

OFFICE OF THE  
FIRST SELECTMAN

Telephone (203) 563-0100  
Fax (203) 563-0299

Email to:  
lynne.vanderslice@wiltonct.org



Lynne A. Vanderslice  
*First Selectman*

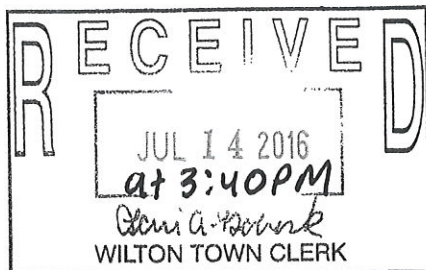
Michael P. Kaelin  
*Second Selectman*

David K. Clune  
*Selectman*

Lori A. Bufano  
*Selectman*

Richard J. Dubow  
*Selectman*

TOWN HALL  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, CT 06897



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MONDAY JUNE 20, 2016  
MEETING ROOM B, WILTON TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:** First Selectman Lynne Vanderslice, Richard Dubow, Michael Kaelin, David Clune, Lori Bufano

**GUESTS:** Rich McCarty – Chair Fire Station II Building Committee, Vivian Lee-Shuie – Co-Chair of the Economic Development Commission, Chris Burney, Anne Kelly-Lenz, Sarah Taffel,

**OTHERS:** Members of the Press and Members of the Public

**A. Call to Order**

Ms. Vanderslice called the meeting to order at 7:00PM

**B. Executive Session**

Mr. Kaelin made a motion to enter into Executive Session to conduct candidate interviews. Motion seconded by Ms. Bufano and unanimously carried.

- Interview – Ben Couch – Deer Committee – 7:00PM
- Interview – Donnie Hall – Economic Development Commission – 7:15PM

Out of Executive Session at 7:38 PM

Mr. Kaelin made a motion to take a short break. Motion seconded by Mr. Dubow and unanimously carried.

Meeting resumed and called to order at 7:42PM

**C. Consent Agenda**

Motion made by Mr. Dubow to approve the consent agenda with a minor change to the June 6, 2016 Board of Selectmen Minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Kaelin and unanimously carried.

## Minutes

- Board of Selectmen Meeting – June 6, 2016

## Gifts

- Realty Seven Charitable Fund – UTV Gift Fund - \$2,500
- Realty Seven – UTV Gift Fund - \$500.00
- Brian M. Meany – UTV Gift Fund - \$1,000
- Gregory & Carolyn Wheeler – UTV Gift Fund - \$1,000
- Carol & Michael Kaelin – UTV Gift Fund - \$100.00
- Wilton Rotary – UTV Gift Fund - \$1,800
- Anonymous Donation – River Road Project

## D. Public Comment

None

## E. Discussion and/or Actions

### 1. Follow up from previous meeting

Ms. Vanderslice wanted to follow-up on a topic from the previous Board of Selectmen meeting. The topic was whether Tighe & Bond, engineers for the Pedestrian Bridge had presented a plan to the Board of Selectmen prior to submitting a plan to the State. She indicated she went back and researched and noted that they did present at the November 2, 2015 Board of Selectmen Meeting.

### 2. Fire Station II Building Committee

Ms. Vanderslice asked Rich McCarty, Chair of the Fire Station II Building Committee to give an update.

Mr. McCarty noted the members of the building committee (David Waters, Ross Tartell, Kevin Czarnecki, Phil Reeves, Ron Hitter). He also noted that members of the Fire Station who regularly participate in meetings are Chief Ron Kanterman and Dave Chaloux. He also noted that Chris Burney, Facilities Manager for the Town has been very helpful to the committee in giving them guidance and direction. Mr. McCarty noted the committee has been meeting since April 5, 2016.

Mr. McCarty noted the building committee is concerned about the impact of their efforts on the neighbors and to that end has invited neighbors to attend meetings and has put up meeting notices outside Fire Station II.

Mr. McCarty noted the committee probed Town agencies about their need for the space within the facility. Responses were that it would be nice, but it is not necessary.

The Committee has reviewed operational statistics and trends along with response times for the area served. The information mandates a firehouse in that area both for EMS and for fire calls, but does not support an expansion of the facility. He noted that the committee has become aware of,



through discussion, that the Chief has avidly spoken about the need to grow the department and the committee cannot anticipate that and what they know to date and would look to the Board of Selectmen with regard to any change to the size of the department. The Committee expects the project will require an updated SOR.

Mr. McCarty stated the committee is looking at three important issues to solve, potable water, septic system and new seismic related structural codes that the state has put out. He reviewed options being looked at with regard to all the issues.

Ms Vanderslice thanked Mr. McCarty for his thorough presentation and the committee's work so far.

### 3. EDC Analytic Survey

Vivian Lee-Shuie, Vice Chair of Wilton's Economic Development Commission and John Kelley of Berkeley Research Group reviewed the Analytic Survey (see attached). Ms. Shuie noted that the survey includes findings from a study of local businesses and residential real estate. She also noted that the study contains a lot of information with data related to expenses, revenue, and financial information. It was decided to break the presentation into two sections and the discussion this evening will deal primarily with the interviews and the surveys that were conducted. Ms. Lee-Shuie stated that the survey was conducted under the banner of the EDC, but that most of the work was performed by community volunteers. John DiCenzo of Halstead Property, Diane DeWitt of Berkshire Hathaway, and Bert Schefers of Abbey Road Associates were the volunteers along with Mr. Kelley. A copy of the presentation is attached.

Upon completion of the presentation the audience gave a round of applause and the Board enthusiastically thanked Ms. Lee-Shuie, Mr. Kelley and the other volunteers for their efforts. A question and answer period followed.

Ms. Vanderslice suggested that item 4, 5 and 8 be tabled until the next Board of Selectman meeting. Motion made by made by Mr. Clune and seconded by Mr. Dubow to table items 4, 5, and 8 and unanimously carried.

### 4. Gilbert & Bennett Lease Tabled

### 5. Legal Review Committee Tabled

### 6. Fiduciary Liability Insurance Renewal CFO Anne Kelly-Lenz reviewed the Fiduciary Liability Insurance Renewal. She noted that the rates were kept the same for this year. The Renewal covers the 457 Retirement Plan, the defined contribution and the IRA. Motion made by Mr. Dubow to allow the First Selectman to approve the

Fiduciary Liability Insurance Renewal. Motion seconded by Ms. Bufano and unanimously carried.

7. Xerox Copier Agreement for Police Department

CFO Anne Kelly-Lenz reviewed the Xerox Copier Agreement for the Police Department. There is a savings in moving to the new copier of approximately \$700 per year by going to the new copier. The department is keeping the old copier that will serve as a backup and added on the maintenance agreement. There is no cost in keeping the old copier and it will be serviced at no additional cost. Motion made by Mr. Dubow to allow the First Selectman to approve the Xerox Copier Agreement. Motion seconded by Ms. Bufano and unanimously carried.

8. Financial Review

Tabled

9. Appointments/Reappointments

Ms. Vanderslice sought to clarify what the BOS had previously voted on as regards to the process for the nominating procedures for the Boards and Commissions, what was agreed and voted on. As follows, she stated the three matters and the resulting decisions discussed at the April 19, 2016 Board of Selectmen meeting.

- Do we want to stay with the current procedures? No vote taken, but consensus was no
- Do we want to change procedures for Republicans and Democrats who currently must seek an endorsement from their party? No vote taken, but the consensus was no. Mr. Kaelin stated: only want to make changes re unaffiliated. Consensus.
- Motion by Mr. Dubow: 100 signatures for an unaffiliated voter to self nominate to fill a vacancy or for a full term appointment. Passed 3-2.

Ms. Vanderslice then reviewed several items which were included in handout provided to the Selectmen (see attached).

- The board did not previously discuss how to handle an endorsement from a party other than the Republican and Democratic party? Ms. Vanderslice suggested due to time constraints, it be tabled to a future meeting.
- Ms. Vanderslice noted the board is **expecting** 15 to 20 applicants for all current vacancies and open full term appointments as of July 1, 2016. Suggestions from Board members as to how to efficiently handle this number of interviews were included on the handout. Ms. Vanderslice suggested tabling the discussion until the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

Ms. Vanderslice stated she would like to schedule 2 of the EDC candidates for next week's meeting. Mr. Kaelin objected, stating he would like information from all candidates before interviewing.



Mr. Clune requested clarification. Ms Vanderslice clarified there are 5 openings on the EDC, positions. As these positions are appointed by the Board of Selectmen, it is the political affiliation of the individual which is considered when doing the minority representation calculation.

Mr. Dubow expressed his concerns that the Board not disenfranchise one of the political parties and be fair in its appointments.

Mr. Kaelin further explained he would like all the information in advance as he thinks it is fairer as he may choose only to interview certain candidates.

Ms. Vanderslice indicated she intends to interview all candidates as she feels it is owed to the candidates and the Town committees.

Mr. Kaelin expressed concerned that there is an inconsistency in the interviews for example some are held on Saturdays and others in the evening. He also suggested he doesn't necessarily need to interview to appoint.

Mr. Clune indicated he would be uncomfortable changing a process which has already began.

Ms. Bufano indicated she will interview all candidates. Mr. Dubow indicated he will interview all appointed candidates.

To help standardize the information, the board agreed to require each candidate to complete an application and require the Town Committees to complete a candidate recommendation form. Ms. Vanderslice will develop and distribute the forms. Once all required information is received, interviews will be scheduled and each Selectman will determine whether they care to attend.

Mr. Kaelin asked Sarah Taffel, the Towns HR Director if the board could discuss candidates in Executive Session. Ms. Taffel indicated yes, but each candidate has the right to request the discussion of them be held in public.

- The Parks and Recreation Commission are forming working groups to investigate field locations and field needs. The Commission requested direction from the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Kaelin made a motion to allow the Parks and Recreation Commission and any other Commission to set up their own subcommittee that reports to them and is temporary in nature. Motion was seconded by Mr. Clune and unanimously carried. It was noted the composition of the working group membership must meet minority representation requirements.
- Ms Vanderslice noted at a previous meeting, the BOS had come to a consensus that reappointments did not require a party endorsement or a petition. She suggested the Board formalize this with a vote. The item was tabled for a future meeting

- Ms. Vanderslice updated the Board as to research she had performed related question as to whether the Conservation Commission is responsible for vetting and recommending members to the Conservation Commission's Deer Committee. At the March 19, 2001 Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission was asked to "handle the task of the proposed Deer Committee". Mike Conklin, Director of Environmental Affairs has stated during his employment with the Department, the Conservation Commission has vetted and recommended appointments to the Deer Committee. Mr. Clune made a motion to appoint Ben Couch for the vacancy on the Deer Committee. Motion was seconded by Ms. Bufano and carried 3-2 with Mr. Kaelin and Mr. Dubow opposed. Mr. Dubow opposing voting without previously reviewing the charge to the commission.
- A resident has raised a question as to when the EDC changed from 9 members to 10 members. Rather than researching 4 years of records, Ms. Vanderslice suggested the BOS reaffirm the membership as 10. Mr. Kaelin made a motion to make the EDC a 10 person commission. Motion was seconded by Mr. Dubow and unanimously carried.
- Ms. Vanderslice noted that Gil Bray, a member of the EDC, changed his political affiliation shortly after being appointed. This may have implications as the Minority Representation stature there is a 3 month waiting period for the effectiveness of an affiliation change. After discussion with Town Counsel, the recommendation is that when the BOS has completed discussions of the candidates and is ready to appoint, should it be relevant, Town Counsel will seek a ruling from the Election Commission as to Mr. Bray's status.
- It has come to the attention of Ms. Vanderslice that the Wilton Library Association recently elected Board of Selectmen appointed Trustees, whose term with Town expires on June 30, 2016 to the Library Board. Reappointment of these individuals had not been discussed or acted upon by the BOS. Ms. Vanderslice will follow-up with WLA Executive Director Elaine Tai-Lauria.

#### 10. Miscellaneous Other Business

None

#### F. Reports

##### First Selectman's Report

None

## Selectmen's Reports

Ms. Bufano

None

Mr. Clune

None

Mr. Kaelin

None

Mr. Dubow

None

### G. Public Comment

Sarah Curtis of Cannon Road spoke with regard to Miller Driscoll Project Scope discussed at the June 6, 2016 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Ms. Vanderslice and Mr. Dubow spoke to Ms. Curtis' concerns.

Ms. Curtis also spoke with regard to the appointment/reappointment of members to the boards and commissions.

### H. Executive Session

At 10:10pm, Mr. Dubow made a motion to move to Executive Session to discuss union negotiations. Motion was seconded by Mr. Kaelin and unanimously carried. Sarah Taffel was invited to join the session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:55PM. No action taken

### I. Adjournment – Having no further business, motion made by Ms. Vanderslice to adjourn meeting at 10:55PM. Motion was seconded by Mr. Kaelin and unanimously carried.



Jacqueline Rochester  
Recording Secretary  
Taken from Video

# Wilton Economic Development Commission

## Update to the Board of Selectmen: Analytic Assessment and Town Surveys

*June 20, 2016*

*(version 2 – amended to fix typos and incorrect source reference)*



# Agenda

- Introduction
- SWOT Analysis and Recommendations
- Wilton At a Glance
- Business Survey and Interviews
- Residential Entry / Exit Survey
- Real Estate Market and Value Implications
- Contributors
- Appendix – Recent Changes to Zoning

# Introduction

# Purpose

Our Mission: The mission of Wilton’s EDC is to enhance Wilton’s reputation as a community where the quality of life for local residents [and] professionals...make Wilton the “first choice” to start a new business, relocate an existing business, or [sustain an existing business.]

## Purpose of This Study:

The EDC has engaged several community volunteers to participate in a working group to analyze data and information collected from the community. The objective is to understand business, residential, and other economic drivers of growth in town. The end result will be to identify areas in which Wilton can strategically focus its regulatory and development efforts, both short-term and long-term.



# Approach and Objective

## APPROACH

1. Interviews with Commercial Real Estate Brokers, Landlords/Representatives, Business Owners, Residential Real Estate brokers
2. Residential Real Estate Survey
3. Wilton-based Business Survey
4. Data collected from multiple sources incl. (but not limited to): CT MLS, Census data, Wilton Tax Records, Board of Education



## OBJECTIVE

1. Understand drivers of “traffic” in and out of town, macro-level (residential and business) population trends, regulatory challenges
2. Observe residential trends using transaction-specific data within a specified time period
3. Obtain insight into why businesses chose Wilton, challenges being faced by these businesses.
4. Observation of any data-based trends to help pinpoint other economic drivers or areas of opportunity.

