



Town of Wallingford
Economic Development Commission
45 South Main Street, Room 311
Wallingford, CT 06492

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2024

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 10/30/24
AT 4:35 PM AND RECEIVED BY
Walter Longo TOWN CLERK

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49

Present: Hank Baum, Chair
Anthony Bracale, Commissioner
Dana Quigley, Commissioner
Rob Fritz, Commissioner
Gary Gonzalez, Commissioner
Gary Fappiano, Alternate

Absent: Frank Apuzzo, Commissioner
Patty Powers, Alternate

Others Present: Don Crouch, Economic Development Specialist
Stacie McCarthy, EDC Secretary
Liz Davis, WCI
Kyle Eagleson, President & Chief Operating Officer, GSB
Alex Sulpasso, Executive VP of Client Experience Officer, GSB
Austin McAnney

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

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Baum led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Welcome New Member** – Chair Baum introduced Gary Gonzalez and welcomed him as a new member of the EDC. Gary Gonzalez gave a brief overview of his background to the Commission.
3. **Discussion on Consent Agenda:** Rob Fritz made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.
4. **Guest Presentation: GSB** – Chair Baum introduced Kyle Eagleson, President & Chief Operating Officer, GSB and Alex Sulpasso, Executive VP of Client Experience Officer, GSB. GSB is requesting a municipal tax abatement for their newly acquired property located at 95 Barnes Rd, Wallingford. GSB purchased parcel and they intended to only occupy one floor of the building and lease out second floor; however GSB employee base has grown significantly and they will now occupy entire building. GSB anticipates making \$4.5M in improvements to the building; therefore GSB is formally requesting a municipal tax abatement for their newly acquired building. Commissioner Bracale questioned if GSB tax abatement requests align with the current incentives being offered. Commissioner Bracale explained

50 they require time to review GSB's request and seek clarification regarding current incentives, specifically
51 related to 'lease for tenant' vs 'owner occupied'. Chair Baum explained Town Council will need to clarify
52 verbiage. Commissioner Bracale explained that it is imperative that incentives should be offered
53 universally to all businesses and not on an individual business basis. Chair Baum and Commissioner
54 Bracale agreed that Commissioner Bracale would take the GSB request to Marketing Committee for
55 further review. Commissioner Bracale asked GSB for their timeline and GSB explained they anticipate
56 obtaining a CO by March 2025. Commission requested Mr. Crouch to resend the current incentives
57 being offered as well as the businesses that have received incentives.
58

59 **5. Housekeeping items:**

- 60
- 61 • **Possible EDC Special Meeting on December 2, 2024 (Cancel Regular November and**
62 **December meetings)** – Commission agreed, will cancel the regular meetings and schedule
63 the Special Meeting.
64
- 65 • **2025 EDC Regular Meeting Schedule** - Commission agreed, Mr. Crouch will add the 2025
66 schedule to December EDC meeting agenda for vote.
67
- 68 • **Selection of Chair and Vice Chair for January 2025 – December 2025** – Chair Baum
69 asked Commission to consider these positions, understanding everyone's time and the level
70 of commitment required.
71
- 72 • **Liaison/Committee Appointments for January 2025- December 2025** – Chair Baum
73 asked Commission to consider these positions, understanding everyone's time and the level
74 of commitment required. Commissioners suggested it may be beneficial to move toward
75 more Zoom meetings allowing members more flexibility. Mr. Crouch suggested that perhaps
76 a 'Liaison' type role should be considered instead of creating full committees.
77
- 78 • **Chair Baum acknowledged Austin McAnneny's attendance.** Austin is considering joining
79 EDC Commission. Austin provided overview of his background and interest in joining the
80 EDC Commission. He attended the September meeting as well.
81

82 **6. Old Business:**

- 83
- 84
- 85 • **Tracy Zone (T-30) –**
 - 86 - Mr. Crouch updated that he, J. Mirra, Town Planner, Zoning Enforcement Officer visited
87 business regarding violations of site plan. Town has seen some improvement since their
88 visit; however Chair Baum asked for update regarding enforcement of violations. Mr.
89 Crouch explained Town Council Ordinance Committee tabled discussion at August 2024
90 meeting, did not put the topic on the September agenda and the October agenda has been
91 cancelled. Mr. Crouch confirmed EDC Commission wrote letter in support of additional
92 enforcement. Chair Baum asked for next steps. Chair Baum will contact Mayor regarding
93 next steps. Mr. Crouch will resend the EDC Commission Ordinance Letter of support to the
94 Commission.
 - 95 - Mr. Crouch has a Developer looking at property for a housing development as well as
96 another developer looking at locations for a microbrewery.
- 97 • **Historic Railroad Station RFP** – Mr. Crouch has given 4 tours and received 2 Letters of Intent
98 (LOI) from interested parties. Mr. Crouch confirmed that the Grant for exterior refurbishment
99 has been submitted and the Town expects an initial response in November 2024.
100

