, approximately 40 apartments/condos, and 105 parking spaces vs. 3 retail shops, 2 restaurants, 6 apartments/condos and 50 parking spaces in the East Haddam Village. He stated that the Swingbridge Landing proposal will add space for 9 more retail businesses, 3 additional restaurants, one office building, 42 new apartments/condos and 105 more parking spaces.

  Mr. Riley pointed out that the existing waste treatment plant was built in anticipation of future economic development expansion. He stated that the Town had previously established the property around and including the Goodspeed Opera House as the East Haddam Village District, designating the old Town Office site as the "highest use" area and the Creamery Road/Lumberyard Road area as the "lower use" area of the District. Mr. Riley advised that the Town only defined a land coverage percentage for the lower use area, set at 20%, noting that the Swingbridge Landing proposal for the highest use area has a land coverage percentage of 27%.

- It's not East Haddam – Mr. Riley addressed the public's concern about the project lacking a "Sense of Place". He noted that often sense of place is defined by a common architectural style; however, the Village District contains a number of architectural styles. He stated that he and Ms. Wilson elected to replicate the Italianate/Victorian style of the Gelston House and the Boardman Bed & Breakfast in their design of the Swing Bridge Landing buildings. They are also replicating the Goodspeed mansion in their plan. He noted several other aspects of their design that tie into the architectural styles in the District and which will create numerous intimate spaces.

  Mr. Riley stated that the Goodspeed Opera House currently defines the sense of place for the Village District. He stated that the proposed Wheel House and Goodspeed Mansion, along with the LaVita building will add to the physical sense of place and provided a to-scale depiction of those buildings as compared to the Goodspeed Theatre. He said that the proposed music school, dance hall, and communal green are all intended to add to the Goodspeed Theatre's cultural sense of place.

- It will cause a traffic nightmare – Mr. Riley stated that CBG addressed this issue with a "highly regarded" traffic consultant during the development phase of their proposal and further noted that the plans will be scrutinized in detail by the state. He discussed the concept of "busiest traffic

hour" and advised that it is currently calculated to generate slightly less than 1200 car trips per hour (i.e., an average of 20 car trips per minute). He noted that the traffic consultant calculated that the Swing Bridge Landing development can be anticipated to add 140 car trips to the "busiest hour" or 2.33 car trips per minute on average.

Mr. Riley stated that, additionally, there are currently 11 means of egress onto Route 82 from the old Town Office site and the Goodspeed Theatre. He advised that their proposal reduces the points of egress to four which will have a significant impact on the traffic on that road. He detailed several other traffic calming measures planned.

Regarding suggestions to incrementally phase in the development, Mr. Riley stated that CBG does not plan to phase in the proposed construction on the 3.72 acres old Town Office site because of concerns about extending the disruption in the Village District. He noted, however, that there are several other properties that, spurred by the Swing Bridge Landing project, will be upgraded/renovated/reused resulting in autonomous "phases" that will occur before the Village District becomes a fully healthy, vibrant, commercial and cultural center.

Mr. Riley stated that CBG would also like to work with the Klinck family to potentially purchase their property to install a river walk and eventually a river dock that could be accessed from the Swing Bridge Landing site. He further noted that the Gelston House is in need of an upgrade and could be expanded to provide additional hotel space.

- <u>It will cost the taxpayers too much money</u> & <u>It can't work financially and will fail</u> - Mr. Riley introduced Michael Goman's video. Mr. Gorman introduced himself and provided some background on himself and Goman & York Property Advisors. He advised that in 2008 he established the company that became Goman & York which provides advisory services (1) on economic development for municipalities, government, and quasi-government agencies, and (2) to large owners of real estate, institutional clients, and developers.

  Mr. Goman stated that the company's focus is on market feasibility studies, fiscal & economic impact studies to determine the type and scale of a project and developing conceptual plans for developers; they also assist in obtaining financial equity for developers. He advised that he has been working with CBG to determine whether or not the Swing Bridge Landing project made financial sense since early on in the conceptual phase of the project.

  Mr. Riley ended the tape stating that he hoped Mr. Goman's presentation is evidence that he is highly qualified to provide advice to CBG regarding this project. He noted that the Board of Finance had previously issued a list of questions regarding the financial aspects of the project that Mr. Goman had responded to.

  John Pollard provided some background on his and Ms. Pollard's professional experience and their current client base. He noted their success in focusing on local and regional tenants and said the goal with the Swing Bridge Landing project is to have unique and curated merchants/restaurateurs to represent the appropriate sense of place.

  Karen Pollard introduced herself and compared the Swing Bridge Landing project to development projects that their organization worked on in Bantam and Woodbury, CT, and noted that the CBG proposal should complement what is already in the District.

  William DiCristofaro introduced himself and recognized citizens' objections to spending more on taxes. He stated that Mr. Riley had addressed concerns about traffic, size and scope of the

project. He emphasized that the referendum on this project is only to give the Board of Selectmen permission to negotiate on behalf of the Town to move forward. He stated that a no vote at the referendum may forever close down the opportunity currently before the Town; however, a yes vote still leaves the door open for the project to go forward with continued citizen input.

Mr. DiCristofaro advised that four of six Board of Finance members had authorized him to state that they support the project and believe it is a worthwhile opportunity that should be pursued.

First Selectman Smith called for a brief recess and the meeting reconvened at 8:40 p.m. He reviewed the ground rules for asking questions and providing comments.

The following public comments and questions were presented:

- Mark Thiede thanked the panel for the presentation and he thanked Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson for their work on the proposal. He indicated, however, that the comparison to Chester is not completely accurate because Chester does not have a Swingbridge that runs into its Main Street. He emphasized that traffic from the Swingbridge should not be overlooked in this plan and expressed concern that CBG did not do any research with the CT Department of Transportation.

  Mr. Thiede discussed the need for having the trust of the Town leaders, its Boards and Commissions, and the public. He concluded his statement expressing concern that the developers had not included an analysis of the project by the state DOT.

  Mr. Riley advised that CBG had worked with the Town Planner and had, in fact, had discussions with the state DOT regarding the planned walkway on the bridge and CBG's recommendation to straighten Route 82 at the end of the bridge.

  Mr. Riley noted that it will require a significant amount of time, effort and money to move their proposed roadway changes through the CT Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA). Consequently, he pointed out that before those steps can be taken, CBG must secure equity investment for the project to enable them to pay for the extremely expensive fees of civil engineers, landscape architects, lawyers, and other professionals required. He further advised that they cannot secure equity investment until CBG has a contractual agreement with the Town.

  Mr. Riley emphasized that CBG has had preliminary conversations with the state DOT regarding straightening the road, traffic calming measures, curb cuts, etc.

- Edward Blaschik introduced himself and thanked Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson for the work they put into their proposal. He expressed concern about the plans impact on traffic and stated he hopes a traffic study will be done prior to implementing the plan. He noted that, unlike the Chester or Essex villages, residents and commercial traffic have little choice other than to travel through the Village District to cross the river.

  Mr. Blaschik noted the taxpayers' commitment to its natural resources and offered his opinion that the CT River is the Town's greatest natural resource and "*we should never sell or lose control and destiny of our land on the CT River".* He stated that a long-term leasing arrangement would be preferable. He referenced the failure of the Moodus Center re-development and noted that Middletown is an example of successfully retaining ownership of their riverfront property.

Mr. Blaschik concluded his statements by saying he is a proponent of the development of the land under the following conditions: the Town retains ownership, traffic improvement measures are implemented, development is of the proper scale, it is an economic generator and it is done at no cost to the Town.

Mr. Riley stated that CBG does plan to make Swing Bridge Landing an economic generator at no cost to the Town. However, he stated it will be many months of working with OSTA before the improvements to Route 82 can be agreed upon and implemented. Responding to Mr. Blaschik's comment that the Swing Bridge Landing proposal is a "dream", Mr. Riley also pointed out that the revitalization of the Goodspeed Opera House was also once a dream and acknowledged that there is a lot of hard work to do before the Swing Bridge Landing dream can become a reality.

Mr. Riley stated that there is no equity investor that will invest in property that is leased and if the Board of Finance makes that a requirement, CBG will not pursue the project.

