

**Town of Trumbull**  
**Economic and Community Development Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 6, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**\*Please note meeting time change**  
**Trumbull Town Hall Long Hill Conference Room**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic & Community Development Commission of the Town of Trumbull was held at Trumbull Town Hall Long Hill Conference Room on February 6, 2024.

**Attendance**

Members Present:     Beryl Kaufman (Chairman)  
                              Marshall Marcus (Vice Chairman)  
                              Leyla Fayyaz  
                              Fred Petrossi  
                              Massimo Mallozzi  
                              Alissa Hall  
                              Justin Scheuble

Members Absent:    Evelyn Zamarly (Secretary)  
                              Terrence Griffiths

Also Present:        Rina Bakalar – Director of Economic & Community Development  
                              Gia Mentillo – Economic & Community Development Clerk  
                              Trumbull Community Television

Chairman Kaufman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of December 5, 2023, Minutes**

A motion to approve the December 5, 2023, minutes was made by Commissioner Mallozzi and seconded by Commissioner Petrossi. The motion carried unanimously. *Commissioner Scheuble abstained.*

**Chairman's Report**

The Chairman welcomed Justin Scheuble as a new member of the Commission, and Commissioner Scheuble introduced himself. The Commission is now at full membership.

A motion to have the Commission attend the March 5<sup>th</sup> Trumbull Mall Area Land Use & Market Feasibility Study community meeting in leu of their regularly scheduled meeting was made by Vice Chairman Marcus and seconded by Commissioner Scheuble. The motion carried unanimously. The Director reviewed general topics for the March 5<sup>th</sup> community meeting.

**Review of Commission Goals**

The Commission reviewed their 2023 goals with the intent to set and vote on 2024 goals at their next regular meeting. Vice Chairman Marcus requested that item 3C on page one of the goals document be revised to say “Encourage attendance...” The Director requested “Adopt-A-Ramp Program” be added to the “Director Requests” portion of the Commission goals. This would primarily entail garnering business interest in sponsorship of an adopt-a-ramp location. The Director gave an overview of how the program works.

## **Director’s Report**

### **Business Update:**

There were 421 new business registrations in Trumbull in 2022. This number has nearly doubled in the past 6 to 7 years and is the highest it has been in quite some time. Though this is not a metric of brick-and-mortar businesses, it is indicative of business activity in Town. Many home-based businesses that start in Trumbull later expand locally. About 13% of Trumbull residents are self-employed.

The storage facility planned for Quarry Road will likely break ground this Spring. Currently, 6 Cambridge Drive is still under contract and appears to be proceeding with redevelopment of the property. The site plan for the Trumbull Center project is expected to be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission in the coming months. WPCA approved the application in January with conditions.

The Director thanked the Commission for their consistent attendance at ribbon cutting events. There are several more ribbon cutting events pending scheduling. The events for Trumbull Academy of Karate (January 20<sup>th</sup>) and TLC Homecare (January 27<sup>th</sup>) went well and received good coverage. The Director hopes to schedule a ribbon cutting for March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00a.m. for Integrated Dermatology Group which just moved to 7 Cambridge Drive from Bridgeport. There are several new businesses at this location, all of which have voiced concerns for the blighted state of 6 Cambridge Drive. Natural Poke Bowl is working to fit out its space at 8 Quality Street.

### **Events**

The Economic and Community Development Department will be hosting the Fairfield County Commercial Broker Network at the Trumbull Mall for their February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting (12:00 - 1:30p.m.). This will serve as an opportunity to share findings from the Trumbull Mall Area Market Feasibility and Land Use Study with the broker community. Commissioners were invited to attend the event. Vice Chairman Marcus requested that a member of GBT be invited to the event as well. The Director provided an overview of recent public transit service expansions to the area.

### **Community Development Update:**

The Director is working with a coalition of colleagues, led by CT Main Street, to identify legislative priorities impacting CT Main Streets. The group is focused on disincentivizing long term vacancies and blight on Main Street. The CT Main Street Caucus will present these ideas at the upcoming legislative session. Commissioners looking for more information were encouraged to reach out to the Director. CT Main Street Center is hosting a summit entitled “Addressing Blight and Vacancy on Main Street” on March 14<sup>th</sup> that will further speak to this topic.

Per the Chairman's request, the Director provided an update on the Main Street Dollars Program which ended on January 31<sup>st</sup>. The analysis of the third round of the program will be completed in the coming months as the six participating businesses report back to the department. This year's program had the highest rate of distribution thus far. Commissioner Fayyaz assisted with the program by taking footage of the participating businesses and patrons to help promote the program. The Vice Chairman suggested using a different method for the program in the future as opposed to the current dollar for dollar reimbursement approach. The Director informed it is key to keep the program simple to implement for businesses as it can be challenging to gather participants, especially when there is additional work created for them.

#### Planning Update:

The Commission will hear more on the ongoing Trumbull Mall Area Market Feasibility and Land Use Study during the March 5<sup>th</sup> community meeting.

#### Grant Update:

The Director is working with Matt Fulda of MetroCOG to apply for LOTCIP funding to complete the sidewalk connection down Whitney Avenue to the Pequonnock River Trail. She is also working to apply for a historic documents grant that is due in April. Though there is a funding proposal pending for the Trumbull Veterans and First Responder Center in the federal budget, the Director has resubmitted the senate bond request for the remaining project funding for 2024. If denied at the federal level, this allows the State to consider allocating additional funds for the project. The Director also intends to re-submit an application for a Safe Street For All grant for improvements to the Trumbull Center corridor in April.

Commissioner Fayyaz suggested including information on utilizing AI in the workforce at the next business resource event. The Director asked the Commission for help finding an expert to speak on the topic and asked that they start thinking about a keynote speaker for the annual Business Appreciation Breakfast. The Commission hopes to bring back the business awards as a separate event this year and considered partnering with the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce to do so. The Commission discussed concerns for finding a space large enough to host a job fair in 2024. The corridor at the Hawley Lane Mall is being considered. Commissioner Hall offered her assistance for the job fair.

#### **Sustainable Trumbull Update**

A motion to remove "Sustainable Trumbull Update" as a standing agenda item was made by Vice Chairman Marcus and seconded by Commissioner Scheuble. The motion carried unanimously. The Vice Chairman stated that the Sustainable Trumbull Team and their efforts are not the purview of the Economic and Community Development Commission and, therefore, the Commission does not need monthly updates regarding the group. Per Commissioner Fayyaz's request, it was clarified that the Commission originally became involved with Sustainable Trumbull when they group first formed to help them get established and provide input on key initiatives. The Commission recognized that there may be times that their efforts overlap with those of the Sustainable Trumbull Team and decided to request an annual or as-needed update from the group.

#### **BRBC Update**

Commissioner Petrossi stated both the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce and BRBC are interested in learning more about the Trumbull Mall Area Land Use & Market Feasibility Study and are grateful for the many ribbon cutting events Trumbull has organized recently.

Commissioner Fayyaz informed that KAR Pilates has expanded their weekly class schedule to meet growing demand.

### **Opportunity for Community Input**

There were no members of the public present during the meeting.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:53 p.m. by Vice Chairman Marcus and seconded by Commissioner Mallozzi. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gia Mentillo  
ECDC Clerk

Cc: Rob Librandi