



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

Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 30, 2021

Not Approved by EDC

Present: Mark Gingras, Vice-Chair
Gary Fappiano, Commissioner
Hank Baum, Commissioner
Jim Wolfe, Commissioner
Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner
Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner
Anthony Bracale, Alternate (via phone)
Rob Fritz, Alternate

Absent: Joe Mirra, Chair

Others Present: Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist
Stacey Hoppes, EDC Secretary
Liz Davis, Director of WCI
Lauren Takores, Record Journal

In absence of Chair Joe Mirra; Vice-Chair Mark Gingras led the meeting. Vice-Chair Gingras called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:33 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Vice-Chair Gingras led the EDC in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Discussion and Possible Action on Special Meeting Minutes dated June 21, 2021** – Tim Ryan asked for one correction to the minutes. Secretary noted the correction. **Jim Wolfe made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**
3. **Discussion: On proposed Data Center Development** – Staff Ryan gave an update on the progress of Data Center Development. This project continues to be a great opportunity for Wallingford. There are three (3) steps in the development process. The first step is the Municipal Host Agreement, which has been approved by the town council. The second step is an agreement with the Wallingford Electric Division, which is currently being worked on. The third step is updating/revising the IX and I-5 Zoning Regulations. Ryan stated that the Planning & Zoning Department along with the Engineering Department and multiple other town departments are collaborating together in this effort. Once the language is updated the document will go in front of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Jim Wolfe asked if there is a timeframe that the regulations are to be completed. Ryan stated that they are hopeful it will go through Workshops and a Public Hearing sometime in September and go in front of the Planning & Zoning Commission sometime in October.
4. **Discussion: On American Rescue Plan Act Funds** – Staff Ryan gave an update on the funds available to Wallingford through ARPA. Wallingford will receive approximately \$13MM. Wallingford has received half of the funds, and the other half will be received 2 years from now. The question is “How does Wallingford distribute it?” The money is for anyone that has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. How do we look at it from an Economic Development perspective? The Mayor is

54 leading a group to create an RFP for a consultant to guide us on allocating the funds. Having
55 synergy with other comparable surrounding towns would be beneficial. This project will be a
56 collaboration of multiple departments in Wallingford due to the flexibility of the allowed uses for the
57 ARPA funds. Businesses that are looking to apply for these funds once the process has been
58 established, will have to illustrate their financial impact and it is suggested that they get their
59 accounting documents together.

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61 **5. Discussion: On possible sale of Town property located at 25 Wallace Avenue** – Staff Ryan
62 gave an update on the town owned, 40' x 60' unused parcel behind Center Street Brewing
63 Company. EDC sent a letter to the Mayor proposing the opportunity. The Mayor has sent a letter to
64 all town departments on August 16, 2021 to see if there are any concerns with selling this parcel.
65 Will give an update at the next meeting, dated October 4, 2021.
66

67 Vice-Chair Gingras, asked if there were any questions on the Expenditure Report. Vice-Chair Gingras
68 asked that Secretary adds a line item for the Expenditure Report/Budget to future meeting Agendas.
69 With no questions on the Expenditure Report they continued to agenda item 6.
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71 **6. Committee Remarks**

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73 ➤ Marketing Committee – Chair Gingras gave an update from the two meetings of the
74 Marketing Committee in August, one on the 18th and on the 23rd.
- 75 • The Committee continues to have high interest in the reuse of the Old Railroad
76 Station. The Mayor asked the EDC to take the lead on this project. EDC Chair, Joe
77 Mirra appointed the Marketing Committee to research the steps needed to create a
78 Feasibility Study. The Committee discussed the variety of possibilities for the reuse of
79 the Old Railroad Station. At the end of their discussions they decided it would be best
80 to get an expert involved that could guide the Marketing Committee to create a
81 Feasibility Study. Jon Walworth was asked to enlighten the committee on the process
82 of formulating a feasibility study. Jon Walworth attended the August 23 meeting. The
83 Committee had a lengthy conversation with Walworth regarding strategy, timelines,
84 and follow-up. Jim Wolfe asked if the EDC could set a date to visit the building.
85 Gingras stated that once they can involve Chair Joe Mirra; that would be a good idea.
 - 86 • Gingras informed the Commission that they have decided to use internal staff for the
87 Part-time EDC Digital Marketing position. Staff Ryan went into more detail stating that
88 the department received 16 resumes for the part-time ED Digital Marketing Specialist
89 position. Applications were reviewed and no viable candidates were identified. The
90 new plan is to have EDC Secretary, Hoppes work an additional five hours per week
91 and outsource certain elements of our digital marketing strategy. This “plan B” will be
92 within the budget previously approved for this initiative. An active program will begin in
93 September as scheduled
 - 94 • Gingras informed the Commission that there will be new articles coming out for the
95 Desk of Joe column in the Wallingford Magazine. The next few issues will be 2 or 3
96 articles on Data Centers.
- 97 ➤ Planning & Zoning Liaison Committee –
- 98 • Chair Baum gave an update regarding the Data Centers and the Planning & Zoning
99 Regulations for the IX and I-5 Zones. Multiple departments have collaborated to
100 create the draft of the new regulations. The final draft is in process of being completed
101 and should be an agenda item on the PZC September meeting.
 - 102 • Chair Baum also stated that he anticipates a Vote on 5 Research Parkway as an
103 agenda item on the PZC September meeting.
- 104 ➤ Retention/Incentives Committee – No updates at this time.
105