- Dot Millen introduced herself and thanked the panel for all their work. She stated that she feels the look of the proposal is very "planned" and "contrived". She supported concerns about Route 82's use as main route through the Village District and recommended the state DOT do a formal traffic assessment before moving forward.

  Ms. Millen criticized several of the statements Mr. Riley made in the East Haddam News interview. She stated that she supports development in the Village District, however, the current design feels too cluttered and hopes it can be redesigned more to the look and feel of Chester.

  Mr. Riley responded that the Town has been working for 16 years and made significant, but unsuccessful, efforts to find a developer for the property. He pointed out that the comparison to Chester was not meant to be from a traffic point of view but rather to compare the size and density of the proposed Swing Bridge Landing to Chester. To illustrate the size of the new development, he noted that the boundaries of their proposal begin at the mid-point of the old Town Office building and end at the generator shack and the rest of the Town stays intact.

- Joseph Shaskus provided some information on his personal and professional background as an environmental safety and health worker and asked the following questions: (1) How well defined is the closure of the municipal garage? (2) How many areas of concern are there? and (3) If CBG backs away from the project, what would the Town be responsible for?

  Mr. Riley responded that until CBG takes ownership of the property, the Town is entirely responsible for the environmental clean-up on the site. If the property is sold to CBG, they would assume that responsibility and the estimate for the clean-up is $1.2M. He confirmed that the clean-up process will be defined when the project goes through the normal regulatory process which is very stringent. He reiterated it will take approximately 1½ years and an estimated cost of $1M for engineering, architectural and legal fees to complete the regulatory process.

  Mr. Smith advised that the Town had the property appraised at $1.25M. He stated that Level 1 and 2 hazardous materials assessments had been done resulting in an estimate of $800k to remediate the site; consequently, the Town had established a net selling price of $450k.

- Eaton Goldthwaite provided some personal background information and stated that he feels the renderings of the Swing Bridge Landing proposal are very attractive. He stated that he and his wife left their home state of New Jersey because of increasing property taxes and noted the negative impact high taxes have on property values.

Mr. Goldthwaite noted the lack of restaurants and other amenities in Town and the 60% vacancy rate in the Village District. He stated that he feels if six of the eight Board of Finance members support the project, that is good enough for him and, that it is his opinion, that there would be no harm in taking this project to the next step because it is not a final approval of the plan.

- (An unidentified public citizen) voiced her opposition to the proposal and discussed her concern for increased traffic in the Village District. She noted that the state had a regular 10-year maintenance plan for the Swing Bridge which may not be sufficient if there is increased traffic on the bridge. Mr. Smith noted that, after the DOT's planned major renovation to the bridge, the expectation is that the regular maintenance schedule will be pushed out to 25-years.

  The individual suggested a better plan would be to sell the site to a "millionaire" who would build a house on the property and the Town would get property taxes immediately while, conversely, she expects the SBL's property taxes will be deferred. Ms. Wilson stated that comparing the property taxes of a single house on the site could not compare to the property taxes the Town would receive from Swing Bridge Landing.

  Mr. Riley advised that the most recent estimate is that the project will increase the Town's Grand List by $25.25M. He stated that there are numerous creative tax deferral vehicles that allow a project to get started and projected that, even utilizing those options, the net gain to the Town would be in the range of $100's of thousands of dollars. He stated that although the project would not pay full taxes initially, it would pay some property tax and, additionally, the value of the surrounding properties would increase which would also benefit the Grand List.

- Edward Rieck stated that he and his wife moved to East Haddam from Florida because of the charm and character of the Town and expressed his desire that any development carry through the architectural diversity and attractiveness that already exists in the Village District.

  Mr. Riley stated that CBG shares Mr. Rieck's goals for the project and noted that his architectural firm is known nationally for doing just that. He advised that they have met with, and will continue to meet with, the Historic District Commission to ensure they meet those goals.

- Laurel White provided her personal background and expressed her concern about accessing the state's shoreline and other natural resources. She expressed a desire to have access to the river front without commercial businesses or apartment and condos nearby. She critiqued several aspects of the CBG proposal and recommended the site be retained exclusively for the public's use. Ms. White concluded her statement by identifying several businesses in Town that she felt were overlooked in previous presentations.

