



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022, 7:00 PM

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT
REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING, INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BELOW

PRESENT: In Person: Chairman Sean Kelly
Zoom Attendance: Vice Chairman Donna Resuttek, Regular Members David Hurley and Jim Fay and Alternate Sam Chang

ABSENT: Regular Members Chris Todd and Alternates Bryan Platt and Amos Smith

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): None

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Houlihan said the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) will hold a legislative breakfast at CNC Software in Tolland on March 3, 2022, from 8:30AM to 10:00AM. The breakfast is free to members, and the Chamber will look into providing a remote attendance option. They will also be holding a business showcase on April 5, 2022, at Georgina's Restaurant. There will be a membership fee and non-membership fee to attend.

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Nothing new to report.

3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices

Ms. Houlihan said the 2022 schedule for best practices certification has been changed. The application period will be open from November to February and the decision-making process will be during February and March. The CEDAS Best Practices Awards Presentation will be held in April at a location that will be announced later. Ellington will be applying to be named a Best Practices community.

Ms. Houlihan brought up the topic of Question 32 of the online application for Best Practices, which asks if the community “engages women and minority owned businesses to determine specific needs and direct them to specialized resources.” She indicated that the commission is not engaged in this from an economic development and planning perspective. Chairman Kelly stated that the score for the community would be affected by this on the Best Practices application, however it is something that should be focused on in preparation for the next application period. Ms. Houlihan reported that Question 26 asks if the town “maintains an inventory of available properties.” She recapped past discussion about this and use of the online commercial property marketplace called LoopNet.

Question 25 asks if the commission “has an economic development strategic plan current within the past three years.” Ms. Houlihan stated that the commission does not have a standalone economic development strategic plan, noting after polling surrounding communities in the past a chapter dedicated to economic development and strategies was added to the Plan of Conservation and Development when updated in 2019.

Question 23 asks if the commission “asks applicants to provide feedback on the application process and uses feedback to make process improvements (customer satisfaction survey).” Ms. Houlihan said this is not something that the commission currently does, but a questionnaire could be discussed and added to the application process in the future.

Question 14 asks if the commission “works collaboratively with a diverse group of partners, reflecting the diversity of your community (race, ethnicity, gender, unique perspectives, etc.) that informs inclusive growth and equitable economic development.” Ms. Houlihan said the commission currently does not have a process related to this that focuses on economic development and planning.

The commission fulfills many of the Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices. Ms. Houlihan noted the commission has a mission statement, the town offers online permitting and staff coordinates meetings to review applications recently submitted, ongoing applications and preconstruction applications.

4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Nothing new to report.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

Chairman Kelly reported the construction of Phase II development at the Big Y Express property is going well. Development of the first part, which is the car wash, is nearing completion. Chairman Kelly, Vice Chairman Resutek and Commissioner Hurley stated that restaurant business at JRego’s Gathering Place, 175 West Road was going well.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget & Expenditures update, and Draft FY22/23 Budget.

Chairman Kelly introduced the changes that were made to the budget at last month's meeting. An increase was made to the advertising and part-time services budget while the contracted services budget was reduced. The total budget is \$4,450.

A business strategic plan will be added to the agenda for next month's meeting.

2. Approval of the January 12, 2022 regular meeting minutes.

MOVED (FAY) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 12, 2022 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence:

- a. Gorman + York Advisory Services, Connecticut's Shifting Demographics, The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development, dated December 9, 2021.

Chairman Kelly discussed the shifting demographics and economic development study performed by Gorman + York Advisory Services and noted the report will be maintained on the agenda for discussion at next month's commission meeting.

- b. Ellington, CT Market Analysis May 2018.

Commissioner Chang spoke about the data contained in the CT Market Analysis, May 2018. He noted that – according to the report – much of the demographic of Ellington can be classified as “Old and Newcomers” and that a small population of the town can be classified as “Soccer Moms.” Chairman Kelly said that the town has a higher percentage of apartments than neighboring towns.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (FAY) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk