

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
June 15, 2023

Members Present: Brian Banak – Acting Chair, John McGuire, Gayle Demko, Bob Kelly, Jeff Girard

Also Present: Bill Hawkins - Director of Planning and Development, Chad Kuzontkoski – Economic Development Specialist, Colin Moll – First Selectman, Ellie Binns - Recording Secretary

1. Brian Banak called the meeting to order at 8:33 AM.
2. Minutes

The minutes of the April 20, 2023 regular meeting were approved unanimously.

3. Public Input – None
4. Election of Officers

Mr. Banak nominated Gayle Demko as Chairman. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Kelly and unanimously approved by a 5-0-0 vote.

Mr. Banak nominated John McGuire as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Kelly and unanimously approved by a 5-0-0 vote.

5. Business Contact Committee Report

John McGuire reported on the Business Contact Committee noting that he has done a recap on six of the previous businesses that were interviewed and there were four new visits. He will be meeting with Mr. Kuzontkoski to coordinate interviews going forward. He also stated that the survey has been revised and is being used with the interviews. The Commission members discussed the type of business that thrives in Suffield and efforts to market the Town toward those types of businesses to interest them in coming to Suffield.

6. Message Board Signage Discussion

Gayle Demko reported on the progress that has been made in implementing the use of digital signage message boards for municipal use. The Board of Education is in support and she will be going to the Fire Commission to ask for their support. She suggested that the Economic Development Commission (EDC) file an application for a text amendment with the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) to revise the regulations to allow these signs for municipal properties. Mr. Banak made a motion that the EDC be the applicant for a text amendment to the PZC. The motion was seconded by Mr. McGuire and approved by a 5-0-0 vote.

7. Light Industrial Update

Mr. Hawkins reported that a PZC public hearing for a 21,600 SF building at 1300 East Street South has been continued to the June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting to allow the applicant to revise their plans in response to staff comments. Mr. Kuzontkoski coordinated the clearing of paths on the property at 1100 South Street so that the property is accessible to potential buyers. He will also arrange new signage offering the property for sale. ATR Realty met with Town Staff regarding 1140 & 1148 South Street to discuss progress and they have submitted a purchase and sale agreement to the Town Attorney for review.

8. Commercial/Town Center Village District Update

Mr. Hawkins reported that Laureno Enterprises has been repairing the roof and siding on a 10,000 SF warehouse building on their Ff Tyler Place property. In other related topics, Mr. Hawkins noted that the Local Transportation Capital Improvements Program (LOTICIP) grant application for \$1.2M in funding to repave the Windsor Locks Canal Trail and an application for sidewalks between Wisteria Lane and Kent Avenue to fill in a gap have been approved by CRCOG.

The Chmiel Farm at 1449 Hill Street was approved at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Town Meeting to purchase the development rights of the property. The Overhill Drive open space parcels are proceeding through the CT DOT process and is expected to close this year. Mr. Hawkins noted that the first house in the Breezy Way Farm six lot subdivision is under construction. MJL Realty Investments, LLC has purchased the development rights for phase II of the Eastwoods Active Adult Development and have met with staff to discuss the approval process.

9. Staff Report

Economic Development Specialist, Chad Kuzontkoski reported on the list of projects he has completed or is working on including updating the Town Website to make it more useable and accessible for local businesses. He has been updating the business list as well as the Farm Guide brochure, the Farm Passport, and meeting with local businesses to introduce himself and offer assistance. He made suggestions to the Commission about other projects he would like to pursue such as a marketing video, a Small Business promotion event, and the creation of a social media presence for the EDC. He will be creating a list of possible projects for the tax increment financing fund and the best ways to utilize programs to market businesses in Town.

10. Adjournment

With nothing further to come before the Commission, Mr. McGuire moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 AM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Banak and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Binns, Recording Secretary