



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2022, 7:00 PM

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

PRESENT: In-Person: Chairman Sean Kelly and Regular Member Jim Fay
Remote Attendance: Vice Chairman Donna Resutek, Regular Member David Hurley, and Alternate Amos Smith

ABSENT: Regular Member Chris Todd, and Alternates Bryan Platt and Sam Chang

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner (In-Person) and Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk (Remote)

OTHERS

PRESENT: In-Person: David Stavens, Ellington Board of Selectmen Liaison

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

The Tolland County Chamber of Commerce held their annual golf tournament on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron. There were approximately 80 golfers in attendance. The upcoming Business After Hours events will be held on June 21, 2022, at 5PM at Whispering Brook Farms in Tolland and on July 19, 2022, at a location to be determined. On August 20, 2022, the second annual Food Truck & Brew Festival will be held at CT Golf Land.

Ms. Houlihan still serves on the Board of Directors, the Economic Development Commission, and the Executive Committee for the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce.

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

a. Discussion: Invitation to Participate, April 19, 2022, Town-wide Farm Day, Saturday, September 17, 2022, 10AM - 3PM.

A letter was sent out asking farmers to participate in a Town-wide Farm Day set for September 17, 2022, from 10AM – 3PM. Oakridge Dairy and Moser Farm – Frog Hollow Road - confirmed they will participate. Staff will conduct additional outreach to encourage other farm owners to participate.

3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices

a. Notice of award as a 2022 Silver Certified Community in Best Practices in Economic Development and Land Use.

On June 7, 2022, Ellington was awarded the 2022 Silver Certified Community in Best Practices in Economic Development and Land Use. First Selectman Lori Spielman, Town Planner Lisa Houlihan, Chairman Sean Kelly, and Regular Member David Hurley all attended the event at Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue in New Haven. Three municipalities received gold status, eight received silver and one received bronze.

The goal of the commission is to achieve gold status by the next certification period which is in three years.

b. Discussion: Program for Municipal Accreditation List of Potential Action Items

i. Review Draft General Application Review Flowcharts.

Ms. Houlihan introduced draft flowcharts for the Ellington Regulatory Land Use Commission General Application Process. The flowcharts include the different processes for applications when there is a public hearing or no public hearing involved. Commissioner Hurley asked if there was a design review process for certain applicants. Ms. Houlihan answered that there is a design process, however it is not relevant for all applications. Ms. Houlihan will add a disclaimer on the flowchart about the design review process which applies to commercial, industrial, and multi-family developments and some non-residential uses in residential zones.

ii. Customer Satisfaction Survey

Ms. Houlihan indicated the Town of Manchester has a customer satisfaction survey and asked the commission if they would like to implement such a survey for Ellington. The survey inquires patrons about the customer service they received from the Planning and Zoning Commission or the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Houlihan said the survey would be sent to an applicant once they have completed the application process.

Chairman Kelly said the survey would help the town fulfill another best practices criterion.

c. Discussion: Economic Development Considerations/Strategies - Chapter Six Economic Development, Plan of Conservation and Development (2019 - 2029).

Commissioners were encouraged to review chapter six and identify goals and objectives they would like to accomplish.

4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Earthlight Technologies, LLC, sold 88-92 West Road and is moving into a newly built headquarters at 128 West Road. The 2014 Tax Abatement Agreement for 88-92 West Road allowed for a 2,100 sq. ft. addition for offices, retail, and warehouse, and granted 50% reduction in increased assessment for three years. The abatement agreement acknowledges a requirement to operate from the location for 10 years, however the signed agreement only included a recapture clause for the first two years of the agreement. Earthlight Technologies, LLC, sold 88-92 West Road to a new business and the Planning Department received a zoning permit for a change in use for Soapstone Media, Inc., who will use the space as an office for service, sales, and marketing of events. The Tax Abatement Policy was amended in 2021 so that recapture is a standard requirement regardless of agreement terms and 2021 changes also acknowledge the ability to transfer the agreement to a new tenant with proper town approval.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

The Planning and Zoning Commission approved 60, 10ft x 10ft personal storage units at 162 Maple Avenue. The storage units will make up three buildings and include fencing and plantings.

Double M Yard Supply, LLC, which is currently located in front of the new headquarters for Earthlight Technologies, LLC, was approved to relocate to 103 Sadds Mill Road.

Big Y Express, Phase I construction at 140 West Road includes a rear building which will be about 2,300 sq. ft. The tenants of the building will be a window treatment store called The Kellner Store.

A zoning permit was approved for D&D Foods for production of sauce at 408 Somers Road.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget & Expenditures update.

There is \$3,347 left in the commission's budget. Chairman Kelly said some of that would go toward the Town-wide Farm Day event and the rest would be used toward the Shop Ellington event that occurs during the holiday season. Chairman Kelly mentioned that it would be a good idea to advertise the commission's sponsorship of Shop Ellington. The last time signs were made for the event, they were printed by Ellington Printery.

2. Approval of the April 13, 2022 and May 11, 2022 regular meeting minutes.

MOVED (FAY) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE APRIL 13, 2022 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

MOVED (HURLEY) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MAY 11, 2022 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence:

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

This agenda item was tabled until the July meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HURLEY) SECONDED (SMITH) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk