



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
www.ellington-ct.gov

TEL. (860) 870-3120

TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE

FAX (860) 870-3122

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2024, 7:00 PM

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

I. CALL TO ORDER:

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items):

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs
 - a. Memo to the Board of Selectmen, dated June 4, 2024, referring the Commission's recommendation from May 8, 2024, to consider establishing a new ordinance pursuant to CGS Section 12-81m - Municipal option to abate up to fifty per cent of property taxes of dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable, nursery, nontraditional or tobacco farm or commercial lobstering business operated on maritime heritage land.
2. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce
3. Agricultural Initiatives
4. CEDAS Best Practices – Customer Service Satisfaction Survey Results
5. Report: Current Economic Activity

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget & Expenditures Update.
 - a. Revised FY 2024-2025 budget due to reductions approved by the Board of Finance during budget deliberations on June 3, 2024.
2. Approval of the May 8, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.
3. Correspondence/Discussion:
 - a. 2024 Ellington Town Profile from AdvanceCT

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Next regular meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2024.

Instructions to attend meeting remotely via Zoom Meeting listed below. The agenda is posted on the Town of Ellington webpage (www.ellington-ct.gov) under Agenda & Minutes, Economic Development Commission.

Join Zoom Meeting via link:

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88515618808>

Meeting ID: 885 1561 8808

Passcode: 436694

Join Zoom Meeting by phone:

1-646-558-8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 885 1561 8808

Passcode: 436694

Town of Ellington Planning Department



55 Main Street, PO Box 187, Ellington, CT 06029/Phone: 860-870-3120/ Email: lhoulihan@ellington-ct.gov

DATE: June 4, 2024

TO: Board of Selectmen
cc: Economic Development Commission Chairman, S. Kelly
Town Assessor, J. Rainaldi
Oakridge Dairy, LLC, S. Bahler,

FROM: Lisa M. Houlihan, AICP, Town Planner, on behalf of the Economic Development Commission

SUBJECT: Potential new abatement ordinance pursuant to CGS Section 12-81m - Municipal option to abate up to fifty per cent of property taxes of dairy farm, fruit orchard, vegetable, nursery, nontraditional or tobacco farm or commercial lobstering business operated on maritime heritage land.

After several months of deliberations including review of enabling statute, a model ordinance from the Connecticut Farm Bureau (CFB), review of similar ordinances from other Connecticut municipalities, and analysis of assessment implications, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) passed the following motion on May 8, 2024.

MOVED (KELLY) SECONDED (SWANSON) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE AS MODIFIED THE DRAFT MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO CGS §12-81M TO ALLOW ABATEMENT FOR 50% OF PROPERTY TAX FOR ELIGIBLE FARMING OPERATIONS AND REFER TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

Attached is a copy of the information analyzed by the EDC as referenced in the opening paragraph of this memo. Please consider referring the proposal to the Board's Ordinance Committee for deliberation.

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024

From Date: 7/1/2023 To Date: 5/31/2024

Account Mask: ?????00220???????

Account Type: All

Print Detail Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Budget Balance

Account Number / Description

Budget Range To Date

YTD

Balance Encumbrance % Remaining Bud

1000.02.00220.10.50103	\$1,600.00	\$910.00	\$910.00	\$690.00	\$0.00	\$690.00	43.13%
Part Time--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60221	\$1,000.00	(\$125.00)	(\$125.00)	\$1,125.00	\$0.00	\$1,125.00	112.50%
Advertising Printing--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60222	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Dues & Subscriptions--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60223	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Travel--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60232	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Postage--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60233	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Education--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60234	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	100.00%
Professional Development--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.20.60250	\$1,500.00	\$313.00	\$313.00	\$1,187.00	\$0.00	\$1,187.00	79.13%
Contracted Services--Econ Devet Commission--							
1000.02.00220.30.60341	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Office Supplies--Econ Devet Commission--							
Fund: 1000	\$4,950.00	\$1,848.00	\$1,848.00	\$3,102.00	\$0.00	\$3,102.00	

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024 From Date: 7/1/2023 To Date: 5/31/2024

Account Mask: ??????00220???????