# Methodology

In order to gain maximum participation in the surveys and interviews, the following methodology was employed:

- Business Survey (28 responses)
  - Social Media – published and targeted announcements to all residents over 18 within 25 miles of zip code 06897. Also published announcements in the following groups: Wilton Economic Development Commission, Wilton Small Business, Wilton 411, Wilton 412, Wilton CT Politics, Working Moms of Wilton
- Media publication – three separate articles published in the Wilton Bulletin and Good Morning Wilton
- Blast email to all Chamber of Commerce Members
- Direct contact via the working group
- Realtor Surveys (132 responses)
  - Multiple blast emails from Kathy Elson (President of CT MLS) to relevant members announcing the effort and ongoing updates
  - Multiple direct target emails to all brokers who had Wilton transactions between the specified time period
  - Direct contact via the working group
  - Direct contact via members within each office
- Business and Broker Interviews
  - Identified all targeted businesses and brokers. Collected contact information and initiated contact directly either via direct introduction, or cold contact.

# Core Working Team

## Wilton EDC Members:

- Vivian Lee-Shiue – Vice Chair, Wilton EDC

## Volunteers

- John Kelly – town resident, Berkeley Research Group
- John DiCenzo – town resident, Halstead Property
- Dianne DeWitt – town resident, Berkshire Hathaway
- Bert Schefers – town resident, Abbey Road Associates
- R<sup>2</sup>Edge students (under direction of John Kelly)
  - Josephine Tom
  - Emily Gan
  - Birunda Chelliah

# SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis and Recommendations



- There is a very strong sense of community and collaboration. Wilton residents and business owners have a tremendous amount of pride in their community and town.
- The town enjoys a rare balance of tax and job-supporting commercial business district, with greater spaciousness of living at 600 persons per square mile.
- There is a good balance of rural space and semi-urban culture/things to do, with fairly easy access to urban and cultural centers.
- Highly educated and fully employed community, among the youngest in Fairfield County, and with greatest rate of employment.
- Strong school system; real and perceived. College matriculation rate leads the county. Graduation rate near the top.
- Town center is off main driving strip, making the center less prone to heavy traffic than neighboring communities.
- Town's desirability appears to be in good balance by both qualitative (survey response) and quantitative (population growth rate) measures.

- Town center not considered a destination shopping location:
  - Town center businesses concentrated in just a few commoditized categories: banks, pizzerias, nail salons.
  - Structure is lacking in creative or traditional zoning, aesthetics or businesses as compared to neighboring towns. Organic growth has led to a disjointed appearance.
  - Perception of excess vacancy rates.
  - Due to the fact that the center is off main driving strip (Rte. 7), drive-by traffic is limited.
- Some businesses suggest the town could demonstrate better common sense and/or communication in its regulations and planning decisions.
- There is a lack of an advocate or centralized entity that can assist businesses.
- Lack of infrastructure (sewer, water, gas) in some areas inhibits further business development.
- Tax burden, both perceived (and real) is significant.
- Extended period of home value stagnation may deter new investors from entering into the community.

- Address commute time impact, with a particular focus on connecting town to urban/semi-urban core.
- Focus on retaining empty-nesters and/or senior population.
- Enable proactive change in zoning requirements to allow for broader usage and applicability.
- Focus on river to develop and better connect the town around a more natural aesthetic.
- Market Wilton as one of the best home and family values in the county, with potential for upside growth in order to lure inbound millennials.
  - Communicate school's advantage in Wilton more broadly/through Realtor community.
  - Focus on a branding niche to attract unique businesses to Wilton – for example, medical, green/health, high-tech.
  - Growth of Norwalk as a semi-urban commercial and shopping center may yield more resident taxpayers to Wilton.
- Focus on attracting and developing a critical mass of businesses with unique knowledge and skillset (e.g. Perkin-Elmer/ASML semiconductor mfg. talent base)

- Upcoming 2017 Assessment expected to yield neutral residential value growth and potentially drop in commercial values.
- Sources of growth in Grand List are not easy to identify.
- Densification of existing businesses – less office space required for same number of employees is creating higher potential for increased office vacancy once leases expire.
- There is a trend for businesses to move towards urban and transportation centers.
- State and local regulations are impacting new business startup rate. There is minimal (intrinsic) incentive for businesses to establish in Connecticut and/or in Wilton
- Current data (residential entry survey) suggests millennials from city are not arriving in great numbers.
- Extended period of home value stagnation may deter new investors.
- Some businesses are not positioned/sufficiently differentiated for survival in era of online and big box discount shoppers.
- Retail lease rates seem to be misaligned from average revenue trends.
- Existing landscape (wetlands) creates significant restrictions to land usage – for example, much of Wilton Center is located in a flood plain and a flood course. This limits the opportunity to build.

# Short Term Recommendations

- Initiate broader collaboration across town entities, including but not limited to the Chamber of Commerce, Board of Education, other commissions, businesses and residents to do the following:
  - Perform a marketing assessment to focus on appropriate themes on which Wilton can be “branded.”
  - Expand “Rapid Response Team” to assist businesses by being single point of contact for regulatory issues and questions. This team should include representative members of various commissions including EDC and P&Z.
- Engage a part time resource to assist with EDC and town coordination. This resource could be the core resource staffing the Rapid Response Team (mentioned above) and the communication outreach (mentioned on next page).
- Identify state-level resources that can help support local businesses.



# Long Term Recommendations

- Perform selective zoning reviews and initiate discussion around zoning changes including (but not limited to):
  - Benchmark zoning regulations in Central Business District (CBD) of neighboring, competing towns, with the intention of creating (proactive) zoning changes where needed.
  - Parking assessments and studies (NOTE: See appendix for zoning changes that post-date some of the interviews stated here.)
  - Re-initiate signage study. Engage members of the community and business owners.
- Explore areas for opportunistic growth such as the expansion of core infrastructure (sewer, gas, water) within Wilton. This would need to include an assessment of ways in which to fund these projects via grants, partnerships, bonding.
- May be accomplished via a private partnership and collaboration of multiple entities in town.
- More active outreach to the local business community and commercial property owners to communicate recent changes, proposals to existing infrastructure, town laws and regulations.
- Initiate a discussion to develop a strategy related to issues and amenities for the aging population who no longer have children within the school system.

# Examples of Opportunities for Change

The following are options for addressing some of the issues mentioned in prior pages. These options may require additional resources, and do not address potential funding sources:

- Commute time – establish municipal transportation center that includes town-specific transportation options (unrelated to Norwalk Transit Authority) to/from major transportation hubs (to South Norwalk / Stamford / Commuter parking lots).
- Empty-nesters:
  - Further development of affordable housing and amenities that are attractive to seniors.
  - Improve or overhaul existing tax assistance/relief programs to make it more effective.
- Establish reputation as a business-friendly environment:
  - Business incentives, tax incentives or deferrals for new businesses that sign extended lease in town (Newtown, CT and Colchester, CT both have very successful new business incentive programs).
- Grand list growth:
  - Residential - examine opportunities to re-zone areas to allow for cluster-type housing similar to River Ridge. See “Case Study” on page 31 of this presentation.
  - Commercial – proactive re-zoning to allow more flexibility for potential businesses\*
  - Identify and market to a core / niche industry in order to attract new businesses\*\*

\* An update to this recommendation appears in the appendix, but we have left this recommendation here because an overarching theme in our interviews had to do with zoning issues

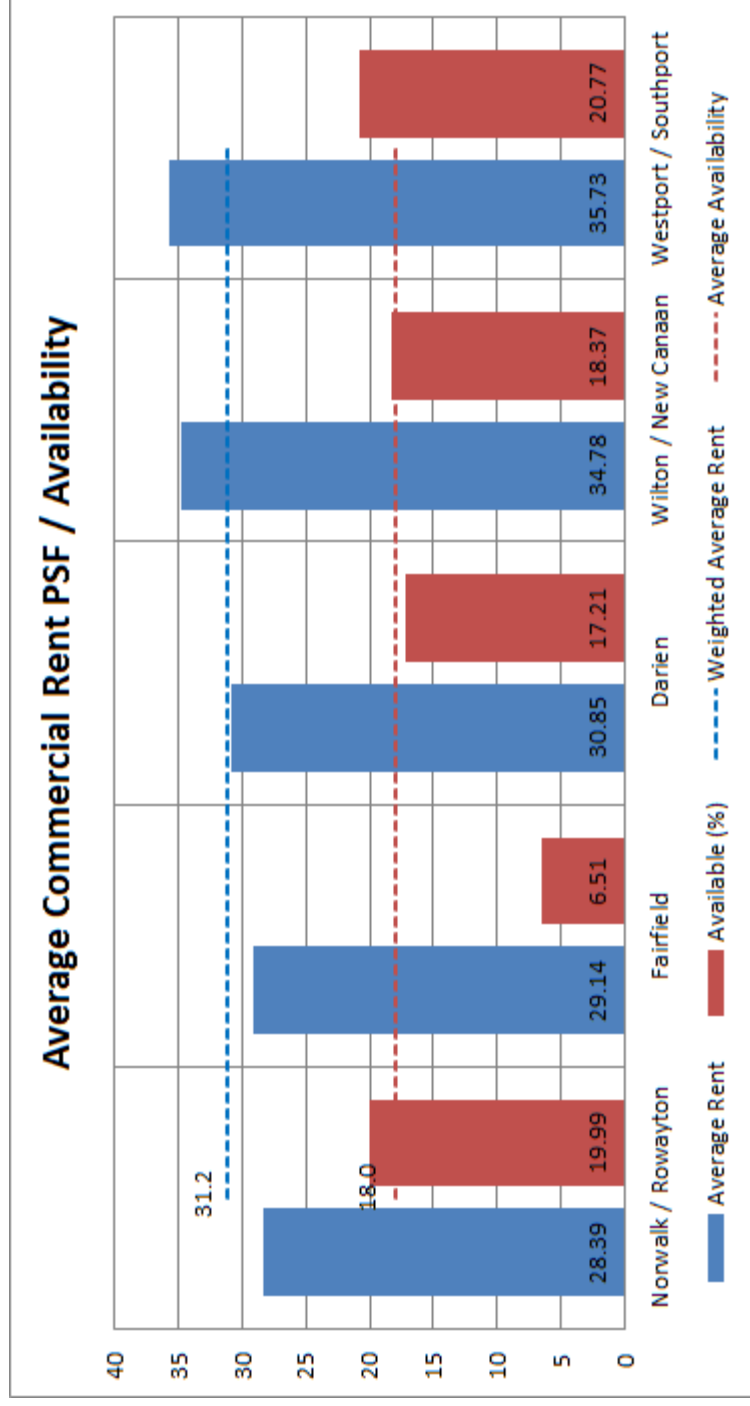
\*\* This is already underway with the Marketing Group

# Wilton At A Glance

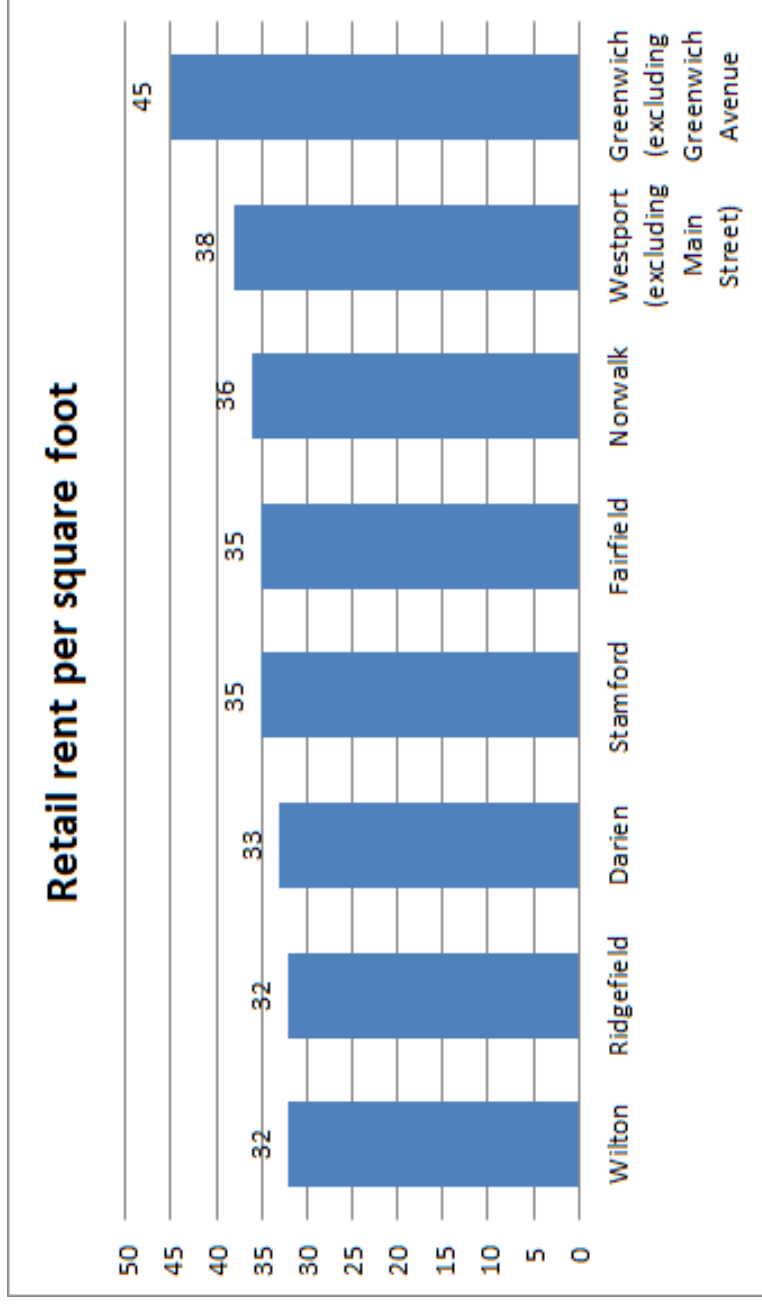
Average Commercial Rent per year, per square foot, and current availability  
(Source: CBRE Fairfield County Statistical Report 4Q2015):

Central Fairfield: Darien, New Canaan, Norwalk, Rowayton, Westport, Southport, Wilton, Fairfield

(Note: Ridgefield is part of Northern Fairfield submarket. Average rent = \$22.65 / average availability = 15.62%)



Average Retail Rental Rates (Source: True Commercial Real Estate)



