

Town of Trumbull
Economic and Community Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2022 – 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 March 1, 2022.

Attendance

Members Present: Beryl Kaufman (Chairman)
Evelyn Zamary (Secretary)
Marshall Marcus
Shelby LeVino
Ralph Sather
Justin Scheuble

Members Absent: Karen DelVecchio (Vice Chairman)

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of February 8, 2022 Minutes

A motion to approve the February 8, 2022 minutes was made by Commissioner Zamary and seconded by Commissioner Marcus. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Revised January 4, 2022 Minutes

A motion to approve the Revised January 4, 2022 minutes was made by Commissioner Marcus and seconded by Commissioner Zamary. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kaufman informed that Commissioner LeVino would no longer be able to regularly attend the Sustainable Trumbull Team meetings as a liaison for the Commission, noting that she asked Commissioner Sather to fill the roll.

Commissioner Sather stated that he would be happy to fill the position if no other commissioners are interested in doing so. He stated that he would prefer to leave the position to another commissioner as he is out of the state for the entirety of the summer and unable to attend those meetings.

Commissioner LeVino informed that the Sustainable Trumbull Team is an action-oriented group heavily involved with the Town and community engagement efforts. Director Bakalar informed that she is currently working closely with the Sustainable Trumbull Team on electric charging infrastructure on for private property locations and the sustainability resource section of the Business Resource Center webpage.

Director's Report

Business Update:

Director Bakalar informed that F&F Mechanical will be moving their Stamford facilities to 140 Corporate Drive in Trumbull, filling 19,000 square feet of vacant space, with hopes of being fulling operational by this summer. Another new addition to the Trumbull Corporate Park is Studio 35, owned by Trumbull resident Eric Van Stone for which there will be a ribbon cutting event established. The Director noted efforts to connect the business with others throughout town whom she felt could benefit from his facility.

Ms. Bakalar stated that Jiagantic Studios of Shelton is looking to curate an index of potential filming locations for various types of media productions, adding that she is working to connect them with both businesses and residents throughout Trumbull. She noted that a key staff member of the company recently moved into Woodside Trumbull, offering a myriad of compliments for the facility, and is looking forward to engaging the community.

Planning and Community Development Update:

The Director informed that the property owners of 7180 and 7192 Main Street (7182 Main Street LLC & 7192 Main Street LLC) received approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) on February 16th for a text amendment to the BC Zone regulations for the area. The owners will be working closely with both the Town of Trumbull and Monroe to complete a site plan to be presented to PZC at a later date.

Furthermore, the Special Permit / Site Plan application for 49 Daniels Farms Road for the adaptive reuse and preservation of historic structures on-site to form a multifamily residential community with 11 one-bedroom apartment units in two buildings and one single-family home was approved at the February PZC meeting. Director Bakalar praised the presentation of the application and offered compliments to the presenter who was highly professional, well-versed on the topic, and eloquent in her demonstration.

Commissioner Sather voiced concerns regarding the traffic implications of the various projects occurring in or around Trumbull Center and questioned if there has been any inquiry into the holistic, long-term impact to the area. Director Bakalar informed that each project is required to conduct a traffic study and include the subsequent traffic report with their Special Permit / Site

Plan applications to PZC. She also cited two (2) instances where there has been a more holistic analysis of the area: the upcoming Trumbull Center Corridor Study (to be presented to PZC on March 16th) and the previous Route 25 and Route 111 Study. Commissioner Marcus informed that PZC is obligated to consider each application on an individual basis and is prohibited from taking holistic look at the area unless the Town establishes a prevailing regulation or initiative.

Furthermore, the CT DOT recently approved the traffic signal improvements and changes to the Pequonnock River Trail crossing on Route 111 near the Fitness Edge Plaza for which the advertisement for the notice to bid is imminent. Commissioner LeVino asked if work on the light is still projected to commence in summer of 2022. Director Bakalar informed that that was yet to be determined as there are ongoing supply chain issues but noted that the project will be a major safety and functionality improvement to the area.

Event Update:

The Director informed the Commission of several upcoming events. There are ribbon cutting events scheduled for Jeff Works at the Hawley Lane Mall on March 16th at 3:00pm and the Next Chapter Bookstore on March 23rd at 10:00am (though the facility will have a soft opening on March 7th). There will also be a virtual staffing resource event on March 31st at 1:00pm for local businesses, for which a planning team has been established. Director Bakalar invited ECDC members to join said meeting and requested that Dan Onofrio help to spread awareness for the event. There are also ongoing planning efforts to conduct a home-based business event in the Jeff Works space for May of this year.

There was a recent article in both the CT Post and Trumbull Times on the home based business Pure by Shasha which the Director stated to be an excellent example of how home based businesses can be a vital part of our community.

Chairman Kaufman asked if the Town maintains a list of home based business. Commissioner Marcus informed that the Tax Collector's office may have some information on home based businesses. Ms. Bakalar confirmed that she develops her list from the Trade Certificates that are filed for these businesses.

Grant Update

Director Bakalar stated that there is a significant increase in grant opportunities to come, thanking George Estrada and his staff for their ongoing efforts to identify needs within the town as well as the BRBC and METROCOG for their support.

The Director informed that the Town is still working through the contracting process for the upcoming mall planning study though she is hopeful it will go out to bid in the coming weeks. She and First Selectman Tesoro met with AdvanceCT, whom the Governor has charged with business recruitment and retention for the State, in an effort to leverage their resources and know-how for the study.

Dan Onofrio thanked the Commission for having him and introduced himself as the president of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BRBC). He informed that he and the BRBC are keeping a close eye on goings on at the State and local levels in an effort to garner feedback and

better inform their efforts to support regional businesses. Additionally, he stated that the BRBC is heavily focused on the manufacturing sector and workforce development at the time being, working closely with the State of CT and Office of Workforce Strategy. He noted that the Governor's office has put out a request for organizations like BRBC to work to identify an industry sector that powers the region.

Opportunity for Community Input

There was no public comment made.

Final Note

Commissioner Marcus asked for an update on efforts to re-occupy the space previous leased by Bianco Rosso. Director Bakalar stated that there have been inquiries from several parties but no one is currently in the process of leasing the building.

The Commission was informed that they have the opportunity to conduct in-person meetings again. Chairman Kaufman asked the Commission for their preference. Commissioners Scheuble and Sather voiced support for an in-person meeting. Bill Chin clarified that the Town does not have the ability to conduct a proper hybrid meeting at this time.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:04p.m. by Commissioner LeVino and seconded by Commissioner Marcus. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gia Mentillo
ECDC Clerk

Cc: Rob Librandi
Doug Wenz