Account Type: All

Print Detail Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Include Inactive Accounts

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Budget Balance

Account Number / Description

Budget Range To Date

YTD

Balance

Encumbrance

% Remaining Bud

Grand Total:

\$4,950.00

\$1,848.00

\$3,102.00

\$0.00

\$3,102.00

End of Report

**TOWN OF ELLINGTON
BUDGET REQUEST
220 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Object No.	Description & Explanation(s)	FISCAL YEAR 2024-25	
		<u>FY 2023-24</u> <u>Revised</u>	<u>FY 2024-25</u>
50103	<u>PART TIME PAYROLL</u>	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600
	Recording Secretary services for monthly meetings (12 @ \$130)		
	TOTAL PAYROLL	<u>\$ 1,600</u>	<u>\$ 1,600</u>
60221	<u>ADVERTISING-PRINTING-FORMS</u>	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
	Commissioner name plates, business cards, workshop flyers, business surveys, shop local campaign advertisements, and other business event supplies		
60222	<u>DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS</u>	\$ 750	\$ 250
	CT Economic Development Association - CEDAS (\$300) Tolland County Chamber of Commerce (\$430). *During budget deliberations on 6/3/24, account reduced by \$500		
60234	<u>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</u>	\$ 100	\$ 100
	Seminars for commission members		
60250	<u>CONTRACTED SERVICES</u>	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
	Economic development strategies, marketing/branding, recognition and other business programs		
	TOTAL OFFICE BUDGET	<u>\$ 3,350</u>	<u>\$ 2,850</u>
	DEPARTMENT TOTAL	<u>\$ 4,950</u>	<u>\$ 4,450</u>



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024, 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, Vice Chairman Donna Resutek, Regular Member Cynthia Soto, and Alternate Michael Swanson (arrived at 7:10 PM); Via Zoom: Chris Todd

ABSENT: Regular Member David Hurley, and Alternates Amos Smith and Sam Chang

STAFF

PRESENT: Via Zoom: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner; In Person: Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk

OTHERS

PRESENT: In Person: John Rainaldi, Town Assessor

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

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

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

- a. Review of Draft Ordinance Pursuant to CGS §12-81m - Municipal Option to Abate up to 50% of Property Tax for Farming Operations.

Chairman Kelly said the draft tax abatement policy captures the requirements the commission has laid out in past discussions to identify the farms that are eligible. The draft policy states that a farm must have \$15,000 in gross sales or incurred expenses and a minimum of 20 cumulative acres of farmland.

The last sentence of Section 4b of the draft abatement policy states "An eligible farm shall cumulatively include a minimum of twenty (20) acres of farmland upon which an individual entity owns and is doing business as an eligible farm, otherwise such abatement application shall be denied." Vice Chairman Resutek questioned the usage of the term "individual entity", asking if that meant anybody can own the land. Commissioner Todd said "individual entity" is meant to identify that the business or the individual landowner can own the abated land, and Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, added that the parameters the commission intended to set were not for leased land. Commissioner Todd suggested the sentence be rewritten to say, "an eligible farm shall own", and Lisa suggested it say, "An eligible farm shall own cumulatively a minimum of 20 acres of farmland." Commissioner Todd recommended the sentence say, "An eligible farm shall own a minimum of 20 cumulative acres of farmland and is doing business as an eligible farm". The commission indicated support for this revision.

Chairman Kelly indicated that even though the commission got support from First Selectman Lori Spielman on the new abatement program, he believed it would face some tough questions from the Board of Selectmen on June 10, 2024. Commissioner Todd recommended including fiscal years 2022 and 2023 and projected fiscal year 2024 with the abatement in effect, adding that selectmen will see increased tax revenue even with the new policy.

Lisa outlined the process for getting the ordinance approved; after it is presented to the Board of Selectmen, they could say that they have additional questions or send it to their Ordinance Committee. The Ordinance Committee would analyze it further before sending it back to the Board of Selectmen for approval. If they are in favor, then the new policy would be voted upon at a town meeting.

Commissioner Swanson asked why the abatement program does not include beef cattle. Chairman Kelly said the abatement is based on the state statute, which does not include beef farms. If a farmer in town owned a beef farm and wanted an abatement, the town would not be able to grant it. If the state statute was changed, then the abatement program could be amended.

Commissioner Todd said ever since he has been a member of the Economic Development Commission, the town has been in pursuit of economic development and growth while maintaining the town's rural character, and that this policy aligns closely with that vision. Commissioner Swanson asked if an eligible farm sells a piece of land, does it get charged back at true assessed value. John Rainaldi, Town Assessor, said the ordinance doesn't address that issue explicitly, but with Public Act 490 land, the owner would file a new application based on the land that's left. Chairman Kelly said if the cumulative amount of land drops below 20 acres after the sale, then the farm automatically becomes ineligible for the abatement and subject to recapture, and Commissioner Todd added that if the farm still meets the land criteria after the sale, then nothing changes. Lisa said she believed the current language is firm the way it is, and Vice Chairman Resutek pointed out that the Town Assessor would have to be notified of the sale of any property, which would trigger a reassessment.