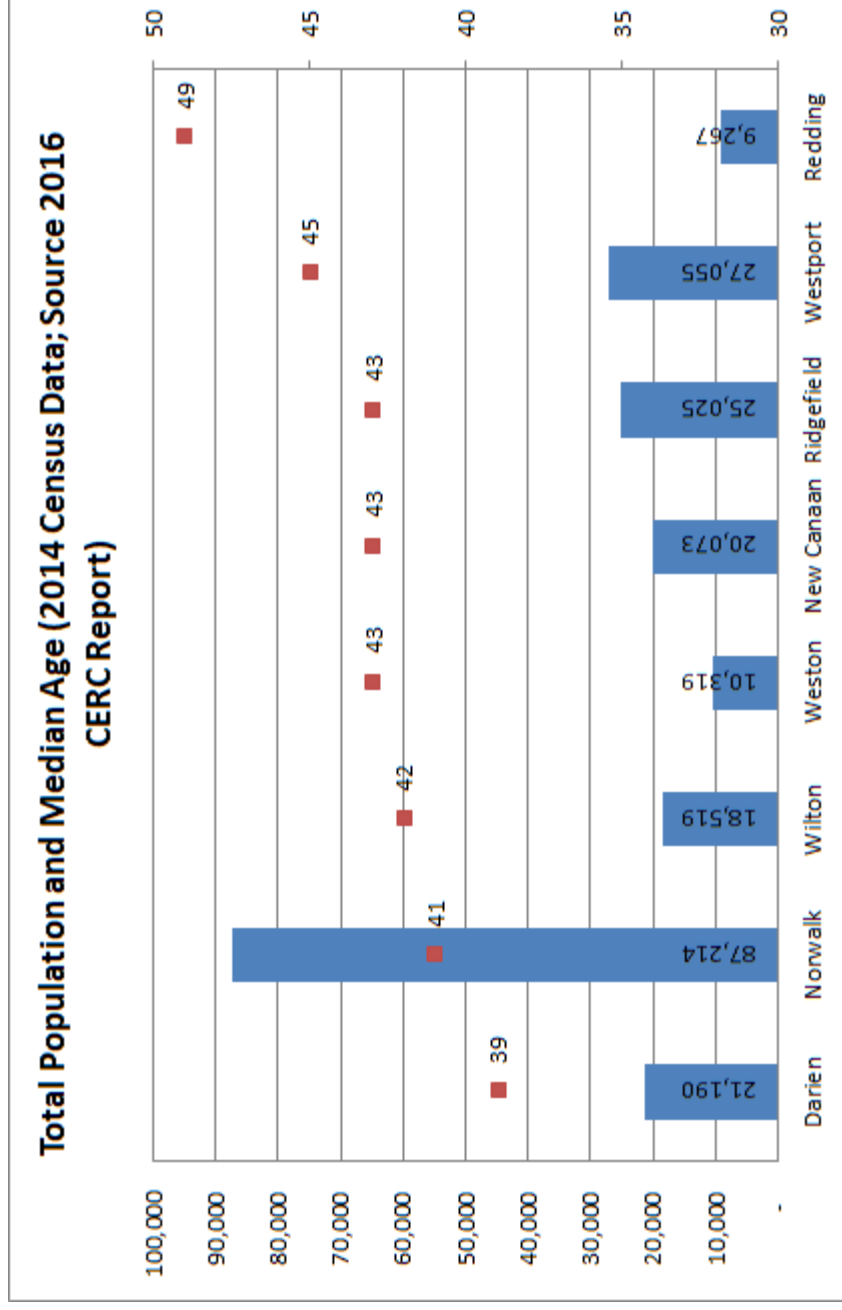
*Weston – not enough volume*



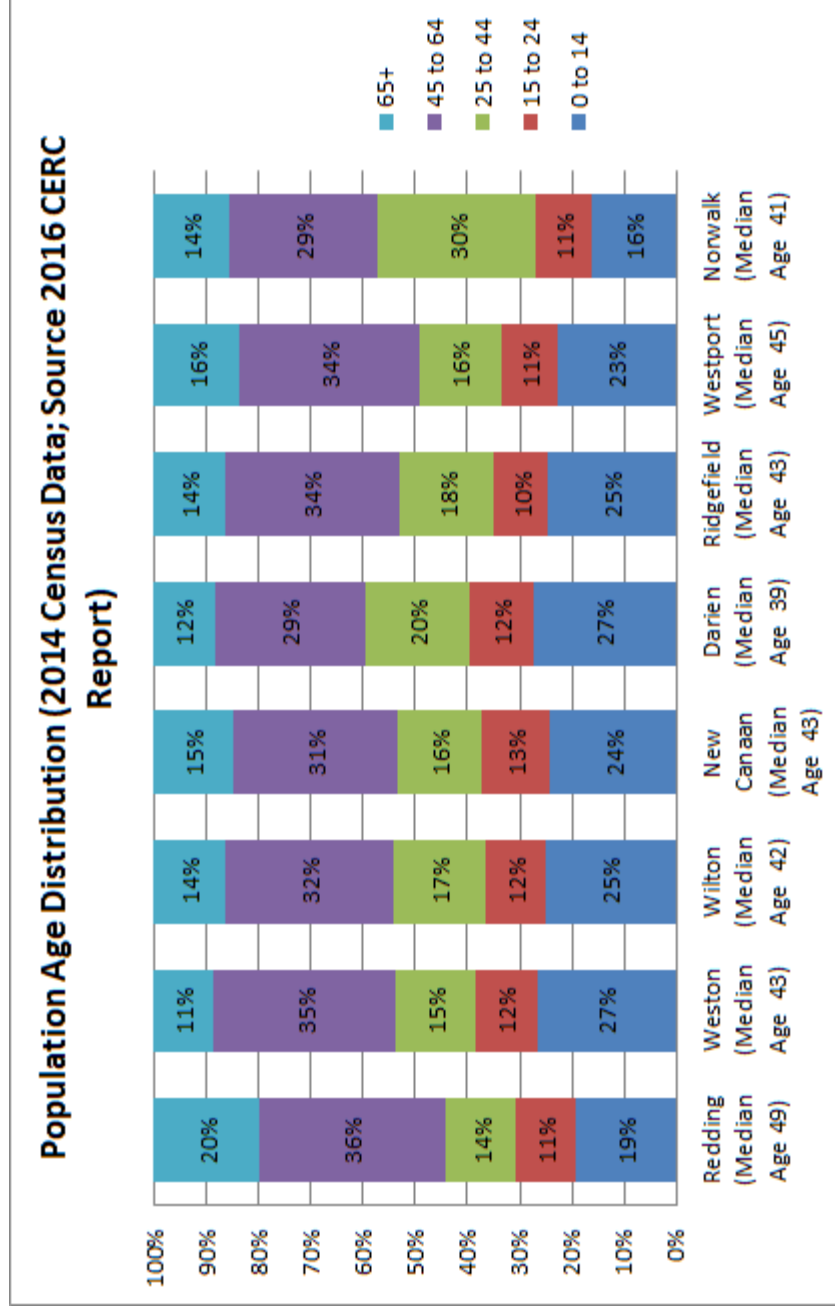
# Wilton At a Glance

Population and Median Age, sorted by Median age (Source: 2016 CERC Report; 2014 Data)

- Wilton population + 10% = 20,371
- Wilton population – 10% = 16,667



## Population Age Distribution, sorted by total population (Source: 2016 CERC Report; 2014 Data)

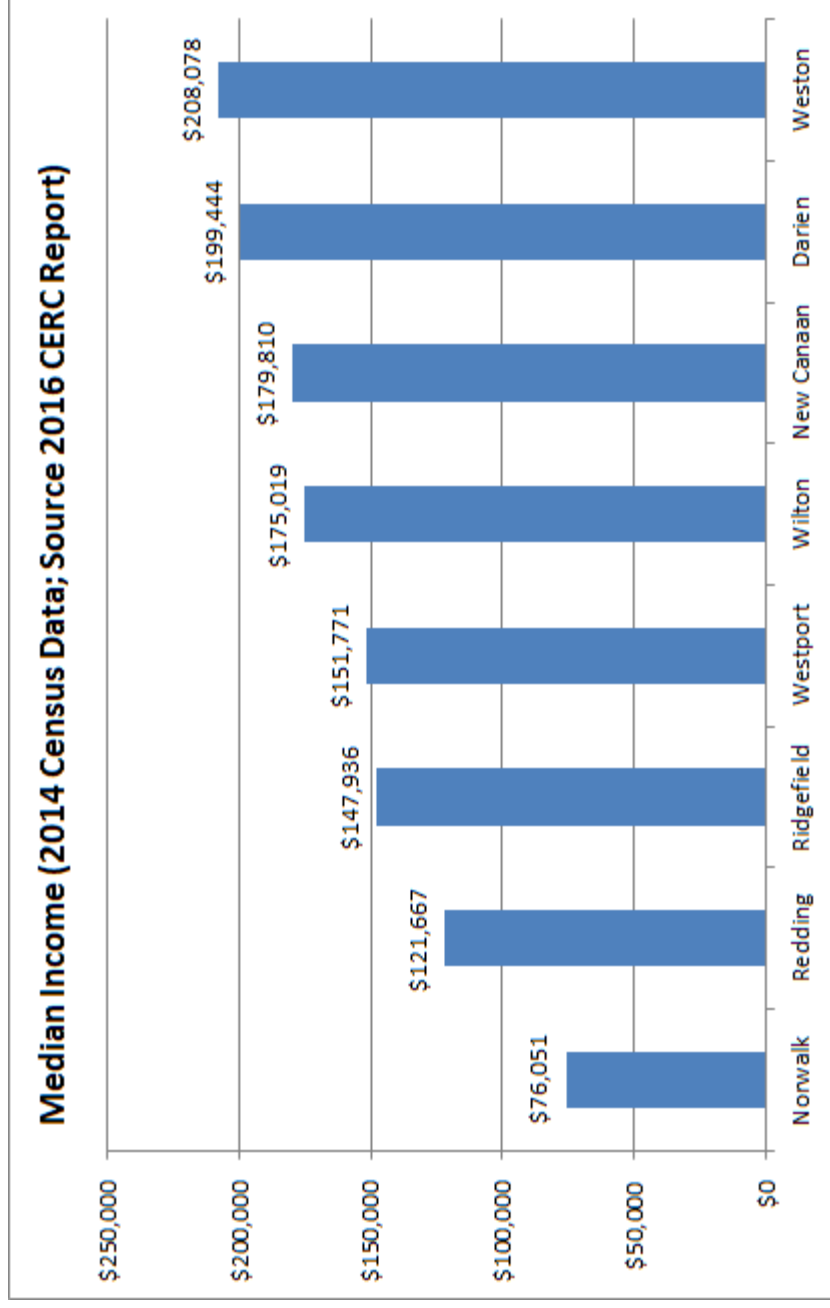


# Wilton At a Glance

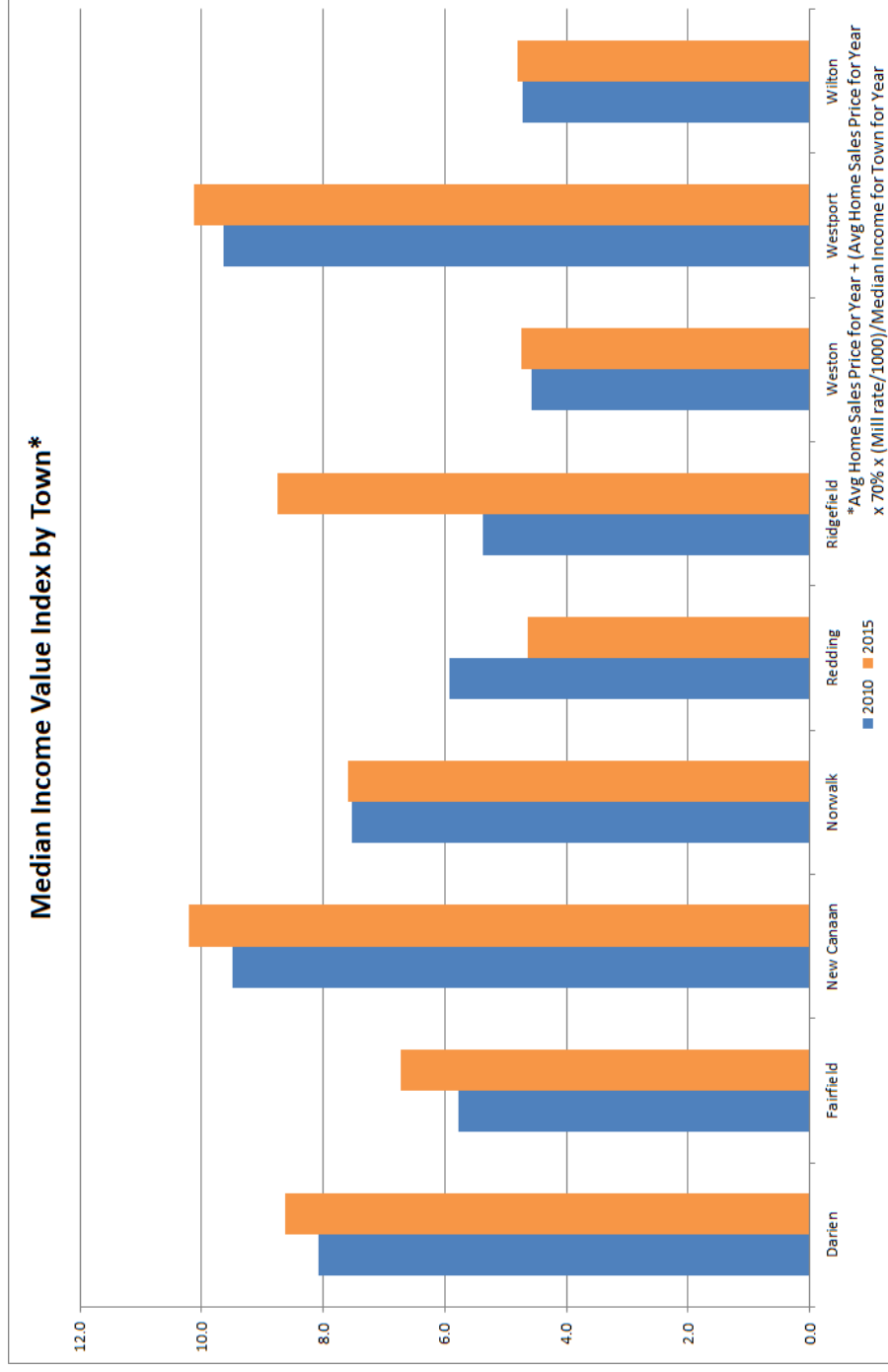
## Median Household Income (Source: 2016 CERC Report; 2014 Data)

- Wilton population + 10% = \$192,521
- Wilton population – 10% = \$157,517

NOTE: as this does not reflect Adjusted Gross Income, these numbers are slightly skewed. We are looking for data that reflects the AGI across neighboring towns.



