



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

May 30, 2025

TO: Members of the Economic Development Commission
FROM: Stacie McCarthy, EDC Secretary
SUBJECT: Regular Meeting Agenda – Monday, June 2, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Town Hall, Room 315
45 South Main Street
Wallingford, CT 06492

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Consent Agenda** *Note: All items listed under 'Consent' will be enacted by one motion.*
(Motion to approve consent agenda)
 - Adopt Meeting Minutes dated May 5, 2025 (Page 2-4)
 - Adopt Monthly Expenditure Reports – April 2025 (Page 5)
4. **Items removed from Consent**
5. **Old Business**
 - a. Update on Historic RRTrain Station – No Update
 - b. Update on Tracy and Enforcement Ordinance – No Update
6. **Reports of Committees and Staff**
 - a. Marketing & Retention
 - b. Planning & Zoning Liaison
 - c. WCI / EDC Strategic Working Group
 - d. Staff Report (Page 6)
7. **New Business**
 - Discussion on Manufacturers Round Tables
8. **Chair's Remarks**
9. **Adjournment**

Dates to Remember:

6/09 – P&Z Commission Meeting
6/10 – Town Council Meeting
6/24 – Town Council Meeting
6/27 – Wallingford Block Party

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 5/30/25
AT 9:45am AND RECEIVED BY
Kristen Pango (15) TOWN CLERK

Individuals in need of auxiliary aids for effective communication in programs and services of the Town of Wallingford are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance Coordinator at 203-294-2070 five days prior to meeting date.

EDCRMAG06022025

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

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2025

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 5/6/25
AT 4:15 PM AND RECEIVED BY
Mister Lomgo TOWN CLERK

Present:

Frank Apuzzo, Vice Chair
Carl Casper, Commissioner
Gary Gonzalez, Commissioner
Nick Lombardi, Commissioner
Austin McAnneny, Commissioner
John Bau, Alternate
Amy Souchuns, Alternate

Absent

Anthony Bracale, Chair
Rob Fritz, Commissioner

Others Present:

Don Crouch, Economic Development Specialist
Stacie McCarthy, EDC Secretary

1. **Call to Order:** Vice Chair Apuzzo called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:31 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Vice Chair Apuzzo led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Welcome New Commissioners: Amy Souchuns and John Bau (Alternates):** Vice Chair Apuzzo introduced and welcomed Amy Souchuns and John Bau to the Commission as alternates and thanked them for volunteering their time. Each gave a brief overview of their background to the Commission.
4. **Consent Agenda:**
 - Commissioner Lombardi made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Casper seconded the motion. Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.
5. **Items removed from Consent:** None
6. **Old Business:**
 - **Update on Historic RRTrain Station** - Mr. Crouch explained that Adult Education is currently utilizing the space. They are making plans to relocate; however, the move is not anticipated to occur later this year. Mr. Crouch explained that Public Works has received the Facilities Condition Assessments which outlines the necessary improvements etc. Commissioner Lombardi explained that many improvements need to be made to bring the building up to code and the town will need to decide how to proceed with future use for the

building. Mr. Crouch explained that the property has been listed on Zoom Prospector to generate awareness. The group plans to continue to discuss this topic further and support initiatives that best serve and support the town and the use of the building in the years to come.

- **Update on Tracy and Enforcement Ordinance** - Mr. Crouch explained that the town has reached out to and met with businesses in the area regarding blight, however, there has been little progress made regarding zoning enforcement changes since the group last discussed this topic.

7. Reports of Committees and Staff:

- **Marketing & Retention –**

- **Mayor's Business Visits** – Mr. Crouch and Commissioner Lombardi (Marketing Committee Chairman) explained that Mayor Business visits with ORAFOL Americas, Inc., Roehm America LLC, Nel Hydrogen, and Specialty Cable Corporation have been scheduled. Mr. Crouch explained that additionally Business Visits are being coordinated with Town Center merchants and when a schedule is finalized it will be shared with the Commission.
- **55 Kondraki Lane** - Commissioner Lombardi explained that he, Commissioner McAnneny and Mr. Crouch are scheduled to attend a meeting with the developers of 55 Kondraki Lane to discuss the project. Commissioner Lombardi explained the developers are interested in possibly tax abatement. As such, the group discussed the need for attractive tax incentives to generate interest in potential properties in town. The Commission agreed that the town's current incentives may be narrow in focus and there may be an opportunity to expand upon them based on investment dollars. Mr. Crouch and Commissioners Lombardi and McAnneny plan to do more research to understand how other towns are approaching incentives.
- **Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority Update (MRDA)** – Mr. Crouch explained that MRDA has rebranded to Connecticut Municipal Development Authority (CMDA). He also explained that he, Mayor Cervoni, Attorney Small and Town Planner Kevin Pagini met to discuss Wallingford's participation in the CMDA program. As a result of that meeting, the administration anticipates a resolution to Wallingford's participation in the CMDA program at the next Town Council Ordinance Committee meeting. Additionally, Mr. Crouch confirmed that a letter of support on behalf of the EDC Commission has been drafted and will be sent at the applicable time.