  Mr. Riley stated that their comments and observations about the lack of amenities are focused on the Village District as a pedestrian experience and not the Town of East Haddam as a whole.

- Lisa McNellis pointed out that East Haddam is geographically one of the largest towns in CT and has a significant amount of designated open space and noted that the proposed development parcel is very small in comparison. She stated that the Town needs economic development to improve the tax base and thanked the panel for making her dream of a village center come true. Ms. McNellis offered her assistance in any way possible.

- Edward Thereault introduced himself and referenced his previous work on the East Haddam Economic Development Commission. He advised that East Haddam currently draws close to 1M people per year to take advantage of the parks and other attractions here but then those visitors leave and support businesses out of Town. He noted that presently Town businesses struggle to survive and stated that a critical mass is needed to provide the support that will help them. He stated the CBG proposal gives the Town an opportunity to focus development where it should be.

  Mr. Thereault stated that he does not believe that any development lowers property taxes but observed that no development does not help. He recommended the citizens vote to move the project forward but requested the developers also look a little more critically at their proposal.

  Mr. Thereault suggested the citizens not "*shoot themselves in the foot*" prematurely and stated that "*we will have plenty of opportunity to have input going forward*".

  Mr. Riley reiterated that East Haddam residents have the spending potential of $97.7M and approximately $81M of that is spent out of town. He stated that the financial projections they did indicate that the Swing Bridge Landing project only needs to capture $10M of that $81M to be economically viable. Mr. Riley offered to have a discussion with Mr. Thereault about the net tax advantage of the project to the Town.

- Mark Walter emphasized that the referendum on the CBG proposal will only be one step in the process. He noted that the project will have to go through numerous Board and Commission reviews where the public's input will be considered. He reiterated his belief that there is a need to develop the Village District.

  Mr. Walter stated that traffic in the Village has, and always will be, a concern; however, it is his opinion that the CBG project will not have a significant impact on traffic. He noted that the morning commute will most likely not be affected at all by the development and suggested that if people are concerned about the evening commute, an alternate route could be through Portland.

  Mr. Walter stated that access to the river front will be improved by additional docking space and noted that the airport is a key partner in the project.

  Mr. Riley reiterated the findings in their traffic engineer's report and stated that the public's concerns for an extremely large increase in traffic may not be the reality.

- Charlotte Gelston stated she believes that traffic safety has not yet been thoroughly looked into and it is one of the main concerns regarding the project. She reviewed some CT DOT statistics regarding daily bridge crossings and stated that it would "*become a nightmare if [traffic across the bridge] were doubled, or tripled, by the impact of this proposed development"*. She stated that, additionally, pedestrian traffic crossing Route 82 will make the problem worse causing backups across the bridge that will put significant stress on its physical structure and mechanisms requiring more frequent repairs. She predicted increased traffic accidents and pedestrian injuries and recommended traffic lights be installed on either side of the bridge.

  Ms. Gelston reported that she did an informal traffic study earlier in the day and counted 25 cars per minute crossing the bridge in each direction and an increase is not viable. She concluded by stating that "*we do need to fix the Village but we cannot sustain that level of traffic".*

Mr. Riley stated that he wanted to reassure the public that traffic is a main concern in the CBG proposal. He stated they are, and will continue to be, working with engineers, traffic consultants and CT OSTA to address the problems in depth. He confirmed that a great deal of analysis will go into traffic issues.

- Theresa Roddy introduced herself and acknowledged the passion and emotions of all of the speakers. She further stated that she had also never heard a developer have so much empathy for all of the citizens in the Town. She recognized the investment of the developers to get the project off the ground and thanked them for their passion and commitment in trying to preserve the nature of the Town while, at the same time, providing an economic development opportunity.

  Ms. Roddy acknowledged that the project will create jobs for the community and thanked the developers for their efforts. Mr. Riley confirmed that it is projected that 90 jobs would be associated with the Swing Bridge Landing and there is a potential for more as a result of increased traffic in the peripheral businesses.