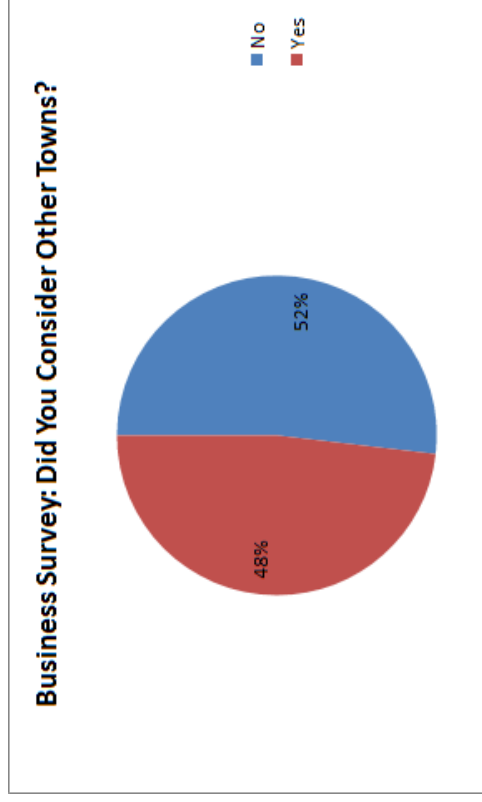
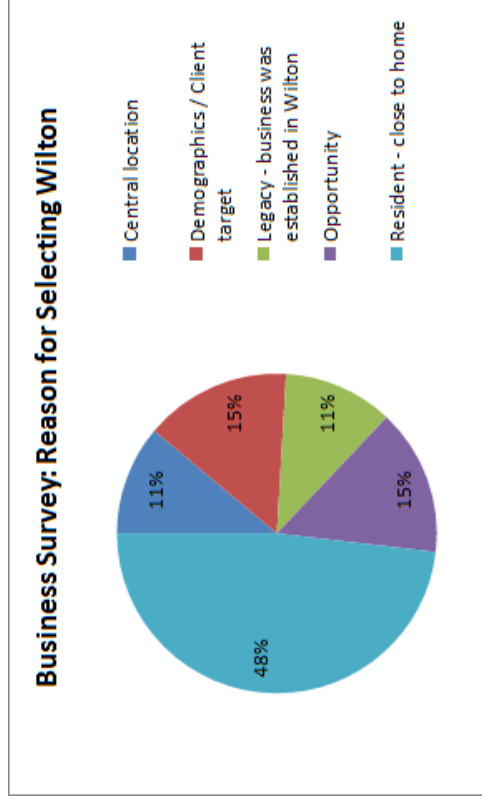
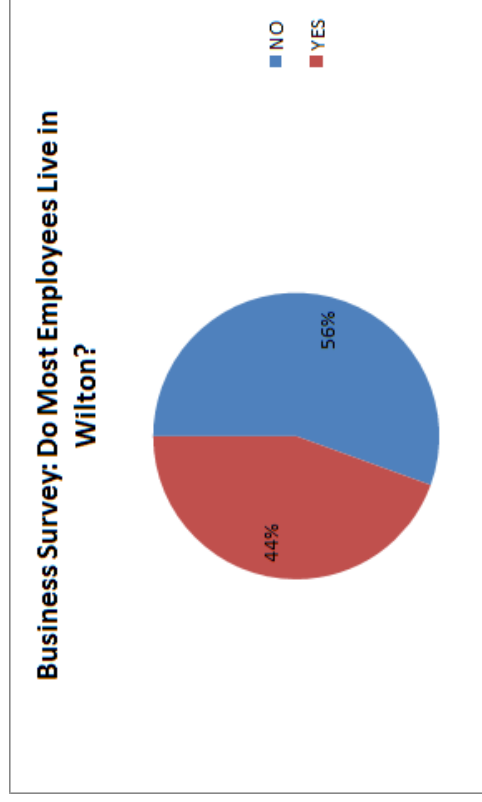
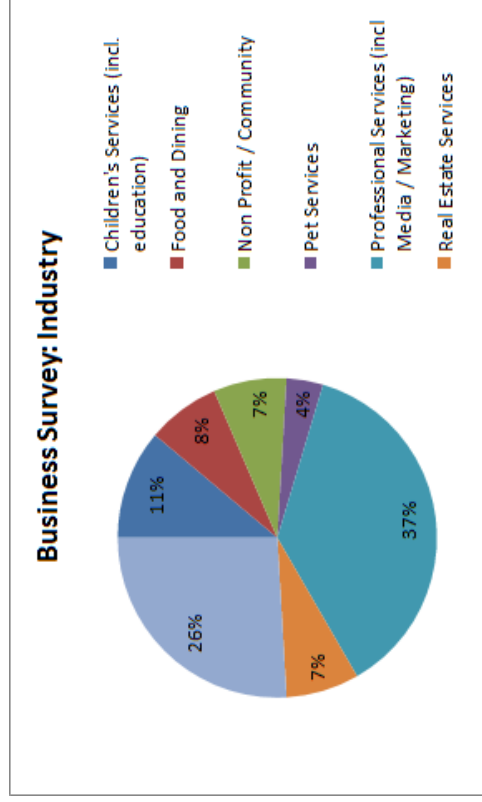
The following custom index shows the total cost of housing over the median income in each town; showing how much of total income goes towards housing at time of purchase. (Source: CMLS and 2016 CERC Report; 2014 data)



# Business Survey and Interview Results

# Business Survey Results

40+ businesses inquired directly for the survey link; 28 businesses completed the business survey (one response was discarded as they were based in Redding / Georgetown).



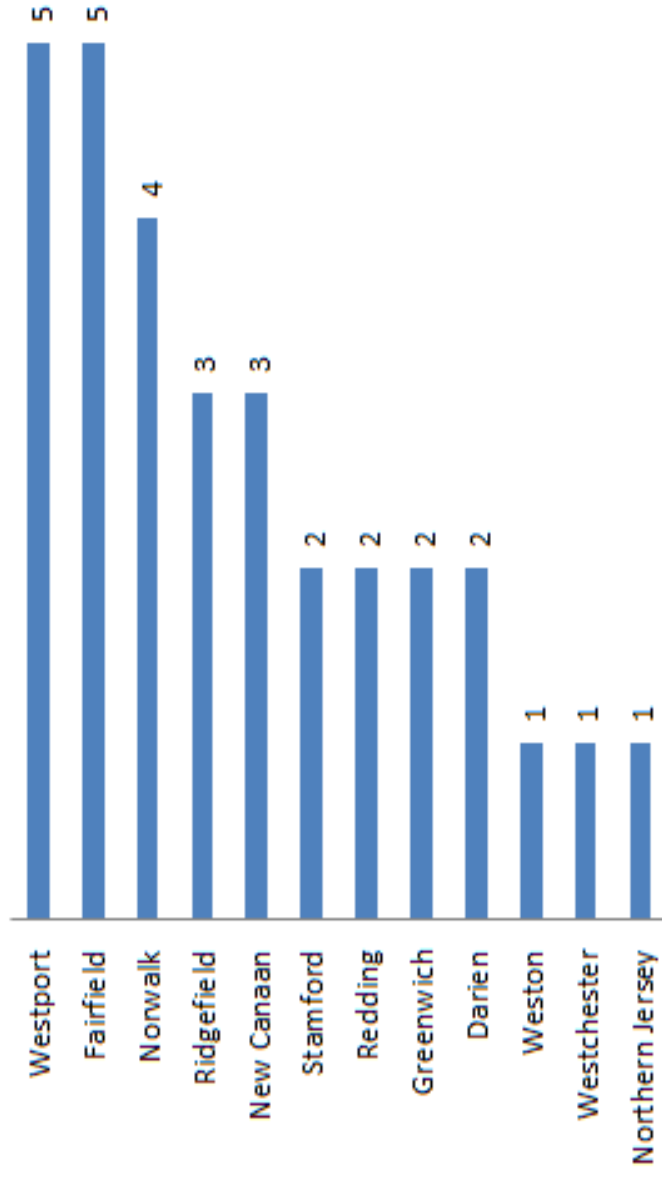
Note: This survey did not include larger corporate entities (Brietling, ASML), as those were targeted via direct interviews.



# Business Survey Results

Of the businesses (48%) considering other towns, the following towns were considered. Note that each business was able to specify more than one town as an alternative.

**Business Survey: What Other Towns Did you Consider?**



# Select Themes from Interviews / Survey

## Leasing Costs and Vacancy Rates:

- Commercial office lease rates in Wilton are on the higher end of the Central Fairfield submarket. Vacancy rate is roughly in line with the Central Fairfield submarket\*
- In general, businesses require less space per employee than they had in the past. Many are consolidating office space.
- Retail benchmarks (anecdotal only) – on average, retail revenue/sq. foot in Wilton is yielding ~\$200-\$300. Generally, revenue should be about 10% of cost per square foot, yielding an **ideal lease rate** of \$20-\$30PSF. In Wilton, leasing rates are running ~\$32 and above, with leases in the higher cost spaces running in the mid \$40 range.

## Financial Considerations:

- Property taxes seem to have steadily increased over recent years - one business said their taxes have doubled in the 8 years they've owned the building. They recently sold and moved out of Wilton (*NOTE: this fact is anecdotal and has not been confirmed; however, the perception of the increase in taxes is a major factor*)
- One asset manager / commercial broker believes that assessment values on commercial buildings will go down in the mid term future, yielding a lower revenue base for the town.

\* Central Fairfield: Darien, New Canaan, Norwalk, Rowayton, Westport, Wilton, Fairfield

# Select Themes from Interviews / Survey

## Wilton as a Location

- Most businesses were established in town because the CEO/COO or owner had an emotional connection to town – i.e. they live nearby or in town.
- Businesses for which one of the key stakeholders did not have a connection in town were often found to be legacy businesses or selected Wilton for the market opportunity (demographic).
- Businesses leaving or bypassing Wilton are doing so in order to be closer to transportation or urban centers.
  - Businesses are finding it harder to attract young talent who prefer to live in a city.
  - One business has a chartered bus service from Manhattan to Wilton to service their employees who live in the city.
- Transportation challenges and traffic are seen as significant barrier to business growth in CT in general; this is not an issue that is unique to Wilton.
- One large Wilton-based business had stated that the local cost of living is a significant deterrent to attracting potential talent and employees.
- Given its proximity to Norwalk (both Post Road and new proposed mall), New Canaan, Westport, Stamford and Danbury, all of which are retail hubs, Wilton is not seen as a retail hub or shopping “destination.”
  - Wilton should focus on niche businesses in order to draw out of town traffic.

# Select Themes from Interviews / Survey

## Planning and Zoning:

- Wilton should review town regulations from a “common sense” perspective and/or allow for exceptions where relevant – one business was told that they had to build a sidewalk in front of the building even though there are no connecting sidewalks.\*
- All landlord representatives and brokers, and several business owners stated that parking is an issue.
- One landlord representative would like to see Wilton allow multi-level free standing parking structures
- Two others mentioned that parking density rules should be revisited and fit to purpose.

## General

- Wilton is currently struggling with the sometimes contradictory nature of the desire/need to maintain history and close-knit sense of community, and the need for economic growth. Some balance needs to be struck between these two factors.

*\* In conversation with the EDC, it became evident that the sidewalk issue was one of communication. The town has a current strategy as it relates to the usage and desire to implement sidewalks, but the reasons were not communicated to the business.*

# Case Study – Multi Family Housing

Avalon Bay currently has a complex on Danbury Road comprising 10.6 acres. Total units are above 100 (actual number range provided: 100-113).

- Total Assessed Value = \$14,073,640
- Total Tax Revenue 2015 = \$377,596\*

Avalon Properties currently has a complex on River Road comprising 12.3 acres. There are 103 total units.

- Total Assessed Value = \$20,105,680
- Total Tax Revenue 2015 = \$ 539,435\*

River Ridge is a newly-built condo complex off of River Road. There are 20 units; total acres = 11.1

- Total Assessed Value of all units = \$14,406,500
- Total Tax Revenue 2015 of all units = \$386,526\*

Compare that with a home on Nod Hill currently sitting on 9.9 acres:

- Total Assessed Value of all units = \$1,742,020
- Total Tax Revenue 2015 of all units = \$ 46,738\*

\*Using rate of 26.8

# Residential Entry-Exit Survey

## Raw Data Summary



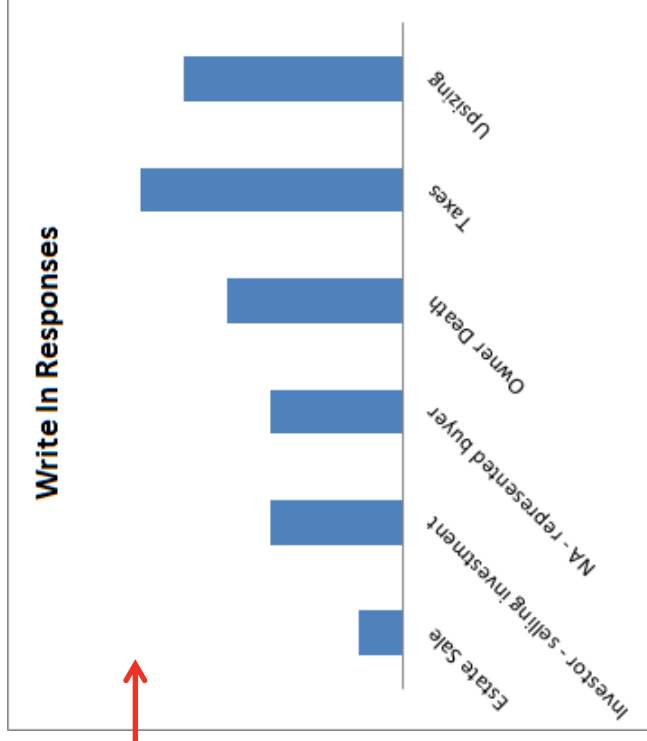
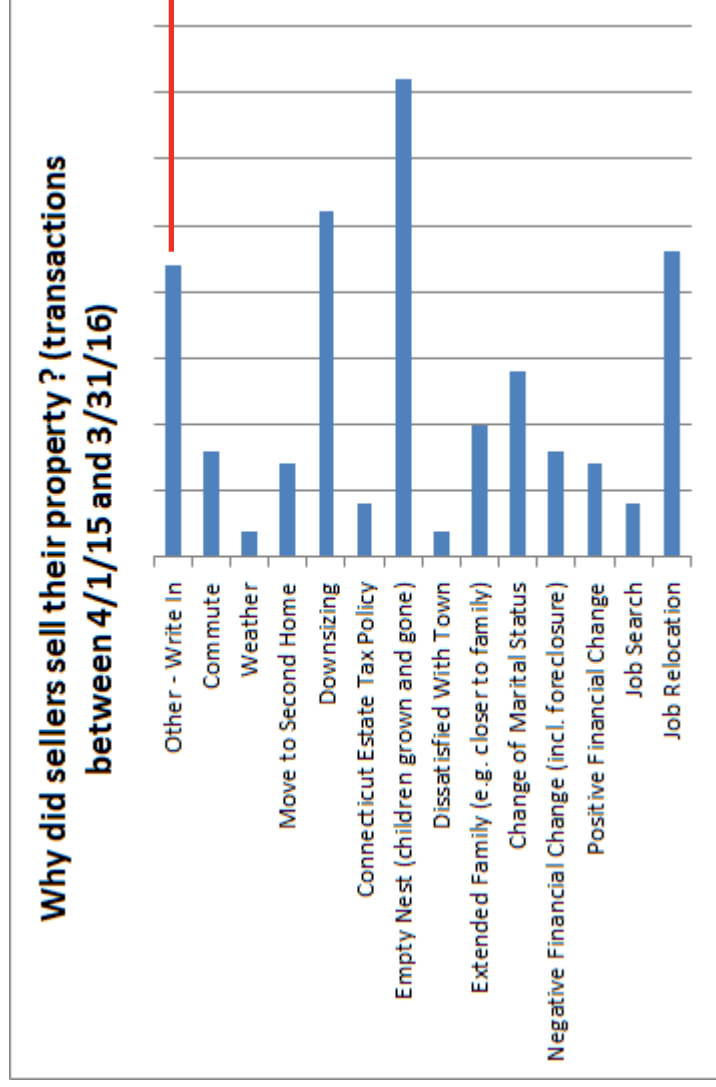
# Residential Real Estate Survey

The commission implemented a survey among the approximately 500 agent participants in the town's residential real estate transactions from 4/1/15 to 3/31/16. 132 surveys were completed and drive the following insights.