- **Planning & Zoning Liaison –**

- **Multi Family Housing update** – Mr. Crouch explained that new zoning regulations being considered would greatly expand the opportunity to construct new multi-family housing units. He explained that interest has increased in anticipation of the zoning changes and there is currently a plan for housing units in the vicinity of South Cherry and Ward Street.

- **WCI / EDC Strategic Working Group –**

- Vice Chair Apuzzo explained that he and Commissioner Lombardi recently visited with many downtown landlords and tenants. They explained many comments were related to improving the rear facades and parking lots. Vice Chair, Apuzzo, explained that their visit was well received and suggested that the Commission as well as WCI consider visiting more often. Mr. Crouch explained that Mayor Cervoni included an additional \$35,000 in his proposed 2025-2026 specifically for rear façade improvement and that the Administration is moving ahead with the existing plan to improve the rear parking lots.

- **Staff Report –**

- Mr. Crouch previously discussed many of the topics in his staff report; however, he discussed that the Town Council Public Hearing regarding the proposed 2025-2026 budget was held on April 28, 2025 and the motions meeting in which the Town Council votes on the budget is scheduled for May 6, 2025

8. New Business:

- No new business to discuss.

9. Chair's remarks – None

There being no further business, Commissioner Lombardi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.; Commissioner McAnney seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Sincerely,

Stacie McCarthy

Stacie McCarthy, Secretary

THROUGH 4/30/25

10/12 = 84%

FOR 2025 10

	ORIGINAL APPROP	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	MTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
10011050 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIO							
10011050 51000 REGULAR SALARIES &	89,917	89,917	78,398.72	7,402.08	.00	11,518.28	87.2%
10011050 55110 TRANSPORTATION REIM	1,500	1,500	.00	.00	.00	1,500.00	.0%
10011050 55405 PROMOTIONAL EXPENSE	30,250	30,250	8,855.00	.00	245.00	21,150.00	30.1%
10011050 56100 OFFICE EXPENSES & S	1,700	1,700	684.88	149.51	781.14	233.98	86.2%
10011050 58735 OPERATING EXPENSES	1,500	1,500	1,211.57	.00	.00	288.43	80.8%
10011050 58810 DUES AND FEES	2,500	2,500	475.00	.00	.00	2,025.00	19.0%
TOTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISS	127,367	127,367	89,625.17	7,551.59	1,026.14	36,715.69	71.2%
TOTAL EXPENSES	127,367	127,367	89,625.17	7,551.59	1,026.14	36,715.69	
GRAND TOTAL	127,367	127,367	89,625.17	7,551.59	1,026.14	36,715.69	71.2%

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Maggie Maldonado **

Economic Development June 2025 Staff Report

Business Attraction

- Commissioners Lombardi and McAnneny along with Don Crouch met with 55 Kondracki developers to discuss fixed tax proposal.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch visited mixed use project in Windsor to discuss opportunities in Wallingford.
- Town Planner, Town Engineer, and Don Crouch met with Mayor to discuss updates with the Senior Housing RFP.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch had pre-submission meeting for 100 South Cherry St.
- Meeting with Jerry Farrell, Jr to discuss potential business use in town.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch met with local developer regarding YLB parcel.
- Met with site selector GSLI to discuss potential opportunities.

Business Retention & Expansion

- Mayor/EDC Business visit with Orafol Americas.
- Mayor/EDC Business visit with Roehm America.
- Mayor/EDC Business visit with Nel Hydrogen.

Community Engagement

- Don Crouch attended Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to discuss proposed Middle Housing regulations. New Regulation Passed.

Department/Industry activities

- Multi-department meeting on online bill payment project with InvoiceCloud.
- InvoiceCloud marketing meeting to discuss plan for Tax, Permit, and Utilities.
- Attended CEDAS event with DECD Commissioner at Goodwin University. Commissioner Souchuns was also in attendance.
- Participated in Mayor's Technology Implementation Steering Administration.
- Multi-department meeting on trails grant with Mayor.
- Attended South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCROG) board meeting for the Town of Wallingford.

Social Media Metrics

- 392 followers to our LinkedIn page. Last report was 377.
- Town website (last 28 days as of 5/28/25)
 - 38,266 Views (number of pageviews on a website and screen views on an app.)
 - Top 5 pages: Home page, Human Resources, Assessor's Office, Tax Collection Office, and How to Pay Town & Tax Bills.
- Town social media (last 28 days as of 4/30/25)
 - 2,154 followers on the Town of Wallingford Facebook page. Net follow increase is 115. .
 - 21,683 engagements (number of reactions, comments, shares, and clicks).
 - 210,918 views (number of times content played or displayed).

