

Town of Trumbull
Economic and Community Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting – Zoom Videoconferencing

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic & Community Development Commission of the Town of Trumbull was held via videoconferencing on February 7, 2023.

Attendance

Members Present: Beryl Kaufman (Chairman)
Karen DelVecchio (Vice Chairman)
Evelyn Zamary (Secretary)
Marshall Marcus
Fred Petrossi
Massimo Mallozzi
Terrence Griffiths

Members Absent: Ralph Sather

Also Present: Rina Bakalar – Director of Economic & Community Development
William Chin – Director of Information Technology
Gia Mentillo – Economic & Community Development Clerk
Dan Onofrio – Bridgeport Regional Business Council

Chairman Kaufman called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of January 3, 2023 Minutes

A motion to approve the January 3, 2023 minutes was made by Commissioner Zamary and seconded by Commissioner Marcus. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman’s Report

Commission Goals:

Chairman Kaufman reviewed the proposed Commissioner goals for 2023, highlighting the changes from the previous year.

A motion to accept the 2023 ECDC goals was made by Vice Chairman DelVecchio and seconded by Commissioner Petrossi.

The Chairman shared positive feedback on her recent visit to Fryborg, newly opened in the Long Hill area (10 Broadway), voicing enthusiasm for their excellent food. Director Bakalar thanked Commissioner Marcus for his relationship with SICILEats and insights regarding their delivery program.

Director's Report

Business Update:

GOLFTEC has opened in the Long Hill plaza (6540 Main Street), and Bare Skin & Wax will open in the coming weeks. The Director hopes to conduct a ribbon cutting ceremony for both businesses. Though Premier Martial Arts recently closed, there is significant interest in the space from other businesses.

The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) recently approved apartment space above Abi's Falafel (10 Broadway); however, current plans for a med spa will keep the use business commercial for the time being.

Director Bakalar intends to conduct a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new manufacturer who has opened a new location at 120 Corporate Drive.

There are two lease agreements pending at Hawley Lane Mall, both of which are unique businesses new to Trumbull. TJ's Discount Wine & Liquor will be expanding its space into the area previously occupied by Payless. The Hawley Lane Mall will be over 95% leased at that point.

Commissioner Marcus suggested Xperiment Virtual Reality consider doing away with its "Open" sign as inconsistent use can cause confusion for customers.

Community Development Update:

Per State mandate, Trumbull is working to establish an Affordable Housing Plan. To assist in this effort, the Town has engaged Planimetrics. A community survey on affordable housing is under development and will be announced in the coming week. Additionally, there will be public meetings held on March 22nd and May 3rd which will afford opportunities for community input as well as education. None of these efforts are a result of or tied to any affordable housing development project in Town, past, present or future.

Planning Update:

The site plan application for the Gateway Commons project will be heard before the PZC on February 15th at 7:00pm.

The Town has gone to contract with Stantec for the Trumbull Mall Area Market Feasibility and Land Use Study. A timeline of deliverables associated with the Scope of Work for the study has been established, and meetings pertaining to the effort commence on February 9th. The new mall owners are committed to being a part of this process. The Director noted that she is working to obtain an intern who can assist in the analysis of mall related crime data.

Grant Update:

The Economic and Community Development (ECD) Department has taken on a grant writing consultant to expand the Town's capacity to act on funding opportunities. Director Bakalar and he are currently working on an opportunity to garner funds for EMS.

Several funding opportunities have become available. The Director hopes to work with Mary Ellen Lemay, of the Sustainable Trumbull Team, to apply for funding for the Thousand Trees for Trumbull initiative for the Long Hill Green area.

Event Update:

The ECD Department is collaborating with several local entities to organize a cyber-security event at Kyber Security (75 Merritt Blvd) the morning of April 27th. Director Bakalar thanked those commissioners who have assisted in the event planning and asked the Commission to help grow awareness for the event as it will be of great value to many regional businesses. Commissioner Mallozzi stated the sub-committee, charged with creating cyber security content for the event, had a successful first meeting with much progress made. Commissioner Petrossi stated that the local chambers of commerce are excited to attend the event which they see as an opportunity to grow their network and foster partnerships.

This spring, the Director also intends to host a virtual Town Hall style meeting regarding resources for small businesses. She hopes to conduct the event in partnership with regional organizations such as WBDC, BRBC, MetroCOG, CT DECD, and UI who offer varying opportunities for local small businesses.

There are also several annual events that will occur this year: the Business Appreciation Breakfast, Trumbull Restaurant Week, and two Fairfield County Commercial Broker gatherings.

Vice Chairman DeVecchio shared that the State recently launched a national database, CONNEX Connecticut, to connect all U.S. manufacturers and suppliers through a single, accurate, searchable online platform.

Sustainable Trumbull Team Update

Chairman Kaufman asked that the Commission refer to the January 10, 2023 Sustainable Trumbull Team minutes for an update. She also asked that members become familiar with the Scope of Work for the Trumbull Mall Area Market Feasibility and Land Use Study.

BRBC Update

Commissioner Petrossi, Chair of Trumbull Chamber of Commerce (TCC), announced that the TCC will be hosting a business after hours networking event at Emma's (942 White Plains Road) on Thursday, February 23rd from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. He asked that those who are interested register on the TCC website, noting this to be a great opportunity to support local entrepreneurs.

Opportunity for Community Input

There were no members of the public present.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:49p.m. by Vice Chairman DelVecchio and seconded by Commissioner Mallozzi. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gia Mentillo
ECDC Clerk

Cc: Rob Librandi
Brian Fitzgerald