Unless otherwise labeled, the source of all data in this section is from the residential realtor survey.

# Reasons for Leaving Wilton

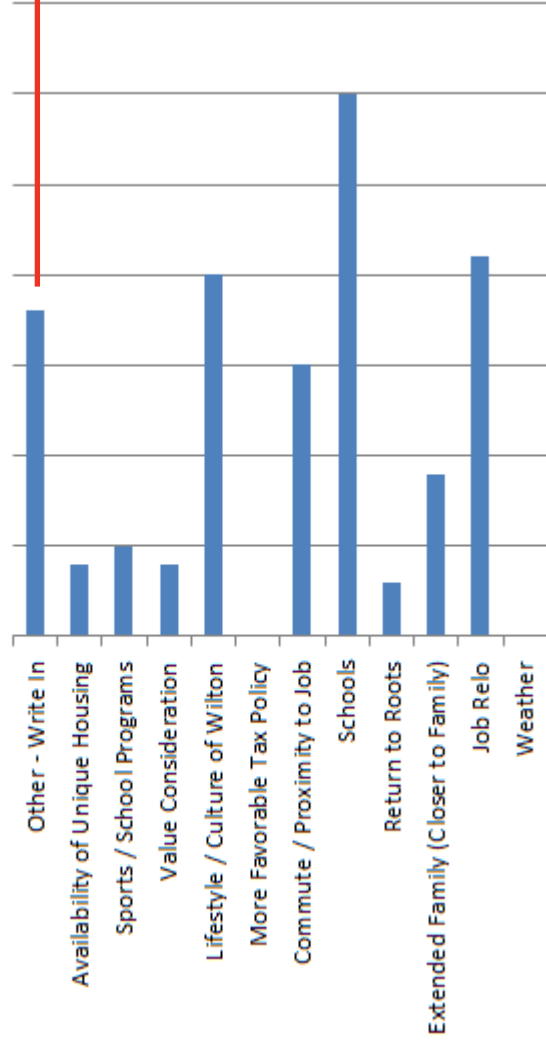
It appears people depart as they reach an empty nest stage of life, and wish to downsize (#2 response) – indicative of the baby boomer generation trying to reduce cost of living.



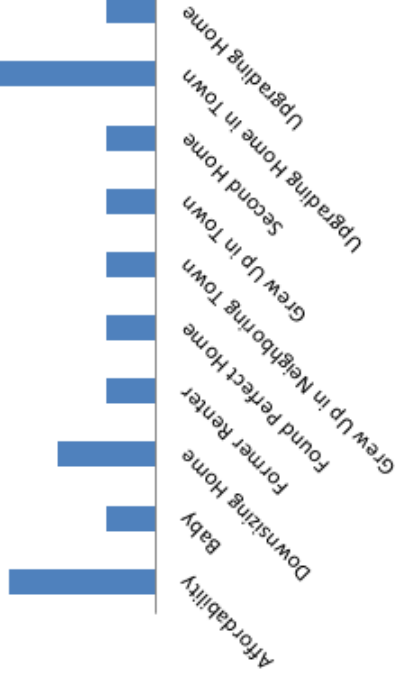
# Reasons for Coming to Wilton

Perceived value/quality of the schools was cited as the number one reason people came to Wilton in the last year, with job relocation and Wilton culture not far behind.

**Why Did Buyers Buy? (transactions between 4/1/15 and 3/31/16)**

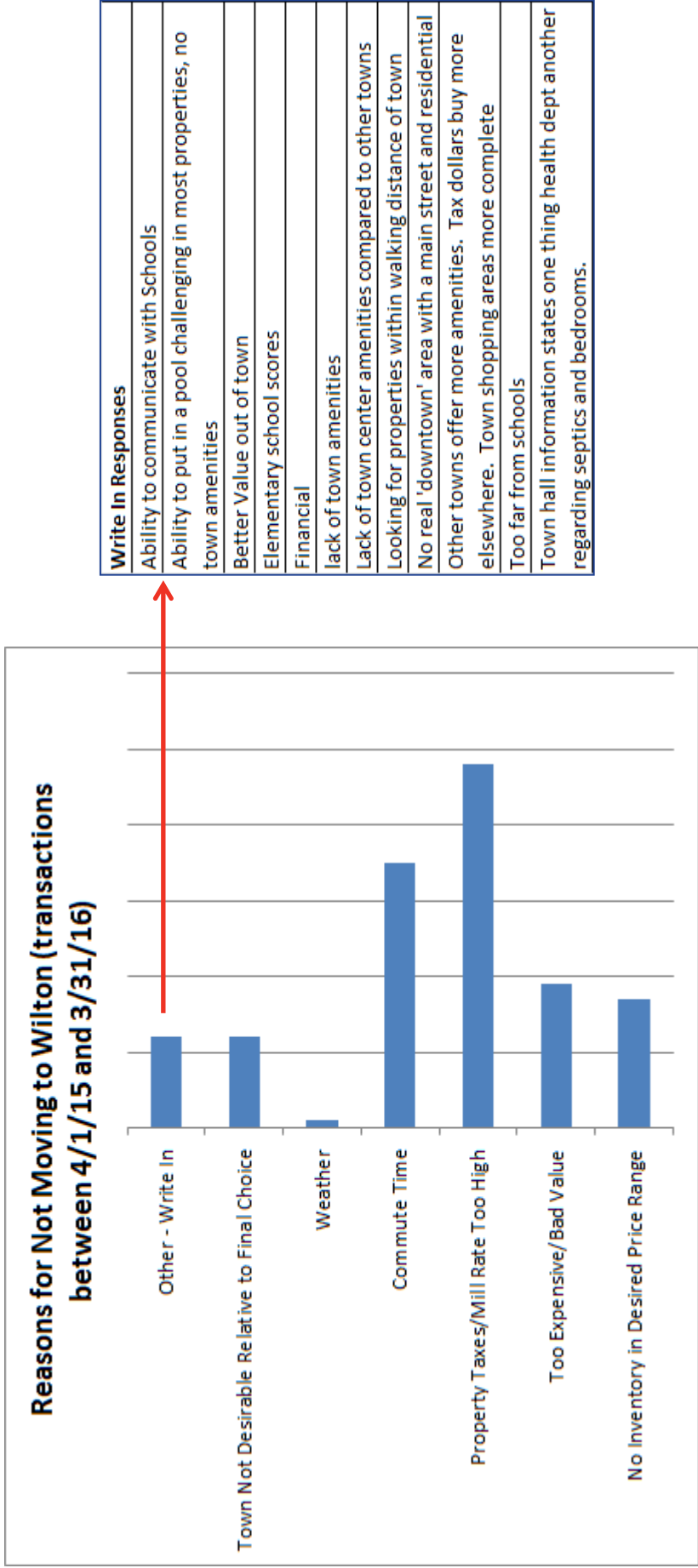


**Write In Responses**



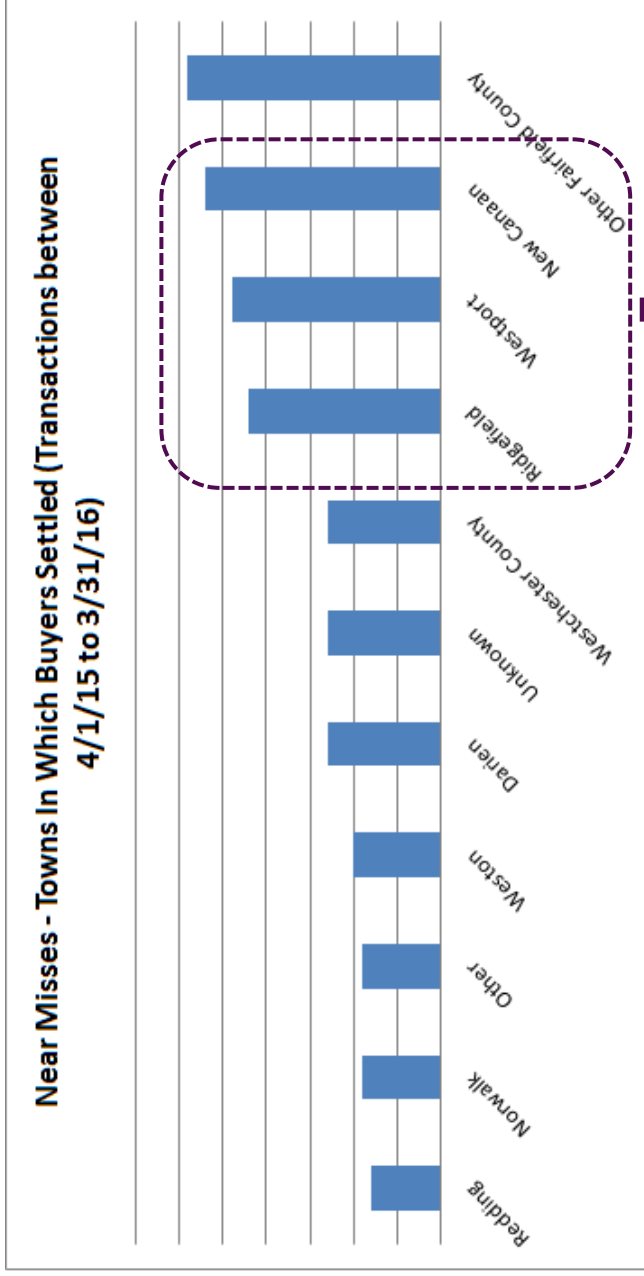
# “Near Miss”

Buyers who “kicked the tires” but ultimately bought elsewhere apparently thought the taxes were too high and the commute was too far (presumably to NYC).