Economic Development Staff Report

In The News

Forbes.com - April 30, 2025

Connecticut's Chief Manufacturing Officer Aims For Growth, Reshoring

Paul Lavoie, whose long manufacturing career included stints in engineering services, hardware and electronics, is now applying his skills to help grow Connecticut's already vigorous manufacturing base in his unique role as the state's Chief Manufacturing Officer.

PATCH - April 30, 2025

Major Shipping Company To Cut 20,000 Jobs: Will Connecticut Facilities Close?

United Parcel Service plans to cut thousands of jobs and close dozens of facilities as it scales back on the amount of Amazon shipments it handles, the company announced Tuesday. The shipping and receiving chain will slash about 20,000 jobs this year and close 73 leased and owned buildings by the end of June, according to announcement. UPS officials said the company is still reviewing its network and may identify additional buildings to be shuttered.

PATCH – May 1, 2025

Unique Fitness Center Opening In Wallingford

Synergy Health & Wellness, located at 202 North Plains Industrial Rd. in Wallingford, will host a grand opening celebration from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday, May 3. Dowling, the founder and owner of Synergy Health & Wellness, is a five-time Ironman competitor and licensed clinical therapist. He said Synergy is "Connecticut's first wellness facility to fully integrate mental health counseling with fitness training, nutrition coaching, and holistic recovery services — all under one roof."

PATCH – May 1, 2025

Mass Layoffs Announced At New Haven Based Company

Arvinas Inc., a local bioscience company, notified the state Wednesday it is planning a "mass layoff" of 131 of its employees in late June. Surging Costs Complicate Plans for New U.S. Factories. The layoffs are expected to be permanent and go into effect June 29, according to the notice from Steve Weiss, Arvinas' senior vice president and chief human resources officer. Of the 131 employees impacted, 92 are Connecticut residents, according to the company.

PATCH – May 3, 2025

Longtime Wallingford Restaurant Closing, Owners Announce With 'Very Heavy Hearts'

Laskara restaurant in Wallingford is closing its doors for good after 26 years in business, the owners announced Saturday with "very heavy hearts."

CT Insider – May 4, 2025

How 2,600 CT contaminated properties could be improved under proposed legislation

The new, revised law would expedite cleanups as they occur and get the properties back on the market faster, particularly in the state's cities where development of brown field often falter under the prospect of becoming expensive liabilities. The Transfer Act required property owners to prove that pollution is not present, slowing down sales and inflating costs of looking for contamination that might not even be present. The new regulations will require a person who released a hazard to immediately remediate it upon its discovery.

Economic Development Staff Report

CT Insider – May 3, 2025

Wallingford considers perpetual affordable housing, unit requirements to tackle demand

The Planning and Zoning Commission has made additional changes to proposed zoning regulations to provide incentives for market rate housing in downtown Wallingford. In recent months the commission has begun drafting new zoning regulations that would expand the amount of affordable and market rate housing that could be developed in the downtown area. Under the new regulations there would be greatly expanded potential for new multi-unit multi-family dwellings. Some members of the commission are torn however on how long they should stipulate the new houses are classified as affordable. State regulations require a minimum of 40 years, though Chairman Jim Seichter wanted to commit the homes as affordable in perpetuity, other members were looking for a density bonus or some other incentive that would encourage developers to keep the units affordable for a longer period.

The Valley Independent Sentinel – May 5, 2025

Ansonia Wants To Sign Leases With Data Centers At Former SHW Site

Mayor David Cassetti's administration plans to lease out two lots at the former SHW site on 35 N. Main St. this year. The city's planning & zoning commission made a positive 8 – 24 referral for the property during its meeting March 31. The city put out a request for proposals for the property April 4. Administration officials have expressed their desire to bring data centers and fuel cells to the lot since early last year. In October 2024, the city signed a \$37 million lease-purchase agreement to build 3.96 megawatts' worth of fuel cells on the site.

Hartford Business Journal – May 5, 2025

Here's how federal tariff policies are already impacting CT small to midsize businesses

There are small businesses all around Connecticut that are heavily reliant on overseas trade, and for them, the news cycle is now an obsession. In 2024, Connecticut imported \$22.7B worth of goods. In January 2025 alone, \$113 million in goods came in from China, according to the Observatory of Economic Complexity, a data tool originally founded at MIT.

CT Insider – May 6, 2025

Where Connecticut ranks among best states in new US News and World Report

Connecticut is the 15th best U.S. state, according to new rankings by U.S. News and World Report. While Connecticut was ranked near the top in certain categories like health care and economy, it falls behind most other states in opportunity and fiscal stability, according to U.S. News. The 2025 rankings evaluated all 50 states using 71 metrics across eight major categories: health care, education, economy, infrastructure, opportunity, fiscal stability, crime and corrections, and natural environment. U.S. News used the most recent data available from thousands of data points, mainly from government and publicly available sources, as well as national survey results to see which categories were most important to people and give each one a weight, according to the methodology.

