Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2020

Present:

Joe Mirra, Chair
Mark Gingras, Vice-Chair
Hank Baum, Commissioner
Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner
Gary Fappiano, Commissioner *
Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner
Jim Wolfe, Commissioner – Attended via telephone
Anthony Bracale, Alternate
Rob Fritz, Alternate

Others Present:

Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist
Lynn Wolff, Secretary
Kathleen Lilley, Exec. Dir., WCI
Lauren Takores, R-J
Jessica Wysocki

Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Mirra led the EDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **Discussion and Possible Action on Special Meeting Minutes dated August 31, 2020 – Jim Wolfe made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted; Mark Gingras seconded the motion. By a unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

3. **Review of monthly Expenditure Report** – Jim Wolfe asked about the expenditures within the Dues & Fees account; what cost $1,000? The secretary didn't remember but believed it was multiple expenses. Mark Gingras asked that the answer be added to the minutes. *Answer: the $1,000 listed on the September report covers two year-to-date expenditures: $850 fee paid to AdvanceCT for SiteFinder and $150 for FY dues paid to ManufactureCT (formerly New Haven Manufacturers Association)*

4. **Committee remarks**
   - Marketing

- Update on October 5 committee meeting – Mark Gingras briefed the Commission about the first meeting with the Quinnipiac University students and their Professor who will work with the Marketing Committee and staff to build, manage and drive a digital campaign aimed at businesses inside and outside CT. Commissioner Bracale (who agreed to work on this project as an advisor) also attended. The seven students on the team were broken into three groups; the groups will begin work on branding analysis, stakeholder interviews and competitor analysis. The Marketing Committee and staff all felt that this first meeting went well. The students are engaged, energetic and had already reviewed the marketing materials that Tim Ryan had sent as background. Tim added that this is a very different approach to marketing. Rather than hire a marketing consultant, which other towns have done, these seven, great QU students will build the campaign from the ground up. The students have committed to working for eight full months and will be compensated for their work. The team is made up of graduate students, seniors and juniors so that, if the EDC wants to continue the digital marketing next FY, it is hoped that some of the younger students will stay on the team and help guide the next group of students. Hank Baum asked what field of study the students are in; Mark said they're in business marketing fields (entrepreneurship, advertising and integrated communications, computer information systems and project management). Rob Fritz said it's a good team of students.

* Gary Fappiano arrived at 6:35 p.m.

- Next meeting: October 19 at 8 a.m.

- P&Z Liaison
  - Update on committee activities – Jim Wolfe reported that the PZC will meet next week but he didn't see anything on the agenda that would necessitate PZL Committee attendance. Regarding 100 Center Street, Joe Mirra said the Town Center is zoned for retail on the first floor to encourage foot traffic. The new owner of 100 Center Street wants to move a chiropractic business into the building but doesn't have enough retail to meet the current regulations. By way of background, Tim Ryan said that the application was denied by the PZC and the ZBA. He also said that this particular business sees about 40 clients/day, which is more than many retailers. Jim Wolfe said the EDC did a lot of work to help craft the current regulations and feels we should keep the regulations as written. Rob Fritz asked if changing the regulations would create a precedent. Jim felt it might; for example, a methadone clinic brings in a lot of clients too but should that really be counted as foot traffic? Gary Fappiano asked if the clients could be seen on the second floor in the Town Center? Tim said yes; however very few buildings in the Town Center have elevators and, in the case of this building, there is no second floor. Rob Fritz thinks we're moving too quickly; he'd like more time to think about it. Joe Mirra said he can see both sides – this is

an established business in our Town but agrees changing the regulations could set a precedent. Rob asked when these Town Center zoning regulations passed, perhaps it's time to change them based on current market conditions. Tim said the Town Center Zoning Regulations are only 1 ½ years old. Kathy Lilley, WCI, asked how long the owner has been in her current building; Mark Gingras said she's been there quite a while. Tim apologized for not introducing Kathleen (Kathy) Lilley as the new Executive Director of WCI to the Commission earlier in the meeting (he had planned to do so as part of his staff report). Since she was already part of this conversation, he asked if she had an opinion. Kathy feels it will be difficult to find a business willing to go into that empty space built specifically to house a bank. Anthony Bracale agreed; retail in that building probably won't work. After some further discussion, Joe Mirra suggested we tell the PZC that the building doesn't lend itself to retail and that perhaps a special permit could be issued, due to the uniqueness of the building. Mark Gingras noted that there are a lot of restaurants that have used former bank buildings. Anthony Bracale asked if there was ample parking at 100 Center Street; Tim said the building has several spaces and there's also public parking behind it. Tim suggested language be sent to PZC that talks about the uniqueness of the building when considering its use; the EDC agreed. **Jim Wolfe made a motion that a letter be sent to the Planning & Zoning Commission stating: Regarding a potential use of the property at 100 Center Street, the EDC respectfully suggests the PZC take into consideration the uniqueness of the building when considering its use; Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