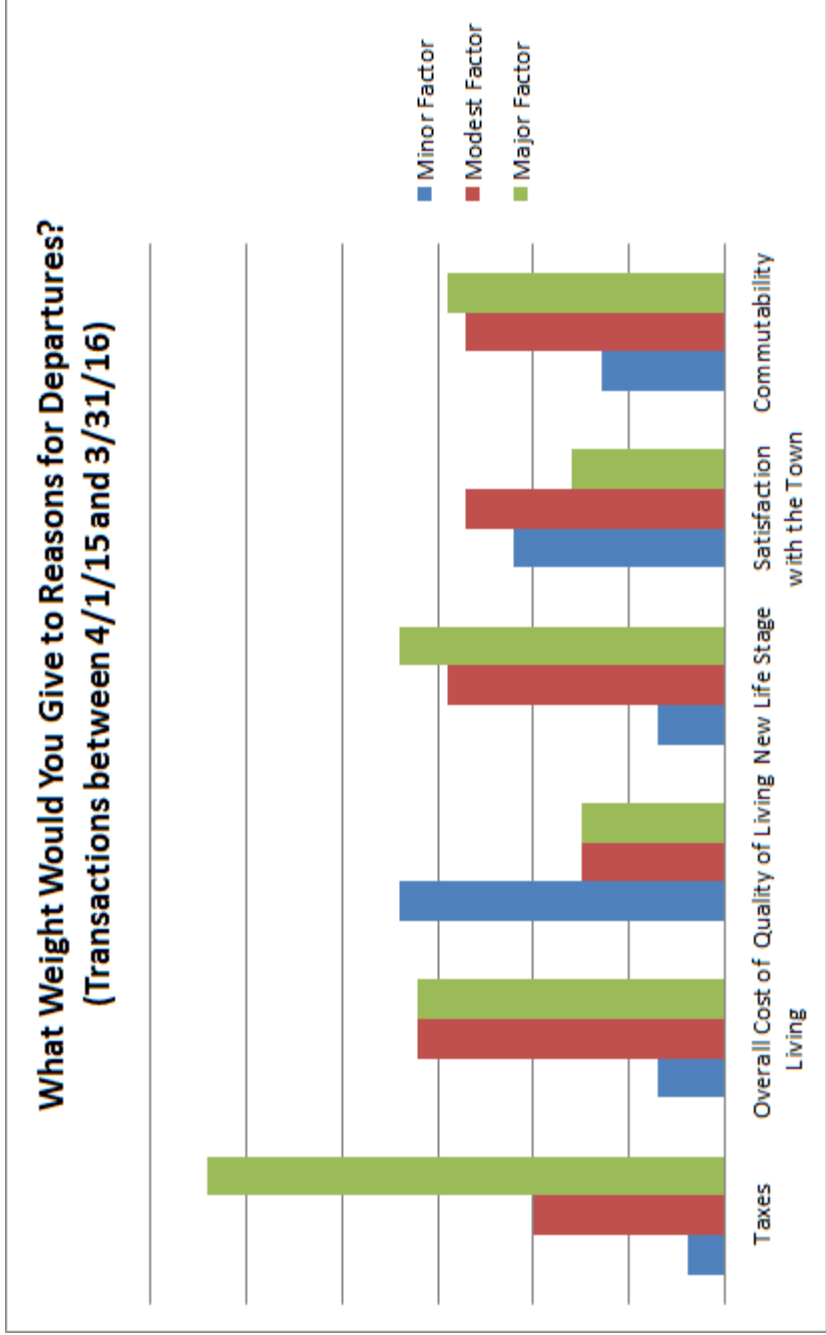


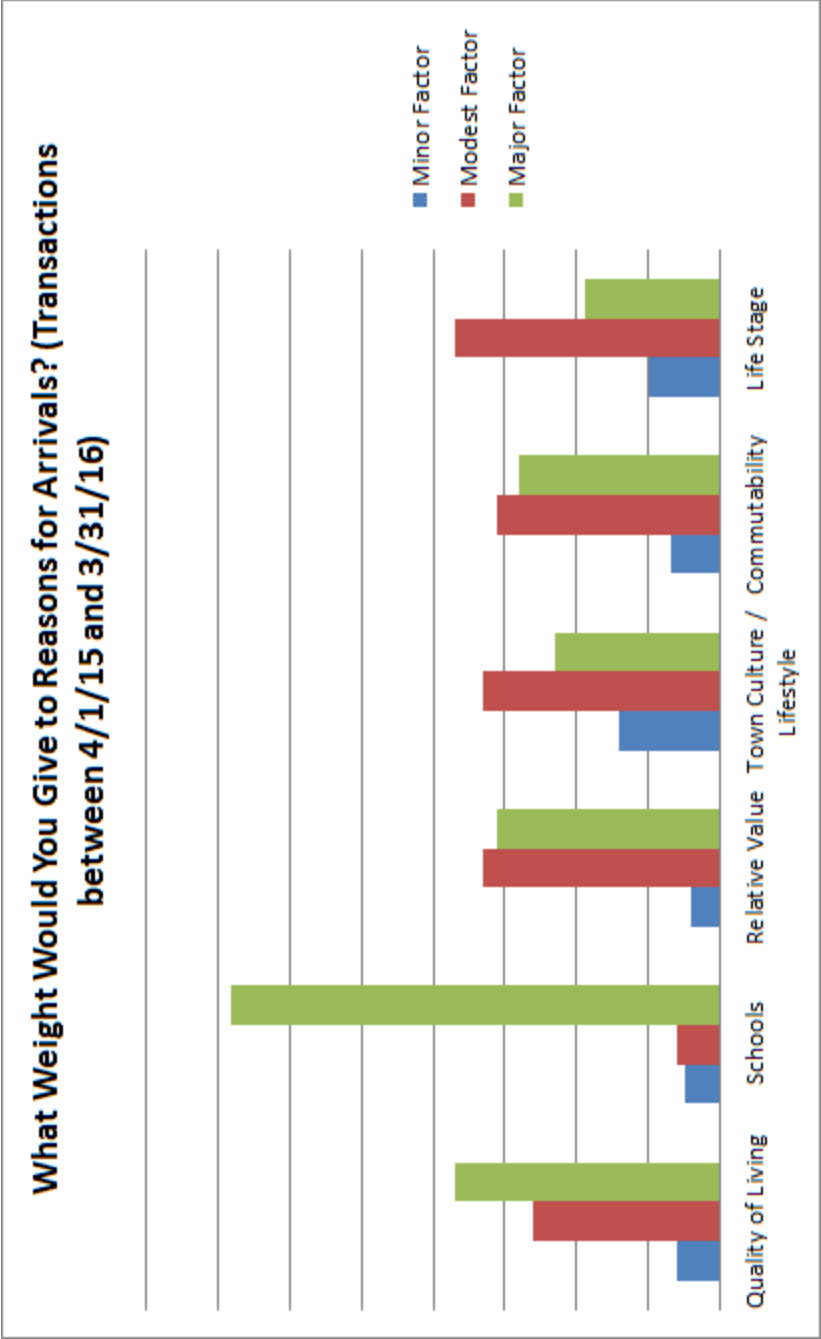
# "Near Miss"

"Near misses" fled to Westport, New Canaan and other locations in Fairfield County.



| Commute Times from Station |                                         |                                                                   |                                                               |                                    |               | Taxes |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-------|
|                            | # of Trains<br>Getting In<br>Before 9AM | Average Time to<br>GCT for All<br>Trains Getting In<br>Before 9AM | Shortest<br>Commute of All<br>Trains Getting In<br>Before 9AM | Earliest Train<br>(departure time) | Mill<br>Rates |       |
| Wilton Center              | 3                                       | 86.3 minutes                                                      | 83 minutes                                                    | 6:05AM                             | 26.8302       |       |
| Ridgefield / Branchville   | 3                                       | 97.3minutes                                                       | 94 minutes                                                    | 5:54AM                             | 26.01         |       |
| Westport                   | 11                                      | 69.5 minutes                                                      | 64 minutes                                                    | 4:48AM                             | 18.09         |       |
| New Canaan                 | 4                                       | 68.75 minutes                                                     | 66 minutes                                                    | 5:33AM                             | 15.985        |       |



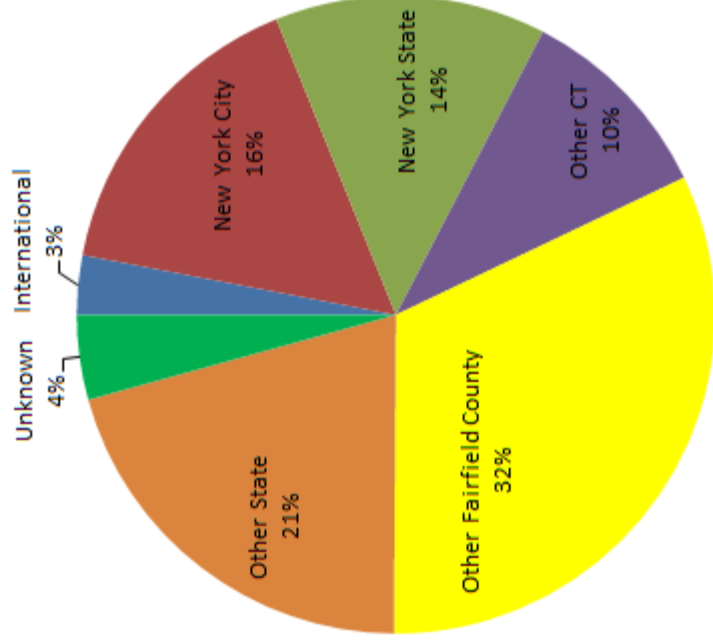




# New Arrivals – Prior Location

In terms of marketing new arrivals today, it appears they are still mostly locals, and not yet the long-desired millennials residing in the city.

**Where Did Buyers Move From? (Transactions between 4/1/15 and 3/31/16)**



# New Arrivals – Reasons for Leaving Prior Location

Agents told us why the arrivals left their last town for Wilton. Parents unhappy with their current school system moved out in favor of the stronger school system in Wilton.

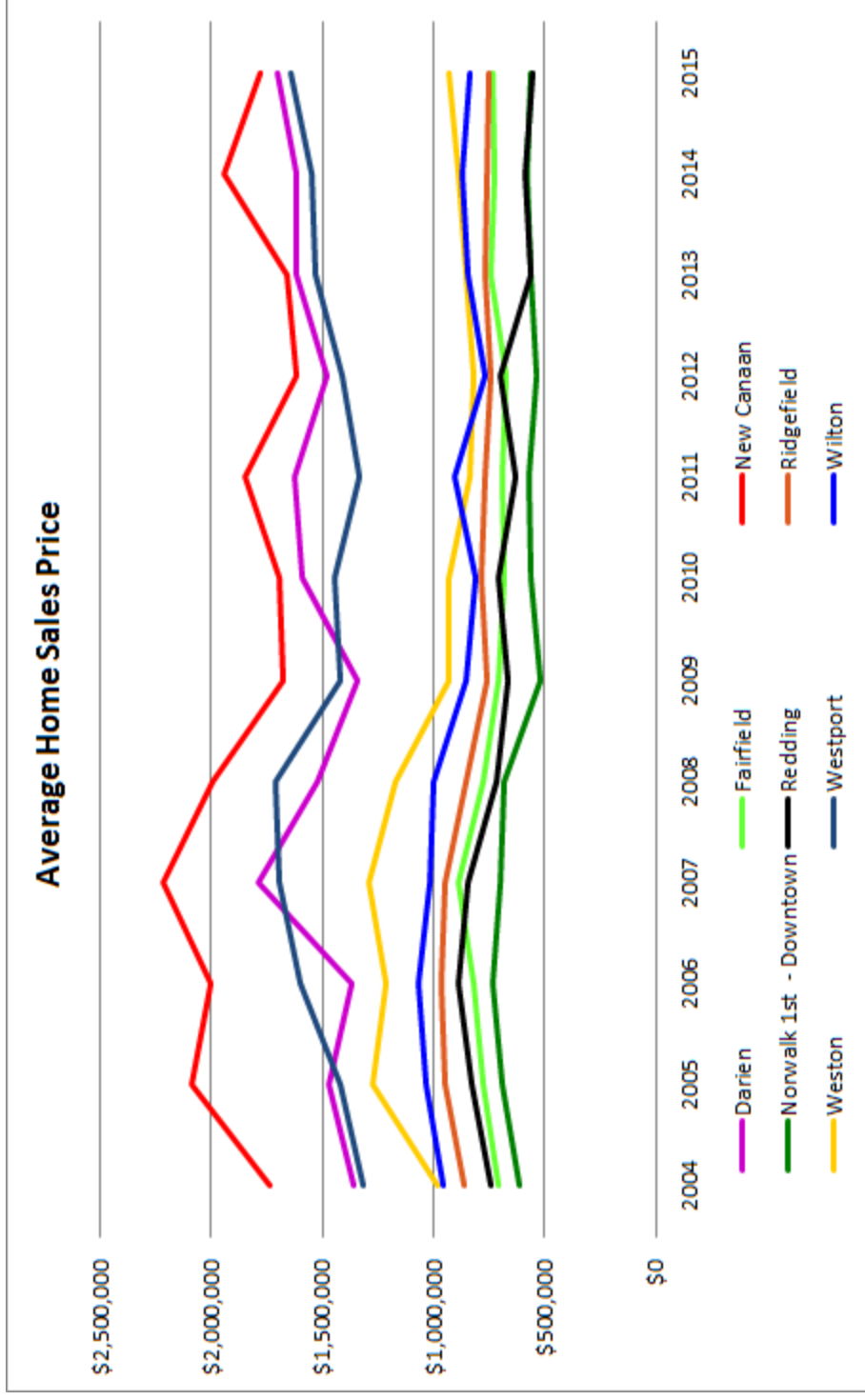


# Real Estate Market & Value Implications

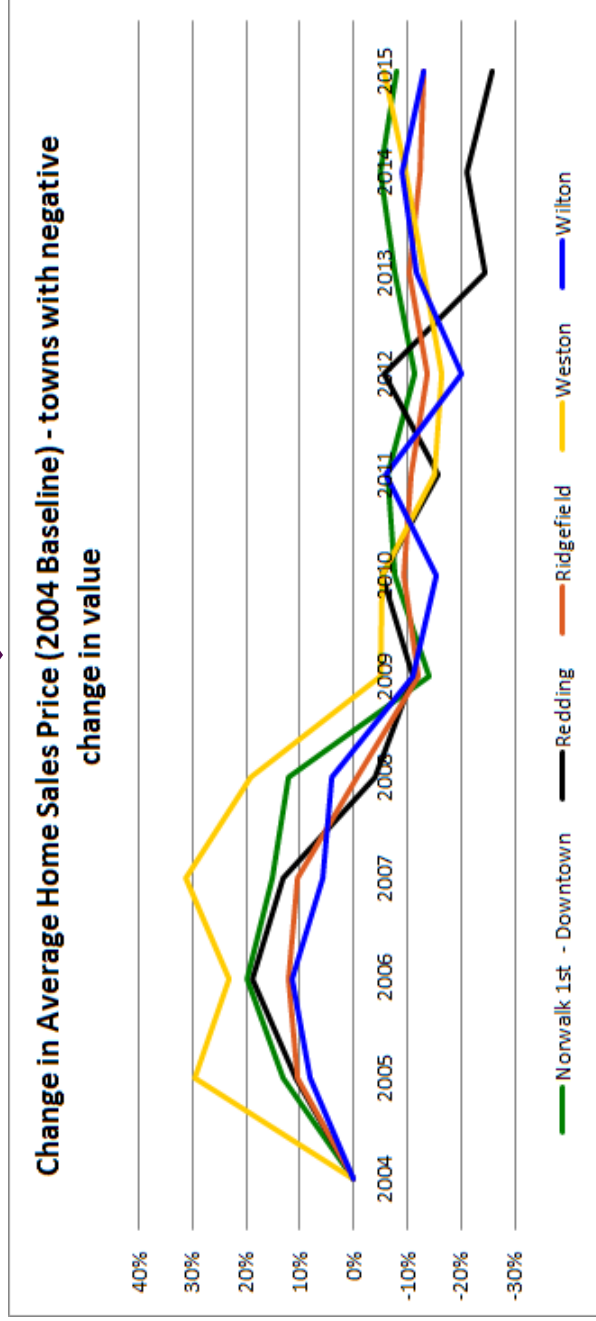
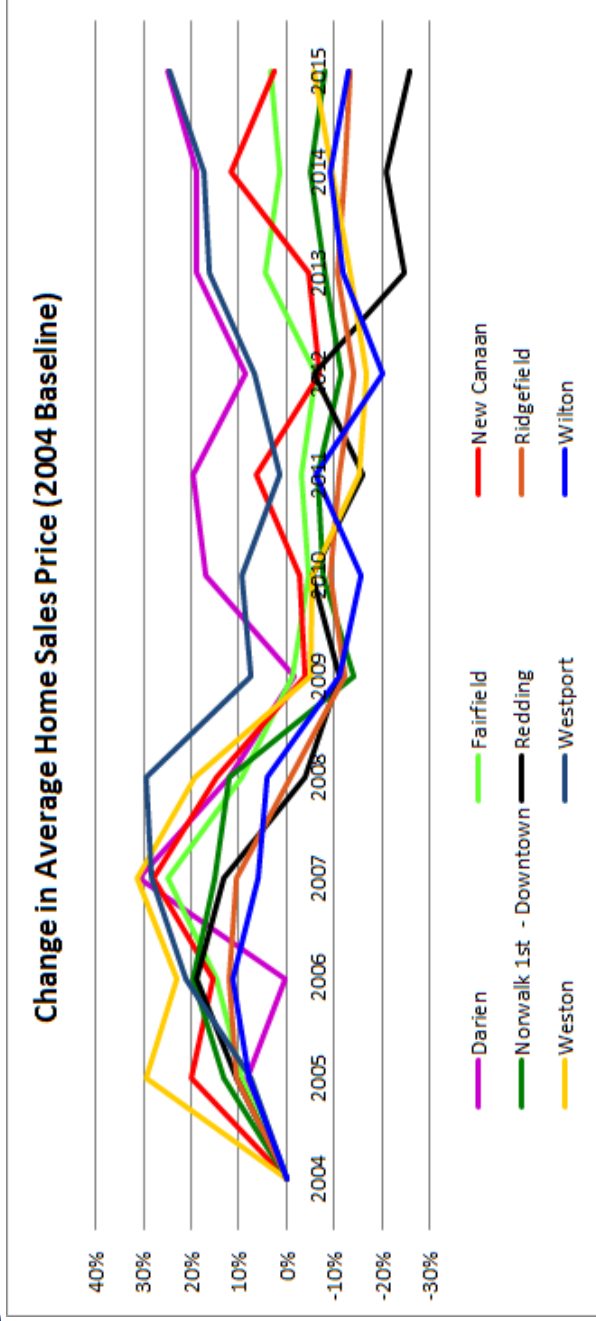
## Model Outputs