PATCH – May 6, 2025

'Unique Shopping Experience' Opens In Hamden

A new vendor boutique shop recently celebrated its grand opening in Hamden. The Shops at Event Edge, located at 4133 Whitney Avenue, hosted a ribbon-cutting celebration last Friday with Mayor Lauren Garrett and the Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce, according to a post on the town's Facebook page.

Economic Development Staff Report

WIRED.com – May 6, 2025

The Future of Manufacturing Might Be in Space

Products made in space—and used on Earth—could be a reality in the coming years. Jessica Frick wants to build furnaces in space. Her company, California-based Astral Materials, is designing machines that can grow valuable materials in orbit that could be used in medicine, semiconductors, and more. Or, as she puts it, “We’re building a box that makes money in space.” Scientists have long suggested that the microgravity environment of Earth’s orbit could enable the production of higher-quality products than it is possible to make on Earth. Astronauts experimented with crystals—a crucial component of electronic circuitry—as early as 1973, on NASA’s Skylab space station. But progress was slow. For decades, in-space manufacturing has been experimental rather than commercial.

CT Insider – May 7, 2025

Smithland Pet & Garden Centers to close 13 stores in Connecticut and Massachusetts

Years after acquiring Agway stores in Connecticut and another chain in Massachusetts, Smithland Pet & Garden Centers announced it is closing all 13 of its locations with customer returns allowed through May 20.

Primepublishers.com – May 7, 2025

Southbury Economic Development Director Kevin Bielmeier Resigns

Economic Development Director Kevin Bielmeier handed in his resignation to First Selectman Jeff Manville on May 1, the morning of the Board of Selectmen’s most recent meeting. His last day with the town will be May 14, 2025. The resignation followed a month of controversy over Mr. Bielmeier’s position, with the Board of Finance first voting to reduce the position from full-time to part-time and then voting to potentially allow the position to be refunded as full-time if certain conditions were met. The defunding of the position as full-time by the Board of Finance took place in a meeting on April 1, during which other cuts were made to the proposed town government budget. A few weeks prior, the board had held a discussion with Mr. Bielmeier as part of their ongoing deep dive into the proposed budget. They asked about future plans, current accomplishments, the growth of the Grand List, and what he was doing to increase the commercial side of tax revenue. Specifically, they asked about his action plan to move forward, saying they had been requesting such a plan for some time and had not yet received one.

CT Mirror – May 8, 2025

New rules offer shot at revival for CT’s rusting industrial properties

The new rules, finalized last month, do away with a 1980s-era law known as the Transfer Act, which had widely come to be seen as an outdated and cumbersome system for remediating polluted properties. Under the Transfer Act, properties that served as home to dry cleaners, auto repair shops, furniture strippers or any other entity that generated more than 100 kilograms of hazardous waste — about half of an industrial 55-gallon drum — in a month became subject to costly investigations and burdensome regulations whenever owners sought to sell or transfer ownership of the property.

CT Post – May 8, 2025

Shelton community news: City welcomes new economic development president

Sheila O’Malley has been named the next president of the Shelton Economic Development Corporation, replacing Paul Grimmer, who is retiring after some eight years in the post. O’Malley comes with close to three decades of experience in economic and community development, most recently as the economic development director for Ansonia. O’Malley will assume president role on May 23.

Economic Development Staff Report

Hartford Business Journal – May 8, 2025

CT House passes bill aimed at protecting warehouse workers

Legislation inspired by labor concerns over Amazon's use of quotas and biometric surveillance to manage its warehouse workers was approved Wednesday on a largely party-line vote in the state House of Representatives. If House Bill 6907 passes the Senate as expected, Connecticut would follow California, Minnesota, New York, Oregon and Washington with laws intended to provide greater protections for workers in warehouses and fulfillment centers.

Record Journal – May 9, 2025

Wallingford council targets cuts to get reduce proposed 19% tax increase

The town council sought to move forward with several cuts to the proposed budget this week, including from the community pool allocation, several nonprofits and vehicle purchases in an effort to reduce the proposed 19% tax increase. The nearly six-hour meeting saw the councilors discuss many different avenues of trying to lower the cost to the taxpayers. An initial draft put forward by Councilors Christopher Regan and Tom Laffin that saw a steep \$2 million reduction in the school budget, as well as others from nonprofits and other items across departments. This budget, however, was turned down by a split vote from the council.

cbia.com – May 9, 2025

First-Time Homebuyer Savings Account: Smart Workforce Investment

Connecticut is on the brink of a transformative step toward addressing its housing affordability crisis and strengthening workforce recruitment efforts. HB 6876, which creates a first-time homebuyer savings account, garnered unanimous bipartisan support in both the Banking Committee and Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee. This legislation is more than just a housing initiative—it's a strategic workforce development tool that positions Connecticut to compete for talent in a tight labor market. HB 6876 allows individuals to open tax-advantaged savings accounts specifically for the purchase of their first home.

PATCH – May 9, 2025

What Connecticut consumers need to know about Rite Aid's latest bankruptcy filing

Rite Aid, once one of the largest pharmacy chains in the United States, announced on Monday it was filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection for the second time in less than two years, but this time around, the company is closing or selling off all its stores, including in Connecticut.

CT Insider – May 9, 2025

Wallingford advocate for Meriden-area Latino business owners to retire after 51 years in flooring

It's hard to imagine Peter Escobar slowing down after 51 years building a business, mentoring young people and boosting the Meriden and Wallingford Latino community. Escobar recently sold his successful flooring business Colonial Flooring America, and is training the new owner Sean Gordon in the changing world of hardwood, tile, luxury vinyl flooring and window dressings.

CT Insider – May 9, 2025

New Haven biotech firm to cut 40% of workforce in latest round of layoffs, pivots on drug program

RallyBio, based in the Gold Building at 234 Church St., said it would lay off nine employees in the coming months, representing a 40% cut in its workforce, company officials said in a statement on Friday as part of its first-quarter earnings report.

Economic Development Staff Report

CT Mirror – May 9, 2025

CT agency aims to build housing in downtowns, near public transit

The Connecticut Municipal Development Authority, formerly called the Municipal Redevelopment Authority, was established in 2019 as an unfunded entity and officially got money and started work last year. Since then, at least 11 cities have passed ordinances agreeing to work with the quasi-public agency. Another 10 are in the process, Kooris said. He's hoping more towns along Metro-North will join in the coming months, and for those that have started, he's aiming to have projects in the works later this year, he said.

Record Journal – May 9, 2025

Dan Haar: Hallmark Christmas movies have left Connecticut. Can the state bring them back?

The state's most recent claim to fame: Christmas movies. Over the last decade, we have made ourselves the Christmas movie state, complete with a Christmas Movie Trail that opened last fall in a splashy event at the landmark Robbins House in Wethersfield. The trail celebrates 22 locally produced, holiday heartstring productions, mostly for Hallmark Channel. More exactly, Andrew Gernhard, born in Norwich, a lifetime state resident, made Connecticut the Christmas movie state. He produced all, or almost all, of those TV movies on the trail — most of them set right here in places like Hartford, Essex and Mystic. Now it's over. The curtain is down. Gernhard has exited Connecticut for Buffalo, N.Y., where he's making the same movies for Hallmark and other studios that he thought he would always make in Connecticut.

PATCH – May 12, 2025

This Bank Is Closing Dozens Of Locations, Including 2 In CT

TD Bank is to shutter dozens more locations across multiple states, including a pair in Connecticut. The Connecticut closings are part 38 branches designated for this year, according to a 2024 filing with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. According to filing, in addition to the pair of Connecticut closings, New England closings include six branches in Massachusetts, four in Maine and four in New Hampshire.

Hartford Business Journal – May 12, 2025

100% affordable housing development The Camelot opens in W. Hartford

The Camelot, a 100% affordable housing development, held a grand opening Monday in West Hartford. The housing complex, developed on the former site of the West Hartford Inn at 900 Farmington Ave., features 44 one- and two-bedroom deed-restricted apartments for a mix of income levels.

New Haven Register – May 13, 2025

Two New Haven housing projects to receive millions in support: 'They could have been homeless'

Two city housing projects are set to receive millions in support from the state Department of Housing and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, including affordable housing. The state Department of Housing is providing \$5 million along with an additional \$2.75 million from the State Department of Economic and Community Development's Community Investment Fund to Continuum of Care, Inc. The project consists of 55 two-bedroom apartments in New Haven. The purpose of the acquisition is to preserve and extend the ability to provide supportive housing to individuals with mental illness and facing housing instability, according to state officials. The

Hartford Business Journal – May 14, 2025

Pioneering CT chocolate company acquired by national, private equity-backed firm

Meriden-based chocolatier Thompson Chocolate has been acquired by a national company, Chocolate Works, which is backed by a private equity investor. The company's 120,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, located at 80 South Vine St. The company reported employing over 100 people as of 2018.

Economic Development Staff Report

Hartford Business Journal – May 14, 2025

State regulator approves bank merger, name change

The state Department of Banking said it has approved the merger of two community banks located in eastern Connecticut. The DOB said it approved the merger of Guilford Savings Bank (GSB) and Norwich-based Eastern Connecticut Savings Bank on May 7. The DOB also said it has approved the combined banks' new name — Ascend Bank — which will be used once the deal is finalized. The proposed target date for the merger is June 1, according to the DOB.

Hartford Business Journal – May 14, 2025

Former Paier College campus listed for sale

The college's former Hamden facility, at 20 Gorham Ave., contains 23,915 square feet of educational and commercial space on roughly 1 acre. The campus contains four buildings and is situated just north of the New Haven border. The listing price is \$1.1 million and the broker is Amodio & Co.

