

## Town of Wilton SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- Service industry opportunities
  - Restaurants (e.g., sit down, pizza & take out, coffee shops)
  - Retail
  - Personal services
  - Strong medical component
- New development – ASML expansion, new apartment buildings/mixed-use, and medical buildings
- Corporate parks with mix of office use and industrial (e.g., Blue Buffalo, ASML, storage facilities, medical buildings)
- School system
- Attractive for residential
  - Culture
  - Arts
  - Open space and outdoor recreation
  - National Park & NRVT
- Well-positioned between Westport, New Canaan, Norwalk, and NYC
- Train station in town (pedestrian bridge to link to Town)
- Small town: “Bigger than small, smaller than big”
- Open-minded P&Z willing to make exceptions to zoning regulations to accommodate projects that make sense for the town
- Strong municipal government can act as a champion for economic development
- We can look at town in terms of 4 areas:
  - Live (more affordable housing, family friendly, strong schools)
  - Work (not bad, some corporate and retail) – over 12,000 people work in Wilton
  - Shop (ok and close to greater variety of retail in Westport/New Canaan)
  - Play (open space, trails, parks, arts/culture organizations)

### Weaknesses

- Some retail vacancies
- Limited public transportation opportunities (e.g. train on spur line)
- Retail leakage because surrounding towns have stronger retail markets
- Residential configuration in downtown makes additional density challenging
- Corporate office park vacancy is about 25%

### Opportunities

- Growing popularity of remote work (in part because of COVID-19) could mean future interest in coworking spaces or other similar facilities
- Determine community identity and “brand”
- Recapture some retail leakage and fill vacant retail spaces – these spaces could be repurposed for stronger uses
- Developable land along Danbury Road

- Lots of historical properties in town
- Interest for additional assisted living facility development
- P&Z looking to make alterations to the zoning regulations
- Wider distribution of online land use regulatory guide
- Development of Master Plan for Wilton Center and the surrounding RT 7 area
  - Area around train station could be more vibrant through more dense development with additional residential units and mixed-use buildings
  - Grant funding received to construct pedestrian bridge from train station to downtown

#### Threats

- Small service industries/businesses get purchased by larger companies and move their offices to Norwalk or NYC
- Impact of COVID-19 on businesses
- Competition from surrounding towns for economic development