101 **7. New Business:**

102

103

104

105

106

107

108

109

110

111

112

113

114

115

116

117

118

119

120

121

122

123

124

125

126

127

128

129

130

131

132

133

134

135

136

137

138

139

140

141

142

143

144

145

146

147

148

149

150

- **ZoomProspector:** Mr. Crouch explained that ZoomProspector, which is used to show 'For Lease/ For Sale' properties on TOW website, was offered through AdvanceCT who markets the the State of Connecticut . TOW previously had an arrangement with AdvanceCT who had a license agreement and offered municipalities a subpage at a rate of \$450-\$500 a year. AdvanceCT is no longer offering subpages and as a result, Financial Times who owns the ZoomProspector product contacted TOW with new rates; i.e. regular pricing of \$3,500 per year or \$2,400 a year with a 3 year commitment. Commissioner Bracale would like to review more details of ZoomProspector and asked Mr. Crouch to send him the Financial Times/ZoomProspector packet which outlines the specifications etc.
- **WCI Sponsorship** – Liz Davis introduced herself as the Executive Director of Wallingford Center Inc. and gave an overview of WCI's mission to new EDC Commission members and attendees. She then presented the Commission with a 'Virtual Map' of the downtown area and explained the objective is to provide Merchants with printed maps that they can distribute to visitors. The maps would include QR codes of restaurants and other businesses that visitors can scan and be taken directly to a specific restaurant or businesses website/Facebook page. Liz explained she is working in collaboration with Choate and utilizing resources who have already created a similar map for Choate. She explained that the map will be used further by collaborating with the Health Department to incorporate a walkable map featuring historic downtown buildings, landmarks etc. Liz explained that Choate is contributing 1/3rd of the cost, WCI is contributing 1/3rd and Liz is asking EDC Commission to contribute the remaining 1/3rd. She confirmed it would be a one-time ask of the EDC Commission of \$2,500. Commission asked Liz for her timeline, at which Liz explained she would like to have the maps available for Merchants in time for the Holiday Stroll. Commission liked the concept however, Commissioner Bracale asked Liz to meet at another time to discuss the concept in more detail, which she agreed to do. Commission agreed once Commissioner Bracale and Liz meet, the project will go to Marketing Committee, at which time Chair Baum suggested that the Commission implement a motion granting the Marketing Committee permission to contribute funds of \$2,500 for the virtual map project. **Rob Fritz made a motion for the Marketing Committee to be given permission to contribute funds of \$2,500 to WCI Virtual Map project after Commissioner Bracale and Marketing Committee review. Dana Quigley seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.**
- **QCC Sponsorship** – Mr. Crouch explained QCC is seeking \$500 sponsorship for their 'Shop. Eat. Enjoy. Local for the Holidays' in support of Small Business Saturday. Item was referred to the Marketing committee to learn more about the QCC event from QCC/Gary Ciarleglio.
- **Brownfields** – Mr. Crouch explained that he and Chair Baum visited Shelton Economic Development Corporation to learn more about their downtown revitalization. Chair Baum explained the Shelton Economic Development Corp was charged by the Mayor with cleaning up and revitalizing their downtown/brownfields and they have made significant progress through substantial grant funding. Commission discussed how learnings from Shelton's success can be applied to Wallingford properties such as Alleghany.
- **Other** – Commissioner Fritz asked for update of 'Office Incentive Program'. Mr. Crouch explained it was just implemented as of October 1, 2024. Group discussed how to best measure effectiveness of EDC Commission initiatives. Group discussed how to generate more exposure through LinkedIn, Facebook etc. Mr. Crouch reported 369 LinkedIn followers and 1,400 on Wallingford Facebook page.

8. Staff Report – Mr. Crouch noted some of the updates on his report:

- Nel Hydrogen \$30M expansion reopening which will have a positive impact on taxes.

- 151
- 152
- 153
- 154
- 155
- 156
- 157
- 158
- 159
- 160
- 161
- 162
- 163
- 164
- 165
- 166
- 167
- 168
- 169
- 170
- 171
- 172
- CT Proton Therapy Groundbreaking ceremony held last week. In one year from now the proton laser beam will be installed and they anticipate having another celebratory event. A year after that, they anticipate serving their first patient.
 - Mr. Crouch along with Commissioner Apuzzon and Mayor Cervoni participated in the EDC / WCI Property owners meeting – 20 property owners from downtown attended. The meeting went well and as a result of that meeting, Favio's Trattoria has already reached out looking to expand. Mr. Crouch said it is exciting to see how quickly after that meeting that property owners are looking to expand.
 - Mr. Crouch updated that the current Police Station is still occupied and it is expected they will move to the new location in about another month.
 - Mr. Crouch is working with Human Resources to coordinate a 2nd Annual Municipal Career Night which is scheduled for December 5, 2024 at Town Hall.
 - Mr. Crouch updated the Commission on the Data Center and explained that the town is waiting on updated language; however based on feedback from Planning & Zoning meeting there is a great deal of misinformation circulating. Mr. Crouch and Chair Baum are planning to address the misinformation in the next 'Desk of Joe' article.
 - **Chair's remarks** – Chair Baum referred back to agenda item 'Committee Reports' and asked Commissioner Bracale if there are any updates from the Committees. There were no updates related to committees.

173 **There being no further business, Rob Fritz made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.;**
174 **Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

175

176

177 Sincerely,

178 *Stacie McCarthy*

179 Stacie McCarthy, Secretary

180

181

182

183

184