PATCH – May 14, 2025

Countdown Begins For Large Pharmacy Chain To Close 4 More CT Stores

Four Walgreens locations will be heading to the corporate gallows next week as the next wave of closures go into effect at the pharmacy chain.

Record Journal – May 15, 2025

Wallingford taxpayers can expect to pay more in approved budget, despite cut to mayor's proposal

The Town Council recently approved the budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year, which is \$3.1 million less than Mayor Vincent Cervoni's original proposal. The new budget total is about \$204 million, down from Cervoni's \$207 million proposal. It has an adjusted mill rate of 24.12 mills, a decrease of 5.82 mills from the current 30.66 mill rate. The new budget will take effect at the start of the fiscal year on July 1.

Hartford Business Journal – May 15, 2025

CT Senate overwhelmingly approves bill to loosen trade apprenticeship ratios

Before the vote, Sen. James Maroney (D-Milford), who co-chairs the General Law Committee, praised Sen. Paul Cicarella (R-North Haven), a ranking member of the committee, for his efforts on the bill.

The state Senate on Wednesday gave overwhelming support to a revised bill that will loosen the restrictions on hiring apprentices. Existing state law sets a hiring ratio for apprentices that certain trades must follow. The rule allows contractors to hire up to three apprentices at a 1:1 ratio. After that, employers must abide by a 1:3 ratio, which means that for each new apprentice, a company must have three additional journeymen. So, a company with 12 licensed journeymen can only have six apprentices on staff. The rules apply to companies in the electrical; plumbing; heating, piping, and cooling; sprinkler fitter; and sheet metal work trades. The bill approved Wednesday, however, grants the commissioner of the state Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) the power to allow a licensed contractor to hire one or more additional apprentices, up to a total of eight, even if the contractor does not employ enough journeypersons to satisfy the hiring ratio.

Hartford Business Journal – May 15, 2025

CT releases new manufacturing strategic plan; goal is to grow sector to 20% of GDP

The state's Office of Manufacturing has released a new strategic plan aimed at growing the sector to 20% of Connecticut's GDP by 2030, and achieving full employment in manufacturing. The strategic plan rests on four pillars of developing talent, building sustainable companies, driving innovation, and fostering collaboration both within and outside the sector.

Economic Development Staff Report

CT Insider – May 16, 2025

New 46-unit, mixed-use development proposed for Dixwell Avenue in Hamden

A new mixed-use development featuring dozens of apartments could eventually rise on a prominent stretch of Dixwell Avenue in the southern part of town. The project calls for 46 apartments, including nine affordable units, and a refurbished retail space with a new drive-thru, according to an application submitted to the Hamden Planning and Zoning Commission by 1890 Dixwell, LLC, based in Atlanta.

CT Insider – May 19, 2025

At 140 years old, Wallingford Grange seeks to broaden community appeal, battle divisiveness

The Wallingford Grange is celebrating its 140-year anniversary this year, with a mission to continue broadening its role in the community beyond agriculture. The National Grange was founded in 1867 as a social organization and advocacy group for local farmers across the country. Wallingford was among one of the first communities in the state to form a branch, on May 27, 1885.

Hartford Business Journal – May 19, 2025

Amid federal funding uncertainty, CT launches updated strategic workforce development plan; calls for AI tech talent accelerator, new training loan program

Gov. Ned Lamont's Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) has launched an updated strategic plan and is seeking to get control of its remaining \$30 million budget to implement new initiatives, including an artificial intelligence tech talent accelerator program. The office was originally created under the Department of Economic and Community Development, where the bond funding still resides, but has since become an independent entity. "The remaining \$30 million is going through a reauthorization process, to come directly to OWS in one lump sum and for us to be able to utilize that for seeding additional innovations within the system," said Kelli-Marie Vallieres, the state's chief workforce officer.

PATCH – May 20, 2025

Middletown Mayor Ben Florsheim To Step Down

Middletown Mayor Ben Florsheim Tuesday announced he will be stepping down next month. The 33-year-old mayor, who made history in 2019 when the former Wesleyan student became the youngest mayor ever elected in Middletown, will be at town hall until June 16. He is in the midst of a second four-year term, won during his 2023 re-election bid. Council President Gene Nocera will become acting mayor at noon on June 16 and the Common Council will then declare a permanent vacancy in the office and schedule a special election, which will likely coincide with the regular municipal election on Nov. 4, Florsheim said.

PATCH – May 21, 2025

Worker, 87, Retires After 65 Years With Wallingford Company

It truly was the end of an era this week when 87-year-old Jerry Swantek said goodbye to Specialty Cable Corporation in Wallingford after 65 years with the company. Swantek, a Meriden resident, officially retired Monday and was honored with a ceremony that included a visit from Connecticut Chief Manufacturing Officer Paul Lavoie, who presented him with a proclamation from Gov. Ned Lamont. Specialty Cable Corporation (SCC), located at 2 Tower Drive, is a small manufacturing company that specializes in producing flight critical, wire and cable for the aerospace industry and serves both commercial and military sectors.