- Todd Gelston stated his comments are not as a member of the Board of Finance but as a public citizen. He noted that there are several phases in a development process of this nature. He acknowledged the proposed referendum for the sale of the property but noted that the project will affect the whole Town and asked at what next phase in the project the citizens will have the opportunity to participate in the decision making of the final development plan. Mr. Gelston specifically asked if there will be a second referendum.

  Mr. Smith reiterated that the planned referendum is for purchase/sale agreement for the site. He confirmed that the sale will not, however, be finalized until numerous Town organizations, Boards and Commissions have scrutinized the project and the Town issues a building permit for same.

  Mr. Riley stated that CBG needs to raise $2M in private equity to do all of the groundwork required to obtain the building permit. He stated that no issuers of private equity would consider a project where a 2nd referendum on the proposal is required. He stated, in fact, that it is rare to get a purchase agreement from a developer that is contingent on qualifying for a building permit.

  Mr. Riley pointed out that all of the regulatory meetings are a public process where the citizens will have an opportunity to review the plans and make comments. He emphasized, however, that the planned Swing Bridge Landing project will be a mixed-use development with restaurants, retail shops and apartments/condos. Mr. Smith concurred that the regulatory process will include opportunities for public input.

- Robert Casner introduced himself and stated that he is a member of the Village Revitalization Committee and noted that the Committee had numerous opportunities to review the proposal with Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson. He referenced the loss of numerous businesses in the Village District and the need to reinvent Goodspeed Landing and stated that this is the best opportunity he has seen in 25-years. He strongly recommended moving forward on the CBG proposal and stated all of the regulatory hearings will be public and the public's input will be considered.

  Mr. Casner recognized that there would be a significant investment needed to determine the feasibility of the project and thanked Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson for their efforts.

- Amalia Shaltiel stated that the public has not had an opportunity to consider the development as part of the whole Village District. She stated the proposal is located in the "wrong place' and recommended moving it to the site where the old Town garage is located.

  Ms. Shaltiel stated she also wanted two points to go on record: (1) that the taxpayers are paying for the remediation of the site through the discounted sales price. She suggested looking into grants to pay for the hazardous materials clean-up prior to selling the parcel. And, (2) the referendum on giving the Board of Selectmen the authority to negotiate the sale/purchase of the property is the only time the citizens will have a yea or nay say on the project and she feels that is wrong.

  Mr. Riley reiterated that there would be a public process following an affirmative referendum to move the project forward.

- John Olin noted that the existing public process is like inviting a "Trojan Horse" into Town and called the proposal a "March of Folly". He also stated that, in 2020, there had been an alternative, much more modest, proposal submitted by Mr. Fellner.

- An Unidentified Citizen stated she does not support the proposal and stated that there were other businesses that wanted to occupy the site that were not allowed. She stated that she does not feel the argument that the project will generate revenue for the Town is justified. She further stated that she feels the developers are not looking at the best interest of the Town and reiterated that the Swingbridge traffic has not been adequately addressed.

- Kim Dodge made the following two points: (1) Mr. Smith advised that the property was appraised at $1.5M but the purchase price is $461k. She questioned if the panel thinks the citizens are "stupid" to sell that property for one-third its value. And, (2) she expressed her concern about traffic and stated the project is "untenable" for this place.

  Mr. Smith addressed Ms. Dodge's figures regarding the sale price of the property. He stated that the site was appraised at $1.25M and estimated remediation cost is $800k; consequently, the difference, $450k, was established as the sales price. He stated that grants for hazardous material remediation might be possible, but it could take a considerable amount of time to go through that process with no guarantee of a positive outcome.

  Mr. Riley stated that a more realistic estimate for the remediation work is $1.2M. He stated that the standard appraisal method is to estimate the "clean" cost of a property and, if it is not a clean site, then deduct the cost to clean the site to arrive at a fair sales price. He stated that the Town had explored cleaning up the site on its own; however, the risk that the expense could be more than the estimated cost was the determining factor in the decision to transfer the risk to the developer.