Chairman Kelly suggested adding the following language to address the issue: "Upon sale of the property, or upon sale of a portion of the property or cessation of eligible farming operations, the property owner must pay to the town a percentage of the original amount of the taxes abated on the applicable land pursuant to the following schedule." Lisa was unsure if the language was needed, and Vice Chairman Resutek believed Section 5 would resolve the potential issue. The commission agreed to leave the language as-is.

MOVED (KELLY) SECONDED (SWANSON) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE AS MODIFIED THE DRAFT MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO CGS §12-81M TO ALLOW ABATEMENT FOR 50% OF PROPERTY TAX FOR ELIGIBLE FARMING OPERATIONS AND REFER TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.

2. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Nothing new to report.

3. Agricultural Initiatives

The abatement that the commission passed for Oakridge Dairy, LLC's bottling plant is going before the Board of Selectmen on May 13, 2024.

4. CEDAS Best Practices – Customer Service Satisfaction Survey Results

Nothing new to report.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

Construction continues at the Big Y Plaza. The businesses that are confirmed for that location are Starbucks and Hartford Healthcare GoHealth. Commissioner Swanson said he heard Select Physical Therapy may open a location there.

Holiday Pizza has opened their new location at 117 West Road and there is a Mexican restaurant moving into their old location on Main Street.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget & Expenditures Update.

Nothing new to report.

2. Approval of the April 10, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (TODD) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE APRIL 10, 2024, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence/Discussion:

a. The Patch article - Ellington Dairy Farm Getting Long-Term Climate Resiliency Grant, dated April 17, 2024.

There was an article in the Ellington/Somers Patch about Oakridge Dairy, LLC, receiving a grant to put towards using less energy and capturing more organic energy.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (SWANSON) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk

Ellington, Connecticut

Labor Force

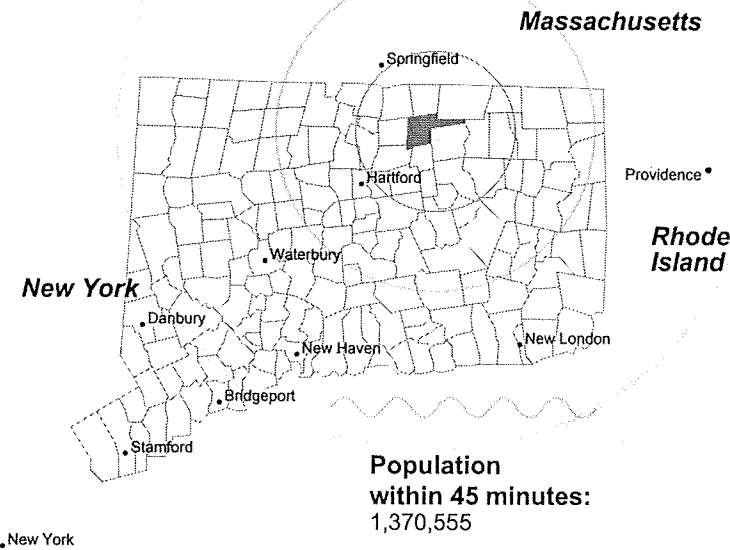
CT Department of Labor, 2023

	Ellington	State
Employed	9,410	1,822,090
Unemployed	306	71,113

Unemployment Rate	3 4%
Self-Employment Rate*	8 10%

*ACS, 2018-2022

Catchment Areas of 15mi, 30mi, and 60mi



Fiscal Indicators

CT Office of Policy and Management, State FY 2020-21

Municipal Revenue

Total Revenue	\$66,797,743
Property Tax Revenue	\$47,391,833
<i>per capita</i>	\$2,835
<i>per capita, as % of state avg.</i>	88%
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$17,704,158
Revenue to Expenditure Ratio	101%

Municipal Expenditure

Total Expenditure	\$66,272,324
Educational	\$46,478,424
Other	\$19,793,900

Grand List

Equalized Net Grand List	\$2,130,763,585
<i>per capita</i>	\$128,128
<i>per capita, as % of state avg.</i>	79%
Commercial/Industrial Share of Net Grand List	9%
Actual Mill Rate	32.60
Equalized Mill Rate	22.13

