

Town of Trumbull
Economic and Community Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 3, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.
Trumbull Town Hall – Long Hill Room

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Economic & Community Development Commission of the Town of Trumbull was held at Trumbull Town Hall in the Long Hill Room on May 3, 2022.

Attendance

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

Members Present
via Conference Call: Evelyn Zamary (Secretary)

Members Absent: Karen DelVecchio (Vice Chairman)

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 7:01 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of April 5, 2022 Minutes

A motion to approve the April 5, 2022 minutes was made by Commissioner Marcus and seconded by Commissioner Scheuble. The motion carried unanimously. *Commissioner LeVino abstained as he was not present for the meeting.*

Chairman's Report

There was no Chairman's report.

Director's Report

Business Update:

Director Bakalar stated that the Town is working to resolve the parking garage issues at the Westfield Trumbull Mall, informing that the Town Building Official is ensuring that parking restrictions remain in place until the garage is properly tested and reviewed for re-opening. Guacamole Mexican Grill has officially opened in Trumbull Westfield Mall and has received positive feedback thus far. The two Adopt A Ramp signs by the mall are being re-landscaped and updated to two-sided signs highlighting Westfield Trumbull Mall and the Residences on Main.

As for Trumbull Center, vacant spaces are being filled. Patrick Fahy is taking over the former Bianco Rosso space, turning it into a family friendly, gathering place, which he hopes to open by the end of the Summer. Next door, Pure Med Spa has officially opened. There are 3-4 other prospective tenants seeking space in Trumbull Center. Also, Next Chapter Bookstore is doing well and working to increase marketing efforts.

The Director informed that the Town would conduct a restaurant week this year. Though several businesses are already interested, there have been requests for varying options regarding how a business can participate. This will be in late September.

The Director stated that the Main Street Dollar program has received good feedback and she hopes to conduct another similar program later in the year and is seeking additional funding to do so.

Several new businesses moved into the Cambridge Drive area, including Synergy Healthcare (from Fairfield) and a medical practice (from Bridgeport). The property at 6 Cambridge Drive is under contract for sale, additional details will follow in the upcoming months. The Director noted the property will not be used for housing.

Director Bakalar stated she is working on an article titled “Vacancy to Vibrancy” for the Bridgeport Regional Business Council’s (BRBC) Region Magazine.

The Director informed that the First Selectman’s State of the Town Address, hosted by BRBC, will be on May 11th and encouraged Commissioners to attend.

Madison Pharmacy has received excellent feedback thus far, with specific mentions of superior customer service. Commissioner LeVino suggested that the owner speak with stakeholders of Madison Village to discuss opportunities for cross promotion. Chairman Kaufman stated that improved curb appeal would be beneficial and Commissioner Marcus stated that earlier hours of operation would be helpful though he understands the limitations of pharmacy coverage.

Community Development Update:

The project for the Nichols Area, which went to PZC for a pre-application review in February, will likely be presenting to PZC in June for a Zone Change, Commissioners were encouraged to attend.

The project located at 7190 Main Street is moving along. The area has been approved for a zone change and the site plan application should be coming soon. Commissioner LeVino asked why site work was occurring prior to site plan approval, and Director Bakalar clarified that there has been a fill permit given for the site.

Planning Update:

The Trumbull Center Corridor Plan has been finalized and is actively being used as a guide in considering various financial opportunities for the area.

The Town is still waiting to receive the approved funding from the State to put the Mall Study contract out for bid. Director Bakalar informed that she will be working with the First Selectman to put a review team together in order to pick the consulting team.

Commissioner Marcus asked for an update on the sidewalks that run through Gisella Place in the Long Hill Green Area. Director Bakalar stated that the sidewalks have been fully designed, but the Town is still waiting for the final approvals on the permit from DEEP that has to do with the culvert the sidewalk will go over. The sidewalks must be coordinated with the new traffic light which will go out to bid as soon as the State issues the authorization to proceed.

Grant Update:

The Town has received 1.5 Million dollars from the State Bond Commission for the Trumbull Veterans and First Responder Center. The Director informed that she has submitted three (3) applications for federal funding in the amount of 3 Million dollars: one to Senator Murphy, one to Senator Blumenthal, and another to Congressman Himes's offices.

Director Bakalar stated that the Town has been assigned a FEMA representative to help navigate upcoming grant opportunities related to Trumbull's long term recovery efforts.

Event Update:

The Director stated she is working with the ECDC clerk and event team to distribute the flyers for the upcoming "Grow Your Home-Based Business." She asked Commissioners for their assistance in getting the word out to potential businesses. The event will offer networking opportunities, panel discussions on marketing and accessing capital, insights on accessing business technical assistance, and a resource table for highlighting participating businesses. She informed that the event is entirely free and not limited to Trumbull based businesses, though there will be a focus on those entities. Commissioner Marcus asked for digital copies of the flyer, stating that he would post it on various social media platforms.

Director Bakalar stated that the adaptive reuse project for Daniels Farm Road has been approved and offered Commissioners the opportunity to view a copy of the presentation.

Chairman Kaufman asked Commissioners whether they preferred to conduct meetings in-person or via videoconferencing going forward. Commissioner Marcus voiced concerns regarding the uptick in COVID-19 cases and stated a preference for virtual meetings as did Commissioner LeVino. Commissioners Scheuble and Sather both stated a preference for in-person meetings and noted that there is now the option to conference call into a meeting for those who have concerns. Commissioner Kaufman stated that the June 7th ECDC meeting would be held virtually, noting that the Commission can determine in regarding how to conduct the August meeting.

Commissioner Marcus asked for an update on the opening of Sicily Coal Fired Pizza, the Italian restaurant located next to Mex on Main. The Director informed that the inside has been renovated though she is not sure when they will officially open.

Commissioner Sather stated that he has sat in on one of the Sustainable Trumbull team meetings thus far, noting that the Committee was very welcoming though they stated he would need to be officially sworn onto the Committee before increasingly his involvement on the team.

Opportunity for Community Input

There were no comments from the public.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:01p.m. by Commissioner LeVino and seconded by Commissioner Marcus. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gia Mentillo
ECDC Clerk

Cc: Rob Librandi
Doug Wenz