- Tracey Gionta stated that she is a member of the Board of Finance but is speaking as a private citizen. She stated that Mr. Fellner did not submit a proposal but, rather developed drawings, at the Revitalization Committee's request, to send out to developers suggesting "what could be" but no responses to that solicitation were received. She gave "kudos" to Mr. Gerrish and the Village Revitalization Committee for their work, the panel for putting the presentation together, and Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson for their efforts of creating a proposal to revitalize the Village District.

Mr. Gerrish confirmed that in the 10 years' time the Revitalization Committee existed, no proposals for the site were submitted. He stated that they had engaged Mr. Fellner to create drawings to articulate the Committee's vision for the site in an effort to solicit developers.

- John Olin stated that just because there have been no other proposals doesn't mean that "we have to accept a bad proposal". He also stated that the developers are making an investment based on an expectation of a return on that investment.

Mr. Gerrish read the following written communications regarding the proposal which were received electronically:

- Laurie A. Turner
  I would like the Board of Selectman to present the following two questions and one comment to Centerbridge Group, LLC at the public hearing on June 9th.

  When posed the question, in part, from the East Haddam News, "In the event that your proposal is voted down, what should the town do?", I found your response "The town is screwed." narrow-minded and offensive to the residents of East Haddam.

  The Connecticut Secretary of State recorded Centerbridge Group, LLC at 89 River Road East Haddam, CT registered in the State of Connecticut on February 22, 2021.

  The principles listed are:

  Jefferson Barker Riley, residence address 89 River Road, East Haddam, CT
  Mary Margaret Wilson, residence 89 River Road, East Haddam, CT
  Noah Adams Riley, residence address 8800 Venice Blvd., Suite 302, Los Angeles, California

  Also recorded is the following statement:

  "IMPORTANT: There are more principals for this business that are not shown here."

  Can you please tell us, who are those other principals of Centerbridge Group, LLC and what is their residence address?

  Also, were any of the Centerbridge Group, LLC principles or Swing Bridge Landing stakeholders, involved in the Haddam Land Swap?

  Thank you.
  Laurie Turner

  Mr. Riley stated that there are no other principals, other than those listed, that he and Ms. Wilson are aware of. He stated that Noah Adams Riley is his son, who is an architect in Los Angeles, and is a principle for succession planning purposes. He stated that none of the principals of the Centerbridge Group, LLC, were part of the Haddam land swap.

- Goetch Stone
  I would be terrified of the traffic. I just don't see how the area would be able to handle that much traffic, it is already a nightmare, how do they propose to handle this?

Mr. Riley stated that this question had been addressed numerous times in the past and several times at this meeting. He requested that their previous comments on the issue of traffic go on the record as their response to Goetch Stone's email.

One additional speaker addressed the audience:

- Marilyn Gleeson stated that over the past week she has been working with Jonathan Silvers and Ken Simon, both award-winning documentary film makers, to put together a video presentation of an alternative plan for the Village District. She stated that they are opposed to the CBG's design but, in general, are not opposed to development in the Village. She invited the audience to stay and watch the video.

  Mr. Smith advised that he had asked the Town's attorney if it would be admissible to view the video and he was told it would be acceptable to screen it at tonight's meeting.

  Carleen Quinn expressed her dissatisfaction with the procedure used to introduce the video presentation and stated that she feels viewing the video at this meeting would be unfair to Mr. Riley and Ms. Wilson, unethical and possibly illegal. She stated CBG had gone through a prescribed process to get to this point and the new group had not. She strongly objected to screening the video at the meeting.

  Mr. Riley stated that CBG had objected strenuously to presenting the video at the meeting. He stated that CBG has been talking with Mr. Silvers about the project for over a year and he has not only objected to this project, even before seeing their proposal, but is convinced that the site is not developable and had expressed his objections to any development in the Village District. Mr. Riley stated that it is, therefore, surprising to him that Mr. Silvers is in favor of an alternative development plan.

  Mr. Smith noted that it did not appear that a majority of the audience wanted to view the video and, therefore, he recommended that Ms. Gleeson, Mr. Silvers, and Mr. Simon screen the video in a different format.

  Mr. Smith refused Mr. Olin's request to speak a fourth time regarding the proposal. He reviewed the process for establishing a date for the referendum and closed the meeting at 10:16 p.m.

  Recorded