Municipal Debt

Moody's Rating (2023)	Aa3
S&P Rating (2023)	AA
Total Indebtedness	\$15,874,588
<i>per capita</i>	\$955
<i>per capita, as % of state avg.</i>	35%
<i>as percent of expenditures</i>	24%
Annual Debt Service	\$2,828,798
<i>as % of expenditures</i>	4%

Access

ACS, 2018-2022

	Ellington	State
Mean Commute Time *	28 min	26 min
No Access to a Car	2 9%	
No Internet Access	3 8%	

Commute Mode

Public Transport	1 4%
Walking or Cycling	1 3%
Driving	80 88%
Working From Home *	11 13%

Public Transit

CT <i>transit</i> Service	-
Other Public Bus Operations	-
Train Service	-

* 5 year estimates include pre-pandemic data



Search AdvanceCT's **SiteFinder**, Connecticut's most comprehensive online database of available commercial properties. advancect.org/site-selection/ct-sitefinder

About Town Profiles

The Connecticut Town Profiles are two-page reports of demographic and economic information for each of Connecticut's 169 municipalities. Reports for data are available from profiles.ctdata.org

Feedback is welcome, and should be directed to info@ctdata.org

These Profiles can be used free of charge by external organizations, as long as *AdvanceCT* and *CTData Collaborative* are cited. No representation or warranties, expressed or implied, are given regarding the accuracy of this information.

Ellington, Connecticut

General

ACS, 2018–2022	Ellington	State
Current Population	16,558	3,611,317
Land Area <i>mi</i> ²	34	4,842
Population Density <i>people per mi</i> ²	486	746
Number of Households	6,477	1,409,807
Median Age	40	41
Median Household Income	\$124,495	\$90,213
Poverty Rate	6%	10%

Economy

Top Industries

Lightcast, 2022 (2 and 3 digit NAICS)	Jobs	Share of Industry
1 Government	693	68%
Local Government		
2 Construction	607	79%
Specialty Trade Contractors		
3 Retail Trade	572	43%
Food and Beverage Stores		
4 Manufacturing	553	26%
Machinery Mfg		
6 Health Care and Social Assistance	444	75%
Social Assistance		
Total Jobs, All Industries	4,297	

SOTS Business Registrations

Secretary of the State, March 2024

New Business Registrations by Year

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total	76	100	122	120	144

Total Active Businesses 1,025

Key Employers

Data from Municipalities, 2024

- Oakridge Dairy
- Country Pure Foods
- Dymotek
- Earthlight
- Barn Yard/Great Country Garages

Demographics

ACS, 2018–2022

Age Distribution

Age Group	Ellington	State
Under 10	1,905 (12%)	11%
10 to 19	2,063 (12%)	13%
20 to 29	1,859 (11%)	13%
30 to 39	2,446 (15%)	13%
40 to 49	1,833 (11%)	12%
50 to 59	2,353 (14%)	14%
60 to 69	2,003 (12%)	13%
70 to 79	1,322 (8%)	7%
80 and over	774 (5%)	4%

Race and Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Ellington	State
Asian	5%	5%
Black	4%	10%
Hispanic or Latino/a	6%	17%
White	81%	64%
Other	3%	4%

Hispanic includes those of any race. Remaining racial groups include only non-hispanic. Other includes American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, two or more races.

Language Spoken at Home

Language	Ellington	State
English	3 (12%)	77 (91%)
Spanish		

Educational Attainment

Education Level	Ellington	State
High School Diploma Only	24 (26%)	24 (26%)
Associate Degree	8 (10%)	8 (10%)
Bachelor's Degree	23 (28%)	23 (28%)
Master's Degree or Higher	19 (22%)	19 (22%)

Housing

ACS, 2018–2022

	Ellington	State
Median Home Value	\$341,600	\$323,700
Median Rent	\$1,701	\$1,374
Housing Units	6,894	1,531,332

	Ellington	State
Owner-Occupied	66 (70%)	66 (70%)
Detached or Semi-Detached	65 (76%)	65 (76%)
Vacant	6 (8%)	6 (8%)

Schools

CT Department of Education, 2023-24

School Districts

School District	Available Grades	Total Enrollment	Pre-K Enrollment	4-Year Grad Rate (2021-22)
Ellington School District	PK-12	2,547	83	96%
Statewide	-	512,652	19,530	89%

Smarter Balanced Assessments

Met or Exceeded Expectations, 2022-23

School District	Math	ELA
Ellington School District	68%	68%
Statewide	42%	48%