- 106 **7. Staff Report** – Staff Ryan gave an update of Activities from June, July and August due to our
107 Summer Recess.
- 108 ➤ The process of formulating an RFP to evaluate an adaptive re-use of the former Railroad
109 Station on Hall Avenue and Quinnipiac Street is underway. Staff feels that this is an exciting
110 opportunity to have an adaptive reuse that would create spectacular possibilities for the
111 Lower Town Center.
 - 112 ➤ The EDC’s recommendations of reducing the open space requirement in the IX and I-5
113 zones, adding uses in the I-5 zone, and allowing environmentally appropriate development in
114 the Watershed Protection Area are addressed in a document prepared by the Town Planner
115 and Town Engineer. This extensively researched draft document has been collaboratively
116 vetted by our land use professionals, the Water/Sewer Division, the Law Department, the
117 Mayor, and the EDC P&Z Liaison Committee. The recommended zone changes will be on
118 the agenda at an upcoming PZC meeting
 - 119 ➤ We’re requesting a small dormant parcel of Town owned land behind Center St Brewing
120 Company at 25 Wallace Ave be sold to the property owner for possible expansion. The
121 Mayor has sent a letter to all necessary Town departments to determine if there is any need
122 for the Town to retain ownership
 - 123 ➤ The PZC approved an application to build a 250,000sf warehouse distribution facility at the
124 combined site at 1117 Northrop Rd and 2 Northrop Industrial Park Road East
 - 125 ➤ The former Wells Fargo bank on North Main Street has been purchased by Mr. Joe Gouveia.
126 He is formulating visions for the property and welcomes input
 - 127 ➤ Liz Davis, former WCI board chair has been hired as the executive director replacing Kathy
128 Lilley. Mike Glidden has taken over as board chair
 - 129 ➤ Events for WCI - Celebrate on Center - Oct 2 -1 day only
 - 130 ➤ Holiday Stroll - Dec. 3
 - 131 ➤ Jim Wolfe asked if there has been any progress on the SkyZone building. Tim Ryan stated
132 that it is an active project, under contract.

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134 **8. Chair’s remarks** – Vice-Chair Gingras welcomed Liz Davis as new Director of WCI.

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136 **9. Other community business** – Due to FOI update this line item was skipped and returned to. Once
137 the FOI update was given, **Commissioner Jim Wolfe made a motion to add a conversation**
138 **regarding the development of Route 5. Commissioner Cymbala seconded the motion...by**
139 **unanimous vote the Commission had a brief conversation regarding widening Route 5 in 2**
140 **areas (one near Tractor Supply and the other near Sam’s Flowers).** Staff Ryan is going to
141 double check, but believes that this is an active request with the state.
142

143 **10. FOI Update from EDC Secretary, Stacey Hoppes** – Staff members Ryan and Hoppes attended
144 FOI training with multiple town departments given by Attorney Janis Small, Law Department.
145 Secretary Hoppes reviewed current and updated FOI requirements with the Commission with the
146 assistance of staff Ryan. One of the changes was that if any additional topics of conversation are
147 brought up at a Regular meeting, there is to be a 2/3 vote in favor of bringing a new topic to the
148 table.
149

150 **There being no further business, Patricia Cymbala made a motion to adjourn the meeting at**
151 **7:36 p.m.; Rosemarie Preneta seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

152
153 Sincerely,

154 *Stacey Hoppes*

155 Stacey Hoppes, Secretary
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