# Average Home Sales Price

(Source: CMLS)

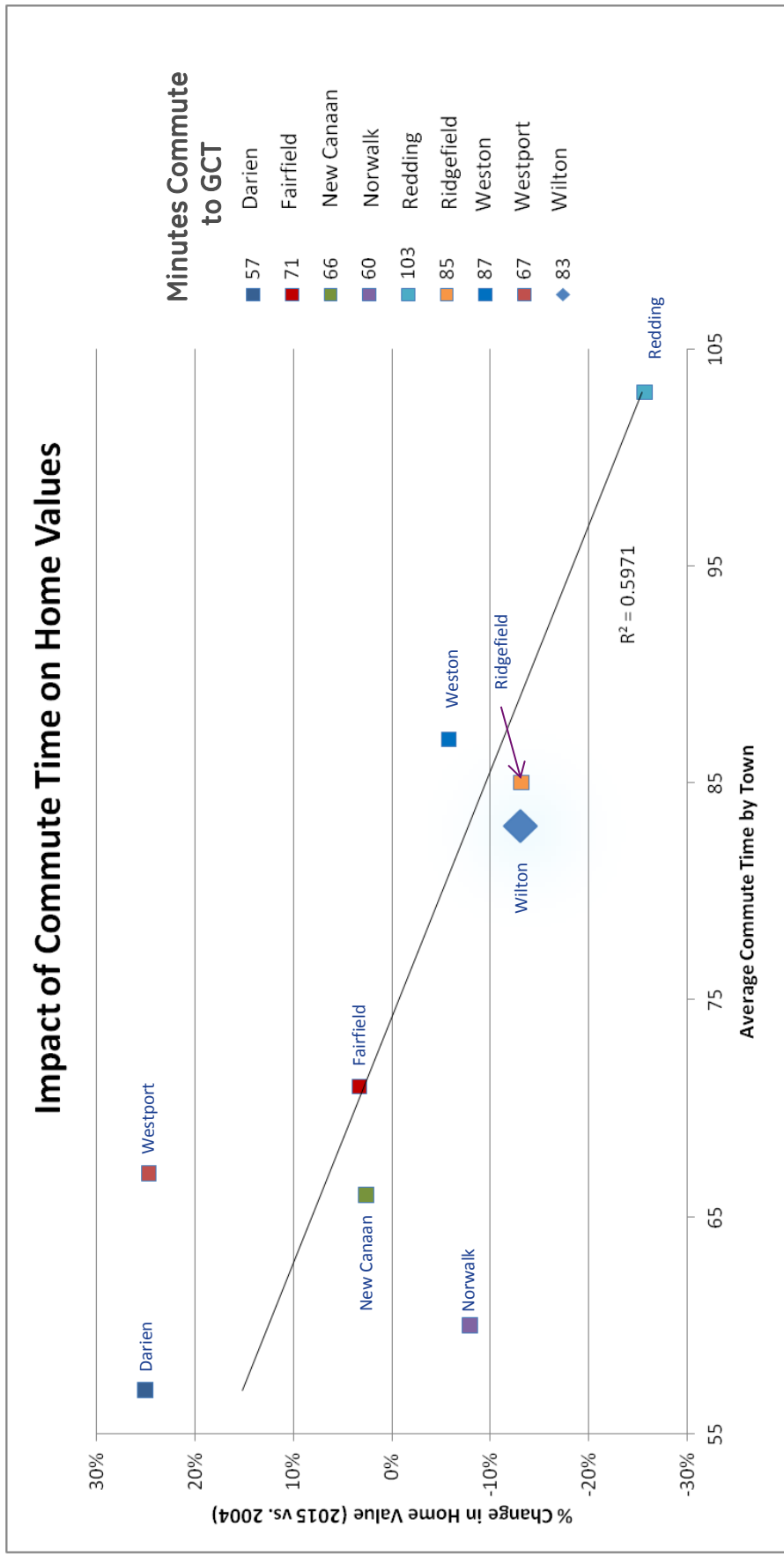


# Average Home Sales Price (Source: CMLS)



# Commute Time versus Home Values

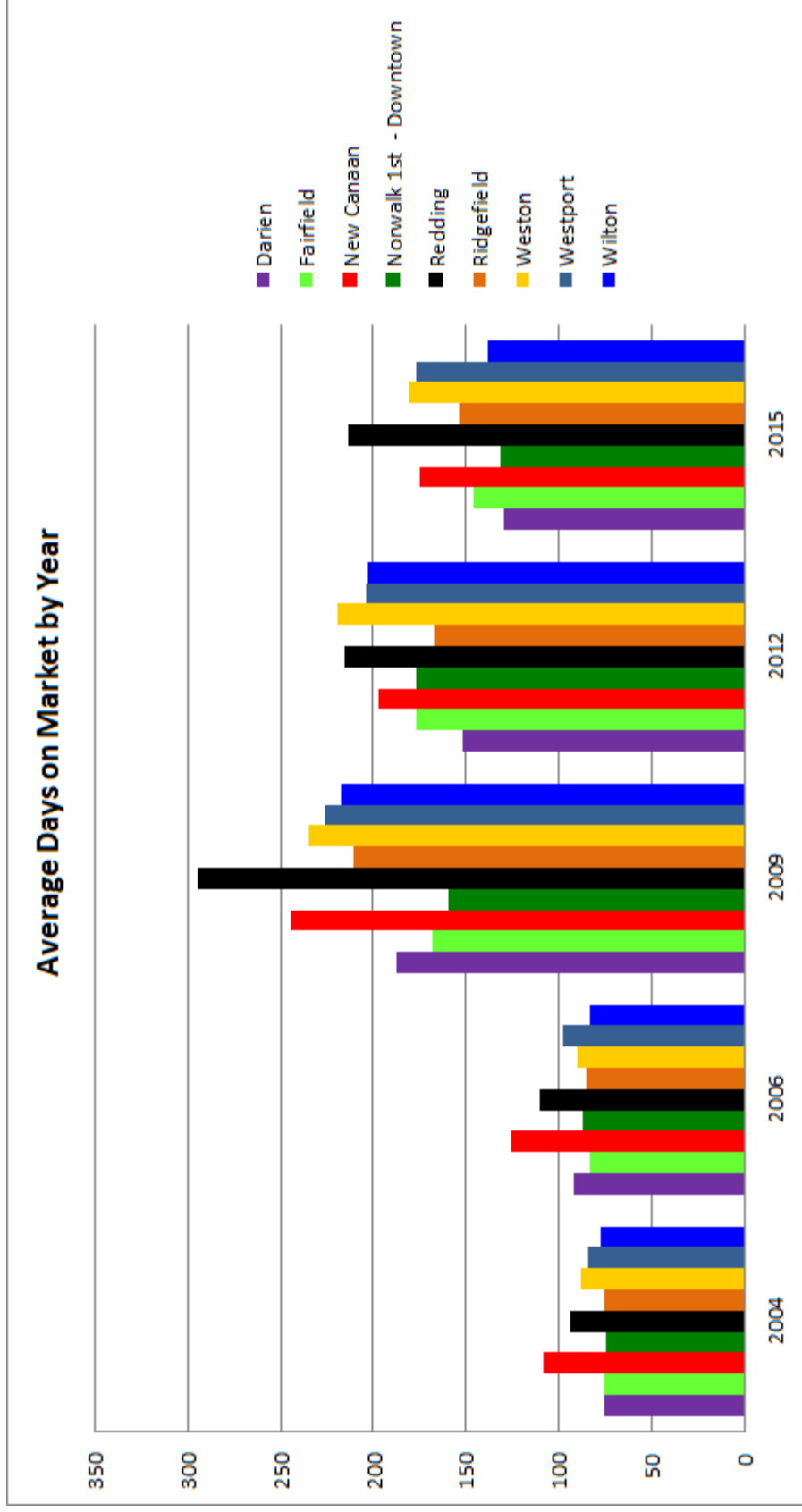
Data suggests a very high elasticity to commute time, with a very strong negative correlation between longer commute times and the appreciation in home values from 2004-2015. (Source: CMLS and Metro North)



Source: CMLS and Metro North. Note that commute times are EFFECTIVE commute times to Grand Central Terminal which includes driving distance to train station for locations without a central station

# Average Days on Market

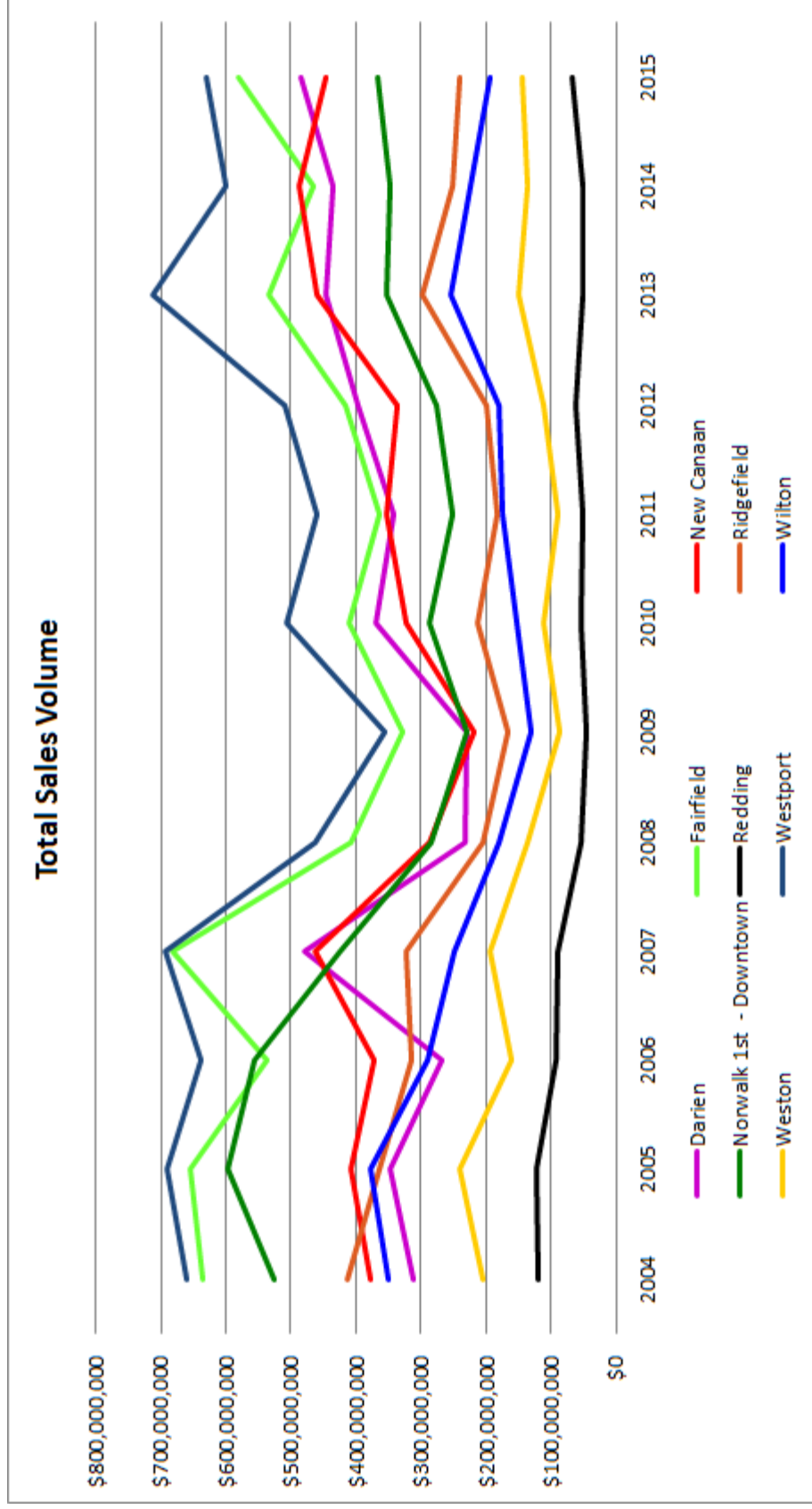
The velocity of home sales across all Fairfield communities measured is significantly down from the 2004 pace, with Wilton surprisingly among the least impacted. (Source: CMILS)