- Next meeting: October 14 at 8:00 a.m., location to be determined.

- Retention/Incentives –
  - Report on committee activities – Gary Fappiano said the Committee hasn't met since August but plans to meet later this month.
  - Next meeting: October 29 at 9 a.m., location to be determined.

5. **Chair's remarks** – Joe Mirra reported he and staff have been attending meetings organized by Town Council Chris Shortell to discuss the continuation of outdoor dining once the Governor's Executive Order is lifted (the Governor's Executive Order supersedes local P&Z regulations). A survey of restaurants around Town is planned to ask how the restaurants feel about continuing outdoor dining. Joe advised members to Google the benefits of outdoor dining – there are quite a few benefits. He feels that the restaurants that have been able to do this during COVID have found it beneficial to business. Mark Gingras fears many of the restaurants might not survive this pandemic.

   Joe provide an explanation of HUBCAP pipelines and reviewed what has been offered and what they'd like to do ***(copy attached)***.

6. **Staff report/regional matters – September report** – Tim reviewed this staff report ***(copy attached)***. Items of note included: Information on the Transfer Act; the next "From the Desk of Joe" column which will talk about expanding outdoor dining; the site at 26 Quinnipiac Street, including the blight lien and resulting sale/improvements once the lien was resolved; the issue with contaminated property on Toelles Road (our Environmental Planner is of the opinion DEEP should not enforce the clean-up because it will destroy property that is currently thriving, despite the presence of nickel in the soil; and the upcoming plan by the Governor to ease COVID restriction concerning capacity at restaurants, libraries, hair salons and some indoor/outdoor performing arts venues previously closed to prevent the spread of COVID. Tim also thanked Jim Wolfe for his work to research the decibel level and frequency of train horns, which is a hindrance to Transit-Oriented Development the Town has endorsed. Tim and Jim plan to discuss this further at the November meeting.

7. **Other community business** – Rob Fritz referenced an article in Sunday's R-J that asked residents questions—the answer from one resident interviewed suggests that our marketing efforts to educate residents hasn't reached everyone yet, based on his answers. Joe Mirra said, while this is unfortunate, we know that we can't reach everyone. He feels that the Marketing Committee has done a great job and, with the addition of the articles in the *Wallingford Magazine* and speaking engagements at Town clubs, we hope to reach more. Kathy Lilley said that Pastor Will, WTIC 1080, says a lot of complimentary things about our Town. Rob Fritz added that the students at QU who are working with the Marketing Committee are also very complimentary.

There being no further business, Hank Baum made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.; Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Sincerely,

Lynn M Wolff

Lynn M. Wolff, Secretary

EDCRMMin100520DrNotApp

HUBCAP Employee Pipeline

where

Local Talent *meets* Workforce Opportunities

Job Fairs - Hiring Events - Workshops

HUBCAP Pipeline Program

HUBCAP Wallingford's Career Resource and Training Center is an unprecedented collaboration of Wallingford's School District, Economic Development Commission, Adult Education, HUBCAP Wallingford, South-Central CT's Workforce Alliance, and Wallingford's Businesses.

Our Pipeline Programs are designed to help recruit, assess, and train the Unemployed, Underemployed, Recent Graduate and High School Seniors who are do not intend to pursue higher education, for career opportunities available in the following fields:

Exploratory • Healthcare • Hospitality • Manufacturing • Service • Entrepreneur

Each session begins with a brief presentation from a local business representative reviewing the career paths in their industry. The second part of each session consist of either remedial training and/or review of the fundamentals for the specific program announcement. At the end of the program local employer are invited to interview the graduating candidates.

