

Community and Economic Development Committee Meeting

Date: November 6, 2025

Topic:

- Rutland Shopping Plaza (Walmart / Brixmor)

The Community and Economic Development Committee of the Rutland City Board of Aldermen met on Thursday, November 6th at 5:30 P.M. in Chambers at City Hall.

Committee members were present including Chair Donahue, Alderman Gillam. Alderwoman McClure and Alderman Whitcomb. A quorum was present and voting.

Also in attendance: Aldermanic Board President Allaire, Alderman Cupoli, Alderman Clifford, and Alderman Talbot

City officials attending included: Mayor Doenges, Rutland City Planning Director, Ed Bove. Bove, and Mary Markowski, City Treasurer.

Other officials included: Sean Adkins, Executive Director of the Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA).

Members of the public included: John and Devine McCann, Chris Ettori, and Steve Costello.

Members of the media included City Reporter Gordon Dritschilo of the Rutland Herald.

Chair Donahue opened the meeting at 5:32 P.M.

Chair Donahue turned the presentation over to Mayor Doenges and Sean Adkins who discussed the current status of Walmart (their intention to relocate out of the City by 2027), the Task Force (formerly chaired by Lyle Jepson at CEDRR) now lies with Sean Adkins (RRA) as Lyle has accepted an appointment from the Governor to VT Commissioner of Economic Development. The conversation centered mostly around the City officials expressing their struggles connecting with the property owner (Brixmor Property Group)*. Sean Adkins indicated that the city did not have site control so there was not much to discuss at this point although there have been many conversations and ideas about what could be at the site. None were discussed at the Committee Meeting. The mayor discussed a Walmart departure fund. President Allaire expressed his concern for loss of the retail element there. He also expressed that the board needs to be involved and kept up to date on what is happening. The mayor noted that Alderman Gillam and Alderwoman Davis serve on the Task Force. Alderman Clifford inquired about the existence of documents from 30 years ago regarding a Walmart commitment to the city. The mayor indicated that their research has not produced any formal agreements.

Alderman Whitcomb inquired about conceptual plans. Ed Bove mentioned the Rutland Regional Planning Commission has completed a planning process with renderings and drawings including architectural conceptual drawings with various uses including the larger parcel and anticipated the release of these any day now.

Alderwoman McClure inquired if the Downtown Rutland Partnership was represented on the Task Force which was answered in the affirmative. Alderman Cupoli inquired about any known effects on other current tenants and Alderwoman McClure inquired about current percentage of vacancy.

Chair Donahue indicated that the Committee report will be informational only with no formal actions taken and that this issue will remain in Committee to continue to be discussed and reported back to the board.

*It is noted here that Brixmor executives have contacted several City officials and the Rutland Herald since the meeting.

Chair Donahue went around the room for comment outside the rail. Hearing none Alderwoman McClure moved to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Whitcomb. Motion passed and the meeting concluded at 5:59 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Tom Donahue, C&ED Committee Chair