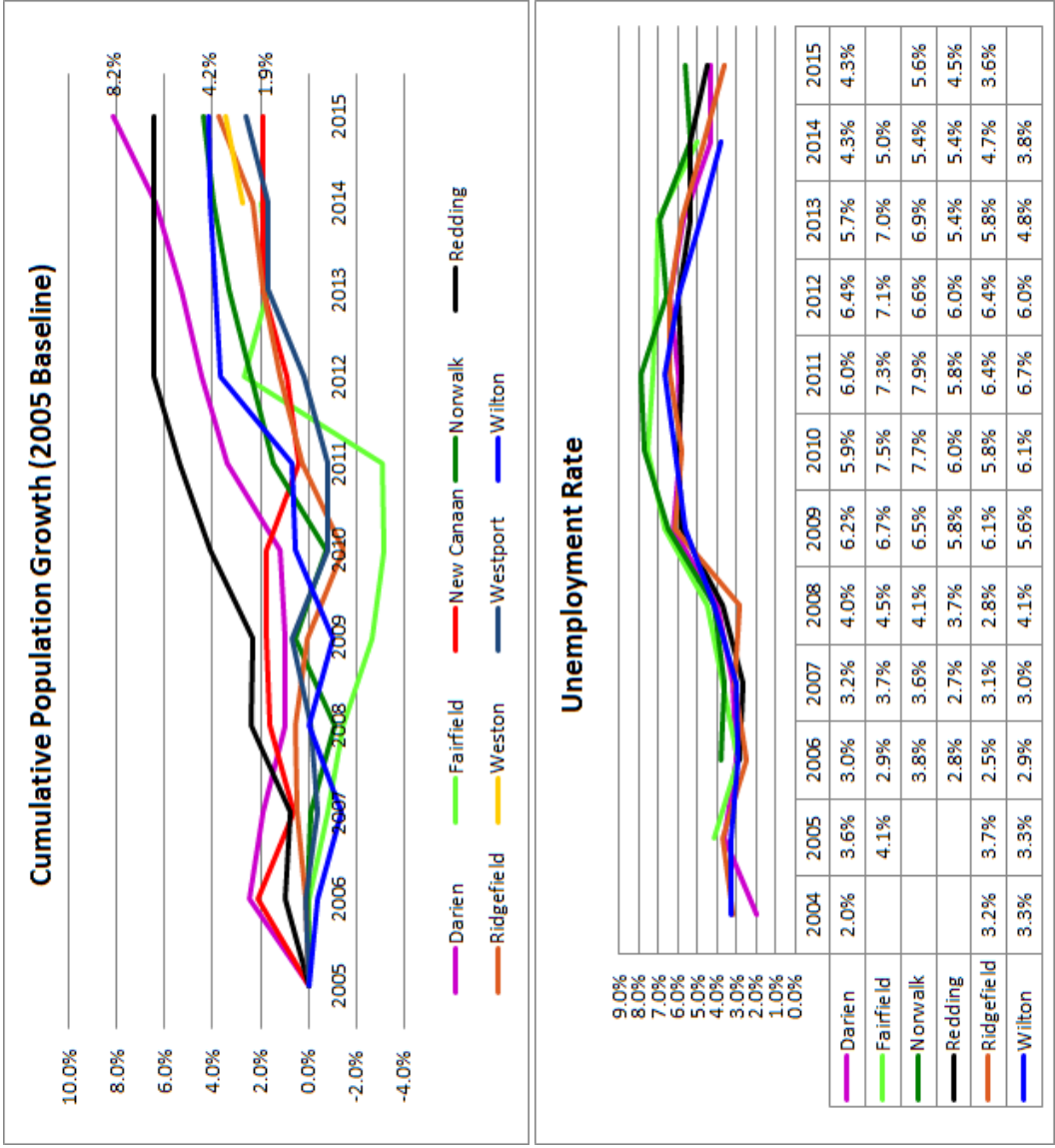
# Sales Volume

Sales volume moved from 6th to 7th across the communities measured, and is now roughly half the 2004 value in nominal dollars. (Source: CMLS)



# Population Statistics

Wilton’s unemployment rate is the lowest amongst neighboring towns, while cumulative population growth (vs. 2005) due to both influx of residents and births outpaces more than half of the neighboring towns. (Source: Town Financials)



# Contributors

# Thank You

We would like to thank the following for their contributions to this study via the detailed business and brokerage interviews:

## Interviews and Information

- Sebastien Amstutz – COO, Breitling
- Matthew Bryant – local commercial building owner
- Kathy Elson – Connecticut MLS
- David Fiore – Marcus Partners
- Kevin Foley / William Montague – Cushman and Wakefield
- Debra Hanson / Mark Ketley – Wilton Chamber of Commerce
- Mike Lindquist – Wilton Auto and Tire
- Mike McAndrews – Kimco Properties; River Road Complex
- Dominick Musilli – True Commercial Real Estate
- Bob Nerny – Town Planner, Town of Wilton
- Allison Pallotto – Tracy Locke
- Barbara Segalini-Stilley – CBRE
- Elaine Tai-Lauria / Ann Duffy – Wilton Library
- Lynne Vanderslice – First Selectman, Town of Wilton
- Lynne Ward – I Park
- Brittney Zatezalo - ASML
- Several representatives from businesses who prefer not to be identified

# Thank You

We would like to thank the following businesses and owners for their contributions to the small business survey:

## Business Surveys

- |                                                         |                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| • Absolute Logic, Inc. (Al Alper)                       | • Kovak-Likly Communications (Bruce Likly)   |
| • Blue Star Bazaar (Megan L. Abrahamsen)                | • KREG Information Systems (Shane H. Kreter) |
| • Canine Company (Jennifer Hill)                        | • Naked Greens (Victor)                      |
| • Cannondale Business Solutions, LLC (Kevin Hickey)     | • Nancy DeViney, LLC (Nancy DeViney)         |
| • Coldwell Banker (Eric Weitz)                          | • Open House (Brian Perry)                   |
| • College Nannies & Tutors (Leona Peiffer)              | • River Road Gallery (Pat Blossom)           |
| • Conceptual Imagery (Scott Benjamin)                   | • Signature Style (Ann Nash)                 |
| • Douglas Cutler Architects (Douglas Cutler)            | • SouthernYankee (Jennifer Angerame)         |
| • Ellen M. Essman CPA and Associates LLC (Ellen Essman) | • The Goddard School (Debbie Lee)            |
| • Georgetown Financial Group Inc. (Susan Schaefer)      | • The Painted Cookie (Susan Schmitt)         |
| • Halstead Property (John DiCenzo)                      | • Untangled, LLC (Kevin Vallerie)            |
| • Hillside Cemetery (Pam Brown)                         | • Wilton Hardware (Tom Sato)                 |
|                                                         | • Wilton Jewelers (Robinson)                 |
|                                                         | • Wilton Library (Elaine Tai-Lauria)         |
|                                                         | • Woodhill Associates, LLC (Wayne Gura)      |

# Thank You

We would like to thank the following Realtors for their contributions to the residential entry-exit realtor survey:

## Realtors:

|                      |                      |                             |                     |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| • Anne Oliver        | • Helen Whitten      | • Lisa Bender               | • Patsy Brescia     |
| • Ashley Ludwig      | • Jeena Choi         | • Lori Fusco Of Joel & Lori | • Phil Crosland     |
| • Barbara Martin     | • Jeff Turner        | • Associates                | • Rebecca           |
| • Ben Keeney         | • Jessica Christ     | • Lorraine Winsor           | • Roseanne Forslund |
| • Candace Blackwood  | • JoAnne E Fisher    | • Lynn Schneider            | • Sabrina McGehee   |
| • Carol Barbour      | • Joni Usdan         | • Lynne Murphy              | • Sally Ritchie     |
| • Carol Mcmorris     | • Judy Robinson      | • M. Arthur Meyer           | • Sandra Visser     |
| • Cecilia Gargano    | • Judy Szablak       | • Marion Filley             | • Saul W. Goldberg  |
| • Claire Nichols     | • Julie Carney       | • Marion Filley Team        | • Sheila Higgins    |
| • Dagny Eason        | • Julinda Chow-Silva | • Advantage                 | • Stephanie Reardon |
| • Debbie Fink        | • Kara Williams      | • Mary Ann Colley           | • Stuart Svirsky    |
| • Dianne deWitt      | • Karin Venditti     | • Mary Ellen Williams       | • Sue Marcone       |
| • Dori Seamans       | • Kathryn Groves     | • Mary Fitzgerald           | • Susan Resch       |
| • Elizabeth Boscaino | • Kathryn Williams   | • Mary Susan Muirhead       | • Suzanne Konover   |
| • Ellen Garcia       | • Kerry McMahon      | • Michele Ferguson Nichols  | • Tanya Nagyhetenyi |
| • Gail Cioffi        | • Kevin O'Brien      | • Monica Cuevas             | • Theresa Blinder   |
| • Gina Arena         | • Kim Luppino        | • Nancy Budd                |                     |
| • Ginny Miller       | • Laura Danforth     | • Nancy Crosland            |                     |
| • Happy Wang         | • Laurie Mortensen   | • Nick Gandhi               |                     |
| • Heather Simmons    | • Linda Dunsmore     | • Patrick Filley            |                     |
|                      |                      | • Patrick Russo             |                     |

# Appendix – Recent changes to Zoning that Post-Date our Interviews

# Recent Changes to Zoning

- On 6/13/2016, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted to approve the following changes, allowing for more flexibility in the overall height limitations in some business zones:
  - Overall height restriction of 55' in the DE-5 and DE-10 districts\*
  - No “story” limit for parking garage structures.
  - Concerning occupied buildings, the regulations now allow up to 4 stories and a height limit of 55'. Previously, 3 stories and 39' was allowed.
  - In order to quality, properties must meet the underlying land requirement of the DE-5 and DE-10 district which is 5 acres and 10 acres respectively – this was to ensure that taller/oversized buildings were not built on under-sized lots.
- Earlier this year, the PZC changed the building coverage ratio in the DE districts from 20 to 25 percent which greatly increases the build out potential in each district.

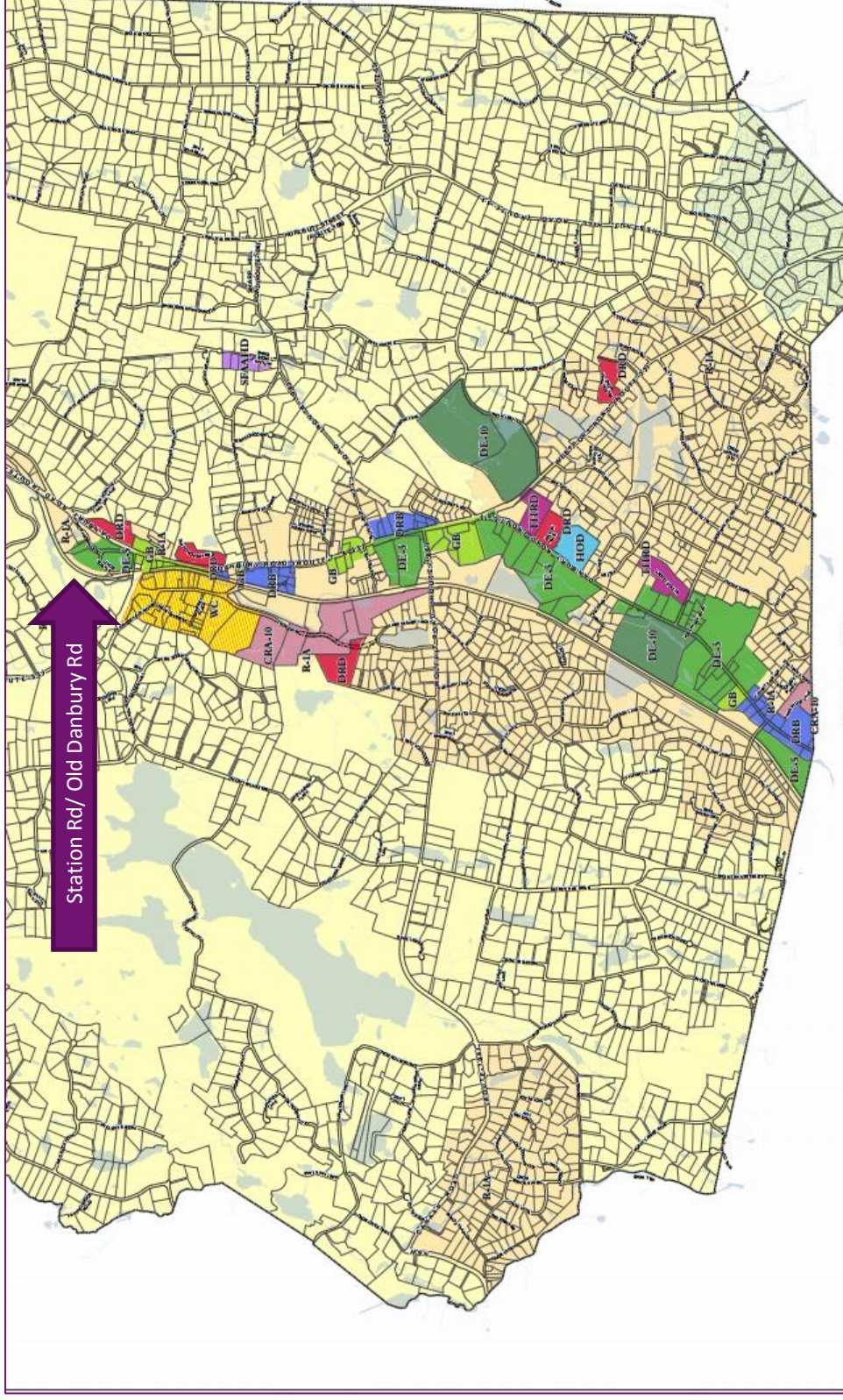
NOTE: Zoning regulations vary by type of use, but for office space, presently requires one parking space per 300 square feet of gross floor area.

\* *Design Enterprise District (5 and 10 acres). See next page for zoning map*



# Wilton Zoning Map

South of Wilton Center – DE-5 and DE-10 are represented by the middle dark and dark green, respectively. There are no DE-5/10 zones north of Old Danbury/ Station Road



## **Commissions and Boards: Appointments/Reappointments**

- **Nomination Process for Commissions and Boards-Vacancies and Appointments:**

### **Background**

- Three matters were considered at the April 18 meeting:
  - Do we want to stay with the current procedures? No vote taken, but consensus was no
  - Do we want to change procedures for Republicans and Democrats who currently must seek an endorsement from their party? No vote taken, but the consensus was no. Mike stated: only want to make changes re unaffiliated. Consensus.
  - Motion by Dick: 100 signatures for an unaffiliated voter to self nominate to fill a vacancy or for a full term appointment. Passed 3 to 2

### **Discussion/Action Item**

- Will the BOS accept an endorsement from a party other than the Republican and Democratic party?

- **Interviews:**

### **Background**

- We are expecting 15 to 20 applicants for all current vacancies and open full term appointments as of July 1

### **Discussion/Action Item**

#### **Current suggestions to handle this volume of interviews**

- Full day of interviews on a weekend
- Divide up interviews among BOS sub groups
- Perhaps not interview all candidates. Chose who to interview based on a review of the information submitted
- Require the Town Committees to provide
  - why they are recommending this candidate
  - how many individuals were interviewed
  - the names of the individuals who performed the interviews

- **Commission Subcommittees or Working Groups:**

**Background**

- The Park and Recreation Commission is forming working groups to investigate field locations and need and is seeking direction of how to form the group.
- At their March 19, 2001 meeting, the BOS asked the Conservation Commission to “handle the task of the proposed Deer Committee”. Mike Conklin stated to me that during his employment with the department, the Conservation Commission has vetted and recommended appointments to the Deer Committee.

**Discussion/Action Item**

- Should we authorize Commissions to vet and recommend appointments to their own subcommittee or working group?
- Should we authorize Commissions to appoint members to their own subcommittee or working group?

- **Other Areas for Discussion**

- **Reappointments:** We came to a consensus that reappointments did not require a party endorsement or a petition, but I suggest we take a vote
- **EDC:** Records within the First Selectman’s Office indicate the EDC began as a 9 person commission and was subsequently increased to 10. I suggest we reaffirm this through a vote so as not to have problems during the appointment process.
- **EDC-Gil Bray:** Gil changed his affiliation 11 days after being appointed. There is language within CGS 9-167 a (g) of a 3 month period for an affiliation change. On the advise of counsel, should the need arise, we will seek an opinion from the election commission as to how to handle.