Hartford Business Journal – May 21, 2025

CT community bank officially appoints new CEO

Guilford Savings Bank officially has a new CEO. Kyle J. Eagleson is now the community lender's president and chief executive officer. Eagleson was elevated to president in January 2024. He takes on the added responsibilities as GSB is nearing completion of its merger with Eastern Connecticut Savings Bank, a deal that was announced last December. The Department of Banking approved the merger on May 7, and announced the deal is expected to close on June 1.

Economic Development Staff Report

cbia – May 22, 2025

Report: Connecticut's Housing Shortage a 'Significant Barrier' to Economic Growth

New research from the CBIA Foundation for Economic Growth & Opportunity finds the state's housing shortage is a significant barrier to economic growth. The **Economic Impact of Connecticut's Housing Shortage** report notes the state has an estimated shortage of 100,000-150,000 units, with some estimates suggesting more than 350,000 units. Connecticut's housing construction consistently lags behind national and regional averages. While 2024 marked the strongest post-recession year for housing production, the 6,499 units permitted was 36% below pre-2008 averages. The research also shows that Connecticut's housing shortage substantially impacts middle-income and moderate-income households who are fully employed but increasingly priced out of suitable housing options. "The economic consequences of this housing deficit are substantial—likely in the tens of billions of dollars per year," said CBIA Foundation director **Dustin Nord**. "The lack of housing not only reduces options for workers, but creates workforce mismatches, impairs business competitiveness, and ultimately constrains economic growth."

CT Insider – May 23, 2025

CT Dems introduce sweeping housing bill with major zoning reforms, delay vote due to GOP filibuster

Connecticut legislators introduced a sweeping bill Thursday that would incentivize towns and cities to build affordable housing, including a targeted number of units they'd be expected to zone for. In addition to allocating affordable housing quotas for towns to target, the bill would promote "transit-oriented" development, grant more resources to public housing authorities, allow more commercial buildings to be converted for residential use and, maybe most controversial, bar towns from imposing minimum parking requirements in most cases.

cbia – May 23, 2025

Planning for a Future-Ready Workforce

The newly updated strategic plan from The Governor's Workforce Council aims to build the next generation of the state's workforce. The Work Forward: Pathways for Growth plan features recommendations focused on building an equitable, inclusive, and innovative workforce that meets the needs of the current economic environment and has the ability to adapt to the needs of the future.

Record Journal – May 27, 2025

Cheshire's Ball & Socket Arts denied \$4.5 million grant for cleanup of former factory complex

The Environmental Protection Agency last week denied a Ball & Socket Arts grant application for \$4.5 million to remediate lead and other industrial contaminants that remain in a key building at the arts, education and retail complex. The lost grant funding was part of a broad federal rollback of many grants, including those to the National Endowment for the Humanities and National Endowment for the Arts that have hit state arts and culture institutions hard. The group would have used the EPA brownfield grant to remediate and renovate the 45,000-square-foot Building 1 to serve as its main arts and entertainment complex, historical space and food court. "Without it, plans for the main entrance and plaza are stalled," Blaisdell said.

Record Journal – May 28, 2025

Meriden's Westfield Care and Rehab to become apartments geared for 55 and older

A city-based property owner and manager submitted plans to turn the former Westfield Care and Rehab into 51 units of market-rate upscale housing for seniors. Cory Kosienski, owner and principal of Meriden Property Management and Property Manage CT, purchased the 33,000-square-foot nursing home for \$1.1 million in December. "I've managed a lot of properties in Meriden," Kosienski said. "For the elderly there are no options that aren't low income, a mobile home, or buy a house. There is no real choice."

Economic Development Staff Report

Hartford Business Journal – May 28, 2025

CT House approves omnibus housing bill following compromises

After a debate marked by an unconventional political strategy, the House of Representatives narrowly passed what is likely the most consequential housing bill that's been considered in the Connecticut legislature in years. House Bill 5002, which passed 84-67, is an expansive bill tackling issues including zoning, transit-oriented development, parking, homelessness and fair rent commissions. It combines Democratic priorities from across a few legislative committees and aims to address the impact of the severe lack of housing, particularly affordable housing, in Connecticut.

Record Journal – May 28, 2025

Cheshire's Norton Brothers Fruit Farm closes after 268 years, company website shows

Norton Brothers Fruit Farm, one of the older farms in Connecticut, has closed after 268 years in business, according to a post on its website. Cheshire Assistant Town Manager Andrew Martelli said he had heard rumors that the farm was closing but had received no confirmation. "I get notifications of all property transfers" and so far, "no one has come in. There's been nothing that's crossed my desk," Martelli said. "As far as I'm concerned, it's just rumors right now." A note on the website at NortonBrothersFruitFarm.com reads, "The Farm and Farm stand are permanently closed as of May 2025."

