



# TOWN OF VERNON

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

55 West Main Street • Vernon, CT 06066

Tel: (860) 870-3637 • Fax: (860) 870-3683

Shaun Gately  
Economic Development Director

**'Virtual' Regular Meeting**  
**Vernon Economic Development Commission**  
**Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:30 AM**

**Zoom Meeting Information**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84665890792?pwd=R3V0YWlSUUVITkJsWVRkVzNYTTN6Zz09>

**Meeting ID:** 846 6589 0792    **Passcode:** M52G97

**By Phone:** 1 646 876 9923    **Meeting ID:** 846 6589 0792    **Passcode:** 940953

**AGENDA**

1. **Call to Order:**
2. **Public Forum:**
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Approve draft minutes from November 10, 2020
4. **Economic Development Status Update:**
  - Amerbelle Mill redevelopment
  - 206 Talcottville Rd. – ProHealth buildout underway
  - Golf Land renovation is underway
  - 274 Talcottville- Square Peg Pizza should be bringing in their renovation plans
  - Primitive Renditions is expanding and moving to the Shoppes At 30 (Reins Plaza)
5. **New Business:**
  - COVID Recovery update-
6. **Old Business:**
  - 2022 POCD update- Continue discussion
7. **Ribbon Cuttings/Ground Breakings/New Businesses:**
  - Your CBD Store was held on 11-19-20
  - Dental Arts of Vernon was held on 11-30-20
8. **Adjournment:**

# **DRAFT MINUTES**

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### 'Virtual' Regular Meeting MINUTES

Shaun Gately  
Economic Development Coordinator

Vernon Economic Development Commission  
Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:30 AM

#### Zoom Meeting Information

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87432660782?pwd=SzlaNmJndE5uTmRoVzVYMTF1OEZ4dz09>

Meeting ID: 874 3266 0782 Passcode: kn60t2

By Phone: 1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 874 3266 0782 Passcode: 878063

1. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order by Chairman Jeffrey Cohen at 7:33 am. Commissioners present: Jordan Coe, Bill McGurk, Bruce Kloter, Bill Breslau, Jim Sendrak, Jeff Adamson. Also present on the call was Economic Development Coordinator Shaun Gately, Project Coordinator Leslie Campolongo. Also present on the call was Mr. John Gumpert authorized representative of Camden Management Partners and Vernon Mill Owner, LLC.
2. **Public Forum:** There was no one present at the Public Forum.  
  
Commissioner Bruce Kellogg joined the call at 7:35 am.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Adamson moved to approve the minutes from October 13, 2020. Motion seconded by Commissioner Breslau. Motion passed unanimously.
4. **Economic Development Status Update:** Mr. Gately provided the Commission a brief update on the following projects:
  - Amerbelle Mill redevelopment
  - 206 Talcottville Rd. (ProHealth) - Buildout underway
  - Golf Land - Renovation underway
  - 274 Talcottville Rd- (Square Peg Pizza) - Discussions in process
  - Laurel Woods Estates

Mr. Gately introduced Mr. John Gumpert, to discuss the greater Amerbelle Mill redevelopment project. Discussion took place. Mr. Gately introduced preliminary site plans and estimated tax implication documents, including a prorated abatement schedule to the Commission. Discussion took place. Mr. Gately and Mr. Gumpert answered questions from the Commission.

Motion made by Commissioner Breslau: "The Economic Development Commission grants a positive recommendation of the proposed abatement schedule to the Mayor's Office." Motion was seconded by Commissioner McGurk. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **New Business:**
  - COVID Recovery - Mr. Gately provided a brief update of the Local Recovery and Reopening Committee activity.

**6. Old Business:**

- 2022 POCD-Commissioner Cohen invited discussion and input on the 2020 POCD. Discussion took place. The Commission will review the 3-year plan and the current POCD Implementation Plan in preparation of its December 8, 2020 meeting.

**7. Ribbon Cuttings/Ground Breakings/New Businesses:**

- Economy Oil Change - 10-28-20
- Gene Pitney Park - 10-20-20
- Rockville Dunkin – rebranding ribbon cutting (to be held on 11-7-20 at 9:00 am)

**8. Adjournment:**

Commissioner Cohen called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Breslau motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Adamson seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Leslie S. Campolongo  
Project Coordinator

## **Other Business**

## **M. Promote Community Spirit Throughout Town (see page 55)**

**M-3** Develop a brand/ positive and recognizable image to help convey Vernon's unique identity in a way that meets the goals in this POCD. (High-Priority)

- Branding is very important, and more work needs to be done here to determine what image the town wants to portray.

### **Possible goals (working with the Mayor and Staff)**

- Work on a marketing campaign promoting a positive image.

## **O. Enhance Gateways (see page 56)**

**O-1** Enhance the gateways to our community. (High-Priority)

### **Possible goals (working with P+Z and DRC)**

- Signs or gardens at off ramps
- Art work at exit 66 because of the Arts Center.
- Maintenance of sidewalks, landscaping, litter removal, cut overgrowth.
- Rockville- Victorian theme
- Shopping district- Shop Vernon

## **Z. Encourage Appropriate Business Development at Exits 66 and 67** (see page 87)

**Z-1** Encourage business development. (High-Priority)

**Z-2** Work with residents, landowners, & local economic development officials to determine desired form / style of development for both areas. (High-Priority)

**Z-3a** Update zoning to allow a wide variety of uses(High-Priority)

**Z-3b** Update zoning to regulate or create incentives for desired form / style(High-Priority)

- Exit 66 and 67 need a vision that will encourage “Appropriate” development. Appropriate is underlined because without the input of multiple voices the definition of appropriate could vary widely. The EDC needs to stay involved in this important topic.

### **Possible goals (working with P+Z, the Mayor, DRC and Staff)**

- Identify potential obstacles for future development and actively mitigate them.
  - Road widening, sewers/utilities, use vs. form, etc..
- Work on conceptual design of the area, working towards preapprovals.
- Potential end users.
- Development agreements with land owners.

## **OO.Ensure that Utilities Meet Current and Future Needs** (see page 115)

**OO-5** Ensure Vernon offers up-to-date communication options. (Low-Priority)

- Sewers, electric, and FIBER connections are all very important to the future development efforts here in town.

### **Possible goals (working with WPCA, the Mayor and Staff)**

- Expand our fiber network to allow companies to tie in.
- Work with land owners, utilities and developers to expand sewer and water coverage.
- Address energy concerns/reliability. (micro grid)

## Q. Encourage the Revitalization of Rockville (see page 70)

**Q-2** Continue to support and collaborate with the RDA. (High-Priority)

**Q-3** Increase patronage of Rockville businesses by employees in the area and Vernon residents. (Medium-Priority)

**Q-4** Encourage redevelopment of West Main Street Retail Block.. (Low-Priority)

**Q-5** Continue efforts to redevelop / re-tenant the Citizens Block. (High-Priority)

**Q-6** Work to ensure that existing buildings (e.g., mills) can continue to support business uses. (Low-Priority)

**Q-13** Explore State programs that can aid in the revitalization of Rockville.

- These need to be discussed in detail. There are many obstacles and several different paths to choose from. But these are very important.

### **Possible goals (working with the RDA, PZC, TC, Mayor and Staff)**

- Work on conceptual design of the area, working towards preapprovals.
- Potential end users.
- Reach agreements with land owners.
- Identify obstacles and possible solutions (i.e... parking, traffic patterns, where do the patrons come from for retail uses, etc.)
- Does this section of town shut down when courts are out and the town offices are closed? How do we get restaurants to thrive?
-



# **The Economic Development Commission Three Year Plan**

Prepared by Vernon Economic Development Commission and the Economic Development Coordinator. Approved on July 10, 2013 (last updated 5-13-15)

The Economic Development Three Year Plan will provide an outline of steps that need to be taken and questions that need to be answered. This will allow us to plan for tomorrow, 10 years from tomorrow and beyond. Along the way we must properly position ourselves to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

- **Goals for future development-**
  - POCD (see attached list of the Economic Development Commissions priorities)
    - Develop and Promote Vernon's Brand
      - News Letter, Signage, Town Website. **(Short Term)**
    - Enhance Vernon's Gateways
      - Place signage at our gateways that is consistent with our Brand. **(Short Term)**
    - Encourage appropriate development of exits 66 and 67 **(Long Term)**
    - Ensure Utilities meet current and future demands **(Long Term)**
    - Encourage revitalization of Rockville **(Short/ Medium/ Long Term)**
      - Work on the perception of Vernon/ Rockville
        - Community Policing **(Short Term)**
        - Police Sub-Station **(Medium Term)**
        - Cameras/ Call Boxes **(Medium Term)**
        - Positive reinforcement **(Short Term)**
        - Enhance the facades **(Medium Term)**
        - Upgrade our Housing stock **(Long Term)**
        - Support group Clean-up efforts **(Short Term)**
        - Redevelop/Re-tenant Citizens Block **(Short Term)**
  - Zoning changes **(Long Term)**
  - Preapprovals
  - Create an atmosphere that is conducive to Job Creation
- **Business Retention and Expansion program (BR&E) - Attempt to Retain and Grow existing Businesses.**
  - Reach out to at least 5 businesses per month (to see if they need help and let them know the EDC here)
  - Work closely with the DECD to help favorably position Vernon businesses **(Short Term)**
  - Incubator/Entrepreneur space
  - Continue to hold Business Outreach events.
    - Business Recognition Event, Job Fair, Broker/ Business Showcase **(Short Term)**
- **Recruitment**
  - Identify Businesses that fit into our future plans.
  - Take steps to remove obstacles
  - Actively recruit our targeted companies

- **Continue to evaluate and refine this plan to ensure it is on track.**

### **Short Term (12 months):**

-Create Town of Vernon Brand "On The Move" Awareness through signage at all exits and in Rockville Downtown, also see if schools and senior center and rec locations will update signage to include "On The Move", update Town website and mailings with new brand. Offer small signage for businesses to display at their workplace.

-Review Town website, is it clean/clear/business friendly? Does it convey who we are and what we offer?

Partner with State of CT DECD to make sure they know how business friendly we are and what we are can provide to businesses.

-Have a Town of Vernon section at the MCC Job Fair to let people know there are opportunities in Vernon.

-Increase police presence in downtown area, change perception of it being unsafe particularly after dark.

-Work with the RCA and RDA to support Clean-up projects on Union Street with local schools/religious groups etc..

-Continue efforts to redevelop/ re-tenant Citizens Block.

### **Medium Term (1-3 years):**

-Encourage redevelopment of West Main Street Retail Block.

-Address parking and walkability of Rockville Center, can we make it easier to get around, what is an appropriate flow?

### **Long Term (3-10 years):**

-Work with landowners to bring sewer and water to exits 66 and 67.

-Encourage appropriate business development at exits 66 and 67, update zoning to allow a wide-variety of uses.

-Address energy concerns and reliability.