Other programs offered thru this alliance – Career Ladders, Apprenticeships, Internships, Job Shadow and On the Job Training

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EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF LIFELONG LEARNING

WALLINGFORD EDC
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Workforce Alliance
Delivering Employment Solutions

For additional information please contact HUBCAP Wallingford - info@hubcapwallingford.org

HUBCAP Wallingford

Healthcare – Hospitality – Service – Manufacturing - Entrepreneur

Exploratory Employment Pipeline

Think in Terms of Career Opportunities Instead of a Job

Explore Careers

- Assess your skills and interests.
- Develop a career plan.
- Focus on what you want to do and how to get there.
- Find work. Learn the skills needed to pursue the career of your dreams.
- Develop an effective resume.

HUBCAP Wallingford's pipeline program is designed to introduce you to the outstanding career

For dates of our next session

Email your name, email, and cell # to

info@hubcapwallingford.org

Participation does not guarantee employment

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Delivering Employment Solutions

Wallingford Manufacturing Employment Pipeline

It's All Here:

- Gain Manufacturing Skills with a Hands-On Project
- Interviews with Wallingford Manufacturing Employers
- Build Your Resume & Interview Skills
- Sharpen Math & Reading Needed for Manufacturing

HUBCAP Wallingford's pipeline is a 6-week program designed to introduce you to today's manufacturing environment and the outstanding career opportunities available in this field.

For dates of our next session or information
Email your name, email and cell # to
info@hubcapwallingford.org

Fee: $35 Participation Fee, Supplies and Dinner Included

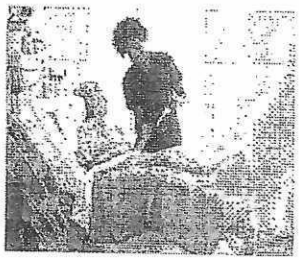
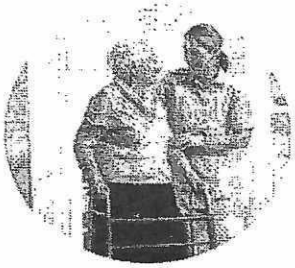
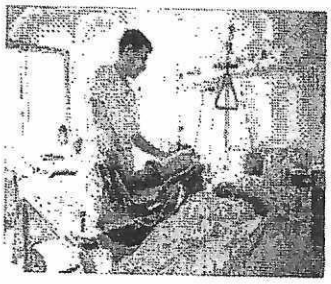
Major Sponsor By: allnex, BYK, Hobson Motzer, Ulbrich

Presented By: HUB CAP, Wallingford Public Schools We Are Proud, Wallingford EDC Economic Development Commission, Workforce Alliance

The HUBCAP Employment Pipeline Project is a combined effort of the Wallingford Public Schools, Adult Education, Economic Development Commission, and Workforce Alliance. Participation does not guarantee employment.

HUBCAP is a non-profit supported by Wallingford Center, Inc. Wallingford Board of Education, Wallingford Economic Development Commission and the Workforce Alliance is the workforce development board for South Central CT.

HUBCAP Wallingford Healthcare Employment Pipeline

HUBCAP Wallingford has partnered with Wallingford Adult Ed to offer a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training program. CNA is a paraprofessional position in the healthcare industry and a good introduction into today's outstanding career opportunities available in the Healthcare field.

Space is limited!

For dates of our next session

Email your name, email, and cell # to.

info@hubcapwallingford.org

Participation does not guarantee employment

For Details and Questions:

Call Adult Ed. at (203) 294-3900 or cberube@wallingfordschools.org

Major Pipeline Sponsor:

Masonicare

Right at Home
In Home Care & Assistance
The Right Care, Right at Home

Presented By:

HUBCAP

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Delivering Employment Solutions

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Class Begins:

TBA

approximately 16 Week Course.

Meeting Times:

Classroom

Tuesday and Thursday
5:00 – 9:00 at Sheehan HS

Clinical

Tuesday and Thursday
5:00 – 9:00 at a Local Healthcare Center

Requirements for Clinical Training:

- A watch with a second hand
- A physical exam with a TB skin test (PPD Test) and/or Blood test (QuantiFERON Gold Test) Our medica form / Your doctor. Physical is due prior to first clinical class.
- Scrubs uniforms
- Current flu shot

Upon successful completion of this program, the student will be able to sit for the Connecticut Department of Health Nurse Aide Competency Examination.

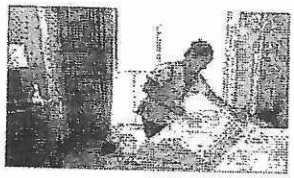
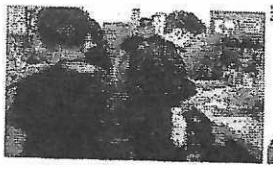
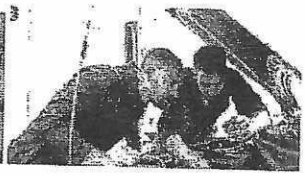
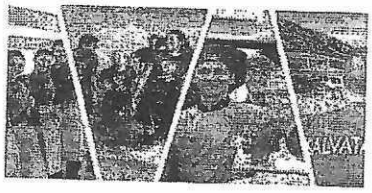
There is an approximately $60. Book cost and a $35. Non-refundable fee for a basic reading and math test at time of application.

Please note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation and the possible resurgence of the virus, you may be required to continue this course from home (long distance learning.)

HUBCAP Wallingford

Hospitality and Service

Employment Pipeline

HUBCAP Wallingford's pipeline is designed to introduce you to the outstanding career paths opportunity available in these industries.

Program includes:

- **Presentations by employer from various industries**
- **Soft Skills**
- **Customer service skills**
- **Communication skills**
- **Build Your Resume & Interview Skills**
- **Interview with Local Employers**

For dates of our next session
Email your name, email, and cell # to.
info@hubcapwallingford.org
Participation does not guarantee employment

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where

Local Talent *meets* **Workforce Opportunities**

Job Fairs - Hiring Events - Workshops

Annual Pipeline Sponsor

HUBCAP Wallingford's Pipeline is an unprecedented collaboration of Wallingford's School District, Economic Development Commission, and Adult Education, HUBCAP Wallingford and South-Central CT's Workforce Alliance. Our Pipeline Programs help recruit, assess and train job seekers for career opportunities available in the following fields:

- Exploratory
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing
- Service
- Entrepreneur

Limited space available – Sponsorships are on first-come basis.

HUBCAP's Inner Lobby signs are seen by increasing numbers of people because of our successful and well-attended Business, Community and Pipeline programs as well as our incubator entrepreneur, pop-up store/restaurants, programs/events, and art shows. **Your sponsorship sign will also be seen by the Local, State and Federal Legislators during their continuing visits to our center.**

HUBCAP is a Non-Profit Organization whose main source of revenue is from sponsorships and donations! To help us continue this program, we invite your company to become a Corporate Sponsor! The revenue from your sponsorship will help to continue and offset program expenses. Sponsorship fee is $1000.00

To help support "tomorrow's <> workforce today", please send your donation and a jpg copy of your corporate logo to info@hubcapwallingford.org

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Joe Mirra direct at **203-774-4742**

Thank you in advance for your consideration and support!

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Staff Report
September 2020 Activities
Presented at October EDC meeting

Local Initiatives

- Town Councilor Chris Shortell has initiated conversation regarding the continuation of expanded outdoor dining and food trucks in a post COVID environment. The fundamental premise is that outdoor dining and food trucks at our wineries have been positively received buy our businesses and their patrons alike. Our present zoning regulations, in most cases, do not allow for such uses but they are allowed under a COVID-era Executive Order from the Governor. Discussions are underway to determine the mechanics of allowing these experiences to continue after the Governor's Executive Order is lifted
- Staff met with the owner and management of Blue Trail Range to discuss their renovation and site improvement plans
- Staff continues to be active on the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee where business related priorities are discussed and passed to our regional legislative delegation
- Staff has been in discussions with CT Main Street Center, a Hartford based not-for-profit, whose mission is to advance the vitality of town centers throughout CT. Discussions revolve around concerns regarding present and anticipated vacancies in our town center