CT.GOV – State of Connecticut Press Release – May 28, 2025

Governor Lamont Releases \$30 Million for Infrastructure Improvements in 46 Small Towns

Governor Ned Lamont today announced that he is releasing \$30 million in state grants to 46 small towns in Connecticut that will be used to complete a wide variety of infrastructure improvements, such as road safety reconstruction projects, emergency management upgrades, sidewalk and pedestrian safety enhancements, educational and recreational facility upgrades, and other kinds of capital improvement projects. The grants are being provided through the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP), a state program managed by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) that delivers grants to small towns for economic development, community conservation, and quality-of-life capital projects. In addition to the grants from the state, each municipality is also contributing funds, bringing the total spent on the 48 projects to \$43.4 million in a combination of state, local, and other funding sources.

- **Branford:** \$1 million in state funding is approved for Town Center sidewalk improvements. This will be matched by \$200,000 from the town.
- **Cheshire:** \$1 million in state funding is approved Phase II of Mixville Park improvements. This will be matched by \$281,800 from the town.
- **Durham:** \$1 million in state funding is approved for the Shady Lane reconstruction. This will be matched by \$270,000 from the town.
- **North Branford:** \$1 million in state funding is approved Edward Smith Library HVAC Improvements. This will be matched by \$850,000 from the town.

Economic Development Staff Report

ctmainstreet.org – website article

National Main Street Comes to Connecticut!

CMSC hosted Main Street America's Executive Director for a day-long look at our stellar downtowns! In Wallingford, WCI Executive Director Liz Davis, Economic Development Specialist Don Crouch and Mayor Vincent Cervoni talked about their plans for increased economic development, how CMSC's Assessment is helping guide their efforts and noted the many new downtown businesses.

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

HOW WE HELP



OUR IMPACT

OUR SUPPORTERS

TAKE ACTION



National Main Street Comes to Connecticut!

CMSC HOSTED MAIN STREET AMERICA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR A DAY-LONG LOOK AT OUR STELLAR DOWNTOWNS!

Erin Barnes, the Executive Director of **Main Street America**, the national organization for which CMSC serves as CT's Statewide Coordinating Program, recently visited CMSC, meeting with staff and touring some of our member downtowns.



CMSC's Michelle McCabe and Christine Schilke took Erin to meet with **Rep. Jane Caribay** (who is also a member of the legislative Main Street Working Group) to talk about the issues of importance to CT's main streets. Erin then toured member downtowns Wallingford and Westville Village in New Haven.

In Wallingford, **WCI Executive Director Liz Davis, Economic Development Specialist Don Crouch and Mayor Vincent Cervoni** talked about their plans for increased economic development, how CMSC's Assessment is helping guide their efforts and noted the many new downtown businesses.

In Westville, we joined **Lizzy Donius, Westville Village Renaissance Alliance (WVRA) Executive Director, City officials Carlos Eyzaguirre and Malachi Bridges, Ariel Vega from Senator Chris Murphy's office and WVRA stakeholders** for a brief presentation and tour of the commercial district, learning about how the neighborhood's resident artists and entrepreneurs contribute to the area's unique vibe, discussing the large new mixed-use development underway and hearing about the area's plans for development.



ABOUT CONNECTICUT MAIN STREET CENTER

CMSC is the state's premier resource for downtown vibrancy. Our mission is advancing communities across Connecticut to establish and maintain vibrant Main Streets. We provide education and training, resources and technical assistance, and function as the statewide champion for downtowns and Main Streets of all sizes.

CMSC is supported by its Founding Sponsors, the **Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD)** and **Eversource Energy**. More information is available at www.ctmainstreet.org.

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Roehm Receives Certificate of Appreciation from Wallingford Mayor

On May 15, Vinile Caroni, the Mayor of Wallingford, CT, and the Wallingford Economic Development Commission (EDC), visited Roehm's plant in Wallingford. During the visit, they received an overview of the plant's manufacturing processes, products, and applications for end users.

The Roehm leadership team engaged in a productive discussion about the regulatory and workforce challenges faced by manufacturers in Connecticut. Mayor Caroni outlined the initiatives that town departments are implementing to support companies like Roehm. Both sides identified potential initiatives to explore in the future.

Mayor Caroni expressed gratitude for the plant's long-standing tradition of responsible manufacturing and community involvement, emphasizing its significance in the town's history. Along with EDC Specialist Don Crouch, he presented a certificate of appreciation to Roehm Plant Manager Dave Smysek and Manufacturing Manager Brian Labrop, recognizing the plant's continued commitment to the Town of Wallingford.

A plant tour followed with a focus on capital projects, including the new above-ground tank farm, which demonstrates Roehm's long-term commitment to the town of Wallingford.

Congratulations to our team at the Wallingford site for their ongoing efforts to demonstrate excellence in the local community.