Creating Opportunities

- CT and New Jersey are the only US states that have a Transfer Act. It has been widely known that the act in its present form has been an impediment to economic development...specifically the conveyance of properties that MAY POSSIBLY be contaminated. The act assumes, depending on the use of a site, that an environmentally unfriendly spill has occurred and the seller has to prove that there's no contamination on the site before transferring tittle...a very expensive proposition. The CT House of Representatives approved an amendment to the Transfer Act that is "spill based" thus the seller of a site only has to conduct the environmental evaluation if a spill has occurred. This is a step in the right direction and represents several years of effort by many constituencies but much work remains before the Transfer Act can be considered a friend of the environment and business development harmoniously
- EDC Chairman and staff met with Bob Devaney, Caretaker for the Center St Cemetery, to discuss concepts to promote the cemetery as a Center St attraction

Marketing

- The digital marketing initiative program is underway. A team of seven students have been selected to work with us along with a QU professor. The plan is to have an active digital campaign before the end of November
- The fall edition of *Wallingford Magazine* will feature another "From the Desk of Joe" column. Subject is the continuation of expanded outdoor dining and food trucks. We plan to continue the Chair's column in future editions of the magazine in an effort to inform our community about the work of the EDC

Trade Shows

- None scheduled

Update on Town Center

- Kathleen (Kathy) Lilley has been hired as the new Executive Director of WCI replacing Liz Landow who retired in September
- The blight lean on the 26 Quinnipiac St site (building has been razed) has been settled with the Town and the property has officially transferred to the new owner Carl Davia. Mr Davia now owns the corner of South Colony St and Quinnipiac St (1 & 23 South Colony St and 26 Quinnipiac St). He has plans for property improvements that are presently underway
- The Town's grant writer coordinated a STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) grant application for the conversion and beautification of the old Brother's Restaurant site. No word yet as to whether we'll receive the grant. Announcement is due in early October

Miscellaneous

- A replacement for the Executive Director of the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce, Dee Nesti, will commence in Q1 of 2021

In the News

- *State DOT: Completion near on Center Street bridge work*...R-J, 9/1...DOT reports they are on track for what we call substantial completion by November 1
- *Extending sidewalk dining into November considered*...R-J, 9/5...The Town may extend outdoor dining on public sidewalks through November
- *Council amends rules for bid waivers*...R-J, 9/10...The Council voted to revise Town regulations on purchasing, raising the bid waiver threshold from $7,500 to $16,000 and puts Wallingford in line with other municipalities
- *Property owner 'baffled' after lien settlement fails to win town approval*...R-J, 9/11...The proposed blight lien settlement (20 percent of the accumulated debt) for a commercial property on Route 5 did not get Town Council approval, holding up the closing for 26 Quinnipiac St
- *Contaminated Property on Toelles Road: Planner concerned about soil cleanup project*...R-J, 9/13...Plans to clean up soil contaminated by industrial pollution on Ametek's property seems like a no-brainer but it's not that simple when the process might further damage the ecosystem
- *Mexican bakery chain eyes opening in downtown plaza*...R-J, 9/14...Azteca Bakery hopes to open in October in the same plaza as Stella's Pizza and Rivas Taqueria and Meat Market and plans to serve traditional Mexican sweet breads, pastries, tres leches cakes, flans, ice cream, coffee, smoothies, etc
- *26 Quinnipiac Street in Wallingford: After second attempt, Town Council approves settlement of blight lien*...R-J, 9/25...The Town Council approved a blight lien settlement for 26 Quinnipiac St, site of the former T-Bonz Bar and Grill; this settlement should allow closing to take place
- *Connecticut moves to expand restaurant capacity, gatherings*...R-J, 9/25...The Governor announced that capacity at restaurants, hair salons, libraries and certain outdoor and indoor event and performing arts venues will increase beginning October 8, while bars and nightclubs will remain closed to prevent possible spread of COVID

New & Expanding Businesses

New

- Amazon...425 S Colony St
- Divine Arts & Crafts...96 Quinnipiac St
- Dynamic US Inc...350 Center St, 102
- EcoView of New Haven...121 N Plains Industrial Rd, A
- Gatsby's...80 Quinnipiac St
- La Azaguanita Deli & Juice Bar...211 S Colony St
- That Metal Shoppe LLC...22 N Plains Industrial Rd, 12

Relocated

- One Source FM LLC...350 Center St, Ste 210
- Toprex...58 Capital Dr, A

Results of EDC Marketing Activities

Advertising	0
Brokers/Site Consultants	1
Direct Contact	2
State/CERC/Chamber/REX	2
Trade Shows	0
Business Assistance	0
Total	5

Respectfully,

Tim Ryan

Tim Ryan